



BEDFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL



Department
for Education

Application Form for Proposers applying to establish a New Free Special School for Pupils with Social, Emotional & Mental Health (SEMH) Needs

June 2026

Overview

This application form should be used, in conjunction with the published specification for the new school and the 'free school presumption' advice, to apply for a new school via the presumption route – i.e. where a local authority has invited proposals to open a new school. This new school would be deemed a free school. You should use this form to provide all the necessary information and evidence for your proposal.

If you would like further information or wish to discuss your application, please contact the local authority using the contact details set out in the specification.

Please note that the LA led free school presumption route is a different route to the DfE's central free school programme. Further information on the central free school programme can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/opening-a-free-school>.



This form MUST be completed using Adobe Acrobat Reader.

Please return your completed application form to Bedford Borough Council via email to **schools.consultation@bedford.gov.uk** by **23:59** on **23rd August 2026**.

New SEMH Special School

An application to establish a new special free school in Queens Park, Bedford to open in spring 2027

Section A: Applicant Details

Name of Organisation:

Name:

Postal Address and Postcode:

Email Address:

Phone Number:

How would you describe your organisation?

Section B: Applicant Experience

Please outline how your organisation meets each of the assessment criteria outlined in the specification and below (*up to 500 words per criterion*).

1. Evidence of the trust having successfully managed self-delivered capital projects:
2. Evidence of successful delivery of an existing SEMH special school, including evidence of education outcomes and attendance within existing provisions:

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3. Evidence of multi-agency partnership working to support children, young people, and their families:

4. Evidence of working in partnership with schools, key health services and CAMHS to support systemic positive outcomes for children and young people with SEMH needs:

5. Evidence of high standards of leadership, management, and governance, including a commitment to staff welfare, training, and development:

6. Evidence of offering a broad and balanced educational curriculum that enhances education outcomes for this cohort of students inclusive of vocational pathways to support post 16 pathways in key stage 4:

7. Evidence of a genuine commitment and desire to work in partnership with Bedford Borough Council to meet the needs of children and young people with SEMH needs in the Borough:

Section C: Visions and Ethos

Please explain how your vision and ethos meet the requirements in the published **specification** (up to 750 words):



Please save the filled-in form and email to **schools.consultation@bedford.gov.uk** as an attachment.

Finding out more

If you would like further copies, a large-print copy or information about us and our services, please telephone or write to us at our address below.

Për Informacion

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Informacja

برای اطلاع

Za Informacije

Per Informazione

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Education, SEND & School Infrastructure

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