

School SEND Capital Funding (SCF)

Bid Process and Governance 2025-26

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Overview

The SEND Capital Funding process is designed to increase inclusion in schools, improve the inclusive environment and assist SEND Schools and facilities in enhancing their learning environment through effective use of capital funds. This process aims to support initiatives that improve the physical and educational setting for SEND pupils by addressing gaps in existing provisions through small works capital projects.

Funding is available for a variety of capital initiatives but is not limited to:

- [Infrastructure Improvements](#): Renovation or small capital works to classrooms, therapy rooms, and other facilities tailored for SEND.
- [Specialised Equipment](#): Purchase of long term use educational tools and assistive technologies.
- [Accessibility Upgrades](#): Installation of ramps, lifts, and other accessibility features.

Bid Application Process:

To apply for SEND capital funding, schools must go through a two stage application process:

1. [Expression of interest \(EOI\)](#): Initial submission detailing the projects need and impact.
2. [Full application](#): Comprehensive proposal including detailed plans, financial breakdown and evidence of additional funding if applicable.

Applications should focus on projects aimed at enhancing or improving existing provision and facilities, rather increasing capacity.

Assessment Criteria

When assessing applications for SEND capital funding, the following criteria will be used to evaluate each proposal. This tailored process ensures that funds are allocated to projects that will provide the most significant benefits to SEND students and align with Southwark Council's strategic objectives.

1. **Alignment with SEND strategy and priorities:** How well the Project aligns with the strategic priorities outlined in the councils SEND strategy.
2. **Impact on pupils:** The potential benefits for SEND pupils, including the number of students impacted and the types of needs addressed.
3. **Feasibility and Business case :**
 - Project feasibility, including detailed business case, plans and timelines.
 - The readiness of the applicant to commence the project, including the availability of necessary resources.
4. **Value for Money:** Cost-effectiveness of the project, ensuring the proposed budget provides good value for money.
5. **Sustainability:**
 - Plans for the long-term sustainability of the project, including ongoing maintenance and support.
 - The project's ability to deliver lasting benefits beyond the initial funding period.
 - Ensuring the proposed project complements existing initiatives and does not conflict with other planned activities
6. **Previous Funding:**
 - Assessment of any previous funding received from the SEND capital fund or other related sources.
 - Evaluation of the success and impact of past projects funded by the Council.
7. **Partnerships and Collaboration:**
 - Evidence of partnerships with other groups, schools, or community groups to enhance the project's impact.
 - Collaboration plans that demonstrate a collective effort to support SEND students.

Eligibility

Who can Apply ?

Eligible Institutions within Southwark: This includes all types of SEND School, such as maintained, free and academies, and other educational institution that cater to students with SEND. These schools must demonstrate a clear need for capital improvements to enhance their facilities effectively.

Eligible Projects that would qualify funding:

1. Minor Building and Infrastructure Modifications:

- **Classroom Adaptations:** Small-scale modifications to existing classrooms to make them more accessible, such as adding adjustable desks or reconfiguring spaces to reduce sensory distractions.
- **Partition Walls:** Installing partition walls to create smaller, quieter learning areas within larger classrooms.

2. Accessibility Improvements:

- **Ramps and Handrails:** Installing ramps and handrails at entrances and within school buildings to improve accessibility.
- **Automatic Doors:** Adding automatic door openers to key entry points to facilitate easier access for students with mobility issues.

3. Specialised Equipment and Resources:

- **Assistive Tech devices:** Portable communication devices such as tablets, specifically purchased as part of a larger project to aid SEND students, or other assistive technologies that support learning.
- **Adapted Classroom Furniture:** Buying height-adjustable desks, ergonomic chairs, or other furniture that can be used in various classrooms to meet the needs of learners.

4. Outdoor Learning and Play Areas:

- **Sensory Play Equipment:** Installing sensory play panels or small-scale sensory paths in existing playgrounds and fixed play equipment
- **Adapted Sports Equipment:** Purchasing inclusive sports equipment like lightweight wheelchairs for basketball.

5. Minor Maintenance and Upgrades:

- **Lighting Improvements:** Upgrading lighting in classrooms and hallways to provide better illumination and reduce glare, which can help students with visual impairments or sensory sensitivities.
- **Soundproofing:** Adding soundproofing materials to walls and ceilings to reduce noise levels and create a more conducive learning environment for students with auditory processing issues.

6. Special/Tailored Learning Environments:

- **Quiet Zones:** Creating quiet zones or small sensory spaces within existing rooms using portable partitions and sensory equipment.
- **Behavioural Support Corners:** Setting up designated corners in classrooms equipped with calming tools and resources to help students manage their behaviour.

