



Department
for Education

Local authority commissioned special free schools

**An expression of interest form for local
authorities interested in commissioning a
special free school**

October 2016

Overview

Since local authorities play a key role in placing pupils with statements or Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans, it is important that they shape the range of provision in their area. Previously, proposals to establish special free schools have only been taken forward in consultation with local authorities. **We are now providing a further opportunity for local authorities themselves to identify where a new special free school would benefit their area**, inform their Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC), and potentially seek proposals for the new school they want, with the Department for Education (DfE) providing capital funding and start-up grants. This is in addition to the central route for special free schools, which continues to operate.

This **expression of interest (EOI) form is for local authorities that would like a new special school**. It allows them to make a case that a special school would be beneficial in their area, including a case that it would help meet demographic growth, changing patterns of need, and cost pressures, without reducing inclusion. It provides RSCs with the initial information they need to understand what is wanted and why. If the EOI is successful, the opportunity will be advertised nationally, and if a strong proposal comes forward that both the local authority/authorities and the Secretary of State wish to take forward, the DfE will provide capital and start-up grant funding, subject to value for money assessments covering both the affordability of the site solution and the limitations on overall capital availability. Please see the accompanying guidance for further detail.

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

This opportunity is intended to identify and meet untapped demand for special free schools as a supplement to LA's existing resources. It **does not replace the 'presumption' process nor does it replace a local authority's duties to ensure appropriate placements for all children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)**.

You should use this form to provide all the necessary information and evidence for your proposal. Please:

- email your RSC during October to say whether you are interested and give any headline facts available (email addresses are in the guidance)
- return this EOI, completed, to freeschool.special@education.gov.uk copying in your RSC, **by midday on 11 November**.

More detailed information about this process can be found in the [local authority-commissioned special free schools guidance](#).

A2: What type of school is wanted?

Please provide key information about the school you would like to commission:

Category of SEN provision (if more than one type, with different top-up rates, please explain)	Social and Emotional Mental Health Provision
Per-pupil revenue funding you would expect to pay (if a range of rates, please explain)	████████████████████
Age range	11-19
Gender (boys/girls/co-educational)	Co-educational
Total number of proposed places	70
Early years provision? If so, how many places?	none
16-19 provision? If so, how many places?	20
Community use/shared facilities	Yes depending on the site secured. We would welcome co-location with other services that would enhance support not only to the pupils but their families as well.

Please use this space to expand on any of the key information above [max. 200 words]

A3: Conversations with partners

Local authorities (in particular smaller ones) **must** speak to their neighbouring LAs to check whether they want to commit to commissioning places at the new school at the specified top-up rate. If they do not, LAs may put in a solo EOI. Authorities **may** speak to other partners in order to ensure that their EOI will complement the local landscape and be a close match for what families want. If you have not engaged with your Schools Forum before sending this EOI to your Regional Schools Commissioner, you will need to do so if successful.

Who?	Conversation summary (3 points max)
Your neighbouring LAs – please specify	<p>The North London Strategic Alliance for SEN have been made aware that we are making this application. Also via an Inter-Authority meeting 8th November 2016 and emails to colleagues: Hertford CC. L.B. Haringey, L.B. Waltham Forest, L.B. Barnet, L.B. Havering and L.B. Hackney.</p> <p>Waltham Forest as our statistical is also preparing an EOI for increasing SEMH places and we have discussed how this compliments Enfield proposals on a regional basis.</p>
Optional: Your Parent / Carer Forum, or other representatives of parents and young people	
Optional: Any other partners, Schools forum, existing FE colleges etc. (please specify)	Enfield Schools Forum are very well aware of the need for more SEMH provision within the authority in both phases.

Section B – The proposed location and site (if applicable)

Please describe where the school would be located and whether a site has been made available/identified. Making a site available on a peppercorn lease gives the greatest chance of the school opening successfully, and on time.

We have an email agreement from Ark Academy chain in support of our EOI:

“I have followed up with [REDACTED] has confirmed that the school would be willing to support an application for Edmonton County to use the [REDACTED] for an SEN secondary school. Given that there is currently no application in place, and given the challenges we discussed, it does not seem necessary to terminate the lease yet and instead we can discuss as you progress. We are happy for you to discuss with the RSC though if that will help strengthen your application.

