



**New Schools Network**  
*Delivery Programme*

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Schools  
Network**

# New Schools Network *Delivery Programme*

*NSN's unrivalled knowledge and experience has been informed by its work with over two-thirds of open and approved free school groups throughout the application and pre-opening phases.*

Opening a free school is a challenging, but incredibly rewarding experience. The preopening period is a long and complex process, requiring a large amount of time and expertise. New Schools Network (NSN) can support you through the pre-opening process to help you navigate and complete key tasks, ensuring that your free school project opens successfully.

The NSN Delivery Programme is designed to address the challenges of the rigorous pre-opening process. Whilst proposer groups have a wealth of skills and expertise, the NSN Delivery Programme fills gaps in capacity and capability, providing a range of support options to prepare schools for a successful opening. The elements of the Delivery Programme are outlined in more detail in this brochure.

NSN's exclusive programme of advice and support has been developed to comply with Department for Education (DfE) and Education and Skills Funding Agency guidance. We focus on the areas that our experience shows will provide free schools with the most value in pre-opening. We provide tailored support whether you are newly approved to open a free school or if you are already deep into the pre-opening phase, to all phases and types of free school. Our flexible offer means you can select the services you require at an affordable rate.

Our dynamic team has built a strong reputation for professionalism and expertise. NSN's deep institutional knowledge is supplemented by its team of experienced free school Specialists with track records in delivering complex free school projects. We are here to support you every step of the way.

*The NSN Delivery Programme is designed to address the challenges of the rigorous pre-opening process.*



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*The insight provided by the New Schools Network during the pre-opening phase was invaluable. The team were very approachable and offered transparent guidance which made the process easy, and enjoyable. Thank you to the team, I wouldn't hesitate to work with you again.”*

University of Liverpool Maths School

*NSN can support you through the pre-opening process outlined below, regardless of the phase or type of free school. A named NSN Adviser and our team of Specialists are available to support you at every stage.*

## Project set-up

The set-up of your project is key to achieving the long term success of the school. Expert free school Specialists and NSN staff are here to help you through your project set-up, providing robust advice and quality assurance to make sure you get it right from the start.

### Specialist advisory and quality assurance meetings:

- Guide you through the pre-opening process and support you with expert advice to effectively manage your project and avoid common mistakes.
- Quality assure your suite of project management tools and project plan prior to submission to the DfE.
- NSN will also provide a personalised and robust project plan.



## Project Development Grant (PDG)

You will need to effectively plan and manage the spend of your PDG throughout the life of your project.

### NSN experts will:

- Advise you on the key aspects of financial planning and management throughout pre-opening.
- Ensure that planned spending is essential to school development and offers good value for money.
- Quality assure your PDG budget plan and other pre-opening funding documents to ensure that spending is effective and offers value for money.

**“NSN have provided a very good service and we’ve benefitted greatly from being associated with you.”**

**Woolwich Polytechnic School**

*In addition to a named Advisor and access to our team of Specialists, NSN has extensive resources and guidance available to assist you on your journey. If you would like to discuss our support further and access a price list of Delivery Programme products, please book a call with the team to discuss the specific support you require via [helpdesk@newschoolsnetwork.org](mailto:helpdesk@newschoolsnetwork.org).*

## Site and Buildings

NSN recognises that the process of finding and developing a school site and premises can be a challenging task for schools in pre-opening. Based on NSN's vast experience of free school capital projects, we can support you throughout the site process, from finding a site to opening, to ensure that your site opens successfully and suits your needs. Every aspect of our support has been developed to complement the support provided by local authorities, LocatED and the DfE Free School Capital team.

### How we can help you

- NSN provides a series of advisory Specialist meetings and premium resources to complement the timeline of statutory meetings with stakeholders as shown below. Each provides advice to help you navigate the complex process and delivers detailed feedback on your plans and next steps. These meetings are tailored to the remaining milestones in your project.



## Governance

Shaping your governance structure around a new free school requires careful planning. NSN provides advice and quality assurance on all aspects of your preopening governance, and can complete your governance plan on your behalf.

### Specialist advisory and quality assurance meetings:

- Advise on the key aspects of pre-opening governance, including your proposed governance structure, identification of skills gaps and planning trustee recruitment.
- Test and challenge your drafted governance plan, providing detailed feedback prior to submission to the DfE.

### Governance plan delivery:

- NSN will produce a governance plan on your behalf, complying with DfE requirements and saving your team valuable time in pre-opening.

## Marketing and Pupil Recruitment

You will need to focus on pupil recruitment with an unrelenting focus- maintaining momentum from approval to opening is key.

