

A Special Free School for Somerset

Trust Engagement Event

21st May 2019



Introductions

About us...

Annette Perrington – Assistant Director for Inclusion

Emily Walters – Head of the Virtual School

Phil Curd – Strategic Manager for Access & Additional Learning Needs

Simon Niles – Devon County Council

Tim Johnson – New Schools Network



Our Bid

Our bid is shaped around Somerset's aspiration to balance its special school offer and ensure children with social emotional and mental health needs, many of whom will also have speech, language and communication needs (SEMH and SLCN) can be educated close to home in good quality provision.

This is an unusual bid in that it seeks to provide support for two distinct types of need, however the common factor is that all children will have displayed challenging behaviour which has resulted in them being unable to access local mainstream provision.

The new school will address the inequitable provision of special school places for children in South Somerset with challenging behaviours stemming from SEMH and SLCN.

Provision to meet these needs locally is the missing part of Somerset's special provision jigsaw and as such, we submitted what we believed to be a strong joint bid with our partners from Devon County Council.



Outcomes

Attainment: An ambitious educational offer which meets needs, will support children to achieve.

Attendance: Good quality provision, where children feel engaged, safe and less anxious will have a positive impact on attendance rates.

Destinations: Developing partnerships with local FE colleges and training providers will support children to engage in effective transition pathways.



Accurate Identification: Having a dual-cohort entry reduces the risk of children with challenging behaviour having their needs wrongly identified and placed in inappropriate provision.



Outcomes

Local Provision: Boys and girls, aged 5-16, from South Somerset who require specialist provision to address challenging behaviour will be educated in their local community.

Early Intervention: Children will be able to be placed at a younger age, enabling expert practitioners to address their needs at the earliest opportunity.



Improved Engagement: Children will be prevented from travelling further, for longer periods of time, meaning they will arrive at school ready to engage in their learning.

Reduced Financial and Environmental Costs: Less travelling will also reduce transport costs to the local authority and reduce pollution.



The School

Type of school	Special						
Area of SEN provided for (please detail designation alongside additional information known about the cohort's needs and abilities)	SLCN & SEMH. This will enable provision to be made for children with differing learning needs whose behavioural presentation prevent engagement in mainstream education. Funding would be consistent with the specialist top-up banding system employed for places in all maintained special schools across the county.						
Which local authorities are committed to commissioning places?	Somerset & Devon						
How many places have been commissioned and by which local authority?	<table> <tr> <td>Upon opening</td> <td>When full:</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Somerset: 52</td> <td>Somerset: 105</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Devon: 12</td> <td>Devon: 15</td> </tr> </table>	Upon opening	When full:	Somerset: 52	Somerset: 105	Devon: 12	Devon: 15
Upon opening	When full:						
Somerset: 52	Somerset: 105						
Devon: 12	Devon: 15						
Per-pupil revenue funding the local authority would expect to pay (if a range of rates, please explain and detail the rates per pupil, including estimates for how many of the cohort will be in each band)	£10k per place (base funding) plus top-up funding, dependent on need. Band 3 = £7,268 Band 4 = £11,475 Band 5 = £15,300 Band 6 = £19,125 Band 7 = £25,245						
Age range	5-16						
Gender (Boys/Girls/Co-educational)	Co-educational						
Total number of proposed full time equivalent places	120						
Type of placements offered	Full-time						



Projected Places

	Year of opening	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	+6
Nursery	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reception	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Key stage 1 (Y1-2)	8	8	16	16	16	16	16
Key stage 2 (Y3-6)	16	24	32	32	32	32	32
Key stage 3 (Y7-9)	24	32	40	40	40	40	40
Key stage 4 (Y10-11)	16	24	32	32	32	32	32
Totals	64	88	120	120	120	120	120



Wider Context

Somerset's only maintained SEMH school, Sky College, is located in Taunton and can accommodate up to 65 pupils. Its location makes access for children in the eastern half of the county difficult, as it's at least an hour by car.

As a result, Somerset has an over-reliance on places in the independent and non-maintained sector.

In addition to those children currently placed at Sky College, there are a further 85 Somerset children aged 4-16 with a primary need of SEMH placed in independent and non-maintained special schools.

Historically, Somerset has inaccurately identified SEMH, and it is recognised that a number of children currently identified as having that need, are more likely to have a SLCN need.

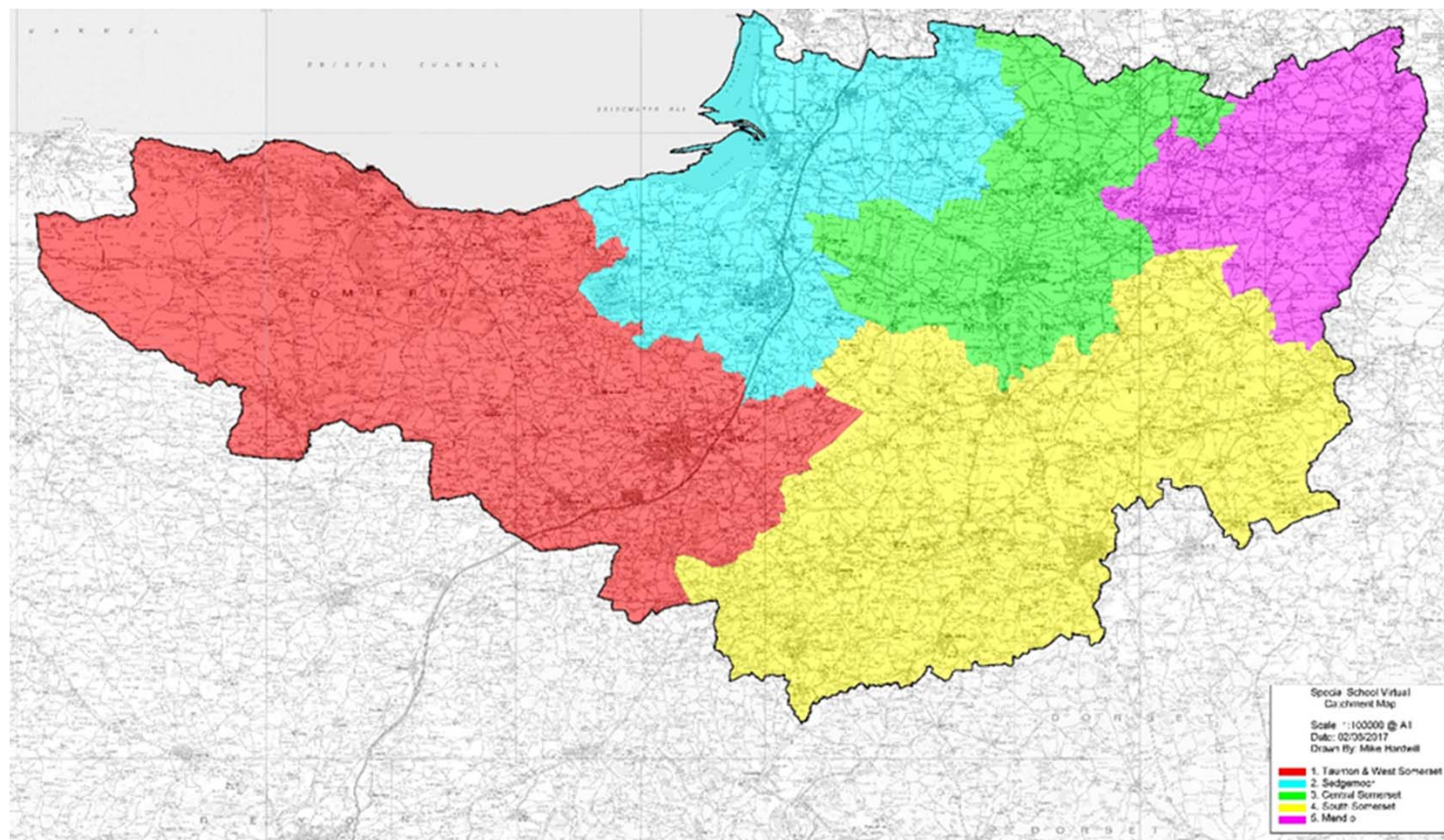
Statistically, this is backed up through local and SEN2 data when Somerset's children with EHCPs are compared against national averages:

Type of Need	Averages	
	Somerset	National
SEMH	23.5%	12.8%
SLCN	9.6%	14.6%



Wider Context

This bid is designed to accommodate children with the relevant level of need located in the virtual catchment of South Somerset (in yellow below) and some children living in the Central Somerset (green), Mendip (pink) virtual catchment areas and children from our partner authority Devon, which sits just below the red and yellow shaded areas:



Special school competitions

**New
Schools
Network**

Agenda

- Introductions
- About New Schools Network
- Special free schools: the basics
- The special free school application process
- How New Schools Network can help you
- Questions

About New Schools Network

- Independent charity, founded in 2009
- Supports free school applicants and open/approved free schools
- Advocates for free school policy
- Worked with around 70% open/approved free schools
- Free services

Free schools: the basics

What are they?

Who sets them up?

How are they
funded?

Freedoms

Free schools: the basics

Do...

Offer education for pupils aged 4 - 19

Be open to all pupils, regardless of their faith, ability or social background

Held accountable through Ofsted inspections and exam results

Do not...

Receive more funding than other state schools

Get set up by 'anybody'

Special and AP free schools: the basics

- There are 34 open special free schools in England
- There are 53 that have been approved to open
- Only 19 have been inspected by Ofsted: 17 of which are Good or Outstanding

- There are 42 open AP free schools in England
- There are 16 that have been approved to open
- Only 31 have been inspected by Ofsted: 25 of which are Good or Outstanding

Special free school application process

**New
Schools
Network**

Special and AP application process

Bid

The LA

- Determines key features
- Prepares evidence of need
- Identifies potential site
- Submits a bid to the DfE

The DfE:

- Approves LAs bid documents
- Publishes specification and application criteria

Application

- Prepare an application with free support from NSN
- Submit application to the LA and DfE
- Attend an interview with the LA and DfE
- Approval from the DfE

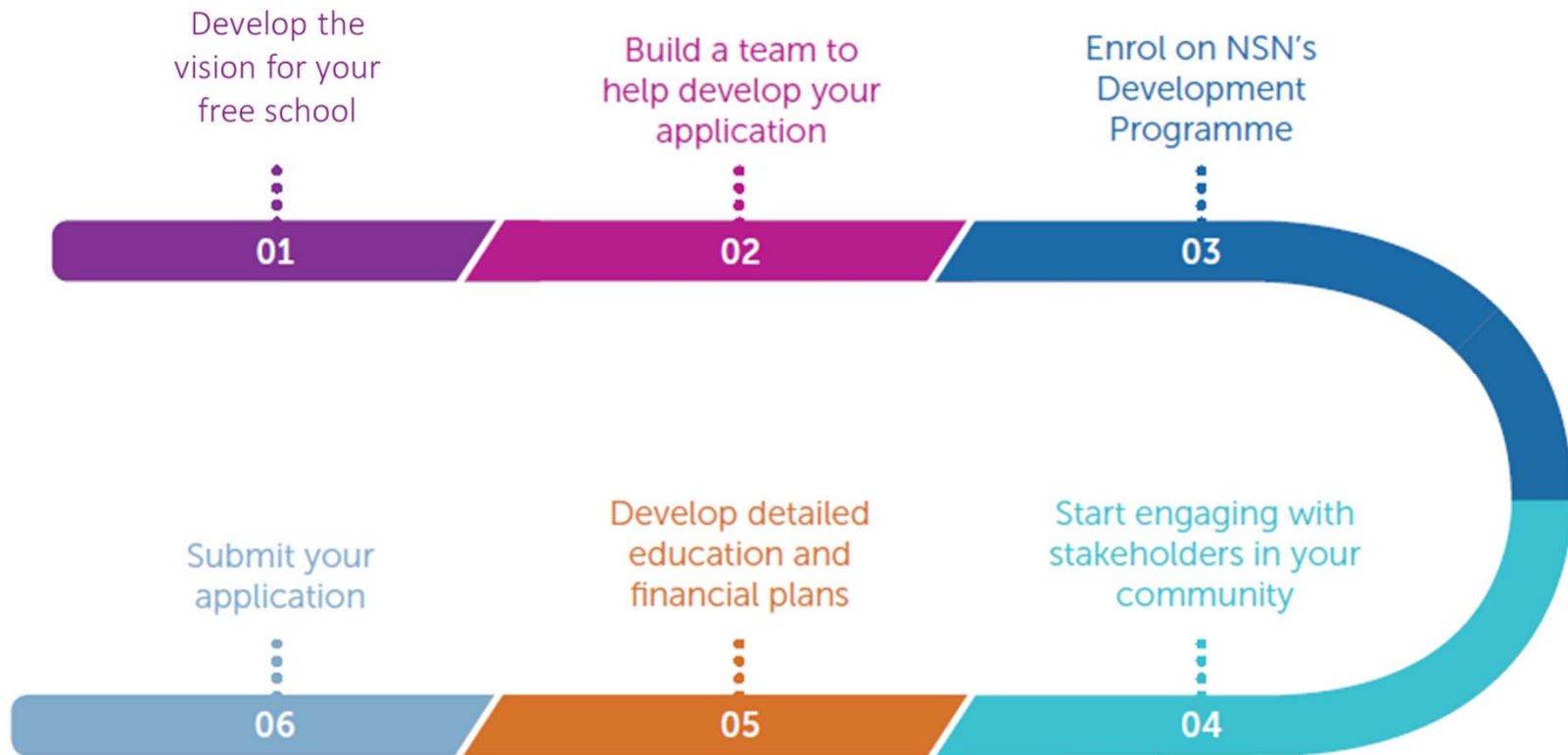
Pre-opening phase

- Enrol on to NSN Delivery Programme
- Recruit staff, develop policies and curriculum, recruit pupils
- Support and funding from DfE
- Sign funding agreement

Open phase

- Continue relationship with NSN
- Build up to capacity
- Ofsted inspection with three years

Application timeline



Lessons learnt

**New
Schools
Network**

Developing a vision

A clear vision will act as the basis for all other activities related to your free school:

Vision

Building a team

Application development

Engaging the community

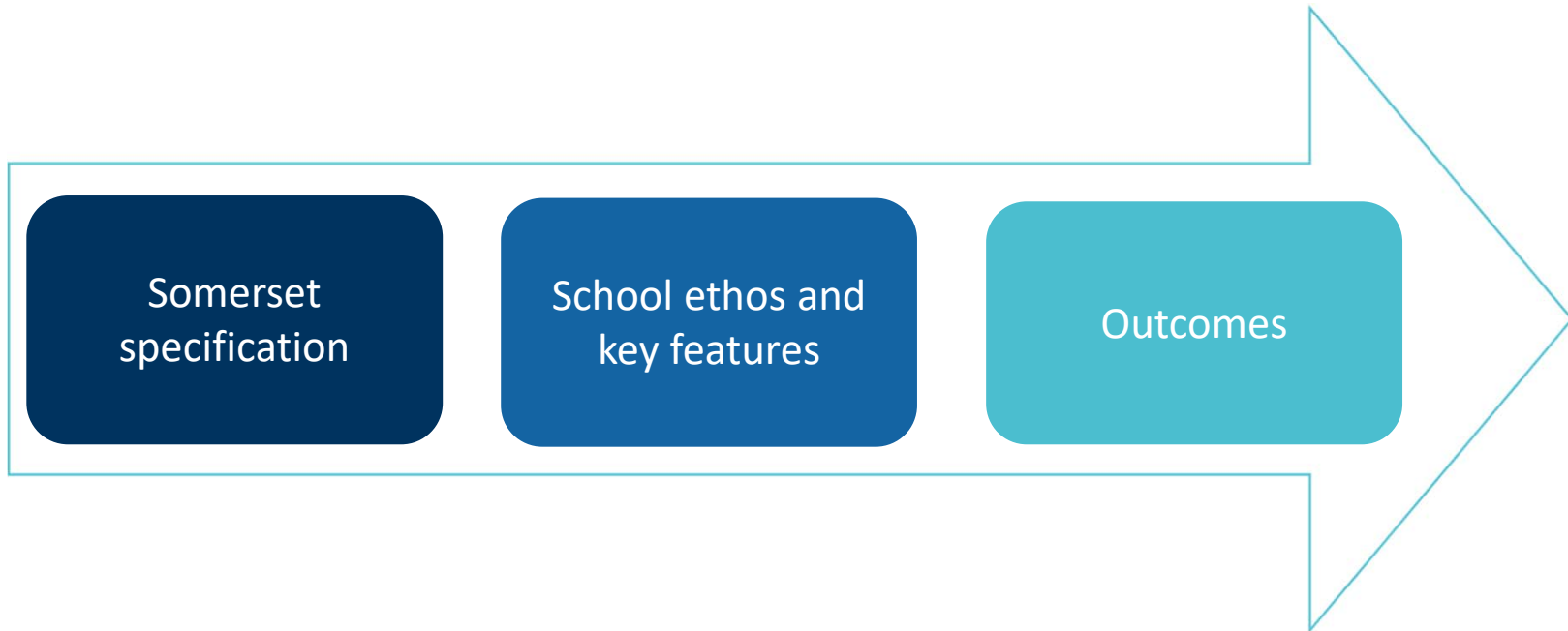
Presenting your vision

The DfE states that all applicants must:

- explain your own vision for the proposed school, and how it will deliver the local authority's specification;
- explain how that vision comes across in your curriculum approach and approaches to meeting pupils' special educational needs; and
- ensure that your vision is evidence-based and consistent with the rest of your application – your overall application should clearly show the plan for implementing your vision.

The vision

Developing a clear vision involves thinking about these key elements:



Importance of a strong team

Applying for, setting up and opening a free school is an extremely demanding process. It's essential that you have a strong, committed team with a wide range of skills working on the project.

Some of the challenges your team will face include:

Engaging with stakeholders
and commissioners

Building a financial plan for
the school

Designing a curriculum

Managing the project as a
whole

Establishing your curriculum and ethos

You must have the following:

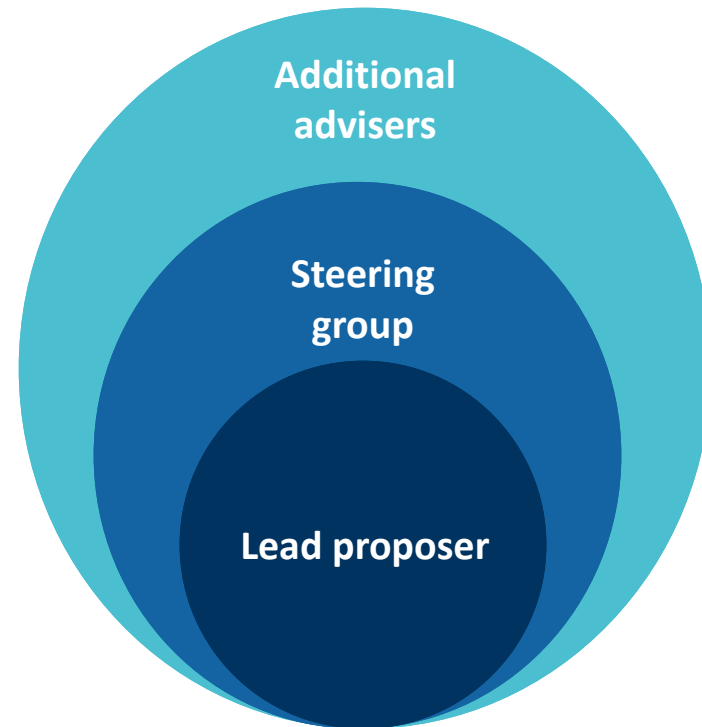
- Education expertise relevant to the type of school you want to set up
- Finance expertise
- Governance expertise

You should have the following:

- Project management expertise
- Marketing/communications expertise

Necessary for pre-opening:

- HR expertise
- ICT expertise
- Buildings and sites
- Legal expertise
- Business/start up experience



How New Schools Network can help you

**New
Schools
Network**

NSN Development Programme

Feedback we have had from groups who have been on the programme has been overwhelmingly positive, and approval rates for groups on the programme shows its success.

100% of those who have received this additional support in the past said it was helpful

You are 50% more likely to be invited to interview.

11 of the 14 successful free schools from the local authority-led special free school round wave 1 received NSN support.

“The Development Programme was excellent and offered appropriate support, challenges and rigour.”

“We couldn’t have done it without you! Thank you so much for keeping us on track and motivated.”

How NSN can help you

Development Programme

A combination of the following:

- A named personal NSN Adviser
- A personalised support plan
- Written feedback on draft applications
- Specialist meetings
- Networking with other free schools
- Help marketing your school

Support for all groups

- Our series of training events
- An hour long 1-1 meeting with one of our Advisers
- Advice from the team via phone and email
- A wide range of resources on our website.

Enrolling onto the DP

- Book a 1-1 meeting with an adviser through our website.
- Submit an enrolment form through our website

Questions?

**New
Schools
Network**