



Department  
for Education

## Free school bid form

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

Published: July 2018

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#### The bid form explained

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Completed bid forms, specifications, and any supporting documentation (e.g. site plans, letters from commissioners)

**should be submitted by midday on 15 October 2018. Submit your bid by email to:**

[APspecial.freeschool@education.gov.uk](mailto: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](#)



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	
<b>Name of your local authority</b>	Stoke-on-Trent
<b>List the bid(s) you are submitting this wave, as either the lead or the sole local authority</b> (including type of school e.g. special or AP) – please list these in priority order so that the first is your preferred bid	Special Free School- SEMH  Not applicable
<b>List the bid(s), if any, that another local authority is leading on and that you are supporting</b> (including the name of the lead local authority)	
<b>Optional: brief description of your expected future need for new special and AP schools, and when they are needed</b>	Stoke-on-Trent will need to consider expansion or new school for cognition and learning to reduce number of pupils in staffordshire special schools. This could be a joint bid with Staffordshire.



1. This section must be completed.
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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 **Stoke-on-Trent Local Authority** 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/our 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(ies) if the bid is successful).

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

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:

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:**

**Signed:**

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

**Print name:**

**Date:**

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

**Section 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
<b>Lead local authority:</b> [select name of lead local authority in cell C30 below. This would be the local authority in which the school would be located]	<div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 15px;"></div>	Telephone: <div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 15px;"></div> Mobile: Email: <div style="background-color: black; width: 150px; height: 15px;"></div> Address: <div style="background-color: black; width: 150px; height: 15px;"></div> <div style="background-color: black; width: 150px; height: 15px;"></div> <div style="background-color: black; width: 150px; height: 15px;"></div>
Stoke-on-Trent		
[If applicable, select name of second local authority in cell C36 below]		Telephone: Mobile: Email: Address:
[If applicable, select name of third local authority in cell C42 below]		Telephone: Mobile: Email: Address:
[If applicable, select name of fourth local authority in cell C48 below]		Telephone: Mobile: Email: Address:
[If applicable, select name of fifth local authority in cell C54 below]		Telephone: Mobile: Email: Address:

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

The submission of our solo bid reflects our current context for SEMH provision and supports delivery of our SEND strategy.

**Current context**

- There are 431 children with SEMH EHCPs
- Our SEMH Special School currently has capacity for 100 children
- 61% of our SEMH cohort attend schools outside of the city
- 62% of LAC with EHCPs for SEMH needs have to attend school outside of the city
- [REDACTED]
- We export significant numbers of children to our LA neighbours (Staffordshire, Cheshire and Derbyshire)
- All of our neighbouring LAs have maintained SEMH provision (Derbyshire – 10 schools, Cheshire East & West – 10 school, Staffordshire – 7 schools)
- Children and families continually tell us that they want to live and go to school in their city (Consultation 16.4.18, 16.5.18 and 1.10.18)
- Co-ordinating services across LA boundaries can be slow and service quality does not always match our city offer
- [REDACTED]
- We have a growing cohort of EHE children who have additional needs, 9 and 27 were in receipt of School Support. 14 of these children have SEMH needs.

Each of these factors has a negative impact upon our high needs spend, the quality of education and care for children accessing provision outside of the city, sufficiency of places in neighbouring authorities and our inability to educate and care for all of our children with SEMH needs within our city. We have excellent relationships with neighbouring LAs and work collaboratively when placing children. We would aim to support our LA neighbours when faced with placement challenges and also through CPD and outreach support.

**Delivery of the SEND Strategy**

The new school is integral to our SEND strategy. We have been building our SEMH continuum of provision for several years through re-designation of Portland in 2012, relocation of MERIT and REACH PRUs in 2012. These settings have had time to embed practice and all have secured 'good' or 'outstanding' Ofsted judgements. Each of these settings are now expanding place numbers and broadening their offer to ensure the needs of SEMH learners can be met through assessment, outreach or placement.

The new SEMH free school will slot into the continuum and provide 70 specialist placements and a complementary outreach offer.

