

# Free Schools in 2012

## How to apply

### Mainstream schools

# Introduction

This guidance:

- sets out the aims of the Free Schools programme;
- outlines the timetable for the preparation, submission and assessment of applications to open Free Schools in 2012;
- details the information you must provide in each part of your application;
- sets out the criteria against which your application will be assessed; and
- lists the minimum requirements which all Free School applications must meet in order to be considered.

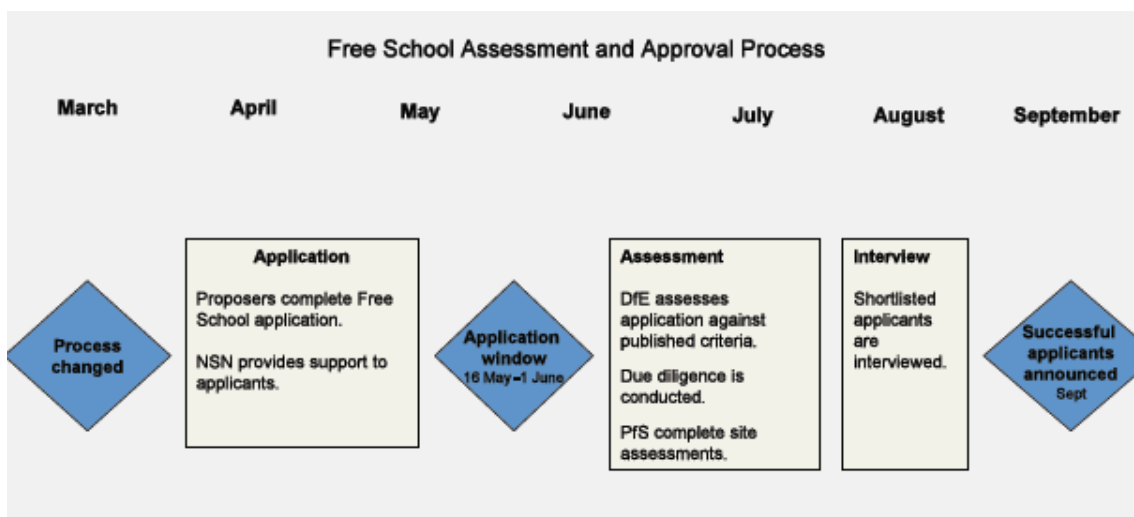
## Free School aims

The vision of the Free Schools programme is to raise standards by encouraging a range of new and diverse providers to play a much greater role in state education. These new providers will have the opportunity to propose establishing new schools in response to parental demand, thereby introducing increased competition, new ideas and greater diversity into the school system.

In delivering this change, the Free Schools programme aims to:

- drive up quality of provision and standards – not only by the introduction of new Free Schools which are of high quality themselves, but also in other local schools;
- provide parents with greater choice about the school their child attends – with the power to propose to set up their own school if they are unhappy with existing options;
- encourage greater innovation in the education system by opening it up to a much wider range of providers and approaches;
- provide a value for money solution to creating new school places and driving system-wide change; and
- create an increasingly self-sustaining and self-improving system, relying far less on central government intervention and more on school leaders, teachers and parents themselves to ensure a good quality of education for all.

# The timetable for assessing and approving applications



## What happens when

### Preparing and submitting your application – up to 1 June 2011

- Read this guidance carefully;
- New Schools Network is able to provide advice and guidance to help you prepare your application; and
- **Please note that any applications received by the Department either before 16 May or after 1 June will not be considered.**

### Assessment of your application – 1 June to 31 July 2011

- We will assess your application against the criteria set out in this document;
- Any applications that do not meet the minimum criteria will be rejected;
- All applications that meet the minimum criteria will:
  - be judged against each other on a competitive basis, using both the minimum and comparative criteria set out in this guidance;
  - be subject to due diligence checks - this means that we will use the personal information you provided to ensure your application is suitable to be submitted to the Secretary of State for his approval; and
  - undergo viability and cost assessments of your preferred site by Partnerships for Schools.

## **Interviewing applicants – 1 to 12 August 2011**

**If your application meets the minimum criteria *and* is assessed as one of the strongest applications against both the minimum and comparative criteria we will invite you to interview in the first two weeks of August (between 1<sup>st</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> August).**

This is a key part of the process. Therefore, please ensure that the key people in your team hold this time in their diaries in case your application reaches the interview stage.

## **Final approval and decisions – 12 August to end of September 2011**

- We will let everyone know the outcome of their application, successful or otherwise, by the end of September;
- If the Secretary of State approves your application to move to pre-opening stage you will be provided with a dedicated project lead from the Department, along with support to help secure a site and open your school in September 2012;
- There will be a significant amount of work to complete between approving your Free School application and your Free School opening in September 2012; and
- Assuming you make good progress against the key milestones in the pre-opening stage, the Secretary of State will then make a decision on whether to enter into a Funding Agreement – this represents final approval.

## Application guidelines and criteria

This guide to completing your Free School application is divided into sections:

- Details of the **applicant group**, including information on the registered company and individual members;
- A **summary sheet** with basic details about the proposed school; and
- **Specific sections** on educational vision and plan, evidence of demand, organisational capacity and capability, premises, initial funding and financial viability.

Each section includes instructions on what you are expected to demonstrate, criteria against which your application will be evaluated and reference to any relevant laws, regulations or guidance.

### Format requirements

**Sections 1 and 2** require you to complete template forms. Please include these with the main part of your application.

**Sections 3 to 7** should be on A4 paper and in Arial font with a minimum font size of 12.

**Section 8** requires you to complete the template spreadsheet. Please include this with the main part of your application.

You are also required to complete **Section 9** (which is self-standing and is accessible in a *separate* downloadable form). This section asks you to provide and confirm personal details and declarations.

### Application deadline and instructions

We must receive your application no earlier than 16 May and no later than **5pm Wednesday 15th June 2011** in order for it to be considered<sup>1</sup>. You must submit one copy of your application electronically and **two** in hard copy. You will need to return two copies of "Section 9: Suitability and Declarations" to us by hard copy using the address highlighted in that document within the same timescales.

Further details on how to submit your application form will be available on our website on 9 May 2011.

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<sup>1</sup> Applicants should not submit additional supporting material after this date, although the Department reserves the right to request additional information if deemed necessary.

We will inform applicants of the outcome of their application by the end of September 2011, if not earlier. Please note that there will not be any appeals processes.

## Process and criteria

We will assess your form in three ways:

- against the minimum criteria, to decide if your proposed Free School is likely to be one of acceptable quality;
- against other Free School applications, to ensure that only the best applications are approved; and
- against cost considerations, to ensure that the proposed Free School is affordable and offers maximum value for public money.

To that end, please note that:

- **applications that do not meet all minimum criteria will not be approved**, these criteria are set out at the end of sections 3-8;
- **all applications that do meet the minimum criteria will then be assessed against each other**, using both the minimum and comparative criteria, also set out at the end of sections 3-8; and
- **value for money and overall cost will be a consideration throughout**, and applications will be assessed against each other in this regard.

## Wider contextual factors for all Free School applications

In assessing an application, we will take into account a wide set of contextual factors, including but not limited to:

- the age range of the free school;
- overall cost;
- value for money;
- the level of deprivation in the community that it serves;
- the standards of schools in the local area;
- the type of provider; and
- its faith or not.

## Free Schools for pupils aged 16-19

Under current legislation, it is not possible to establish a Free School solely catering for pupils aged 16-19. Subject to Parliamentary approval, the Education Bill currently before Parliament will make that possible, and will enable the Secretary of State to approve applications for 16-19 Free Schools to open in September 2012. If you wish to set up a 16-19 Free School, please submit your application using the same sections set out below.

## **Additional criteria for existing independent schools seeking to become Free Schools**

Only existing independent schools that already provide high quality places will be considered. If independent schools do not meet the following minimum criteria, their applications will be rejected:

- For schools inspected by Ofsted, the Bridge Schools Inspectorate or the School Inspection Service, judgements of good or better in each of the following areas of its latest inspection report:
  - (i) the quality of education;
  - (ii) safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety; and
  - (iii) promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.
  
- For schools inspected by the Independent Schools Inspectorate, judgements equivalent to good or better in each of the following areas of its latest inspection report:
  - (i) the quality of academic and other achievements;
  - (ii) the contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision;
  - (iii) the contribution of teaching;
  - (iv) the quality of the pupils' personal development;
  - (v) the contributions of arrangements for welfare, health and safety; and
  - (vi) the effectiveness of governance, leadership and management.
  
- There are no significant outstanding issues on compliance with the independent school standards; and
  
- The existing trust has a good track record of managing their accounts (see section 8 below).

If an existing independent school meets these criteria, we will take into account not just the information included in the application form but wider contextual factors, including:

- examination performance, both in absolute and relative terms compared to other state schools (our expectation is that the school should perform significantly better than other schools in the local area at the relevant key stage);
  
- the popularity of the school (our expectation is that the school is at or near maximum capacity in terms of pupil numbers);
  
- the appeal of the Free School to parents who do not currently have children at the school, especially from more disadvantaged homes;
  
- the level of deprivation in the area - in the event of two similar applications, those from more deprived areas will be prioritised;



- overall cost – including judgements on revenue and capital cost estimates; and
- value for money.

## Checklist for applicants

Before submitting your application form, please ensure you have:

- established a Company Limited by Guarantee (also commonly known as an 'Academy Trust') and registered this with Companies House (not the Charity Commission) - guidance can be found at the link below<sup>2</sup> <sup>3</sup>;
- completed ALL SECTIONS of the application and suitability and declarations forms, using the section numbering and titling consistent with the guide below:
  1. Applicant details
  2. Outline of the school
  3. Educational vision
  4. Educational plan
  5. Evidence of demand and marketing
  6. Organisational capacity and capability
  7. Premises
  8. Initial costs and financial viability
  9. Suitability and Declaration (separate downloadable form);
- completed and attached the financial viability assessment spreadsheets (section 8); and
- considered your responses against the evaluation criteria for each section.

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<sup>2</sup> [REDACTED].

<sup>3</sup> Model Memorandum and Articles of Association are available from [REDACTED]

## Free School requirements

The Free Schools programme aims to increase the range and quality of education for children in a pluralist and democratic society. The Secretary of State will therefore seek to ensure that only suitable persons are permitted to establish Free Schools which will be publicly funded. In addition, any decision relating to the establishment of Free Schools must be affordable and in accordance with the Government's wider policies and guidelines.

The Secretary of State will consider each application on its merits, and take into account all matters relevant to the application. He will reject any applications put forward by organisations which advocate violence or other illegal activities.

In order to be approved, applications will need to demonstrate that they would support UK democratic values including respect for the basis on which UK laws are made and applied; respect for democracy; support for individual liberties within the law; and mutual tolerance and respect.

### Assessing the suitability of applications

In addition to the evaluation criteria set out in this application form, you should also be aware of the following **minimum requirements**.

1. Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 places a duty on the Secretary of State to promote equality of opportunity. The Secretary of State must have due regard to the need to:
  - Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
  - Advance equality of opportunity<sup>4</sup>
  - Foster good relations (and tackle prejudice and promote understanding)<sup>5</sup>.Applicants are required to ensure that their proposed Free School will be able to further those aims.
2. Free Schools with a religious character will have to balance the needs of (a) children with a faith and (b) children of other faiths or none; and when oversubscribed, be able and willing to admit at least 50% of their intake without reference to faith.
3. Applications for schools seeking to be designated as a school with a religious character (faith school) must be accompanied by a letter of endorsement from the relevant religious body or diocese for the Church of England or the Roman Catholic Church.

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<sup>4</sup> This refers to people who do / do not share a protected characteristic; protected characteristics refer to age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation

<sup>5</sup> *ibid*

4. Creationism, intelligent design and similar ideas must not be taught as valid scientific theories.
5. Existing independent school applicants should note the additional criteria set out on p.8-9.
6. Free School applicants will need to confirm that they understand and accept the following:
  - Free Schools must have arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school. This is set out in parts 3 and 4 of schedule 1 of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010 (██████████);
  - Free Schools are required through their Funding Agreement to adopt practices and arrangements that are consistent or in accordance with the School Admissions Code, the School Admission Appeals Code and admissions law as it applies to maintained schools ██████████;
  - Free Schools must meet the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010 ██████████; and
  - the model Free School Funding Agreement ██████████.

## Section 1: Applicant details

As Companies Limited by Guarantee, certain details will be publicly available on the Companies House website. However, personal information will be treated in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

We realise that not all of this section will be relevant or appropriate to existing Academy sponsors.

<b>Details of Company Limited by Guarantee</b>
Name: Chapel Street Community Fund
Company address: [REDACTED] London [REDACTED]
Company registration number: 06905803
<b>Main contact</b>
Name: [REDACTED]
Address: [REDACTED] Surrey [REDACTED]
Email address: [REDACTED]
Telephone number: [REDACTED]
<b>Members and Directors</b>
Please confirm the total number of (a) Company Directors <b>2</b> and (b) any other members of the Governing Body <b>5</b> appointed to date and list them below. Please also confirm who the proposed Chair of the Governing Body is.
Name: [REDACTED] Position: [REDACTED] ([REDACTED])
Name: [REDACTED] Position: [REDACTED]
Name: [REDACTED] Position: [REDACTED]
Name: [REDACTED] Position: [REDACTED]
Name: [REDACTED] Position: [REDACTED]
Name: [REDACTED] Position: [REDACTED]
Name: [REDACTED] Position: [REDACTED]
Name: [REDACTED] Position: [REDACTED]
Name: [REDACTED] Position: [REDACTED]

Position: [REDACTED] ([REDACTED])
Name: Position:
<b>Related organisations</b>
Does the Company Limited by Guarantee have any links (through the members, directors or otherwise) with any other charitable or commercial organisation? Y/N <b>Yes</b>
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:  Chapel St Community Interest Company - 06709585 Chapel St Community Health CIC - 07011497  We do not envisage these social enterprises playing any active role in the Free School.
If your organisation is an existing independent school, please provide your six digit unique reference number: <b>n/a</b>

### 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: [REDACTED]

Date: 15<sup>th</sup> June 2011

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). **Sent under separate cover.**

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

## Section 2: Outline of the school

Proposed school name:	<b>Atherton Community School</b>							
Age range:	<b>11-19</b>							
Proposed numbers in each year group at point of opening and explanation of how pupil numbers will expand to fill the school over time.  If your application includes nursery provision, please add additional rows as appropriate.		2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
	Reception							
	Year 1							
	Year 2							
	Year 3							
	Year 4							
	Year 5							
	Year 6							
	Year 7	90	90	90	90	90	90	90
	Year 8		90	90	90	90	90	90
	Year 9			90	90	90	90	90
	Year 10				90	90	90	90
	Year 11					90	90	90
Year 12	75	75	100	100	100	100	100	
Year 13		75	75	100	100	100	100	
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).	Atherton Community School will be registered as a school of religious character, according to the regulations mentioned below. It will be a Christian School and will have an inclusive admissions policy. ACS will maintain a Christian ethos, welcoming children, families and staff of all faiths and no faith. Attached is a letter of endorsement from Churches Together (See Appendix 1a).							
Is this an application for a single-sex school? If so, please tick the relevant box.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Y / <input type="checkbox"/> N. If Y, please tick one of the following boxes <input type="checkbox"/> Boys <input type="checkbox"/> Girls							
Local authority area in which the school would be situated (and if near to a LA boundary please include names of neighbouring LAs).	Wigan Borough Council							

Being designated as a school with a religious character will allow you to admit pupils or recruit some teaching staff on the basis of religious belief. The Funding Agreement requires you to teach Religious Education according to the tenets of your faith. You do not need to apply for religious designation as part of the application process, but this will be necessary if your application is approved. The Religious Character of Schools (Designation Procedure) (Independent Schools) (England) Regulations 2003 (as amended), available [\[redacted\]](#), sets out the procedure for Independent Schools and Academies to be designated as schools with a religious character. As Free Schools will legally be Academies they will need to follow the same process.



## Section 3: Educational vision

The educational vision should describe why you are setting up *this* Free School and its defining features and ethos. This is your opportunity to tell us in your own words about the overarching vision for your school.

### Information required

- Set out why you are establishing your Free School – the rationale for this age range/ curriculum offer/ location / pedagogy; and
- Identify what will make the school distinctive in its vision and ethos.

### Evaluation Criteria

Minimum Criteria:

- A clearly focused vision that underpins the application; and
- Aligns with the aims of the Free Schools programme (as set out page 3).

### Foundations for Atherton Community School

“Every child should have one person who is irrationally committed to their success.”

██████████

(██████████ of the ██████████ and ██████████)

**Atherton Community School (ACS) is utterly committed to equipping the children of this community to achieve long-lasting success.**

By seizing this opportunity to create a new type of school in which all children can grow and develop, ACS will help to change the educational landscape and demonstrate a model of community learning that transforms the lives of children and their families by building confidence, celebrating achievement and generating exciting futures through academic attainment.

ACS is a response to the overwhelming cry of parents and carers, leaders and the local community for a new school in Atherton. In 2010, led by the chaplain of Hesketh Fletcher CE High School, community leaders invited Chapel St to help

explore a new educational future in the face of the school's closure. Over the past year the Chapel St team have had the privilege to work with hundreds of local teachers, families, employers and stakeholders. The Chapel St team and ACS Steering Group have worked hard to foster a spirit of partnership across the whole community.

We are working with an array of organisations to ensure that ACS has the support of the community and access to local resources. It is clear from the Evidence of Demand and Consultation sections that there has been considerable engagement already.

Together we have developed a compelling vision for a new school harnessing our team's experience of leading schools in challenging circumstances, driving school improvement in areas of educational challenge and creating over 50 new academy schools. These priorities and provisions have been shaped by parents, carers, school leaders and community members to ensure that ACS meets the needs and fulfils the aspirations of the local community.

Raising the aspirations and attainment of local children is our key priority. As one Headteacher observes, "The first challenge in this community is to engage children and improve attitudes to learning." We acknowledge that many local families have lost confidence in the education system and fail to appreciate education as a result.

ACS will be a dynamic educational hub, transforming the lives of children, enhancing the prospects of families and providing a catalyst for community regeneration. Through quality provision and dynamic partnerships with other providers ACS will offer personalised pathways to higher education, vocational training and the workplace. For 11-19 year-olds, this proposal offers a route of progression that is currently unavailable to local families.

This proposal promotes the benefits of a smaller secondary setting. ACS plans to grow to a student population of 450 secondary students (using 3FE cohorts) combined with 200 Sixth Form students. Deliberately smaller than the average UK setting, ACS offers a more intimate learning community addressing the specific needs of families in Atherton. To ensure smooth transitions for new students and families, ACS will develop a comprehensive orientation programme for children in Year 6, adopting methods successfully used by American universities.

ACS will combine recent learning technologies with a highly personalised

approach in order to optimise the impact of learning on children and families. Partnerships with other schools and organisations will enable a broad range of courses while ensuring that staff and governors can draw on high-level expertise. As a result, ACS will offer quality, individuality and sustainability to students, families and the wider community.

The NEET rate in Wigan currently stands at 6.8%. As an 11-19 setting, the personalised approach of ACS will provide extra support and challenge to those who are likely 'drop out' of full-time education or training. Governors and staff will ensure that ACS plays a significant part in reducing the rate of young people Not in Education, Employment or Training. Through the development of our own Sixth Form with Winstanley College, one of the UK's leading Sixth Form providers, and partnerships with other colleges, training providers and local employers, ACS will dramatically increase the number of young people accessing Higher and Further Education.

### **1. ACS will offer a distinct education in a dynamic environment**

**Pedagogy.** Our teaching methods move beyond the mastery of mere information, inviting students to be challenged and changed by their learning. We will teach children to delight in knowledge: to move from, 'Whatever!' and 'So what?' to wonder and wellbeing. Lessons will come with a license for adventure, learning will be integrated across subjects and disciplines and teaching will be applied to real life.

**Inclusion.** Inclusion is central to our vision and ethos, under-pinning educational opportunities and sponsoring success and achievement for all. ACS will be open to all regardless of faith, ethnicity, educational need, gender, or sexual orientation. We will invest in children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and develop students who are especially gifted or talented in certain areas. ACS will have exemplary differentiation including SEN provision that includes parents and carers, identifies children's needs and assesses and monitors progress.

**Behaviour.** Our guiding principle is the golden rule. Staff and students will treat others in the same way that they wish to be treated. This will form the basis for positive behaviour management at ACS. While clearly addressing the factors that cause children to make poor choices, we will refuse to identify children by their negative behaviour and rather build on their personal strengths and abilities.

## **2. ACS will develop skills and build knowledge**

**Confidence.** We believe that confidence and self-esteem are essential if children are to learn and develop. ACS will accelerate students' learning, personalising education to fit the needs and fulfill the potential of every child. Personalisation will be the foundation of teaching and learning at our school.

**Curriculum.** We believe that a curriculum of core subjects combined with access to wider studies through technology and collaboration can provide a focused and rounded education. ACS will provide a challenging environment where students are stretched and supported in all areas of education. Strategic planning will align national expectations for attainment with child-centred and child-led learning.

**Creativity.** We believe that exercising creativity and imagination is a vital element of effective education and enhances all areas of learning. ACS will develop innovative approaches to learning and problem solving as well as exposing students to the creative and expressive arts.

**Collaboration.** We believe that twenty-first century education must emphasise the role of enterprise. ACS will equip students with the character, ingenuity, social expertise and team skills that they need to succeed in a fast-changing world. We will facilitate enterprise learning in collaboration with local employers enabling positive experiences in the workplace and assisting students to become more vocationally self-aware.

