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| Location: | The new Free School will be located on a c3.54 hectare acre site in the Hampden Fields development and is presently scheduled to open in September 2027[[1]](#footnote-1), subject to statutory consents and construction market conditions. Attached is a masterplan of the development showing where the new primary school will be built.The Development approved in June 2021 is on land to the south of Aylesbury comprising eventually 3000 homes and will include two primary schools. A second primary school is due to be delivered later in the development when demand is expected to exceed the capacity of the first primary school. |
| Context and need for school places | The proposed school will be built as 3fe in size to accommodate demand from the Hampden Fields development, with a 90 place nursery and 18 place SEND unit. Buckinghamshire Council (BC) has consulted on the Aylesbury Vale Local Plan which proposes when completed, approximately 30,000 homes to 2033 which includes Hampden Fields (3000 homes) as well as a number of other major developments in Aylesbury: Berryfields (3000 homes), Kingsbrook (2450 homes), , Woodlands (1100 homes), SW Aylesbury (1400 homes) and SE Aylesbury (1600 homes).   |
| Phase/Age Range and Capacity | The school that is the subject of this competition is a new one and is not replacing an existing school. The school will be a 3fe primary school (630 places) for children from 4 years of age to 11 years of age, with a separate 90 place nursery for ages 2-3, catering for mixed education, building up over time to its full capacity. The school will have an 18 place SEND unit which would be included in the 630 places in the main school.  |
| Opening date | BC would seek to open the primary school on 1 September 2027 subject to statutory consents and construction market conditions. |
| Admission Arrangements | The school will build up over a period to ensure the viability of local schools. Initially the school will open in Sept 2027 with up to 60 children in Reception and 30 into both Years 1 and 2. It is anticipated that the school will then increase its admission number to 90 in Sept 2030 subject to pupil demand. The school will then build up over the following six years to a capacity of 630 primary places and 90 nursery places. This arrangement can be reviewed with BC prior to the school opening, subject to demand for primary school places from the development.All proposers will be expected to follow the DfE School Admission Code and the School Admission Appeals Code. Proposers will be expected to participate in the BC co-ordinated scheme for admissions and the Council’s in-year admissions procedure. The 18 places in the SEND Unit will form part of the 630 capacity of the school (i.e., pupils allocated to the Unit would be included in the school’s admission number of 90). |
| Special Educational Needs | The school will be expected to be fully inclusive and to educate children with special educational needs and disabilities in line with legislation (Children and Families Act, 2014).The school will have an 18 place SEND Unit for students of mixed education, who have an EHCP that identifies Communication and Interaction (Autism) as the primary area of need. The Unit will open on the 1 September 2027, or whenever an opening date is agreed, but the Council will work with the sponsor to increase admissions to the unit over a period of time. The capacity in the Unit will build up over a period to a maximum size to enable 18 students to be accommodated in it. It is envisaged that pupils attending the Unit would spend most of their time based within the Unit (as the Unit will be self-contained with its own outside play area) but they will also be able to join in with parts of the school day where appropriate. The successful sponsor will be required to sign an SLA with BC for the provision of the SEND Unit. The school would be responsible for the quality and outcomes of the provision.  How this is provided could be negotiated, however children attending this provision would be a part of the school.Admissions for the units will be managed by the LA’s iSENd service under the Children and Families Act 2014. Trusts cannot be their own admitting authorities for the unit.One of the key aims of the Unit is to enable SEND pupils to access a mainstream offer, whilst accessing specific specialist support for their communication and interactions needs. Without specific provision, historically, there have been increased requests from families to attend special schools both within and outside Buckinghamshire.The unit will be funded in line with other ARPs / Units within BC. This includes a placement fee and top-up funding that comes with a student’s EHCP. Placement fee will always be in place, but the top-up funding will be allocated according to when children attend the Unit.  Placement funding should cover base costs, while top-up covers individual support per pupil. |
| Catchment area | The catchment area for the new school will cover the whole of the Hampden Fields development, as agreed with the successful bidder, based on distance/transport links, feeder schools and community/physical boundaries. However, in time BC may wish to review the catchment area of the new school with the successful sponsor, and the successful sponsor would be expected to be willing to take part in such negotiations. |
