



Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
Secretary of State

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SF November 2010



Free School Proposal: Birstall, Birkenshaw and Gomersal Parents Alliance (BBGPA)

Thank you for submitting your proposal to set up a new school to the Department for Education. It has now been fully assessed and judged to be sufficiently strong in all areas to proceed to the next stage. I am therefore pleased to invite you to proceed to business case stage.

I ask that you develop a business case for a maximum 800 capacity school but also consider the capital costs of refurbishing and expanding the premises. It may be that a smaller school would require a reduced capital investment but still deliver the small, community based school at the heart of your proposal.

I understand that you are looking to open your new school in September 2013, and the Department will work with you to do everything it can to make this a reality. In view of the lead-in time available to your proposal, my officials will agree with you what the key dates should be for your programme of work. I am also aware that you wish to take in a small group of pupils from Gomersal Middle School from 2012 and ask you to consider this further as part of your Business Case. I am very keen for the first wave of Free Schools to be innovative and responsive to parental demand, and I believe that the new school your group is proposing can carry through this vision.

As you know, Free Schools form an integral part of the Government's education policy to improve choice for parents and raise standards for all young people. I will be looking to your proposal, along with others in this initial cadre of Free Schools, to shape the way forward for future proposers.

Business Case

I want to ensure that you have the support you need to develop your business case. Attached to this letter you will find a table which sets out the tasks that will need to be completed. Please complete this table, identifying which tasks you are able to take forward alone, and those for which you think you will require additional support, and submit it to your named DfE lead, [REDACTED]. Please note that the DfE cannot fund any work that its officials have not explicitly agreed to support. Alongside this assessment you should provide an outline of the main dates for progressing your proposal.

Admissions

All Academies and Free Schools are required to have inclusive admission arrangements which comply with the School Admissions Code. Free Schools are required to be within local authority coordinated admissions where possible. You should provide your local authority with your admission number and admission arrangements for inclusion in their admissions prospectus as soon as they are determined (15th April each year).

I will look forward to receiving your final business case in due course. Please continue to work with [REDACTED] in the Department throughout this process and direct any questions you have to her.

In addition to this letter, I will also be writing to your local authority and local MP to inform them that your proposal has moved forward to business case stage.

*In digital - let's see using fund in
Yes,
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MICHAEL GOVE