

## Worcester new free special school – engagement events Q & As

**Q: What is the build time for the new school?**

A: DfE still need to undertake a feasibility study, but they have indicated to WCF that they will require vacant possession of the site by early summer 2024, with an indicative timeline for the school to open in September 2026.

**Q: Have DfE appointed a contractor?**

A: Not yet - DfE still need to undertake a feasibility study of the proposed site

**Q: Will the successful Trust have an opportunity to input into the building design?**

A: It will depend on the timeline and at what stage DfE are with the design & feasibility processes

**Q: Funding – will all pupils be funded for the full academic year regardless of when in the school year a child is admitted?**

A: We will have to have discussions about what funding looks like and will then confirm the agreed arrangement. Any Trust submitting an application should make it clear in their bid whether or not funding for the full year is assumed.

**Q: How confident is WCF that there will be sufficient pupils to open the school with the numbers proposed in each key stage for the first year? This query relates particularly to KS4 because those pupils can change their choices over the next couple of years.**

A: WCF is confident that the proposed year group sizes are realistic. We are unable to guarantee numbers at this stage, of course, but we are monitoring numbers of children that are coming through system now and although the actual pupils in the targeted cohort may change, we are confident that there will be sufficient numbers to populate the school as proposed.

**Q: Is Worcestershire looking at any stage to do an early opening in a temporary building elsewhere?**

A: We are still in the early stages of discussions with DfE about timescales but there are currently no plans to open the school prior to 2026.

**Q:**

**Is the SEND strategy currently accessible in the public domain?**

A: The draft SEND strategy 2023-2026 is available at <https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/send-local-offer-0/our-send-strategy>

**Q: Will the curriculum be age-related or will it need to be significantly adapted in line with the cognitive capabilities of the pupils?**

A: it would be an age-appropriate curriculum. The target cohort for the school have the cognitive ability to access the relevant age-related curriculum, but they're not able to reach their potential because of the environment. Having those smaller class sizes will enable them to reach their potential, so the standard age-related curriculum will be appropriate.