

Royal Borough of Greenwich Children's Services

New All-through Special School

*For pupils diagnosed with Autistic Spectrum Disorder with
complex learning needs*

GUIDANCE & SPECIFICATION FOR PROSPECTIVE SPONSORS

- New school to be established **over two separate sites** within the borough and delivered **in two stages**

Please read through the guidance before registering and completing your mandatory pre-application form

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GUIDANCE FOR PROSPECTIVE SPONSORS

I. Introduction

We are inviting applications from suitably qualified academy proposers who are interested in becoming the sponsor for a 240 place all-through special school for pupils diagnosed with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) with complex learning needs from reception age to Year 14.

The new all-through special school will be located over two separate sites within the borough and delivered in two stages. Stage one incorporates a new secondary and sixth form campus to be built on the former primary school site on Hargood Road, SE3 and is planned to open from September 2025. Stage two will develop the primary phase provision to be located at an alternative site within the borough and is planned to open from September 2026.

This guidance and specification document provides all the background information and timescales that academy proposers will need to apply to become the sponsor of this exciting new school. Academy trusts wishing to apply are asked to:

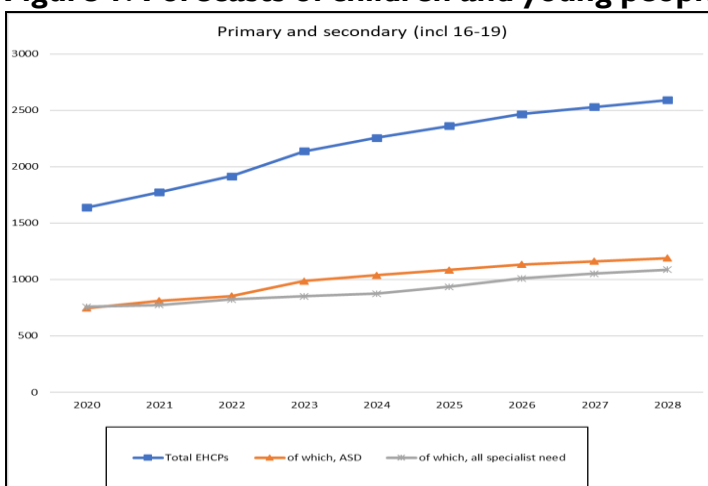
- 1) **Register their interest** by emailing new-special-free-school@royalgreenwich.gov.uk and confirming their wishes to apply. Academy trusts who register their interest will be kept informed on any updates on the application process through email correspondences.
- 2) **Complete their mandatory pre-application form** which is downloadable from the [Royal Greenwich website](#) and submit it to new-special-free-school@royalgreenwich.gov.uk by the submission deadline which is outlined in [Section 6](#) of this guidance.

Once the mandatory pre-application stage closes, the assessment panel with representatives from the Council and the DfE will assess whether applicants meet the **pre-requisite acceptance criteria** (see [Section 4](#)) before being short-listed to progress to the main application stage. Further details on the main application stage is provided in [Section 4B](#) and [Section 6](#) of this guidance.

2. Background

A. Need for additional places

Figure 1: Forecasts of children and young people with Education Health and Care (EHC) Plans



As highlighted in Figure 1 above, demand for specialist school places in the borough is forecast to increase over the next five years, particularly for those pupils diagnosed with ASD with complex learning needs.

Although most children and young people with an ASD diagnosis will continue to attend Royal Greenwich mainstream schools, there is an immediate pressure for additional specialist provision for children and young people diagnosed more complex learning needs.

If additional places cannot be provided within the borough, children and young people will need to be placed out-of-borough to have their needs met and even these places are becoming more challenging to secure. Therefore, establishing additional specialist places within the borough is essential to meet demand and the needs of more children and young people locally.

B. Efforts to meet the need for additional places

In October 2022, the Council applied to the Department for Education (DfE) to establish and fund a new all-through special school for children and young people diagnosed with ASD with complex learning needs.

In November 2022, Cabinet formally agreed the proposal to establish a new all-through special free school at Hargood Road, SE3 with an allocated budget set aside in the event that the Council's application to the DfE was successful or unsuccessful.

In March 2023, the Council was informed that its application to the DfE for capital funding to establish the new all-through special school was unsuccessful due to the nature of competitive bidding where the number of bids outstripped the available DfE resources.

Despite this outcome, the Council remains committed to proceed with funding and delivering the new all-through special school itself given the unprecedented level of demand and need for additional specialist places across the borough.

C. How the new school will be delivered

Originally, the Council proposed to deliver the new all-through special school on the former primary school site at Hargood Road, SE3 8HR. However, site constraints at the Hargood Road site identified during the pre-planning advice stage has led to the current proposal of the new all-through special school being located on two separate sites within the borough and delivered in two stages.

The first stage will deliver a new secondary and sixth form campus (Years 7 to 14) to be built at the Hargood Road, SE3 site. This new campus will deliver an additional 80 secondary and 48 sixth form specialist places from September 2025. This represents a total of 128 additional specialist places at the Hargood Road site.

The second stage will deliver the primary phase campus (Reception to Year 6), to be developed at an alternative site within the borough; its location is to be confirmed. The primary phase campus will deliver a total of 112 additional specialist places anticipated from September 2026.

3. Who can apply?

Under the Education Act 2011, the DfE requires that where a Council considers there is a need for a new school in its area; it must seek proposals from suitably qualified organisations to establish the new school

as a 'free school'. As such, the new all-through special school will be a free school that will be operated by an academy sponsor in the form of an academy trust.

Therefore, the Council is seeking a suitably qualified academy trust with a reputable track record for operating special schools to sponsor the new all-through special free school across two separate sites in the borough.

Academy trusts wishing to apply are asked to first **register their interest** by emailing new-special-free-school@royalgreenwich.gov.uk and then **complete their mandatory pre-application form** (accessible from the [Royal Greenwich website](#)) and submit it to new-special-free-school@royalgreenwich.gov.uk by pre-application stage deadline which is outlined in [Section 6](#) of this guidance.

Please note that only those academy trusts who meet the pre-requisite acceptance criteria will be invited to apply for the main application stage.

4. Acceptance criteria

There will be a two-stage assessment process based on the following acceptance criteria at each stage.

A. Assessment Stage I – Mandatory pre-application stage

During the mandatory pre-application stage, the applicant will be assessed on the following pre-requisite acceptance criteria:

- I. **Quality** – Evidence of special school(s) being operated by the academy trust judged by Ofsted as 'good' or 'outstanding'. No special school(s) operated by the academy trust at the time of inspection being judged by Ofsted as 'inadequate'.
- II. **Experience** – Evidence from the academy trust of operating existing special school(s) for pupils with an ASD diagnosis with complex learning needs desirably at primary, secondary and sixth form phases of education.
- III. **Deliverability** – Confirmation by the academy trust that they can work together in partnership with the Council to develop and establish the new school by the timescales currently set out in the [specification document \(Annex A\)](#) for each delivery stage, while also being mindful that delivery timescales for the separate sites may be subject to change and require some flexibility from the sponsor to meet demand for specialist places at the time.

There are two assessment scoring scales for the pre-application stage as follows:

Questions 3 ('Quality') and 4 ('Experience') will be scored on a four-point scale, so that:

- 0 = The evidence and response(s) provided to the question is 'inadequate'
- 1 = The evidence and response(s) provided to the question is 'adequate'
- 2 = The evidence and response(s) provided to the question is 'good'
- 3 = The evidence and response(s) provided to the question is 'excellent'

Pass threshold (Quality and Experience): A minimum score of 2 above will be required to pass each question for 'Quality' and 'Experience'.