The new school will ensure that there are sufficient local places for children with SEMH, that places are of good quality and value for money and that children can live at home or access care in their 'home city'. The new school will contribute to building capacity within our local system across to identify and respond to need.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Table A2 - evidence that the new school will be fully commissioned (to be completed for both special and AP schools)							
Commissioner	Year of operation	Number of EY places	Number of KS1 places	Number of KS2 places	Number of KS3 places	Number of KS4 places	Number of 16-19 places
STOKE-ON-TRENT	First year of opening	0	0	0	18	24	0
	Second year of opening	0	0	0	12	18	0





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
[NAME OF COMMISSIONER. COMPLETE A LINE FOR EACH COMMISSIONER]	First year of opening						
	Second year of opening						
[NAME OF COMMISSIONER. COMPLETE A LINE FOR EACH COMMISSIONER]	First year of opening						
	Second year of opening						
[NAME OF COMMISSIONER. COMPLETE A LINE FOR EACH COMMISSIONER]	First year of opening						
	Second year of opening						
[NAME OF COMMISSIONER. COMPLETE A LINE FOR EACH COMMISSIONER]	First year of opening						
	Second year of opening						
[NAME OF COMMISSIONER. COMPLETE A LINE FOR EACH COMMISSIONER]	First year of opening						
	Second year of opening						
[NAME OF COMMISSIONER. COMPLETE A LINE FOR EACH COMMISSIONER]	First year of opening						
	Second year of opening						
[NAME OF COMMISSIONER. COMPLETE A LINE FOR EACH COMMISSIONER]	First year of opening						
	Second year of opening						
[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 1]**

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	
<b>Type of school</b>	Special free school
<b>Category of provision/needs</b> (if more than one type, with different top-up rates, please explain)	SEMH- Social, emotional and mental health needs
<b>Age range</b>	11 to 16
<b>Per-pupil revenue funding you would expect to pay</b> (if a range of rates, please explain)	<div style="background-color: black; height: 15px; width: 100%;"></div> <div style="background-color: black; height: 15px; width: 80%;"></div> <div style="background-color: black; height: 15px; width: 95%;"></div> <div style="background-color: black; height: 15px; width: 75%;"></div>
<b>Gender</b> (co-educational/boys/girls)	Co-educational
<b>Total number of proposed full time equivalent places</b> (once school is at full capacity - including 16-19 places, but not including nursery places)	70
<b>Type of places offered</b> (e.g. full time, short term, part time)	Full time
<b>Number of nursery places, if applicable</b>	0
<b>Number of 16-19 places, if applicable</b>	0
<b>Describe any planned outreach, training and/or reintegration support</b> (including details of funding that will be made available to support the school with this)	<p>The school will develop its outreach function aligned to the LA strategy- outreach capacity should be built into the staffing structure.</p> <p>Re-integration/ transition from and back into mainstream will form part of the schools offer.</p>

Table Bii - pupil build up							
	Year of opening	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	+6
Nursery							
Reception							
Key stage 1 (Y1-2)							
Key stage 2 (Y3-6)							
Key stage 3 (Y7-9)	18	24	30	34			
Key stage 4 (Y10-11)	12	18	24	36			
16-19: commissioner referred							
Totals	30	42	54	70	0	0	0

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### Section C1 – the current context in your area

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

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

In addition, please use table C1i (for special schools) or C1ii (for AP schools) - found on the next tabs - to describe the recent, current and projected trends of

#### 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)*

Stoke-on-Trent has a range of specialist settings; 4 maintained special schools, two AP settings (1 maintained and 1 Academy) and 2 resource bases. 4 Good/Outstanding mainstreams schools lead Nurture Groups to promote inclusive practice. All maintained special schools and PRUS are 'Good' or better.

SEMH provision is being enhanced through delivery of the SEND Strategy to secure;

- 40 additional places at Portland SEMH School
- Academisation and expansion of REACH PRU adding 80 places
- Expansion of MERIT PRU adding 10 places and step-down provision from Tier 4 settings.
- 180 additional nurture places
- 20 additional places at Inspire
- 70 places at proposed SEMH free school

Currently 39% of children with SEMH EHCPs attend local settings;

- 20% in mainstream
- 0.2% in Alternative Provision
- 19% in maintained special schools

61% of children with SEMH needs travel beyond the city to go to school. The majority of these attend one of ten non-maintained independent providers. The quality and cost of this is a key driver to develop provision locally. Two of the ten schools are not 'Good' (one is inadequate). Six alternative providers work with the LA and special schools to make provision for learners on a part time basis. Four providers are registered and have a 'Good' Ofsted judgement.