**Community.** We believe that it takes a community to raise a child. Children grow and develop faster when they are part of a learning community. ACS will actively engage parents and carers in their child's education and seek to support them in their own learning and development. By fostering networks of reciprocity and support between parents and carers and staff we will develop an environment that builds community and enhances family life.

**Closeness.** We believe that quality relationships are intrinsic to successful educational outcomes. ACS is a deliberately small school. Our vision is to build meaningful and continuous relationships between staff, children, families and the community. Monitoring attainment and achievement in order to plan our students' next steps will help us meet the needs of each child. Our work will account for the child's stage of development as opposed to their age, in the core subjects of English and maths.

**Contribution.** We believe that every child has unique gifts and talents and the potential to make a positive contribution to their community. ACS will develop young citizens who are aware of their duty to society and actively involved in

building and supporting their local family.

**Continuity.** We believe that continuity is key to the development of self-confidence. Acknowledging that many of the difficulties in our current education system occur at points of transition, ACS will provide a secure learning community for children through continuity of key aspects of school life including teaching and learning methods, curriculum and assessment, personal coaching, pastoral care and our positive behaviour management system.

**Coaching.** We believe that every child should have someone who is irrationally committed to their success. ACS will provide every child with a personal coach to support them in their learning and development.

**Crossing Cultures.** We believe that children have much to gain from experiencing different cultures, contexts and communities. The ACS curriculum will be grounded in the core skills as exemplified by the English Baccalaureate. Further breadth and depth will be added through opportunities to experience other cultures, making a difference in the lives of children and communities in other parts of the world. We will replace self-entitlement with a sense of responsibility. Our focus on cultural diversity is also a demonstration of our commitment to following all legal and moral imperatives as outlined in equality and diversity legislation.

**Christian character:** We recognise the local demand for a school with a Christian ethos. Where the trustees of Chapel St are concerned, a Christian ethos school welcomes children, families and staff of all faiths and no faith, enabling all to work together towards the common good of the whole community. ACS will improve community cohesion and increase civic pride. While our admissions policy will not include criteria for admitting children on the basis of their faith, we understand that we are subject to Section 48 inspections.

At Chapel St, Every Person Matters. ACS will extend the Every Child Matters agenda to include parents, carers and other members of the community, recognising that stronger communities and families make for stronger children. ACS will improve outcomes for children, their families and the local community. Participation in the ACS Forums, such as the Parents and Carers Forum and the Community Forum, will provide feedback and input on needs being met, such as pre and after school provision, and meeting expectations around achievement and standards. This is formalised through Participation Groups in the governing body and these forums.

### **3. ACS will raise aspiration and attainment**

Increasing intrinsic motivation and building ownership of learning is crucial. Our personalisation strategies will extend to children's interests and experiences, ensuring that we take every opportunity to meet need, build confidence, acquire knowledge and develop skills. In addition to individual development plans and learning reviews with their coaches, students will also have opportunities to provide feedback on teaching at ACS through input into learning councils, advisory groups and the School Parliament. This last group will report to the governing body each term.

In raising aspiration and attainment ACS will achieve the following objectives:

- A commitment to position ACS at the top of achievement tables with 70% of students attaining 5+ A\*-C (or equivalent) and 80% of students achieving 2 levels progress in English and in maths at the end of KS4
- Prioritising learning in core subjects with additional sessions to provide increased challenge and contextualise learning to achieve the highest possible standards
- Learning streams to give a deeper understanding of how learning fits together and offer opportunities for application through real life situations
- Personal coaching for students to increase their capacity for learning in collaboration with the Effective Lifelong Learning Initiative (ELLI) at the University of Bristol
- Collaborating with students and their families in shaping learning through Learning Councils, School Parliament, Parents and Carers Forum
- Enterprise learning and financial literacy including:
  - working in cross-phase teams to initiate and implement enterprises benefitting the school and community
  - investment programme to enable children to consolidate and integrate different aspects of learning and develop key skills such as teamwork, financial management, project planning and social enterprise.
  - family and community investment programmes offering business start-up support to foster social enterprise and economic advancement reducing levels of debt, unemployment and family breakdown and providing a learning hub for the whole community.
- Family and community partnerships to develop and support children's learning and development beyond the school grounds

- Strategically designed transition strategy for new students at ACS including personal coaching sessions in Year 6, home visits and an orientation programme during the summer before Year 7
- Breadth and quality of post-16 options including an outstanding Sixth Form in partnership with Winstanley and further education with neighbouring Wigan and Leigh College
- Family style lunches unifying the school as a community.

We believe that the community of Atherton is the home to much untapped potential. On these streets live many a future lawyer, doctor, teacher, entrepreneur, politician and artist. Until now there has been a lack of organisations and groups with the skills and convictions to fire the imagination and equip the children of Atherton towards these ends. ACS exists to fill this gap.

We recognise that raising the aspirational bar is not simply about academic achievement. ACS will ensure that students develop a range of skills and access vocational training where strategic and appropriate. However, we remain committed to enabling all students to achieve in core subjects. By schooling students in problem solving and enterprise we aim to foster generations of business leaders and entrepreneurs. In partnership with Fred Longworth High School and Winstanley College ACS will raise the aspirations and attainment of local students.

#### **4. ACS will deliver a transformative Secondary School**

Given the need for secondary places in the Atherton Community and the demand from parents and carers for a greater choice, we have developed these proposals for an outstanding school that will radically raise the aspirations and attainment of local children. The ACS secondary phase will be a 3FE setting, providing parents and carers with a local option and greater choice.

While some parents and carers indicate that local schools are overly large and anonymous, the size of ACS will foster a stronger sense of community and continuity between students, staff and families.

The economic realities of the town have heavily influenced these proposals. Atherton has disadvantaged areas where the average weekly income is £380 (versus £450 in the region), only 36.7% of adults are in full-time employment and 8.73% have professional qualifications. The long-term unemployment rate of 1.32% exceeds regional and national levels.

In the past, deprivation has led to a defeatist attitude where some schools are

concerned. Counter to this, ACS will adopt a 'no excuses' culture, personalising learning and support to drive up standards across each cohort and the school population as a whole. Staff, students and families will be encouraged and equipped to achieve the highest possible standards.

In Autumn 2010, we undertook an initial consultation in Atherton with over 400 parents and carers. This research highlighted that parents and carers were keen to raise the aspirations and attainment of young people and to see a new form of education in which they could more fully engage.

There is a clear need to approach education differently. There are now 1,000,000 young people (1 in 5) who are disengaged from education, employment or training across the UK. There is also a mismatch between what students' learn inside school and their lives outside school. The UK is experiencing record levels of personal debt; research demonstrates that inadequate education directly leads to poor financial literacy. For this reason, Chapel St will integrate life skills and enterprise/financial literacy into a curriculum that is built on a strong foundation of English, maths and Science.

Establishing a secondary school focused on excellent education is a strategic investment that will pay off in both the short and long term. In the immediate, ACS presents local families with a secondary school in their own town; 97% of local parents and carers are demanding this. Beyond this, the imminent investment in a school building that has recently closed offers far better value for money than the alternative new build in four years' time when the availability of secondary places moves beyond crisis point.

