



Department  
for Education

# Free school application form

Special free schools

**Published: December 2015**

Insert the name of your free school(s) below using BLOCK CAPITALS

**ORCHARD HILL SPECIAL FREE SCHOOL  
(HILLINGDON)**

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# The application form explained

Before completing your application, please ensure that you have read both the [background information and glossary document and the relevant assessment criteria booklet](#) carefully. Please also ensure that you can provide all the information and documentation required.

## Sections

### Declaration

The declaration must be made by a company member on behalf of the company/trust. The declaration section is found in the Word application form. All applicants are required to complete this section in full.

**All applicants will need to complete sections A, B, C, E, H and I in full.**

For sections D, F and G, the information you need to provide will depend on the type of group you are. Please refer to the relevant section of the *background information and glossary document*, and the *assessment criteria booklet*, for the information your group should include in these sections.

**Section A** asks you for applicant details in the Excel form.

**Section B** asks you to outline your proposed free school(s) in the Excel form.

**Section C** asks you for detailed information on the vision for your school(s) and is to be completed using the Word form.

**Section D** asks you for detailed information on your proposed education plan(s) and is to be completed using the Word form.

**Section E** asks you to evidence that there is a need for the school(s) you are proposing in the Word form.

**Section F** asks you to demonstrate that you have the capacity and capability to open the school(s) you are proposing and is to be completed using the Word form.

**Section G** specifically asks about costs. This requires the completion of the relevant sections of the Excel budget template.

**Section H** asks for information about premises, and 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 Word form for this.

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

### **Submitting Sections A to H**

The completed Word and Excel templates and the budget plans need to be submitted by email to the department by the application deadline to: [FS.applications@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:FS.applications@education.gsi.gov.uk). Your email must be no larger than 9MB in size.

The Word template should be between 50 and 100 pages long (depending on which type of group you are); 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 budget Excel 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 templates.

You also need to submit two hard copies (of Sections A-H and the budget plans) by a guaranteed 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. You may also hand deliver if you prefer.

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

### **Submitting Section I**

Section I, i.e. the Personal Information form, is required for each member, director, and principal designate who 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 by email alongside a copy of Section A (from the Excel template) to [due.diligence@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:due.diligence@education.gsi.gov.uk) stating the name of the school in the subject title.

### **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

Task to complete	Yes	No
1. Have you established a company by limited guarantee?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Have you provided information on all of the following areas (where appropriate)?		
<b>Section A:</b> Applicant details	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Section B:</b> Outline of the school	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Section C:</b> Education vision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Section D:</b> Education plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Section E:</b> Evidence of need	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Section F:</b> Capacity and capability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Section G:</b> Budget planning and affordability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Section H:</b> Premises	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Is the information in A4 format, using Arial 12 point font, and includes page numbers?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Have you fully completed the appropriate budget plan(s) where necessary?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Have you included CVs in the appendices for all relevant individuals in the template provided and in line with the requirements set out in the criteria?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. <b>Independent schools only*</b> : Have you provided a copy of the last two years' audited financial statements or equivalent?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. <b>Independent schools only*</b> : Have you provided a link to your school's most recent inspection report and completed an externally validated self-assessment and governance assessment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. <b>Independent schools only*</b> : Have you provided the documents set out in the criteria document specifically around your current site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. <b>Re-applications only</b> : Have you changed you application in response to the written feedback you received, if you are re-applying after being unsuccessful in a previous wave, as set out in Section 4.4 of this guide?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Have you sent an email (of no more than 9 MB in size**), titled: <b>Free School Application - School Name: [insert]</b> with all relevant information relating to Sections A to H of your application to: <a href="mailto:FS.applications@education.gsi.gov.uk">FS.applications@education.gsi.gov.uk</a> before the advertised deadline?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Have you sent two hard copies of the application by a guaranteed delivery method such as 'Recorded Signed for' to the address below?  Free Schools Applications Team, Department for Education, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3BT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

\* Independent schools include existing alternative provision and special school institutions that are privately run.

\*\* If your application is larger than 9MB please split the documents and send two emails.

Section I of your application	Yes	No
12. Have you sent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a copy of Section A (tab 1 of the Excel template); and</li> <li>• copies of the Section I Personal Information form for each member, director, and principal designate who has not submitted one of these forms within the past 365 days; and</li> <li>• a list of those lead applicants, members, directors, and principals designate who have submitted Section I forms within the past 365 days</li> </ul> by emailing scanned copies of Section I forms to <a href="mailto:due.diligence@education.gsi.gov.uk">due.diligence@education.gsi.gov.uk</a> stating the name of the school in the subject title, including a full list of members, trustees, and the principal designate (if appointed); and a copy of Section A?  (See guidance for dates and deadlines)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



## 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 background information and glossary document;
- The funding agreement with the Secretary of State;
- 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); and
- For children with an education health and care plan ('EHCP') naming the school, the requirements pertaining to children with SEN within the special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice, including the duty to admit a child where the school is named in an EHCP;
- For schools where the Secretary of State agrees in the funding agreement that they can also admit non-statemented pupils with special needs, the school must, in respect of these pupils, comply with the School Admissions Code, the School Admissions Appeals Code and the admissions law as it applies to maintained schools. 16-19 applicants do not need to follow these codes but must have admissions arrangements and criteria which are fair, objective and transparent.

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:**



**Position:**  (please delete as appropriate)

**Print name:**



**Date:**

**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:



## Completing the application form

### Section A – applicant details (use Excel spread sheet)

This section will need to be completed by **all** applicants. Please:

- complete the Section A tab in the Excel spread sheet; and
- refer to the background information and glossary document, and the assessment criteria booklet for what should be included in this section.

### Section B – outline of the school (use Excel spread sheet)

This section will need to be completed by **all** applicants. Please:

- complete the Section B tab in the Excel spread sheet; and
- refer to the background information and glossary document, and the assessment criteria booklet for what should be included in this section.

## Section C – vision

This section will need to be completed by **all** applicants.

Please:

- use the space provided below; and
- provide one version of this section, referring to individual schools or circumstances if you are applying for more than one school;
- refer to the background information and glossary document, and the assessment criteria booklet for what should be included in this section.

### **Section C1 – a credible proposal to deliver a high-quality free school and a clear rationale for establishing it in this area**

#### **Key Features**

Our proposal is to create Orchard Hill Special Free School (Hillingdon) for 210 full-time children and young people aged 5 to 19 who have social emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH) in association with a range of learning needs, including a high proportion with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). We intend to open this new co-educational Free School in the London Borough of Hillingdon for September 2017, adding to the family of Schools and Colleges currently operated by Orchard Hill College and Academy Trust (OHC&AT).

OHC&AT currently has two schools in Hillingdon, The Young People’s Academy (YPA) and The Skills Hub (TSH), which are an SEMH Special School and Alternative Provision respectively for pupils aged 11-16, jointly administered by an Executive Head Teacher. Our intention is to close both these facilities to create a new Free School that extends SEMH provision in the area from primary through to post 16. Furthermore, we want to be able to meet the full continuum of local SEMH concerns equally, irrespective of the systems or processes that may have generated a referral. Our plan, therefore, is to establish an economy of scale and flexibility of resources capable of responding to all learners of similar need, whether a Statement or Education, Health and Care Plan has been issued or not. Essentially, we will be seeking to blend the very best aspects of our existing Special School and Alternative Provision so that all pupils on the SEMH continuum can be responded to equitably to ensure outstanding progress. This blended approach, coupled to a significantly wider age range of 5-19, we believe presents a substantial change in the profile of our existing facilities.

#### **Demand**

The Orchard Hill Special Free School (Hillingdon) is being proposed with the intention

## **Section C1 – a credible proposal to deliver a high-quality free school and a clear rationale for establishing it in this area**

of meeting an increase in local demand as predicted by Hillingdon Borough Council's Additional Needs Strategy, originally published in 2014. The document concluded that careful consideration was needed regarding the *"capacity of our special schools to meet the needs of the increasing population"*. In tackling this issue, particular reference was made to developing *"an all age approach to special schools"*, in addition to improving SEMH responses at primary and post 16. ■

In a follow up briefing note to Councillors (2015), the head of Disability Services in Hillingdon indicated that special school places should adhere to certain principles, including:

- All age provision where possible
- Minimise distance required to travel to school
- More open and flexible models (more generic provision)
- Maximum special school size around 250
- Therapeutic provision within a collaborative approach
- Good quality provision
- Outcome focused provision

These concepts have provided the cornerstone of our discussions in devising our Free School proposal and were the main drivers in considering the closure of our existing academies and replacing them with an all age, more open and flexible model with key therapeutic elements.

Within the same document to Councillors, OHC&AT is referred to by name as being in partnership with Hillingdon Borough Council to consider options for creating a 6<sup>th</sup> Form facility for young people with SEMH difficulties locally who are at risk of not being in education, employment or training (NEET). Our proposal, therefore, is intended to directly address this issue as well answer concerns around developing effective KS1 & 2 responses as highlighted in the original strategy document. Added to this have been further discussions around the complex learning needs of children and young people who exhibit SEMH difficulties which, based on information provided by Hillingdon, suggests that Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD) are a major issue and, as such, an important part of our proposal.

OHC&AT is also mentioned concerning the development of a post 19 College in the area for young people who have traditionally only been able to access adult social care packages on leaving school. Although not part of this Free School application, it does demonstrate OHC&AT's ongoing relationship with Hillingdon Borough Council and our commitment to providing a full and comprehensive continuum of provision locally.

In terms of immediate demand, the closure of our existing Academies will generate a

## Section C1 – a credible proposal to deliver a high-quality free school and a clear rationale for establishing it in this area

need for approximately 140 places, which are currently split between 60 at YPA and 80 plus at TSH. The remaining 70 places will be made up of 20 children at KS1 & 2, and a 50 in the 6<sup>th</sup> Form.

### Trust Vision

Orchard Hill College and Academy Trust (OHC&AT) is committed to providing **outstanding educational opportunities** for all our pupils and students. OHC&AT is a **'family'** that works for mutual benefit. The OHC&AT family operates across London and the South and engages with quality improvement work nationally and internationally to benefit our pupils and students. It includes sponsored and affiliated SEN and mainstream Academies and Colleges.

We believe that together we can offer the very best for our pupils and students and our local communities. The aim is to ensure that each provision, either sponsored by or affiliated to OHC&AT, gains **mutual benefit** from each other.

OHC&AT places the **development and achievement** of its pupils and students at the heart of its vision and strategic direction. **Improving opportunities and outcomes** for our pupils and students is at the core of all that we do. All young people deserve to leave education confident that they have developed the skills they need to achieve their ambitions, with meaningful education, work and life experiences to draw on.

OHC&AT is committed to **equality of opportunity** and to **promoting diversity**. The organisation has a 'can do' approach to meeting the needs of all pupils and students. Expertise across OHC&AT is widely distributed and this enables us to be highly proactive when considering admissions for a wide range of children, young people and adults.

Our expertise covers a **broad range of needs and abilities**. Although this is mainly centred on pupils and students with special educational needs, it is not exclusively the case. OHC&AT benefits from the sharing of best practice across different settings and places great emphasis on its **working partnerships** within local communities, including employers and Local Authorities. This means that we are able to be responsive to the needs of pupils and students in both **SEN and mainstream** provisions, including alternative provisions such as pupil referral units or short-stay schools, to deliver quality and high standards in both contexts.

For pupils and students who experience barriers to learning, OHC&AT is committed to **meeting a broad spectrum of additional learning needs**, some of which will be complex and severe. These will typically relate to areas such as specific learning difficulties, autism, mental health needs, physical and medical needs and those relating to emotional wellbeing and behaviour. Within this continuum pupils and students will

## Section C1 – a credible proposal to deliver a high-quality free school and a clear rationale for establishing it in this area

have a primary need, but we recognise through our experience that most will also have a range of additional needs that can contribute to learning and developmental issues. Our overarching ability, therefore, is in recognising and responding to this diverse and complex group of individuals, and providing the foremost expertise in helping everyone succeed in their life and career ambitions.

### Free School Vision

Within the context of the Trust's vision, the mission of the Orchard Hill Special Free School (Hillingdon) will be to **give every child the tools to succeed**. We will be driven to achieve this for all pupils through the development of a learning culture that is **inclusive, aspirational and focused on assuring success**. This mission will be underpinned by a clear set of values and aims.

- To work with our pupils to build confidence in their abilities to succeed at school and as adults.
- To teach our pupils to keep themselves healthy and safe.
- To help our pupils to learn to understand and manage their feelings.
- To provide help for parents and carers to support and nurture their children.
- To support other providers across the borough in meeting the needs of pupils social, emotional and mental health difficulties.

Furthermore, our Free School will be committed to creating an **inclusive environment**, where people are treated with **dignity and respect** and where we anticipate and respond positively to different needs and circumstances so that everyone can achieve their potential.

We are committed to promoting and advancing **equality of opportunity**, not only because it will be an important part of the mission, vision and values of the Free School, but also because by attracting and retaining the most diverse range of pupils, staff and partners, we will ensure the Free School's future success.

We believe that everyone has the right to be treated fairly and without discrimination, regardless of age, disability, gender, gender identity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, circumstances or background.

## Section D – education plan: part 1

This section will need to be completed by **all** applicants. Please:

- use the table below; and
- refer to the background information and glossary document, and the assessment criteria booklet for what should be included in this section.

In the table below, please provide the proposed numbers in each year group at the point of opening and an explanation of how pupil numbers will build up over time. Please add additional rows/columns if appropriate. If you are an existing independent school wishing to become a free school, please use the first column to show how many pupils you currently have. 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 2017, please leave the relevant earlier columns blank.

	<b>Current number of pupils (if applicable)</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Reception								
Year 1		1	2	2	2	2	2	2
Year 2		1	3	3	3	3	3	3
Year 3		2	3	3	3	3	3	3
Year 4		2	3	3	3	3	3	3
Year 5		2	4	4	4	4	4	4
Year 6		2	5	5	5	5	5	5
Year 7		24	24	24	24	24	24	24
Year 8		24	24	24	24	24	24	24
Year 9		24	28	28	28	28	28	28
Year 10		32	32	32	32	32	32	32
Year 11		32	32	32	32	32	32	32
Year 12		24	25	25	25	25	25	25
Year 13		0	25	25	25	25	25	25



Totals		170	210	210	210	210	210	210
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## Section D – education plan: part 2

### D1 – an ambitious and deliverable curriculum plan which is consistent with the vision and pupil intake

If you are applying for more than one school and they will all be similar, please provide one version of this section, referring to individual schools or circumstances, where relevant. If schools will be different, you may find it simpler to provide more than one version of this section.

All applicants will need to complete the table of subjects and hours. Please use the table below.

Subject/other activity	Hours per week	Mandatory/ Voluntary	Comments
<b>Primary</b>			
English	4	M	
Maths	4	M	
Science	4	M	
Computing	2	M	
Humanities	4	M	
PSHE	2	M	
PE	2	M	
Art	2	M	
Music	2	M	
Design technology	2	M	
Structured play	2	M	Therapeutic support
<b>Key Stage 3</b>			
English	4	M	
Maths	4	M	
Science	4	M	
Computing	2	M	
PSHE	2	M	
PE	2	M	
Design technology	2	M	
Art	2	M	
House activities	2	M	Competitions/Sport

Reward activities	2	M	Part of positive behaviour management system
Music	2	M	
Community/Charity/Enterprise/Careers/Guest tutor projects	2	M	Half termly form group project
<b>Key Stage 4 (inc. GCSE)</b>			
English	4	M	
Maths	4	M	
Science	4	V	
PSHE/Citizenship	4	M	
PE	2	M	
House activities	2	M	Competitive element
Reward activities	2	M	As part of recognising positive behaviour system.
Health and fitness	4	V (Options)	Part of this broad spectrum offer will be delivered 'in-house', however, we have set aside a large 'outsourcing' budget to purchase courses from other local providers, including FE Colleges, where necessary or 'buy in' expertise/courses as required. Consequently, we do not expect to be self-sufficient across this entire subject range.
Music production	4	V (Options)	
Motor vehicle/bike maintenance	4	V (Options)	
Hairdressing/barbering	4	V (Options)	
Construction	4	V (Options)	
Catering and hospitality	4	V (Options)	
<b>6<sup>th</sup> Form (inc. GCSE &amp; Level 3)</b>			
Health and fitness	4	V (Options)	
Music production	4	V (Options)	
Motor vehicle/Bike maintenance	4	V (Options)	
Hairdressing/barbering	4	V (Options)	
Construction	4	V (Options)	
Catering and hospitality	4	V (Options)	
English	4	V (Options)	
Maths	4	V (Options)	
Science	4	V (Options)	
Work placement/experience	10 Block	M	
Mentoring session	2	M	

[Add more lines as appropriate]

All applicants will need to complete this section you will give us different information depending on which type of group you are.

