

# **School Specification Document**

## **for Potential Academy Sponsors**

### **New Primary School in Lakenheath, Suffolk**

#### **Introduction**

Under Section 6a of the Education & Inspections Act 2006 (the 'free school presumption') where a LA identifies the need to establish a new school they must, in the first instance, seek proposals to establish an academy. Suffolk County Council has identified the need to establish a new primary school in Lakenheath to open in September 2019 or September 2020. This document provides information about the new school. The lettered sections in the specification refer to the sections in the Sponsor Application Form.

#### **The Forest Heath District**

Forest Heath is situated in the heart of the East Anglia, located adjacent to the boundaries of Norfolk and Cambridgeshire and close to north west Essex. The District covers an area of over 37,398 hectares (144 square miles) with two strategic national routes passing through it: the A11 from London to Norwich and the A14 from the Midlands to Ipswich and the East Coast Ports.

Forest Heath is the home the headquarters of British horse racing, Newmarket Racecourse, and to two of the largest USAF air bases in the UK, RAF Lakenheath and RAF Mildenhall. In January 2015, the US Department of Defence announced that operations at RAF Mildenhall would end. Discussions are now taking place on the future of the site.

The District is a mixed urban and rural area, including three market towns, with Newmarket being the largest, followed by Mildenhall and Brandon. These towns contain the majority of the population. There are 20 civil parishes one of which is Lakenheath. Details of existing school provision in the Forest Heath area can be found in Appendix A.

**Lakenheath** is a village of around 9,000 residents located approximately half way between Mildenhall and Brandon, about 5 miles north of the former. The village is host to the largest USAF base in the United Kingdom, RAF Lakenheath. The current primary school (Lakenheath Community Primary) provides 1.5 FE (315 places) for children aged 4 -11. Forest Heath District Council has confirmed at Committee that they are 'minded to approve' developments generating over 660 new houses in Lakenheath village. The pupil yields from the housing over 10 years are expected to be approximately 170 pupils. Future housing may still come forward.

The existing primary school is full. Its site is constrained and it would be difficult to expand further. In order to make provision for this potential new housing and to provide space to expand if more housing is agreed, the county council has agreed to commission a new primary school in the area.

The authority is therefore seeking proposals from appropriate sponsors to open this new school. This school would be deemed a free school. Please complete the Free School Presumption application form and return it to:

***Joy Stodart, Schools Commissioning Manager, Children and Young People's Services,  
Suffolk County Council, Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP1 2BX.***

The timetable for invitation and receipt of proposals and final decision-making is set out below:

<b>Stage 1 – Invitation for Proposals</b>	
19 March 2018	Launch of process: National and local announcements using DfE and SCC websites
4 May 2018	Deadline for receipt of proposals
<b>Stage 2 – Assessment</b>	
w/c 8 May 2018	Assessment of proposals and selection of preferred proposers
21 May 2018	Assessment Panel Interviews
10 July 2018	Recommendation to SCC Cabinet and confirmation of preferred sponsor.
12 July 2018	Proposals are sent to the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) for the East of England and North East London for consideration and decision NB. The Secretary of State will only consider entering into a funding agreement with an approved sponsor/s. (The DfE's approved sponsor list can be accessed from the <a href="http://education.gov.uk">education.gov.uk website</a> ).
<b>Stage 3 - Decision by Regional Schools Commissioner (for the Secretary of State)</b>	The RSC will consider the LA assessments and recommendations and decide which proposer is in the best position to take forward the new school. The RSC will inform the LA and the successful proposer of the decision and the LA will inform unsuccessful proposers. There is no specified timescale for this part of the process.

If you would like further information or wish to discuss your application, please contact 01473 265331/07515190911.

**NB:** the LA led free school presumption is quite a different route to the DfE's free school programme. Further information about how to establish a new school via the free school programme route can be found at



- Handover and occupation Summer 2019\*

\*if the main school is not complete, handover will be of the pre-school section only at this point.

Design work has already been completed which means that sponsors will have limited opportunity to influence the shape of the school. However, sponsors should note that the school will be built to current DfE Building Bulletin 103 requirements for primary schools. The proximity of the new school to the Lakenheath Base and the main flight paths means that the school will be built with enhanced acoustic protection in the building and the provision of external 'pods' for use by staff and pupils.

### **Capacity and PAN**

The school's capacity will be planned at 210 places with the ability to expand to 420 places. The Council will want to work with the sponsor/s to balance the availability of places against local demand. This will require a flexible approach based on the pace of house building in the area.

We anticipate that the new school will open initially with 30 places in Reception. The school will then build up to a capacity of 210 primary places. This arrangement will be reviewed with Suffolk County Council prior to the school opening subject to demand for primary school places from local housing developments.

### **Age range and Gender**

The age range of the school will be 4-11. The school will provide places for boys and girls (mixed).

### **Pre-School**

A 30-place pre-school will be located on site. The number of families taking up the 30-hour offer will influence the actual numbers on role. Sponsors will be asked to consider offering places to 2 year olds and to provide before and after school provision if demand justifies this. *Sponsors will be expected to*

*confirm whether they wish to run this provision.* If they do not, the area will be 'red-lined' out of the academy transfer and a provider sought. A lease-back arrangement will be in place in the event that the sponsor wishes to relinquish management of the setting in the future.