Please do keep in touch regarding the progress of the application so we can discuss timings of the disposal. We would also need to jointly work with the RSC to ensure there was a straightforward approach to the disposal given that it would just be transferring from one provider to another which should negate the need for an arduous process. “

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

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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

I confirm that the Lead Member of Corporate Property at [REDACTED] has seen this expression of interest and supports it.

Please tick to confirm

Section C – Rationale for School

Please provide an explanation of how and why this provision is required and how it would benefit the local area. [500 words max.]

Please include:

- How the school will fit into the broader spectrum of SEN provision in the region (including neighbouring LAs if appropriate)
- How it would help meet pressures on special educational provision
- The potential impact on inclusion, including (where applicable) types of expert support you would expect the school to provide to mainstream schools in the area
- Parental demand

The London Borough of Enfield context

Enfield SEND statistics

- Second highest number of pupils of any borough in London
- Population increase of 3.4% between 2011 and 2014
- Over 500 additional statements or Education Health and Care Plans have been agreed since 2011, an increase of 29%
- Enfield Special School population increased by 24%
- Proportion of Enfield children with a statement/EHCP being educated out of the borough has increased by 107 since 2011, a rise of over 200%
- Profile of primary need has changed over time
- Proportion of children more likely to require travel assistance have increased
- Increases in diagnosis Social Emotional and Mental Health up 28% since 2010

Enfield currently has only one special school for learners with SEMH which has 44 places. They accommodate 20 primary learners and 24 secondary but the provision finishes at the end of KS4. Our proposal will allow for more continuity for this cohort and supported transitions into provision post 16 which would include a full educational programme up until the age of 19.

The Borough has a high rate of permanent exclusion in the secondary phase and this provision is designed to tackle this in a strategic manner. Our recent Local Area Ofsted Inspection stated that:

There are higher rates of exclusion for pupils with a statement or EHCP in Enfield than in other areas of the country. The SEMH needs of pupils attending secondary schools are sometimes not identified quickly enough, leading to some pupils becoming disengaged from their learning and being permanently excluded.

Currently, there is insufficient provision for pupils with diagnosed and undiagnosed SEMH in the Borough. This proposal would address this issue. It would provide expert support both in terms of full time placements, part time assessment placements as well as a comprehensive outreach programme to support inclusion in our mainstream schools of pupils with SEMH

Our shared vision is to create a specialised school unlike any other that currently exists in Enfield.

The majority of the places would be of a permanent nature but up to 10% of places would be occupied on a temporary basis by children who need respite from their mainstream placement whilst there is an assessment of their needs. We envisage the majority of the cohort to have Education, Health and Care Plans, however those in need of a full assessment would not be precluded from attending. Schools could also commission places for example, if a child was struggling or there had been a serious incident, then the school could send the child to this new school for 'Day 6' provision and to enable assessment of need and a plan to be created. The assessment might include interviews with the in-house Educational Psychologist and counselling team, SALT, meetings with parents etc.

The intention is that the school would offer each child a personalised programme that focused on their individual needs. It is self-evident that these needs change over time and we envisage a flexible approach to the learning program which could include time in the mainstream to access curricula that is not available in the school as well as full re-integration into the mainstream if the needs of the pupil could better met in that environment. It is also our intention to run an extended day so that the school offers the The programme proposed would include the following:

- Developing confidence in mathematics and English so that every child obtains at least grade 4 in both subjects
- Developing self-esteem through success but also through developmental and cognitive psychological therapy
- Developing learning skills so that every child has the opportunity to study for at least 5 GCSE subjects
- Developing personal skills and practical skills that include
 - Personal presentation
 - Cooking, cleaning and looking after others
 - Growing food
- Developing confidence and self-esteem through physical fitness
- Developing employment skills
- Developing personal skills through art, music and drama
- Developing community cohesion through engagement in local provision

Ensuring that children are kept fully engaged by having a programme that starts at 8am and concludes at 6pm.

