

# **Special free school Proposer engagement event**

**Sans Souci**  
21 May 2019

# Special free school Proposer engagement event

## Agenda

- About Solihull
- *Solihull Academy – working with SMBC*
- Background and vision
- Break
- *New Schools Network*
- Location and funding
- Panel questions and answers
- Next steps and summary

# Special free school Proposer engagement event

## About Solihull



# **Solihull Academy**

## **Working with Solihull Council**

(Principal, Solihull Academy)

# Special free school

## Background and vision

(Assistant Director, Learning and Achievement)

(Team Leader, School Place Planning)

(Manager, Specialist Inclusion Support Service)

(Principal Educational Psychologist)

# Special free school

## Proposer engagement event

### Context

- Whole service planning
  - Mainstream inclusion
  - EHC plan processes
  - Provision planning
- Future relationship with Solihull Council
- The **autism centre of excellence**

# Special free school

## **Proposer engagement event**

### **Autism centre of excellence**

- What is the autism centre of excellence?
- Vision for the centre of excellence
- Progress to date
- Initial multi-agency steering group
- What next?

# Special free school

## Proposer engagement event

### Current SEND provision in Solihull

- 5 special schools (including 1 special academy)  
*with 638.4 places*
- 4 secondary additionally resourced provisions  
*with 89 places*
- 5 primary additionally resource provisions  
*with 58 places*