### **Support for vulnerable learners and those with special educational needs**

The new school must provide an inclusive learning environment in which all pupils, including those with special or additional educational needs and those with disabilities, are supported and enabled to make appropriate progress. The needs of vulnerable children and young people should be met locally wherever possible. The new school should have a strong focus on equalities, early intervention, and supporting the needs of the local community.

### **Community use**

Sponsors must ensure the school plays a key role within its immediate community and the wider local economy. The school will be expected to provide access for community groups as appropriate.

### **Catchment area**

The catchment area for the school is under discussion at present and will be confirmed at a future date. It is likely that the catchment area will be the same as the existing Lakenheath Primary School.

### **Proposed admission arrangements**

The council expects the school to serve the community in the Lakenheath area. Sponsors will have oversubscription criteria that are reasonable, clear, objective, procedurally fair and which comply with all relevant legislation. Sponsors will be required to follow the DfE School Admissions Code and the School Admissions Appeal Code. Sponsors will also be required to participate in the Council's co-ordinated scheme for the normal admissions rounds although they are not required to do so for admissions in the year of opening. They will also have to follow the Council's In-year Fair Access procedure.

## **Transport arrangements**

The council's transport policy is available at

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-and-learning/schools/school-meals-transport-and-travel/school-transport/>

Sponsors will be expected to produce a School Travel Plan. The new academy will be expected to encourage safe and sustainable travel to school. Sponsors will be expected to work with neighbouring schools when agreeing the timing of the school day and professional development dates to enable efficient use of school transport.

## **Equality and Diversity**

As a County Council, we are committed to ensuring fair and accessible services for everyone in Suffolk. The weight given to the equalities and inclusion policy area within the Council specifically complements our organisational priority in respect of supporting vulnerable people. We also have a responsibility to ensure that the companies and organisations that we commission to provide services on our behalf, take the same positive approach to equality. All potential academy sponsors will be required to demonstrate their commitment to promoting equality and diversity and to eliminating unlawful discrimination.

## **Working in Partnership**

A key component of selection would be the sponsor/s willingness to work in collaboration with other providers and local partners to develop services which meet the needs of local children, young people and families in a coordinated way. In particular, sponsors would be expected to liaise with all local providers of pre-school education and to work with high schools to plan effective pupil transition.

Sponsors will also be expected to support the strategic responsibilities of the county council to ensure sufficiency of high quality school places and improved educational outcomes through agreed sharing of data and information

## **C –VISION**

The proposal should explain how the applicant group will ensure the following:

- a strong educational vision for curriculum delivery based on high standards of attainment
- the trust and support of parents
- a strong and effective vision for each key stage
- effective management focused on outstanding teaching and commitment to children (including strategies for effective performance management)
- consistently high-quality teaching throughout the school
- excellent support facilities to meet the needs of all children, including LAC and pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- excellent outcomes and consistent quality of teaching and learning
- seeking out and sharing best practice within and beyond the school, promoting innovation and creativity in learning and teaching
- implementation of rigorous processes of self-evaluation and continual improvement
- outstanding and dynamic leadership, management and governance
- robust and effective financial management.

## **Section D – EDUCATION PLAN**

The proposal should cover the following:

- An ambitious and deliverable curriculum plan which is consistent with the vision and pupil intake
- Strategies for measuring pupil performance effectively and setting challenging targets
- A staffing structure that will deliver the planned curriculum within the expected income levels
- The needs of all children are fully provided for within the curriculum
- Details of enrichment and extended services, for example, breakfast

clubs, sports clubs, homework clubs and music/art clubs

## **Section E – CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY**

The proposal should cover the following:

- A clear track record of relevant high quality educational delivery
- The resources the applicant group would deploy to support the development of the new free school by the opening date
- Any resources outside the applicant group that you would draw on to help establish the new school
- How the school will be organised and how this will develop
- How the school will work with parents, staff and the community in managing this development and any changes necessary to achieve implementation
- Clear evidence that you have the skills and ability to manage a school budget
- What the governance arrangements would look like

## **Section F – FUNDING AND COSTS**

### **Capital Funding**

The county council will provide the land and buildings for the first phases of the school i.e. 210 places plus early years' provision. The cost will be met through a mixture of LA basic need funds and S106 contributions.

Subsequent housing developments will be expected to provide funding for future growth through Section 106 agreements. The budget for the new school is £9.8 m (which includes the land acquisition cost) including the pre-school. This includes a significant uplift in costs to provide noise attenuation.

## **Lease Arrangements**

The site will be made available to the agreed academy provider on a 125-year lease, with the usual terms pursuant to the 2010 Academies Act. There will be a lease-back arrangement for the pre-school.

## **Other Allowances**

The Council will provide a **start-up** allowance of £191,000 to cover the employment of a Headteacher and administrative support in advance of the school opening.

A **setting up** allowance will also be made for each classroom. This is to pay for the desks, chairs and other equipment in each classroom in the school. The calculation is based on average costs. The basic cost for primary school classrooms is £5,000 per class. In addition to the funding per class, the council will also make a **block payment** of £25,000 for a primary school to cover the cost of establishing office and communal space etc.

## **Pupil related funding**

The council will fund the school initially on the difference between the estimated pupil numbers and 75% of PAN as they progress through the school for the first 3 years.

## **Section G – IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

As prescribed by Section 9 of the Academies Act 2010 and Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the LA impact assessment reviews the potential impact of any new school on existing educational provision in the area.

The impact assessment is attached at Appendix B.