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Section 1: Applicant details

Details of Company Limited by Guarantee
Name: Stone Soup Learns
Company address: <div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> Nottingham <div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 20px; display: inline-block;"></div>
Company registration 07217174
Main contact
Name: <div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 20px; display: inline-block;"></div>
Address: <div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> Nottingham <div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 20px; display: inline-block;"></div>
Email address: <div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 20px; display: inline-block;"></div>
Telephone number: <div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 20px; display: inline-block;"></div>
Members and Directors
Please confirm the total number of (a) Company Directors 3 and (b) any other members of the Governing Body 4 appointed to date and list them below. Please also confirm who the proposed Chair of the Governing Body is.
Name: <div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 20px; display: inline-block;"></div>
Position: Director
Name: <div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 20px; display: inline-block;"></div>
Position: Financial Director; Director of Trust
Name: <div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 20px; display: inline-block;"></div>
Position: <div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 20px; display: inline-block;"></div>
Name: <div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 20px; display: inline-block;"></div>
Position: Proposed Chair of Governors
Name: <div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 20px; display: inline-block;"></div>
Position: Proposed Governor
Name: <div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 20px; display: inline-block;"></div>
Position: Proposed Governor
Name: <div style="background-color: black; width: 100px; height: 20px; display: inline-block;"></div>
Position: Proposed Governor

Related organisations
Does the Company Limited by Guarantee have any links (through the members, directors or otherwise) with any other charitable or commercial organisation? Y
If Y please provide their name and Charity Commission number and describe the role that it is envisaged to play in relation to the Free School:
Stone Soup Learns is a company affiliated to a network of other Community Interest Companies (not for profit organisations) whose parent company is The Stone Soup Project. The group structure is attached at Appendix B.

The Stone Soup Project aims to support Stone Soup Learns by providing all required 'back office' services, such as HR and payroll. This is explained in more detail in Section 6.

If your organisation is an existing independent school, please provide your six digit unique reference number:
n/a

Declaration to be signed by a Company Director

I confirm that the information provided in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge and that if the application is successful the Company will operate a Free School in accordance with the requirements outlined above and the requirements of the Independent Schools Standards* and the Funding Agreement with the Secretary of State.

Signed:

Print Name:

Date:

Each Member and Director of the Company should also complete and return the personal information and declarations from Section 9 (which is in a separate downloadable form).

* The requirements of the Independent Schools Standards are not applicable for 16-19 Free Schools

Section 2: Outline of the school

Proposed school name:	Stone Soup Learns					
Age range:	11-19					
Proposed numbers in each year group at point of opening and explanation of how pupil numbers will expand to fill the school over time.		2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
	Key stage 1					
	Key stage 2					
	Key stage 3			10	10	10
	Key stage 4	30	40	40	40	40
	Post 16	10	30	50	50	50
If an existing independent school, provide details of your latest inspection (including the report), current numbers on roll and total capacity of school.	N/A					
Will your school have a religious character (i.e. be a faith school)? If Y, please specify which faith. Please see notes below (at the end of this table).	No.					
Is this an application for a single-sex school? If so, please tick the relevant box.	No.					
Local authority area in which the school would be situated (and if near to a LA boundary please include names of neighbouring LAs).	Nottingham City, Nottinghamshire County Council. We also have contacts with Derbyshire schools and its LA.					

Section 3: Educational vision

The Stone Soup Project as a whole was established as a social enterprise, aiming to tackle some of society's problems. One area which we wished to address was the issue of alternative education provision, and therefore one of the divisions of the Stone Soup Project was established as 'Stone Soup Learns', dedicated to providing high quality, accredited alternative educational provision.

From the start, we developed a distinctive culture and ethos, by employing a team of highly qualified industry professionals and setting students' learning firmly in vocational, practical and work based contexts, so that students would respond to the clear sense of 'difference' and the opportunity presented by fresh pathways to success. In this respect we have added to the choice and diversity of provision for disengaged young people in the Nottingham area, and the level of referrals we have received is a testament to this.

Our track record in alternative education provision, and the high quality of the vocational learning we provide, has meant that our learning programme is in great demand. We receive many more referrals than we are able to accept because we are not able to offer full-time provision to more than five learners as we are not registered as an independent school. Our objective in applying for Free School status is to be able to satisfy the demand we have experienced and particularly to increase our offer of full-time provision to a much higher number of learners as an Alternative Education Provider Free School.

Free School status will also provide us with a more sustainable contract and staffing model. Traditionally, we have never known the required staffing levels leading into a new academic year, as the level of referrals is unpredictable. In order for our business to remain viable, we have needed to constantly expand and contract, which is detrimental to staff morale and limits our ability to build a consistent environment for young people. We believe that Free School status will allow us to maintain a stable staff team.

Education traditionally has emphasized conveying a lot of information and facts, and has arguably not set these facts in a context to which a particular cohort of young people can relate. When teachers present material to the class, it is often in a polished form that omits the natural steps of making mistakes, recovering from them, deconstructing what went wrong, and starting over again.

There are over 130 young people in full-time alternative provision in Nottingham City alone. Many more access alternative provision on a part-time basis. Whole cohorts of young people leave alternative education with few or no qualifications, and most importantly no desire or motivation to become fully independent members of society. This is replicated in many of our mainstream schools.

Mainstream schools, whilst fulfilling an invaluable role for the majority of young people, are not appropriate for all. Many young people who are referred to our part-time programmes suffer a variety of emotional and behavioural disorders, and find it difficult to integrate into large class sizes, and to follow a more traditional, academic method of learning. We take a different approach entirely. Appendix A contains our current prospectus which gives a flavour of the approach we intend to continue to take, and to develop, as a Free School.

Vision Statement

We believe that every young person has the opportunity to succeed by being motivated and inspired, rather than contained. Our school aims to develop young people into unique, responsible, receptive, discerning human beings with a sense of their own value. Our school is structured to nurture the social development of all the young people we work with, most of whom experience significant disadvantages which compromise their ability to learn. We facilitate young people's learning, removing the barriers to their learning through a holistic, multi-agency approach and developing their ability to maintain good relationships with each other and with the members of staff, caring for and promoting the school and their community.

Our vision for Stone Soup Learns Free School offers a broad and balanced curriculum (described in Section 4) within a family environment using a pedagogic approach rooted in learning by doing, inspiring and motivating, where learning naturally involves exploration, curiosity, failing and learning from mistakes, and a host of associated affective responses. Our curriculum allows young people to develop their vocational skills, and be given the opportunity to work in real businesses, learning not just the skills associated with their vocational choices, but the long term life skills that are required for the workplace. It is our intention that all young people attending our free school will leave with the skills and motivation to become fully independent, contributing members of society.

Ethos

The school will be underpinned by 7 key principles:

1. High expectations – Young people excluded from school generally have low expectations for themselves, and this has been reinforced by negative experiences at school. Our ethos is to inspire and raise these expectations, and channel this into high achievement
2. Respect – Good behaviour and high achievement starts with mutual respect. Our learners should be treated like young adults, and staff expect the same respect. Respect leads to trusting relationships which in turn improve pupil behaviour and achievement.
3. Individual Learning – No two young people are the same. Challenging behaviour often manifests itself when an assignment is pitched at the wrong level. High levels of differentiation in teaching allow each young person to progress at a pace that is suitable for them. Teaching is inspirational and enjoyable.
4. A different approach – Traditional school has not worked for many of these young people, so we approach their education differently. An integral part of learning is failure, learning how to recover, and evaluating what went wrong and how to do it differently. We believe in learning by doing, and supporting the students in developing skills in how to learn for themselves. Projects need to be real, and skills set into contexts showing why it is important that these skills are learnt.
5. Flattened Hierarchy – The school is small so that all staff know all students. The school will have the feeling of a family, and this will be bolstered by high parental and community involvement.
6. Preparation for Independent Living – Our school will be preparation for life. Financial education, work skills and work experience will be core aspects of teaching. Progression to further learning and into employment will be a key principle of the school.
7. Personal Development – Our school aims to not only improve educational attainment, but to develop young people's life skills and to have an understanding of the world in which they

live. Challenging a young person's misconceptions of their immediate society is as important as basic skills achievement.

These key principles can be measured through the following outcomes:

- a. Improved sense of direction and self, including changes in self-esteem, confidence, motivation, and health awareness
- b. School attendance
- c. Reductions in disruptive and/or violent behaviours and exclusions, suspensions, or referrals
- d. Academic attainment and increase in numbers of learners receiving awards for their performance
- e. Positive progression routes and reductions in those not in Employment, Education or Training.
- f. Improvement in developing and sustaining relationships (with family, project staff, peers) including changes in the ability to communicate, cope with authority, and work with others

Provision for Key Stages 3, 4 and 5

We currently work with students predominantly in Key Stage 4, moving into Key Stage 5, and so intend to continue to work with these age profiles. However, we regularly receive requests to accept young people in Years 8 and 9 – Key Stage 3 – and are confident that our provision and approach is also highly relevant to them. We therefore intend that one of the benefits of expanding by becoming a Free School will be to offer a number of places to Key Stage 3 students.

Nottingham profile

Stone Soup Learns is and will continue to be based in Nottingham City, which has a high proportion of disengaged young people and high proportion of young people over 16 who are not in Employment, Education or Training. In September 2010, Connexions Nottingham published data which showed that 5.7% of all Year 11 students leaving school in Nottingham become NEET. Comparisons with statistical neighbours and other large cities are relatively favourable; we would suggest that this is due to organisations like ours, working in partnership with a range of other education providers such as South Nottingham College, our key contact. By becoming a Free School and expanding the number of young people we can work with, we will be able to play a more significant part in reducing these NEET figures further.

In Nottingham City itself, a far higher than national average of young people have special educational needs, and level 2 achievement is over 10 percentage points lower than the England average at 44.5% versus 55.2%. English and Maths skills at Level 1 are achieved by 90% of the student population, compared to 95% nationally, and 97% versus 99.7% achieve at least one qualification.

These statistics confirm what we know to be the case in Nottingham; that our young people are not achieving their full potential. The achievement of 5 or more A*-C grades is in the worst 10% nationally, at 41.4%, and the secondary school persistent absence rate is in the worst 5% nationally. We are passionate about making a positive contribution to improving those statistics.

Our Free School will not only drive up Threshold Achievement, but will also improve progression for school leavers, through Apprenticeships and further learning in the sixth form department of the Free School. In Section 4 below, we discuss in more detail the outcomes that we currently achieve with our young people, and how we intend to improve these further.

Section 4: Educational Plan

Admissions

We already work very closely with Nottingham City's 14-19 Quality Assurance Team, and a number of City schools and academies. We have a robust admissions process which referring organisations must follow before a young person starts their education with us, and we have a range of supporting documentation which shows how this process is followed. We are determined for the school to continue to be seen as a partner in fulfilling the educational needs of the local community. We have established excellent working relations with other schools locally. Regular referring partners and numbers of young people referred are detailed in Section 5.

We are an equal opportunities non discriminatory school and we therefore welcome applications for admission of young people from diverse backgrounds and with varying needs. Each admission is considered on a case by case basis to ensure that the pupils we admit are ones which will benefit from the education provision we offer. The school is fully committed to policies of non-discrimination as defined in legislation and will abide by the School Admissions Code and the School Admissions Appeals Code.

ADMISSION CRITERIA

1. That full time mainstream provision is not deemed appropriate at the time of entry;
2. That a personalised education and behaviour program will stabilise school circumstances and aid progress and achievement.
3. That there is a clear need for the structure, regime, routine and consistency of Stone Soup Learns.
4. That full background details are made available from the placing authority;
5. That the interest of the young people be protected;
6. That support available to the young person from other agencies prior to placement continues.

All involved agencies and individuals will discuss the school placement with the Head teacher and decide if the young person's needs can be met by such a placement. If a placement is deemed appropriate, a date will be set for admission.

Contact will be made with the young person's last school or education provider for educational history information that will help with future education and behaviour management strategies. The average length of placement is just under a year. Some Yr 10 students are referred to us for the following year, creating a maximum of two academic years.

All placements will be reviewed at termly intervals to determine their feasibility. The basis will be both formal and informal depending upon circumstances. The Head teacher will make decisions regarding appropriateness of placement after consultation with all concerned parties. Although our aim is to enable students to return to the mainstream, this occurs rarely. Out of 41 referrals last year, one went back into main stream for his Yr 11. This year, there has been one that has re-entered main stream. Our primary concern is not to put the student's progress at risk; it is often the case that where our style of education is supporting that progress, a return to mainstream education might be detrimental. In all cases, we work closely with the referring school or provider to ensure that the provision made for the young person is absolutely in his or her best interests, and offers the best opportunity for achieving solid outcomes.