## **D1 - an ambitious and deliverable curriculum plan which is consistent with the vision and pupil intake**

### **Pupil Intake**

On account that we intend to close our two existing academies to create Orchard Hill Special Free School (Hillingdon), the pupil population will reflect the profile of learners we are currently catering for, with the exceptions being a wider age range and the emergence of increasing levels of mental health issues requiring therapeutic interventions. Based on this profile, learners referred and admitted to the school will be represented in some or all of the following:

- All pupils will have additional and significant learning needs, which will be often specific in nature and typically concern numeracy and literacy issues, which can be attributed to many of the conditions outlined below.
- High proportions will have mental health issues that may show up as forms of anxiety, depression, irrational beliefs and/or personality disorders. These concerns can be linked to being on the child protection register and/or abused or neglected, which often result in attachment problems identified through:
  - An aversion to touch and physical affection.
  - Control issues.
  - Anger management problems, often leading to verbal and/or physical aggression and/or damage to property.
  - Difficulty showing genuine care and affection.
  - An underdeveloped conscience.
  - Chronically low self-confidence and self-esteem.
- The majority will exhibit speech, language and communication problems to an extent that will lead to some or all of the following issues:
  - A limited understanding vocabulary and that this seems to worsen over time.
  - Difficulty joining in and keeping up with conversations or tuning into other's verbally expressed interests.
  - General difficulties with the meaning and use of language, pronunciation and grammatical aspects, as well as body language, gesture, inference and intonation.
  - Difficulty understanding complex language such as reversible sentences, which mean that using language for a wider range of purposes such as negotiating, compromise and problem solving can be hard.
  - Poor working memory capacity and speed of processing, which means that

## **D1 - an ambitious and deliverable curriculum plan which is consistent with the vision and pupil intake**

coping with large amounts of frequently new and complex spoken information will be difficult.

- Limited use of complex words, though young people may often be aware of the importance of 'long words', linking them with intelligence and not 'fitting in' socially.
- Problems with longer stretches of spoken language such as explanations, even when simple sentence structure is adequate.
- Difficulty moving from one style of language to another leading to appearing rude or inappropriate by using an overly casual style of talking, for example.
- Many individuals will also either be suspected, or are known to be involved in drug and alcohol misuse, which can result in:
  - Unexplained change in personality or attitude.
  - Sudden mood swings, irritability, or angry outbursts.
  - Periods of unusual hyperactivity, agitation, or giddiness.
  - Lack of motivation; appears lethargic or "spaced out".
  - Appearing fearful, anxious, or paranoid, with no reason.
  - Poor attendance.

### **Learning Needs**

In association with the above, the intake are also likely to be characterised as follows:

- Most learners, across all age ranges, will be functioning in the lower quartile of all pupils nationally, currently between level 1 and 5 of the National Curriculum as was, which is significantly below national expectations and may contradict early academic profiling that predicted average rates of progress for this group.
- Some will fall into the bottom 5% of all pupils, below level 2 and occasionally working towards level 1 of the National Curriculum as was, which may be the result of other special educational needs having being overlooked from an early age, e.g. hearing loss.
- Some learners will also show signs of high ability, which may have previously identified them as gifted or talented.
- Almost all will have significant gaps in their knowledge and understanding across a range of subjects compared to learners in mainstream schools.
- Most will have numeracy and literacy difficulties, with many having concerns that

## **D1 - an ambitious and deliverable curriculum plan which is consistent with the vision and pupil intake**

fall into the category of dyslexia and/or dyscalculia.

- Some will have other forms of additional and/or special educational needs including vision and hearing difficulties, poor motor coordination, autism and/or ADHD.

### **Curriculum Principles**

In keeping with our vision and knowledge of the expected pupil intake, we have designed a curriculum around the following principles. Essentially, we strive to:

- Ensure consistent good and outstanding teaching.
- Develop rich and personalised pathways in which each pupil can access the learning required to achieve individual aspirations for life and work beyond school.
- Develop a focus on learning, achievement and outcomes through high quality interactions and support for learning.
- Build an inclusive and cohesive community based on strong relationships and support for positive learning behaviour and respect.
- Develop a reputation for excellence so that the school becomes the school of choice for pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties and other such related barriers to learning in Hillingdon and in neighbouring boroughs.
- Implement effective structures to support learning, personal development, leadership and achievement.
- Develop outstanding governance, management and leadership at all levels.
- Ensure the skill set of the team reflects pupil and curriculum requirements.
- Continuously challenge ourselves to improve standards of literacy and numeracy and pupil achievement, attainment and positive behaviour overall.
- Deploy new technologies effectively to strengthen teaching and learning and to develop creativity and innovation.
- Provide a broad and diverse programme of enrichment, including Sport and vocational activities.

### **Curriculum Outline**

The Free School's curriculum will be coherent and dynamic, able to meet individual learner needs and encourage progression. There will be a consistent and explicit focus

## **D1 - an ambitious and deliverable curriculum plan which is consistent with the vision and pupil intake**

on learning, encouraging pupils to take increasing responsibility for their own learning behaviours. As such we want all pupils to become **successful learners** who enjoy and achieve, **confident individuals** who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives, and **responsible citizens** who make a positive contribution to their communities.

The features of the curriculum will include using creative approaches to teaching and learning by exploiting the opportunities presented through **practical** and **functional** as well as **academic programmes**. There will be a focus on personal development, functional skills, and competencies linking different curriculum areas, progression and enrichment opportunities, and an emphasis on applied learning. Learners at the school will be provided with the opportunity to actively engage with the curriculum they are studying. We believe the focus on applied learning encourages crucial developmental aspects specific to the needs of learners with SEMH difficulties. We feel their development is best served through:

- Learning through doing
- Interactions with other learners through group work
- Real life investigations and active enquiry
- Learning in different environments
- Interaction with community, colleges, other schools and employees.
- Linking understanding and learning activities to job roles

The development of **Key Stage 4 & 5** programmes will provide real opportunities for pupils to practice the skills they will need when they enter employment and further education. The curriculum provision will promote diversity, opportunity and inclusion for all learners at the school.

To enable this, a key process will be high quality information, advice and guidance offered to all pupils to help them make their decisions and personalise their curriculum provision and pathway. The advice and guidance will be linked to recording achievement, reviewing progress and individual learning plans or 'passports' to education. The cycle of support will include assessment, review, guidance, individual action planning and target setting.

### **Passport to Personalisation**

Pupils will be supported to develop a 'Passport to Education', which is our plan for children and young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN). The purpose of the Passport is to enable a personalised programme for each pupil, which empowers him or her to develop necessary skills to reach their chosen destination enabling them to achieve to their full potential. The Passport is a programme of learning and teaching

## **D1 - an ambitious and deliverable curriculum plan which is consistent with the vision and pupil intake**

which, as well as setting targets and actions for the pupils' learning, provides a **planned teaching strategy** so that skills learned are sustainable and can be built upon. The Passport, therefore, supports teaching teams and any other professionals working with the pupil of their particular aims, objectives and ultimate destinations and how they can be met.

The Passport will enable the school to plan a journey of progression with the pupils in collaboration with parents/carers/stakeholders giving them autonomy over their own learning. It will be a tool for monitoring the effectiveness of teaching, and to assess if the support needs of the individual pupil are being met.

Passports will be reviewed termly and also in the interim when it is necessary to make changes to the programme. These regular reviews ensure that the pupil's needs are being met and that progress is being made. When satisfied that the expected progress has been made the teacher/pupil and other stakeholders set new targets with the aim of these being achieved by the pupil by the next review.

### **Structure**

The school day will comprise of five compulsory lessons per day, each lasting for 50 minutes. An optional period at the end of the day will be offered to all pupils to extend and support learning in a range of curricular areas.

Teaching groups will be organised around each Key Stage up to and including a 6<sup>th</sup> Form. This will provide a natural progression through the school with particular emphasis on:

- **Key Stage 1 & 2** – Focus on core activities and learning through play, where pupils are able to acquire practical, functional skills and improve their abilities to listen and respond appropriately to instructions. Structured play/therapeutic support and interventions will also include child and parent/carer sessions in order to strengthen social development in the home as well as in the school. A strong focus on early reading through development of phonic skills, developing comprehension, guided and independent reading. Pre-writing, early writing and handwriting developed through daily activities designed in collaboration with Occupational Therapists. Maths teaching focusing on the principles of counting and the four operations, ensuring pupils have a firm foundation to build upon when they transition through the school. Access to targeted and specific educational visits to broaden knowledge and understanding and to embed learning in new contexts. **Consistent with all key stages**, the curriculum is enriched with SMSC (spiritual, moral, social, cultural awareness) and as such supports the expectation that pupils begin to develop a deeper understanding of the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty,

## **D1 - an ambitious and deliverable curriculum plan which is consistent with the vision and pupil intake**

mutual respect and tolerance of those with different values, cultures, beliefs and faiths.

- **Key Stage 3** – More applied learning in the core subjects and through a choice of options. Pupils will also begin their preparation for Work Related Learning as well as have opportunities for residential and offsite visits into the community. Furthermore, pupils will be encouraged to develop their team work and healthy competitive skills by regular participation in house competitions that will have a cognitive as well as physical emphasis. A main focus will be the development of trial and error through practice and the recognition that different people have different strengths. Participation within and for the local community will further develop students' social skills and enhance their understanding and appreciation of their place within it. Community based projects will be closely linked with charity based projects to develop pupils' empathy and initiative skills. Blended with this will be enterprise type projects. In order to provide a broad experience of the world and expose students to as many different careers and life experiences as possible, guest tutors and lecturers will be a regular feature of the curriculum. 'Tasters' and insights into the many different careers that they may want to pursue will be a key feature of this.
- **Key Stage 4** – Pupils will continue towards examinations in the core and optional subject areas, as well as participate in Work Related Learning and college placements in order to extend their vocational skills and their abilities to be independent learners. Of particular importance will be students' roles within the school and how these can be duplicated into the world of work. Vocational/Technical courses will reflect 'real life' work environments, as the local community will be encouraged to make full use of the 'Technical Town' where real life occupations are being replicated. This will provide students with the full experience of those particular professions right down to customer engagement and dealing with members of the public.
- **6<sup>th</sup> Form** – The emphasis will solely focus on the world of work and the preparation for employment or higher education. Students will have the opportunity to strengthen and enhance previous gains and grades in the core subjects as well as build upon their experiences of the world of work. Students will be closely mentored to ensure that they are preparing to leave full time education or move onto higher education.