[Redacted text block]

Currently 62% LAC with SEMH EHCPs attend schools outside Stoke-on-Trent. Placements out of city often require care placements as travel distances are not conducive to daily transit. Within the city we have high quality LA small group homes providing local care for children. Plans and funding have been approved to expand this network from 8 homes to 12 ensuring that more LAC with SEMH needs can attend school and live locally.

Word count: 426

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	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Resourced provision and units outside local authority	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Special schools (either maintained or academies) inside local authority	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Special schools (either maintained or academies) outside local authority	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Independent / non-maintained special schools inside local authority	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Independent / non-maintained special schools outside local authority	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Mainstream schools inside local authority	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Mainstream schools outside local authority	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
General FE colleges (if relevant) inside local authority	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
General FE colleges (if relevant) outside local authority	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Specialist FE providers (if relevant) inside local authority	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Specialist FE providers (if relevant) outside local authority	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

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

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





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

## Section C2 – your strategy for high needs provision

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

### Box C2 - your strategy for high needs provision

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

Our vision is for all SEND pupils to make outstanding progress and achieve their potential, we will secure this by;

1. **Building capacity locally to meet need**
2. **Ensuring sufficiency, efficiency and effectiveness**
3. **Co-producing plans with stakeholders**

We monitor performance against each of these principles by reviewing data from external review, statutory returns, stakeholder voice, internal monitoring and validated data. Performance data informs our self-evaluation and strategy. The strength and accuracy of evaluation was recognised during our local area inspection in 2016.

Work we've undertaken and planned under principles 1 and 2 is outlined below, work on co-production (3) is covered in C3.

1. We have developed a continuum of provision to meet SEMH needs locally which is working well. To make provision for more SEMH learners locally we need to;

- Implement the CAMHS strategy and city wide CPD
- Work with the Transforming Care cohort to ensure children with LD or mental health needs stay at home
- Further develop SEMH outreach
- Expand mainstream provision
- Increase specialist SEMH placements

Development of the continuum has a strong foothold in mainstream with 4 established nurture groups in good/outstanding mainstream settings and an outstanding PRU which converted to an AP academy in September adding 80 more places. Our investment in mainstream provision is deliberate. The 2016 local area SEND inspection identified the gap between the progress of SEND learners and that of other pupils. We recognise and work on the 'gap' and we are clear about the work we need to do. There are already positive signs of progress;

- The attendance of SEND learners in mainstream is strong and trends over time are in line with national. SEMH as a group have shown significant gains in attendance over the past year.
- The inclusive practice in mainstream is evident in a 0% permanent exclusions for learners with EHCPs, however rates for school support and all pupils exceed national. Fixed term exclusion rates in primary settings are below national, rates in secondary settings are almost double the national.
- Fixed term exclusions from special settings are well below national and rates for fixed term exclusion of EHCP pupils sits just below national.
- Four nurture groups operating within mainstream have supported 15 successful reintegrations since April 2018.

Implementation of the mental health strategy and its positive impact was recognised in the local area inspection in 2016. We have built on this to develop the capacity of all schools further through professional development, 60 schools have completed Anna Freud training enabling schools to;

- Train and develop Mental Health Leads
- Assess the emotional health of their school
- Develop and deliver early intervention
- Access CAMHS more speedily through standardised assessment

This early work has fed into a bid for a 'Mental Health Workforce' Trailblazer to expand the CPD offer across all schools.

Nurture and reintegration support already contribute to successful inclusion within mainstream. These settings provide assessment, short term programmes and supported reintegration enabling children to have their needs successfully met in mainstream. In 2017/18 12.5% of children with EHCPs were placed within mainstream settings, this is one and half times that of our five closest statistical neighbours and 1.3 times the national.

We recognise that the proportion of children placed in specialist schools exceeds national and statistical neighbour data. Plans are in place to reduce the number of children placed in specialist schools through further expansion of Nurture groups and an enhanced SEMH outreach offer. Special school outreach was commended by Ofsted in 2016, expansion of this service will provide quality support to promote and sustain successful inclusion in mainstream.