For Key Stage 3 pupils, however, there will be a different emphasis, with an explicit aim to enable students to be re-integrated into the mainstream for Key Stage 4 wherever possible.

Stone Soup Learns endeavours to offer successful personalised education packages to all children who are admitted. Sometimes, however valid the placement seems, it may become evident that a young person's stay at Stone Soup Learns will not work in their best interests. We aim to have planned 'managed moves' if at all possible which is more positive for the young person and prevents the stigma of exclusion. We endeavour to tailor each young person's provision to suit their individual requirements. However if we are unable to meet their needs we consider a 'managed move' to another establishment to be a more appropriate option for all concerned.

In addition, if the young person requires specialist provision then we are able to offer such as residential psychiatric assessment and support. See the section below on Special Educational Needs.

If anyone feels that a 'managed move' or an 'immediate removal' is inappropriate and they wish to make a formal complaint, then our Concerns & Complaints Policy demonstrates how they may take that forward.

Curriculum and Organisation of Learning

The school day will run from 9.30am until 3:00pm, with a supervised lunch break between 12:15 and 1pm, which we also regard as educational time in respect of their social and emotional development. There will be a breakfast club provided at 9.00am. We will follow the same academic year as other schools, and adhere to holiday periods as indicated by the Local Authority. Young people referred for full-time education will attend Monday to Friday. We will also offer part-time placements, and those days will be agreed with the referring organisation to allow appropriate differentiation.

It is recognised that the school will have learners attending the school for varying lengths of time, and all qualifications offered are modular. This allows for learners to achieve more weighty qualifications based on the length of time they are at the school. We follow the Local Authority's school terms and year, to ensure full co-ordination of provision with our referring partners.

Stone Soup Learns provides a personalised curriculum which follows a number of key principles:

- The curriculum is to provide effective teaching and learning so that all students reach their full potential. This is important for **all** learners including those classified as having special needs, those with English as an additional language, and the more able.
- It is important to recognise that the curriculum is not solely about the National Curriculum, although this is the legal foundation because it secures an entitlement for all students. The curriculum embraces all that is learned through Stone Soup, whether it be in lessons or part of informal learning within and beyond the normal 'core' day.
- We believe that learning is an enjoyable, lifelong process through which everyone can achieve their potential and exceed their expectations. We will challenge and support our students to do their very best by providing an extensive range of learning experiences beyond the statutory requirement.

The school's curriculum is and will continue to be based on the Foundation Learning model, although we do envisage offering qualifications at Level 2. The focus of the timetable is on the development of the functional skills of English, Mathematics and ICT at Entry Level 1-3, Level 1 and Level 2. We shall also introduce Level 3 qualifications as required for our Key Stage 5 students. The two example timetables below illustrate this approach. These subjects will be delivered in a variety of contextual, learning by doing approaches, closely linking outcomes to real world applications. Therefore, a young person may be studying English, but will be undertaking a real-world project focusing on literacy skills which will also provide understanding of, for example, geography or history, rather than following a traditional 'English lesson'.

Students will also study PSHE, Personal Development and Citizenship, and be able to complete modules in these areas. The school aims to create a caring environment in partnership with parents and the wider community adopting approaches that positively encourages and maintains high standards. Social development is promoted through many existing structures in the school, particularly through the 'Rules, Rewards and Consequences' systems, the use of Circle Time, and the involvement of parents and carers. These are detailed in the Behaviour section below.

Our other key curriculum feature is that each young person will choose a vocational area to specialise in. Initially they will be offered the areas of Construction, Creative Industries or Fashion / Textiles, but we are currently working with our project companies to develop other subject specialisms such as motor mechanics and Hair & Beauty. Physical Education is also a part of the curriculum, but will not contribute to their qualifications.

A critical aspect of our 'learning by doing' approach is that, as learners stabilise and settle to the enjoyment of learning, and increasing progress in outcomes, they earn the opportunity to take part in real, paid work experience. This element is vital for the young people to learn what is expected of them in the workplace. Each young person in work experience will receive £10 per day income to their bursary, which will be paid into their personal bank account on graduating from Stone Soup Learns. If a student does not 'stay the course' and graduate, they do not receive their income.

An example timetable is below, presented for illustrative purposes. Note that the 9.30am start, with its statutory Registration session and Form tutor time, takes place in the shaded 'staff planning' section:

KEY STAGE 3
Example Timetable
Year 7 -9

	09.00-10.00	10.00-10.15	10.15-11.15	11.15-12.15	12.15-1.00	1.00-2.00	2.00-3.00	3.00-4.00
Monday	Staff Planning	Tutorial	Creative/ Aesthetic	PE/Sport	Dinner	English	IT	After School Curricula Activity & Pastoral Support
Tuesday		Tutorial	PSHE	Maths		Enrichment		
Wednesday		Tutorial	Maths	Creative/ Aesthetic		IT	PE/Sport	
Thursday		Tutorial	IT	Maths		English		
Friday		Tutorial	Enrichment			PSHE	Creative/ Aesthetic	Staff Meeting

KEY STAGE 4 - Level 1

Example Timetable (Mixed Year Groups)

Year 9 (After summer half term) - End of Year 11

	09.00-10.00	10.00-10.15	10.15-11.15	11.15-12.15	12.15-1.00	1.00-2.00	2.00-3.00	3.00-4.00
Monday	Staff Planning	Tutorial	PSHE	English	Dinner	Creative/ Aesthetic	PE/Sport	After School Curricula Activity & Pastoral Support
Tuesday		Tutorial	English	Maths		Vocational Options		
Wednesday		Tutorial	Maths	Independent Study/ Pastoral Support		PSHE	PE/Sport	
Thursday		Tutorial	Maths	English		Vocational Options (IT)		
Friday		Tutorial	Vocational Options			Vocational Options		Staff Meeting

Example Timetable for a part-time attendee:

Stone Soup BTEC First Diploma in Music 2010 - 2011					
Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
09:30 - 10:30	Computer Music Systems	Computer Music Systems	Computer Music Systems		
10:30 - 11:30			Self-Directed Project Time		
11:30 - 12:30					
12:30 - 13:00	Lunch/ Individual Tutorial	Lunch	Lunch		
13:00 - 14:30	Functional Skills	Functional Skills	Functional Skills		
14:30 - 15:30	Computer Music Systems	Music Business	Self-Directed Project Time		
15:30 - 16:00	Edexcel Project	Edexcel Project	Group Tutorial		
16:00 - 16:30	Individual Tutorial				

We currently offer a range of subject courses which lead to accreditations, as shown below:

Awarding Body	Qualification Title	Credit Value	SCAAT Points	Contribution to Threshold (1 GCSE = 20%)
NCFE	NCFE Level 2 Award in Music Technology	4	46	20%
NCFE	NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Music Technology	13	92	40%
NCFE	NCFE Level 1 Award in Music Technology	9	25	20%
NCFE	NCFE Level 1 Certificate in Music Technology	15	50	40%
NCFE	NCFE Level 1 Introductory Award in Music Technology	3	6.25	5%
NCFE	NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Creative Craft (Graphics)	9	23	10%
NCFE	NCFE Level 1 Award in Creative Craft using Fashion	7	12.5	10%

NCFE	NCFE Level 1 Award in Creative Craft using Digital Imaging	7	12.5	10%
NCFE	NCFE Level 1 Award in Creative Craft using Fashion	7	12.5	10%
NCFE	NCFE Level 1 Certificate in Drug Awareness	9	6.25	5%
NCFE	NCFE Level 1 Award in Personal and Social Development	7	Not released	Not released
NCFE	NCFE Level 1 Certificate in Personal Money Management	3	6.25	5%
NCFE	NCFE Level 1 Key Skills in Communication	6	18.8	15%
NCFE	NCFE Level 1 Key Skills in Information and Communication Technology	6	18.8	15%
NCFE	NCFE Level 1 Key Skills in Application of Number	6	18.8	15%
NCFE	NCFE Level 1 Certificate in Adult Numeracy	3	12.5	10%
NCFE	NCFE Level 1 Certificate in Adult Literacy	3	12.5	10%
NCFE	NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Adult Numeracy	3	23	10%
NCFE	NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Adult Literacy	3	23	10%
EDEXCEL	EDEXCEL Level 1 BTEC Award in Construction	7	12.5	10%
EDEXCEL	EDEXCEL Level 1 BTEC Certificate in Construction	13	25	20%
EDEXCEL	EDEXCEL Level 1 BTEC Diploma in Construction	37	100	80%

Another distinctive aspect of our approach to learning and the curriculum is the regular offer of educational visits to enhance and inspire learning. An educational visit is any planned off-site activity undertaken by any Students and accompanied by member(s) of the school teaching and support staff. Safely managed educational visits with a clear purpose are an important part of a broad and balanced curriculum. They are an opportunity to extend students' learning and enrich their appreciation and understanding of themselves, others and the world around them. They can be the catalyst for improved academic performance, a lifetime interest or in some cases professional fulfilment. They are to be encouraged!

We have a clear and detailed Visits policy and process in place, developed in reference to DfE guidance and in consultation with the LA Outdoor Co-ordinators. This will be updated to reflect the school's Free School status and accompanying changes in governance. This ensures that appropriate Risk Assessments take place; full Health & Safety requirements are adhered to and all reporting requirements to Governors will be met. However, most appropriately, it ensures that the educational value and purpose of the visit is maximised.

Using the flexible timetable and modular qualification process we have described above, we are in an excellent position to provide full-time education, part-time education for the full year, and other part-time educational experiences for shorter stays. Every student who attends Stone Soup Learns has an Individual Learning Plan agreed, discussed and updated with their mentor. This has been a key element of our expertise to date. Our concern has been that, all too often, a

part-time placement spends two or three days per week with us, and the rest of their time at home; by becoming a Free School and expanding, we are able to offer more students more time in education, providing greater opportunities to gather more qualifications.

We have also found that many of our students who initially arrive with us on a part-time basis and very disaffected, are engaged and motivated such that they increase and extend the time they spend with us or our partner organisations learning. We thought that a case study of one such student may help to illuminate how we work, and how we intend to continue working as a free school. This case study is based on a full-time placement, and as such is fictitious, but captures the approach that we take on a part-time basis now, and how we intend to work as a Free School.

██████████ at Stone Soup Learns – a Case Study

██████████ was referred full-time to Stone Soup Learns in January whilst he was in his final year of school. His school contacted us because they felt that ██████████ had very low motivation and was unlikely to achieve any GCSEs without a radically different approach. He had had a number of short term fixed exclusions for rude and aggressive behaviour towards staff and peers.

The school sent us through his previous educational history (pen profile), his prior achievements, and we arranged an interview date for ██████████ and his Foster mum. At the interview, ██████████ explained that he hated maths and English, and that he was interested in computer games. The Head teacher contracted an agreement with ██████████ that he should try developing his passion for computer games, and he selected multi-media as his vocational option.

The following Monday, ██████████ started his Induction Day at Stone Soup Learns. He was allocated a mentor who gave him a Student Handbook, explained the basic ground rules, and introduced him to his timetable. His mentor then accompanied him to his morning lessons. In the afternoon, the mentor discussed with ██████████ what he wanted to do while at Stone Soup Learns, and they developed his individual learning plan together. The mentor also conducted some initial assessments designed to test basic maths and English, and measure his confidence and other behavioural and social aspects.

Over the following week, although ██████████ showed great aptitude and motivation for his multimedia course, he was involved in a number of incidents. Through analysis of the daily Running Records [see below] it was apparent that these incidents seemed to happen more often in English classes. The initial screening results had also shown that ██████████ had a reading age of 7, and was nearly illiterate. At the subsequent team meeting it was decided that ██████████ desperately needed One to One support with his Maths and English. His mentor discussed this with him and he agreed to give it a go.

Over the following term, ██████████ slowly settled into life at Stone Soup, and built a good rapport with his mentor. He started becoming much more confident, and excelled at team sports. He maintained his One to One maths and English, and by the end of that term had achieved a graphic design and music qualification. He had also developed a real passion for the enterprise lessons. He had coupled together with two colleagues to write a funding application for starting up a greetings card business. They had also been making and selling greeting cards to the local community, and through tracking the expenses and income, he starting developing an interest in maths and numbers. He had also opened a bank account, and was determined he would last the year with no more incidents because he wanted to make sure he received his earnings at the end of the year. He had also engaged with Stone Soup's holiday activities

delivered in partnership with Connexions.

For his final term, his mentor put him forward for a work experience interview with Stone Soup Creates, and was accepted for one day a week. His pay was added to his enterprise money. All seemed to be going very well for ██████████, until in May he stopped attending.