Section D – Pupil data and existing SEN provision

The purpose of this section is to help us to understand the need for a new school in the context of how existing provision is used, and future expected growth in need. We want to approve EOIs that:

- address demographic growth
- help LAs meet what pupils and parents want
- help LAs manage within their budgetary constraints

We do not want to approve EOIs that have the side-effect of decreasing inclusion in mainstream schools, or of creating excess spare capacity in existing special schools. (e.g. if several LAs each want a similar school, any one of those might make sense on its own but in aggregate there might not be enough need.) In this section you need to explain how the places in this school would be filled and where the pupils would come from (D1). You also need to explain the general demographic trends and placement trends for *all* pupils with EHC plans (D2).

D1: Pupils who would go to the new special school

Please indicate how you expect the places in this school to be filled, and the impact on inclusion.
[500 words max.]

Please include:

- *Where the pupils will come from – what is the balance of demographic growth (e.g. new housing developments) vs changing patterns of need (e.g. which are the schools the pupils would attend if this school did not go ahead)?*
- *The impact on numbers and proportion of students with SEN at mainstream schools*
- *How the school would be financially sustainable within budgetary constraints in the long term, including (if applicable) how it would help deliver wider value for money (for example in reducing transport costs)*

Our proposal would provide an educational setting for those learners that are already part of our cohort who are currently educated outside of the authority. We have learners with SEMH as their primary need educated in the following authorities:

Haringey

Hertfordshire

Kensington and Chelsea

Camden

Barnet

Waltham Forest

We also currently have 28 learners in independent SEMH outside of Enfield which if we had the places within the authority we would not need to do. The average cost of a place is ██████ plus the transport costs; to one provider in Hackney the annual transport costs for the cohort of learners attending is over ██████ per annum. This is not only a drain on scarce resources but it also dislocates the learners from their own community. All learners with SEMH face a particular set of challenges and our inability to educate all of them within Enfield just adds to these.

We also have 22 learners who are under the age of 19 who are on roll at local FE Colleges in Enfield, Haringey, Waltham Forest and Hertfordshire. For some of them this is probably the most suitable provision for them given the programme of study being offered. However it is currently the only choice they have as we do not have specialised post 16 provision. There is no doubt that this proposal would help to nurture and support those learners who are not ready to make the transition to FE or to other post 16 opportunities.

As already stated one of the key components of this provision would be the facility for both outreach support and respite/additional assessment opportunities for mainstream schools. Our hope would be that this would at least maintain the balance of learners with SEMH SEN needs in the mainstream and might actually enhance the resilience and expertise in our secondary schools to enable them to include more learners with this need.

Currently the high needs budget pays for all of the learners described above that are attending independent SEMH provision both inside and outside of Enfield. The cost is considerable so we believe that this new school would be a more effective and efficient use of resources and ensure these young people are being educated in line with our inclusion strategy of placing pupils in the borough.

