



Department  
for Education

# **Suffolk County Council**

## **Free school presumption**

**Specification for proposers wanting to establish a new school in Chilton Leys, Stowmarket, Suffolk.**

## Section A - 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 Stowmarket to open in September 2022. This document provides information about the new school. The lettered sections in the specification refer to the sections in the Sponsor Application Form.

### The Stowmarket District

Stowmarket is a market town situated in mid Suffolk between Ipswich and Bury St Edmunds. The town is the largest town in the mid Suffolk District with the A14 to the north of the town providing good access to the Midlands and to the major port at Felixstowe. There are good rail links to Cambridge, Peterborough, Norwich, Ipswich and London. Currently the town's population is in the region of 20,000 people and growing at an increasing rate with much development at the North end of the town.

In February 2013, Mid Suffolk District Council adopted The Stowmarket Area Action Plan (AAP) which allocated a green field site known as Chilton Leys for residential development. Planning permission for 1115 houses has since been agreed. The yield from this housing is expected to be approximately 263 pupils some of whom will find places in other nearby schools. The developments are as follows:

<b>Development</b>	<b>No dwellings</b>	<b>Pupil yield</b>	<b>Rate of build</b>
Chilton Leys Phase 1 (Northfield View)	215	51	Built out
Chilton Leys Phase 2	600	150	50 dwellings per year from 2019 on

South of Union Road	300	62	40 dwellings per year from 2018 on
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1115</b>	<b>263</b>	

The existing primary schools are not well connected to the new housing. In order to make provision for pupils coming from this new community, and to provide space to expand if more housing is agreed, the county council has agreed to commission a new 210 place primary school with a 60-place pre-school in the area. The authority is therefore seeking proposals from appropriate sponsors to open both settings. This school would be deemed a free school.

### Existing education provision in the area

Details of existing school provision in the area can be found in Appendices 1 and 2. This provides data for FSM, BME, SEND, KS2 outcomes as well as a map showing the IDAC Index.

The timetable and process for advertising and assessing applications is as follows:

<b>Stage 1 – Invitation for Proposals</b>	
2 March 2020	Launch of process: National and local announcements using DfE and SCC websites
1 May 2020	Deadline for receipt of proposals
<b>Stage 2 – Assessment</b>	
w/c 4 May 2020	Assessment of proposals and selection of preferred proposers
w/c 18 May 2020	Assessment Panel Interviews
14 July 2020	Recommendation to SCC Cabinet and confirmation of preferred sponsor.
17 July 2020	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="https://www.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.

The application form can be found at Appendix B. Completed forms should be returned to [schools@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:schools@suffolk.gov.uk).

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

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/opening-a-free-school>

If you would like further information or wish to discuss your application, please contact **Joy Stodart, Head of Schools Infrastructure, Children and Young People’s Services, Suffolk County Council, Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP1 2BX.**

