



## CHILDREN'S & LEARNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**Subject Heading:**

Draft Criteria to Assess Applications from  
Free School / Academy Providers

**CMT Lead:**

Sue Butterworth

**Report Author and contact details:**

Mary Pattinson  
433808  
[mary.pattinson@havering.gov.uk](mailto:mary.pattinson@havering.gov.uk)

**Policy context:**

The LA has recently adopted a School Places Commissioning Strategy. Part of that Strategy explains that Free Schools and Academies are likely to move into the LA to address our primary rising rolls. The LA therefore wishes to ensure that it is proactive in ensuring that it attracts high quality organisations as potential education providers.

### SUMMARY

The report sets out draft criteria which the Authority is planning to share as a part of any discussions with potential Free Schools and Academies who may wish to provide places for children and young people in Havering. Members are asked to comment on these criteria and/or make further suggestions.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

To consider the draft report, making suggestions for changes or additions to the criteria which will then be included in the final version.

### REPORT DETAIL

Annex A sets out the Draft Criteria which will be used in discussions with potential Free Schools and Academies who may wish to establish themselves in Havering. It is intended to be used in the early stage meetings with Free School and Academy sponsors who are interested in finding out about schooling in Havering in general and therefore provides an opportunity for the Authority to set out its broad expectations for any new school provider.

The final decision about whether any Free School or Academy can set up in Havering is not the responsibility of the LA, rather the Department for Education (DfE). However, Havering is keen to ensure that in these early stage meetings the Authority's expectations are clearly set out.

It also provides an opportunity at a later date, once the DfE have awarded a contract to a Free School or Academy, to enter into further discussions about the detail of any proposals as they are developed by the provider organisation with the intention that they support the establishment of effective partnership working with a new sponsor and shape, where possible, any provision.

## **IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

**Financial implications and risks:** The funding of Free Schools and Academies is provided by the DfE so there is no capital requirement from the Authority.

Additional revenue funding would be provided via the EFA, as for all other Academies, based on LA formula allocations.

**Legal implications and risks:** There are no legal implications.

**Human Resources implications and risks:** There are no HR implications.

**Equalities implications and risks:** The production of these criteria and the discussions that this would generate with providers should enhance the opportunity for improved provision for the most vulnerable children. However these criteria are not binding on any new provider of education in Havering and makes no changes to any policy or practice of the Authority. Therefore there is no need for an Equality Assessment.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

***Annex A – Draft Criteria to Assess Applications from Free School / Academy Providers***

**Annex A:**

**Draft Criteria to Assess Applications from Free School / Academy Providers**

1. Suitability to run an educational establishment
  - Accessed by organisation's track record and suitability of sponsors and those that will lead the school, (DfE are clear if they have concerns about the suitability of the providers this will rule them out)
2. Clear educational vision, aims and objectives and a capacity to implement them
  - A compelling vision for their school
  - A solid education plan backed up by relevant education expertise
  - Including innovative and creative approaches that promote excellence, equity and extend diversity of provision in the Borough
  - As creationism, intelligent design and any view or theory that is contrary to established scientific and/or historical evidence or explanation and therefore must not be taught as an evidence based view or theory in schools in the UK; this would be applied to Havering free schools along with our LA maintained schools and academies
3. Strong leadership and management capacity
4. A commitment to achieving high standards for their pupils
  - Targets to be at least in the top 25% of similar schools and aim for the top 10%
  - Clear explanation of how this will be achieved and how they will narrow the gap between the attainment of children from vulnerable backgrounds and the rest of the cohort
5. A commitment to support and deliver the Early Education Entitlement for qualifying 2 year olds (statutory offer from September 2013); and 3 and 4 year olds.
6. Plans for ensuring compliance with relevant Safeguarding legislation
7. Plans for ensuring that the provision and policies will be fully SENDA Compliant
8. Clarity on governance, quality assurance and quality control arrangements
9. Fair, transparent and inclusive admissions policies which are in line with the LA's Admissions Code
10. Extended learning opportunities outside the normal school day
11. Supporting the principle of a SEN resource base.
  - The Council would welcome proposals which offer a base for pupils on the Autistic Spectrum Disorder with MLD
12. Enthusiasm to work in partnership across the LA with all other schools and partner agencies

13. Strong commitment to the local community and proactive engagement with parents, including the use of school accommodation to support local community needs.
14. The capacity to run a financially viable school.