## **5. ACS will deliver a transformative Sixth Form**

Where Atherton continues to see a welcome rise in vocational training for children post-16, parents and carers, community members and policy-makers widely recognise the lack of outstanding Sixth Form provision in the area. Some would argue that the lack of this provision further limits the aspirations of local young people.

The vision for the Sixth Form phase of ACS is one of academic excellence, where students study A-levels and undertake a range of work placements and enrichment activities to prepare them for university and professional careers such as medicine, law, finance and teaching. The curriculum offer builds on the English Baccalaureate at GCSE and will include the facilitating subjects favoured by the Russell Group of universities (more detail later on). By commissioning Winstanley to deliver our Sixth Form setting, ACS will provide a post-16 setting as an intentional gateway to higher education and achievement. The ACS Sixth Form will have 200 places.



Many young people in Atherton have not seen their parents or carers positively engaged in work. Working in a community of high unemployment with low levels of entry into university education, ACS will encourage students to explore dynamic and challenging pathways to work, training and higher education providing regular opportunities for work experience and enterprise learning. Recognising the range of provision and possibilities for students post-16, ACS will work with Wigan and Leigh College as well as Winstanley to support all students in identifying the best context in which to continue their educational growth and development.

## **6. ACS will build dynamic educational partnerships**

Chapel St recognises that the aspirations articulated above are not without ambition. To this end we are keen to secure the support of local partners. ACS is partnering with Fred Longworth High School and Winstanley Sixth Form College, both outstanding schools, to increase our capacity, ensure a broad curriculum, collaborate on innovative developments and benefit from expertise in key areas such as raising achievement for boys, ensuring excellent attendance and sharing Advance Skills Teachers in core curriculum.

Our Educational Partner in secondary provision is Fred Longworth High School, a vibrant Arts and Applied Learning College. Fred Longworth has a strong tradition of achieving excellent examination success, regularly outperforming targets to give students an academic head start. Results in 2010 were the best ever, with 85% of students gaining 5 or more A\*-C grades, improving still further on record results in 2009. As an Educational Partner, Fred Longworth High School is well placed to further increase our knowledge and capacity both academically and pastorally. In designating Fred Longworth as an Outstanding School in 2010, Ofsted were particularly impressed with the “outstanding progress” of students and noted that “their determination to learn is palpable”. They also commented upon the respect that students have for one another and for adults. Partnership with Fred Longworth High School offers particular advantages:

- **Curriculum development.** The staff and leadership at Fred Longworth have a proven track record for developing areas of the curriculum to raise achievement for boys and ensure the highest standards through creative planning, teaching and learning. As ACS develops its curriculum, Fred Longworth will share their expertise in developing the most efficient and engaging curriculum which builds our students’ “determination to learn” while providing quality assurance for our own model
- **Shared staffing.** As an outstanding provider in the core subjects as well as in expressive arts, Fred Longworth will enable breadth of the curriculum, support the development of the learning culture and increase cost efficiency through sharing outstanding teachers

- **Joint commissioning for Sixth Form Provision.** The partnership between ACS and Fred Longworth creates further financial viability and capacity for commissioning Sixth Form provision
- **Data systems and processes.** Common systems and processes for data on assessment, attendance and pastoral care will enable ACS to build on a successful infrastructure from the outset while also making shared analysis possible to contextualise our monitoring. These shared systems will greater inform action planning and sharpen priorities and implementation for continuing professional development
- **Attendance.** Fred Longworth High School has been very successful in ensuring students attend school through the creation and implementation of strategies for both academic and personal engagement. Working with our Head of Personal Development, Fred Longworth's [REDACTED] responsible for [REDACTED] will share expertise and experience to inform our systems and strategies to keep students in school
- **Inclusion.** Fred Longworth has implemented a highly effective inclusive pastoral system, highlighted in the recent Ofsted inspection stating that "those more vulnerable students and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive targeted support that is outstanding... students with special educational needs and/or disabilities progress in line with their peers, although those with a statement of special educational need perform even better as a result of the close personal attention provided". With this expertise and experience the [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] at Fred Longworth will support ACS in transforming their inclusive ethos into reality in all aspects of school life
- **Mentoring the Principal.** The [REDACTED] at Fred Longworth will provide support in recruiting, selecting and mentoring the new Principal at ACS grounded in her experience successfully communicating high aspirations for the school, keeping staff and students' morale high while ensuring outstanding academic and personal achievement
- **Advanced Skills Teachers.** Fred Longworth has [REDACTED] in English, maths and Science who are committed to providing support to develop outstanding teaching and learning in these crucial areas. As our partner exemplifies, high standards for attainment in these core subjects

build the bedrock upon which all other achievement is based. Specifically, Fred Longworth offers expertise in raising achievement for boys across all subjects.

Our education partner for Sixth Form provision is Winstanley College, graded outstanding by Ofsted in all areas of provision and this year topping the A-level performance tables for colleges. The partnership with Winstanley fits our vision for continuous learning in a smaller environment. The outstanding teaching and learning at Winstanley also aligns with our aspirations for ACS.

Considering the size and newness of ACS this relationship will prove vital to our success. There will be two aspects to our relationship with Winstanley:

a) The first is as our educational partner with a track record of effective school improvement and sustained outstanding provision. Winstanley has a superb track record of commitment to – and success in – achieving financial stability, safeguarding the health, safety and welfare of its students and supporting equality and diversity in all aspects of its activities. As part of our joint partnership working, Winstanley College will have a member of staff on the ACS SLT, and thereby support ACS in the appointment of staff. Sixth Form staff will be represented on the governing body.

b) The second is a commercial relationship in which Winstanley will act as a provider for educational services around Sixth Form provision, which will be underpinned by Winstanley's mission to achieve excellence in a supporting and challenging learning community, offering the highest quality educational provision, outstanding guidance and support for students and a diverse range of extra-curricular activities.

Further benefits of the partnership with Atherton Community School are as follows:

- **Outstanding input and support.** Having played a vital role in the turn-around of Abraham Guest School, the Winstanley team have a proven track record in school development
- **Locally accessible outstanding Sixth Form provision.** By commissioning Sixth Form provision from Winstanley, ACS will offer 16-18 year olds resident in the east of Wigan borough an opportunity to experience a Winstanley College education without a costly and time-consuming travel-to-learn journey. The experience that Winstanley offers has provided a top-quality A-level education for young people for many years and we seek to extend this successful model to another location for the benefit of a wide group of young people. We also seek to raise the aspirations of those who might otherwise have dismissed the possibility of A-levels and university

- **Teaching Staff.** Winstanley staff deployed to ACS will also support curriculum development thus increasing staffing capacity, bringing greater innovation to the curriculum, coaching others and providing continuity for students
- **Work Placements.** ACS is committed to Enterprise Learning. Within the Sixth Form, students will spend four days in Sixth Form study and one day in a work placement linked to their aspirations for future career and/or study. A number of students who see teaching as a future vocation may serve their placement in the secondary phase of the school supporting teaching and learning as well as their own personal development
- **Value for Money.** A great benefit to partnering with Winstanley in this way will be that we will be able to bring in competent expertise faster.