# Special free school

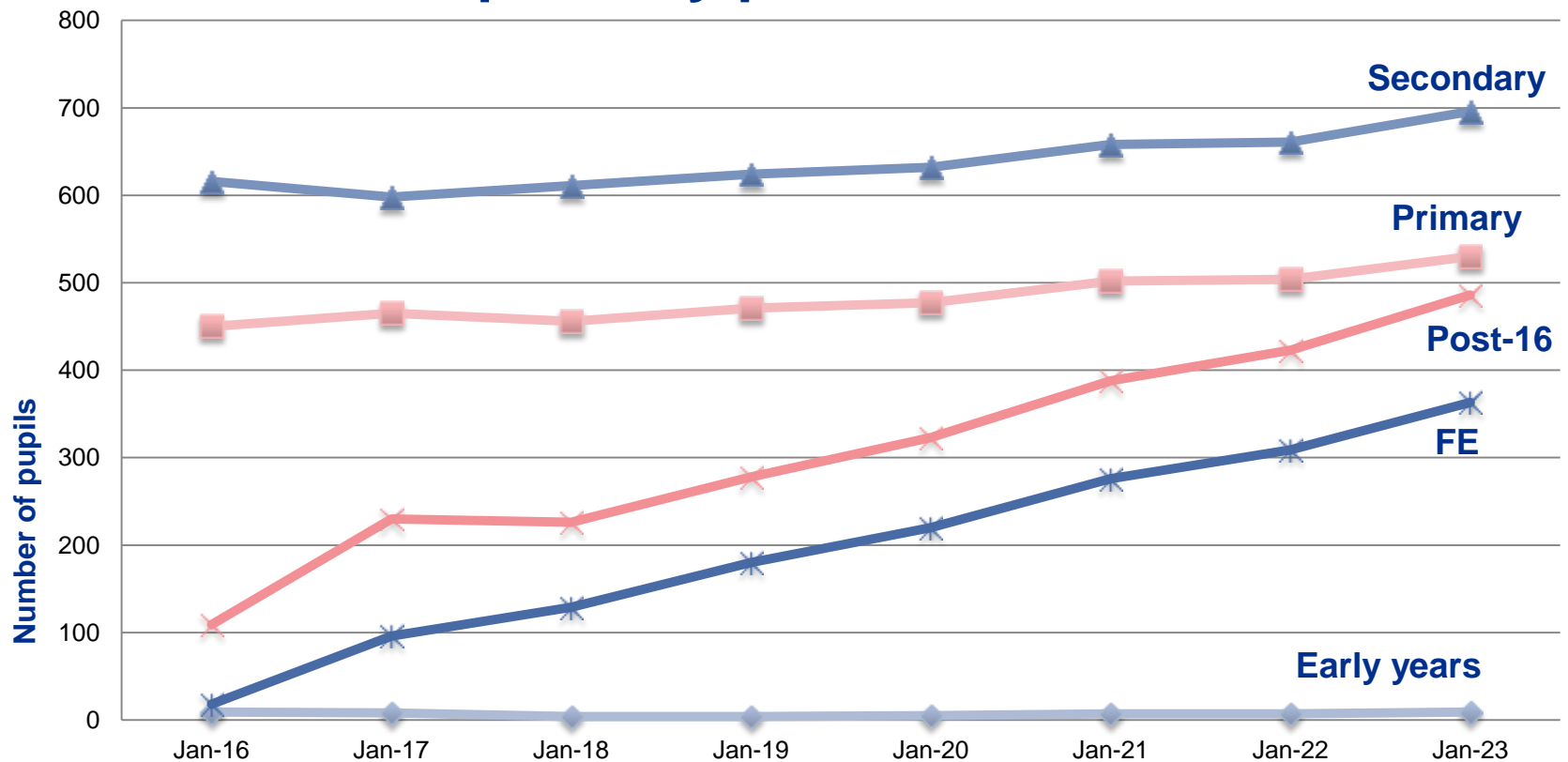
## **Proposer engagement event**

### **SEND school place commissioning strategy**

- Provides evidence base for future SEND provision planning
- Basis for working with schools and partners to develop new provision
- Outlines our principles for developing new SEND provision
- Seeks to embed a spend to save model
- Introduced an annual commissioning cycle

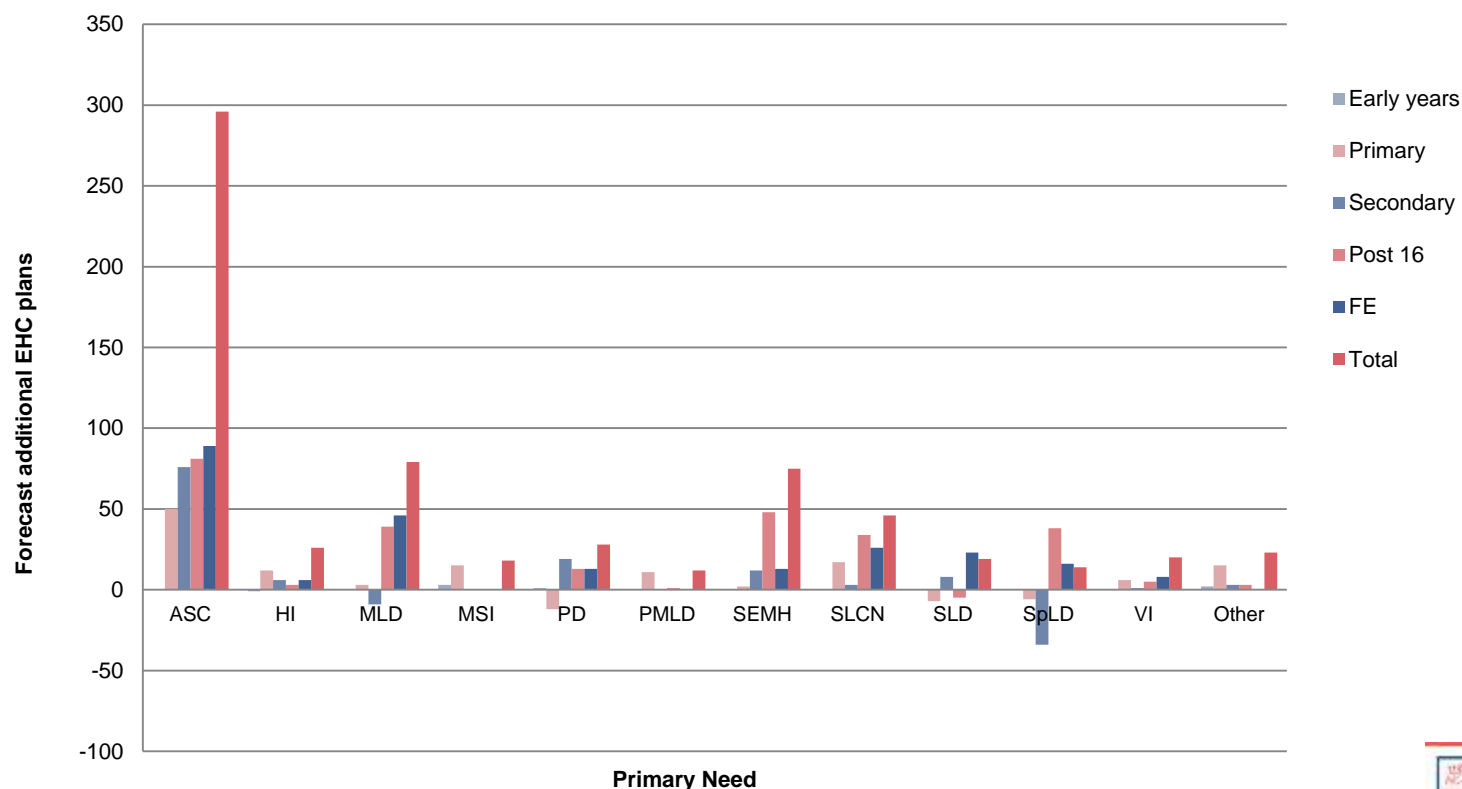
# Special free school Proposer engagement event

