



SEND Resource Bases

Guidance Notes for Submitting an Expression of Interest

Oxfordshire County Council is inviting expressions of interest from suitable primary and secondary schools and academies interested in the establishment of small Resource Bases to be located on their school site.

In this guidance, you will find a brief overview of our strategy for the development of Resource Bases, the assessment criteria that will be used to review expressions of interest, along with the pupil placement approach and the expected funding model.

We would hope that the first Resource Bases would be operational from the start of Autumn Term 2026.

Expression of interest forms should be returned by email to school.planning@oxfordshire.gov.uk by 5pm on 13th June





Overview of SEND and Resource Bases Strategy

The Oxfordshire SEND Sufficiency Delivery Strategy 2022/23-2026/27 sets out Oxfordshire County Council's planning framework for the delivery of additional school-based capacity to meet the needs of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). It complements the Oxfordshire Local Area SEND Strategy and is aligned with the DfE Delivering Better Value (DBV) Programme. The Strategy is published on the council's website at: https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/file/special-educational-needs/SENDsufficiencystrategy.pdf

Under the Strategy, capital investment to provide additional SEND provision in Oxfordshire will focus on the following four priorities:

Priority 1: Local access to appropriate high-quality provision

Priority 2: Reducing overall cost pressures

Priority 3: Meeting emerging needs

Priority 4: Efficient use of resources to maximise reach and scope of support

The Strategy sets out a spatial framework to provide a structure for the phased expansion of the network of Resource Base provision, as one strand of increasing SEND provision in Oxfordshire. Oxfordshire's share of the recently announced DfE high needs capital grant to support inclusion of pupils in mainstream will be used to support the establishment of new Bases.

Resource Bases provide additional specialist facilities on a mainstream school site for a small number of pupils who have EHCPs. The Resource Bases currently operating in Oxfordshire have capacities between 8 and 16 (primary) or 30 (secondary) pupils, and are broadly proportionate to the size of the school. Pupils are on the roll of the mainstream school and are allocated to the Base by the LA through the EHCP process.

Statutory Process

Establishing a new Resource Base is defined as a "significant change" and the DfE sets out the necessary consultation and approval process. For a non-academy school, the Local Authority is the statutory decision maker, as set out in the DfE's guidance Making significant changes ("prescribed alterations") to maintained schools (publishing.service.gov.uk). Such decisions are usually delegated by the Cabinet to the Lead Member responsible for Education, after the statutory consultation process has been followed by the local authority. Changes to academies are approved by the DfE Regions Group team, or Regional Director, and the relevant academy trust is responsible for applying, supported by a consultation, to the DfE. The local authority can provide support for this process.





Evaluation of Expressions of Interest

The Local Authority will complete a detailed evaluation of all expressions of interest taking account of the criteria listed below. If there are more strong applications that can be funded at this stage, priority will be given to those which clearly meet gaps in existing provision, whether that is in location or type of need.

You should clearly relate your application to these criteria, providing evidence as appropriate.

Where necessary, LA officers may wish to visit your school and have discussions with key staff to clarify your application.

Assessment Criteria

The proposal would increase the number of: Chil sch	ildren with SEND who will attend their local school ildren we care for (CWCF) and Children we previously cared for (CWPCF) who will attend eir local school ildren in receipt of pupil premium funding (PP/disadvantaged) who will attend their local hool Quality First Teaching	
would increase the number of: Chi sch	eir local school illdren in receipt of pupil premium funding (PP/disadvantaged) who will attend their local hool	
Chil sch	nool	
	Quality First Teaching	
	Quality First Teaching	
pro	rong leadership of SEND, and capacity to manage the proposed investment and new ovision, for example as assessed by Ofsted	
Hig	gh quality of education for SEND, for example as assessed by Ofsted	
The school	w quality of education for SEND will be strengthened through the proposed investment	
demonstrates: High	gh aspirations for learners	
Incl	clusive school ethos - low rate of permanent exclusions, suspensions, etc.	
Cle	ear plan to measure impact	
Right Support Right Time in Inclusive Settings		
M e	eet the needs of children with complex needs	
Fill	a local current or emerging geographic gap in provision	
Proposal would:	rget the type of SEND for which there is a local shortage of provision	
Ве	affordable and sustainable within the relevant revenue funding mechanisms	
	liver added value in supporting SEND provision beyond the school, e.g. through a local rtnership approach	
Property expectations and governance		
Rep	present good value for money	
Proposal would:	ake more effective use of OCC's education estate and assets	
	imply with standard OCC governance processes and prioirties, inlcuding sustainability and E guidance as outlined in BB104 Area guidelines for SEND as appropriate	





Pupil placements to Resource Bases and Funding Arrangements

In Oxfordshire, admissions to Resource Bases are centrally co-ordinated and agreed through a process of panel discussions and decisions. Admissions are for the LA to determine based on its consideration of all the advice and information received about a CYP's special educational needs, and consultation responses from settings. In some cases, there may be children already on the school's roll who would qualify for transfer to the Resource Base, but this <u>cannot</u> be assumed. Pupils may be allocated even if the admission number for the school has already been filled.

Resource Base admissions criteria assume that children can access mainstream education for 50% of their time, although this may not be the case from the outset. Experience from successful Bases suggests that children can progress towards this target as their needs are addressed through the Resource Base.

Revenue Funding

The revenue funding model for Resource Base places is subject to Schools Forum approval. For 2026/27 it is expected to be:

- Core funding: a combination of per-pupil funding (AWPU) through the local schools funding formula, plus
 - £6,000 per place for those occupied by pupils on roll (as of October census) as these pupils will already have generated AWPU for the main school budget;
 - or £10,000 per place for commissioned places not occupied (as of October census) –
 as these children will not have generated AWPU for the main school budget.
 - All places expected to be opened within the next three years would be funded.
- Top-up funding: paid on a per-pupil basis by the resident (commissioning) local authority. For Oxfordshire, the proposed level would be:
 - A standard rate of £12,000 per pupil.
 - Places occupied by pupils would be funded.

Schools can also request exceptional needs funding based on individual pupils.

Capital Funding

Funding is being made available to support capital works via the DfE High Needs Grant. It is expected that proposals will use existing excess space within school, and that the grant will be used to fund adaptations to make space more appropriate for running a Resource Base, rather than a wholescale change. It will be very difficult to support cases for physical extensions and/or brand-new accommodation.

If you have indicative costings for capital works then please do share these in your application, although it is not essential to submit at this stage.