D2: Trends in your specialist provision for all children with EHC plans

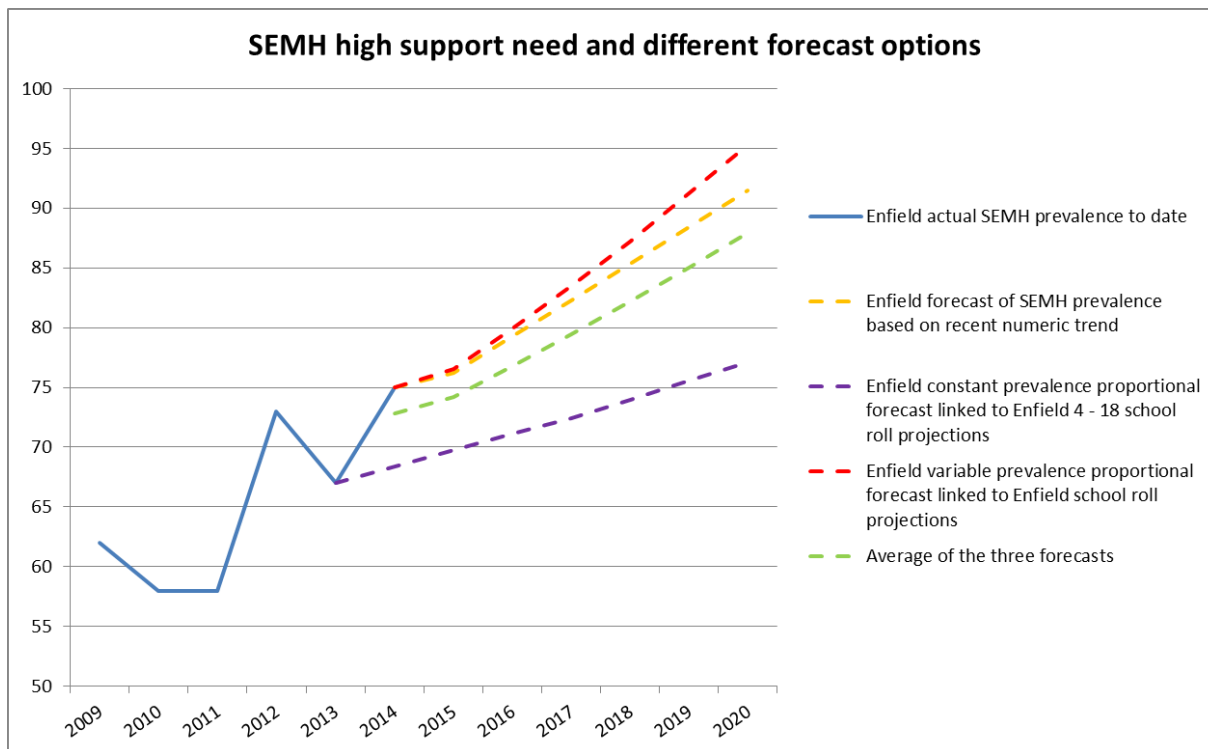
Please use the table below to describe the recent, current and projected trends of specialist provision that caters for **children with EHC plans living in your LA(s), of the age range for which you want the new school** (drawing upon [SEN2 Data](#)). If this is a joint bid, i.e. other LAs are committed to commissioning places, either fill in the table once for the LAs together, or copy/paste the table and fill it in for each LA (please say which you have done). **The projected data for 2020 should show the pattern you expect if this EOI is successful.**

	No. of Settings	Please indicate the no. of pupils with an EHC plan living in your LA who are placed within these settings		
		2012	2016 (as at Sep 2016)	2020
Resourced provision and units inside LA				
Resourced provision and units outside LA				
Special schools (either maintained or academies) inside LA	1	24	24	84
Special schools (either maintained or academies) outside LA	2			
Independent / non-maintained special schools inside LA				
Independent / non-maintained special schools outside LA	3		30	0
Mainstream schools inside LA				
Mainstream schools outside LA	13		13	15
General FE colleges (if relevant) inside LA	2		2	0
General FE colleges (if relevant) outside LA	3		3	0
Specialist FE providers (if relevant) inside LA				
Specialist FE providers (if relevant) outside LA				

Please provide a brief explanation of any recent trends and the rationale for future projections [200 words max.]

Please include:

- anything the RSC should know about why you are expecting the changes you have described from now to 2020
- any changes to capacity you are already expecting (e.g. planned expansions / closures / other new schools and how this school would sit alongside those)
- details of any wave 12 free school applications



The forecasting for demand of SEMH suggests that pressure on capacity is only going to increase. Whilst the use of out-of-borough placements means that the likely level of demand for September 2016 can be met it will bring a significant impact on delivery costs which are compounded by the long-term use of out-of-borough placements.

Enfield is currently looking at a possible MAT to open a Free school in the primary phase. There is also a plan to rebuild our existing SEMH provision, Aylands School which might increase their capacity. However we need the places and we need them now.

Current Special School expansions

- Orchardside School, Bullsmoor Lane aims to consolidate and increase capacity for secondary school aged children requiring short term support
- West Lea Special School, originally a maintenance project to replace life expired buildings project scope increased to include additional places.
- Aylands Special School, also a maintenance project to replace the life expired main school building. Again, the opportunity has been taken to increase the availability of special school places by increasing the size of the new school building,

Confirmation

I confirm that the Director of Children's Services at [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] has seen this expression of interest and supports it.

Please tick to confirm

Date (DD/MM/YYYY)	11/11/2016
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