



Department
for Education

Guidance

Notes on area guidelines for mainstream schools: BB 103

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This publication is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/area-guidelines-and-net-capacity/notes-on-area-guidelines-for-mainstream-schools-bb103>

1. Building Bulletin 103: Area Guidelines for Mainstream Schools

Area Guidelines for Mainstream Schools (BB103)

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/area-guidelines-and-net-capacity>) sets out simple, non-statutory area guidelines for school buildings (part A) and sites (part B) for all age ranges from 3 to 19. It covers all state schools, including mainstream academies and free schools, except special schools and alternative provision.

The document supersedes the area guidelines in Building Bulletins 98 and 99, recommending reduced minimum internal and external areas. The minimum gross area recommended for buildings, which is currently used to calculate funding for many new or replacement school projects, averages 15% lower than that recommended in BB98 and around 6% lower than BB99.

The document aims to assist building professionals, school sponsors and those involved in creating a design brief for new school buildings, school refurbishment or conversion projects. It may also be of interest to head teachers, governors and others who need advice on the appropriate amount of space for teaching and learning activities.

However, in line with policies which seek to increase choice and opportunity in state funded education, these guidelines will not necessarily have to be met in every case and should always be applied flexibly in light of the particular circumstances.

In part A, simple graphs and formulae can be used to check that the number, size and type of rooms in both new designs and existing buildings are as recommended. The revised formulae continue to address the needs of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities, the school workforce and community use out of school hours. They do not affect the net capacity assessment method.

Part B sets out site area recommendations using similar graphs and formulae.

The recommendations are based on typical curriculum delivery and staffing, and take account of schools' duty to offer universal infant free school meals from September 2014. The total net area recommended allows for the individual priorities of schools to be accommodated. The minimum overall gross area recommended has been revised, rigorously tested and used in the baseline designs.

2. Schedule of Accommodation tool

The Schedule of Accommodation (SoA) tool

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mainstream-schools-schedule-of->

accommodation-tools) referred to on page 3 and elsewhere in the document is now available on GOV.UK.



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