His mentor attempted to contact him on many occasions, and his foster mum explained that he rarely came home. When eventually his mentor made contact, ██████████ explained that he couldn't live with his foster mum anymore and wanted to move. ██████████ was referred to Stone Soup Cares and met with a social worker who explained his options to him. The case was then escalated through appropriate channels, and ██████████ was able to be moved, and once again he settled down at Stone Soup Learns, and completed the year excelling in multimedia and had significantly raised his reading age.

He used the money he received from his work experience and enterprise projects to buy a laptop. Although he had had many careers guidance sessions throughout his time at Stone Soup, he wanted to apply for the apprentice position at Stone Soup Creates. With a glowing reference from Stone Soup Learns, and a confident interview, he was accepted onto the apprenticeship programme in September.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs

The school will comply fully with the Special Education Needs legislation including the Code of Practice. Initially the Head teacher will be the SENCO, since this role is at the very heart of all the school's operations. However, as the school develops, we plan to integrate that role with that of the Mentor Team Leader, which will have the effect of strengthening the mentor team, putting them at the heart of SEN and multi-agency working. During the time that the SENCO role lies with the new head, the mentor team leader will have the opportunity to train up in the role. It might, of course, be possible to appoint a fully qualified SENCO to the role of Mentor Team Leader, in which case the successful candidate can take on that role with immediate effect.

We will manage SEN provision in liaison with the Local Authority and other external services, particularly using our linked organisation Stone Soup Cares which has extensive resource including Educational Psychologists and Adolescent Mental Health specialist to support students presenting Emotional and Behavioural difficulties.

Children with Special Educational Needs are and will continue to be supported by the school in the following ways:

- The wholly individual and personalised approach to Stone Soup Learns will guarantee an appropriate and relevant curriculum which takes into consideration any particular learning needs that a student may have.
- The school will appoint a qualified member of staff as Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) who will ensure that all guidelines and statutory requirements are followed.
- Additional resources, for example laptops/tablets will be provided for those diagnosed with literacy, language or communication based difficulties and we will draw upon the most effective teaching and learning approaches to enable them to successfully communicate their ideas and learning.

- Regular and targeted training sessions with staff which relate to specific needs that students present with are provided. Staff training is covered in more detail in Section 6.

The actual Case Study below provides a flavour of our experience and approach with students who come to us with SEN. Names have been changed.

██████████ at Stone Soup Learns – a Case Study

██████████ was referred to Stone Soup in February for two days per week, by his school. His school had identified he had ADHD, speech problems and some autistic traits. He was very low in confidence, and had a low level of basic skills. Had often showed attention seeking behaviour, and found it very difficult to concentrate on tasks and listen to instructions.

The approach taken at Stone Soup allowed ██████████ attitude to learning to change dramatically. His attendance for the remainder of the academic year was 95%, and he achieved a Level 1 qualification in Music Technology, and his Level 1 Literacy. Coupled with this, ██████████ Running Records had shown a steady reduction in challenging behavior, and an increase in his ability to communicate with staff and peers. Through discussion with the referring school, it was felt that ██████████ had benefitted greatly in the short time we had worked with him. This led to a full-time referral for the following academic year.

His Year 11 showed a dramatic improvement in his personal development. He was much more confident, and felt comfortable in the environment at Stone Soup, and we supported him to perform on Britain's Got Talent. ██████████ continued to show dramatic improvements in his personal development and general co-operation, and extended his Level 1 Music Technology qualification to 40% of Level 1 Threshold, completed a Level 1 Creative Craft qualification (20% of threshold) and completed his Level 1 Numeracy. This gave him a total of 80% Threshold at Level 1.

We also supported ██████████ in his progression. He decided he wanted to study music technology after he had finished his Yr 11, and we arranged college interviews and worked with Connexions to advise him on possible progression routes. ██████████ was interviewed and was successful in applying for Stone Soup's post 16 music technology course in partnership with South Nottingham College. ██████████ cited his relationship with tutors and the support he received as one of the main reasons for choosing to continue his studies post compulsory school age with The Stone Soup Project.

██████████ enrolled in September for a Level 2 BTEC Diploma in Music Technology, which he successfully achieved. He also completed the EdExcel Foundation project, and has now achieved a full level 2 qualification. ██████████ is now taking his studies to Level 3; we have facilitated his progression with ██████████, and will be studying full-time at the college from next year.

Organisation of Pupils

Our plan is to reach a capacity of 100 students by 2014, of whom 10 will be Key Stage 3, 40 at Key Stage 4 and 50 in the sixth form. Our student population is highly mobile, however, with some students on short term referrals while other will stay with us up to the age of 19. The actual throughput of students in any one year is therefore likely to be significantly greater than 100. We now have several years of experience of when student referrals occur in the year and will be able to budget and arrange our staffing to account for lower numbers early in the year. Key Stage 3 and Y10 referrals generally arrive throughout the year, while Y11 and Key Stage 5

will be more stable.

Pupils will be organised to provide as much stability as possible for the students while allowing the school the greatest flexibility of approach. The demand for places in each Key Stage is likely to vary from year to year, and we would not reject referrals to any one Key Stage if we had capacity overall. Our students will be vertically grouped by Key Stage for pastoral purposes, creating 'family units' of 8-10 students, which will enable a buddy system to operate effectively and for the older students to act as role models to the younger ones and to new arrivals. Each tutor group will be led by one tutor as a form tutor. In addition, each student will have a mentor who will negotiate their learning plan with them and support their holistic learning, emotional and social development. Our aim is to ensure that every student has a genuine chance to form a nurturing relationship with an adult.

Academically, learning will be fully personalised, operating on a 'stage not age' basis, and with each student's timetable individually negotiated to take into account their personal needs, aptitudes and interests.

In classes we will continue to work with our current ratios of 1 tutor to 5 young people. We remain flexible as to how we organise individual learning activities, but maintain this ratio to ensure that real progress and raised outcomes are achieved. For example, if we have 8 young people who have chosen music as their main learning we would often teach sessions with two tutors to the whole group of 8.

There will be distinctive programmes of study which relate to the various Key Stages, with an increased emphasis on vocational specialisms and work experience for KS4 and KS5 learners, however grouping of pupils will be determined by their individual needs. Students will find it perfectly natural to be working with younger students for their English, but with older students for Creative Industries, for example. Progress will be based purely on the rate at which they achieve their personal goals rather than the concept of 'moving up a year' regardless of whether those goals have been met.

Pupil development and achievement

As can be seen from the information above, we are equally focused on achieving outcomes in terms of qualifications for our students as we are facilitating their development and progress. To ensure that student progress and achievement is monitored, tracked and regularly assessed, we use a number of systems.

Individual Learning Plans: these are agreed with each student upon entry to Stone Soup Learns. Our entry paperwork identifies where the student currently sits in terms of basic skills performance, and builds on that in the lessons which follow. Small groups ensure close and individual attention, working with students at similar levels so that no student is left behind, nor disengaged through lack of challenge. ILPs are referred to in tutorials daily. Their form tutor will know what each of their targets are and can use this knowledge to provide challenge in classes. For example, should a student refuse to engage in a maths session, the tutor and/or mentor might refer to their ILP in which the student has declared they want to get Level 1 Maths before they leave.

Mentors support by Lead mentor: each student has a mentor who is their continuous contact at Stone Soup Learns. The Mentor regularly reviews the ILP with the young person, as well as the Running Records, to create a continuing dialogue of care and support to facilitate

achievement and outcomes. He or she also analyses the students' Management Information Systems (MIS) reports on both 'hard' and 'soft' outcomes and discusses issues, progress, achievements and targets with the student. Mentors are coordinated, guided and supported by a Lead Mentor who oversees the mentoring approach and ensures that all systems are followed.

Running Records: at the end of each day, each teacher completes a Running Record of the lessons they have facilitated. This is essentially a narrative of the attitudes to learning displayed by individuals in the class. They can be used to track trends in progress and engagement shown by individual learners.

Assessment process: Assessment is the process by which decisions are made about a student's learning, progress and achievement. The Course Team is responsible for ensuring that:

- Assessment is based upon and will meet national standards set by the Awarding Bodies.
- Each student is informed of the assessment requirements and processes for the course during the induction period.
- An assessment plan is given to each student at the beginning of the course and thereafter as appropriate.
- Assessments are appropriate for the student and at the right level.
- Assessment materials are fair and unambiguous.
- All students have a variety of assessment opportunities on a regular basis.
- Completed student work is marked / graded promptly and constructive written feedback within two weeks or as agreed with the students.
- Students are made aware of the School's Appeals Procedure during the induction period – this is a process by which a student may appeal against an assessment made by a tutor. (This Appeals Procedure is available for examination should that be required.)
- Student progress is monitored, documented and held centrally by their Mentor.
- Students are informed regularly of their progress and action points agreed.
- Students are given the opportunity to accredit prior learning where appropriate.
- Each assessment activity will be accompanied by an assessment brief that will:
 - a. Identify the module and outcomes that will be assessed
 - b. Specify the criteria for grading, including key skills where appropriate, and the extent to which self and peer appraisal, if any, may be involved in the assessment process
 - c. State the date for submission of the work by the student and the date by which assessor feedback and provisional grade (subject to verification) will be provided
 - d. Use clear language at an appropriate level, to ensure quality of opportunity to all students undertaking the assessment
 - e. Include any relevant health and safety warnings and Advice

Internal Verification Process: this is the process by which assessment materials and assessment decisions are checked to ensure that they meet the approved assessment criteria. At Stone Soup Learns, we consider that this process is critical in ensuring that the tasks and projects set for our students by their teachers are appropriately pitched, that there is equivalence across groups with different teachers, and that any task will be able to meet awarding body requirements so that work can be easily accredited. Our internal verification process is overseen by a member of staff appointed as Internal Verifier, and is available to view.

External verification process: we are frequently visited and externally Quality Assured by our partners particularly from South Nottingham College. Appendix C holds examples of their reports, demonstrating the high quality delivery of educational provision at Stone Soup Learns.

Student Tracking System: When we began the education programme at Stone Soup Learns, we established a Student Tracking System. This is an information management system that is tailored for our approach particularly in working with pupils with behavioural problems. The system is developed in-house and designed to be used by tutors and support staff in an active way throughout the delivery of the school curriculum. This system is continually being developed and updated to capture a wider range of features to allow more detailed and sophisticated tracking of progress and outcomes against attendance and attitude to learning shown by our students. All students and staff have access to a range of technology in every class; learning through technology is a base feature of our approach, following as we do the industry standard in every case.

We keep hard outcome data (achievement, attendance) and with the new student tracking MIS, we will be tracking and measuring soft outcomes to which the mentors will have full access. Target setting is done in One2One interviews and recording in their ILP.

The information gathered can be analysed in a number of ways by senior management and social workers. This is very useful in terms viewing information about students from multiple sources and analysing behaviour, attainment and other trends. In the future we aim to publish data on our website, and allow parents confidential access through a parent/carer's portal to their child's data, so that they can review the Running Records at their leisure and become more fully engaged in their child's progress. No more waiting for student reports...they can find out how their son/daughter has done at school by logging on and reading their Running Record.

We plan to develop this system further by adding further functionality and enabling its use as an online portal. It is an on-going development that we hope to publish for use by other organisations working in alternative education.

Achievements and outcomes

In terms of student achievement, we are committed to achieving qualifications for our students in order to progress to further education, as illuminated in our two case studies above. In the Academic Year 2009 / 10, of 27 students who were on roll at some point with Stone Soup, we achieved Level 1 literacy and numeracy qualifications with two thirds of them (67%). 86% (23 students) achieved at least one qualification.

Only 4 of the 27 left with no creditable qualification, all of whom were attending only 1 day per week and therefore unable to meet the basic time requirement to gain a Level 1 qualification. Given the chaotic and challenging nature of many of our students, and comparing our outcomes to equivalent organisations such as Pupil Referral Units, we are clear that we provide strong quantifiable outcomes for our young people.

Working with parents: working with parents is a core element of our approach wherever possible. Our website contains video clips of parents talking about the positive and long-lasting impact that Stone Soup Learns has had on their children, and we have the full versions should you wish to view them. As well as ongoing involvement with parents, particularly where formal IEPs are required, parents are encouraged to contact the school whenever they wish. We are currently developing our student tracker to include parent involvement. We also hold parents' evenings twice a year in which the students' achievements are celebrated. This, and our regular reporting processes which will also be available online as described above, will be supplemented by widening our approach to working with parents in consultation with them; our current limited parent base has made this difficult to achieve to date, and is one of the benefits we see to becoming a Free School. See also our Community Engagement section for further

details on parental involvement.