Question 5 ('Deliverability') will be scored on a two-point scale, so that:

- 0 = ticked "No", not met the acceptance criteria.
- 1 = ticked "Yes", met the acceptance criteria.

Pass threshold (Deliverability): A minimum score of 1 will be required to pass the 'Deliverability' question.

To progress to the main application stage, the applicant must obtain a minimum total score of 5 points across all assessed questions and must pass each pass threshold for quality, experience, and deliverability.

B. Assessment Stage 2 – Main application stage

Only applicants who meet the pre-requisite acceptance criteria at the mandatory pre-application stage will be invited to progress to the main application stage.

The DfE has published the following model application form and acceptance criteria that can be reviewed by prospective sponsors as a guide only:

- I. [Model application form \(Annex B\)](#)
- II. [Model acceptance criteria \(Annex C\)](#)

The above model documents have been tailored by the Council and will only be made available to short-listed applicants during the commencement of the main applicant stage.

Selected applicants will be invited to attend an interview, at which they will be asked to answer questions to provide clarification and further detail on their main application. Trusts will be notified in advance if a presentation is to form part of the assessment day.

The interview panel will include some or all the following assessment panel members:

- Elected Member(s) of the Council
- Council Officer(s)
- Representative(s) from the Department for Education (DfE).

The shortlist of preferred sponsors will be interviewed by the assessment panel, and the date for this will be confirmed as soon as is practicable. The assessment panel will conclude their assessment with a recommendation to the Regional Director to be made in Spring 2024. Please refer to the provisional timescales in Section 6 of this guidance.

The Regional Director for Southeast England & South London, on behalf of the Secretary of State, will consider the Council's assessments and recommendations before deciding which proposer is in the best position to take forward the new free school. The Regional Director will inform the Council and the successful proposer of its decision, and the Council will inform any unsuccessful proposers.

5. How to register and apply

Please ensure your academy trust completes the **mandatory pre-application form** before the submission deadline (please refer to [Section 6](#) of this guidance on key submission timescales).

6. Key timescales and assessment outline

Stages	Date(s)	Action
<p>1 Assessment Stage 1: Mandatory pre-application stage.</p> <p>i. Pre-application stage opens (4-week period)</p> <p>ii. Pre-application stage closes (submission deadline)</p>	<p>From 4 December 2023</p> <p>By midnight on 29 December 2023</p>	<p>Applicants are asked to first register their interest by emailing new-special-free-school@royalgreenwich.gov.uk. Applicants who register their interest will be kept informed of any updates on the application process via the contact email(s) they register with.</p> <p>Applicants must complete their mandatory pre-application form (available from the Royal Greenwich website) and submit it to new-special-free-school@royalgreenwich.gov.uk by the submission deadline date.</p>
<p>2 Notification of shortlisted Sponsors</p>	<p>January 2024</p>	<p>The assessment panel will assess all pre-applications received against the pre-requisite acceptance criteria. Successful applicants who are shortlisted will be notified and invited to progress to the main application stage.</p>
<p>3 Assessment Stage 2: Main application stage.</p> <p>i. Application opens (6-week period)</p> <p>ii. Application submission by short-listed sponsors</p> <p>iii. Interview and assessment of short-listed sponsors</p>	<p>January 2024</p> <p>February/March 2024 (date TBC)</p> <p>March 2024</p>	<p>Upon notification, short-listed sponsors will receive the acceptance criteria and application form template to complete at the same time.</p> <p>Upon notification, the submission deadline date will be confirmed with shortlisted sponsors at the same time.</p> <p>The assessment panel will interview and assess applications using the acceptance criteria that will be available to all shortlisted sponsors.</p>
<p>4 Submission of recommendation to the Secretary of State (SoS)</p>	<p>March or April 2024</p>	<p>Recommendation of the Council's preferred sponsor will be made following the interview and assessment of short-listed sponsors at the main application stage.</p>
<p>5 Sponsor agreed by the SoS</p>	<p>From April 2024</p>	<p>Regional Director for Southeast England and South London on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education to agree the recommended sponsor. The successful sponsor will be notified.</p>
<p>6 Pre-Opening Phase</p>	<p>From May 2024</p>	<p>Successful sponsor to commence pre-opening phase. Please check the DfE's guidance on Pre-opening phase expectations (Annex D)</p>
<p>7 School Opens</p>	<p>From September 2025</p> <p>From September 2026 (provisional)</p>	<p>Admission of first cohorts in Key Stage 3 and sixth form at the Hargood Road, SE3 site.</p> <p>Admission of the primary phase cohorts at an alternative site within the borough.</p>

