

77 BEXLEY ROAD: TRANSITION LEARNING CENTRE (TLC)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS) FOR PROVIDERS

30 MARCH 2026

PURPOSE, PROVIDER ELIGIBILITY AND THE APPLICATION PROCESS

1. What is the purpose of the Transition Learning Centre (TLC)?

The TLC will provide a specialist post-19 educational environment for **young people aged 19–25 with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)** who are assessed as requiring education beyond the statutory school age due to their SEND needs. The centre will focus on **preparation for adulthood**, including independence skills, therapeutic support, employability, community inclusion, and personalised pathways.

2. What is the purpose of this competition process?

This is a **Competitive Grant process** seeking to appoint a qualified provider to **operate and manage the TLC**, ensuring high-quality, person-centred provision that supports young adults with complex needs to achieve their long-term goals.

3. Who is eligible to apply?

Only state-funded education providers with proven experience in delivering high-quality FE or post-16 education for learners with complex SEND are eligible.

In addition, providers must meet all relevant quality standards within Ofsted inspection framework and the DfE's due-diligence requirements for high needs students funding as a new Special Post-16 Institution (SPI). Details of these requirements are set out [here](#).

Further details on the eligibility criteria are set out in **Section 4 of the Guidance and Specification** document published in the competition pack.

Applicants must also meet all **mandatory Part A prerequisites** in the application form.

4. When applying, what documents must be submitted?

Providers must submit:

- the **fully completed application form**
- all items listed in the **Mandatory Attachments Checklist** (e.g., safeguarding policies, financial statements, workforce structure, relevant experience evidence)

Incomplete submissions will be deemed non-compliant.

5. What is the application deadline?

Submissions must be emailed to school-place-planning@royalgreenwich.gov.uk by **midnight on 08 May 2026**. Late applications **will not** be accepted.

6. How is the competition assessed?

There are **two mandatory stages**:

1. **Application Stage (80% of overall score)**
2. **Interview Stage (20% of overall score)**

Within the application stage:

- **Part A** (Quality, Experience, Deliverability) is pass/fail.
- **Part B** (Vision, Education Plan, Capacity & Capability) forms **100% of the application score** and contributes **80%** to the overall final score.

7. How does the pass/fail system in Part A work?

To progress to Part B, providers must:

- Score **at least 5 points** in total across Part A; and
- Meet the **minimum pass threshold** for each test: Quality, Experience, Deliverability.

Providers who fail to meet these thresholds will not progress.

8. Will feedback be provided to applicants who do not pass Part A?

Yes. Providers who do not pass Part A will receive written feedback outlining reasons for non-progression.

9. What will be assessed at the Interview Stage?

The interview will evaluate:

- Coherence and consistency between the information provided in the written application and the responses given during the interview; and

- The extent to which the provider’s vision for the TLC aligns with the Council’s strategic ambitions and with the provider’s own organisational vision, values and strategic direction.

This stage comprises **20% of the overall score**.

10. Can providers submit clarification questions?

Yes. A clarification window will operate until one week before the submission deadline.

All substantive and technical clarification questions should be directed to: school-place-planning@royalgreenwich.gov.uk.

All questions and anonymised responses will be published on the TLC competition website to make available to all applicants.

Prospective applicants are therefore advised to check the website regularly and prior to sending any clarification questions to avoid the same questions being asked multiple times.

11. Will the local authority facilitate site visits?

As the TLC building has not yet been constructed, the local authority will **not** be able to facilitate site visits at this stage. Once a provider has been appointed, they will be invited to participate in **construction and mobilisation meetings**, some of which may take place on the site as works progress.

At this point in the process, the local authority does **not** consider visits to providers’ existing school or service sites to be necessary. If such visits are required at a later stage, providers will receive **adequate advance notice**, and any visit undertaken will **not form part of the scored assessment**.

12. What are the anticipated grant award and opening dates?

Indicative timeline:

- **Grant Award:** July 2026
- **Mobilisation:** July 2026 – August 2027
- **Opening:** September 2027

Timings are subject to the Council’s internal process and capital programme delivery.