The number of children with EHCPs has increased steadily from 2014, current numbers exceed both national and statistical neighbour data significantly. As part of our capacity building strategy we have reviewed thresholds for graduated response and provided SENDCOs with additional training. There is now a shared understanding amongst school leaders, SENDCOs and parents of the threshold for graduated response and funding matrix. Initial indicators are positive as EHCP rates have slowed.

2. The growing number of children with EHCPs requiring specialist placements continues to add pressure to sufficiency and efficiency. Pressures have led to increasing numbers of children being placed outside of the city in expensive placements. The proportion of children with EHCPs placed in non-maintained/independent schools in 2017/18 was more than double the national and more than three times that of our five closest statistical neighbours.

The effectiveness and quality of independent/non-maintained provision is an ongoing concern. Whilst we monitor placements and performance of these organisations we don't know these schools as well as local settings. These institutions do not benefit from engagement in our schools or agency networks. Not only do independent/non-maintained settings perform less well in inspection the performance data on progress and attainment of learners is inferior.

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

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

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

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

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

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

##### Who will go to the school?

The new Free School would provide for 70 children aged 11-16 with an Educational and Health Care Plan for Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs. The needs of this cohort may present through challenging behaviours, social skill gaps, difficulties in building and sustaining relationships and in some cases social isolation. Many of these children will have attachment issues, experienced trauma and many will have additional needs such as ASD and SLCN. The SEND strategy is approved by the City Council Cabinet and Members.

##### Why is the school needed?

Much work has been undertaken and continues to maximise the capacity of the local SEMH continuum. With this important ground work in place the expansion of specialist provision through a new Free School will complete the local SEMH offer. Currently 263 children travel out of the city to access specialist SEMH provision, these children;

- Endure lengthy daily journeys to school
- Do not achieve as well as their peers in local SEMH provision
- Would prefer to attend a local school
- Are unable to engage in local social activities or build relationships locally after school due to travel constraints
- Cannot access local services
- If looked after 'move' out of city and access care placements away from their home town
- Find transition back into their communities and EET at 16 extremely challenging a significant proportion of SEMH learners with EHCPs are NEET at 16.

##### What difference will the school make?

Opening the new Free School within the city would ensure that children with SEMH EHCPs;

- Have their needs met, make good progress and realise their potential
- Attend a 'good or better' school
- Have shorter travel times into school
- Attend a local school and access local after school and out of school activities
- Who are looked after access high quality local authority small group homes
- Access local services under local commissioning arrangements operating under local agreements and protocols
- Are supported into high quality local provision and placements at colleges and through initiatives such as Supported

##### How will the school fit?

We expect our new special free school to form an integral part of our SEMH continuum and forge strong relationships with all setting and partners. We expect the school to be outward looking and build relationships and capacity through;

- SEMH outreach offer to all settings
- SEMH research and development hub developing and demonstrating successful techniques and pedagogy with SEMH learners
- Multidisciplinary assessment and therapy hub
- Deliver high quality transition and reintegration support

The new school will form part of our family of schools benefitting from;

- City Headteacher and Leader Networks

- Core commissioned offer from agency partners
- Core offer from Virtual School
- Access to citywide initiatives including Better Together and the CAMHS Strategy

*Word count:*

500

<b>Table C3 - engagement with others</b>		
<b>Who</b>	<b>How you have engaged</b> (e.g. surveys, meetings)	<b>Summary of engagement</b> (e.g. summary of survey findings and/or conversations)
Your neighbouring local authorities – please specify	Via the Regional network meetings	The regional group are aware of our intentions and support the bid due to our export figures.
Commissioning bodies in your area – please specify	CCG	Representatives of CCH including DCO attended free school planning meetings. In addition the CCG and providers are part of SEND strategy group.
Local mainstream schools – please specify	We engage schools in a range of ways; *Headteacher Associations *SEND Working Groups- with Headteacher representation on all workstreams	*Regular updates at Headteacher associations and feedback from groups into strategy *Working groups are all informing the strategy including expansion and free school bid submission
School representative bodies e.g. schools forum – please specify	*Schools Forum have reviewed and agreed the strategy and associated funding	Schools forum meetings and Schools forum High needs working group have contributed to development of bid.
Representatives of parents and carers and young people e.g. parent/carer forum – please specify	The Parent Engagement Group (PEGiS) is the forum for parents & carers of children and young people with SEND (Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities) and young people (up to the	Lead reps attended consultation and workshop meetings to shape and inform the strategy including free school bid on 16.4.18, 16.5.18 and 1.10.18 . Parental survey April to May 2018 and Young people survey group September 2018.
Any other partners e.g. community groups, FE colleges – please specify	FE colleges have been consulted as part of the Head Teacher network group.	