## Increase in EHC plans by phase 2016 to 2023



# Special free school Proposer engagement event

## Forecast additional EHC plans at 2023 by primary need



# Special free school

## Proposer engagement event

### Priorities for provision development

- Establish a free school with a focus around autism with 100 places age 7 to 16.
- Create autism enhanced provision in secondary schools across the borough
- Create SEMH additionally-resourced provision for primary in north Solihull
- Further develop post-16 collaboration (with Solihull College) in south Solihull
- Explore growing demand for SLD key stage 1 and early years
- Consider the development of Post-16 autism and SEMH provision

# Special free school

## Proposer engagement event

### Key issues in Solihull

- At January 2019, there were –
  - 155 pupils with an EHC plan, where autism is their primary need, are placed in out-of-borough provision
  - 124 (80%) placed in specialist and/or independent provision
- Forecast growth shows that demand for specialist provision will continue to grow
- Growth cannot be managed in existing provision in Solihull, so number of pupils travelling outside of Solihull will continue to increase
- This growth is financially unsustainable

# Special free school

## Proposer engagement event

### Special free school

- Focus on autism and associated high-level social emotional mental health (SEMH) needs
- 100 places
- Year 3 to year 11 (Ages 7 to 16)
- There will be –
  - 30 key stage 2 places
  - 40 key stage 3 places
  - 30 key stage 4 places
- Access will be by an EHC plan
- Post-16 partnership with Solihull College

# Special free school

## Proposer engagement event

### Mainstream inclusion

*Solihull banding document (2016-17)*

- Defines the four areas of need from the *SEND Code of Practice (2015)*
- Graduated approach
- Outlines expectations for how needs should be met
- Provides guidance at each banding level
- Explains funding for each banding level

Band	Support within a mainstream setting
0-1	Support within a mainstream setting
2	Mainstream setting with an EHC plan
3-5	Specialist settings with an EHC plan

# Special free school

## **Proposer engagement event**

### **Training for schools to support early identification and inclusion**

- 2016-17 – training commissioned for all schools and settings
- Autism Education Trust (AET) tier 1, 2 and 3 training offered to all schools and early years settings
- All schools have a trained AET lead who has completed all tiers of training
- Termly AET leads group has been growing where staff support each other, share ideas and receive training
- Early years group - 20 leads across Solihull



# Special free school

## Proposer engagement event

### Embedding autism-friendly practice

- All schools have tier 1 training updates every three years
- Free tier 1, 2 and 3 training for new staff
- All schools have an AET action plan (reviewed annually)
- These developments were part of the **all-age autism strategy**
- Next steps
  - Develop and embed the use of AET tools e.g. progression framework
  - Setting and reviewing school action plan targets

# Special free school

## Proposer engagement event

### Inclusion charter

- Co-producing with schools, settings, children/young people and parent groups
- Will form basis of Solihull's revised inclusion strategy
- Six key themes being identified as key to inclusion
- Workshops with representatives from schools, settings and parent groups
- 20 key themes emerging as the foundation of a charter
- Every setting will be asked to sign-up