Partnership working

We aim to work in partnership with:

- Parents, carers and social workers, linked through Stone Soup Cares
- Nottingham City Council Education, Health and Social Services
- Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire County Councils
- Neighbouring primary and secondary schools
- South Nottinghamshire FE College
- Local organisations, businesses and employers engaged in construction industries, linked through Stone Soup Builds
- Local artists, professionals and experts in the creative media industries linked through Stone Soups Creates

We also intend to work with local schools to improve educational provision by:

- Collaborating on staff training events
- Working together within a staff coaching or mentoring scheme
- Holding joint conferences to share best practice and innovation, particularly in the area of children with emotional and behavioural difficulties
- Encouraging staff to conduct masters degree level action research in our community of schools
- Sharing common concerns and co-ordinating our response to local issues
- Spreading best practice between local schools by arranging teacher exchanges

As a small school we recognise that it is only through such partnerships that we will benefit from 'economies of scale' and ensure that we create channels through which we can contribute effectively to new ideas and evolving best practice. Our aim is not to relieve local schools of the students that are presenting challenges; a key part of our work will be to support those schools in achieving earlier success with such students and keeping them in the mainstream.

Our partnership network is also designed to act as a Quality Assurance mechanism. Nottingham City Council's 14-19 team have developed an alternative provision database, and to be included on that database. Providers must achieve certain quality standards, which are monitored through constant self assessment. Any agreement made between Stone Soup Learns and another provider will clearly state the curriculum area the young person is studying and what qualifications they expect to achieve. A similar process is used for part-time referrals from schools, in that part of their admission process clearly identifies what qualifications the young person is working towards, and whether this fits with their wider curriculum that children are receiving as part of their full-time education. This avoids repetition and looks at each young person's education in a holistic way.

We will also work closely with other providers on this database and the City Council's 14-19 team to expand the range of curriculum we can effectively offer. This particularly pertains to South Nottinghamshire College who will be the primary providers of 16-19 academic courses for our students, who will remain based with us, supported by their mentor and form tutor, and arranging their vocational courses and work experience primarily through us.

Our partnerships with the various Education, Health and Social services of Nottingham City Council are of vital importance. Our aim, through processes and relationships already established through Stone Soup Cares, is to ensure a fully joined up approach to multi-agency

working. In order to genuinely address our students' needs in a holistic way, we engage constructively in all aspects of their lives that might be affecting their educational and personal development, whether these are housing, health or drugs related issues. We also work in partnership with the local police, in order to address issues of criminal or anti-social behaviour collaboratively.

Complaints

We currently have a full complaints procedure, policy and accompanying form for use at Stone Soup Learns, which we intend to update to reflect the changed nature of the educational environment and governance structure. However, we find that our complaints process, based as it is on the principle that complaints can be valuable tools in the process of monitoring and improving practice and should be heard with an open mind, is very effective in defusing problems and avoiding escalation to a more serious level.

Stone Soup Learns recognises that in any organisation there are likely to be complaints. It is the responsibility of Senior Management to instil a "non blaming culture" for staff, whereby the school accepts that mistakes will be made, and to encourage all concerned to take proper ownership of their part in whatever has gone wrong and to look at what can be learned from it.

Behaviour and attendance

Behaviour

Stone Soup Learns recognises that the best way of achieving positive behaviour from our students is by keeping students busy, engaged and interested. The Stone Soup Behaviour approach is central to our aim of creating a purposeful working atmosphere for staff and students. It rests on the following principles:

- Positive behaviour is fundamental to successful learning, but it extends further than the workroom. We see 'behavioural literacy' as a key skill that is as important as reading or writing.
- If we want students to behave well, we need to create a positive, caring and fair environment to teach, model and manage the behaviours we want.
- Behaviour is therefore the responsibility of all teaching and non-teaching staff.
- Positive reinforcement – recognising and rewarding student's good behaviours – is more effective than sanctions and punishments. Our Behaviour approach is therefore a positive, rewards-based system, with regular opportunities to recognise and celebrate success.

We also make clear which behaviours we consider unacceptable, and therefore lead to sanctions. The approach makes a distinction between low level disruption and challenging, offensive behaviour that we label as 'anti-social'.

Just as there are some students who will find some subjects harder than others, so there are some students who will find learning and displaying positive behaviour more difficult. All staff who work at the School need to try and understand the causes of poor behaviour as well as respond to the behaviours themselves. Some students may exhibit persistent, challenging behaviours and do not respond to some mainstream education systems approaches to managing behaviour (e.g. exclusion, detention). Serious behavioural issues like these will take time to resolve.

We provide support and guidance for tutors through Continual Professional Development (CPD) and alternative provision / support as appropriate for our students. Regular, ongoing training is part of the Stone Soup Learns' responsibility to support staff and we have a training programme

which includes workroom management, working with dyslexic students and de-escalation strategies.

However, all students need to learn that actions carry consequences, and they therefore have a choice how to behave. Their choices can lead to rewards or sanctions.

Reinforcing and Rewarding the Positive

Our approach requires that:

- Every member of staff should aim to praise in every session at least five times more frequently than they reprimand.
- Weekly meetings and tutorials can be used to reward students who have met individual and/or group targets or have shown themselves to have excelled or made improvements in behaviour.
- Reward charts highlight students who have shown positive behaviour or achieved certificates.
- Tutors/Key workers use daily Running Records to note positive, helpful behaviour as well as challenging behaviour.

Responding to Challenging Behaviour: ‘The Three Strike’ rule.

The response to low-level disruption (verbal abuse, deliberate, persistent disruption) is controlled by the teaching staff by using the ‘Three Strike’ rule (Reminder; Warning; Third Strike out). It is always useful to offer some discussion time outside of the session with a student who is displaying challenging behaviour, however if staff are alone with a student and if a colleague is not available to attend the discussion, tutors must remain visible to other staff or CCTV cameras. Behaviours such as physical violence or deliberate vandalism lead to:

- removal from the session for the day,
- attending a re-integration meeting with the parent/carer, referrer and either one of the lead tutors or the Head teacher.

In exceptional circumstances, although very rare, exclusion from a programme will be considered. All incidents involving situations where a student, tutor or member of the public has been at risk of harm should be noted on an Incident Form and referred to in the Running Records. This matter should also be brought to the attention of the Head teacher who will decide if the matter requires reporting to the Governing Body.

Support for Students - Contact with Home: Where tutors are concerned about behaviour, the Head teacher, or Lead Tutor may schedule a meeting with the parent/guardian. Working in partnership with home is our most effective way of monitoring behaviour. Most parents are supportive and understand we are acting in the student’s best interest. However, we also recognise the need for sensitivity in these conversations as some home situations may be particularly difficult at times. Therefore, we discourage individual members of staff from calling home directly, and contact with home should not be made without first speaking with the Head teacher or Lead Tutor

Bullying: Our anti-bullying policy aims to ensure that all students in our care are protected from bullying. It is the responsibility of Stone Soup Learns staff to ensure that students are protected from bullying at all times. All students will be taught in an environment where bullying is unacceptable. The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to young people, to the extent that it affects their health and development or, at the extreme, causes them significant harm (including self-harm). All teaching and ancillary staff must be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with school policy. We have a clear and extensive anti-bullying policy with associated actions

and consequences which is available to view.

Attendance

Stone Soup Learns is committed to providing the highest quality support to our students and to ensure that they have every opportunity to achieve their learning goals. We believe that all our students benefit from the education we provide and therefore, from regular attendance at their provision. In order to achieve this we make every effort to ensure that all students achieve the maximum possible attendance and that any problems which may impede full attendance, are acted on as quickly as possible.

In support of this policy the school recognises the importance of monitoring attendance and understands the legal requirement for our students to attend their provision. The procedure for attendance monitoring is as follows:

- The attendance registers are kept and updated on a daily basis, and shared with the referring school weekly.
- If a student is absent from morning registration, The Tracking Officer will initially contact parents / carers to establish whether the learner is authorised absent.
- Only legal guardians can authorise the absence of a learner, and must give a valid reason (illness, family emergency etc)
- If the learner is late, this information is shared with the tutors and what their expected time of arrival will be.
- The Tracking Officer records this information on the 'Student Tracker', and notifies the referring school of the learner's absence and their reason for absence.
- If no contact can be made to the parent/carer, the absence is recorded as unauthorised
- If there is an absence for greater than one full week, and no contact can be made with the legal guardian, a letter is sent home by the Tracking Officer asking the parent/carer to make contact. (Our Standard Letter "Absence" is available to all staff on our shared drive). A copy will be kept on the student's file.
- If the non-attendance persists the issue is escalated to management and the referring school. A meeting is sought between the young person concerned and their legal guardian to discuss their non-attendance.
- If attendance does not improve then a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Service.

Becoming a free school will allow us to use our own mentor team to drive up attendance. Unity runs a similar model, however their staff are constantly changing, and there is little or no rapport between young person and mentor. Increased stability of funding will enable us to employ a more stable team in which each mentor is involved in their student's learning, shares learning experiences and establishes rapport in a wide variety of contexts that are meaningful to the student. That rapport, in which problems, issues and aspirations are freely shared, is the basis for improved attendance, motivation and engagement.

Attendance targets will form part of each student's ILP, and we will also set targets for the school as a whole, so that students acquire a sense of obligation to the school community just as they would to an employer.

Community Engagement

Our aim is that our Alternative Provision Free School is seen as a hub of the community that welcomes parents and the wider community. Through our partnership in particular with South Nottingham College, we are able to offer free part-time evening courses to adults aged 19+, and

these will be run on the same site as the school. We intend to grow our family learning offer as a Free School so that parents will at some stage attend the same school at which their children study.

The Stone Soup Project Group is active in community engagement through a number of activities:

- Summer Activities for young people
- A UK Online Centre delivering free IT skills training
- A range of accredited short courses for Adults
- Informal learning opportunities for Adults
- Business development and support for emerging social enterprises and charities.

We plan to bring this activity to our Free School and develop it as a community centre offering a range of learning opportunities to the wider community. We hope to involve young people in this activity as much as possible and offer them opportunities to teach the skills they are learning in their day to day education.

It is often the case that the parents of students who are struggling with their own education, had difficulties themselves at school. They will often have low levels of literacy or numeracy and poor life skills, such as financial management and parenting. One of the key strategies to enable parents to engage constructively in their child's learning is to re-engage the parents as learners themselves. Both our informal learning opportunities and accredited courses will encourage that engagement, focusing on areas of most relevance and urgency in their lives, such as:

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- ICT skills and internet access
- Domestic finance
- Parenting skills
- Health and wellbeing
- Self esteem and readiness for work
- Vocational course in line with our own specialisms
- DIY skills

We want parents to use the school as a fun, community environment in the evenings and not have fear of the school gates. We go out of our way to involve the community.

The Stone Soup project has been built on the development of networks of organisations and businesses in the community, relating these as appropriate to public services and local government initiatives. It is through this network that we will continue to support sustainable growth and projects in the community. Our curriculum builds in the involvement of students in this process so that they learn from models of participation and community engagement and adopt behaviours through which they make economic and social contributions.

Section 5: Evidence of demand and marketing

Evidence of Demand

Stone Soup Learns has been providing alternative education opportunities on a part-time or full-time basis for a small number of young people since 2006. From the outset, the success of our particular provision meant that we were asked to take on increasing numbers of young people to benefit from our provision. We took a decision as a CIC company not to become an independent school, and have therefore managed our applications carefully so as not to fall into a position where we would be required to register.

Our admissions demand profile since 2006 is as follows:

	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	TOTAL
2006/7	8	0	0	1	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	13
2007/8	14	0	0	2	7	0	0	1	0	0	0	24
2008/9	20	2	8	7	14	7	2	2	2	0	0	64
2009/10	8	1	5	3	3	3	3	6	4	3	2	41
2010/11	29	2	3	1	3	1	0	0	1	1	0	41

In August 2009 we were asked by Nottingham City Council to take on a large contract to provide education to young people at risk of permanent exclusion on a temporary or permanent basis; we decided to turn them down because of our decision at that time to remain as a 'Project' rather than become an independent school, because of the blend of other activities that Stone Soup was involved in. This contract would have required the capacity to admit 20 full-time learners, and it is clear that the requirement for that capacity from Nottingham City alone has not diminished.

This year alone, in addition to taking on the 41 students who have worked with us this year, many of whom would have benefited from a longer and full-time placement, we received an additional 21 requests for placements which we simply had to turn down. This gives further evidence of the demand for our service from our referrers, given that they know how small we are and how limited we are in taking on new students.

This year, we took the decision to separate our projects into individual companies, each of which can then formalise its position within its appropriate sector. In this case, Stone Soup Learns took the decision to apply to become a Free School.