### **Blended Curriculum**

A significant proportion of pupils who attend the school will be required to engage with a programme of **therapeutic support**, to include access to Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, counselling support (Drug and Sexual Health), Music



## **D1 - an ambitious and deliverable curriculum plan which is consistent with the vision and pupil intake**

and Drama therapies, and behaviour therapies, as well as intensive therapeutic support, advice and guidance for families. Some students may also be withdrawn from specific lessons throughout the week to provide them with more intensive support such as those who require literacy and numeracy enhancement.

We refer to the integration of therapeutic and other means of personalised support as the Blended Curriculum. We expect that pupils at the Free School will benefit enormously from therapists being able to work collaboratively and alongside teaching staff to support and facilitate learning. We have extensive experience of this through our other facilities and know that, given the right guidance, professionals can work in partnership in order to make the blended approach a success. For example, we currently support the involvement of speech therapists and teachers in helping parents develop collaborative interventions and activities in order to support their children in devising a person centred programme of learning. Similarly, we have examples of pupils using technology programmes to support their literacy and language skills overseen by Speech and Language Therapists, who in turn work with the teachers to assess the pupils barriers to communication enabling them to jointly devise a programme of learning that develops communication, language and literacy skills.

As alluded to earlier in the section, we recognise that an increasing number of pupils require specific mental health support and we believe a blended team approach to be the most effective way of responding to this. Furthermore, we understand that communication is key to all learning, and as such the collaborative work between teachers and therapists, including speech and language, has obvious benefits. The same applies to any other therapies accessed by pupils who need to be supported and facilitated in order to participate and achieve. With this in mind the timetable will allow flexibility for staff and pupils to work together and to share facilities, to engage in collaborative working, field visits, talks by visiting practitioners and celebration events.

### **Practical Focus**

Our Free School aims to increase enjoyment of learning and achievement in all subjects within the school through a focus on the practical subject areas and those that encourage engagement and understanding of the wider community. Access will also be offered to vocational partnership programmes, which enable a high level of effective access and attainment by pupils with complex and diverse needs, so these subject areas are viewed as very important to the development of the curriculum and in helping our pupils to access the next stages in their education / work and personal lives.

The opportunities to develop collaboration and co-operation skills, improved listening and co-ordination and the ability to express oneself physically and emotionally, through *doing*, are key features of these subjects and important to the overall development of our students, the majority of whom will display signs of social maladaptation due to their

## **D1 - an ambitious and deliverable curriculum plan which is consistent with the vision and pupil intake**

difficulties.

### **Extending and Enriching the Curriculum**

A rich and varied programme of extra-curricular activities will be offered by the School. This will include:

- Sport and physical activity
- Performing Arts (Dance, Drama, Music)
- Art, Design and Technology
- Other curricular and cross curricular clubs and activities
- A tailored programme of trips, visits and residentials

Enrichment activities will also support curriculum pathways and support personalised programmes. Extension activities will stretch the more able, including additional programmes for G&T students, additional study support options, booster sessions and the opportunity to use the School's facilities to complete coursework, undertake research and use online resources.

Together the enrichment and extension activities will help broaden the learning experience, increase learning enjoyment and improve attainment.

The activities will form under three categories:

- Healthy Life
- Creative Life
- Broadening Life

Pupils will engage in and develop a range of hobbies, skills and sports. All staff in the Free School will be expected to contribute towards the Personal Enrichment Programme.

### **Developing Independent learning**

The School Vision sets out the aspiration for a consistent and explicit focus on learning, which will encourage pupils to take increasing responsibility for their own learning. In addition, the School will develop a curriculum, which fosters creativity, independence and innovation.

To achieve this, we will give learners an appropriate level of responsibility and control to be active producers of digital content and media.

We will develop access to a variety of pupil-led technologies where pupils take a lead

### **D1 - an ambitious and deliverable curriculum plan which is consistent with the vision and pupil intake**

and ownership of some of the facilities, e.g. school radio / TV.

Within this facilitated learning environment, ICT will support the teacher to:

- Ensure all pupils are actively and imaginatively engaged in their learning, using a variety of ICT resources and pedagogical styles to achieve planned and mutually agreed learning outcomes.
- Promote independent learning, which in turn emphasises and develops the teacher's role as consultant and facilitator.
- Recognise that pupils have ICT capabilities and skills from beyond the classroom, which can be creatively harnessed to transform learning, with the intention of offering industry, recognised qualifications.

### **D2 – measuring pupil performance effectively and setting challenging targets**

If you are applying for more than one school, please provide one version of this section, referring to individual schools or circumstances where relevant.

**All** applicants will need to complete the table below but you will give us different information depending on which type of group you are. Please:

- use the space provided below; and
- refer to the background information and glossary document, and the assessment criteria booklet for what should be included in this section.

### **D2 – measuring pupil performance effectively and setting challenging targets**

#### **Targets**

Our targets relate to the principles outlined in the previous section and our knowledge of the children and young people most likely to attend our school. In the main we want to ensure that all pupils who come to us eventually leave with the skills, knowledge, determination and qualifications to make a successful living. To this end we have already highlighted that we endeavour to provide a high quality 'blended' approach to learning and social and emotional development that should enable these hard to reach learners to transform their lives and go on to make a worthwhile contribution to their communities and society in general. To achieve this we expect older learners to accomplish a range of GCSEs alongside accelerated progress across a range of core subjects for our younger admissions. In summary this will include:

- 100% of lessons to be good or outstanding, with the majority outstanding.

## **D2 – measuring pupil performance effectively and setting challenging targets**

- 100% of learners to be able to read, write and speak at an age appropriate level by the time they leave the school.
- 100% of learners to make expected or better than expected progress in English and Maths (literacy and numeracy).
- 100% of learners to have access to at least 5 GCSE subjects or the equivalent.
- 100% of learners to gain a GCSE pass (A\*-G) in Maths and English.
- 75% of learners to gain 5 or more GCSE passes (A\*-G) or the equivalent (inc. English and Maths) with support plans in place for the remainder.
- 100% of parents and/or carers feel fully informed and able to support their child's learning.
- 100% of partner schools play a role in supporting dual arrangements.
- Attendance to be 95% or above.
- 100% of learners make a successful and sustained transfer to other education, employment or training.
- 100% of learners are personally assessed upon entry and follow an individual education plan (IEP).
- 100% of learners with identified special and additional educational needs are placed on targeted programmes of support.
- 100% of learners are set personalised learning outcomes in all subjects, evidence of which will be held individually in achievement files.
- 80% of learners are on course at any time to meet Passport targets, including learning outcomes, with the remainder having the necessary additional support in place to remedy this.
- 100% of observed lessons demonstrate good or outstanding behaviour.
- 100% of learners with these needs will have access to therapeutic and restorative approaches in response to challenging behaviour and other therapeutic needs.

### **Assessment and Monitoring**

An annual Assessment and Reporting Calendar will be published each year, setting out the dates for data to be entered in the MIS, and dates for the analysis of data.

Every six weeks, teachers will be asked to report on the progress that pupils have made in their classes. Teachers will work to draw up an assessment calendar which identifies key assessments to be used when reaching a decision about an appropriate

## **D2 – measuring pupil performance effectively and setting challenging targets**

'working at' grade or level to be submitted when progress checks are completed.

Passports will be reviewed three times a year and targets will be informed by the regular records of progress.

The Academy will use a RAGS coding system to identify pupils for celebration or intervention.

**RED** indicates that attention is needed as the student appears to be performing at a significantly lower level than can be expected when compared to their average Key Stage score in English & Maths.

**AMBER** indicates the need for monitoring, as the student does not appear to be making the rate of progress that we would wish. Whilst progression is being made by the student, the student is not advancing by the points score required in order to make good progress.

**GREEN** indicates that the student is performing at a level that is consistent with DfE Challenge expectations.

**SKY BLUE** indicates that the student is performing at an outstanding level.

Every assessment point will utilise a 3 week cycle that includes a moderation week, an assessment week, and an AFL week. This is designed to complete the cycle from agreed standards, to agreed actions for improvement.

Following this, information will be available to all teaching staff in the School. Pupils will receive a summary of their progress against targets, with a copy sent home for parents.

Each year group will have a Passport that analyses underperformance at all levels and disseminates information to key players, including Form Tutors, classroom teachers and other significant adults. They will also devise and implement effective interventions, evaluating the impact of them.

Subject Leaders will be looking at the overall pattern of attainment and progress, i.e. if a significant proportion of pupils are underachieving in a particular subject area / class. Also looking at patterns in terms of groups of pupils, e.g. FSM; and individual pupils known to have particular challenges.

The SLT will receive a summary report at every assessment cycle analysing current attainment and progress against targets and identifying areas of concern. Departmental performance (including individual student and class analysis) will be available for all teaching staff and will form the basis of discussion at line management meetings.

Pupils will have targets in all subjects. Achievement and progress against these targets will be tracked on a personalised basis and specific groups will also be closely tracked, e.g. LAC, FSM.

### **D3 – a staffing structure that will deliver the planned curriculum within the expected income levels**

If you are applying for more than one school, please provide one version of this section, referring to individual schools or circumstances where relevant.

**All** applicants will need to complete this section, but you will give us different information depending on which type of group you are. Please:

- use the space provided below; and
- refer to the background information and glossary document, and the assessment criteria booklet for what should be included in this section.

**D3 – a staffing structure that will deliver the planned curriculum within the expected income levels**

### **D3 – a staffing structure that will deliver the planned curriculum within the expected income levels**

#### **Overview**

Staffing at our Free School will be formed from 3 core elements, covering teaching and learning, pupil support, and finance, facilities and administration. There will also be in place a senior leadership team.

The Free School will be open from 8.30am to 4.00pm daily, and will follow the term dates set by the Borough of Hillingdon.

We will operate nominal class sizes of between 6 and 8 pupils, depending on age, stage and complexity of need.

Each class will be managed by a class teacher, supported by a permanent teaching assistant.

A team of qualified therapists and intervention specialists will operate in parallel with the class timetable. This 'pupil support team' will provide behaviour support as required in addition to planned sessions of learning and therapeutic support as set out in individual support plans.

#### **Teaching & Learning Team**

We anticipate being full from Year 2 when our Free School will broadly adopt the following class based structure:

- Primary (20 fte) = 3 classes + 3.3 fte Teachers & 3.0 fte Assistants
- Key Stage 3 (76 fte) = 10 classes + 11.0 fte Teachers & 10.0 fte Assistants
- Key Stage 4 (64 fte) = 8 classes + 8.8 fte Teachers & 8.0 fte Assistants
- 6<sup>th</sup> Form (50 fte) = 7 classes + 7.7 fte Teachers & 7.0 fte Assistants
- **Totals: 210 fte = 28 classes + 30.8 Teachers & 28 fte Assistants**

In year 1 there will be 1 less class at Primary and 4 fewer in the 6<sup>th</sup> Form. This equates to an initial reduction of 5 classes overall including 5.5 fte Teachers and 5.0 fte Assistants. There will also be proportionate initial reductions in pupil support staff, although we expect to have in place a full complement of leaders and finance, administration and facilities staff.

#### **Pupil Support Team**

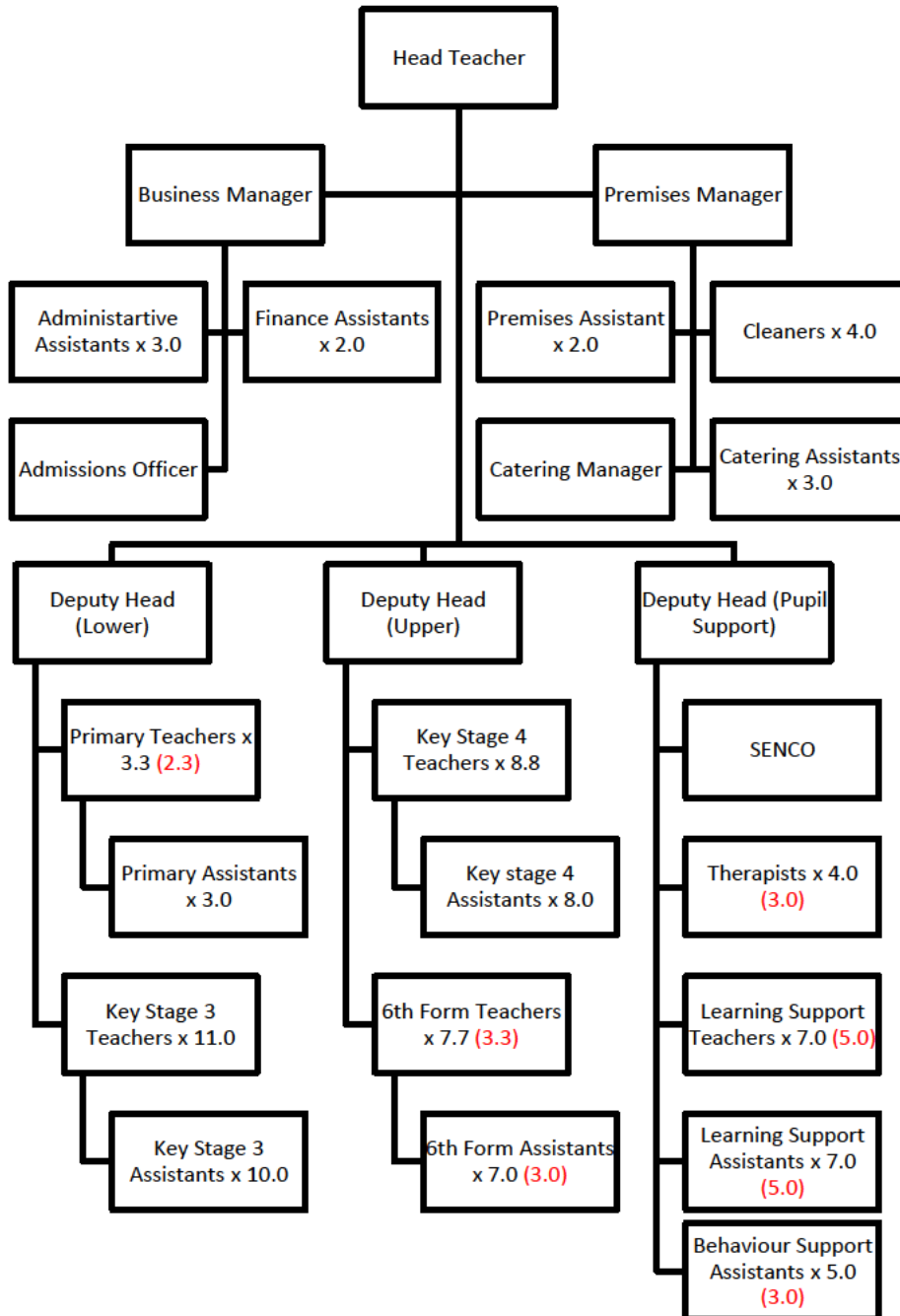
We envisage a pupil support team operating in parallel with the teaching timetable to deliver interventions as required alongside planned sessions of learning and therapeutic support. The team will comprise:

- Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) x 1.0

**D3 – a staffing structure that will deliver the planned curriculum within the expected income levels**

- Therapists x 4.0
- Learning Support Teachers x 7.0
- Learning Support Assistants x 7.0
- Behaviour Support Assistants x 5.0

**Organogram When Full (Year 1 variations in red)**





## **D4 – the school will be welcoming to pupils of all faiths/world views and none**

All applicants will need to complete this section in full for each school they wish to open. Please:

- use the space provided below; and
- refer to the background information and glossary document, and the assessment criteria booklet for what should be included in this section.

### **D4 – the school will be welcoming to pupils of all faiths/world views and none**

#### **SMSC**

A key curriculum feature, given the experiences and needs of pupils, will be an ongoing focus on spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) learning, which for us will include the ability to:

- Explore beliefs and experience; respect values; discover oneself and the surrounding world; use imagination and creativity; reflect. (Spiritual)
- Recognise right and wrong; understand consequences; investigate moral and ethical issues; offer reasoned views. (Moral)
- Use social skills in different contexts; work well with others; resolve conflicts; understand how communities work. (Social)
- Appreciate cultural influences; participate in culture opportunities; understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity. (Cultural)

#### **British Values**

We recognise British values as being:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith.

In so doing we want to:

- Enable students to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence.
- Enable students to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England.
- Encourage students to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative,

#### **D4 – the school will be welcoming to pupils of all faiths/world views and none**

and to understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality of the school and to society more widely.

- Enable students to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England.
- Further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling students to acquire an appreciation for and respect for their own and other cultures.
- Encourage respect for other people.
- Encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic processes, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England.
- Encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the **Equality Act 2010**.

#### **Equality**

As an existing organisation Orchard Hill College and Academy Trust (OHC&AT) is already committed to providing outstanding educational opportunities for all pupils and students. It is proud of its diverse community of children, young adults, staff and stakeholders and is committed to maintaining excellence in teaching and learning by ensuring there is equality of opportunity for all, fostered in an environment of mutual respect and dignity, regardless of faith or worldviews.