13. What are the key expectations for the appointed provider?

The successful provider must:

- Deliver personalised, high-quality special post-16 institution (SPI) provision for learners aged 19- 25 with EHCP.
- Provide strong therapeutic input informed by EHCP outcomes
- Support independence, community access, and where appropriate, employability pathways
- Work collaboratively with health and adult social care commissioned services for the wraparound support required by learners
- Meet the relevant regulatory and quality standards for a specialist post-16/post-19 provision

14. Are partnership or consortium applications permitted?

Yes. Partnerships or consortium bids are eligible. A single lead provider must be nominated to hold contractual responsibility.

15. Will TUPE apply?

At present, TUPE is **not expected** to apply. However, when the proposed **Grant Agreement** comes to an end, TUPE may apply at that stage to manage the transition to a new provider. If this changes, applicants will be notified promptly.

16. Can providers submit more than one application?

No. Providers (including consortium leads) may submit **one** application only.

17. Who should we contact for further information?

All general enquiries as well as substantive or technical clarifications should be directed to: school-place-planning@royalgreenwich.gov.uk

PROPERTY AND PROPOSED OCCUPATION ARRANGEMENTS

18. How will confidentiality be managed?

All submissions will be handled securely and confidentially in accordance with data-protection legislation. Commercially sensitive information will only be accessed by the evaluation and moderation team.

19. What is the proposed lease arrangement for the TLC premises?

The Council proposes to grant a **25-year Full Repairing and Insuring (FRI) lease** of the premises at 77 Bexley Road. This means the provider will be fully responsible for maintaining and repairing the building throughout the term.

20. What is the annual rent?

The lease will be let at a **peppercorn rent (if demanded)** for the duration of the **Grant Agreement**.

21. What happens to the rent if the Grant Agreement ends early?

If the provider is no longer delivering the service **within the first five years**, the rent will revert to **Open Market Value (OMV)**, determined by an external valuer. After year five, OMV will be agreed or determined by an independent expert if required.

22. Will the provider have security of tenure?

Yes. The lease will fall **inside the security of tenure provisions of the Landlord & Tenant Act 1954**, giving the provider rights to renew the lease unless specifically excluded by law.

23. Are the premises newly constructed or refurbished?

The premises are newly constructed, and therefore **no Schedule of Condition will be provided**. The provider must keep the building in good and substantial repair throughout the lease term.

24. What repairs and maintenance will the provider be responsible for?

Under the **FRI lease**, the provider is responsible for:

- all internal and external repairs

- statutory inspections and certification
- maintaining building services and systems
- ensuring ongoing compliance with health and safety and relevant regulations
Failure to meet statutory obligations may result in lease termination.

25. Will the provider be responsible for insurance?

The Council will hold **buildings insurance**, and the provider must **reimburse the cost** at market rates. The provider is responsible for its own contents and operational insurance.

26. Can the provider make alterations to the building?

- **Structural alterations:** Not permitted.
- **Non-structural internal alterations:** Permitted but require **prior written landlord consent**.

27. Will there be a service charge?

No service charge is anticipated.

28. What running costs is the provider responsible for?

The provider must pay:

- utilities (gas, electricity, water)
- business rates
- waste services
- any other property-related outgoings

29. Can the provider assign or sublet the premises?

- **Assignment:** Only with **prior written landlord consent**.
- **Subletting:** **Not permitted**.

30. What is the permitted use of the property?

The premises must be used solely for the **Transition Learning Centre (TLC)**— supporting young people aged 19–25 with EHCPs who require continued education beyond statutory school age.

31. Is there a break clause in the lease?

Yes. There will be a **rolling break clause** linked to the termination provisions of the Grant Agreement, meaning both agreements are aligned.

32. Will the Council cover any legal costs?

No. **Each party must meet its own legal costs** associated with the lease.

33. Will there be a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)?

No MOU is anticipated as part of the arrangements.

THE COMPETITIVE GRANT PROCESS AND GRANT AGREEMENT

34. What does it mean that the provider appointment is being run as a Competitive Grant process

The Council has chosen to use a **Competitive Grant process** rather than the public contract procurement route. This means the competition is **not classified as a public contract** and is therefore **conducted outside of the Procurement Act**.

The process still follows principles of **fairness, transparency and equal treatment**, but it is not bound by the statutory procurement procedures required for public contracts.

35. Why is a Competitive Grant approach being used instead of a formal procurement?

Because the Transition Learning Centre (TLC) is a **publicly funded educational and developmental intervention** for young adults with EHCPs, the Council's intention is to **fund the delivery of agreed outcomes**, not to purchase services for its own use.

