

Free Schools - Proposal Form

The Proposal Form asks you for details on the educational aims and objectives, parental demand and premises of the proposed Free School. It also asks questions about the suitability of the provider(s) involved. All new Free Schools will be opened with the same legal status as Academies, in a binding agreement with the Secretary of State.

Please note, all information provided in this form will be published on the Department for Education website.

INITIAL DETAILS

Name (Please specify if you are the nominated representative of an organisation that wishes to set up a Free School)

██████████ ██████████, nominated representative of Harris Federation

Name of your organisation

Harris Federation of South London Schools

Address (of organisation or individual)

Harris Federation of South London Schools

██████████ London

██████████

Are you an existing independent school wanting to convert to a Free School?

No

If yes, please provide your 6-digit school unique reference number (URN)

If no, please confirm the nature of your organisation (educational group / charity / business / parent group etc)

Harris Federation of South London Schools, a top performing federation of Academies formed as a charitable trust; DfE Accredited Schools Group

Please confirm whether your organisation is incorporated i.e. set up as a Company which is registered at Companies House. If so, please provide the Company Registration Number, Company Address and details of the Directors and Secretary. If not, please indicate the approximate date by which it will be incorporated.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, our organisation is incorporated
Company Registration Number: Company no. is 06228587 Charity no. is 1120150
Company Address: [REDACTED], [REDACTED], London
Details of Directors and Secretary: [REDACTED]
<input type="checkbox"/> No, our organisation is not yet incorporated
Approximate date by which it will be incorporated:
In which Local Authority area will the school be based? If you are near to a LA boundary, please include name of neighbouring LA(s)
Local Authority Southwark
Neighbouring LAs N/A - in central position in Southwark

Is your Local Authority aware of your intention to set up a Free School?

Yes

(If Y please give details of your discussions with them so far)

Harris Federation has been in discussion with the Local Authority in response to increasing demand for primary provision in the area. The implementation of a reduced 6 FE entry to the Academy at Peckham means there is spare space within the secondary school and the possibility that a wing could be freed up to be remodelled to create a primary school. Officers have confirmed that there is a case in terms of predicted numbers and pressures on local primary schools (many of which are taking admissions above the ideal

number) to support proposals to open a primary school here in a central location within Southwark. The opening of a primary school would increase diversity of provision and also fulfil the need for places in the area and parent demand. Members of the LA have not yet formally considered the proposal. However the proposal is being included within consultations on primary school admissions for 2012/13

SUITABILITY OF PROVIDER

The Secretary of State will consider each proposal on its merits, and take into account all matters relevant to that proposal. Generally, he would expect that all proposals will comply with all aspects of the rigorous suitability and vetting tests throughout the application process, including due diligence and CRB checks and will reject any proposers who advocate violence, intolerance, hatred or whose ideology runs counter to the UK's democratic values.

Do any of the following apply to the organisation (or any consortium member), or to (any of) its director(s)/partners/proprietor(s) or individual applicants (select Y/N):	
Is in a state of bankruptcy, insolvency, compulsory winding up, receivership, composition with creditors (including any Individual Voluntary Arrangement), or subject to an Administration Order or any legal proceedings concerning their solvency?	No
Has been convicted of a criminal offence?	No
Is involved in any illegal activities?	No
Has not fulfilled obligations related to payment of taxes?	No
Is guilty of serious misrepresentation in supplying information?	No
Is not in possession of relevant licences or membership of an appropriate organisation where required by law?	No
Is barred from certain work with children as a result of being:	
[a] included in the list of those barred from Regulated Activity with children, kept by the Independent Safeguarding Authority? Or	No
[b] included in the list kept under section 1 of the Protection of Children Act 1999(4) (list of those considered by the Secretary of State as unsuitable to work with children)? Or	No
[c] subject to a direction of the Secretary of State under section 142 of the Education Act 2002 (5) (or any other disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in such a direction)? Or	No

<p>[d] disqualified from working with children under sections 28, 29 or 29A of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000(6)?</p> <p>For further information on [a], [b], [c] and [d], please contact the CRB www.crb.homeoffice.gov.uk.</p>	No
Is disqualified from registration under Part 10A of the Children Act 1989(7) for child minding or providing day care?	No
Is disqualified from registration under Part 3 of the Childcare Act 2006(8)?	No
Is a member, or has been a member in the past, of a proscribed organisation?	No
If the answer to any of these questions is "Yes" please give details below:	

EDUCATIONAL AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Briefly outline your reasons for wanting to set up a Free School. Max 200 words.