Equality, for us, means ensuring everyone is able to participate in all our activities and diversity acknowledges there are differences between people, which should be recognised, respected and celebrated.

OHC&AT has been required to evidence how it meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 in terms of its intake but also as an employer. In addition, we recognise our wider responsibilities with regard to parents/carers, governors and other stakeholders. To this end we understand that our duty extends to all the aspects of a person's identity or 'protected characteristics', including:

- Race
- Disability
- Sex
- Age
- Religion or Belief

#### **D4 – the school will be welcoming to pupils of all faiths/world views and none**

- Sexual Orientation
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Gender Reassignment

#### **The Principles We Will Apply**

- All pupils will be entitled to the best possible education that respects and addresses their individual learning needs.
- All pupils should be free from discrimination, harassment or bullying, particularly with regard to their protected characteristics.
- All pupils will be given the opportunity to express their opinions and concerns with regard to the school and its discharging of its responsibilities with regard to Equality.
- All pupils will have equality of opportunity with regard to learning experiences within and outcomes beyond school life.
- We will make all reasonable adaptations to maximise accessibility for all pupils and students to all aspects of the curriculum and environment.
- All pupils will be expected to work within OHC&AT's Equality & Diversity Policy. Appropriate support will be put in place or, if necessary, sanctions taken when this is breached.
- We will set, monitor and update targets and practices designed to narrow the achievement gap for all pupils.
- The diversity within the pupil population will be recognised, valued and celebrated.

#### **D5 – the particular needs of the children coming to the school have been carefully considered and will be met appropriately**

This section covers how your school will address the particular needs of children at the school.

**All** applicants will need to complete this section in full for each school they wish to open. Please:

- use the space provided below; and
- refer to the background information and glossary document, and the assessment criteria booklet for what should be included in this section.

## **D5 – the particular needs of the children coming to the school have been carefully considered and will be met appropriately**

### **Children's Needs**

As a specialist learning environment we believe all aspects of Orchard Hill Special Free School (Hillingdon) are geared towards meeting a range of additional and special educational needs and that our key principles, based on personalised, high quality learning, are central to this.

As described in section D1, the needs of children coming to the school can be summarised as:

- All pupils will have additional and significant learning needs.
- High proportions will have mental health issues.
- The majority will exhibit speech, language and communication problems.
- Many individuals will also either be suspected of, or are known to be involved in drug and alcohol misuse.
- Most learners, across all age ranges, will be functioning in the lower quartile of all pupils nationally.
- Some learners will fall into the bottom 5% of all pupils.
- Some will also show signs of high ability, which may have previously identified them as gifted or talented.
- Almost all pupils will have significant gaps in their knowledge and understanding across a range of subjects compared to learners in mainstream schools.
- Most learners will have numeracy and literacy difficulties, with many having concerns that fall into the category of dyslexia and/or dyscalculia.
- Some children will have other forms of additional and/or special educational needs including vision and hearing difficulties, poor motor coordination, autism and/or ADHD.

### **Interventions**

On the understanding that almost all our entire intake will have some form of learning difficulties, particularly in relation to numeracy and literacy we intend to have in place:

- A Passport for every learner, which is understood and supported by all professionals involved in educating and supporting a particular pupil. This plan will orchestrate the full range of support on offer and provide the vehicle for regular review and modifications.
- Small class groups of no more than 8 learners to 2 adults so that personal

**D5 – the particular needs of the children coming to the school have been carefully considered and will be met appropriately**

learning outcomes can be set and interventions designed, which are fully deliverable and specific to the particular capabilities of the individual.

- A programme of one-to-one withdrawal provided by a range of Support Assistants who are fully trained in the delivery of numeracy and literacy support.
- A referral process and access to external agencies with specialist knowledge in areas such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, Tourette's and other conditions known to specifically affect learning.

With regard to social, emotional and mental health concerns, which may show themselves through a diverse and often disturbing range of behaviours, we expect to have organised:

- A fully trained and supervised workforce, capable of understanding and responding effectively to the behaviour of young people with social, mental and emotional health issues.
- Assessments, interventions and training designed and implemented by a fully qualified Child Psychotherapist (CP) who understands the needs and demands of this particular cohort. This will include a caseload and delivering a programme of one-to-one withdrawal.
- A referral process and access to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) alongside other services specialising in young people's mental health and attachment issues.
- Access to a full range of extra-curricular learning focussed on building self-esteem through resilience, friendship and achievement.

In relation to speech, language and communication problems, we will want to respond by having prepared:

- A trained workforce, capable of understanding and responding effectively to the range of communication and interaction issues exhibited by our learners.
- Assessments, interventions and training designed and implemented by a fully qualified Speech and Language Therapist (SaLT) who understands the needs and demands of this particular cohort. This will include a caseload and delivering a programme of one-to-one withdrawal.
- A referral process and access to external services, including medical and other professionals, equipped to diagnose and respond to the numerous conditions associated with communications concerns.

With regard to drug and alcohol misuse, as with other conditions we expect to have in

**D5 – the particular needs of the children coming to the school have been carefully considered and will be met appropriately**

place:

- A trained and knowledgeable workforce, capable of identifying and responding to immediate concerns.
- A clear policy on the school's response and approach to drugs and alcohol.
- Engagement with families at an early stage with a view to managing risk at home and in the immediate local community.
- A programme of one-to-one advice and guidance initially provided by learning support staff.
- Referrals and ongoing access to organisations such as drugs advisory services and other external support, including medical and other professionals, equipped to diagnose and respond to drug and alcohol related issues.

In addition to the above the new Free School will employ a full time Family Liaison Lead to communicate directly and effectively with parents, carers, schools and other agencies, employers and local community groups.

**Safeguarding**

As an existing provider we already have in place, both within our Academies and the Trust, a comprehensive safeguarding policy that clarifies the following:

- Types of abuse and recognition
- Reporting arrangements
- The designated person
- Contact with the family
- Recording and reporting
- Where criminal offences suspected
- Immediate risk or danger
- Continued provision of support
- Allegations of abuse against the member of staff
- Requests for assistance by other agencies
- Pupils subject to child protection plan
- Confidentiality

## **D5 – the particular needs of the children coming to the school have been carefully considered and will be met appropriately**

In meeting these aspects, in setting up our Free School we are driven by certain guiding principles, including:

- Children and young people have the right to protection from neglect, physical, emotional and sexual abuse.
- All citizens, as well as professionals, have a responsibility for the protection of children and for reporting concerns about a child's welfare or safety.
- The well-being of the child is the paramount consideration in all protection work.
- In any conflict between the needs of the child and those of the parents/carers, the needs of the child must be put first.
- Children must be listened to and taken seriously, whatever their level of development or communication.
- Children's wishes and feelings must be taken into account; children will be involved in decisions about their future in ways appropriate to their age and understanding.
- Work with children should be sensitive to the child as an individual with particular needs and circumstances.
- All children will be treated with respect and accorded full civil and legal rights.
- Each child and family is unique with differing experiences, circumstances and perspectives.
- Professionals concerned with child protection investigations must make every effort to identify and ameliorate any disadvantage arising from ethnic origin, culture, religion, language, gender, sexual orientation, class, disability or age.
- Particular attention should be paid to the vulnerability of children with a disability, special needs or communication difficulties.

### **Behaviour**

The following section is maintained within a larger policy already being operated by OHC&AT.

In summary, the behaviour and social/emotional development of the children and young people within our Academies is an essential factor in facilitating positive access to learning, the wider community and the overall quality of their lives. We recognise that successful support for pupils via the management of challenging behaviour is wholly dependent upon the school ethos. It is incumbent on the whole school community, including governors, families and volunteers, to promote positive behaviour and to

**D5 – the particular needs of the children coming to the school have been carefully considered and will be met appropriately**

maintain a positive regard towards all pupils and colleagues, offering pupils appropriate role models at all times. All those who are part of the school community should demonstrate an unfailing commitment to good values and principles, including:

- Teaching right from wrong
- Honesty and fairness
- Respect for others
- The importance of getting on with people and establishing positive relationships
- Self-discipline, self-management of behaviour and a sense of responsibility for oneself

Within our Free School pupil behaviour, both appropriate and inappropriate, will be managed with sensitivity and professionalism. Staff and other adults within the school's community need to constantly re-examine and reflect upon their own values, attitudes and behaviours in order to appreciate the messages they are giving pupils. They also need to be familiar with clear guidelines and strategies e.g. Pupil Support Information (behaviour management plans), to help maintain positive behaviour and discourage negative behaviours when they occur. Regular, high quality in-service training can do much to help staff achieve better understanding of pupil behaviour and all OHC&AT Academies are committed to providing this.

