



Department  
for Education

# **Tees Valley Special Free School**

**Seeking proposals to establish a  
Special Free School across the Tees  
Valley (Middlesbrough, Redcar and  
Cleveland, Hartlepool, Stockton and  
Darlington)**

**March 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 Tees Valley Local Authorities 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>March 2019</b>	Announcement of successful LA bids. Competitions in successful areas subsequently open.
<b>March-September 2019</b>	Trust application stage – trust engagement
<b>September 2019 – trust application window closes</b>	Deadline for proposers to submit applications in successful areas.
<b>September-December 2019 – Assessment of trust applications</b>	The Tees Valley and DfE to evaluate submitted applications and interview trusts

<b>Winter 2019 Early 2020</b>	Secretary of State decision on successful trusts
<b>Early 2020</b>	Successful trust announcements

### 3. Contact details and further information

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

**Name: Diane McConnell**  
**Job title: Director of Education**  
**Email: [diane.mcconnell@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk](mailto:diane.mcconnell@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk)**

**Tel: 01642 444342**

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

**Name: Ian Dunn**  
**Job title: Schools Capital Officer**  
**Email: [ian.Dunn@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk](mailto:ian.Dunn@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk)**

**Tel: 01642 771162**

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

**RSC: Janet Renou**  
**RSC's office: Darlington**  
**Email: [rsc.north@education.gov.uk](mailto:rsc.north@education.gov.uk)**

#### **4 Tees Valley: Context and Planning**

This is a Tees Valley joint initiative. As such, extensive work has been carried out across the five LAs. The five LAs in the Tees valley have worked together to identify the common areas of need that currently exist across the area, complimentary ways in which they can work together and to recognise the very distinctiveness of each of their areas and communities. The 'common themes' identified are in relation to students with SEMH needs who display challenging behaviour and recognise that provision centrally in the Tees Valley would add benefit to and complement existing provision.

This common approach and resource will add benefit to all the Tees Valley SEND offer and give families and children and young people greater 'joined up' working and equality of access to specialist provision.

Demand for SEMH provision in the Tees Valley is increasing year on year. Further pressure arises from an increase in the rates of fixed term and permanent exclusions. Mainstream settings indicate they do not have the capacity or expertise to offer the provision required. The nature and severity of the needs of many special school students is preventing a successful reintegration back into mainstream provision. All the Tees Valley LAs have children and young people accessing out of area settings, including Independent School settings, at much higher overall cost for provision and transport than local provision. Young people and families have additional anxieties about lack of more local educational placement opportunities as well as more challenges in terms of becoming part of a local community peer group.

The proposed specialist educational setting will help the Tees Valley LAs to more appropriately, more cost effectively and more locally meet the needs of children and young people of compulsory school age, primary and secondary and post 16 with SEMH needs. They will be undergoing an EHC assessment or already have been issued with an EHCP although a small number of places will be offered on an 'assessment' basis to ensure children and young people are supported quickly in a suitable environment.

Our Councils promote collaborative working with partners to improve quality, efficiency and to drive forward integrated working for more effective service delivery. Therefore, it is expected that any proposed new specialist educational provision will continue to develop good joint working across Tees Valley education, health and care including CAMHS to ensure that appropriate support is in place for children and young people with SEMH as outlined in their EHC plan.

<b>SECTION TWO: THE SCHOOL</b> Type of school	Special Free School
Area of SEN provided for (please detail designation alongside additional information known about the cohort's needs and abilities)	SEMH - Including other secondary needs which may include but not necessarily limited to Speech and Language and Autism
Which local authorities are committed to commissioning places?	Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland and Stockton.
How many places have been commissioned and by which local authority?	The new Tees Valley special school will be 100 place school based in Redcar and Cleveland LA. 20 places per LA (15 plus 5 assessment places)
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)	The new Tees Valley Free Special School will have children and young people placed at a charge of £10 K per place (base funding), plus top ups ranging between bands 2 and 5 depending upon the needs identified within the EHCP and as aligned to current banding arrangements agreed as follows: Band 2 £6,300 Band 3 £10,100 Band 4 £12,800 Band 5 £15,000. It is estimated that 85% of students will be in bands 2 and 3 with 15% being in bands 4 and 5. There will be within the new model a small number of assessment places which will be charged at £12,800 per year.
Age range	5 to 19
Gender (Boys/Girls/Co-educational)	Co-educational
Total number of proposed full time equivalent places (once school is at full capacity – this should include 16-19 places but not nursery)	As above
Type of placements offered (e.g. full time, short term, part time)	All types of non-residential placements will be offered to meet the individual needs of children and young people across the Tees Valley who require this level of specialist support. This will include fulltime, short-term and part-time provision.
Number of nursery places, if applicable	0