There is an increasing need for primary places and oversubscription at reception entry level in Southwark. The demand for primary places is forecast to continue over the coming years. There is strong evidence of demand from local parents for a Harris Free Primary School at Peckham and we have received a petition signed by 261 parents seeking this provision.

Harris Federation has a track record of success in running secondary schools which serve deprived and challenging populations. It has sponsored specialisms in primary schools and would like to expand provision into the primary sector. 261 local parents have expressed support for the Federation to open a primary school based on the Federation's principles for successful schools.

The Free School would be offered links with the Academy and would be supported with leadership capacity and governance from the Academy. Opportunities will be taken to provide use of the Academy's specialist facilities and specialist teaching. The Free School will have a senior leader who will operate at Vice-Principal level under the leadership of the Academy Principal and provide drive and direction for the Free School.

The Free School will be modelled on the proven successes of ensuring good behaviour, engaging and rigorous teaching and learning, and focused target setting and monitoring of pupil achievement. It will have the same specialisms as the existing Academy of Business Enterprise and Performing Arts

The aim will be to develop a cohort of students who will choose to stay on into the Academy at secondary level and whose teaching and learning will be accelerated.

Please set out the Free School's aims and objectives. You should also describe:

- the teaching methods that will be used and whether the Free School will follow a particular philosophy (eg Montessori);
- the outline of the Free School's proposed curriculum, including any religious ethos;
- how the Free School will improve pupil learning and ensure strong discipline;

Max 2000 words.

The school will be a two form entry primary school. It will be non-selective and non-denominational, open to all local children. After prioritising children with special educational needs and those in public care, straight line distance will be the main admissions criterion. Students graduating from the primary school will be given priority of admission to the Academy in a revised admission

procedure and will be expected as a norm to transfer at age 11 into the Academy.

The school will be part of the network of Harris Federation schools sharing curriculum, teaching and learning practices, pastoral practices and administrative services. It will have very strong links with Harris Academy Peckham. The Academy Executive Principal will provide leadership across both institutions in a tight federation (within a larger Federation). All Harris Federation schools operate within one academy Trust, Harris Federation of South London Schools, with a local governing body for each school and a single Harris Federation Board of Trustees. The Free School will be led by a Headteacher at equivalent level to a Vice Principal of the Academy. The curriculum and teaching and learning good practice will be developed with support and advice from [REDACTED], a local outstanding primary school.

The specialisms of Business and Enterprise with Performing Arts will be a focal point of the Free School's work and mirror the specialisms of the Academy. Both Business and Enterprise & Performing Arts will infuse the whole curriculum, and give the pupils an understanding of both specialisms through each subject on the curriculum.

The specialisms will be integral in developing whole-school events, with students learning skills such as problem-solving, risk-taking, and decision-making. This work will be age appropriate to the respective key stage, and will progress as pupils move from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 and in the Academy will continue through to Key Stage 5 in the Academy.

In addition specialist teaching can be provided to primary classes in other subject areas where it is sometimes difficult to recruit teachers with a high level of expertise (Languages, Science, Music, Art, Technology) and to arrange timetabled lessons in the secondary facilities where it would be beneficial to allow more specialist work. Some of this might be by contributing lead lessons or by a regular timetabled lesson.

Numeracy and mathematical skills will be enhanced by teaching through broad Enterprise contexts whilst Literacy will be enhanced by a phonics approach to reading and enhanced development of oracy through interaction with adults other than teachers along with many opportunities for presentation of project work. The approach to teaching reading, writing and mathematics will be highly structured with some ability grouping in use. The highly motivating Academy rewards system based on Vivo Miles suitably adapted will be introduced.

Approaches to teaching and learning and behaviour management will identify consistent principles and practice (applied throughout the Federation at secondary level and adapted to be appropriate for younger children in discussion with [REDACTED] - see above) which can be applied in developing pupils through their growth as individual learners from age 5 to age 11 and carry on after transfer into the Academy. This will include a focus on literacy and numeracy using methodologies which are consistent across the Key

Stages. This will involve the Academy's subject leaders in defining skills and knowledge which they would like to see pupils have at age 11; how these can be delivered in the primary curriculum and how they can support primary teachers who are not specialists in those subjects. The aim will be to develop a curriculum which is engaging for pupils but develops high levels of skills and knowledge and drives up attainment and again the methods to deliver this will be agreed with advice from [REDACTED].