# Special free school

## Proposer engagement event

### Inclusion charter – emerging themes

- We seek to understand, listen and respect each other
- We value and support emotional wellbeing for all
- We welcome all children and communities
- We support each other to be confident to be inclusive
- We keep our promises and act consistently with the law
- Inclusion is at the heart of financial planning
- We seek to identify and support needs early
- We understand the importance of all transitions and plan carefully for success

# Special free school

## Proposer engagement event

### Developing specialist provision for children with autism

- Autism intense monitoring (AIM) team
- Part of the graduated approach
- Enable children to be successful within a mainstream setting
- Additionally-resourced provision for children with autism
  - within mainstream schools
  - **two** for primary aged pupils (14 places each)
  - **one** for secondary (30 places)
- Increasing caseload

# Special free school

## Proposer engagement event

### Cohort for free school

- Following graduated approach, it is identified through the EHC plan assessment process or annual review meeting, that the provision to meet the needs of a child or young person with a diagnosis of autism, is small group teaching from an autism specialist for the majority of their time in school
- Currently the children and young people who are going to out-of-borough (OOB) provision, or being educated through AP/ESCOS/EHE

# Special free school

## Proposer engagement event

### Cohort for free school (continued)

- The data indicates that it is the group of children with autism and a co-occurring high level SEMH needs that requires teaching within smaller environments
- Currently looking at use of the AET progression tool and SCERTs to support the identification process as part of the graduated approach.

# Special free school

## Proposer engagement event

### Cohort – Background Information

January 2019

- 41% of pupils with an EHCP had autism as a primary need
- 124 pupils with autism attend independent or specialist out-of-borough schools

Survey of out-of-borough pupils February 2019

- 46% of pupils with autism (or related need)
- 32 male and 6 female
- Key stage 1 and key stage 2 – **6 pupils**
- Key stage 3 and key stage 4 – **27 pupils**
- Key stage 5 – **5 pupils**

# Special free school

## Proposer engagement event

### Cohort – out-of-borough pupils (February 2019)

- Primary need – autism 21 (55%) and SEMH 13 (32%)
- 79% have a diagnosis of autism
- 29% have been permanently excluded
- 55% have had two or more fixed term exclusions
- 95% have had attendance issues
- 68% have attended five or more schools
- The presentation of pupils ranges from those that are highly anxious to those with very challenging behaviour, in many cases elements of both.



# Special free school

## Proposer engagement event

### Pupil A (secondary pupil)

- Primary need – autism
- Previously child missing education
- LAC with many moves of area whilst in care
- Delayed language skills, cognition and learning needs
- Functioning below age related expectations
- Motor skill difficulties
- Challenging behaviour towards other children
- Complex and persistent difficulties

# Special free school

## Proposer engagement event

### Pupil B (secondary pupil)

- 1 Permanent exclusion and 10 fixed-term exclusions
- Primary need – SEMH
- Secondary need – SLCN needs
- Autism assessment incomplete. Tests indicate cognition and learning needs. Low vocabulary skills
- Challenges with social skills, struggles to develop and maintain relationships
- Difficulty with emotion regulation
- Complex sensory needs
- *Socially vulnerable child*

# Special free school

## **Proposer engagement event**

### **Pupil C (primary pupil)**

- Primary need – autism
- Secondary needs cognition, learning and SEMH
- Complex sensory needs (noise, crowds)
- Challenges with continence
- Anxiety impacts on ability to engage in social interactions
- Can be verbally and physically aggressive

# Special free school

## Proposer engagement event

### Pupil D (primary pupil)

- Primary need – autism
- Secondary need – SEMH, cognition and learning
- 3 fixed term exclusions
- EHC assessment in process
- Challenges with emotion regulation
- Functioning below age-related expectation in mathematics, above age in English
- Unsafe behaviours such as running away, climbing high, locking self in room trying to harm others
- Social anxieties (novel situations)
- Sensory issues (noise, crowds) wears ear defenders. Seeks sensory input e.g. stroking carpet, fidgeting, chew, pull skin

# Special free school Break

# Special school competitions

New  
Schools  
Network

# Agenda

---

- Introductions
- About New Schools Network
- Special free schools: the basics
- The special free school application process
- How New Schools Network can help you
- Questions

# About New Schools Network

---

- Independent charity, founded in 2009
- Supports free school applicants and open/approved free schools
- Advocates for free school policy
- Worked with around 70% open/approved free schools
- Free services



# Free schools: the basics

---

What are they?

