

Mainstream Guidance

Completing Section E3

Winter/spring 2019

Introduction

The staffing in your school should be led by the curriculum you plan to offer and your vision for the free school. The DfE's criteria states that all applicants will be assessed on the extent to which their staffing structure matches the curriculum proposed and their financial plans. 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 this section through the extent to which:

- The proposed structure 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.;
- Applicants have credible contingency plans to adapt the 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.
- Applicants demonstrate an awareness of the challenges relating to teacher recruitment and retention within a national, regional and local context. Applicants must also set out clear plans for eliminating unnecessary teacher workload.

Criteria

All applicants must include an organogram, staffing build up overview, contingency plans, and overview of their approach to recruitment and retention and approach to managing staff workload.

Applicants that already run an existing school of the same type and phase as that which they are proposing are able to base their responses to the criteria on one or more of their current settings and must also outline how staff will be shared across their trust. The same is true for applicants that run an institution that will not be part of the same trust but will offer some staffing support – e.g. a university. Applicants that do not run a comparable setting should outline the structure they will design, but are encouraged to take existing models into account.

Contingency plans

The overview of contingency plans presented in your application must:

- Demonstrate how the trust will review key financial health and efficiency metrics. In order to do this you should explain how key metrics such as pupil/teacher ratios, average class sizes and average teacher costs) are reported on and benchmarked against other schools. You should consider who will be responsible for compiling and reviewing these reports and ensure this is consistent with the information you provide in section F3.
- Demonstrate that at less than full capacity, the staffing structure is sufficiently flexible to respond to reductions in funding and can still deliver a sufficient curriculum, including an overview explanation of how you would approach making savings.
- Explain the actions taken to reduce costs, the reasons for these actions and the reason for prioritising certain actions. Applicants should explain how their amended plans would continue to support delivery of your education vision and plan, and any changes they would have to make to the education plan.

Recommendations on completing this can be found in the NSN ‘Completing your budget plan’ resource [here](#).

Staffing issues to consider

The DfE criteria specifically 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 challenges in your area, and that you present clear plans to mitigate these challenges in the free school.

Recruitment and retention

Your discussion of recruitment and retention must:

- Take 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 applicants will mitigate against the challenges identified.

The DfE suggest that applicants refer to [teachers analysis compendium 2](#) when completing this section.

Staff workload

This section must 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](#).

When writing this section, and considering the specific issues of recruitment, retention and workload you should consider the following points:

- **The vacancy rates and number of posts filled temporarily in comparable local schools-** The underlying data from the [School Workforce Survey](#) provides this information for every school in England. A higher than average percentage of posts that fall into either category might indicate that you will struggle to recruit staff to your new school. How will you adapt your recruitment process to account for this? What incentives might you be able to offer that differ from those of other local schools?¹ You should identify ways in which your recruitment policy will be different and more successful than local schools, and how you will overcome challenges faced by other schools.
- **National trends indicating why teachers leave the profession –** A number of factors important to teacher retention in your free school will be wholly or partially controlled by your leadership team and governors. How will you ensure workload is reasonable? What actions will your leadership team take to ensure teachers feel valued and supported by your leadership team? You should explain how the trust will implement systems to reduce workload such as joint planning and agreed formats for lesson planning. You should also consider what you will do to deliver flexible working and career progression opportunities. Section 4 of the teachers' analysis compendium 2 includes a recent survey of ex-teachers indicating reasons for leaving the profession that you may wish to consult.
- **Subject specialists –** It is vital that you work out how many specialists you will need to deliver your curriculum and how many subject specialists you will need. This is especially important in the early years of your school, while your school and staff are still growing. Some subjects such as modern foreign languages and music will need subject specialist teachers, and you will need to consider how you will ensure this is in place from when your school opens.

¹ Applicants should note that, owing to the point in the year at which this data is captured, DfE do not consider it to offer a fully comprehensive picture of the issues that a particular school might face with regards to recruitment and retention.

- **Curriculum and specialisms** - You will also need to consider whether the curriculum adopted by your school or its specialism pose a particular recruitment challenge and whether you anticipate this will be eased or exacerbated by your school's location. What steps will you take to mitigate any challenges? Will you use academy freedoms or partnerships with other schools? NFER have published research on [retention by subject area](#) on a national level which may help you inform your thinking. You may also wish to draw anecdotal evidence about recruitment in the area you will serve from conversations with local schools and the LA.
- **The proximity of your proposed school to providers of initial teacher training-** If you are intending to open a free school in an area that is a significant distance from providers of ITT, you may find it harder to recruit staff than schools in other areas. Have you thought about how you might alter your approach to recruitment to account for this? Will it require a wider recruitment campaign via more outlets? Will you seek to develop strong relationships with ITT providers during pre-opening to raise the profile of your school? Will you need to rely on a higher proportion of experienced staff than most free schools? What would the effects of this be? Teachers analysis compendium 2 provides maps illustrating proximity to providers of ITT.
- **The particular benefits of being part of a multi academy trust** - If your free school will form part of a multi academy trust it is vital that you explain the advantage this will bring to pupils in your school, and you should also consider the potential benefits to staff. When considering recruitment and retention of staff, you should explain any plans you have to share staff across the trust, using staff from existing schools to support specialist delivery in the early years of your school's growth. You should also consider the opportunities for staff development, succession planning and shared CPD.
- **The particular challenges and benefits of being a brand new school** – Free schools that have progressed through pre-opening report a number of recruitment challenges unique to being a new school, but also a number of benefits. How can you market the specific advantages of joining a new free school and the unique opportunity of joining your free school to potential staff? How will you overcome the need to recruit staff to teach multiple subjects in your early years of growth? [NSN's guidance on recruitment for free schools in pre-opening](#) may be helpful when reflecting on this. It will also help determine a brief overview of your recruitment strategy, as the criteria require.

Developing your staffing structure

In order to meet the criteria for section E3 you will need to include an organogram illustrating the staffing of the school at full capacity. You must also show how the profile of staff will develop as the school grows to capacity. This can be demonstrated in a table alongside the organogram which shows what the staffing structure would look like at steady state. An example of how to present your staffing build up in a table is given at the end of this document.

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

- Whether or not your staffing is sufficient in the early years when pupil numbers are very low: Will the head teacher have a teaching commitment? Do you appoint your deputy head from year 1 of operation or in a later year, and what is your rationale for the timing of this appointment? Is the business manager a part or fulltime role and why? Do you have sufficient teaching staff to deliver the full curriculum to pupils in the school from day 1?
- **How the SLT and staffing changes over time:** How will roles and responsibilities of the SLT shift over time as new members, assistant heads etc. 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? Have you thought about the range and type of needs in your free school (e.g. Early Years, SEN, EAL etc.) and whether you have the staff to meet these needs? How many HLTAs/support staff do you think you will need and why is this sufficient? What is the rationale for appointing teaching staff on different pay scales, and is there a balance here? Have you thought about the appointment of specialist staff, and staffing of the enrichment curriculum?
- **The appointment of non-teaching staff:** Have you accounted for non-teaching staff, i.e. business management, administrative, catering, and cleaning and caretaking etc.? Do you have sufficient staff in each of these areas, and have you thought about this will grow over time?
- **Sharing staff:** If you are a multi-academy trust, how will you share staff across the MAT? What roles will be shared between the existing school(s) and the new school? Have you accounted for shared staff and central services in your staffing build up table and your organogram?

Example: Overview of staffing growth year on year for a 2FE primary school

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
Students on role	60	120	180	240	300	360	420	420
Reception classes (30 per class)	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Y1-6 classes (30 per class)	0	2	4	6	8	10	12	12
Leadership Team								
Principal	1* <i>(L22)**</i>	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Vice Principal		1 <i>(L10)**</i>	1	1	1	1	1	1
Business Manager	0.5 <i>(grade 6,24)**</i>	0.5	1	1	1	1	1	1
Assistant Head					1 <i>(L2)**</i>	1	1	1

Admin								
Office Admin	0.5 <i>(grade 2,12)**</i>	0.5	1	1	1	1	1	1
IT/Media Apprentice	1 <i>(£4k pa)**</i>	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
SEN Co			1 <i>(U1)**</i>	1	1	1	1	1
Caretaker	1 <i>(grade 2,9)**</i>	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Caretaker						0.5 <i>(grade 2,9)</i>	0.5	0.5
Caretaker Apprentice						1 <i>(£4k pa)**</i>	1	1
Cleaner	2	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Dinner ladies	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4
Teaching Staff								

Main scale teachers	2 <i>(M3)**</i>	3	4	6	8	9	11	11
Upper pay scale teacher		1 <i>(U2)**</i>	2	2	3	3	3	3
HLTA	1 <i>(grade 6,27)**</i>	1.5	2.5	3	3	4	4	4
Support Staff	2 <i>(grade 2,11)**</i>	4	6	8	10	12	14	14
Classroom apprentice	2 <i>(£4k each pa)**</i>	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Enrichment Staff	1 <i>(grade 3,15)**</i>	1	2	2	2	2	2	2
(1=2PT positions)					1 <i>(grade 6,27)**</i>	1	1	1
PSA	1 <i>(grade 5,24)**</i>	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
DoL Assessment				0.6 <i>(M6 +TLR)**</i>	1	1	1	1

Peripatetic	0.2 (M2)**	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.5	1	1
PPA cover								
No of qualified teachers (exc. senior leadership team)	2.2	4.3	7.3	10	13.4	14.5	17	17
PPA hours per week requiring cover	8	16	24	32	40	48	56	56
Covered by	Cover team fully trained HLTAs	HLTAs	HLTAs/DoL Assessor/ SENCO	HLTAs/DoL Assessor/ SENCO	HLTAs/DoL Assessor/ SENCO	HLTAs/DoL Assessor/ SENCO	HLTAs/DoL Assessor/ SENCO	HLTAs/DoL Assessor/ SENCO

* 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 salary checker tool](#).