



Department  
for Education

# **Local authority commissioned Special free schools**

**Seeking proposals to establish a  
Special free school**

**Redbridge Council**

**July 2017**

## **Overview**

Local authorities play a key role in placing pupils with statements or Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans, so it is important that they help shape the range of provision in their area. Previously, proposals to establish special free schools have only been taken forward in consultation with local authorities. The Department for Education (DfE) has recently provided a further opportunity for local authorities themselves to identify where a new special free school would benefit their area, inform their Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC), and seek proposals for the new school they want. This opportunity is intended to identify and meet untapped demand for special free schools as a supplement to LA's existing resources. If a strong proposal is received that both the local authority and the Secretary of State wish to take forward the (DfE) will provide capital funding and start-up grants subject to value for money assessments.

## **Information for proposer groups**

### **Proposed timeline**

The competition closes at mid-day on xx/xx/xx'

### **Contact details and further information**

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

**Liz Hunt**  
**Head of Access and Inclusion**  
**Email: Liz.hunt@redbridge.gov.uk**  
**Tel: 020 8708 3976**

If you would like further information regarding the site, please contact:

**Keith Mattacks**  
**Capital and Asset Management**  
**Email: Keith.mattacks@redbridge.gov.uk**  
**Tel: 020 8708 3059**

**Regional School Commissioner:**  
**Tim Coulson**  
**RSC's office: East of England and North-East London**  
**Email: rsc.eastnelondon@education.gov.uk**

## **Event**

**Event: Event for Potential Proposers – Presentation and Questions**  
**Date: Friday, 8 September 2017**  
**Time: 2pm – 4pm**  
**Location: Town Hall, 128-142 High Rd, Ilford IG1 1DA**

## Section 1 - THE SCHOOL

This section lists key details of the school proposed. Your application must be for a school that has these key characteristics.

<b>Which local authorities are committed to commissioning places?</b>	Redbridge
<b>How many places have been commissioned and by which local authority?</b>	It is anticipated that 48 KS1 places and 16 full time Early Years places will be commissioned by Redbridge Local Authority.
<b>Type of SEN</b>	SLCN, SEMH, Cognition and Learning, Communication and Interaction
<b>Per-place funding you expected to be paid</b>	£10k per place plus £20,000
<b>Age range</b>	2-7
<b>Boys/Girls/Co-educational</b>	Co-educational
<b>Total number of places.</b>	64 (includes 16 full time Early Years places)
<b>Early years provision?</b>	16
<b>16-19 provision?</b>	No
<b>Community use/shared facilities</b>	<p>Opportunity to explore establishment and shared use of an All Weather Pitch or Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) on the site of William Torbitt Primary School, subject to completion of full feasibility and detailed design.</p> <p>Potential sensory room facility available for hire, subject to completion of detailed design.</p> <p>Community use in specified areas during out of school hours.</p>
<b>Number of residential places</b>	None

Redbridge Borough is committed to the principles of inclusion and the development of local infrastructure to increase the local offer for Redbridge children. The number of children and young people in Redbridge schools with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and or a Statement is on an overall upward trajectory with over 200 more children and young people with an EHCP or statement than in 2014.

Approximately 1% of Redbridge children attend special schools and a shortfall of over 100 places is predicted over the next 6 years. Special schools offering primary and early years provision are operating at capacity, with no further scope to expand on site. The new 64 place Special Free School will ensure there is sufficient capacity in Redbridge in the future for local children requiring a special school place in Early Years or KS1.

There is evidence to suggest the needs of children in special schools in Redbridge are becoming more complex. There has been significant demographic growth and diversity of population within the borough with an increase in the range of complex needs due to consanguinity amongst populations. The Special School will support the principles of inclusion and strong partnership working, complement the landscape of school provision in Redbridge and help address the predicted local demand for additional Special School places.

**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.**

	<b>No. of students in first year of opening 2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>
<b>Nursery provision</b>	8	8	16	16	16	16	16
<b>Reception</b>	8	16	16	16	16	16	16
<b>Year 1</b>	8	16	16	16	16	16	16
<b>Year 2</b>	8	8	16	16	16	16	16
<b>Totals</b>	32	48	64	64	64	64	64

## **Section 2 - THE PROPOSED LOCATION AND SITE**

This section describes the provisional site.

The provisional site is located in Torbitt Way close to an A Road and comprises an area of land currently forming part of William Torbitt Primary School site and an adjacent area of land, previously the site of the former Aldborough Hatch Community Centre. The gross site area is approximately 4,096m<sup>2</sup>. There is an opportunity to explore the establishment of an All Weather Pitch or MUGA or on the site of William Torbitt School for shared use.

Subject to completion of full feasibility and detailed design, it is envisaged that the Free School site would have a separate access to the primary school either in Torbitt Way or Aldborough Road North. Potential relocation and new build of the Caretaker House, located on the site, is included in scope of the full feasibility.

The building specification and high-level design plans, although not yet confirmed, would be compliant with all relevant building bulletins including BB104, BB93 and BB101 and other issues achieving a BREEAM excellent. It is anticipated that the school buildings will be shielded from the main road by a planting schedule designed to provide natural filtration of

particulates and an acoustic barrier. Within the building it is anticipated that the main ventilation provision will be via a mechanical air in / air out system with heat recovery and filtration to remove particulates. The ventilation system would be linked to CO2 monitors that automatically operate the ventilation system when air quality decreases.

It is estimated that works could commence on site within a year, dependent upon completion of full feasibility and detailed design, internal permissions and planning permissions. The planning designation for the site would be D1 (Education) and the land also has a CR1 designation (urban open space).

### **Section 3 – RATIONALE AND CONTEXT FOR THE SCHOOL**

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

The new Free School will support the on-going high quality of SEN provision in Redbridge and will provide a specialist Nursery environment offering assessment places. It will create provision for children (boys and girls) aged 2-7 with significant special educational needs and disabilities including: social, emotional and mental health (SEMH); speech, language and communication needs (SCLN); cognition and learning and communication and interaction difficulties and will give specific focus to planning for transition at age 7. There is an expectation that the Free School will establish effective working arrangements with William Torbitt Primary School and will work in strong partnership with the Local Authority, other special schools and mainstream schools. The school would join a high performing special school sector in Redbridge.

Children with severe and complex levels of need are almost always known about by age 2 and many from birth. There is a very effective planning process in Redbridge involving the multi-agency Pre School Liaison Group where children are discussed so that their need for places can be highlighted very early. Redbridge does not currently have assessment nursery provision for young children with emerging complex needs and who would benefit from a period of detailed assessment to ensure educational arrangements at statutory school age maximise potential and opportunity for inclusion.

The SEN Code of practice recognises that in exceptional cases particularly for very young children who present with significant complex needs and for those who may not have experienced the English Education system, specialist provision may be accessed through “assessment” places. Indeed, as the needs of young children can rapidly change at this time of development, assessment over time accompanied with targeted early intervention can be most effective. It is envisaged that within 6 months of an assessment place being agreed, an EHC assessment will be undertaken with a view to clarify the child’s longer term placement needs. An assessment place is an opportunity for a detailed educational assessment of needs and necessary support arrangements. Following an assessment place, where appropriate, the young child will be offered mainstream provision. The assessment places will be administered through the SEN Early Years Panel and discretionary funding will be provided according to the child’s needs in addition to the place funding. The terms of reference, Early Years arrangements and banding documentation is found on the local offer website.

Redbridge is a net importer of children with SEN and statements or EHC plans. Based on historical trends, about half the children who move in require a place in a special school and this puts significant pressure on early years and primary school places at special schools in the locality. Additional KS2 places have been developed at Hatton School through the provision of satellite classes with more being explored to further increase the number of KS2 places. The new Free School will create additional Early Years and KS1 places to ensure a sufficient supply of special school places to address the predicted increase in local demand across this age range.

#### **Section 4 – VIABILITY OF THE NEW SPECIAL SCHOOL**

The predicted deficit in Special School places over the next 6 years is based on a historical pattern of approximately 1% of the total number of pupils in Redbridge schools. The special school will ensure sufficient Early Years and KS1 places to accommodate the predicted additional local demand and will offer specialist multi-agency assessment provision for children with complex needs. The role of assessment places will enable more effective and sustained placements across the sector and ensure educational arrangements at statutory school age maximise potential and opportunity for inclusion. This will reduce the need to increase commissioned outreach services in mainstream schools and nursery settings.

Along with the proposed High Needs Funding Reform it is predicted that there would be sufficient funds to fund the new provision. It is planned to review all placements in light of the new provision with a view to reducing high cost placements, such as out of borough, and a potential reduction in transport costs to help deliver wider value for money in the longer term.

#### **Section 5 – PUPIL DATA - TRENDS IN SPECIALIST PROVISION FOR ALL CHILDREN WITH EHC PLANS**

	No. of Settings	Please indicate the no. of pupils with an EHC plan living in your local authority who are placed within these settings		
		2012	2016 (as at Sep 2016)	2020
Resourced provision and units inside LA	5	94	147	230
Resourced provision and units outside LA	0	0	0	0
Special schools (either maintained or academies) inside LA	4*	413	490	581
Special schools (either maintained or academies) outside LA	27	53	65	80
Independent / non-maintained special schools inside LA	0	0	0	0
Independent / non-maintained special schools outside LA	27	71	84	99
Mainstream schools inside LA	72	655	707	763
Mainstream schools outside LA	22	75	53	15

\* The number of settings will increase to 5 with the inclusion of the new special free school.

The significant rise in pupil numbers in Redbridge has resulted in a corresponding increase in the number of children with special educational needs and disabilities requiring special school places. Redbridge is a net importer of children with SEN and statements or EHC plans, attracted by the outstanding special schools. This, together with further growth from housing development; increased birth rate; higher occupancy of housing; and changing patterns of need, will put significant pressure on places at special schools in the locality. The new Special Free School will create additional specialist provision to address the predicted additional local demand for Early Years and KS1 places.