Ineligible Projects/Cost that would **NOT** qualify SCF funding:

1. Operational and Revenue Costs:

- Salaries and Wages: No funding for staff compensation.
- Utilities and General routine maintenance.

2. Supplies:

- Classroom Supplies: Regular classroom supplies like paper, pens, and textbooks.
- Educational Materials: Purchase of educational resources like books.

3. Non-Capital Equipment:

- General IT Equipment: Tablets and other devices for general classroom or administrative use.
- Office Furniture: Standard office furniture not specific to SEND needs.

4. Programs and Activities:

- Training Programs: Costs related to staff training and professional development.
- Extracurricular Activities.

5. Services:

- Consultancy Fees: Fees for consultants and external service providers.
- Transport Services: Costs associated with transportation for students.

Application Process & Governance

Applications for SEND capital funding are assessed through a structured two-stage process. This approach ensures thorough evaluation and alignment with Southwark Council's strategic objectives for SEND provisions.

1. Expression of Interest (EOI)

- **Purpose:** The EOI allows schools to provide an initial overview of their proposed project.
- **Content Requirements:**
 - **Project Need:** Description of the need for the project, including the specific gaps in current SEND provisions that the project aims to address.
 - **Impact:** Explanation of the expected difference the project will make for SEND students.
 - **Preliminary Details:** Basic information about the project scope, estimated costs, and timeline.
 - **Submission:** Schools submit the EOI to the designated email: SchoolCapitalProjects@southwark.gov.uk.
 - **Evaluation:** The initial evaluation checks alignment with the council's SEND criteria and strategic priorities. Schools that meet the criteria are invited to proceed to the full application stage.

2. Full Application (Bid Application)

- **Purpose:** The full application requires a comprehensive business case for the proposed project.
- **Content Requirements:**
 - **Detailed Project Description:** In-depth details of the project, including objectives, activities, and milestones.
 - **Financial Plan:** Complete budget breakdown, including detailed cost estimates and up to three quotes for expenses over £5,000 to ensure competitive pricing.
 - **Funding Needs:** Statement of the total funding required, how much funding the school can contribute, and any other funding streams.
 - **Impact Analysis:** Detailed analysis of the expected benefits and outcomes for SEND students.
 - **Sustainability Plan:** Explanation of how the project outcomes will be maintained in the long term.
 - **Submission:** Schools submit the full application along with necessary documentation to the designated email: SchoolCapitalProjects@southwark.gov.uk.
 - **Evaluation and Decision:** The Children Services Capital Board evaluates full applications based on feasibility, impact, value for money, and alignment with strategic priorities. Successful applications to receive funding allocation.

Funding Requirements

1. Demonstration of Additional Funding

- **Requirement:** For projects where the total cost exceeds £15,000, schools must demonstrate how they will secure the additional funding required beyond the council's contribution.
- **Evidence:** Schools should provide detailed information about the sources and amounts of additional funding, such as:
 - School funds
 - Contributions from partnerships or community groups

2. Financial Plan

- **Detailed Breakdown:** The application must include a comprehensive financial plan that outlines:
 - The total project cost
 - The amount requested from the council (up to £15,000)
 - The amount and sources of additional funding
- **Budget Justification:** Provide a justification for the budget, explaining how each cost item contributes to the project's objectives and overall impact

3. Funding Contribution

- **Threshold Parameters:**
 - Schools can request full funding for projects costing up to £15,000, provided they meet the necessary criteria and demonstrate value for money.
 - For projects costing more than £15,000, schools should be able to demonstrate the source of additional funding to cover costs above the initial £15,000 threshold.
 - Schools must provide a minimum of three written quotations for expenses over £25,000 to ensure competitive pricing.
 - The council will evaluate each application individually to determine the appropriate level of funding support based on the project's needs, alignment with strategic priorities, and available resources.

Contract Value	Procurement
Up to £5,000	Minimum of one written quotation, which represents value for money, must be obtained.
Under £25,000	Minimum of two written quotations, which represent value for money, must be sought. Where possible one quotations from a local supplier should be sought

£25,000 or more to below £100,000	Minimum of three written quotations, which represent value for money, must be sought. Where possible two quotations from a local supplier should be sought
£100,000 +	Full competitive tendering process or a compliant framework must be used. Consult with LBS Project team

4. Sustainability and Impact

- **Long-term Plan:** The financial plan should be sustainable plan that outlines how the project's outcomes will be maintained in the long term or future plans that may affect the proposed project.