The Local Authority is also developing a 14-19 centre with Wigan and Leigh College on our preferred site at [REDACTED]. During the next phase of development we will look to develop a Site Operational Board that might also include use of joint facilities for the developing partnerships around 14-19 provision. The partnerships with Fred Longworth High School and Winstanley College offer significant potential to develop a learning village both on site and virtually with Wigan and Leigh College. We will look to work together with Wigan and Leigh College providing support in vocational training and personalised pathways to Further Education and Higher Education in the following ways:

- Providing more vocational training opportunities for 14-16 year olds at ACS through the 14-19 college (which would be co-located if ACS is also located on the Hamilton Street site)
- Providing the same kind of skills-based progression for post-16 students who are not suited to the ACS Sixth Form delivered by Winstanley
- Providing a broader Sixth Form offering through the Wigan and Leigh Sixth Form College for those not suited to ACS Sixth Form or for those students looking for a much broader curriculum/Sixth Form college environment
- Providing further training for post-16 through a possible University Technical College.

In addition to this, the Wigan and Leigh 14-19 and Sixth Form Colleges could provide useful support to the secondary setting of ACS.

- Utilising staff/subjects/facilities in relation to building capacity in enterprise learning

- Maximising their strong sports base and connections with the Leigh Sports Village
- Increasing cost efficiency through the benefits of co-location/shared procurement/economies of sharing resourcing.

We have high aspirations for many pupils to progress into our Sixth Form; we also recognise that for some, there are alternative career paths that will enable them to pursue their talents and interests. Through collaboration with Wigan and Leigh College we can guide them towards the most effective routes to training, education and employment.

## **7. ACS will optimise the use of ICT to improve outcomes and attainment**

A key tool to enable ACS to realise our vision will be ubiquitous ICT, with the most value for money. All students will become autonomous users of ICT through discrete ICT lessons, cross-curricular use and access to robust, secure ICT facilities. Please see attached Appendix 8 – ICT Vision.

Autonomous users of ICT are confident learners. ICT offers a variety of ways both to communicate ideas to learners and supports their different learning styles. Through the use of digital ‘toolkits’, including digital audio and video recorders and portable digital devices, students will be offered a variety of ways to present their ideas. ICT technologies will allow students to explore new ideas and experiment with new ways of independent and collaborative working.

ICT will inextricably link aspects of the curriculum by embedding the use of a variety of learning tools. We develop our approach to ICT as costs allow, for example, an important resource will be an on-line curriculum. This facility will store and present learning modules to support the core curriculum. Teaching modules will exploit similar technologies to those children’s experience when playing computer games. This approach will deliver dynamic learning and enhance attainment by enabling the learners to work independently, in groups or as classes through the proposed vertical and horizontal groupings.

The use of visual and audio ICT equipment will support and encourage innovation and creativity. Students will be encouraged to demonstrate their learning through the creation of teaching resources for others to use. The use of moving images and Green Screening will allow students to superimpose themselves on a variety of locations to open doors onto other places, environments and cultures throughout the world. ICT will also be used to support enterprise projects – a key focus of the curriculum.

ICT will play a key role in supporting collaboration and our partnerships with Fred Longworth High School and Winstanley College. The ICT network will

support a number of tools to support collaborative learning both within the school/Educational Partnership and throughout the world. These will include school hosted (and therefore safe), blogs, forums, chat rooms, audio and video conferencing. In addition, we will establish a number of 'Windows on the World' locations in social areas around the school. These will be direct video and audio links to partner schools and organisations around the world (who are on similar time zones). Classes will be able to include discussions with these students as part of everyday life. We believe that this will help expand the students' learning network and help to raise aspirations. All members of the school will use email – in a safe and secure environment. Students will receive and submit work via email or through virtual tools enabling immediate feedback. The wider community will also use secure email to provide coaching, expert sources of information and appraisal of student progress.

## **8. ACS will provide a developmental environment**

The final key factor that will characterise ACS is that we will create an environment of low stress with high challenge. As with the rest of the planning of our school, we are constantly mindful of fundamental principles of educational and developmental psychology. All aspects of the infrastructure will contribute to building a low-stress environment, from a well-structured positive behaviour programme to personal coaching with a key staff member to peer mentoring with an older pupil.

While our vision is big, we are ready to meet the challenge. Our targets for academic success in particular are ambitious, but based on the performance of outstanding schools in the local area. We have set ambitious targets for other outcomes such as attendance and behaviour which are key ingredients for achievement. With the support of our education partners, trustees and governors, ACS will use both interim and final outcomes to measure our success.

## Section 4: Educational plan

The educational plan should describe the structure of your school and the experience that pupils will have whilst attending it. You should set out what pupils will achieve, how they will achieve it and how the school will evaluate performance, both of individual pupils and the school as a whole.

### Information required

#### Admissions Criteria

##### Compliance with the Code of Practice for Admissions

Chapel St is aware of the need to comply with the Admissions Code to ensure the admissions arrangements are clear, lacking complexity and fair. ACS will work within the locally coordinated admissions process and will ensure that it contributes to local admissions arrangements. ACS will particularly encourage admissions from the most deprived areas in Atherton. We will make sure that all communication is targeted and accessible to all our community, including the hard to reach.

The school will not seek to select its pupils by ability; interview applicants; or seek payment from parents and carers for admission. Furthermore, while ACS is a Christian school, we will not seek to admit on the basis of faith and will operate an inclusive admissions policy (open to all faiths and to none).

#### Year 7 Admissions

ACS will work with locally coordinated processes and procedures for admissions arrangements on an annual basis.

Working with the locally coordinated processes, ACS will work alongside the LA ensuring that parents and carers can benefit from a prospectus and suitable marketing materials. ACS will of course ensure that website information is available to all prospective parents and carers.

ACS will admit **90** pupils to Year 7 in 2012/13 and thereafter admit **90** pupils on an annual basis.

## **Sixth Form Enrolment**

Sixth Form entry requirements will be based upon a GCSE points scoring system equivalent to 2A's and 6B's. Enrolment for Sixth Form is unlike admissions for secondary and there are no coordinated LA arrangements, or common admissions criteria.

Working with Winstanley College, its partner and provider for Sixth Form provision, we will ensure that parents and carers can benefit from a prospectus and suitable marketing materials. ACS will, of course, ensure that website information is available to all prospective parents and carers. We expect that many students will be enrolled from the Year 11 of ACS, but also expect that sufficient places are available for students from the Fred Longworth High School as well as other local schools.

ACS will admit **75** students to Year 12 in 2012/13, a further **75** students in 2013/14 and thereafter admit 100 students on an annual basis.

## **Sixth Form Appeals**

ACS will work within the guidelines of the Admissions Appeal code. In the event of an appeal on the basis of learning disability or difficulty, we will consider the length of time and level of provision since diagnosis to take into account children whose diagnosis of a learning disability or difficulty has either been received too late for the school to put support in place or where the school has been unable to provide the support identified as needed in the Educational Psychologist's report. In these cases, the appeal for special consideration would be successful. However, sometimes there are appeals from students who have received appropriate support in school in the form of additional time in exams, one-to-one support in class, or additional tuition. We usually conclude that with this support the student is in a position to achieve, in line with their peers, and to give them special consideration would be unfair.

## **General admissions arrangements**

ACS will ensure that it provides places for children of all abilities, all of whom will come from the local area. We intend to attract local pupils and students from the immediate area surrounding the school and all our publicity and promotional material is designed to appeal to parents and carers in the surrounding neighbourhoods of the school. We are determined that no-one will be marginalised because of challenging or difficult circumstances and will put support in place where this is needed to access information and communication with ACS.