7. Contact Us

For all enquiries, please contact new-special-free-school@royalgreenwich.gov.uk.

ANNEX A: SPECIFICATION

Section A - Introduction

Under section 6A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (the ‘free school presumption’) where a local authority identifies the need to establish a new school it must, in the first instance, seek proposals to establish an academy.

The Royal Borough of Greenwich (“the Council”) has identified the need to establish a new all-through special free school (from reception to sixth form) for children and young people diagnosed with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) with complex learning needs.

The new school is proposed to be located on two separate sites within the borough by each main phase of education. The proposed secondary and sixth form campus is to be located on the former primary school site at Hargood Road, SE3 in the Kidbrooke Park ward area of Southeast London while the proposed primary phase provision is to be located at an alternative site within the borough and will be confirmed as soon as practicable. Further details on the proposed primary phase provision are provided in Section B of this specification.

The new all-through special school is anticipated to open on a phased basis starting with Year 7 and Year 12 cohorts opening in September 2025. The primary phase provision is anticipated to open from September 2026 at the earliest.

I. Background and context

The Council is committed to inclusive education and continues to work with schools to ensure that pupils with additional needs grow up and learn alongside their peers in local mainstream settings, wherever possible. However, it is recognised that some children and young people will require a specialist setting, preferably linked to their local community.

Within the cohort of children and young people in mainstream schools, some have severe and complex learning needs (non-verbal, lacking basic independence skills, behaviour that challenges) requiring a high-level of individual support. This includes children where the severity of need is known, children whose needs are becoming more complex and those newly arrived in the borough. Some of these children are better placed in specialist provisions in line with parental preference and professional recommendations. The number of children and young people attending Royal Greenwich schools who have an Education and Health Care (EHC) Plan has been rising. Autism continues to be the prevalent primary need for pupils with an EHC Plan.

This unprecedented level of demand for specialist provision has meant that many children and young people with ASD on an EHC Plan who require a specialist placement are either remaining within mainstream settings or being placed in specialist provisions outside the borough due to the insufficient number of specialist provisions able to meet their needs locally. However, most local authorities are seeing an increasing demand for specialist provision so finding suitable provision in neighbouring local authorities, or the independent sector, is becoming more and more challenging.

In line with one of the core principles in our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Partnership Strategy, the Council ensures that the voices of children, young people and their families help ‘shape’ services, so they are responsive and based on ‘real’ rather than perceived need.

Further to the overwhelming evidence from our SEND place planning projections indicating the need for a new SEND free school locally, the outcome of a consultation with children, young people and their families in September 2022 further reinforces this need. The establishment of a new special school locally will therefore not only fulfil the wishes and needs of local children, young people and their families but also helps the Council fulfil its statutory school sufficiency duty. The summary of consultation responses is provided by following the links in the list below:

1. [summary_of_parent_responses.pdf \(openobjects.com\)](#)
2. [summary_of_prof_responses.pdf \(openobjects.com\)](#).

More recently, the Council conducted a public consultation on opening the new all-through special school across two sites within the borough and this included some online and in-person community engagement events. The overall outcome of the public consultation was very positive with the vast majority of respondents (91%) stating that they were mostly positive or positive about the proposal. The full report is available [here](#).