<p><b>Number of 16-19 places, if applicable</b></p>	<p>20</p> <p>There will be an allocation of 20 places which will be based on a flexible learning package that leads to greater independence, personalised pathways, employment pathways and a bespoke tailored curriculum which will meet the individual needs of young people ensuring that they have every opportunity to move successfully into adulthood. This will be split across the LAs as 4 per LA, however there will be flexibility across the LA's to use these places as required.</p>
<p><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></p>	<p>The schools operational budget would be supplemented by the provision of targeted therapeutic outreach support packages procured and paid for by schools and local authorities for pupils at Key stage 1 and beyond. On offer from this new Free School will be the delivery of training for the Tees Valley. This offer will include training relating to: de-escalation strategies, classroom behaviour strategies, attachment difficulties, development of emotional literacy plus others to be agreed during further consultation with provider. There will also be a robust outreach model which will be delivered across the Tees Valley supporting settings to develop their skills and knowledge, support children and young people to remain within a mainstream setting and provide advice and support to parents and carers. For those children and young people who are accessing an assessment placement, outreach will be part of the offer which will fully support them for the home school develop their skills and knowledge to further meet the needs of the child. As part of this new model Health and Social Care will contribute expertise and resource to this locality provision to ensure the holistic needs of children and young people are fully met and that parents and carers receive the support that they require.</p> <p>It is proposed that the Tees Valley special school is centrally placed to the Tees Valley LA Partnership. The school will be close to FE, schools and business parks. The school's facilities will be open for use by the local community and part paid for by local schools and key agencies. The school will be used for a range of community activities such as holiday activities and support for families who have children attending the school, training for schools, colleges, work based training providers and businesses to meet the needs of pupils and young people with challenging behaviours.</p>

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	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reception	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Key stage 1 (Y1-2)	0	5	5	5	5	5	5
Key stage 2 (Y3-6)	35	35	25	25	25	25	20
Key stage 3 (Y7-9)	20	25	30	35	35	35	30
Key stage 4 (Y10-11)	20	25	30	25	20	20	25
16-19: commissioner referred	0	10	10	10	15	15	20
Totals	75	100	100	100	100	100	100

### **SECTION THREE: RATIONALE AND CONTEXT FOR THE SCHOOL**

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

The Tees Valley area is the one of the most deprived areas nationally. Outcomes for children and young people are too low and need to be improved. We have a high proportion of children and young people with SEMH needs who required specialist provision within their local area who currently access out of area specialist provision. Across the Tees Valley we have approximately 200 children and young people who are placed in specialist provision away from their families and friends. These numbers are set to grow based on national data and local trend data. The cost of this provision is having a significant impact on all LA's High Needs Budgets which are overspent and Local Authorities Transport Budgets which are also under significant pressure. The Tees Valley has a distinct lack of provision which has been judged by Ofsted as 'outstanding' in meeting the needs of pupils with SEMH who present challenging behaviours. A number are in an Ofsted 'category' which limits choice and equality of access. Providers are setting tighter criteria for admission making it hard for the LAs to place pupils locally. In addition, in 4 out of the 5 LAs the pathways Post 14 are of poor quality. Parents are saying that in many areas the transition for their children at Post 16 is poor and that they would want greater opportunities for their children and the ability to be economically independent and have full inclusion in the work place.

All types of non-residential placements will be offered to meet the individual needs of children and young people across the Tees Valley who require this level of specialist support. Each LA will have 5 of their 20 commissioned places designated as short term assessment places. The Tees Valley proposal will fulfil the need for specialist provision ensuring that children and young people have access to the specialist support they require which will prepare them for adulthood and achieve their outcomes. Tees Valley Special Free School would add value to the existing SEN provision by providing places for our most complex young people with SEMH through offering a multidisciplinary assessment and identification with the local area. It is proposed that the school will also provide outreach support which will focus on building capacity in mainstream settings. This outreach support which is currently missing across the Tees Valley will enable greater number of pupils with SEMH to be educated in mainstream settings and will ultimately reduce out of Local Authority placements.

