



Department  
for Education

# **Stockport Local Authority Special Free School**

**Seeking proposals to establish a  
Special Free School**

**Stockport MBC**

**2019**

## SECTION ONE: OVERVIEW

### 1. Summary

The Department for Education (DfE) is working collaboratively with selected Local Authorities to establish new schools that fit within the local authorities' strategies for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and those requiring alternative provision. This opportunity is intended to identify and meet untapped demand for special and alternative provision free schools as a supplement to LAs' existing resources. If a strong proposal is received by a trust that both the Local Authority and the Secretary of State wish to take forward, DfE will provide capital funding and start-up grants subject to value for money assessments.

This document sets out the key information regarding the school that Stockport MBC will be establishing alongside DfE. Trusts should use the information within this document, alongside the engagement events, to determine whether they would like to apply to open the school, and to base their application on.

### 2. Key dates

<b>24 July 2018</b>	Special and AP free schools wave is launched – the guidance and criteria for local authorities seeking to establish new special or alternative provision free schools is published.
<b>11 March 2019</b>	Announcement of successful LA bids. Competitions in successful areas subsequently open.
<b>TBC 2019</b>	Sponsor Engagement Event, all registered Interested Parties will be invited.
<b>30 September 2019</b>	Deadline for proposers to submit applications in successful areas.
<b>TBC 2019</b>	Stockport LA and DfE to evaluate submitted applications and interview trusts
<b>TBC 2019 / 2020</b>	Approved applications announced.

### 3. Contact details and further information

If you would like any further information or would like to discuss your application, please contact:

**Name:** Cathy Lyall  
**Job title:** Strategic Lead, SEN & Inclusion  
**Email:** [cathy.lyall@stockport.gov.uk](mailto:cathy.lyall@stockport.gov.uk)  
**Tel:** 0161 474 4463

If you would like any further information or would like to discuss the site, please contact:

**Name:** Charlotte Cordingley  
**Job title:** Head of Estates and Asset Management  
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**Tel:** 0161 474 4240

Please find below the contact details of the Regional Schools Commissioner:  
[Include RSC details for that region]

**RSC:** Vicky Beer  
**RSC's office:** RSC for Lancashire and West Yorkshire  
**Email:** [lwy.rsc@education.gov.uk](mailto:lwy.rsc@education.gov.uk)

### 4. Stockport Context and Planning

*Please include here details of why the local authority is running this competition and requires this school. Should this be a joint bid, please explain how the local authorities will work together and how other local authorities are involved in commissioning places.*

Stockport's Specialist provision has increased significantly beyond capacity over recent years with a 31% increase in maintained special school placements and an additional £5million per annum. Stockport has 2 Outstanding, 1 Good Primary and 2 Outstanding, 1 Good Secondary Community Special Schools. All primary special provision has been significantly expanded or is operating over-capacity.

Increasing need for specialist Autism (AUT) and Severe/Complex Learning Difficulties (SLD) school places forms the basis of this bid. The majority of these pupils attend Lisburne Primary which increased from 49 to 107 in recent years, over-capacity by 40 places, requiring two additional temporary satellite sites with increasing Reception Year intakes projected. These larger cohorts will transfer to an already over-populated secondary sector, predominantly Heaton (30%) and Castle Hill High (60%) Schools. The remainder will transfer to external placements.

Heaton Secondary has increased more than 50% over 5 years and accommodates 30 pupils over-capacity. Over-occupation has led to reduced break-out/small group spaces in turn resulting in requests for transfers to non-maintained, independent specialist provision with 'facilities' identified as a contributory factor challenging the ability to meet need. Increasing numbers of pupils with AUT &

SLD Complex attend Castle Hill High School. The school has to be additionally resourced with support staff to help pupils presenting significantly greater needs access the curriculum.

Rising numbers and levels of need have increased external placements for pupils who would traditionally access LA maintained provision if there was sufficient capacity locally. This has exacerbated the already considerable pressure on the High Needs block alongside pressures on Cash Limit from increased SEN travel costs. Educating students locally in Stockport, with place funding that is significantly lower than external placements and reduced travel costs, will support Stockport in managing high needs costs.

The High Needs Budget (HNB) has a forecast £2.3m deficit in 2018/19, which is being financed via a combination of DSG reserves, transfer from schools block and planned deployment of Council funds. Growth in required specialist places and overfull maintained settings will mean increasing reliance on equally over-subscribed external places at significant escalating costs in future years. The pressure will also impact associated transport costs funded from the Cash Limit SEND transport budget, which had a deficit of £235,000 in 2017/18, forecast to increase to £477,000 in 2018/19, due in part to the higher cost of transport to placements further afield. Of the 128 pupils transitioning to Year 7 in September 2019, 120 require a special school place, many of whom will now need to be placed out of Borough.

The Council has determined to deliver an expanded primary special school as an investment to save to address immediate growth in the primary sector. Insufficient capital funding is available however for a secondary equivalent which will be required as the need rolls into the secondary sector.

The proposed free school would therefore:

- enable Heaton School to assume its appropriate size of 80. Initial discussion has taken place with the school which has asked to reduce places as it is finding it challenging to meet the needs of an increasingly complex cohort within limited space;
- accommodate AUT places currently provided at Castle Hill High School, allowing repatriation of pupils placed externally with SEMH needs to fill any released places. Initial discussions have taken place with the school which has also been approached to accept a further 25 pupils to extend further over number in September 2019. In addition there are several tribunals that have been initiated by other LAs to place their pupils in this provision;
- reduce reliance on external placements, including some residential which could have been avoided if sufficient capacity existed;
- enable attendance for children educated at home where parents perceive needs cannot be met through existing provision;
- help mitigate projected future growth in numbers.