Who sets them up?

How are the  
funded?

Freedoms

# Free schools: the basics

---

## Do...

Offer education for pupils  
aged 4 - 19

Be open to all pupils,  
regardless of their faith,  
ability or social background

Held accountable through  
Ofsted inspections and  
exam results

## Do not...

Receive more funding than  
other state schools

Get set up by 'anybody'

# Special and AP free schools: the basics

---

- There are 34 open special free schools in England
  - There are 54 that have been approved to open
  - Only 19 have been inspected by Ofsted: 17 of which are Good or Outstanding
- 
- There are 42 open AP free schools in England
  - There are 11 that have been approved to open
  - Only 32 have been inspected by Ofsted: 26 of which are Good or Outstanding

# Special free school application process

# Special and AP application process

## Bid

### The LA

- Determines key features
- Prepares evidence of need
- Identifies potential site
- Submits a bid to the DfE

### The DfE:

- Approves LAs bid documents
- Publishes specification and application criteria

## Application

- Prepare an application with free support from NSN
- Submit application to the DfE and LA
- Attend an interview with the LA and DfE
- Approval from the DfE

## Pre-opening phase

- Enrol on to NSN Delivery Programme
- Recruit staff, develop policies and curriculum, recruit pupils
- Support and funding from DfE
- Sign funding agreement

## Open phase

- Continue relationship with NSN
- Build up to capacity
- Ofsted inspection with three years

# Application timeline



# Lessons learnt

# Developing a vision

---

A clear vision will act as the basis for all other activities related to your free school:

Vision

Building a team

Application development

Engaging the community



# Presenting your vision

---

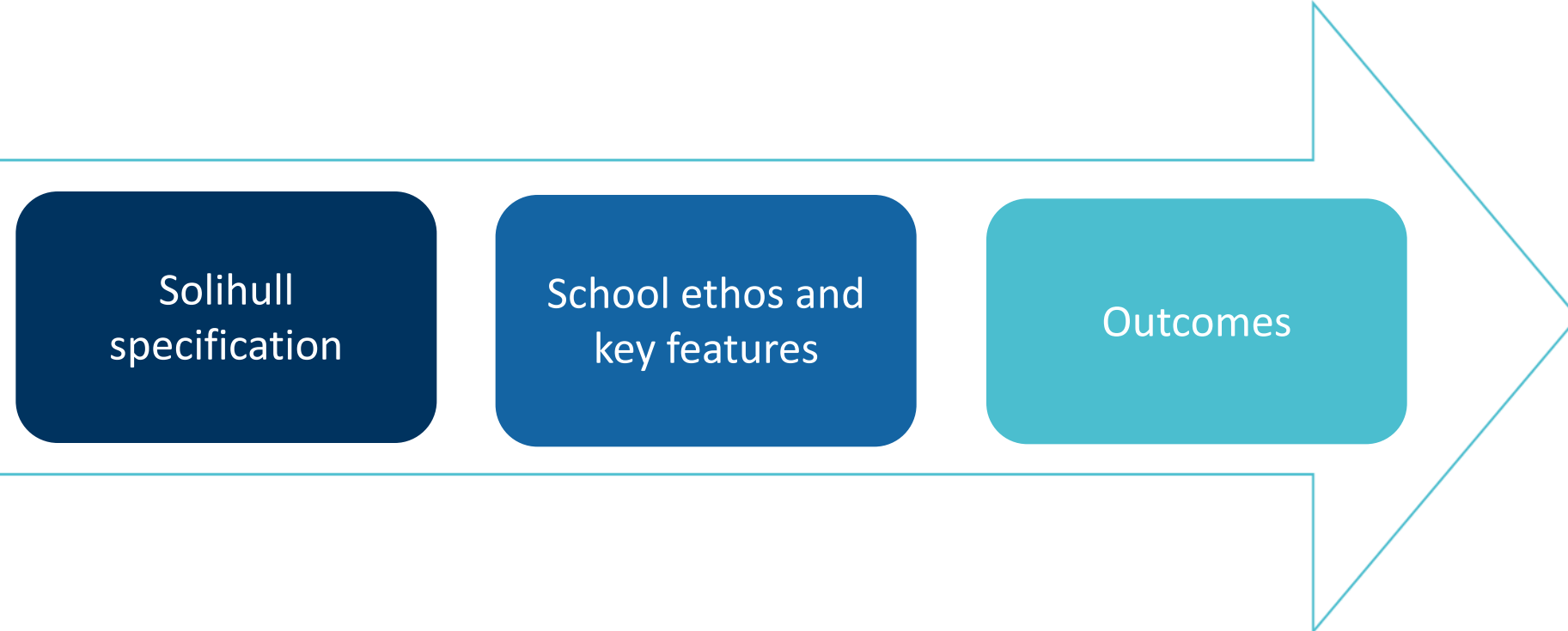
## **The DfE states that all applicants must:**