This new Tees Valley Free School will provide training for aspiring teachers through the specialist initial teacher training programme which will be based at the school. This will build capacity and expertise across the Tees Valley area. The school will be a Beacon of Excellence. Parents want more localised provision, their children to be in their local community, greater access to therapeutic services and a local one stop access point. The new Tees Valley special school will only be 30 minutes' travel time from the 5LAs and parents would have more localised support.

*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.*

The vision for the new Tees Valley SEMH Free School, is to provide specialist support for the identified group of pupils and to build capacity and skills in mainstream settings to meet need. Also, to ensure early identification of need and assess need on a multi-disciplinary basis. The establishing of a free school would allow for the education of students to be more centrally achieved within the Tees valley area. Following consultations with parents and carers such provision and location would be reflective of the expressed wishes and feelings of the families. In addition to meeting the needs of the students such provision would achieve best value for the public purse.

The increase in the number of students who require therapeutic intervention and the need for CAMHs intervention is significant in the Tees Valley reflecting the national picture. This new Special Free School provision will meet need more effectively and work in partnership with current education providers, partner agencies and families alike. This would reduce the need for students to travel further afield across the north east to access educational placements. The services accessible in the school would provide a holistic approach to meeting need.

The Tees Valley LAs are undertaking extensive consultation and reviews of SEND provision in each location. Collectively across the Tees Valley we have approximately 200 children and young people who are placed in specialist provision away from their families, friends and community. These numbers are projected to grow based on local and national trend data. The cost of out of area provision is having a significant impact on all local authorities High Needs block funding.

Across the Tees Valley parents report that the transition and outcomes for their children to Post 16 provision are often poor. This is reinforced by the need for a greater choice in local opportunities for their children to allow continued development into independence, adulthood and employment.

The Tees Valley proposal will enhance the current offer within the graduated response in each area and existing specialist provision. The Special Free School would provide capacity for those students with the most complex needs offering a multi –disciplinary response to need.

It is proposed that the school staff will provide outreach support to schools in the area, being able to provide a multidisciplinary response. Thus, increasing the confidence, skill set and capacity to meet the need of students with SEMH needs across the spectrum within mainstream education. Such approaches will support the movement of students back into a mainstream setting as and when appropriate.

*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*

The new Tees Valley Free School will provide training for aspiring teachers through the specialist initial teacher training programme which will be based at the school. This will build capacity and expertise across the Tees Valley area. Multidisciplinary staff will also pursue further training at the Free School thus developing a consistent and coordinated approach across education, health and care. The school will be viewed as a beacon of excellence.

Parents want more localised provision, their children to be in their local community, greater access to therapeutic services and a local one stop access point. The new Tees Valley special school will be at most 30 minutes' travel time from the five LAs and parents would be able to access more localised support.

The new Tees Valley Free School in Redcar and Cleveland will complement all the above by providing specialist and targeted interventions and educational provision for students with some of the most complex needs and ensure mainstream settings develop their skills and knowledge through the development and implementation of outreach and staff training.

*Provision for children with special educational needs, and the outcomes for pupils, across the local authority and how you expect trusts to support this.*

## **SECTION FOUR: THE PROPOSED LOCATION AND SITE**

This section describes the provisional site.

<b>Full address and full postcode</b>	This vacant site opposite the fire station on Alexandra Road, Grangetown, Redcar & Cleveland, TS6 7DB
<b>Size of site</b>	7.7 hectares
<b>Further details on site (for example, current use/your reasons for choosing it/further developments (e.g. housing) planned for area</b>	<p>The proposal is for a site in Redcar and Cleveland which lies in the centre of the Tees Valley with good links to the four other local authorities. Most students who attend the new school will be transported there and there are good transport links provided via the A66.</p> <p>This vacant site consists of 7.7ha the site, which is generously sized in relation to the requirements of the proposed school.</p> <p>The site is located 3.5 miles from Middlesbrough College and 4.7 miles from Redcar and Cleveland College and 7.5 from Stockton Riverside College. All of them deliver further and higher education to students throughout the Tees Valley region.</p>