School staff will be continually made aware of recent legislation, relevant literature and research, local and national guidelines and successful practices elsewhere related to the field of positive behaviour support. We recognise that challenging behaviour, however it manifests itself, is usually an impediment to accessing the curriculum effectively, and thus quality learning experiences, and that positive behaviour, which encompasses high quality learning behaviour, is a necessary pre-requisite to effective teaching and learning. OHC&AT recognises, therefore, the importance of a whole school approach to behaviour management within each Academy and across the organisation as a whole.

At Orchard Hill Special Free School (Hillingdon) we will:

- Understand that positive behaviour promotes high quality learning experiences
- Maintain a culture and ethos that has respect for the child or young person at its centre
- Provide an environment of calm and good order
- Have positive expectations that pupils will behave well, with courtesy and with self-discipline, and that staff uphold strong professional and personal values



**D5 – the particular needs of the children coming to the school have been carefully considered and will be met appropriately**

towards each other

- Embed effective systems and procedures to encourage and maintain positive behaviour, with a set of strategies to help staff prevent and respond to challenging behaviour
- Recognise that challenging behaviour is a form of communication and always treat it as such
- Provide relevant training, structures and support for all, including parents
- Work in close partnership with parents, carers and other agency colleagues

**Attendance**

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils and endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. Parents and pupils play a part in making our school so successful. Every child has a right to access the education to which he/she is entitled. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all.

It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

For our children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered it is vital they are at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. The routines children and young people develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff, and future aspirations depend on good attendance.

Ultimately good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and absence below 95%
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attenders find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying
- Regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary school,

**D5 – the particular needs of the children coming to the school have been carefully considered and will be met appropriately**

secondary school, and higher education, employment or training.

We believe the foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child. To help us focus on this we will:

- Provide information on all matters related to attendance in our regular home liaison.
- Report to parents/carers on how their child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainments.
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements
- Reward good or improving attendance through class competitions, certificates, trips or events.
- Set targets for the school and for classes for attendance and display these in the school.

## **Section E – evidence of need**

This section asks you to evidence that there is a need for the school(s) you are proposing. **All** applicants will need to complete this section in full for each school they wish to open.

### **E1 - provide valid evidence that there is a need for this school in the areas**

This section will need to be completed by **all** applicants. Please:

- use the space provided below;
- include evidence as annexes; and
- refer to the background information and glossary document, and the assessment criteria booklet for what should be included in this section.

**E1 – provide valid evidence that there is a need for this school in the area**

## E1 – provide valid evidence that there is a need for this school in the area

Free Schools Applications Team  
Department for Education  
3rd Floor  
Sanctuary Buildings  
Great Smith Street  
London SW1P 3BT

23 February 2016

Dear Sir/Madam

**Re: Confirmation of support for a Special Free School in Hillingdon**

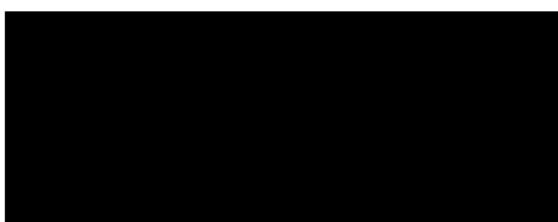
I can confirm that the London Borough of Hillingdon has identified a need for further development of local provision for children and young people with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) difficulties in association with a range of learning difficulties, including Autistic Spectrum Disorders.

The local vision in Hillingdon is "putting our residents first" and our Additional Needs Strategy sets out our support for the development of local educational provision to reduce the number of pupils who have to attend school at long distances from home.

Our analysis of the data on pupils with SEMH difficulties demonstrates a need for more local provision including pathways to support pupils to develop the skills for independence as they reach adulthood. The local authority will consider naming any new local provision in pupils' Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans and make referrals through the 'hard to place' panels where other statutory arrangements are not in place.


Based on current analysis, I anticipate 'naming' the chosen school, subject to EFA approval for approximately 60 secondary aged pupils in the first academic year, some of whom may be attending post 16. Also in the first year, the local authority will want to commission at least 10 primary places for children who need Alternative Provision (AP) and a further 100 for similar young people in the secondary age range, including 20 places post 16.

In subsequent years I believe Hillingdon will utilise all available places at the chosen school up to an agreed total capacity of 210 as identified in the table below, together with



**E1 – provide valid evidence that there is a need for this school in the area**

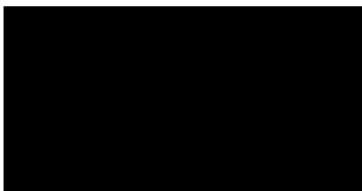
current 'top-up' amounts as at February 2016 (please note that pupils with EHC Plans are funded on a model with different bands according to their needs so this provides a current average).

<b>Age Range</b>	<b>Places</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Top-Up</b>
KS1 & 2	20	AP	
KS3 & 4	80	AP	
Post 16	50	AP/Special	
KS3 & 4	60	Special	
Total	210	AP & Special	

Given Hillingdon Council's key role in running the competition and making approved bidder recommendations to the Department, we are not expressing support for any individual bid but are pleased to outline the identified need that we have in the borough.

I hope this confirms the Council's position that there is a need for developments in the specialist provision available for pupils with SEMH difficulties in the borough. I would be happy to answer any additional questions should you require it.

Yours faithfully



## E1 – provide valid evidence that there is a need for this school in the area

### Summary

The letter provided by the Borough of Hillingdon states that they will commission Special Education Needs and Alternative Provision places from Orchard Hill Special Free School (Hillingdon), beginning with 170 in Year 1 and then 210 in Year 2, which represents our maximum intended capacity. 'Top-up' amounts are consistent with expectations and as such the financial viability of the school, based on these numbers and values, can be clearly demonstrated in the financial spreadsheet.

As outlined in Section C, the commissioning arrangements are being proposed with the intention of meeting an increase in local demand as predicted by Hillingdon Borough Council's Additional Needs Strategy, originally published in 2014, where particular reference was made to developing "*an all age approach to special schools*", in addition to improving SEMH responses at primary and post 16. In follow up correspondence to Councillors, OHC&AT is referred to by name as being in partnership with Hillingdon to consider options for creating a 6<sup>th</sup> Form facility locally for young people with SEMH who are at risk of not being in education, employment or training (NEET). Our proposal, therefore, aims to directly address this issue as well as answer previous concerns surrounding effective KS1 & 2 responses and SEMH issues linked to Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD).

We are currently the sole provider locally of SEMH statemented and Alternative Provision (AP) at Key Stage 3 & 4, as well as offering an exclusive amount of additional AP for primary aged children. There is no dedicated 6<sup>th</sup> Form special provision or AP in the area, with the main option being to infill Further Education courses where available. Our Free School proposal, therefore, is designed to consolidate more effectively our existing arrangements as well as build better quality experiences at the lower and upper age ranges. In terms of immediate demand, therefore, the closure of our existing Academies will generate a need for approximately 140 places, which are currently split between 60 at YPA and 80 plus at TSH. The remaining 70 places will be made up of 20 children at primary, and a 50 in the 6<sup>th</sup> Form, as explained in the commissioning the letter above.

### Parental Demand

All parents and carers with children at our existing facilities have been contacted to explain the proposed changes (**see letters attached**). We are still awaiting some responses but from those we have heard from the overwhelming response has being positive with 100% of returns so far indicating that they would like their son or daughter to attend the new free school. Similarly 100% have expressed an interest in a sixth form place.

Please tick to confirm that you have provided evidence as annexes:



## **E2 – valid evidence of need for non-statemented pupils/pupils without an education, health and care (EHC) plan**

This section will need to be completed by **all** applicants. Please:

- use the space provided below;
- include evidence as annexes; and
- refer to the background information and glossary document, and the assessment criteria booklet for what should be included in this section.

<b>E2 – valid evidence of need for non-statemented pupils/pupils without an education, health and care (EHC) plan</b>
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Please see above.
-------------------

## Section F – capacity and capability

### F1 (a) Skills and experience of your team

Named individual in charge during pre-opening: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] – see CV below.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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## F1 (b) Skills gap analysis

This section will need to be completed by **all** applicants. Please set out any skills gaps that you think exist within your group and how you intend to fill them. Please:

- complete the table below; and
- refer to the background information and glossary document, and the assessment criteria booklet for what should be included in this section.

As an established Multi Academy Trust, OHC&AT has a robust structure from Directorial level downwards. The close affiliation with our sponsor, Orchard Hill College, allows for collegiate sharing of knowledge and expertise across the OHC&AT family, meaning that skills gaps can be effectively managed as they arise. For any additional needs where there are not suitably experienced or qualified staff, we will recruit to reflect the growth in pupil numbers. Specialist expertise will be supported through the OHC&AT sponsor and through targeted recruitment.

<b>Skills/experience missing</b>	<b>Where is the gap?</b> i.e. pre-opening team, trustees, local governing body	<b>How and when do you plan to fill the gap</b>
Potential skills gap in Early Years and 6 <sup>th</sup> form	Staffing team	The gap will be managed by recruiting suitably qualified staff during pre-opening, as well as using expertise of other schools in the Trust.