The prescriptive timescales for admissions arrangements requires us to have our prospectus in place by end August 2011 with other communication media in place very



shortly after that to help parents and carers with information.

If in the case that implementation approval is delayed (for the 2012 admissions cycle) and thereby leaving us unable to work within the timescales set out by the local authority, ACS will continue to promote as depicted but make special emphasis upon contacting all of those parents and carers who have expressed a preference. Parents and carers will be informed of what options are available to them by the LA and in the event that ACS is not offered as a suitable alternative to other schools, we will ensure that sufficient marketing and promotion activity and events are held and we will ensure that parents and carers are given the opportunity to contact the Local Authority and express their preference for a place at ACS.

### Process of Application

Arrangements for applications for places at ACS will be made in accordance with the LA's coordinated admission arrangements and will be made on the Common Application Form provided and administered by the relevant LA.

The ACS will use the Wigan Borough Council's timetable for applications to the school each year (exact dates within the months may vary from year to year). This will fit in with the timetable for the coordination of admission arrangements within the LA as agreed by locally coordinated processes, LA and local schools.

- a) By September - ACS will publish in the prospectus information about the arrangements for admission, including oversubscription criteria, for the following September (e.g. in September 2011 for admission in September 2012). This will include details of open evenings and other opportunities for prospective pupils and their parents and carers to visit the school. The school will also provide information in relation to the school to the LA for inclusion in the composite prospectus, as required
- b) In September and October - ACS will provide opportunities for parents and carers to visit the school (2012 onwards)
- c) October – Common Application Form to be completed and returned to the pupil's home LA to administer. Applications are received by 31<sup>st</sup> October for secondary and Sixth Form
- d) LA sends ACS applications to the trust if there is oversubscription
- e) ACS sends a list of pupils to be offered places at the school to the LA; applications are prioritised in accordance with published over subscription criteria
- f) February – the LA applies the agreed scheme for their own schools,

informing other LAs of offers to be made to their residents

- g) 1<sup>st</sup> March offers made to parents and carers
- h) ACS will ensure its application processes enable parents and carers to apply before these deadlines.

### **Admissions criteria**

ACS wishes to work in harmony with the locally coordinated procedures throughout the process and will seek to match the admissions and oversubscription criteria applied by the LA.

Where the number of applications for admission is greater than the published admission number, applications will be considered against the criteria set out below. After the admission of pupils with a **statement of Special Educational Needs** where ACS is named on the statement, the criteria will be applied in the order in which they are set out below:

1. Children In public care (those looked after by a Local Authority under section 22 of the Children Act 1989)
2. Children with exceptional medical, social or welfare needs which means the child must, because of those needs, attend the school. Appropriate evidence from a doctor, social worker etc must be provided
3. Children who have a brother or sister or half brother or sister already in the school (and who would be in the school when the child is admitted). If there are more children with siblings in the school than places available, places will be allocated to those children with siblings who live nearest to the school as measured by the LA using GIS. In the event of a tie-break (i.e. children living in the same block of flats) we will use random allocation
4. Children who live nearest to the school as measured by the LA using GIS. In the event that of a tie-break (i.e. children living in the same block of flats) we will use random allocation.

There will be a right of appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel for applicants refused admission. ACS will participate in the LA's Fair Access policy.

### **Curriculum and organisation of learning**

#### **Expectations around length of school day, term and year**

ACS seeks to create a low-stress, high-challenge environment where our students learn in the most efficient ways to connect with their lives outside school. The day will start at 8.30am - lessons will begin sessions from 9.00am, though we are exploring the

benefits of having staggered starting times, especially for older children. However, decisions about timings and ensuing plans for organising the rest of the school day will be dependent on local needs and will therefore be defined during the pre-opening phase.

Academic learning and personal development time will be timetabled creatively to help weave together the concept of learning and development for children rather than these being discrete.

We will run a 190-day school year for students in three terms in line with the pattern of other Wigan Schools. Older students who might access a 16+ course at a local college will be expected to fit with the college timetable with regard to half terms etc. Staff will work a 195-day year including at least five training days in line with other Wigan Schools. Through our partnership with the Fred Longworth School and Winstanley we will explore the possibility of joint approaches to training and development particularly with regard to modelling outstanding teaching and learning.

## **Our Curriculum Model**

### **Key Stage 3**

Key Stage 3 students will learn in their own space with a small group of teachers planning integrated learning around themes. Implementing a home base model of organising pupils in Key Stage 3 will maximise learning time by keeping pupils in their 'home base classroom' while specialist teachers move to them for most subjects. Sharing teachers across the transition years will enable greater continuity of learning and relationships. Although the model outlines the amount of time devoted to each subject, the actual sessions will integrate skills as appropriate, ensuring proportional coverage in each area over the week. In order to enable application of key literacy and numeracy skills integrated with other areas of learning, double sessions of English and maths are planned four mornings a week. This strategy strengthens our focus on core skills, enables an additional hour of learning each week over the statutory requirement, as well as providing opportunities to see how learning relates to 'real life'.

Curriculum design will incorporate skills-based problem solving, across subjects, to effect increased attainment and build into an enterprise model of education. Alongside the core curriculum through the secondary phase of education, the further development of enterprise and financial literacy will continue to enable contextualised, hands-on learning across the curriculum. The timetable would prioritise core English and maths skills with extended 90-minute periods to maximise practical activities, the content of which will be related to the integrated learning with their home base class.

In Key Stage 3 pupils learn in their own space with a small group of teachers

planning integrated learning around themes. ACS will use a home base model of organising pupils through Key Stage 3 to maximise learning time by keeping pupils in their ‘home base classroom’ while specialist teachers move to them for most subjects. Although the model below outlines the amount of time devoted to each subject, the actual sessions in Key Stage 3 will integrate skills as appropriate, ensuring proportional coverage in each area over the week. Teaching and learning sessions will be based on 45-minute blocks of time. In order to enable application of key literacy and numeracy skills integrated with other areas of learning, double sessions of English and maths are planned four mornings a week. Lessons in the expressive arts will be taught in blocks one day a week while enterprise learning will be taught throughout the curriculum with discrete learning in this area once a week.

All schemes of work will identify each of these competences and the skills and knowledge related to them. The ELLI Project’s seven Dimensions of Learning Power will provide a framework for teaching, learning and assessment of the above competences and skills. In order to support effective integration of these skills and knowledge into lesson planning across the disciplines, we will group learning into four Learning Streams set out below. The table also indicates the number of lessons along with the percentage of indicative curriculum time allocated per week for Key Stage 3.