- explain your own vision for the proposed school, and how it will deliver the local authority's specification;
- explain how that vision comes across in your curriculum approach and approaches to meeting pupils' special educational needs; and
- ensure that your vision is evidence-based and consistent with the rest of your application – your overall application should clearly show the plan for implementing your vision.

# The vision

---

Developing a clear vision involves thinking about these key elements:



Solihull  
specification

School ethos and  
key features

Outcomes

# Importance of a strong team

---

Applying for, setting up and opening a free school is an extremely demanding process. It's essential that you have a strong, committed team with a wide range of skills working on the project.

Some of the challenges your team will face include:

Engaging with stakeholders  
and commissioners

Building a financial plan for  
the school

Designing a curriculum

Managing the project as a  
whole

# Establishing your curriculum and ethos

---

## **You must have the following:**

- Education expertise relevant to the type of school you want to set up
- Finance expertise
- Governance expertise

## **You should have the following:**

- Project management expertise
- Marketing/communications expertise

## **Necessary for pre-opening:**

- HR expertise
- ICT expertise
- Buildings and sites
- Legal expertise
- Business/start up experience



# How New Schools Network can help you

**New  
Schools  
Network**

# NSN Development Programme

---

Feedback we have had from groups who have been on the programme has been overwhelmingly positive, and approval rates for groups on the programme shows its success.

100% of those who have received this additional support in the past said it was helpful

You are 50% more likely to be invited to interview.

11 of the 14 successful free schools from the local authority-led special free school round wave 1 received NSN support.

“The Development Programme was excellent and offered appropriate support, challenges and rigour.”

“We couldn’t have done it without you! Thank you so much for keeping us on track and motivated.”

# How NSN can help you

## Development Programme

A combination of the following:

- A named personal NSN Adviser
- A personalised support plan
- Written feedback on draft applications
- Specialist meetings
- Networking with other free schools
- Help marketing your school

## Support for all groups

- An hour long 1-1 meeting with one of our Advisers
- Advice from the team via phone and email
- A wide range of resources on our website.

# Enrolling onto the DP

---

- Book a 1-1 meeting with an adviser through our website.
- Submit an enrolment form through our website

## Contact NSN

Email: [info@newschoolsnetwork.org](mailto:info@newschoolsnetwork.org)  
Phone: 020 7952 8558  
Website: <https://www.newschoolsnetwork.org/>