## Section B The School

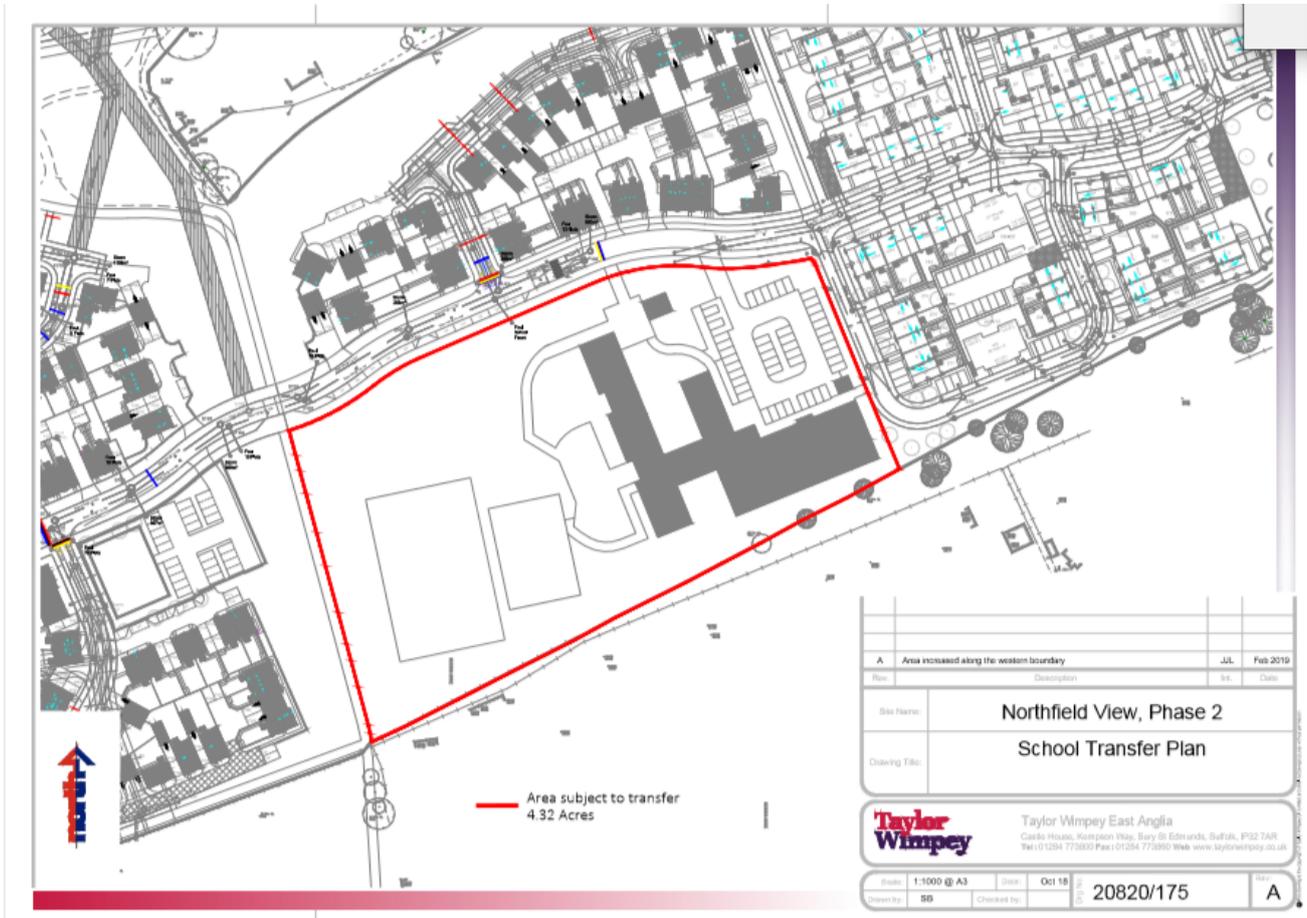
### Opening date

The new school is needed for September 2022.

### Site/Location

A site of 4.32 acres (1.75 ha), located on Brooke way, is included in a S106 agreement. The transfer of this site to SCC has recently been completed.

Indicative plans for the new school follow:



The indicative timescale for developing the buildings is as follows:

- Initial design June 2020
- Planning application Autumn 2020

- Consent Spring 2021
- Appointment of contractor Spring 2021
- Mobilisation on site June/July 2021
- Handover and occupation Summer 2022

Considerable work has already begun so the successful sponsor will only have limited opportunity to influence the design of the school. The school will be built to current DfE Building Bulletin 103 requirements for primary schools.

### **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 but depending on demand for places, this may be reviewed so that the school actually opens with Reception and Years 1 and 2. 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 60-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 council expects the school to serve the community in the area bounded by the new housing at Chilton Leys.

### **Proposed admission arrangements**

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

## **Section C - Vision**

Applicants should take account of the relevant criteria in Annex C of the free school presumption guidance.

As a minimum, please ensure you include the following:

- A strong educational vision and a curriculum delivery based on high standards of attainment for each key stage
- Plans for appropriate engagement with the local community and parents during the pre-opening period and any on-going engagement

- Excellent support facilities to meet the needs of all children, including looked after children, those with Special Educational Needs, etc
- A commitment to excellent outcomes and high quality of teaching and learning

## **Section D - Education Plan**

Applicants should take account of the relevant criteria in Annex C of the free school presumption guidance.

The proposal should include information on the following:

- An ambitious, broad and balanced, deliverable curriculum plan which is consistent with the vision and pupil intake. This could include a curriculum table and pupil build up chart
- 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
- How the needs of all children are fully provided for and how the school will be fully inclusive
- Details of enrichment and extended services, for example, breakfast clubs, sports clubs, homework clubs and music/art clubs
- 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**

Applicants should take account of the relevant criteria in Annex C of the free school presumption guidance.

As a minimum please ensure you include the following:

- The resources you would draw on and/or deploy to support the development of the

new free school by the opening date

- Clear evidence that you 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 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 being determined currently.

### 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 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.

The Chilton Leys new school EIA is attached at Appendix 3.