



Baroness Barran

Minister for the School System and Student Finance
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Mr Tobias Ellwood MP
Letter by email to: tobias.ellwood.mp@parliament.uk

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Dear Tobias,

We are delighted to tell you that the Secretary of State for Education has approved the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole bid to establish a new special free school.

We want all children to have the chance to reach their potential, which is why we are increasing high-needs funding for young people with complex needs by over £10.5 billion this year - up 60% over the last five years.

The 2024 Spring Budget announced an initial £105 million to fund an additional wave of special free schools. This builds on the £2.6 billion funding from the 2021 Spending Review to support the creation of places for children and young people with SEND or who require alternative provision. When combined with the special free schools programme, this is creating over 60,000 new specialist places across the country.

We will now be inviting applications from proposer groups to open and run the new free school. We will be looking for applications that demonstrate an ability and commitment to creating a good new school, delivering what the local area and its families need, and ultimately enabling the children that attend it to achieve their full potential.

Officials will also continue work with the local authority to finalise the site for the school, ensuring that it is both affordable and deliverable in a way that maximises the speed that the new school will be open and meeting the need for additional, specialist, high quality places in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole.

We will write to you again when we announce who will run the school, and also to confirm the site for the school once heads of terms are agreed. We hope that the new free school will help to provide more good specialist places for children, often vulnerable and disadvantaged, in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole.

I am writing in similar terms to other MPs with a constituency in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole.

Yours sincerely,

BARONESS BARRAN
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE