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| Location: | The new Free School will be located on a 2.7 hectare site on Village 4 within the Kingsbrook development and is projected to open in September 2025, subject to statutory consents and construction market conditions and pupil demand. Attached is a masterplan of the development showing where the new primary school will be built.The Development is on land to the east of Aylesbury comprising eventually 2450 homes to include two primary schools and a site for a new secondary school. The first primary school on the Kingsbrook development is in Village 3 and opened in September 2021. Following a competition process Inspiring Futures Partnership Trust was appointed by the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) as the sponsor to run the first primary school. The secondary school opened the following year in September 2022. Following a competition process The Insignis Trust was appointed by the RSC as the sponsor to run the secondary school. |
| Context and need for school places | The proposed school will be built as 2fe in size (420 places, excluding a 12 place SEMH Unit which will be in addition to the 420, with a 60 place nursery) to accommodate demand from the Kingsbrook development although its design will be future proofed to allow for further expansion up to a 3fe school should demand rise further due to new housing. In addition, the build will include 2 additional classrooms to allow for potential bulge classes to accommodate pupils from the development during peak growth times, if required. Any Trust bidding to run the school must agree to accepting bulge classes as and when requested by Buckinghamshire Council (BC) to meet the pupil needs from the development. BC has consulted on the Local Plan for Aylesbury which proposes when completed, approximately 30,000 homes to 2033 which includes Kingsbrook (2500 homes) as well as a number of other major developments in the Aylesbury area: Berryfields (3000 homes), Hampden Fields (3000 homes), Woodlands (1100 homes), SW Aylesbury (1400 homes) and SE Aylesbury (1600 homes).   |
| Phase/Age Range and Capacity | The school that is the subject of this competition is a new one and is not replacing an existing school. The school will be a 2fe primary school for age ranges from 4 years of age to 11 years of age, with a 60 place nursery for ages 2 - 3, catering for mixed education, building up over time to its full capacity. The school will have a 12 place SEN unit which would be in addition to the 420 places in the main school.The school design will be future-proofed so that in time, if necessary, it can be expanded up to 3fe, (subject to planning) with a 90 place nursery. Core infrastructure may be oversized from the outset to facilitate future expansion.The building will include 2 additional classrooms to enable the school to admit up to two bulge classes to accommodate pupils from the development during peak growth years in advance of any decision to move forward with a permanent expansion. This will enable BC to monitor pupil yield rates from the development which in the initial stages can be very volatile. |
| Opening date | BC would seek to open the primary school on 1 September 2025 subject to statutory consents, pupil demand and construction market conditions.  |
| Admission Arrangements | The school will build up over a period to ensure the viability of local schools. Initially the school will open with up to 30 children in Reception and 30 into both Years 1, 2 and 3. It is anticipated that the school will then increase its admission number to 60 in 2026 and build up over the next three years to a capacity of 420 primary places and 60 nursery places. This arrangement can be reviewed with BC prior to the school opening, subject to demand for primary school places from the development.All proposers will be expected to follow the Department for Education (DfE) School Admission Code and the School Admission Appeals Code. Proposers will be expected to participate in the BC co-ordinated scheme for admissions and in-year admissions procedure. The 12 places in the SEND Unit will not form part of the 420 capacity of the school. |
| Special Educational Needs | The school will be expected to be fully inclusive and to educate children with special educational needs and disabilities in line with legislation (Children and Families Act, 2014).The school will have a 12 place SEND Unit for students of mixed education, who have an EHCP that identifies Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs as the primary area of need. The Unit will open on the 1 September 2025 or whenever an opening date is agreed, but BC will work with the sponsor to increase admissions to the unit over a period. The capacity in the Unit will build up over a period to a maximum size to enable 12 students to be accommodated in it. It is envisaged that pupils attending the Unit would spend most of their time based within the Unit (as the Unit will be self-contained with its own outside play area) but they will also be able to join in with parts of the school day where appropriate.One of the key aims of the Unit is to enable SEND pupils to access a mainstream offer, whilst accessing specific specialist support for their communication and interactions needs. Without specific provision, historically, there have been increased requests from families to attend special schools both within and outside Buckinghamshire.The successful sponsor will be required to sign a Service Level Agreement with BC for the provision of the SEND Unit. The school would be responsible for the quality and outcomes of the provision.  How this is provided could be negotiated, however children attending this provision would be a part of the school.Admissions for the units will be managed by the BC’s iSENd service under the Children and Families Act 2014. Trusts cannot be their own admitting authorities for the unit.The unit will be funded in line with other ARPs / Units within Buckinghamshire.  This includes a placement fee and top-up funding that comes with a student’s EHCP.  Placement fee will always be in place, but the top-up funding will be allocated according to when children attend the Unit.  Placement funding should cover base costs, while top-up covers individual support per pupil. |