At the same time from date of opening onwards there will be a focus on improving teaching and learning in the primary school through observation and sharing of good practice. The primary school will benefit from the same rigorous monitoring of the quality of teaching strategy which has driven up standards in the Academy. Academy staff and senior staff from Charles Dickens School will be used to continually challenge the Free School staff to improve their performance in observed lessons. Staff will be supported to be data focused using the tried and trusted management information system operated by the Academy – knowing clearly where their pupils are in terms of achievement and attainment and having stretching targets for them. Pupils should know what they can achieve now and what they have to do to reach the next level of achievement. Mentors and tutors from the Academy's students will work with the Free school pupils to support them to attain the next levels of success.

Teaching will be further enhanced by use of the additional Academy days in the calendar for which staff will receive a Harris bonus. This time will be used for high quality collaborative curriculum design and planning. This will also include common CPD and INSET with Charles Dickens School within the first few years of the Free School opening.

As pupils move through the Free School the aim will be to look at opportunities to introduce Key Stage 3 learning targets into the upper primary curriculum to enable an accelerated KS3 course to be delivered in Years 7 and 8 for graduates of the Free School, and early start to KS4 in Year 9 for the more able students. For less able students it will give greater opportunity to have solid foundations before starting KS4.

The Academy systems will be made available and support state -of- the – art provision and use of ICT in the primary school, enabling learners and their parents to access materials and information from home as well as from school. There will be a focus on enabling parents to support their children in their learning and specific support for those who did not find learning easy themselves when at school.

The challenge to staff at the primary school to improve their performance will be supported by high levels of professional development backed and supported by the Harris Federation and access to resources. There will also be opportunities for staff in Key Stage 2 to link to staff working in Key Stage 3 and staff in the Academy to work with primary aged children – breaking down some of the traditional primary/secondary boundaries and sharing skills and approaches which are more effective with younger or older students. This will

help across both the Free School and the Academy with improved delivery of personalised learning for those students who are working ahead or behind the norm, and open up new career development opportunities across age/stage boundaries.

The Free School will open with significant parent support (see the petition with 261 signatures above) and will aim to develop close links with the community and will make use of the traditionally closer relationship between parents and their children's primary school to build on and encourage those relationships and when students transfer to the Academy, ease their transition into the secondary school – rather than losing them.

The Academy will wish in particular to encourage extra-curricular activities with the Free School which cross traditional primary/secondary boundaries and promote collaborative projects in areas such as music, dance, drama and art. There will be opportunities for older students to lead younger pupils in small group work as part of developing their own personal Enterprise targets in leadership. There will be a focus on Performing Arts.

The key strands of the Every Child Matters agenda will be reflected in all aspects of the Free School's work and delivery. Economic Well Being and Being Healthy are delivered well through the two specialisms proposed and high quality approaches to teaching and learning will address the dimension of Enjoying and Achieving. The philosophy of the Harris Federation is founded upon Making a Positive Contribution and this will be reflected in an ethos that will include a culture of positive attitudes and collective responsibility for safety. The Free School will promote close relationships between the key agencies involved when dealing with children in vulnerable circumstances and when the pupils progress to the Academy at age 11 will wish to have consistent staff involvement across the two institutions - under one leadership - to ensure that such children move between Stages with well understood, well prepared and consistent support.

Recruitment of teachers will be enhanced by the attraction of working for the Harris Federation. The Academy will be looking for opportunities to use advanced skills teachers across the Federation's Academies who can contribute to the primary school as well as at secondary age ranges and will be using its reputation (as well as the CPD and career development opportunities) to recruit excellent teachers in the primary school as it builds. It will be vital from opening to be able to model outstanding practice to less experienced staff and staff from Charles Dickens School can support this. The primary school will also have the benefit of support from the Federation Advisers on Maths, Literacy and Science.

What are your organisation's core areas of work / aims? Max 500 words.

The Harris Federation specialises in delivering high quality outcomes for children through a consistent focus on behaviour management, high expectations of teachers and staff, a relentless drive to improve teaching and learning, continual monitoring of student progress against expectations and intervention to improve attainment.

It runs 9 secondary Academies but is aiming to expand to 20 or more in the Greater London Area, including a number of primary schools. Discussions are taking place with other local schools interested in joining the Federation who may also be able to link with the Free School.

It uses its Federation to share good practice and to provide career development for aspiring leaders.

What capacity and capability do you have (or have access to) in order to deliver the educational vision set out above? Please indicate the resources, experience and expertise (educational and legal) that you have or have access to. Max 500 words.

The Harris Federation already operates nine secondary academies and has a track record of success. The Harris Federation central teams led by the Chief Executive support principals in delivering teaching and learning. This support takes three forms:

- Providing effective support services
- Creating a collaborative network that facilitates the sharing of good practice and resources, and the adoption of common policies
- providing specialist curricular support in Maths, English and Science

The Chief Executive holds schools accountable through monitoring and performance management.

In this instance where primary expertise is limited within the Federation, it is intended to bring in specialist primary advice from [REDACTED]

Do you have plans to work with a 3rd party organisation? If so, please include their details below and set out the intended nature of that relationship (for example, a contract, co-sponsorship arrangement, informal partnership).

We plan to develop the Free School with advice and support from the Headteacher and senior staff of [REDACTED], who will need compensation for releasing the Head and senior staff from time to time

to work with us. This will be an informal partnership

Please name the key individuals / trustees involved in setting up the Free School (if available). Please also indicate whether trustees have been chosen and their roles confirmed. Please provide details of employment of these individuals and any conflicts of interest you believe might arise.

The school will be a Harris Federation School. The Harris Federation Board will be the legal governing body and single employer (see above for more details on directors).

During the set-up phase, local parents who have supported the proposal, together with the Executive Principal of the Academy, will be represented on the project steering group, which will be responsible for signing off key documents and decisions. This group will have advice from [REDACTED] and it will be planned to make an appointment of the Free School Head at an early date - probably Summer 2011.

Harris Federation will then work with parents to agree effective governance arrangements that ensure parents are at the centre of the school's accountability once the school is open. It is planned that very close links with the Academy will be ensured by common membership of both local governing bodies. The Executive Principal of the Academy will lead both institutions.

EVIDENCE OF DEMAND

What evidence of local parental demand do you have? For example, a petition or a declaration from interested parents or pupil number projections for the area. Max 200 words.

We have a petition signed by 261 parents.

In addition we have discussed demand for primary places within the area wioth southwark. Southwark use the GLA to prepare projections, based on population, migration and new housing. The latest projections (applied by Southwark to their School Capacity Collection 2010) confirm a projected pressure for primary places in the Nunhead and Peckham Rye planning area where the new Free School would be. The projected pressure for Reception places in this area is for a shortfall of 2 forms of entry (FE) in September 2012. Individual planning areas don't reflect the pressure that Southwark, along with other boroughs, is under (as a result of the increased birth rate and the reduced migration of parents from London), the authority therefore plans across a wider area to ensure that the need for places is met in the future. In the case of both the south, where the school would be located and the adjacent centre planning area the pressure for reception places is considerably greater - in the south a projected shortfall of nearly 5 FE in September 2012, while in the centre the projected shortfall is 4 FE. Southwark is proposing to meet these shortfalls by a mixture of bulge classes and permanent additional places. The additional 2FE at the Free School would therefore go some way to meeting the projected shortfall of places in the area.

What is the proposed capacity (number of pupils)? Max 200 words.

The proposed capacity of the school is 420 places.

What is the proposed age range of the Free School? Please include details of planned pupil numbers in each year group.

The proposed school will be a two form entry primary school for children aged 4 - 11.

When do you hope the Free School will start operating (for your first set of pupils)?

It is proposed that the school opens in remodelled accommodation in Harris Academy Peckham in September 2012. This would allow time for the admission policy to be consulted on during the Spring 2011 and admissions advertised in the LA booklet issued in June 2011 and a remodelling scheme to be designed in time for building works to be completed in the Summer of 2012.

PREMISES

What steps have you taken to identify a potential site? Please include details of the geographical area the school seeks to serve; a list of any sites you have considered; and any discussions you have had to identify a suitable site. If known, please include the proposed location, premises and postcode of the Free School.

A Stage A/B feasibility study has been carried out into a wing of Harris Academy Peckham which shows that a 420 place school could be created there with separate entrance and play areas from the Academy. This would be a lease arrangement made between schools within the Federation so has no risk, but would require capital funding to remodel the accommodation to be suitable for a primary school.

The premises are at Harris Academy Peckham, [REDACTED], London, [REDACTED].

Further information

Please note, all information provided on this form will be published on the Department for Education website. Information that you supply on this form may be shared with (a) the New Schools Network and (b) the Local Authority in which you wish to set up the Free School. Information about the New Schools Network can be found at <http://www.newschoolsnetwork.org>.

Submission of this form will be treated as consent, from both you and anyone else whose personal data is contained on this form, to the sharing of this information as set out above.

In addition, information that you provide on this form, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes, primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.

Next Steps

Please email completed Proposal Form to
freeschools.registration@education.gsi.gov.uk

You will hear back from a named official at the Department for Education within two weeks, who will offer you advice on how best to progress your application. The Secretary of State will make a judgement on the potential of the project based on criteria relating to educational aims and objectives, evidence of demand, potential premises, suitability of provider and any other relevant considerations to decide whether the proposed Free School project should move into stage 3, namely that of drawing up a business case and plan.