



Department
for Education

Free school bid form

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

Published: July 2018

Contents

[The bid form explained](#)

[Overview](#)

[Confirmation](#)

[A1 - who is putting this bid forward](#)

[A2 - evidence of commissions](#)

[Table A2 continued](#)

[B - type of school](#)

[C1 - current context](#)

[Table C1i - for special schools](#)

[Table C1ii - for AP schools](#)

[C2 - strategy for high needs](#)

[C3 - why you want a new school](#)

[C4 - expected outcomes](#)

[D - site](#)

The bid form explained

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Completed bid forms, specifications, and any supporting documentation (e.g. site plans, letters from commissioners) **should be submitted by midday on 15 October 2018. Submit your bid by email to:** APspecial.freeschool@education.gov.uk. Please title your email as follows: **Special/AP free school bid – [insert name of local authority (or lead local authority if joint bid)]**. Your email should not exceed 9 megabytes in size;

anything larger will not be delivered. **If the bid is larger than 9 megabytes**, please split the documents and send two (or more) emails clearly indicating that the emails are connected (e.g. email 1 of 3).

Free school bid forms should:

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

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

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

[Next tab](#)



Free school bid form [1 of Y]

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

Overview

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

Overview table	
Name of your local authority	Northumberland
List the bid(s) you are submitting this wave, as either the lead or the sole local authority (including type of school e.g. special or AP) – please list these in priority order so that the first is your preferred bid	1. Sole authority - Special school 2. N/A - submitting one bid only
List the bid(s), if any, that another local authority is leading on and that you are supporting (including the name of the lead local authority)	There are currently no other local authorities that border Northumberland making a Wave 14 bid as far as we have been informed. However, Newcastle, North Tyneside and Gateshead Councils have expressed an interest in potentially commissioning places at the new provision.
Optional: brief description of your expected future need for new special and AP schools, and when they are needed	The focus of the new school would be to address the growth in the number of young people diagnosed with ASD and SEMH, and reduce the reliance on expensive out of county placements. Although there is an existing demand within the system that is currently being met by alternative providers, we would expect this situation to remain in place until a new free school could be constructed. We realise that the building solution in this bid is likely to take up to three years, so we are fully aware that the current arrangements will need to continue until the additional capacity is available.

[Previous tab](#)

[Next tab](#)



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

Confirmation

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

I am the Director of Children's Services at **Northumberland County Council** and I have seen this expression of interest and support it.


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

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

I also confirm that I am aware of the financial consequences of the commissioning on our high needs budget.

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

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

Signed:	
Position:	Director of Children's Services at Northumberland County Council
Print name:	Cath McEvoy
Date:	15/10/2018

Signed:	
Position:	Director of Children's Services at [INSERT LOCAL AUTHORITY NAME]
Print name:	
Date:	

Signed:	
Position:	Director of Children's Services at [INSERT LOCAL AUTHORITY NAME]
Print name:	
Date:	

Signed:	
Position:	Director of Children's Services at [INSERT LOCAL AUTHORITY NAME]
Print name:	
Date:	

Signed:

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

Print name:

Date:

[Previous tab](#)

[Next tab](#)



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

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

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

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

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

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

NB THIS IS NOT REQUIRED AS NOT AN AP SCHOOL

Table A2 - evidence that the new school will be fully commissioned (to be completed for both special and AP schools)

Commissioner	Year of operation	Number of EY places	Number of KS1 places	Number of KS2 places	Number of KS3 places	Number of KS4 places	Number of 16-19 places
Northumberland County Council	First year of opening	N/A	N/A	N/A	15	10	N/A
	Second year of opening	N/A	N/A	N/A	23	15	N/A
	Third year of opening	N/A	N/A	N/A	30	20	N/A

[Previous tab](#)

[Next tab](#)



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

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

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

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

Table A1 - local authority(ies) putting forward this bid		
Name of local authority	Name of person leading	Contact details
Lead local authority: [select name of lead local authority in cell C30 below. This would be the local authority in which the school would be located]	Russell Pickering	Telephone: 01670 622750 Mobile: Email: Address:
Northumberland		
Commissioning authority	Mark Longstaff. Head of Commissioning and Investment	Telephone: 0191 643 8755 Mobile: Email: Address:
North Tyneside		
[If applicable, select name of third local authority in cell C42 below]	Amber Burton. Head of Inclusive Education.	Telephone: Mobile: Email: Address:
Newcastle upon Tyne		
[If applicable, select name of fourth local authority in cell C48 below]	Deborah Mason. SEND Services Manager	Telephone: Mobile: Email: Address:
Gateshead		
[If applicable, select name of fifth local authority in cell C54 below]		Telephone: Mobile: Email: Address:

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

During the initial stages of the bid writing process, we contacted other local authorities to discuss the possibility of a

joint bid. Interest in commissioning places in the new school have been shown and supporting statements have been received from North Tyneside, Newcastle and Gateshead local authorities.

[Previous tab](#)

[Next tab](#)



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

Table A2 continued

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

Table A2 continued - evidence that the new school will be fully commissioned (to be completed for both special and AP schools)							
Commissioner	Year of operation	Number of EY places	Number of KS1 places	Number of KS2 places	Number of KS3 places	Number of KS4 places	Number of 16-19 places
North Tyneside Council	First year of opening	N/A	N/A	N/A			N/A
	Second year of opening	N/A	N/A	N/A			N/A
	Third year of opening	N/A	N/A	N/A			N/A
Newcastle City Council	First year of opening	N/A	N/A	N/A			N/A
	Second year of opening	N/A	N/A	N/A			N/A
	Third year of opening	N/A	N/A	N/A			N/A
Gateshead Council	First year of opening	N/A	N/A	N/A			N/A
	Second year of opening	N/A	N/A	N/A			N/A
	Third year of opening	N/A	N/A	N/A			N/A
[NAME OF COMMISSIONER. COMPLETE A LINE FOR EACH COMMISSIONER]	First year of opening						
	Second year of opening						
[NAME OF COMMISSIONER. COMPLETE A LINE FOR EACH COMMISSIONER]	First year of opening						
	Second year of opening						
[NAME OF COMMISSIONER. COMPLETE A LINE FOR EACH COMMISSIONER]	First year of opening						
	Second year of opening						
[NAME OF COMMISSIONER. COMPLETE A LINE FOR EACH COMMISSIONER]	First year of opening						
	Second year of opening						
[NAME OF COMMISSIONER. COMPLETE A LINE FOR EACH COMMISSIONER]	First year of opening						
	Second year of opening						
[NAME OF COMMISSIONER. COMPLETE A LINE FOR EACH COMMISSIONER]	First year of opening						
	Second year of opening						



Free school bid form [1 of Y]

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

Section B – what type of school is wanted

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

Table Bi - what type of school is wanted	
Type of school	Special free school
Category of provision/needs (if more than one type, with different top-up rates, please explain)	SEMH and ASD. LA Special School Top Up rates of Band C to E are appropriate for both types of needs.
Age range	11 to 16
Per-pupil revenue funding you would expect to pay (if a range of rates, please explain)	Per pupil funding is estimated [redacted] per pupil based on place funding of [redacted] per pupil, plus an estimated Special Band C rate of [redacted] per pupil in line with the current Banded Funding structure for Special Schools
Gender (co-educational/boys/girls)	Co-educational
Total number of proposed full time equivalent places (once school is at full capacity - including 16-19 places, but not including nursery places)	80 places
Type of places offered (e.g. full time, short term, part time)	Full time
Number of nursery places, if applicable	N/A
Number of 16-19 places, if applicable	N/A
Describe any planned outreach, training	Northumberland County Council is currently in the process of recruiting Inclusion Support Workers into the School Admissions and Inclusion Team. If the bid was successful, the new staff could use the school as their contractual work base. The primary focus of these Officers would be ensure that the educational, social, emotional and health development of children and young people is fully supported

Describe any planned outreach, training and/or reintegration support (including details of funding that will be made available to support the school with this)

by coordinating appropriate and effective intervention plans. The Support Workers would also have a key outreach role through the promotion of inclusive practice within mainstream environments to ensure exclusions are kept to a minimum. In addition, they would support the reintegration of permanently excluded learners from alternative provision back to into mainstream schools.

Table Bii - pupil build up

	Year of opening	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	+6
Nursery	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Reception	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Key stage 1 (Y1-2)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Key stage 2 (Y3-6)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Key stage 3 (Y7-9)	24	36	48	48	48	48	48
Key stage 4 (Y10-11)	16	24	32	32	32	32	32
16-19: commissioner referred	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Totals	40	60	80	80	80	80	80

[Previous tab](#)

[Next tab](#)



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

Section C1 – the current context in your area

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

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

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

Box C1 - the current context in your area

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

Since the introduction of SEND reforms in 2014, Northumberland County Council has seen both a rise in the number of children with statutory EHCP plans and an increase in demand for specialist provision in order to meet the needs of these children and young people. The LA has increased capacity in current special schools by increasing class sizes and with some small scale school adaptations. However, it has been acknowledged that this action alone will not address the current position. The LA is aware that there is a greater demand and agreed need for places than can be accommodated from the current school provision. Special school numbers have risen year on year over the past 5 years, an overall increase of 57%. At the same time as an increasing demand for places, the DfE 2019/20 High Needs Block Allocations published in July 2017 show only an [redacted] or [redacted] increase to [redacted] from [redacted] for 2018/19. This was the lowest percentage increase of any LA in the country. This is on top of no increase in the High Needs Block allocation between 2017/18.

To cope with this sharp rise in demand, the LA has become increasingly reliant on out-of-county provision. With current charges ranging from [redacted] per pupil, this is an unsustainable solution to the lack of appropriate places available within Northumberland. As an authority, we spent [redacted] on out-of-county provision in 2017 and this figure does not include the increasing cost of transport for these young people. Two of the out-of-county SEMH providers used by Northumberland have been rated as Requires Improvement by Ofsted; we are therefore in the unacceptable position of sending our vulnerable young residents out of the area to a poorer standard of education than they would receive within our own schools. The Northumberland schools that would currently meet the needs of these pupils are Cramlington Hillcrest and Atkinson House and they both have been rated Good by Ofsted.

The focus of the new school would be to address the growth in the number of young people in Northumberland being diagnosed with ASD and SEMH through the creation of an 80 place special school in the South East of the county, where the increase in growth in these diagnoses has been most prevalent. Given the proximity of South East Northumberland to the Tyneside conurbation, Newcastle, North Tyneside and Gateshead local authorities have indicated that they would consider placements, with further discussions due to take place around specific numbers. Should Northumberland's bid be unsuccessful, the Council would need to continue to use out of county provision to meet demand in the short term with a view to sourcing alternative funding streams.

The main objective of establishing the proposed provision for 80 young people is for them to achieve better outcomes and improve their life chances. Furthermore, the Table in Section C1i also demonstrates that there are potential annual savings of [redacted] arising through reductions in the use of independent and non-maintained school fees and associated travel costs by educating these young people within Northumberland close to their home communities.

Word count: 515

[Previous tab](#)

[Next tab](#)



Section C1 – the current context in your area

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

Table C1i - trends in your specialist provision for all children with EHC plans

Type of provision	Number of providers used	Please indicate the number of pupils with an EHC plan living in your local authority who are placed within these settings, and the total cost (including base, top-up and transportation if applicable) of all placements at each setting											
						Projected figures without the new school you want				Projected figures if your bid for a new school is successful			
		2014 (pupils)	2014 (cost)	2018 (pupils)	2018 (cost)	2022 (pupils)	2022 (cost)	2026 (pupils)	2026 (cost)	2022 (pupils)	2022 (cost)	2026 (pupils)	2026 (cost)
Resourced provision and units inside local authority	3												
Resourced provision and units outside local authority	1												
Special schools (either maintained or academies) inside local authority	8												
Special schools (either maintained or academies) outside local authority	10												
Independent / non-maintained special schools inside local authority	2												
Independent / non-maintained special schools outside local authority	11												
Mainstream schools inside local authority	117												
Mainstream schools outside local authority	15												
General FE colleges (if relevant) outside local authority	n/a												
Specialist FE providers (if relevant) inside local authority	n/a												
Specialist FE providers (if relevant) outside local authority	n/a												



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

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



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

Section C2 – your strategy for high needs provision

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

Box C2 - your strategy for high needs provision

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

Strategy for High Needs provision

Northumberland's Vision for SEND

Northumberland is committed to giving all children the best start in life and to support them to reach their full potential.

We want vulnerable children and young people to develop their independence and resilience and to become confident adults who live fulfilled and productive lives.

To this end, we undertake to work in partnership with professionals from a variety of organisations and with children, young people and their families, to ensure that services for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities are of a high quality, accessible, efficient and have the maximum positive impact.

Strategy for high needs provision

The strategy consists of the following six strands :

1. Reduce Independent and out-of-county placements and costs through decreasing the number of children and young people being placed in and attending out of county placements. This will be achieved through
 - Strengthening the graduated approach in mainstream schools to ensure the notional SEN funding is being maximised;
 - Increasing specialist provision within Northumberland for children and young people, particularly for those with social, emotional and health needs.
2. Review funding bands
 - Carry out a review of funding bands and definitions with schools to ensure there is standardisation and benchmarking across the system;
 - Review 'Top Up' funding system, strengthen monitoring and replace over time with STAR (Short Term Additional Resource).
3. Review the role and funding arrangements of SEND Support Services
 - Identify and deliver efficiency savings on SEND Support Services;
 - Review the effectiveness of the current SLA arrangements;
 - Implement an outcomes framework to monitor the value added by SEND Support Services.

Word count: 1006

[Next tab](#)



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

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

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

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

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

Box C3 - why you want a new school and how it fits with your overall strategy

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

We have an increasing number of pupils with SEMH for whom it has been necessary to make out-of-county provision. Two of these out of area schools have been graded Requires Improvement by Ofsted. As a consequence, the Council places more young people with a particular independent school, resulting in over-reliance on this provider to meet the needs of a broader range of pupils. In addition, we are reviewing the placement of a small number of Northumberland pupils with SEMH with a further NMSS special school that has been rated Requires Improvement. The cost of the out-of-county placements is an inefficient use of the Council's resources and many of these placements are being made due to capacity issues rather than based on the specific needs of the pupils. All our LA special schools are good or outstanding.

The Local Authority was part of the NE12 Commissioning Framework, with one of the aims of NE12 being to develop the SEND specialist provision in the local area. There has been limited development in this area. One school opened up in South Tyneside, but closed within a term due to safeguarding issues. The one new provider to the area is based in Sunderland and as such is only available for a small proportion of Northumberland students due to distance. Furthermore, the fees for this school are excessive in comparison to other providers. The demand for SEMH places in other authorities as well as Northumberland is increasing and we have had requests for places in the Council's own over-subscribed SEMH school from other local authorities. Three of the LAs that border Northumberland have indicated that they would consider placements with us if the school was established, although as yet there has been no specific agreement in relation to commissioned numbers.

If successful in our application, the Council would expect the need to make out-of-county placements to decrease, although there may continue to be the need to make such placements where it was in the best interests of the relevant young person. By increasing the KS3 and KS4 provision for pupils with SEMH, we would be able to review the designation of our current special schools to ensure that they are appropriate for meeting the needs of the young people in that area. We would also look at creating capacity within our current SEMH secondary school to admit a cohort of pupils in Y5 and Y6 in order to enhance the LA offer. We currently do not have appropriate provision to meet the needs of girls with SEMH and therefore it is proposed that the new provision would be co-educational.

The new school would support pupils to be better prepared for adulthood by planning for this as soon as possible, although no later than by Year 9. Northumberland has an extensive network of alternative providers who have been accepted on to an approved framework, having met a set of required educational standards and having agreed to on-going quality assurance by the Council. We would expect that this school would be included within this network to offer vocational provision and employment tasters to support clearer pathways to employment and further education.

Table C3 - engagement with others

Who	How you have engaged (e.g. surveys, meetings)	Summary of engagement (e.g. summary of survey findings and/or conversations)
Your neighbouring local authorities – please specify	Discussions, email and we will be meeting to discuss	We have received responses from 3 LAs - Newcastle, North Tyneside and Gateshead - who have all indicated that they would potentially request placements. North Tyneside, who are geographically closest to the proposed site, want to have further discussions about the proposal and potential commissioning arrangements.
Commissioning bodies in your area – please specify	We have engaged with a broad range of stakeholders including parents, schools, colleges and commissioners as part of capacity consultation events.	We held five public events across the county and we received 206 responses to a range of questions. Increasing local special school provision was the most frequently raised issue within the consultation.
Local mainstream schools – please specify	As above	As above
School representative bodies e.g. schools forum – please specify	As above	As above
Representatives of parents and carers and young people e.g. parent/carer forum – please specify	As above	As above
Any other partners e.g. community groups, FE colleges – please specify	As above	As above

[Previous tab](#)

[Next tab](#)



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

Section C4 – the expected outcomes

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

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

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

Box C4 - expected outcomes

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

It is the council's stated intention that every child must be in a service that best meets their individual needs. As a result of more local provision in the South East of the county, parental choice will be increased, young people will be able to attend a setting within their home communities and they will spend less time travelling to and from their specialist provision. While this is beneficial to the wellbeing of families and to the young people attending the school, a special school in the preferred location will also lead to significant savings to the Council's high needs budget and SEND transport costs.

We do not envisage the establishment of this school increasing the risk of exclusions from mainstream schools and reducing inclusion. With support from headteachers, we are currently reviewing the process for identifying pupils requiring special school provision to ensure that we have a high degree of rigour when agreeing placements. In addition, we are also in the process of recruiting Inclusion Support Workers into the School Admissions and Inclusion Team. If this bid is successful, the new officers will use the school as their contractual work base. The primary focus of these officers will be to ensure that the educational, social, emotional and health development of children and young people is fully supported by coordinating, appropriate and effective interventions plans. They will also have a key outreach role through the promotion of inclusive practice within mainstream environments to ensure that exclusions are kept to a minimum. In addition, they will also be supporting the reintegration of permanently excluded learners from alternative provision back into mainstream school.