We are confident on the basis of the track record and the support we have from the LA and from Unity Learning Centre, a PRU-equivalent in Nottingham and a key referrer of students to our facility, that we shall quickly be able to expand our provision to the predicted numbers stated in Section 1. We have contacted our regular referring organisations, who are all very keen to see our expansion and conversion to a Free School. They are outlined below, with their contact details as shown:

In the Academic Year 2010 – 11, we had the following referral requests from the following organisations:

Organisation	Contact	Referrals
Big Wood School	[REDACTED]	3
Arnold Hill School	[REDACTED]	1
Fernwood School	[REDACTED]	1
Carleton Le Willows School	[REDACTED] mob	1
Ellis Guilford School	[REDACTED] / [REDACTED]	4
Unity Learning Centre (Nottingham PRU)	or [REDACTED] OR [REDACTED]	22
Wilsthorpe School (Derbyshire LA)	[REDACTED]	1
Nottinghamshire County Council	[REDACTED]	4
REAL education	([REDACTED]) [REDACTED]	1
Bulwell Academy	[REDACTED] mobile	1
Glenbrook Centre	[REDACTED]	1
Long Eaton School (Derbyshire LA)	[REDACTED]	1
CLM	[REDACTED]	1
Others		6
Total referrals		48

In addition to these organisations, with whom we work frequently and from whom we receive regular requests, we have also had single referrals from the following organisations, cited as 'Others' above, in the academic year 2009 / 10:

- Eastwood comprehensive
- Holgate School
- Dayncourt School
- Manning School for Girls
- Hadden Park High School
- Wheldon School and Sports College.

Retrospectively the demand for our provision has developed as follows:

2006/7 – We had developed a good relationship with Nottingham City's Virtual PRU and with Concord House PRU, successfully delivering some short workshops resulting from a pilot project in the previous academic year. We started with 8 referrals from these two organisations, and more were referred throughout the year. The referrals were a mixture of Year 10 and Year 11 students.

2007/8 – Concord House PRU was closed and all learners were moved to the Virtual PRU's roll. Due to a successful year with positive outcomes, Virtual PRU wanted to send more learners and we retained our Year 10 learners from the previous academic year. We also developed a

relationship with Nottinghamshire County Council, and took six further placements from them.

2008/9 – The majority of our placements this year came from a re-branded Virtual PRU (now called Unity Learning). We were also still taking referrals from Nottinghamshire County Council, and we started taking referrals from Derbyshire County Council (a total of 5). We were also receiving numerous enquiries directly from schools wishing to place learners here, and we began our Direct Referrals model.

2009/10 – In 2009, the [REDACTED] of Unity wanted a much stronger emphasis on full-time provision, and implemented a number of changes. We were unable to take on the number of placements he had requested as we were not registered as an independent school. As a result we could not enter into a partnership agreement with Unity, and suggested that they should use our Direct Referrals model in the same way as the local schools. As a result, the total number of referrals dropped that year, but the client base widened from 6 referring to 18. We were now working with the Local Authority, Unity Learning, Nottinghamshire County Council, and over 10 different city schools. Had we been able to work with Unity and take the number of full-time placements they were offering, we would have projected this to be around 80 placements in total.

2010/11 – We are continuing to work with Nottinghamshire County Council, Unity and a wide variety of City Schools, listed above. However our reluctance to register as an independent school severely limits the referrals we can take, and is now the basis for this application for Free School status. We have already received 62 requests this year, which included 21 requests that we were unable to accommodate, and the indications are that this number will increase significantly once our partners become aware of our increased capacity.

We are aware of our competitor organisations in Nottingham, which include [REDACTED]. However we believe that we are distinguished from other providers through our ability to engage with the other companies in the Stone Soup group and receive paid work experience. Our bursary programme, which is funded for each student based on their work experience earnings, is attractive to the young people and as a result they are more motivated to stay on.

Opportunities

If approved, we will conduct statutory consultation in line with section 10 of the Academies Act 2010, and will enlist the support of Cambridge Education in order to ensure the compliance and effectiveness of the process.

The purpose of the consultation will be to inform on the plans to convert Stone Soup Learns into a free school, to highlight the benefits of increasing our capacity, to provide opportunities for our colleagues in the schools and PRUs from whom we receive referrals to contribute to the development of our provision and to enable parents, carers and members of the local community to ask questions and voice their opinions.

The consultation plan will be structured over a 6 week period, to ensure the maximum opportunity for engagement and responses. Our aim will be to establish a dialogue between the company directors and all potential stakeholders in Nottingham, providing a flow of information in varied forms and media to ensure accessibility to all the diverse groups in the community.

In two significant respects our consultation process will differ from other Free Schools in that we do not have a defined catchment of parents. We serve a wide community that crosses city and

county boundaries and pupil referrals to us are generally initiated by their current education provider rather than by parental choice. There is no simple way of predicting who the parents or carers of future students might be. Secondly, relatively few of our students come from stable family backgrounds. Currently, 6 out of 27 students are 'looked after' in care or in foster homes, and many of the families are dysfunctional in significant respects.

In this respect, therefore, our consultation will be targeted at existing carers, children's home managers, social workers and parents in order to receive feedback on our current provision and future plans, which will provide us with a statistically significant indication of the needs of future carers.

Our consultation will be targeted at:

- Nottingham City Council referral team and quality assurance team
- Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire County Councils
- Unity Learning Centre
- Neighbouring secondary schools, particularly those from whom we have had referrals in the past
- Neighbouring FE vocational education providers
- Local PRUs
- Existing parents, carers and social workers with responsibility for our current students
- Our proposed partners
- Teachers' unions and non teaching staff unions
- Local community organisations and groups who might become stakeholders in the school
- Local youth and sports groups
- Neighbouring residents

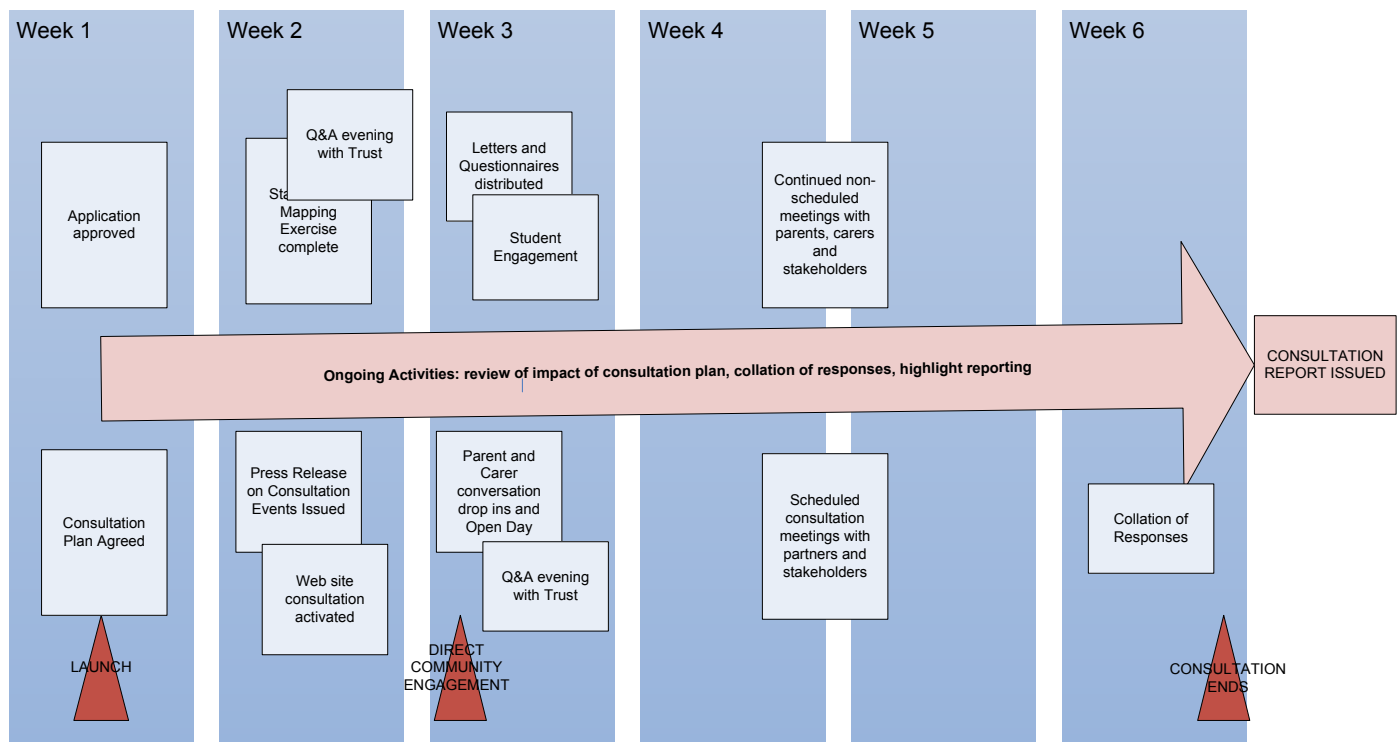
The core messages of our consultation will be:

- The distinctive ethos of Stone Soup Learns
- Our curriculum and vocational specialisms
- The ways in which we aim to improve the life chances of disaffected young people
- Our plans to work in partnership with local schools and PRUs working together to share the best teaching methods and resources
- The relationships we plan to establish with community organisations
- The routes our students will take into employment or further education

We will consult through:

- Direct personal contact
- Our Web site
- Telephone and e-mail
- Mail shots and door to door survey
- Informal presentation and Q & A evening to be held in a public hall close to our preferred premises
- Drop in information centres at the local supermarket, leisure centre and library
- Briefing papers to the local media
- Various forums in the local area, including the Children and Young People's Forum, the Collaborative Provision Forum, and student voice.

Consultation process and timescale:



Our consultation plan will fully comply with the Equality Act 2010, ensuring that all stakeholders of whatever background, ethnicity or faith are able to participate. Our primary function is to engage positively with disadvantaged students, and to draw their families, communities and support networks into that process.

Marketing strategy

Essentially, Stone Soup Learns is driven by the needs of our community; we seek to respond to those needs rather than to stimulate them. As an existing provider, our marketing will communicate the benefits of our proposed change of status and continue to express our existing vision, ethos and pedagogy.

Publicity for the school has included:

- Communications with the 14-19 referral team and 14-19 quality assurance team of Nottingham City Council
- Communications with the heads, SENCOs and appropriate SLT members of all secondary schools from whom we have had referrals or requests for placements in the past, in both Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire.
- Our website
- Our brochure (see appendix A)

Further marketing of the school is planned once this application has been accepted and again for 2013. The website will be expanded to include an on-line consultation facility and include full details of our application. News and updates will be entered as and when new information becomes available, for example the recruitment of the Head teacher and additional staff. If feasible we will arrange an open day in the early spring of 2012.

We identified four key market segments in our initial marketing, with whom we intend to undertake an immediate initial marketing campaign should we be given the Free School status, to prime demand for September 2012:

- Local Authorities from whom we have had referrals: Nottingham City Council, Nottinghamshire County Council and Derbyshire County Council – they will also be targeted in April / May of each year to highlight the benefits of choosing us as a placement from the subsequent September;
- Head teachers of local secondary schools from whom we have had students in the past: we would aim to offer a programme of visits during the summer terms, to raise awareness of our offer when staff have spare capacity, and then have a particular marketing campaign to them in November / December to capture students who are not making good progress as they move into Year 10, or who are looking unlikely to do well in Year 11.
- Providers of 16-19 education in the area, particularly those with an emphasis on vocational provision, bearing in mind our particularly strong relationship with South Nottingham College: we would maintain an ongoing programme of contact and discussion with them across the academic year.
- Providers of SEN provision in Nottingham, especially those working with similar students to our own: again, we would maintain an ongoing programme of contact and discussion with them across the academic year.

In the run-up to opening, the marketing visits will continue directly after our consultation process in line with our planned increase in numbers.

We have also consulted with the parents of our existing students to understand their views and aspirations for their children, and will continue to do so as part of our learning and development conversations. You can see on our website the edited highlights of conversations with parents and carers about the positive impact that Stone Soup Learns has had on their children; we have the full length versions of these video clips should you wish to view them.

Marketing to parents and carers presents us with our greatest challenge. Stone Soup Learns does not essentially provide a local service for its neighbourhood; the majority of our students are 'looked after' while the parents and carers are spread over a very wide area and are drawn from a range of communities. It is impossible to predict who the parents of our future students will be. Our marketing and consultation processes therefore have involved the parents of our existing students as a 'representative sample' and the understanding and insights of the educational providers of the schools and authorities from whom we receive referrals.

Section 6: Organisational Capacity and Capability

6.1 Organisational Capacity to set up a School

The Stone Soup Project, and Stone Soup Learns as a company, is led by the following directors who also have operational roles in the running of the organisation:

- [REDACTED] – [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED] – [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED] – [REDACTED]

The organisation is broken down into a number of divisions.

Stone Soup Learns – This is our current alternative provision that will become the school. It is managed by [REDACTED] and employs a number of teaching staff.

