

Stepping Stones: Frequently Asked Questions

FAQs published on Friday 11 May 2018.

1. Can a primary school apply for the funding?

Yes, although we expect that most applications will be made by secondary schools. If a primary school does apply, they will be expected to work closely with a partner secondary school to ensure that they can deliver all chosen elements of the programme – this should be outlined in their application.

2. Do the application questions have a minimum/maximum word count?

We have not set minimum or maximum word counts for each question, however responses are limited by the size of the text boxes provided. In general, we are looking for succinct responses, which cover any key prompts given.

3. Can I submit un-signed Partnership Declaration Forms?

Ideally, Partnership Declaration Forms should be completed, signed and submitted with your application by midday on Friday 18 May. If you are waiting for forms to be signed, please still complete the Partnership Declaration Form as far as you are able and also provide evidence in your application that a partnership has been agreed (for example, correspondence with the school in question).

4. What due diligence information are schools required to submit?

Please refer to Appendix C of 'Stepping Stones – request for applications'. Local authority maintained schools are exempt from the due diligence process; however other schools should provide as much of the documentation listed with their application.

5. Are schools able to work in partnership with external providers to deliver the Stepping Stones programme?

Although it's not anticipated that many applicants will choose this route, schools may choose to work with an external provider to deliver elements of the Stepping Stones programme. For example, during the pilot phase, schools worked with Gangs Unite to deliver the community mentoring aspect of the programme. The decision to work with an external provider must be made clear in the school's application (with particular reference to questions 11 and 16 of the application form) and supporting budget breakdown sheet. Schools should consider the impact that working with an external provider may have on their ability to continue the programme after the initial funding period (see question 18 of the application form).

6. How much does it cost to run Stepping Stones?

It very much depends on which elements of the programme you choose to run in your school. As outlined in the request for applications, Stepping Stones has six main elements. Although schools must run the peer mentoring element of the programme, they can choose which other element(s) they deliver. The Stepping Stones Toolkit (www.london.gov.uk/stepping-stones) includes an economic assessment of the programme and break-down of cost per student for all elements. Please note however, that these costs are based on delivering the pilot programme. They are likely to be reduced in future years, because the design of various materials and resources has already been completed – these are available through the Toolkit.

7. How much detail should be included in the delivery plan?

You don't need go into minute detail, but it's important to pick out key termly milestones which will help us understand how you plan to run the programme and what will happen when. Your plan should capture activity relating to all chosen programme elements, as well as any wider administrative processes. For example, milestones relating to the peer mentoring element of the programme might include things like:

- Peer mentors selected and training scheduled
- Training takes place for peer mentors
- Peer mentors paired with incoming Year 7s
- First peer mentoring session takes place

8. Do all participating Year 7 students need to participate in all activities on offer through the programme?

All participating Year 7 students should take part in the peer mentoring scheme, which is the only mandatory element of the programme. Aside from this, we are happy for you to be flexible so long as you provide a rationale for this in your application.

9. What is meant by "risks" in question 13 of the application form? Do I need to complete a risk assessment?

No, we're not asking for a risk assessment. Lack of parental support for the programme or disengagement from Year 7/Year 10 pupils are good examples of risks which might affect the impact of Stepping Stones in your school.

10. Should student outcomes be tracked just at the end of Year 7, or again at the end of Year 8?

We anticipate that outcomes will be tracked at the beginning, middle and end of Year 7, as well as the beginning, middle and end of Year 8 for students who take part in the first year of delivery. You will also be tracking outcomes for peer mentors. We will appoint an external evaluator to support all schools with this process.

11. Is my school able to use Year 9 students and/or sixth form students as peer mentors, as opposed to Year 10s?

We strongly recommend that your peer mentors are selected from those students entering Year 10 in the 2018/19 academic year. The pilot programme demonstrated notable benefits to students in this age group and was able to minimise disruption by:

- Running peer mentoring training in the summer term of Year 9
- Running peer mentoring sessions before school (1-2 sessions per week)
- Ending peer mentoring sessions after Easter of Year 10

You may wish to consider using older students (for example Year 12 or 13) to manage or administer the peer mentoring scheme.

12. Do all feeder primary schools need to complete a Partnership Declaration Form?

If you plan to work with them on this programme, then yes. Please see question 3 if you are concerned about receiving signed forms in time for the application deadline.

13. Are schools expected to provide match funding to run the programme?

There is no expectation for schools to provide match funding; however, the £50,000 grants available are intended only as a means for schools to kick-start running Stepping Stones. Schools who wish to run all elements of the programme (as per the pilot), or support larger numbers of pupils may wish to commit additional match funding. Applicants are encouraged to consider the economic assessment of the pilot programme found at www.london.gov.uk/stepping-stones

Any match funding which schools intend to provide should be recorded on the 'Stepping Stones: budget breakdown sheet'.

14. Why does the budget breakdown sheet include the year 2020/21?

The GLA are funding schools to run Stepping Stones over two academic years (2018/19 and 2019/20); however, the 'Stepping Stones: budget breakdown sheet' shows forecast spend per financial year - it therefore includes 2020/21.

15. I'm having trouble editing the Stepping Stones application form, what should I do?

Please re-download the application form from www.london.gov.uk/apply-stepping-stones - we have resolved an earlier issue around editing drop-down lists. If you are still experiencing technical issues then contact: educationprogramme@london.gov.uk