Stockport has been subject to a SEND Local Area Inspection and was required to submit a joint Written Statement of Action (WSOA) by 26<sup>th</sup> February 2019. Part of the WSOA refers to improved joint planning and commissioning, including for specialist places and services provided. A revised SEND Strategy is a key document being developed with families as part of the WSOA.

All students in the school will have EHC plans and referrals will be made through the joint SEN Panel, which is chaired by the Operational Lead for SEND. Discussions will be held with parents, particularly those of young people placed out of Borough, to facilitate 'repatriation' to a local provision, where possible, and to reduce travel time.

The school will be encouraged to work with the transition social workers, the post-16 SEN team and Economy, Work and Skills Service to support transition into adult services, employment opportunities and post-18 provision.

## SECTION TWO: THE SCHOOL

The tables below list key details of the school proposed. Your application must be for a school that has these key characteristics. Please note you only need to complete the relevant table depending on the type of school.

<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>Area of SEN provided for (please detail designation alongside additional information known about the cohort's needs and abilities)</b>	AUT / SLD Complex
<b>Which local authorities are committed to commissioning places?</b>	Stockport MBC
<b>How many places have been commissioned and by which local authority?</b>	133 by Stockport with flexibility to support other local authorities
<b>Per-pupil revenue funding the local authority would expect to pay (if a range of rates, please explain and detail the rates per pupil, including estimates for how many of the cohort will be in each band)</b>	£10,000 + £7,000. The £7,000 top-up rate is based upon a projected average following assessment of current rates applied to similar types of provision.
<b>Age range</b>	11-18
<b>Gender (Boys/Girls/Co-educational)</b>	Co-Educational
<b>Total number of proposed full time equivalent places (once school is at full capacity – this should include 16-19 places but not nursery)</b>	133
<b>Type of placements offered (e.g. full time, short term, part time)</b>	Full time
<b>Number of nursery places, if applicable</b>	Not applicable
<b>Number of 16-19 places, if applicable</b>	28
<b>Any planned outreach, training and/or reintegration support (including details of funding that will be made available to support the school with this)</b>	The school staff would be able to access CPD opportunities and may be asked to share their expertise across schools if they wish to do so. The SEN Panel members will work closely with the school at points of transition and particularly should students make sufficient progress to be able to transition to a mainstream setting.

The table below details the number of places that the local authority proposes for each year group at the point of opening until the school is full.

	Year of opening	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	+6
Nursery	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Reception	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Key stage 1 (Y1-2)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Key stage 2 (Y3-6)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Key stage 3 (Y7-9)	21	42	63	63	63	63	63
Key stage 4 (Y10-11)	0	0	21	42	42	42	42
16-19: commissioner referred	0	0	0	0	0	14	28
Totals	21	42	84	105	105	119	133

## SECTION THREE: RATIONALE AND CONTEXT FOR THE SCHOOL

This section describes the rationale and the context in which the new school will operate.

*3A. Please include a brief description of the existing provision in your area, future expected growth in pupil numbers and how you expect places to be filled.*

As part of the WSoA there is a commitment to undertake a further sufficiency audit. In terms of secondary provision, however, these pupils are currently in special, resourced or mainstream primary provision and there is considerable concern that there will not only be insufficient specialist places in the locality to accommodate the numbers going through but also that the nearest out of Borough provisions are also reporting that they are full. There is a risk that we will not be able to place these vulnerable young people at all.

There are currently no specific plans to link this school to the three special secondary schools, although this is likely to be advantageous to the system this is something that will be developed over time. There are established relationships with existing independent, non-maintained special provision within the Stockport footprint. For example, there is a formal partnership with Seashell Trust to co-deliver autism training to settings, schools and colleges.

Non-maintained and independent schools in Stockport are able to access services such as School Improvement and CPD through a traded arrangement and a number of non-maintained special schools choose to do this.

*3B Please also include details as to how these proposed new arrangements are likely to lead to improvements in the standard, quality and/or range of educational provision for children with special educational needs, and the outcomes for pupils, across the local authority and how you expect trusts to support this.*

As part of Stockport's WSoA there will be development of an agreed Outcomes Framework, with specific KPIs, and all settings, schools and colleges are expected to contribute to improved outcomes for this group of vulnerable young people.

For this school this may include:

- Improved attainment and progress measures for all children and young people with SEND and particularly for SEND learners with multiple vulnerabilities groups, e.g. EHE, CIN, Care Leavers.
- Fewer change of placement requests.
- Improved attendance for SEND learners.
- Reduced short-term exclusions.
- Reduced complaints, mediation and tribunals due to high parental satisfaction.
- Fewer children with SEND going on to access crisis services as adults, due to early intervention and supported transition.

The school will enable pupils to achieve the best possible outcomes, supported by an informed and skilled workforce who:

- maintain the highest aspirations for each individual,
- provide appropriate support to enable them to achieve their targets,
- help them to access learning,
- ensure that they are prepared to be as independent as possible as they move towards adulthood.

A commitment to work in partnership with Stockport's services as well as with parents, carers and the young people promotes this aspiration.

## SECTION FOUR: THE PROPOSED LOCATION AND SITE

This section describes the provisional site.

<b>Full address and full postcode</b>	Worcester Road, Cheadle Hulme, Stockport, SK8 5NW
<b>Size of site</b>	2978.5sqm
<b>Further details on site (for example, current use/your reasons for choosing it/further developments (e.g. housing) planned for area</b>	The proposed site is a former primary school site owned by the Local Authority and located within the Cheadle Hulme area of Stockport. There is ample surrounding greenspace for external play and a beneficial development opportunity within the area due to a clear site meaning early development and shorter completion programme can be progressed once planning permission is achieved thereby allowing early entry for pupils.