Stone Soup Cares – This our Social Care division and Independent Fostering Agency (IFA). It is managed by [REDACTED] (A qualified social worker) and was Ofsted approved at the beginning of the year.

Stone Soup Builds – This is our construction company that offers commercial building services alongside a range of training programmes including work experience and accredited courses. It is managed by [REDACTED]

Stone Soup Creates – This is our creative industries company that offers commercial services in Multimedia Production and Software development. It also offers a range of training programmes including work experience and accredited courses. It is managed by [REDACTED]. This structure is shown in an accompanying diagram Appendix B.

Each of these organisations trades with other divisions by providing services and expertise in their respective fields. For example Stone Soup Builds and Creates can offer work experience to students from Learns. The Creates division is also developing the Student Tracking System. Stone Soup Cares offers consultancy in developing welfare programmes and ensuring the safeguarding of children in our care. Stone Soup Learns also offers support to Creates and Builds in developing their training programmes and providing accreditations.

All divisions are supported by the Head Office which provides infrastructure support such as Financial Management, Payroll and HR services and Facilities management. This structure allows the group to achieve economies of scale and the development of different and discrete areas of expertise. This is particularly powerful in supporting our learning by doing approach and giving students real vocational opportunities where they can put their skills to use and focus on the career paths. In doing this students feel they are part of a much wider organisation than the school. This encourages and supports the familial network which we aim to develop across the whole organisation.

Members and Governors

[REDACTED] (Proposed Chair of Governors)

[REDACTED] (Director of the Company and CEO)

- (Director of the Company, proposed Governor)
- (Director of the Company, proposed Governor)
- (proposed Governor)
- (proposed Governor)
- (proposed Governor)
- (staff member)
- (staff member)
- (staff member)
- (staff member)
- (staff member)
- (Referrals Officer)

The governing body will in total be composed of up to 20 governors as follows:

Trustees including the chair	4
Parents	2
Head teacher– ex officio	1
Teacher representatives	2
Partner representatives	5
Co-opted	Up to 5
Local Authority governor	1
Nominee by DfE	1

Our current Trustees and proposed Chair will be joined by the two partner representatives detailed above. We are also proposing to ask Unity Learning Centre to provide a Governor, as our main referrer, and also wish to have at least one secondary school and one primary school Head teacher or senior leader representative. We propose to canvass a number of Local Councillors with whom we currently have warm informal relationships with to formalise their commitment to Stone Soup Learns by becoming governors. We will also approach members and contacts within appropriate Local Authority services especially the Youth Offending team. Finally, we are keen that one of our co-opted Governors is a Student Governor, and one a past student.

We have an aspiration to have at least 2 parent Governors on the Body, but we are aware that many of our parents lead chaotic lives, and many of our students are in Local Authority Care or with Foster Parents. Nevertheless, we believe that having parent representation is crucial, and will gather appropriate representatives through individual conversations and through communication on our website.

We are keen for there to be scope to co-opt other Governors in order to ensure that the governing body maintains sufficient breadth of skills, experience and expertise to be effective.

These local capabilities will be supplemented by expert advice from our parent company, as described above, and a leading Education Provider such as Cambridge Education (with whom we have already a strong working relationship) who will supply various services to the school.

Recruitment of the Head teacher Designate

Recruitment of the Head teacher will involve a number of Members [REDACTED], assisted by Cambridge Education (or alternative).

Making appropriate and timely appointments will be key not just to curriculum delivery but also to maintaining and expanding the credibility which Stone Soup Learns already has in the local area, and with parents and students. The aim will be to recruit a Head teacher by 1 April. The post will be advertised in early autumn for interviews by early December. The offer would be made in time for the person to resign by mid February 2012. This timetable allows for re-advertising if necessary and for any supplementary training of the Head teacher which is considered necessary.

For the appointment of a Head teacher an open and objective appointment process will demonstrate that the best possible candidate has been identified to lead the school. The National College for School Leadership guidance for recruiting head teachers and senior leaders will be followed and national advertising will be used to ensure wide coverage and compliance with recruitment requirements. We will be keen to appoint a candidate who has experience of a senior leadership role in a Special or Alternative Provision school which was deemed to be 'outstanding' and who has clear sympathy for the vision and ethos of Stone Soup Learns, a strong sense of the criteria for excellence in teaching and learning with the nature and ability of the students who are referred to the school, and of additional and new strategies which can be used to maintain and enhance our progression and achievement levels.

The Governors will be supported in the recruitment and selection process by experienced professionals from an appropriate body such as the NAHT, CE or Future Leaders.

All recruitment processes will be designed to ensure compliance with employment law and safer recruitment practices.

Other issues relating to setting up the school

Identification of the additional ICT requirements and purchase/provider options is led by [REDACTED]. These will be validated by the Head teacher once appointed, and purchases made accordingly.

Marketing and Communications will be led by [REDACTED]

The Members need some assistance on education related issues, and on developing a wider support for students with Special Educational Needs. Cambridge Education has been advising on these aspects of the bid, in terms of expanding the scale of our operation without losing its unique and excellent qualities. We also intend to work closely and more formally with Stone Soup Cares to formalise our access to their Educational Psychologists and Adolescent Mental Health team, as well as advisory social workers. We foresee a need for continued support from both these partners or a better supplier once the bid has been approved. We have already noted that we would request their assistance in the consultation process (see Section 5) and in selecting a high performing Head teacher.

Should we need additional assistance, for instance in distributing mail shots or analysing data from our consultation, we would call upon our parent company Stone Soup Project taking the need for confidentiality and data security into account.

Curriculum development will be led by the Head teacher with assistance from the governors especially [REDACTED]

6.2 Capacity and Capability to run a school

The Governing Body will be chaired by [REDACTED] until the school has opened and parent and other governors have been appointed, at which point the Chairman of Governors will be formally elected.

Financial Capacity

The Stone Soup Project's finances are overseen by [REDACTED] as Chief Operating Officer with responsibility for financial matters, and as such he has extensive experience of managing the company's finances effectively. We also use a firm of qualified auditors, EBS Accountants, who audits the accounts and provides advice as required. They will continue in this role with the Free School; [REDACTED] will continue to lead on financial matters assisted as needed by the Chairman (and where needed) the auditors.

Recruiting a committed governing body

Initially the Governing Body will comprise the Directors and Members of the Limited Company supported by [REDACTED], and the Head teacher once appointed. Once the first year's admissions have been decided and accepted 2 parent representatives will join the governing body. As stated earlier, the ideal situation is that both will be elected by parents; however, given the nature of our parent base, it may be that one or both will be nominated by the Governors following informal conversations and approaching individual parents. Once the school has started teaching at key stage 3, more parent governors may be appointed. Each of the appointed governors will serve for 2 years at which point they may stand for re-election. Any elected representatives will serve for 4 years.

We are in the process of having conversations with our 'client' schools, and other partners and associates, with regard to becoming members of the Governing Body, and so far have had very positive responses. We are confident that should we be given the opportunity to become a Free School, we will be able to recruit a wide base of Governors to support and challenge the development of Stone Soup Learns.

Accountability

The Governing Body will be accountable for all policy matters relating to the running of the school. The Governors will decide on what controls to apply to limit the authority of the Head teacher in taking independent action. These controls will include spending limits without reference to a Governor or Governors, controls on staff recruitment and disciplinary matters, matters relating to pupils, significant changes in the curriculum and policy matters and statements to the press or on the website. The governing body will meet at least once per term and may set up functional small sub-committees to assume delegated responsibility for such matters as budgeting and finance, human resource matters and curriculum development. The Chairman may in exceptional circumstances take decisions on behalf of the Governors but will need to subsequently report these to the Governing body for their approval.

The Head teacher will be accountable for the day to day management of the school in

accordance with terms of reference, performance targets and controls decided by the Governors. The Head teacher will also be expected to undertake limited teaching duties in the early years of the school and to act as the school SENCO and lead for child protection and children looked after children.

There will be an annual meeting at which the governing body will report matters of significance during the previous year to the parents and respond to questions. However we envisage that, given the nature of the school and its widely spread client base, there will be frequent and far more informal means of communication between governors, parents / carers and the local community generally.

Communications with parents and other interested parties such as the referring schools will be facilitated by a website which will be regularly updated. The Head teacher will report matters of significance at least once a term electronically.

The school will operate an open door policy whereby members of staff can drop in to discuss with the Head teacher issues concerning them. The Head teacher will be expected to monitor the performance of all staff, especially teaching staff. He or she will be expected to observe learning, conduct learning walks and monitor student performance including Running Records, Incident Reports, and Assessment outcomes, to ensure this is satisfactory and identify shortfalls. An annual performance management review of all staff will be undertaken. The results will be available to the Governing Body.

The Head teacher will take into consideration staff performance in recommending pay awards which will not be automatic. Staff performance appraisal and assessment will continue to be a holistic, robust and honest two way process designed to achieve the best possible outcomes for the member of staff in terms of his or her career progress, and generating the best possible outcomes for young people. We currently have a monthly 'supervision' session with each member of staff, which is half an hour to an hour of appraisal and discussion of actions, progress and next steps, where any issues relating to performance and learning can be raised. This is in addition to our weekly staff meetings which are supportive discussion-based environments for raising important issues about students and about the learning environment.

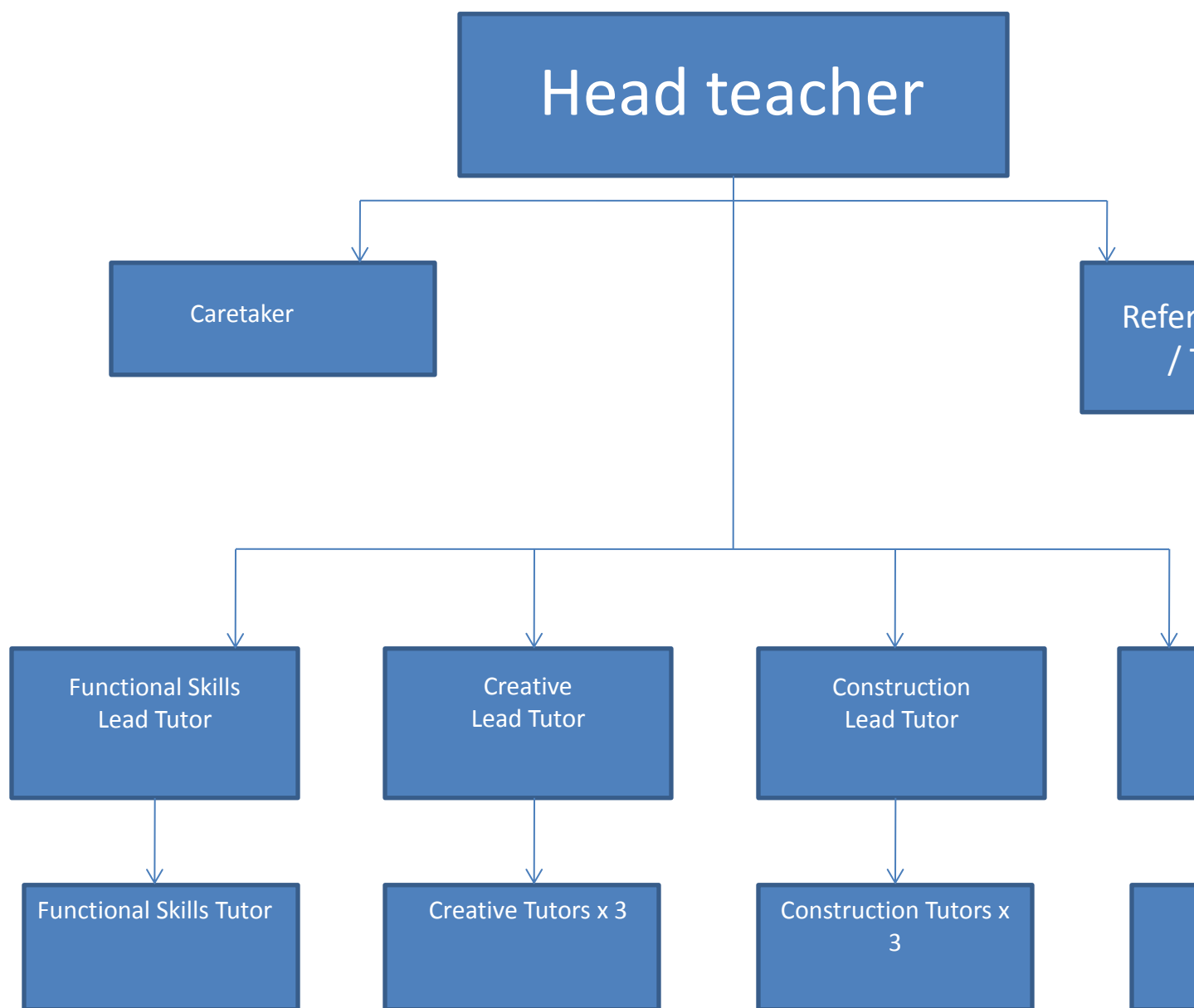
Staff regularly receive practice-based training resulting from this discursive approach. They are also all supported by complete computer visibility from a central point – the managing staff can log on to see all student screens simultaneously, and thus see whether all are on task and working purposefully. All classrooms have CCTV which is used not simply for analysis of incidents, but more frequently as the basis for discussion about teaching and learning approaches, as our students do not easily adapt to lesson observations from an external adult.