The proposed new all-through special school will provide an additional 240 specialist places over two separate sites for children and young people aged 4 to 19 years who have a diagnosis of ASD with complex learning needs. The establishment of the new all-through special school will support the local authority with achieving its priority and sufficiency duty of ensuring that all local children and young people with SEND have a school place and the opportunity to attend a good local school.

II. Evidence of need

Over the five years to 2023, the number of school aged young people with an EHC Plan increased by over 40%. Autistic spectrum disorder continues to be the prevalent primary need for pupils with an EHC Plan; currently around 46% of primary need for all ages identified in EHC Plans is ASD. Additionally, there is a growing demand in the number of children and young people diagnosed with autism who also have moderate learning difficulties (MLD). Some of these children and young people may require a different kind of specialist provision.

Over the last few years, the local upward trend in the number of young people with an EHC Plan is anticipated to continue over the medium term. The proportion of children and young people with an EHC Plans now represents around 3% of the resident population aged 0-19 years. This is similar to the proportion of pupils in Royal Greenwich schools with an EHC Plan, with a further 15% of pupils having SEND support needs. Overall, this equates to 18% of the Royal Greenwich pupil population having special education needs or disabilities.

As of June 2023, there were over 500 children and young people with speech, language and communication needs awaiting a diagnosis of ASD some of whom will require a specialist placement. In addition to the current pressures, the number of pupils with EHC Plans is expected to increase by at least 450 over the next five years, with pupils requiring specialist provision increasing by around 240 over the period, of which around 140 will be of secondary school age.

Therefore, the establishment of the new all-through special free school will not only help increase capacity for specialist ASD provision locally, it will also help relieve pressures on provisions in neighbouring boroughs. Local children and young people will also continue to retain access to the range of excellent provision within the local community, reduce journey times, stress, and travel costs.

The Council is now seeking proposals from strong, inclusive, high quality and high performing academy trusts to become the sponsor of this exciting new school. The new school will provide 240 specialist places

for children and young people aged 4 to 19 years who have a diagnosis of ASD with complex learning needs.

Commissioning of the places would be through the Royal Greenwich SEND placement panel in line with our SEND admission policy ([sen_admissions_policy_2022](#)).

The Regional Director for Southeast England and South London (RDSE & SL), on behalf of the Secretary of State, will consider the Council's assessments and recommendations before deciding which proposer is in the best position to take forward the new school. The RDSE & SL will inform the Council and the successful proposer of its decision, and the Council will inform any unsuccessful proposers.

Please note that this Council led free school presumption programme is a different route to the DfE's free school programme delivered centrally. Further information about how to establish a new school via the DfE's free school programme can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/opening-a-free-school>

Section B - The New School

I. Main characteristics

The main characteristics of the new all-through special school are anticipated to be as follows:

School Characteristics	
Type of school	All-through Special Free School from Reception to Sixth Form.
Opening dates	<i>Delivery Stage 1: Secondary and sixth form campus - Anticipated from September 2025.</i> <i>Delivery Stage 2: Primary phase provision - Anticipated from September 2026 at the earliest.</i> See details of the separate sites below.
Area of SEN	ASD with Complex Learning Needs
School size	240 special school places including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 112 primary places (YR to Y6). • 80 secondary places (Y7 to Y11). • 48 sixth form places (Y12 to Y14).
Which local authorities are committed to commissioning places?	Our place planning projections indicate that Royal Greenwich will fill all the places.
Commissioned places	240 places to be commissioned by the Royal Borough of Greenwich.
Per-pupil revenue funding the local authority would expect to pay	For details on the Council's agreed banding funding formula for Special Education Needs, please refer to Sections E and F of the Council's banding document .
Age range	4 -19 years
Gender	Co-educational

