

The Different types of free school

	<i>Mainstream</i>	<i>16-19</i>	<i>Alternative Provision</i>	<i>Special</i>
<i>Pupil cohort</i>	The majority of pupils will attend a mainstream school.	Pupils aged 16-19.	Pupils who are not thriving in a mainstream school. This is usually for behavioural reasons but could be for a variety of reasons, including medical needs.	Pupils with a special educational need (SEN). This may be with or without an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
<i>Admissions</i>	<p>Parents apply for a place for their child in the same way as for maintained schools. Places are allocated in line with the school's admissions policy, which must comply with the Schools Admissions Code.</p> <p>The free school is the admissions authority and is responsible for the admissions process.</p>	<p>Must have fair and transparent and objective admissions arrangements, but these do not need to comply with the Schools Admissions Code.</p> <p>These criteria can be selective and can admit pupils on the basis of GCSE grades or other criteria, such as auditions. You should describe your admissions arrangements in your free school application.</p>	<p>Admission is by referral from commissioners (for example, schools and local authorities). The school will have a referrals panel who will decide if the school can cater to the pupil's needs. If the pupil is admitted the school will pay the top-up fee for the pupil – please see below information on funding.</p> <p>Please be aware that you will have to describe your admissions (referrals) processes as part of a free school application.</p>	<p>Admitting pupils with an EHCP: Parents whose children have an EHCP can request that the free school is named on their child's EHCP, but the final decision about which school to name rests with the LA.</p> <p>Admitting pupils without an EHCP: Parents can apply directly to the school, but their child must have the SEN of the type for which the school is designated, and must be able to provide proof, e.g. a letter from a medical professional. If the free school is oversubscribed on this basis, the oversubscription criteria of the School Admissions Code will apply. Pupils without an EHCP apply as with a mainstream school.</p>
<i>Curriculum</i>	Must be broad and balanced, with an appropriate focus on English, maths and science until the age of 16. It must meet the needs of students so that they are prepared for further or higher education, training or employment. While many free schools will employ teachers with QTS, the only teacher that is required to have QTS is the SENCO.	Must meet the needs and interests of students, but there are no compulsory subjects that must be offered or taught. Can be highly specialised, although this must be justified.	Must be broad and balanced but not in the same way as mainstream – it must include English, maths and science as part of an appropriate, varied and stretching curriculum for the expected pupil cohort. The expectation is that pupils will successfully transition back into mainstream education, or onto employment or training.	<p>For pupils with an EHCP: Must be viable and appropriate for their specific needs, and in line with the requirements as set out in the EHCP. It should cover developing literacy and numeracy skills, or the functional elements of English, maths, ICT, scientific literacy and personal and social development.</p> <p>For pupils without an EHCP: Must be a broad and balanced curriculum as with a mainstream school until the age of 16. All members of teaching staff must have QTS.</p>
<i>Funding</i>	<p>Free schools are legally academies so funding is the same as for academies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic per-pupil funding is according to the local authority (LA) funding formula and is comparable to that received by maintained schools in the LA. Additional funding related to deprivation (the pupil premium) is awarded as with maintained schools. Free schools also receive funding for central services that the LA funds for maintained schools (Education Services Grant). They must organise these services themselves. 	<p>Funding is calculated using the Education Funding Agency (EFA) funding formula that incorporates factors including student numbers, student retention, higher cost subjects, disadvantaged students and area costs.</p> <p>This is supplemented by additional funding for high needs students, bursaries and other financial support awarded to individual students.</p>	<p>Pupils are allocated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Per-place funding of £10,000 from the Education Funding Agency An additional amount to meet the costs of provision, as negotiated between the free school and the commissioning body (the LA or a school). This is known as the top-up fee. 	<p>For pupils with an EHCP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Per-place funding of £10,000 from the Education Funding Agency An additional amount to meet the costs of provision, as negotiated between the free school and the commissioning body (the LA). <p>For pupils without an EHCP: Pupils will receive funding based on levels for students with similar SEN without an EHCP in the LA. This would be in line with a pupil with this level of SEN attending a mainstream school in the LA.</p>

Hybrid schools

Arrangements for hybrid schools will be determined on a case-by-case basis. The DfE will enter into a discussion with hybrid schools to decide what funding applies.

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