# Questions?

New  
Schools  
Network

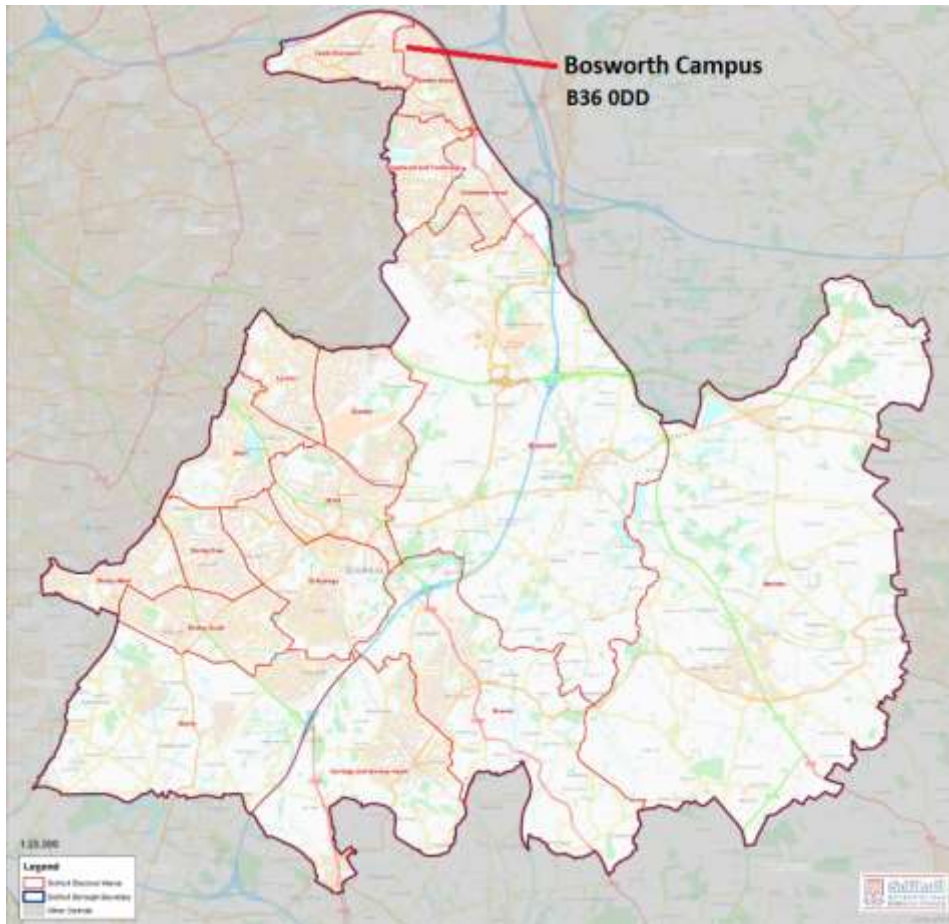
# Special free school

## Location and funding

(Capital Development Manager – Regeneration)  
(Head of Access and Development)