School Characteristics	
(Boys/Girls/Co-educational)	
Total number of proposed full time equivalent places	240
Type of placements offered	All full time
Nursery provision	None
Sixth form provision	Yes, 48 places
Any planned outreach, training and/or reintegration support (including details of funding that will be made available to support the school with this)	To be determined.
Details of the site/ building, including details of ownership	<p>The proposed all-through special school will be located over separate sites within the borough and will include a:</p> <p>Secondary and sixth form campus (September 2025) This site will be located at: Hargood Road Kidbrooke London SE3 8HS</p> <p>The Hargood Road site is located on a former primary school site owned by the Council. The former primary school buildings have now been demolished and the site is being redeveloped to accommodate the secondary and sixth form phases of the new all-through special school.</p> <p>Primary phase provision (September 2026) Initial due diligence studies and pre-planning consultation have shown that the primary phase will not be deliverable on Hargood Road, SE3. As such, further assessments are being conducted to identify a suitable site elsewhere within the borough for the primary phase to be delivered. We are anticipating that a suitable site would be identified for the primary phase to be delivered by September 2026 at the earliest. The successful sponsor will be expected to work with the Council throughout this process of identifying and delivering the primary phase provision.</p>
Transport arrangements	<p>Pupils will be encouraged to develop and adopt independent travel skills to access the school via sustainable transport links. Certain pupils may be eligible for travel assistants as determined by Royal Greenwich's Travel Policy.</p> <p>The secondary and sixth form site on Hargood Road is served by a local bus route. This site will have some parking facilities onsite but there is very limited parking off-site within the local residential area. Further details on the travel arrangements will be available during the planning application stage of the building project including a detailed traffic</p>

School Characteristics	
	management plan carried out by transport consultants who will study the additional parking pressures for all. The transport arrangements for the primary phase provision will be available in due course.
Character/Ethos of school	The school will not have a religious character or ethos.
Community Use	The school will be expected to make available its facilities for community use where possible.
Equalities Impact Analysis	Please see Section G.

II. Opening arrangements

The exact opening arrangements for the new school will be determined in discussion with the successful sponsor from Spring 2024 while being mindful of potential risks that may be identified throughout the delivery of the separate school sites and demand for specialist places. However, the current phasing of pupils across the key stages and sites is proposed as follows:

Key Stage	School sites	Year of opening (2025)	+1 (2026)	+2 (2027)	+3 (2028)	+4 (2029)	+5 (2030)	+6 (2031)
Reception	Primary Provision (Site TBC)		16	16	16	16	16	16
Key stage 1 (Y1-2)			32	32	32	32	32	32
Key stage 2 (Y3-6)			64	64	64	64	64	64
Key stage 3 (Y7-9)	Secondary & Sixth Form Campus (Hargood Road, SE3)	24	40	56	48	48	48	48
Key stage 4 (Y10-11)					24	40	32	32
Key stage 5 Age 16-19		16	32	48	48	48	48	48
Totals	Totals	40	184	216	232	248*	240	240

* Forecast to be above capacity in 2029, which if that turns out to be the case would need to be managed.

III. School buildings and design

The design for the primary, secondary and sixth form phases of the all-through special school will follow the standard DfE [BB104 area guidelines for SEND](#) and [special school design output specifications](#).

The procurement of the Design & Build contractor has now completed, and the appointed contractor has commenced the design stages. The Council anticipates completion of the RIBA Stage 2 design for the Hargood Road school site by January 2024.

Applicants who have been shortlisted to progress to the main application stage (Assessment Stage 2) will be offered the opportunity to attend a design workshop to provide feedback on the proposed design based on the standard BBI04 Schedule of Accommodation (SoA). While short-listed applicants can help the Council inform the school building design, there is no guarantee that their input will be included in the final building design. Attendance and participation in the design workshop is voluntary and will not be assessed as part of the sponsor competition.

Section C - Vision

Short-listed applicants should take account of the relevant acceptance criteria in Annex C for Section C that will be available to them during the main application stage.