The above timescale for recruitment of the Head teacher allows time for advertising and recruitment of additional teachers and staff as the intake expands. We currently have 4 staff working with Stone Soup Learns, in each of our three focus areas of Construction, Creative and Fashion / Design. New additional staff will attend Stone Soup Learns induction courses to familiarise them with the processes and procedures we currently use, and where viable, will spend some time in the working school in advance of September 2012. Planned staffing levels are shown below:

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Head teacher	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Teachers f/t	6	11	15	15	15	15	15

Mentors	2	3	6	6	6	6	6
Referrals	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Administrator	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Caretaker	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Total staff	12	18	25	25	25	25	25
Student No's	40	70	100	100	100	100	100

We currently have 5 of the 6 teachers in post, and the Referrals Officer. We will therefore need also to recruit 2 mentors, an administrator and a caretaker. We may use Stone Soup Builds to provide us with site staff at the preferred site.



Recruitment will be an open process led by the Head teacher and supported by nominated governors. Rigorous interview processes will continue to be used, testing each candidate fully against the person specification for each role, given the specific nature of our approach and of

our students. Teachers will be tested in depth through a series of tests to ensure sufficient English and Maths skills to teach contextually and vocationally. The role of the mentor is critical, and will be recruited on the basis of a variety of 'key worker' and youth work experience, in addition to formal qualifications.

Friends of Stone Soup

All parents, carers and referrers will be automatically enrolled as members of the Friends of Stone Soup. The Friends will be a channel for informal engagement between parents and carers, staff, referring bodies, partners and the Governors, as well as a forum to help coordinate a range of activities including:

- Extra-curricular activities, including sports and clubs
- Family learning, including those that lead to accreditation for parent / carer as well as student
- Visiting speakers and community involvement
- Fundraising
- Social events

Section 7: Premises

Site Options

We currently run Stone Soup Learns from The [REDACTED], Nottingham [REDACTED]. However, this will be insufficient for an expanded provision. We have therefore identified The [REDACTED] Nottingham [REDACTED], and are due to move into this site with the few students we work with from September 2011, for the reasons set out below.

Preferred site

Our preferred site is [REDACTED] Nottingham [REDACTED]. The site is currently used mainly as a community centre, although has also been used for education and training by a variety of community organisations. The site was originally built as a school and has great potential to become an alternative provision free school. The site is currently fully DDA compliant.

The site is managed by the [REDACTED], a company limited by Guarantee, whose core objectives are:

- To improve the social and living conditions in the [REDACTED] area and enhance community safety, confidence and health;
- To attract funding and investment into the [REDACTED] area in order to stimulate promote and continue economic regeneration;
- To encourage and empower local people to take ownership of the [REDACTED] and responsibility for the development of their own communities.

We were initially approached by the [REDACTED] to take on the site as it is currently languishing. We were asked if we could revive the building and local area by developing activity of community benefit. By building a strong partnership with the [REDACTED] and becoming resident in this building we will be connecting with the local community and regenerating a local asset. The site itself is well known in the community and will attract a great deal of interest and support.

The site is based in St Anns, an area of high deprivation in Nottingham City. It has good transport links, with students arriving largely by bus and taxi. The school buildings are set back from the road, and are surrounded by a fence and school gate. The school itself has a reception area and café, and access to the rest of the school is only available through this reception area. This therefore provides excellent safeguarding for all our students.

The interior of the school is set over two floors, with a sports hall, assembly area and four large teaching rooms. There are also a number of smaller rooms for office space, and small tutorial rooms. There is sufficient space for our fully expanded provision of 100 students. The proposed site has heating, fire alarms and complies fully with Health and Safety requirements.

We have secured The [REDACTED] in Nottingham as the site to run our current provision and community based activities. This will become operational in September 2011 for our part time provision and will be fully equipped by September 2012. We will use this site if we are successful with a Free School application.

The exterior of the site includes a garden area and external hard areas for play, dining and informal chat, and external learning. Beyond the fenced area is a park owned by the City Council, which is semi-derelict – we have plans to work with the students to tame and develop this space for learning and play. There are also allotments adjacent, providing another learning opportunity for the school.

Adjacent to the site is a business centre with additional space, should Stone Soup Learns need to expand further. There is also a Sports Barn complex adjacent to the site, providing indoor

recreational activities for the students and enabling us to deliver a fully rounded curriculum which includes healthy living.

The site is owned by Nottingham City Council. We will pay an annual fee for its use and maintenance which is reflected in the financial plan. We believe that given the sound structure of the site as a former school, any renovation and refurbishment required can be undertaken for a reasonable sum and will be excellent value for money as it will also provide a community facility which the area would benefit from.

Section 8: Initial Costs and financial viability

Please see Financial Spreadsheet.

The Stone Soup Project



stonesoup



Alternative Education 2010/11

The Stone Soup Project is a Nottingham based Social Enterprise offering a variety of vocational courses tailored to young people who, for various reasons are not able to access full time mainstream education. We work closely with Local Authorities, Schools, Families and a range of external agencies to assist disaffected young people in overcoming barriers to their learning and to reach their full potential.

The company is committed to a holistic enabling approach and is flexible enough to respond to the individual needs of each young person. Established in 2002, we have over 7 years experience of working with young people in this sector, our staff team are highly qualified industry professionals in their individual fields, and are committed to offering a positive learning experience to the young people in our care.

Direct Referrals

We welcome direct referrals from schools and alternative learning services for:

Part Time Exclusions

Working alongside existing school programmes to enhance basic skills and offer accreditation and practical experience in a range of vocational courses.

Short term Exclusions

Similar to part time exclusions but also working with schools, families and other key stakeholders to assist reintegration into mainstream education.

Full Time Exclusions:

Providing a full time education covering basic skills and accreditation in a range of vocational subject areas of interest to the young person.

All engagement in these referral programmes encompass:

- Enhancing access to vocational learning and relevant work experience
- Modifying behaviour, teaching of thinking and problem solving skills
- Promoting and assisting towards work experience, employment or further education
- Encouraging reintegration into mainstream education if appropriate
- A focus on team working and understanding the workplace environment

All courses are carefully designed to make activities as practical as possible in order to interest and motivate students. Emphasis is placed on preparing the young person for further education or the workplace and we employ a vocational, project based approach.

Any of the above can be designed as a term or yearly programme and tailored to meet the needs of the student.



Our current programme of courses include:

- Music Production
- Video/Film Production
- Graphic Design
- Web Design
- Business & Enterprise
- Information Technology
- Construction
- Craft Design Technology

These programmes offer students the opportunity to gain level 1 & 2 NCFE qualifications using Industry Standard software and equipment. During the course students will have the opportunity to work on real world projects which will involve direct liaison with professionals in the field.

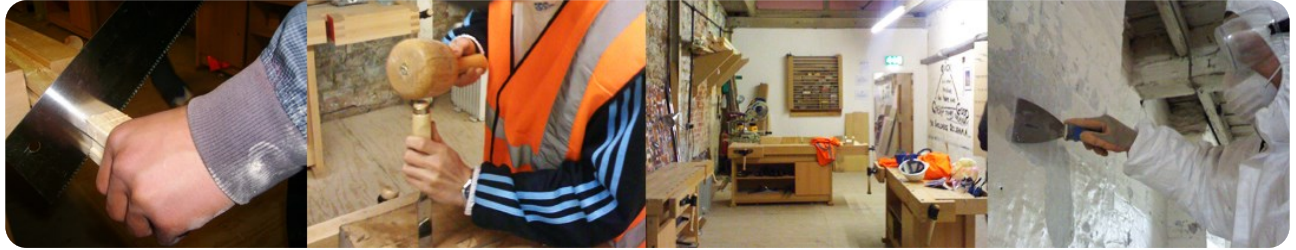
Alongside these courses students are taught literacy and numeracy skills and have the opportunity to gain NCFE Level 1 and level 2 qualifications in both these subjects. PSHE also forms a core part of any curriculum we offer.

This list is not exhaustive and we welcome enquiries about our bespoke service which can design courses in a variety of subjects to meet the needs of the referrer and students. Currently we are working with associates to create courses in Horticulture, Cookery, Theatre Design and Drama.

Added to the academic content of the programmes, referrals also include:

- Attendance Tracking
- Home visits and parental liaison, agency liaison (Connexions, YOT etc.)
- Parents evenings
- Celebration events & reward systems
- Work experience and employment opportunities
- Apprenticeships
- Life skills and wellbeing
- “Setting up for life” - which involves, opening a bank account, CV writing and interview skills.
- Assistance with college applications and entry
- Streamlined entry process into Further Education through our college partnerships.

Beyond Year 11 we also offer a range of further education opportunities including Pre E2E, E2E and post E2E courses run in conjunction with local Further Education Institutes.



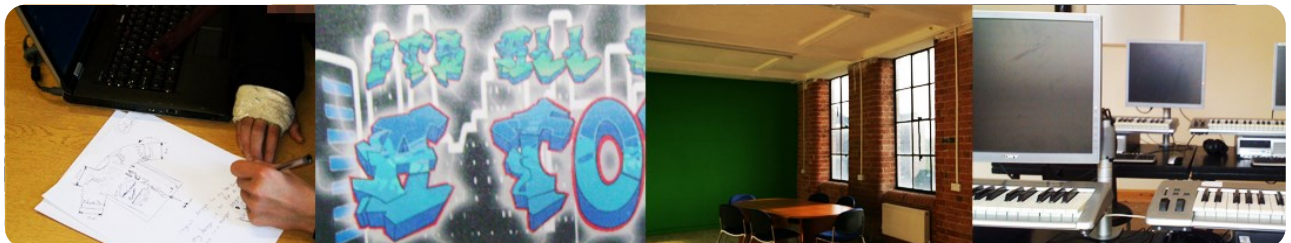
Costs

Placements cost £65 per day and include provision of a lunch. For the construction course there is an additional charge for materials of £5 per day.

How to access the Service

If you would like to work with us, a call to our Head Office is enough to start to start the process. An appointment can be made for the referrer and young person to visit the project and meet the team. This is followed by a meeting between the student and a project worker to ascertain what the young person's requirements are and their suitability for our programmes. Once a placement has been agreed, we will issue a referral form to be completed, after which a start date is arranged and the programme commences. Placements on these programmes can be made at any time of the year.

For more information about this service or to discuss our range of programmes please contact our Head Office on: [REDACTED], alternatively you can email us on [REDACTED]



Our Philosophy

It is recognised that many of the young people referred will have Emotional and Behavioural difficulties which may inhibit their ability to access learning. All members of staff are therefore given training to understand the potential barriers to students' progression.

All aspects of the young person's experience with Stone Soup are underpinned by the 5 outcomes of the Every Child Matters legislation and the work is tailored to the expectations of the Government White Paper "Back on Track". Our experience has shown that behavioural problems start at a much earlier stage than the point of our involvement. When Exclusion from main stream school becomes necessary it is a destructive process for both the young person involved and the members of staff who instigate the process. It is with this in mind that The Stone Soup Project can offer a collaborative service or "behaviour partnership" directly to schools to work with the young person whilst they are still in mainstream school and to try to prevent exclusion. In the case of a young person who is already excluded the Project recognises the benefit of reintegration where possible.

There is a strong emphasis on Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), along with encouraging students to be more flexible in their thinking. As part of the overall learning experience students are encouraged to place their new found skills into the context of real life experiences and are taught how their skills can be utilised whilst in a controlled and safe environment. This provides opportunities that contribute effectively to preparing students for their futures beyond school. For those students who show an interest and aptitude, we offer a mentoring service in business management to help students utilise their skills in the commercial world. We have the very satisfying experience of having students return as adults for further advice and guidance in their chosen subjects and sometimes in the businesses that they have created.



Company Details

The Stone Soup Project Community Interest Company

[REDACTED]

Nottingham

[REDACTED]

Tel:

[REDACTED]

E-Mail:

Web: www.thestonesoupproject.com

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What qualifications can students achieve?

We are a registered centre for NCFE and ASDAN and offer both level 1 and 2 qualifications. Completion of a level 2 qualification is regarded as equivalent to a GCSE. Students placed with us can achieve level 1 & 2 in the following:

- a. Basic skills in Literacy & Numeracy
- b. In their chosen core subjects (Graphics; Music; Painting; Joinery; Enterprise etc.)