# Special free school Proposer engagement event

## Proposed site location



# Special free school Proposer engagement event

## Bosworth campus

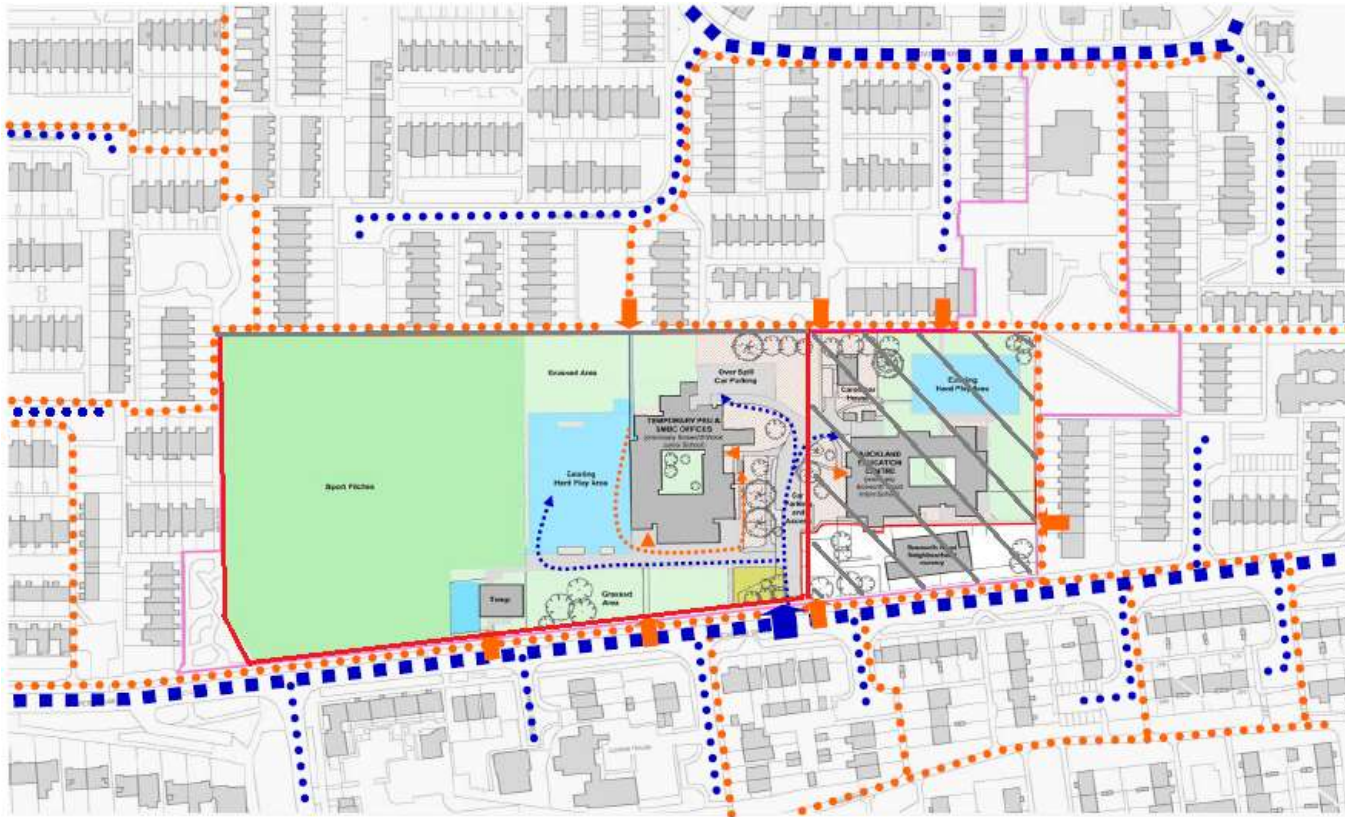




# Special free school

## Proposer engagement event

### Location and building



Plan identifying the primary vehicular and pedestrian routes to and around the Bosworth site

# Special free school

## **Proposer engagement event**

### **Developing a control option**

The DFE (in full consultation with Solihull Council) will –

- Propose the boundary for the site
- Remodel or new building?
- Complete a feasibility study
- Define the indicative project budget
- Secretary of State sign-off

# Special free school Proposer engagement event

## Special free school funding

- Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)
  - Funding deducted from local authorities' high needs allocations
  - Paid directly to schools
- DFE (ESFA) base funding – £10,000 per place
- Solihull Council top-up funding – £10,000 per pupil (in bid)

# Special free school Proposer engagement event

## Special free school funding

### Current modelling

- 25% to 35% of initial pupils will be relocated from existing placements at independent schools
- Planning starts now with the annual review process
- Trust to support '*selling the new school*'



# Special free school Proposer engagement event

## Special free school funding in Solihull

- Solihull operates a banding system for funding
- For most special schools we operate 2 bands
- Current bands are –

	MLD (170 places)		SLD (100 places)		SEMH (80 places)	
Top-up rates (banding values)	<b>4a</b>	<b>4aE</b>	<b>4b</b>	<b>4bE</b>	<b>4c</b>	<b>4cE</b>
2019-20	<b>£1,976</b>	<b>£6,136</b>	<b>£9,412</b>	<b>£13,832</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£14,196</b>

# Special free school Proposer engagement event

## Special School Funding (DFE)

*A guide to new special free school revenue funding 2019 to 2020 May 2019 (DfE)*

The following funding will be available to special free schools upon opening:

- per-place (FTE) funding
- commissioner top-up funding
- business rates grant
- teachers pay grant
- teachers' pension employer contribution grant
- universal infant free school meals
- PE and sport premium
- post-opening grant

# Special free school

## **Proposer engagement event**

### **Further information**

- Top-up funding
- Special free schools' continuing financial viability
- First year place funding
- Future place funding

# Special free school

## **Proposer engagement event**

### **Further information**

- Top-up funding
- Special free schools' continuing financial viability
- First year place funding
- Future place funding

# **Special free school**

## **Panel questions and answers**

# **Special free school**

## **Next steps and summary**

(Director of Children's Services)  
(Assistant Director, Learning and Achievement)