## **F2 – a governance structure, and roles and responsibilities that will ensure accountability and effective decision making in this academy trust and drive improvement in the new free school**

All applicants will need to complete this section in full for each school they wish to open. Please:

- use the space provided below; and
- refer to the background information and glossary document, and the assessment criteria booklet for what should be included in this section.

### **F2 – a governance structure, and roles and responsibilities that will ensure accountability and effective decision making in this academy trust and drive improvement in the new free school**

We do not anticipate any restructure to our current governance model.

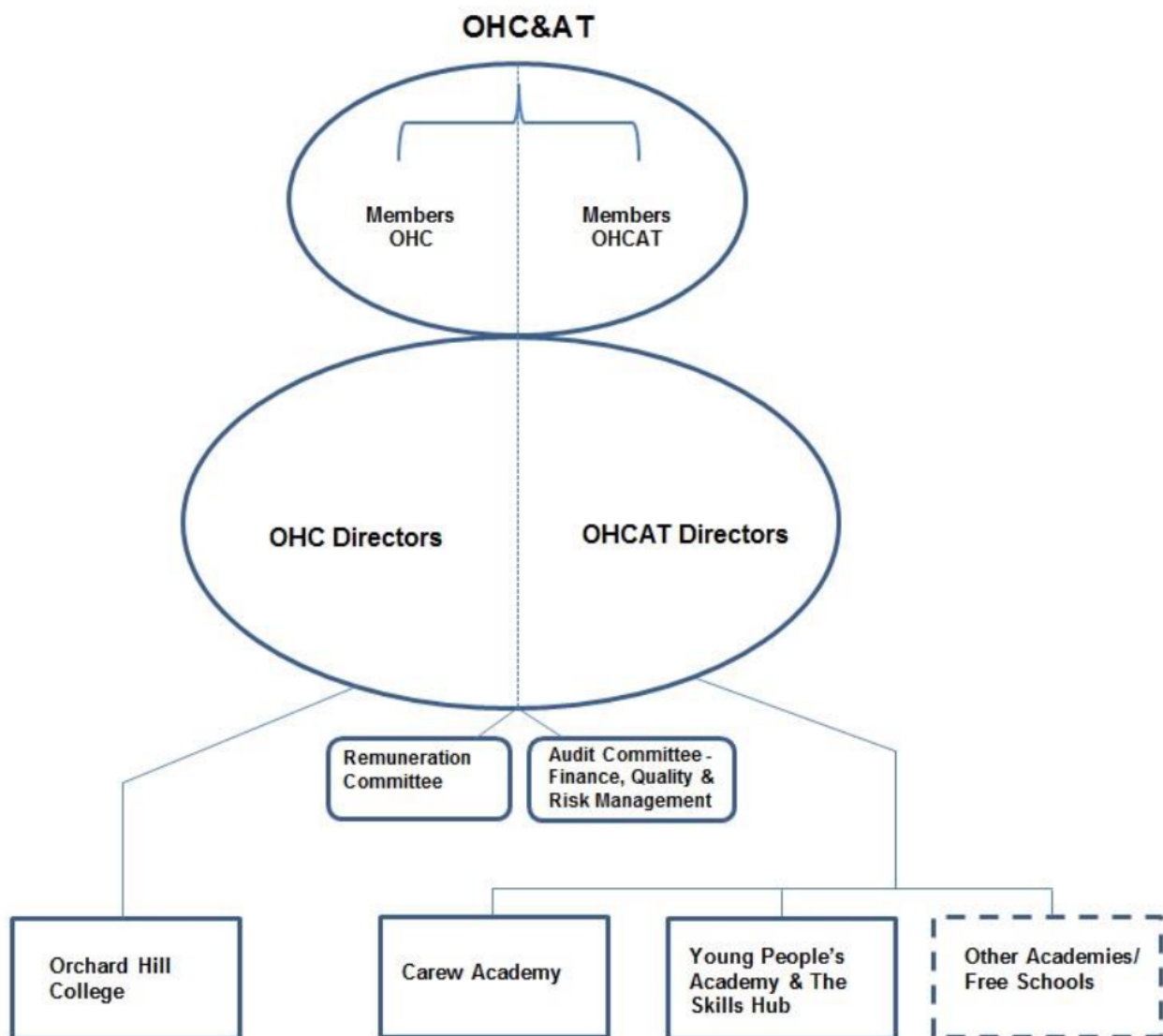
Orchard Hill College and Academy Trust has both Members and Directors. The Members are members of the Academy Trust for the purposes of the Companies Acts. They have a number of statutory rights including the right to remove Directors, the right to amend the Articles and the right to receive the annual accounts. They are also given the right to appoint some of the Directors under the Articles of Association. Typically, the Members meet once a year at the AGM or as is required in order to confirm the appointment of some of the Directors.

Orchard Hill College and Academy Trust is governed by a Board of Directors who are responsible for, and oversee, the management and administration of the Trust and the Academies run by the Trust. The Directors have overall responsibility and ultimate decision making authority for all the work of the Trust, including the establishing and running of schools. This is largely exercised through strategic planning and the setting of policy. It is managed through business planning, monitoring of budgets, performance management, the setting of standards and the implementation of quality management processes. The Directors have the power to direct change where required.

The Local Governing Body of an Academy is a committee formed by the Directors and derives its power from the Directors, through a scheme of delegation and schedule for responsibilities. The Local Governing Body is responsible for fulfilling a largely strategic role in the conduct of an Academy, in conjunction with a Principal/Headteacher who is responsible for the internal organisation, management and control of the Academy.

In November 2014, the College Governors and the Trust Directors voted to align the organisations through the establishment of a collaborated 'family' Board. This allows greater coherence in decision-making and greater clarity of communication, while retaining the individuality of each organisation. Separate resolutions of decisions for each organisation that are made are recorded in the minutes. See governance structure chart below:

**F2 – a governance structure, and roles and responsibilities that will ensure accountability and effective decision making in this academy trust and drive improvement in the new free school**



The Trust has Articles of Association which constitute its governing document, and operates a comprehensive set of policies and procedures that are regularly reviewed to maintain compliance with statutory duties and national guidelines, and are signed off at Board level.

OHC&AT operates a portfolio governance system, assigning strategic areas to directors and governors via skill matching. This is mirrored at Local Governing Body level. The portfolio governance system allows the organisation to benefit from expert challenge and guidance and ensures clear pathways of accountability at all levels.

We do not anticipate any conflict of interest or any financial transactions to take place between any member/trustee (or a connected party/business) and the academy.

OHC&AT has a Conflict of Interest Policy that is regularly reviewed and updated. All Trustees are asked to complete a Register of Business Interest form, details of which are published on our website.

## **Section G – accurate financial plans that are consistent with the rest of the application, demonstrate financial viability, and are based on realistic assumptions about income and expenditure**

**All** applicants will need to complete this section but you will give us less different information depending on which type of group you are.

Please

- complete the Excel spreadsheet (where necessary);
- add any commentary you want to include in the space provided below, for example, explaining the costs of centrally provided services (we do **not** want you to provide a commentary on the whole budget, just particular areas you want to highlight); and
- refer to the relevant section of the background information and glossary document, and the assessment criteria booklet for what should be included in this section.

<b>Section G – budget planning and affordability</b>
[Add text here. Table expands]

## Section H – premises (use Excel spread sheet)

This section will need to be completed by **all** applicants. Please:

- complete the Section H tab in the Excel spread sheet; and
- refer to the background information and glossary document, and the assessment criteria booklet for what should be included in this section.

## Annexes

This section will need to be completed by **all** applicants. Please:

- Provide CVs of key individuals, any letters of support and maps.
- The annex is excluded from the page limit but should be submitted as part of your application, i.e. as one Word document.
- refer to the relevant section of the background information and glossary document, and the assessment criteria booklet for what should be included in this section.





\*I **would/would not like** my son/daughter to attend the new free school—\*Please delete as appropriate

\*I **would/would not/not applicable** consider the sixth form as a possible option for my son or daughter to attend in the future-\*Please delete as appropriate

Name of child:

Parent/carer signature:



I **would/would not like** my son/daughter to attend the new free school—\*Please delete as appropriate

\***I would/would not/not applicable** consider the sixth form as a possible option for my son or daughter to attend in the future—\*Please delete as appropriate

Name of child:

Parent/carer signature:

**ANNEX TO SECTION F:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Sent:** 25 February 2016 10:23

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED],

We have already met and discussed your capacity, but I have not yet emailed you to put it in writing. Given Orchard Hill's track record and capacity I am content to agree a capacity for **1 free school** in the North West London and South Central region in wave 11.

Please upload this email alongside your final application form and complete shorter **capacity and capability** section as indicated. Please note this email is not an endorsement of your application as a whole and does not imply it will be approved.

If you have any further questions please contact [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk)

 Department for Education



Department  
for Education

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email [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk)

write to Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London, TW9 4DU

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