

School Specification Document for

Potential Academy Sponsors

New Primary School in Red Lodge 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 Red Lodge to open in September 2018.

The Forest Heath District

Forest Heath is situated in the north west of Suffolk 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 to 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 two of which are Lakenheath and Red Lodge.

The village of **Red Lodge**, approximately 2.6 miles to the south of Mildenhall and adjacent to the A11, has been identified by Forest Heath District Council as a major focal point for future housing growth. Over 1500 new houses have planning approval over two main developments – west of Turnpike Road (295 houses) and Kings Warren (1250 houses). Many of these are now complete and occupied. Additional houses are likely to come forward as the District Council finalises its Site Allocations document.

The village primary school, St Christopher's CEVCP, was relocated from the nearby village of Tuddenham into a new building in Red Lodge in 2011. Since then, the school has expanded its permanent accommodation from 210 to 420 places for children aged 4-11 and, since 2015, has been providing an additional form of entry to meet local demand. St Christopher's will be able to continue this temporary increase for the 2017 academic year but technically, the school has now reached its capacity.

The following table shows the pupil forecasts and school capacity and PAN for St Christopher's CEVC Primary School:

			Total rolls (inc housing)				
			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Pupil forecasts from core intake			352	412	466	499	530
Potential year-on-year changes			-19	-19	-19	-19	-19
Potential pupils from new housing			5	5	5	5	5
	PAN	CAPACITY					
St Christopher's CEVC Primary School	60	420	338	398	452	485	516

As the pupil forecast table above shows, the school will exceed its capacity by 2018. Most of this current demand is from the continued growth of the local population and not from new housing. While temporary accommodation will help meet this demand, it does not

resolve the challenge of providing permanent, long term places particularly for pupils from new housing. In anticipation of further housing growth (at present there are 3 developments being considered by the District Council to bring forward 444 dwellings generating around 110 primary pupils) and the fact that St Christopher's cannot be extended further, a new school will be required.

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 (Appendix A) and return it to:

Gavin Bultitude, Assistant Director, Resources and Support, 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:

Stage 1 – Invitation for Proposals	
27 January 2017	Launch of process: National and local announcements using DfE and SCC websites
10 March 2017	Deadline for receipt of proposals
Stage 2 – Assessment	
w/c 3 April 2017	Assessment of proposals and selection of preferred proposers
w/c 18 April 2017	Assessment Panel Interviews
13 June 2017	Recommendation to SCC Cabinet
19 June 2017	SCC Cabinet confirms its preferred bid(s)
Date to be confirmed	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 education.gov.uk website).
Stage 3 - Decision by Regional Schools Commissioner (for the Secretary of State)	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 authority is also planning to provide a new school at Lakenheath which is also in the Forest Heath area. This may be of interest to potential sponsors of Red Lodge.

If you would like further information or wish to discuss your application, please contact joy.stodart@suffolk.gov.uk or 01284 758829 / 07515190911 or deborah.decova@suffolk.gov.uk or 01284 758834 / 07872 67694

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 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/free-schools-in-2014-how-to-apply-mainstream-and-16-to-19-free-schools>.

Section A – Applicant Groups

In this section applicants must supply some basic information about their group. Applicants must be DfE approved sponsors. If you are not already an approved sponsor you will need to separately apply via the formal sponsor approval process. You should contact the DfE about this before submitting a proposal and you can find out more information at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/sponsor-an-academy>

When completing the application form, applicants should take account of the relevant criteria of the free school presumption guidance (Appendix E).

Section B -THE SCHOOL

Site/Location

The county council is in the process of acquiring a 5-acre site for the new school. An indicative site plan and outline plan of the school is attached (see Appendix B). Details of other schools in the area can be found in Appendix C.

Programme

The timescale for developing the buildings is as follows:

- Initial design completed* August 2016
- Planning application November 2016
- Planning Committee/consent March 2017
- Appointment of contractor November 2016 &
(2 Stage tender) May 2017
- Mobilisation on site May 2017
- Handover and occupation Summer 2018

*Appendix D

If any of the processes are delayed, the LA may consider postponing the opening date until September 2019. In this case, temporary accommodation would be found in existing schools for the interim period. Any bulge classes would form part of the current school i.e. not the new school.

Because of the need to open the school in 2018, considerable work has already taken place. This means that although sponsors will be engaged in agreeing later design details they will have limited opportunity to influence the main design. 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 would open initially with 30 places in Reception and each of Years 1 and 2. The school would then build up over six years to a capacity of 210 primary places. The pre-school will offer 30 places. Suffolk County Council would review this plan with the sponsor 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 provision

Provision will be made for a 30-place pre-school (0-4) setting on the school site. We would expect the provision to be delivered by the successful sponsor. However, if a sponsor was not in a position to provide this we might still accept proposals and work with them to commission the provision ourselves.

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 will cover Red Lodge and the surrounding villages i.e. it will be share a catchment with St Christophers CEVCP.

Proposed admission arrangements

The council expects the school to serve the community in the Red Lodge area. Sponsors will have oversubscription criteria that is reasonable, clear objective, procedurally fair and which complies 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. There are excellent walking and cycling routes in the village of Red Lodge and the new academy will be expected to encourage safe and sustainable travel to school as well as safe and considerate parking and pupil drop-off. 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

Applicants should take account of the relevant criteria in Appendix F. The proposal should explain how the applicant group will ensure the following as a minimum:

- 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 any pre-opening period and any on-going engagement
- Excellent support facilities to meet the needs of all children, including looked after children and those with Special Educational Needs
- A commitment to excellent outcomes and high quality of teaching and learning
- A commitment to seeking out and sharing best practice within and beyond the school, promoting innovation and creativity in learning and teaching
- A commitment to the implementation of rigorous processes of self-evaluation and continual improvement
- outstanding and dynamic leadership, management and governance

Section D – EDUCATION PLAN

Applicants should take account of the relevant criteria in Appendix F. The proposal should cover the following as a minimum:

- An ambitious, broad and balanced, 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; with a focus on outstanding teaching (including strategies for effective performance management)
- The needs of all children are fully provided for within the curriculum 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

The proposal should cover the following as minimum:

- A clear track record of relevant high quality educational delivery
- The resources you would draw on/deploy to support the development of the new school by the opening date
- 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 range of skills and abilities to set up and run the 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 where appropriate. 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 £7.6 m.

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.

Other Allowances

The Council will provide a **start-up** allowance of £115,000 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.

The DfE currently provides £25,000 for **legal expenses** to the successful sponsor.

Pupil related funding

The council will fund the schools on agreed PAN for the first 3 years i.e. 90 pupils for the first year of operation (R, Yr1 and Yr2), 120 for the second year and 150 for the third and so on. Beyond the initial 3 years, the school will be funded on actual numbers.

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 can be found at Appendix E.