

Special Guidance

Completing Section D3

Spring 2019

Introduction

The DfE's criteria states that all applicants will be assessed on the extent to which their staffing structure matches the proposed curriculum and financial plans. Your financial plans must align with the top-up rates set out in the local authority specification. Applicants must also set out clear plans to successfully manage and develop the workforce, including ensuring that staff workloads are sustainable.

The DfE will assess the quality of the staffing structure through the extent to which:

- It includes an appropriate balance of roles, experience and expertise across the senior leadership team, middle managers, SENCO, subject leaders, teachers, support staff, personal coaches etc.;
- You have credible contingency plans to adapt your staffing structure and still deliver a sufficient curriculum if income were less than expected;
- The changes proposed, if there were a reduction in income, would result in an affordable, good quality education plan which would be consistent with the vision for the school; and reflective of its particular characteristics;
- You demonstrate an understanding of teacher recruitment and retention issues and have planned mitigations to ensure you have the appropriate staff to deliver your curriculum effectively.

All applicants must include an organogram, staffing build up table and contingency plan. The contingency plans must:

- Demonstrate that at less than full capacity, your staffing structure is sufficiently flexible to respond to reductions in funding and can still deliver a sufficient curriculum and sustain pupil outcomes, including an overview explanation of how you would approach making savings. **Recommendations on completing this can be found in the NSN 'Completing your budget plan' resource [here](#).**

- To do this you should explain the actions you would take to reduce costs, the reasons for these actions and the reason you have prioritised the actions as you have. You should explain how your amended plans would continue to support delivery of your education vision and plan, and any changes you would have to make to the education plan.

Below is an example of how you might present the table showing your staffing build up year on year, as well as some advice on how to approach the narrative that should accompany it.

How to approach the narrative

You must accompany the staffing build-up table with a narrative explaining your staffing decisions as your free school builds to full capacity. You should think about:

- **Whether or not your staffing is sufficient in the early years when pupil numbers are lower:** Will the headteacher have a teaching commitment? Is this realistic? Will you appoint your deputy headteacher in Year 1 of operation or in a later year, and what is your rationale for the timing of this appointment? Have you appointed sufficient admin staff in the first years of operation? Do you have sufficient teaching staff to deliver the full curriculum to pupils in the school from day 1 of operation? Who will liaise with external providers and lead on quality assurance of external provision during the early years of operation?
- **How the senior leadership team (SLT) and staffing changes over time:** How will roles and responsibilities of the SLT shift over time as new staff members are brought in? Have you thought about how and when you will introduce middle-leadership roles into the free school? What is the rationale for appointing certain roles on part-time contracts, how do these change over time, and is appointing these staff part-time a viable recruitment strategy?
- **The appointment of teaching staff:** Do you have sufficient teaching staff to deliver the full curriculum and to teach each of the different year-groups as you build to capacity? Have you thought about the range and type of needs in your free school (e.g. percentage of pupils likely to have an EHCP) and whether you have the staff to meet these needs? What is the rationale for appointing teaching staff on different pay scales, and is there an appropriate balance? Have you thought about the appointment of specialist staff, and staffing of the enrichment

curriculum? If you have existing schools (state or independent), do you intend to use any of your existing staff in the new school? If so, how will this work in practice? If your proposal includes a nursery, will it be led by a qualified teacher?

- **Staffing the therapeutic curriculum:** How will you staff the therapeutic aspects of your educational offer? Will therapeutic staff be employed directly by the school? If so, when will they be appointed? Where therapeutic staff are not directly employed by the school or trust, have you adequately explained how the service level agreements through which these staff will be employed will work and how they will be managed and held to account? Have you adequately explained the roles and responsibilities of the therapeutic team?
- **Support staff:** How many HLTAs/support staff do you think you will need and why is this sufficient? Have you considered the different roles that support staff are likely to play (e.g. TAs or learning mentors) and have you considered the viability of recruiting specialist support staff relevant to the focus of your special school curriculum offer?
- **The appointment of non-teaching staff:** Have you accounted for non-teaching staff, i.e. business management, administrative, catering, and cleaning and caretaking etc.? Are some of these services being bought as services? Do you have sufficient staff in each of these areas, and have you thought about this will grow over time?

Recruitment and retention

The DfE criteria requires applicants to set out their approach to tackling the specific issues of teacher recruitment and retention and managing teacher workload. In this part of the application it is important to demonstrate that you have a strong understanding of the recruitment and retention challenges in your area, and that you present clear plans to mitigate these challenges in the free school. The DfE suggest that applicants refer to [Teachers analysis compendium 2](#) when completing this section. Your discussion of recruitment and retention must:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the teacher recruitment and retention issues that the school might face, taking into account local, regional and national factors relevant to the context of the proposed school;

- Set out a planned strategy for successfully recruiting high quality staff and demonstrate how you will mitigate against the challenges identified.

This section must also include clear and specific plans for how teacher workload will be managed and kept under review to ensure it is sustainable as the school grows. In order to complete this section, you should consider:

- How the workforce will be well managed and developed, taking into consideration issues such as flexible working and continuous professional development. It is essential that these plans are consistent with your education plan and your financial template.
- The DfE suggest that your plans should follow the recommendations of the 2016 independent review group reports on eliminating unnecessary workload in [marking](#), [planning and resources](#) and [data management](#), and those of the [2018 Advisory Group on data](#).

Example: Overview of staffing growth year on year for 110 place ASD provision

	2020	2021	2022	2023
Students on role	48	60	80	110
EYFS & KS1 classes (6 per class)	1	1	1	1
KS2 classes (6 per class)	3	3	3	3
KS3 classes (6 per class)	4	6	6	6
KS4 classes (10 per class)			2	4
KS5 classes (10 per class)				1
Leadership Team				
Principal	1* (L22)**	1	1	1
Vice Principal	1 (L10)**	1	2	2

Head of FE				1 (L6)**
Business Manager	0.5 (SCP 49)**	1	1	1
Admin				
Office Admin	0.5 (SCP 28)**	1	1.5	2
Data Support Officer	0.5 (SCP 24)**	1	1	1
Caretaker	1 (SCP 18)**	1	2	2
Teaching Staff				
Main scale teachers	6 (M3)**	8	10	13
Maths Coordinator	1 (U2)**	1	1	1
English Coordinator	1 (U2)**	1	1	1

Pupil Support				
HLTAs	4 <i>(SCP 28)**</i>	5	6	7
TAs	12 <i>(SCP 22)**</i>	14	18	23
Therapeutic Team				
Therapeutic Support Worker	2	3	4	5
Clinical Psychologist	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Educational Psychologist	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Speech and Language Therapist	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4

* Each number equates to one full-time equivalent, so “1” doesn’t necessarily represent one member of staff. Where posts are part-time or transition from part into full-time roles, you should show that this is the case in your narrative, and explain what the rationale is behind these decisions as well as what the impact might be on recruitment.

** The information in brackets indicates which level of the teaching pay scale a member of staff is appointed at. In order to calculate how this works for different staff in your free school, consult the [TES pay scale calculator](#).