| School building and design | The school will be procured and delivered by BC and will then be transferred by BC to the successful sponsor on a 125 year lease. The school will be built to current Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) Standard Specification and in line with DfE Building Bulletin 103 requirements for primary schools. The new school will be a modern design offering high quality facilities for the benefit of the school and the wider Hampden Fields community.When up to capacity, the main school will accommodate 630 children, including the children in the 18 place SEND unit. There will also be a separate 90 place nursery for pupils aged 2-3.The design process for the school has yet to commence but may have done so by the time the successful sponsor has been appointed. Bidders will need to confirm that they will accept the building as contractually “practically complete”.Buckinghamshire Council will not accept any alterations the Trust might seek to make to the design. However, the successful sponsor will be able to be fully involved in the design process and delivery of the school prior to opening.There are various encumbrances affecting the title. Further details of which will be provided following written request. |
| Revenue funding: | A furniture and equipment allocation will be provided by BC in agreement with the successful sponsor or will be provided through the construction contract. |
| Equalities Impact Assessment | BC has carried out an Equalities Impact Assessment and confirms that the new school will not have a negative impact on public or service users and that no groups or local schools will be adversely affected by the new school. |
| Start-up costs | The cost of the school build will be met by BC through S106 funding, and Basic Need.BC will provide a budget, currently £74,700 for start-up costs which would initially be allocated from January 2027 *(subject to opening date agreement*), before the school opens to allow for the recruitment of a Headteacher and then the appointment of appropriate staff.After the opening of the school the diseconomies of scale funding as the school builds its number on roll to capacity will be in line with the Council’s agreed growth funding criteria. The Council will fund 30 pupils per class in the first year of opening and then 27 for all subsequent years for those classes for a maximum of 3 years.  The Council also provides funding of 30 per class for all new reception classes after the first year of opening until all year groups are open, these classes do not have any further guaranteed funding.The successful sponsor might be eligible to apply for DfE Project Development Grant. Details are on the DfE website.After opening the new school’s annual budget allocation will be funded directly by the ESFA. |
| Application process and assessment criteria: | Only applications submitted by the published **deadline of 5pm on Friday 9 June 2023** using the appropriate BC application form will be considered for evaluation.Bidders must ensure that they are on the DfE’s approved sponsor list: any potential bidders, who are not on the approved list, must contact the South East, Regional Director (RD) and arrange to go through the DfE’s approval process. A potential bidder can apply to become an approved sponsor at the same time as submitting an application to sponsor a presumptive free school. You must contact the RD/DfE before submitting a bid to BC.All bids received will be evaluated against the criteria set out in the application form and the key criteria set out by the DfE, which are strategic vision, educational capacity and performance, financial planning and operational capacity and governance. A short-list of bidders for interview will be drawn up. Short-listed applicants will then be interviewed by a panel made up of the Cabinet Member for Education and Children’s Services, DfE representative (if available), Corporate Director Children’s Services, Director of Education, Head of Achievement and Learning, and the elected member for the Hampden Fields area.After the panel interviews and BC has agreed on its preferred bidder, details of all bids and the Council’s recommended bidder will be sent to the RD. The RD on behalf of the Secretary of State will consider, with the Advisory Board, the Council’s assessments before deciding which bidder is in the best position to take forward the new school. The RD will then inform the LA and the successful bidder of the decision, and the LA will inform unsuccessful proposers. |
| Timeline for process | * Invitation to submit a proposal published on 17 04 2023
* Deadline for bids to be received 5pm on Friday 9 06 2023
* BC informs DfE and RD of bids received by 12 06 2023
* Bids evaluated and due diligence undertaken by LA/DfE/RD by 21 July 2023
* Shortlisted bidders for interview will then be notified by BC and invited to panel interviews in September 2023
* Details of all bids received including BC preferred bidder submitted to DfE/RD in September 2023
* RD makes decision on successful bidder by October/November 2023
* BC will expect the successful Trust to join their project board managing the opening of the school.
* The successful bidder must hold a 6 week consultation as set out in Section 10 of the Academies Act 2010, before the DfE funding agreement can be signed.
* Primary school opens September 2027, subject to the conditions laid out previously.
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| Requests for clarification or more information | * Please contact Paula Campbell-Balcombe, Commissioner Schools, School Commissioning, Buckinghamshire Council on 01296 382896 or via: paula.campbell-balcombe@buckinghamshire.gov.uk
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1. The S106 agreement for the Hampden Fields development endeavours to make provision for the primary school at the start of the academic year following occupation of the 350th home (or such later date as may be appropriate) – which based on the current housing trajectory is estimated to be September 2027. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)