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**■. Co-production of plans with stakeholders**

Development and delivery of the SEND strategy relies heavily on successful partnership working with all stakeholders. The proposed free school will be an integral part of our network and make a valuable contribution to the city partnership.

Co-production and collaboration have developed all aspects of the SEND Strategy. Not surprisingly the key messages from all stakeholders on barriers and challenges are aligned. Partners in health, social care, our families and children made a plea for;

- Local provision
- Good communication with families and between agencies
- Joined up services
- Integrated assessment

We expect the proposed free school to sign up to collaborative working and delivery of the plea from all stakeholders.

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## Section D – the proposed location and site

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

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

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

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

.....Phil Cresswell .....- Director - Place, Prosperity and Growth

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 Councillor D Jellyman at **[Stoke on Trent City Council ]** has seen this bid and suppts expression of interest and supports it.

Table D - the proposed location and site	
<p>Please describe the location in which you propose to set up your school being as specific as possible. This could include the name of the area in which you would like to put the school, the part of a city, town or suburb. Please also consider how flexible you are - how far from your preferred location are you willing to go? Please include an annotated map as an additional file and send it to APspecial.freeschool@education.gov.uk, if possible. If applicable, please also describe the potential impact of any specialism that you plan for your school to have on the site requirement.</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
<p>Please tell us the postcode of a central location in your preferred area. You need to provide this even if you have already identified a preferred site. It must be a full postcode e.g. SW1P 3BT, not SW1.</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p>
<p>Your calculated building space using the ESFA formula (see section D in the guidance) and any comments on this.</p>	
<p><b>If you have identified a preferred site, please complete the rest of the table:</b></p>	
<p>Full address and postcode of preferred site. It must be a full postcode e.g. SW1P 3BT, not SW1.</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
<p>In which local authority is your preferred site?</p>	<p>Stoke-on-Trent</p>
<p>Please tell us how you found the site.</p>	<p>Currently owned by Stoke on Trent Council and identified as available for re use through SEND strategic plan and in High Needs finance plan.</p>
<p>Please confirm the tenure.</p>	<p>The local authority submitting the bid</p>
<p>Please include information on purchase or lease price if known.</p>	<p>The Local authority would lease the site on 125 years with p</p>
<p>Who owns the site?</p>	<p>The local authority submitting the bid</p>
<p>Is the site available/on the market? (Please attach agents' particulars as an additional file and send it to APspecial.freeschool@education.gov.uk if available)</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Name and contact details of owner and/or the agent or local authority representative</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
<p>If the site is local authority owned, which local authority owns it?</p>	<p>Stoke-on-Trent</p>
<p>If the site is local authority owned, please state if the local authority have confirmed that, if successful, the site may be used by the free school. Please include terms (e.g. 125 year peppercorn lease). Please also provide details of any other local authority contribution towards the capital costs of the project (e.g. developer contributions).</p>	<p>The Local Authority have confirmed that the building and site will be available to be used by the free school. The site will be availbel on 125 year peppercorn lease.</p>

What kind of site is it?	Existing building
What is the current use?	[REDACTED]
Why have you chosen this site? What makes it suitable?	[REDACTED]
<p><b>If known, how big is the building and the site?</b> Please attach any site and building plans as an additional file and send it to APspecial.freeschool@education.gov.uk</p>	
<p><b>Please comment on the condition of the building.</b> Please attach photos if available as an additional file and send it to APspecial.freeschool@education.gov.uk</p>	[REDACTED]
<p><b>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</b>, including: the development and developer, timing and programme of build, number of housing units, status of planning application and any links to planning applications/decision notices, extent of funding coming from the developer plus confirmation of the local authority's position in relation to your free school using this site.</p>	

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