This aligns with grant-making principles, where funding supports a provider to achieve specific, measurable public-benefit outcomes.

36. Will providers still need to meet the same standards as a procured service?

Yes. Although this is not a public contract under procurement law, the Council will still require the provider to meet:

- robust quality standards
- statutory requirements for post-19 SEND provision
- agreed KPIs and reporting requirements
- safeguarding, compliance and regulatory expectations

The assessment criteria and interview stages ensure only high-quality, experienced providers progress.

37. What type of agreement will the successful provider enter into?

The successful provider will enter into a **25-year Grant Agreement** with the Council. This agreement sets out:

- funding conditions
- delivery expectations
- required outcomes and KPIs
- monitoring and reporting arrangements
- intervention and termination provisions

38. Is the Grant Agreement linked to the property lease?

Yes. The **Grant Agreement and the lease will be co-terminus**, meaning they run for the same 25-year period. If the **Grant Agreement** ends (for example through termination), the Council may also end the lease in line with the provisions set out in the draft Heads of Terms.

39. What KPIs will be included in the Grant Agreement?

The **Grant Agreement** will include KPIs relating to:

- quality and effectiveness of educational provision
- progress and outcomes for young people aged 19–25 with EHCPs

- safeguarding and compliance
- financial accountability and governance
- preparation-for-adulthood outcomes (independence, employability, community participation)

Details are included in Appendix A (Specification) published in the competition pack.

40. Will the Grant Agreement give the provider full control of the premises?

Yes. The **Grant Agreement** works alongside the **25-year Full Repairing and Insuring Lease**, which gives the provider operational control of the premises for the duration of the agreement, subject to the lease terms.

41. What happens if the provider fails to deliver the Grant Agreement requirements?

If a provider fails to meet key KPIs, statutory obligations, or material terms of the **Grant Agreement**, the Council may:

- require improvement via a formal action plan
- withhold or adjust grant payments
- apply intervention measures
- terminate the **Grant Agreement** if issues persist

Termination of the **Grant Agreement** may also trigger a notice under the lease.

42. Can the Grant Agreement be transferred to another organisation?

No. The **Grant Agreement cannot be assigned** to another organisation without the Council's consent. Any change in control, partnership arrangements, or organisational restructuring must be discussed with the Council in advance.

43. Will the Competitive Grant process affect how the Council evaluates applications?

The evaluation remains robust. Providers will still be assessed on:

- organisational capability
- education and therapeutic model

- governance and safeguarding
- experience with 19–25-year-olds with EHCPs
- readiness to manage the premises under a 25-year FRI lease

The method is different, but the quality bar is the same.

44. How will funding be released under the Grant Agreement?

Funding will be released in line with:

- agreed payment schedules
- financial reporting requirements
- evidence of performance against KPIs
- compliance with monitoring frameworks

Payments are contingent on delivery of agreed outcomes, not simply occupation of the building. Full details will be set out the **Grant Agreement** to be signed prior to the appointment of the successful provider.

45. Is a Grant Agreement less formal or binding than a contract?

No. A **Grant Agreement** is a **legally binding agreement**, and non-compliance has consequences. The grant mechanism simply reflects the nature of the intervention being funded, not the seriousness or enforceability of the obligations.

46. What is the interaction between the funding elements included in the funding model for the TLC?

Element 1 (place funding) and Element 2 (top-up funding) are included within the income model presented in Paragraph 6.6 of the Specification document ([TLC_Guidance_Specification \(incl Appendix A\)_20260318.pdf](#)). Therefore, Elements 1 and 2 should be understood as being within the components that make up the funding streams set out in the funding table, rather than supplementary funding on top of those figures.

47. Can the Pre-opening Development Grant (PDG) be used for overheads including oncosts and any capital costs?

The Pre-Opening Development Grant (PDG) is intended to support mobilisation and readiness activities required before the TLC opens. It may be used for:

- Reasonable mobilisation overheads,
- Staffing on-costs directly related to mobilisation, and
- Essential pre-opening activities.

However, the PDG cannot be used for capital expenditure. This includes any building works, fixtures, fittings, equipment that would ordinarily be classed as capital, or any other costs that fall under capital definitions.

The PDG **must be used only for** allowable revenue-based mobilisation costs as set out above.