The Council's overarching vision within its [Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Partnership Strategy 2019-2024](#) is that:

“All children and young people with special needs and disabilities in Royal Greenwich, regardless of their background or circumstances, should have a happy and fulfilled childhood where they belong, grow and succeed so that they enter adulthood ready, willing and able to achieve their highest potential.”

Therefore, proposers must be ambitious for children and young people diagnosed with ASD with complex learning needs, while at the same time be able to demonstrate that their vision of the new school is deliverable and affordable.

As a minimum, proposers should ensure they include the following information within their application during the main application stage:

- Overarching vision for the new school over two sites and how it informs their education plan.
- Demonstrate that their vision is both deliverable and affordable within the available funding.
- Provides a coherent and consistent vision with the other sections of their application. Proposers will not need to provide details of their intended enrichment programme at this stage; however, if an enrichment programme is crucial to achieving their vision, they should mention it in the relevant application section and provide more details in their education plan.
- If the proposer already sponsors more than one school, they will be asked to provide a brief overarching vision for their chain and planned expansion strategy (including how many schools they hope to have in total, geographical spread, and timescales).

The Council also expects proposers to demonstrate the following overarching vision, capability, experience, and values during the main application stage:

1. *Child centred ethos – hearing the ‘voices of children and young people’ in their learning journey*
 - a. By ensuring pupils are supported to participate effectively in decisions about the support available to them in their local area and in school to reach their full potential.
 - b. By ensuring pupils are involved in the planning and reviewing process of their support.
 - c. By ensuring pupils have access to the information they need to make informed decisions.
2. *Involving parents and carers – hearing the ‘voices of parents and carers’*
 - a. By engaging parents and carers in shaping provision for their child’s achievement, behaviour and safety, and their spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development.

3. *Working in partnership*
 - a. By being a key partner with the Council in delivering the priorities as set out in the Royal Greenwich [Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Partnership Strategy 2019-2024](#) and help shape future SEND partnership strategies.
 - b. By working in partnership with the Council, SEND support, therapeutic services, and other partners to contribute towards meeting a collective responsibility to secure the best outcomes for children and young people at the new school.
 - c. By supporting the statutory responsibilities of the Council to ensure sufficiency of high-quality specialist school places and improved educational outcomes through agreed sharing of information on the new school.
 - d. By demonstrating continuous improvement, transparency and sharing of expertise, good practice, and collaborative working.
 - e. By demonstrating that the new school can play a key role within its immediate community and the wider local economy.
 - f. By attending meetings with Council members and/or officers upon request to report on progress of the school.
 - g. By providing data as requested by the Council to enable the performance of the school to be monitored. This includes allowing the Council to attend meetings established by the sponsor to monitor the performance of the school against any issue identified in an Ofsted inspection report.
 - h. By responding quickly and positively on any safeguarding concerns raised by the Council.
4. *Management and accountability*
 - a. By having an established management structure and proven experience in delivering an inclusive curriculum able to meet the wide-ranging needs of children and young people with ASD with complex learning needs. This includes the capability and aspiration to become a National Centre of Excellence for the education of children and young people with ASD with complex learning needs.
 - b. By being accountable to the Secretary of State including meeting the [pre-opening phase expectations](#) (Annex D) set-out by the DfE.
 - c. By being accountable for performance to parents, the local community, and to the Council for education, safeguarding and support for pupils including vulnerable children and families.
5. *Values and missions*
 - a. By adhering to the [Council's and Children's Services values](#)
 - b. By adhering to the [Council's Corporate missions](#) - particularly mission four that supports children and young people to reach their full potential.

Section D - Education Plan

Short-listed applicants should take account of the relevant acceptance criteria in Annex C for Section D that will be available to them during the main application stage.