### Specialist advisory and quality assurance meetings:

- Advise on key features of a successful marketing and recruitment plans, using tried and tested strategies relevant to your context.
- Provide detailed feedback on your marketing plan and materials, giving you the knowledge to turn your plans into applications and pupils in seats.
- NSN will also provide a personalised marketing plan for your school.

### Media training:

- NSN will provide an intensive training session with an experienced media consultant to prepare leaders for media engagement.

## Principal Designate Recruitment

Recruiting a principal designate (PD) is crucial to the success of your free school. NSN is here to support you to attract a high quality PD and ensure that they are fully prepared to lead your new school.

### Specialist advisory and quality assurance meetings:

- NSN will advise you on the key aspects of PD recruitment, providing an understanding of the role and skills required, as well as advice on developing your recruitment plan and materials.
- NSN will test and challenge your recruitment plan and recruitment pack, providing detailed feedback to ensure you attract the highest calibre applicants and successfully induct them.

## Section 10 consultation

NSN Specialists and Advisers can help you to understand the process and requirements of the section 10 consultation, advise and quality assure your plans and materials relevant to your local context, and produce a fully compliant section 10 consultation report on your behalf.

- NSN will provide you with an overview of the section 10 consultation, helping to determine your strategy and consultation materials.
- NSN will provide quality assurance and detailed feedback on all of your consultation materials and project plan.
- Your NSN Adviser will provide oversight and weekly catch up meetings during the consultation to provide support and challenge, ensuring engagement with key stakeholders.
- Your NSN Adviser will analyse and share key insights on responses to the consultation with you, determining the trust's response to any key challenges.
- Your NSN Adviser will produce and deliver a draft of your section 10 consultation report, compliant with DfE expectations, on your behalf.

## Finance and Funding

Securing financial viability is a necessary step in signing your funding agreement with the Secretary of State. NSN experts can support you to ensure that your budget forecasts demonstrate viability for your new school.

### Specialist advisory and quality assurance meetings:

- Advise you on the key aspects of post-opening financial planning and management, ensuring that spending is essential to the development of the school.
- Explain how to successfully complete a robust financial plan.
- Test and challenge a completed draft of your financial plans
- Provide detailed feedback prior to submission to the DfE to ensure that statutory requirements are met.

**“ Overall the process and support regarding the S10 was excellent and that is reflected in the smoothness of the process, and the fact the Department for Education accepted the report immediately!”**  
Watling Academy

## Education brief

NSN Specialists and Advisers can support you to ensure that your education brief captures your vision and meets DfE requirements. NSN has vast experience of advising and quality assuring free school education plans.

### Specialist advisory and quality assurance meetings:

- NNSN will advise you on the key features of the education brief and how this will translate into practice once the school opens, ensuring that you have a thorough understanding of DfE requirements.
- NSN will review your education brief and provide detailed feedback to ensure that your education brief meets DfE expectations.

## Readiness to Open Meeting (ROM)

The successful completion of a ROM is a key milestone in order to confirm that your school will open successfully. NSN Specialists and Advisers have vast experience of working with free schools through their ROM, and we can support you to successfully prepare and undertake your ROM, tailoring our support to the specific circumstances of your project.

### Specialist advisory and quality assurance meetings:

- NSN will work with you to identify and mitigate key risks to the project ahead of your ROM.
- NSN will test and challenge your risk report and other required documentation and provide detailed feedback prior to submission to the DfE to ensure that requirements are met.
- NSN will provide a mock ROM, aiming to emulate your ROM with the DfE to help anticipate and prepare for questions and discussion points.



## Get in touch

Book a call with one of our advisers to learn how NSN can support you on 020 7537 9208 or send us an email to [helpdesk@newschoolsnetwork.org](mailto:helpdesk@newschoolsnetwork.org)

# Delivery Programme support

*Our flexible offer means you can select the services you require and NSN will tailor this to your specific context. As part of our offer, you can expect:*

- A named Adviser
- Access to expert free school Specialists
- Advisory and quality assurance meetings
- Detailed written feedback and actions from each meeting

**Delivery Programme Services are often sought after during the following timeframes:**

## Services following your approval into preopening

- Project Set Up
- Project Development Grant
- Governance
- Section 10 consultation
- Pupil Recruitment and Marketing (including media training)
- Site and Buildings

## Services for your final year of pre-opening

- Site and Buildings
- Funding and Finance
- Education brief
- Readiness to Open Meeting
- Principal Designate recruitment

If you are interested in one or more of NSN's pre-opening services, please contact us at [helpdesk@newschoolsnetwork.org](mailto:helpdesk@newschoolsnetwork.org) or call 020 7537 9208. We would be happy to discuss how we can support your free school project and send you a price list of our services.



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