| Catchment area | The catchment area for the new school will cover the whole of the Kingsbrook development, as agreed with the successful bidder, based on distance/transport links, feeder schools and community/physical boundaries. However, in time BC may wish to review the catchment area of the new school with the successful sponsor, and the successful sponsor would be expected to be willing to take part in such negotiations. |
| School building and design | The school will be procured and delivered by BC and will then be transferred by BC to the successful sponsor on a 125 year lease. The school will be built to current Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) Standard Specification and in line with DfE Building Bulletin 103 requirements for primary schools. The new school will be a modern design offering high quality facilities for the benefit of the school and the wider Kingsbrook community.When up to capacity, the main school will accommodate 420 children. and There will also be a 60 place nursery for pupils aged 2-3 and a 12 place SEND Unit.The buildings will be future proofed to expand to 3fe with a 90 place nursery should demand necessitate the provision of additional places. Core areas of the building may be oversized from the outset to minimise disruption with future expansion plans.The design process for the school has commenced. Bidders will need to confirm that they will accept the building as contractually “practically complete”. BC will not accept any alterations the Trust might seek to make to the design. However, the successful sponsor will be able to be fully involved in the delivery of the school prior to opening. |
| Revenue funding: | BC will provide a furniture and equipment allocation, in agreement with the successful sponsor or it will be provided through the construction contract. |
| Equalities Impact Assessment | BC has conducted an Equalities Impact Assessment and confirms that the new school will not have a negative impact on public or service users and that no groups or local schools will be adversely affected by the new school. |
| Start-up costs | The cost of the school build will be met by BC through S106 funding, HIF and Basic Need.BC will provide a budget, currently £74,700 for start-up costs which would initially be allocated from January 2025 *(subject to opening date agreement*), before the school opens to allow for the recruitment of a Headteacher and then the appointment of appropriate staff.After the opening of the school the diseconomies of scale funding as the school builds its number on roll to capacity will be in line with BC’s agreed growth funding criteria. BC will fund 30 pupils per class in the first year of opening and then 27 for all subsequent years for those classes for a maximum of 3 years.  BC also provides funding of 30 per class for all new reception classes after the first year of opening until all year groups are open, these classes do not have any further guaranteed funding.The successful sponsor might be eligible to apply for DfE Project Development Grant. Details are on the DfE website.After opening the new school’s annual budget allocation will be funded directly by the ESFA. |
| Application process and assessment criteria: | Only applications submitted by the published **deadline of 5pm on Friday 9 June 2023** using the appropriate BC application form will be considered for evaluation.Bidders must ensure that they are on the DfE’s approved sponsor list: any potential bidders, who are not on the approved list, must contact the South East Regional Director (RD) and arrange to go through the DfE’s approval process. You must contact the RD/DfE before submitting a bid to BC.All bids received will be evaluated against the criteria set out in the application form and the key criteria set out by the DfE, which are strategic vision, educational capacity and performance, financial planning and operational capacity and governance. A short-list of bidders for interview will be drawn up. Short-listed applicants will then be interviewed by a panel made up of the Cabinet Member for Education and Children’s Services, DfE representative (if available), Corporate Director Children’s Services, Director of Education, Head of Achievement and Learning, and elected councillors for the Kingsbrook area.After the panel interviews and BC has agreed on its preferred bidder, details of all bids and BC’s recommended bidder will be sent to the RD. The RD on behalf of the Secretary of State will consider, with the Advisory Board, BC’s assessments before deciding which bidder is in the best position to take forward the new school. The RD will then inform BC and the successful bidder of the decision and BC will inform any unsuccessful proposers. |
| Timeline for process | * Invitation to submit a proposal published on 17 04 2023
* Deadline for bids to be received 5pm on Friday 09 06 2023
* BC informs DfE and RD of bids received by 12 06 2023
* Bids evaluated and due diligence undertaken by BC/DfE/RD by 21 07 2023
* Shortlisted bidders for interview will then be notified by BC and invited to panel interviews in September 2023
* Details of all bids received including BC preferred bidder submitted to DfE/RD in September 2023
* RD makes decision on successful bidder by October/November 2023
* BC will expect the successful Trust to join their project board managing the opening of the school.
* The successful bidder must hold a 6 week consultation as set out in Section 10 of the Academies Act 2010, before the DfE funding agreement can be signed.
* Primary school opens September 2025 (subject to the conditions laid out above)
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| Requests for clarification or more information | * Please contact Paula Campbell-Balcombe, Commissioner Schools, School Commissioning, Buckinghamshire Council on 01296 382896 or via: paula.campbell-balcombe@buckinghamshire.gov.uk
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