As a minimum, proposers should ensure they include the following for each phase of education:

- An ambitious, broad, and balanced, deliverable curriculum plan which is consistent with the Council's vision and pupil intake. This could include a curriculum table and pupil build up chart.
- Proposers who do not have direct experience at a particular phase of education (either the primary, secondary or sixth form phase) will need to demonstrate their ability to plan and deliver an appropriate curriculum.

- Strategies for measuring pupil performance effectively and setting challenging targets.
- A staffing structure that will deliver the planned curriculum within the expected income levels; with a focus on outstanding teaching (including strategies for effective performance management). This could also include an organogram and staff build up chart.
- A plan for attracting, recruiting, and retaining high quality staff including staff development.
- The needs of all children and young people are fully provided for and how the school will be fully inclusive.
- The school’s plan for ensuring that all children and young people are safeguarded.
- Details of enrichment and extended services, for example, breakfast clubs, sports clubs, homework clubs and music/art clubs.
- The school’s plan for ensuring children and young people are equipped with life skills, digital skills, and the world of work.
- The school’s plan for community engagement and use of the building and facilities once fully open.
- The school’s approach to: PHSE; the Prevent Duty; safeguarding and welfare; and promoting fundamental British values (democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs).

Section E - Capacity and Capability

Short-listed applicants should take account of the relevant acceptance criteria in Annex C for Section E that will be available to them during the main application stage.

As a minimum, proposers should ensure they include the following:

- Clear evidence of being able to open the new school on a phased basis from September 2025 and 2026 respectively over separate school sites for each main phase of education.
- The resources identified by the proposer to draw on and/or deploy to support the development of the new school by the opening dates.
- Clear evidence from the proposer that they have the range of skills and abilities necessary to set up and then run a school effectively, including managing school finances, leadership, project management, marketing, human resources, safeguarding and health and safety.
- How the school would be organised and what the governance arrangements would look like, including a diagram of the proposed structures.

Section F – Funding, costs, and land matters

- The DfE currently provides £25,000 for legal expenses to the successful sponsor.
- The Council will work with the successful academy sponsor to identify and agree pre- and post-opening costs for the school. For example, the successful sponsor will be paid a Project Development Grant (PDG) to meet essential non-capital pre-opening revenue costs. This will be paid in line with the agreed DfE rates for the type of school. Prospective sponsors are advised to visit the [Free schools pre-opening guide](#) for further details on this and other pre-opening entitlements. The relevant excerpt on PDG funding from the DfE’s free school pre-opening guidance is below.

Type of school	PDG funding for first school opening in a given academic year	PDG funding for each additional school opening in the same academic year
Primary mainstream	£220,000	£150,000

Type of school	PDG funding for first school opening in a given academic year	PDG funding for each additional school opening in the same academic year
Secondary and all-through mainstream	£300,000	£200,000
Special	£220,000	£150,000
AP	£220,000	£150,000
16 to 19	£250,000	£170,000
Local authority presumption	£25,000	£25,000

- For details on the Council's agreed banding funding formula for Special Education Needs, please refer to Sections E and F of the [Royal Greenwich SEN funding formula banding](#).
- The capital costs for construction of the separate school sites will be met by the Council including a set budget for furniture, fixtures, equipment, and IT. This will be met by the Council from a combination of its capital resources including the High Needs and Basic Needs Grant and s106 developer contributions.
- The lands for the proposed school sites are owned by the Council and a model free school 125-year lease(s) will be provided to the successful sponsor at nil consideration.

Section G - Impact and Equalities Assessments

As prescribed by section 9 of the Academies Act 2010 and section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the local authority must assess the potential impact of any new school on existing educational provision in the area. The local authority must also consider whether the new school would impact on any groups with protected characteristics.

Overall, the proposed school development to be located on two separate sites is not considered to have any negative impacts on the equalities of different protected groups or existing special educational provision.

A full copy of the Council's Equality Impact Assessment on the new all-through special school is available [here](#).