2. Can you work with students who have severe EBD and/or who have statements for ADHD and such like?

Yes, our staff are trained in working with these kind of students; to spot warning signs and employ de-escalation techniques where necessary. Our team also have a wealth of experience working with these types of students. Many of our students come to us with statements and successfully engage with the main group. We can also offer tailor made one-to-one programmes if this is required.

3. What added benefits are students offered?

Beyond the opportunity to gain real qualifications and enterprise skills. Students get to work alongside industry professionals and are encouraged and assisted in progressing into further education or the workplace. They are offered support and advice on a personal and professional level with assistance being given to set up bank accounts, write CV's etc... Students also have the option to apply for apprenticeships when offered. Our organisations objectives are much wider than just education; we want to affect real social change and have a keen interest in helping disadvantaged people and communities.

4. How do the students respond, do we actually affect change?

Students generally respond positively to our approach. We often stay in touch with them even after their placements have finished and offer advice and support. Some of the relationships are advisory and in others we take a more proactive approach. Over the years many have come back and completed apprenticeships or gained experience working for us; some have actually gone on to become employees whilst others have set up as sole traders and/or gone into further and higher education.

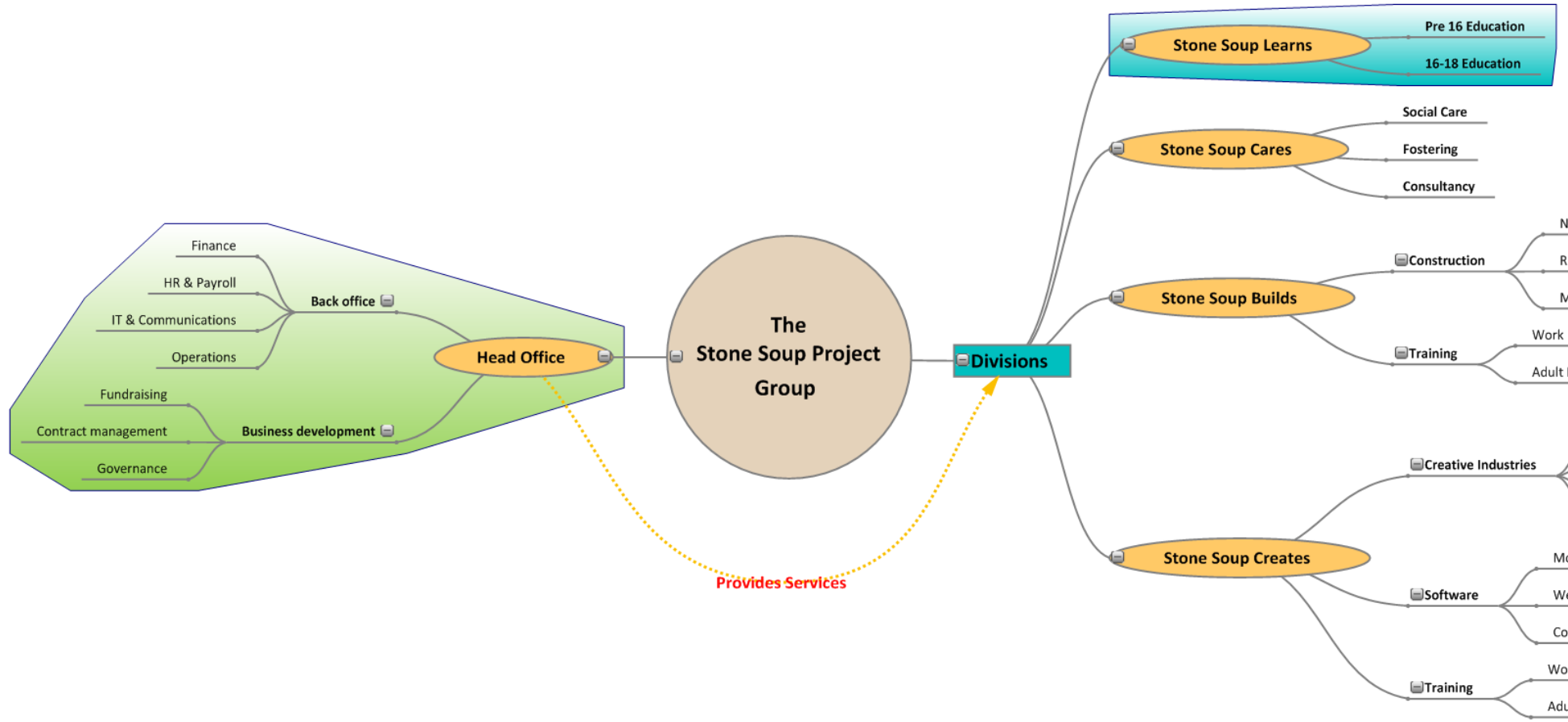
5. If a student is to be placed part time alongside his school work. How many days would this be and can these days be decided by school?

The school can decide how many and which days are most appropriate depending on the individual students preferences, ability and need. A key strength of ours is the adjustment of the teaching process according to the learning needs of the pupils. One size does not fit all and we always accommodate individual differences and specific interests/skills/needs.

6. What constitutes a full time placement?

10am – 3pm, 5 days per week equates to the 25 hrs required for full time engagement.

Appendix B



Appendix C

Quality Assurance Checklist 2010/11

Provider: Stone Soup	Person responsible for QA: [REDACTED]
Visit report by: [REDACTED]	Date: 16 th November 2010

Please indicate which of the following you have in place

Item	Y/N (where applicable)	Evidence	Date Checked
Baseline Essential Criteria			
Adoption of essential elements of SQA (partnership agreement; programme schedule(s); contractual agreement)	N	<i>Uses own SLA however, this does cover the points in the SQA</i>	16/11/10
Health and Safety -Insurance details (5 million in public liability and employee liability insurances) -Vetting by a competent person -Policy in place -Risk assessments and action plans in place -Fire Risk Assessment -PPE available (if appropriate)	Y	<i>Insurance certificate seen – policy with Zurich and was taken out in Feb 2010.</i> <i>Health and Safety policy in place and has been vetted by an external organisation.</i> <i>Risk assessments seen</i>	16/11/10
Safeguarding Checklist	Y	<i>Safeguarding checklist seen</i>	16/11/10
CRB Single Central Record	Y	<i>Central log of CRB reference numbers are kept they are held electronically and are password protected.</i>	16/11/10
Attendance data collected and shared (in a consistent, timely fashion)	Y	<i>Attendance is collected and submitted to schools on a weekly basis</i>	16/11/10
Delivery staff are suitably, trained and experienced	Y	<i>Certificates seen – some staff are currently undertaking their teaching qualifications</i>	16/11/10
Evidence of parent/carer consent forms	Y	<i>Direct referral forms are sent to Stone Soup from the schools which have parents consent included</i>	16/11/10
Identified, clear progression routes for learners	Y	<i>Provider offers post 16 progression opportunities through partnership arrangements with South</i>	16/11/10

		<i>Nottingham College</i>	
Initial learner assessment process	Y	<i>Uses the Unity initial assessment process</i>	16/11/10
A delivery plan or Scheme of Work	Y	<i>Delivery plans seen</i>	16/11/10
Qualifications on offer are section 96 listed	Y	<i>Qualifications delivered through EDEXCEL and NCFE</i>	16/11/10
Recommended			
Quality assurance policy, calendar & self assessment report	Y	<i>QA policy in place and completes an annual SAR</i>	16/11/10
Information, Advice & Guidance (IAG) policy	Y	<i>Connexions PA's regularly visit the young people on the programme</i>	16/11/10
Equality & Diversity Policy	Y	<i>Policy in place</i>	16/11/10
Third party reports/certificates for example OfSTED (if applicable)	Y	<i>Has been involved in a OfSTED inspection through work delivered with South Nottingham College</i>	16/11/10
A Complaints procedure	Y	<i>Complaints procedure seen. Also listed within the students induction pack</i>	16/11/10
Learner induction process/records	Y	<i>All learners receive a induction pack</i>	16/11/10
Policy statements on behaviour, attendance, bullying, supervision/leaving the premises, travel, free school meals and substance misuse	Y	<i>Provider has policies for all of the areas listed with the exception of travel and free school meals</i>	16/11/10
Records of data collection (attendance, punctuality, retention, achievement)	Y	<i>Data is collected electronically.</i>	16/11/10
Parents informed of any placement details	Y	<i>A letter is sent to parents to ask them for consent of the work placement</i>	16/11/10
A Policy and examples of risk assessments for offsite visits	Y	<i>Has a policy in place for educational visits and risk assessments seen</i>	16/11/10
Management of medications policy statement	Y	<i>Has a policy which states stone soup will not administer medications but will provide a secure storage</i>	16/11/10
Lesson observation schedule	Y	<i>Observations are completed annually and all staff are observed.</i>	16/11/10

Lesson observation proforma	Y	<i>Completed proforma seen</i>	16/11/10
Records of CPD	Y	<i>Training log seen</i>	16/11/10
Assessment schedule linked to scheme of work which is appropriate to learner needs	Y	<i>Assessment schedules seen</i>	16/11/10
ILP/IEPs that include targets and reviews of learner progress and assessment tracking	Y	<i>ILPs completed and seen</i>	16/11/10
Procedure for students to appeal against qualifications assessment decisions	Y	<i>The awarding body procedure is followed.</i>	16/11/10
Progress reports sent to schools and parents	Y	<i>Parent days are arranged allowing parents to come into the centre to discuss the progress of the young person</i>	16/11/10
Learner course reviews for induction, mid-course and end-of-course	Y	<i>Evidence of ILPs being reviewed</i>	16/11/10
Tutor course reviews	Y	<i>Reviews of the courses are a weekly item on the staff agenda</i>	16/11/10
EV reports and follow-up procedure	Y	<i>EV reports seen</i>	16/11/10

If you have no recent self assessment report, please fill in the following:

Describe your Quality Assurance Process.

Please include and explain:

- Who is involved
- How it is monitored, reviewed and followed up
- Any action planning

Describe two key strengths of your provision delivered on behalf of schools and why you believe them to be strengths:


Describe two key areas for improvement of your provision delivered on behalf of schools and how they are being addressed:

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Re-Verification Visit Report

Name of Provider: The Stone Soup Project	Name of Visitor: ██████████
Name of linked Schools: Unity and a variety of City schools as and when requested	
Date of Visit: 16 th November 2010	Names of Staff Visited: ██████████
Baseline/Essential Criteria Met: Yes	If no areas not met:
Provider Profile: Provider has worked with young people for a number of years offering alternative provision within the following areas: Construction, Music Technology, Digital Radio, Design, Business Administration and Information Technology. All qualifications are delivered at levels 1 and 2 and are accredited by NCFE or EDEXCEL. Work in partnership with South Nottingham College offering opportunities at post 16.	
Comments on QA process: Provider has vigorous QA processes in place incorporating both Unity processes as well as their own. All procedures and processes fully meet the requirements of the QA toolkit.	
Lesson Observations: Lessons are observed on an annual basis.	
Schemes of Work: Detailed schemes and lesson plans are in place for all of the qualifications offered.	
External Evaluation: External verification reports are available. Stone Soup has been involved in an Ofsted inspection through work delivered with South Nottingham College.	
Arrangements for Programme Delivery How is attendance reported: Attendance is recorded daily and reported to both Unity and Schools on a weekly basis.	

Systems for Monitoring Progress:	
All young people have individual learning plans which are reviewed on a regular basis.	
Arrangements for student welfare and guidance:	
All young people are given an induction pack from when they first start. The induction pack is comprehensive and provides details of support on offer for the young people. The induction packs also lists an abbreviated version of the policy statements for behaviour, attendance etc for the young people	
Information for Parents:	
Parents are invited to attend open days to discuss the young person's progress. Progress reports are also sent to parents and schools.	
An abbreviated induction pack is given to parents informing them of the role and responsibilities of stone soup.	
Data:	
How many young people attended your provision last academic year?	
In Year 10:	In Year 11: - To be submitted
How many did you retain for the whole programme?	
In Year 10:	In Year 11: To be submitted
How many are returning?	
In Year 10:	In Year 11: To be submitted
What was your percentage attendance?	
Can you provide a summary of achievement data by qualification and level and give evidence of this? Yes / No	
Areas for Improvement:	
Action Points Agreed with the Provider:	By Who:
Safeguarding Posters to be sent to the provider.	

Copies of What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' document to be sent to the provider.	
Baseline/Essential Actions:	By Who:
General Actions:	By Who:
Notes: The Stone Soup project has offered to share their self assessment report however, only to local authority staff.	Actions: