

Northumberland SEND Free School Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the timescale to open the school for pupils attending?

There is no timescale given at this point of the process. We still need to progress to the next stage.

Our experience would suggest a three year programme from today (17/5/19) so an expected opening of September 2022. This timescale would take into account all elements such as planning and procurement processes.

2. What sort of LA funding is going into the school?

The DfE will cover the cost of the build, through the free school programme. The LA have to fund any off site works such as highway improvements.

3. How many of the 144 out-of-county pupils at a cost of £4.6m do you expect to stay in county with this new school?

We don't know what the position will be like in three and a half years time. We need to have a comprehensive plan to support all our special schools to be able to provide high quality provision in order to present families with a positive school choice dilemma.

4. It was mentioned about the lack of SEN in mainstream in Northumberland - will mainstream resource be in addition to the new Free School?

There are currently no mainstream additional resourced provision units but there are plans to establish new units within the next year.

5. Inclusion Support Workers have been mentioned in the specification document - how can Inclusion Support Workers be further utilised alongside the Free School? Could this be formalised to use the expertise in schools?

There is expertise in the nine special schools in Northumberland which is underused. There are 115 exclusions and 4500 fixed term exclusions and work is being undertaken to reduce this. We have invested in Inclusion Workers who have successfully supported a number of highly vulnerable pupils to remain in mainstream provision. We are now working with pupils in Alternative Provision pupils with a view to placing them in more appropriate special schools.

The 2017-18 Northumberland Education and Skills Annual Report can be viewed [here](#). It demonstrates the positive results at KS1 and KS2 and the improving KS4 Progress 8 and Attainment 8 scores. Our two key priority areas of improving our SEN offer and decreasing the rate of exclusions continue to be worked on, and we hope that the Free School will help us to address these key areas. In three and a half years time when we have the new Free School, it is expected that pupil outcomes in Northumberland will be higher still.