



New Schools Network:
*Support for pre-opening and
open free schools*

**New
Schools
Network**

Support for free schools in pre-opening

NSN has supported free school groups in pre-opening since 2014. NSN's unrivalled knowledge and experience has been informed by its work with **over two-thirds of open and approved free school groups throughout every stage of the process.**

NSN's programme of advice, guidance and support has been developed to comply with DfE and ESFA guidance, **and focuses on the areas that our experience shows will provide free schools with the most value in pre-opening.** The Foundation Advisory Service delivers guidance to groups in pre-opening through a series of events and resources, as well as providing opportunities to interact with and learn from successful free school leaders from around the country. The foundational offer includes:

NSN Foundation Advisory Service | Free of charge for all approved schools

An invitation to NSN's pre-opening launch event

Delivered in partnership with the DfE, this post-approval event is an opportunity to prepare for pre-opening and to reflect on lessons learnt from NSN's network of successful open free schools.

Key pre-opening resources

NSN has developed guidance to help groups navigate the complex pre-opening period – from securing a site to developing a comprehensive marketing plan.

Question-and-answer service

A helpdesk service for all free schools in pre-opening, NSN answers any questions you may have over the telephone or by email.

Invitations to NSN Spotlight visits to open free schools

These regular events provide groups with an opportunity to visit a high-performing free school and learn about the school's journey from conception through to its first Ofsted inspection.

Invitations to NSN events focusing on the final stages of pre-opening

Two cohort-wide events held in the year of opening, focusing on the final stages of pre-opening and successfully leading an open free school.

Networking opportunities

In addition to a regular programme of events, NSN provides focused opportunities for school leaders to share their expertise and experience of pre-opening.

Workshops and seminars

In association with external partners, NSN facilitates a series of workshops and seminars to discuss specific aspects of pre-opening in detail.

Regular newsletters

Groups on the Foundation Advisory Service receive a regular update from NSN with information about upcoming events, policy news and links to useful resources.

Support for open free schools

NSN has supported open free schools since 2011 by providing advice, training and networking opportunities. Our dynamic and adaptable team has built a solid reputation for professionalism and expertise.

NSN's **deep institutional knowledge** is supplemented by its team of Associates – experienced specialists with strong track records supporting complex free school projects and growing multi-academy trusts. Collectively, NSN's Advisers and Associates have worked on **over 500 free school projects** – ranging from supporting groups in the pre-opening phase, to setting up and working in free schools. NSN's support for open free schools includes:

NSN Open Free School Support | Free of charge for all approved schools

Associate meetings

NSN's team of expert Associates are on hand to offer guidance to open free schools on a number of issues, including academy trust governance, site and premises, finance and procurement, pupil recruitment and marketing, education and staffing, communications and consultations. Associate meetings are completely free, confidential and can be held in person at our offices in London or over the phone, at a time and date to suit school leaders. They can be used to discuss challenges, review plans or key documents and direct schools towards further support.

Training for free school media spokespeople

An intensive session with an experienced media trainer to prepare free school leaders for media engagement.

Invitations to NSN Spotlight visits to open free schools

These regular events provide free school leaders with an opportunity to visit other high-performing free schools to share best practice.

Networking opportunities

In addition to a regular programme of events, NSN provides focused opportunities for school leaders to share their expertise and experiences of running successful free schools.

Events, workshops and seminars

In association with external partners, NSN facilitates a series of events, workshops and seminars to discuss issues affecting open free schools.

Visits to open free schools

NSN Advisers regularly visit open free schools to learn more about past and present challenges, to offer support and guidance, and to share best practice.

Question-and-answer service

A helpdesk service for all free schools, NSN answers any questions you may have over the telephone or by email.

Regular newsletters

All open free schools receive a regular update from NSN with information about upcoming events, policy news and links to useful resources.

Resources

NSN develops guidance to support free schools with the challenges of opening and running a new school.

Want to find out more?

If you are interested in finding out more information about NSN's support for open and pre-open schools, please contact the Delivery team at **open@newschoolsnetwork.org**, or call **020 7952 8559**.

We would be happy to discuss how we can support your free school project.

**New
Schools
Network**

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