The school will have a strong focus on preparing for young people for adulthood and will establish strong links with Alternative Providers to ensure that students make successful transitions to Post-16 provision either in mainstream colleges or with training providers, with a consequent reduction in the number of young people recorded as NEET.

We expect the school to promote strong educational progress and provide good educational outcomes. Through partnership working and challenge and scrutiny of pupil progress against the agreed outcomes in pupils EHCPs, we believe that the outcomes for students in a more local provision will be significantly better than the current out-of-county arrangements. Northumberland has a history of supporting local special schools to deliver improved outcomes and all the LA special schools are good or outstanding. Although this school will not be maintained by the LA, we will offer the same support and challenge as we do to the other LA special schools.

Word count:

457



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

Section D – the proposed location and site

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

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

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

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

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

I confirm that the Lead Member of Corporate Property at Northumberland County Council has seen this expression of interest and supports it.

PLEASE TICK TO CONFIRM

Table D - the proposed location and site

Please describe the location in which you propose to set up your school being as specific as possible. This could include the name of the area in which you would like to put the school, the part of a city, town or suburb. Please also consider how flexible you are - how far from your preferred location are you willing to go? Please include an annotated map as an additional file and send it to APSpecial.freeschool@education.gov.uk , if possible. If applicable, please also describe the potential impact of any specialism that you plan for your school to have on the site requirement.	The proposed site is in [redacted] which is one of the most populated areas of the county and is the locality with the greatest demand for special school places. The site itself has been chosen due to deliverability of the project as [redacted]. The site itself is compact and provides 4753sqm of developable area. Whilst there would be plenty of space to provide outdoor handstanding play areas, as well soft landscaping, there would be limitations in relation to grass sport pitches. However, we do not envisage that this will be an issue as it would be in line with some of our other special schools in Northumberland. The site is also [redacted]. We are already in contact with Actice Northumberland, our holding company, to discuss this. The site is a clear site with all the previous buildings being demolished in 2017.
Please tell us the postcode of a central location in your preferred area. You need to provide this even if you have already identified a preferred site. It must be a full postcode e.g. SW1P 3BT, not SW1.	[redacted]
Your calculated building space using the ESFA formula (see section D in the guidance) and any comments on this.	1450m2
If you have identified a preferred site, please complete the rest of the table:	
Full address and postcode of preferred site. It must be a full postcode e.g. SW1P 3BT, not SW1.	[redacted]
In which local authority is your preferred site?	Northumberland
Please tell us how you found the site.	The site had been previously used [redacted]. The site was then used [redacted] by [redacted] following [redacted]. The site therefore has full vacant possession and is in the ownership of the local authority.
Please confirm the tenure.	Freehold purchase
Please include information on purchase or lease price if known.	Not known
Who owns the site?	Local authority building
Is the site available/on the market? (Please attach agents' particulars as an additional file and send it to APSpecial.freeschool@education.gov.uk if available)	Yes
Name and contact details of owner and/or the agent or local authority representative	[redacted]
If the site is local authority owned, which local authority owns it?	Northumberland
If the site is local authority owned, please state if the local authority have confirmed that, if successful, the site may be used by the free school. Please include terms (e.g. 125 year peppercorn lease). Please also provide details of any other local authority contribution towards the capital costs of the project (e.g. developer contributions).	The local authority have confirmed that the site could be used for a free school, with a lease for 125 year on a peppercorn rent. The local authority is currently in negotiations with developers to secure section 106 funding specifically for SEND places. If or when these contributions have been agreed, the local authority would make these contributions [redacted] to the scheme.
What kind of site is it?	Cleared site requiring new build
What is the current use?	School/education building
Why have you chosen this site? What makes it suitable?	Location and previous education use make this site ideal for redevelopment for SEND provision.
If known, how big is the building and the site? Please attach any site and building plans as an additional file and send it to APSpecial.freeschool@education.gov.uk	4753m2
Please comment on the condition of the building. Please attach photos if available as an additional file and send it to APSpecial.freeschool@education.gov.uk	The site is a clear site.
If the named site is part of a housing development or the school is attracting Section 106 contributions, please give as much detail as possible , including: the development and developer, timing and programme of build, number of housing units, status of planning application and any links to planning applications/decision notices, extent of funding coming from the developer plus confirmation of the local authority's position in relation to your free school using this site.	There are currently two applications for developer contributions to SEND in the area. Negotiations are still on going with the developers [redacted]. The local authority are currently seeking [redacted] worth of contributions and would contribute the full amount to this scheme if negotiations and planning applications are successful.

[Previous tab](#)