<b>Communication and Expression</b>	<b>Exploration and Problem Solving</b>	<b>Innovation and Creativity</b>	<b>Personal development</b>
<b>English</b> 8 lessons (23%)	<b>Maths</b> 8 lessons (23%)	<b>ICT</b> 1 lesson (3%)	<b>PSE and Coaching</b>

			1 lesson (3%)
<b>MFL</b> 1 lesson (3%)	<b>Science and health</b> 4 lessons (11%) plus integrated learning with maths application sessions	<b>Design and Food Technology</b> 1 lesson (3%)	
<b>Drama</b> 1 lesson (3%)	<b>Geography</b> 1 lesson (3%)	<b>Creative Arts (Art, Drama and Music)</b> 1 lesson (3%)	
<b>History and Current Events</b> 1 lesson (3%)	<b>RE and Ethics</b> 1 lesson (3%)	<b>PE (including Dance and Games)</b> 1 lesson (3%)	
Enterprise learning and Citizenship			

A possible model for the school day is set out below:

<b>Time</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Comment</b>
8:30- 9:00	Statutory Registration and Transition time	e.g. Bright Ideas time ( thinking activities), DEAR (Drop Everything And Read) 20 mins per day, MFL activity/games for reinforcement
9:00- 9:45	Period 1: English	Teaching and learning of discrete skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening
9:45- 10:30	Period 2: Literacy skills application	Content taken from other subject areas e.g. persuasive text on the ethics of genetically modified products
10:30- 10:45	Break	
10:45- 11:30	Period 3: Maths	Teaching and learning of discrete skills including algebra and calculation, shape, space and measure and data handling

11:30- 12:15	Period 4: Numeracy skills application	Content taken from other areas e.g. creating a budget for menus from food technology
12:15- 13:00	Family Style Lunch and Play/Social time	
13:00-	Home base with MFL,	

13:30	Enterprise Learning and Coaching	
13:30-14:15	Period 5: RE and Ethics/ICT	
14:15-15:00	Period 6: Science	Provide opportunity for double periods
15:00-15:15	Break	
15:15-16:00	Period 7: History/Geography	
16:00-17:00	Sports/Extracurricular / Enrichment Option	Students will be required to opt into one sport a term e.g. Rugby or Football

### **GCSE Prep in Key Stage 4: Years 10-11**

ACS will operate a modified one-week timetable for pupils preparing for GCSEs. Our school refers to learning in Key Stage 4 as GCSE Prep[aration] to maintain our focus on achieving qualifications to add to pupils' CV portfolio as part of a larger educational path. There will be 25 hours teaching time distributed across each of the different National Curriculum subjects. Each day lessons will be taught in combinations of 45-minute and 90-minute slots, with practical subjects generally preferring the double period of 90 minutes.

Achieving an E Bac will be a goal for students at Key Stage 4. English will be a course that leads to two GCSE outcomes, one in English Language and one in English Literature. With a focus on sustaining achievement in maths through Key Stage 4, the school will offer exemplary teaching in this subject extending the most able introducing them to the advanced statistics of [REDACTED] and others who innovate in bringing to life global trends of health, economics and education. The Science course will cover the three main Sciences: Biology, Chemistry and Physics, as well as Earth Science. It is a double award GCSE course, taught by two teachers. This means that pupils spend double the time on Science as they do on most other subjects. As in Key Stage 3, partnership with Fred Longworth High School will enable breadth of the curriculum offer while ensuring quality of teaching and learning and value for money.

Pupils will be able to choose to do all of the humanities subjects, or any combination of them (History, Geography and Religious studies) at GCSE level. Additionally, there will be other courses pupils can choose to study, including GCSE Business Studies and GCSEs in Modern Foreign Languages and the Arts. ACS has the tremendous advantage of partnering with Wigan and Leigh College and Winstanley which will enable us to identify appropriate pathways for

students through to vocational training as well as higher education.

Teaching and learning in Key Stage 4 will be as integrated as possible in planning integration where appropriate. However, to enable students to shape and pursue their own educational pathways, subjects will be taught in discrete sessions at Key Stage 4. The basic time allocation is as follows but will be flexible enough to allow attendance of courses in the Wigan and Leigh College timetable where possible.

<b>Course</b>	<b>Lessons per week</b>	<b>Indicative Percentage of curriculum time</b>
<b>KS4</b>		
English	5	14%
Maths	5	14%
Science (and Earth Science)	5	14%
Modern Foreign Language	2	6%
History	2	6%
Geography	2	6%
ICT or vocational	2	6%
Option subject (practical e.g. DT)	4	12%
Option subject 2	2	6%
Option subject 3	2	6%
Personal development (Emotional, Spiritual, Social)	1	3%
Or to offer vocational qualification to meet students' needs		

Should a staggered timing of the day be introduced, Key Stage 4 could work on a possible model as follows:

<b>Time</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Comment</b>
9.30	Statutory registration	
9:45-10:30	Block 1	
10:30-10:45	Break	
10:45-11:30	Block 2	Could potentially be double block
11:30-12:15	Block 3	
12:15-13:00	Family Style Lunch and Play/Social time	
13:00-13:30	Home base with MFL,	



	Enterprise learning and Coaching	
13:30-14:15	Block 4	Could potentially be double block
14:15-15:00	Block 5	
15:00-15:15	Break	
15:15-16:00	Block 6	Could potentially be double block
16:00-16:45	Block 7	

### **Sixth Form**

A range of courses will be developed with Winstanley College as our commissioned provider. The main option under consideration is that the subjects on offer are grouped and marketed around entry into specific professions including medicine, the law, teaching, business and finance. Each A-level class will have approximately four and a half hours of lessons per subject per week. Year 12 students will study four AS subjects; Year 13 students will study three or four A2 subjects.

A-level courses will be offered in a range of subjects which will include English, mathematics, Further mathematics, History, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, and either Spanish or French, all of which are regarded as ‘facilitating subjects’ by the Russell Group of universities. This core of subjects may be extended as student numbers grow, so as to meet the needs and interests of students. The Russell Group argue that studying at least two of these subjects allows access to the broadest range of degree subjects.

In addition, courses such as General Studies, Critical Thinking and the Extended Project Qualification will be used to broaden students’ experience and to help them build the skills they need to progress to Higher Education or enter employment.

The Sixth Form students will have the opportunity to participate in sports and the performing arts and other enrichment activities. For example: debating, Duke of Edinburgh Awards (probably alongside pupils of the secondary school). Large scale activities, such as educational trips, can be run jointly with Winstanley College which increases opportunity and reduces costs.

The final element would be a programme of work experience, coaching or volunteering ideally undertaken within ACS or in the Atherton community. This could give students a significant advantage in applying to university or for apprenticeships or employment. Conceivably the A-levels could be studied over four days a week with the enrichment and work experience being addressed on the fifth day. This may produce greater efficiencies in the deployment of staff

and the use of students’ time.

## **Enrichment**

Enrichment and extracurricular opportunities will be a range of activities during lunch times, after school and in the holidays that will reinforce a love for sport, learning and give time to engage the learners while pursuing common talents and interests. The activities offer will evolve as the school grows and could include Fantasy Football Club, Maths Challenge, Running Club with sports teams, Team and Trust building events (e.g. building a raft in a set period of time), Enterprise Club, Debate Club, Cooking Club, Aspiring Artists, Dance Studio, Young Citizens. Leigh Centurion Rugby Football League Club (professional rugby league club currently top of the National Championship) and Leigh Miners Ranger Amateur Rugby Football League Club (one of the UK's largest amateur clubs working with 800 young people in the area) will be partnering with us to deliver sports and PE. Enterprising students will be encouraged to initiate new clubs supported by a staff sponsor. We will develop a programme of activities staffed by volunteers who may be paid teaching staff. Some activities will be run by Sixth Form students as part of their work placements where appropriate.

Additional learning enrichment opportunities will include Saturday or holiday Advanced Skills Centres (modelled on the Excellence in Cities model) for Able, Gifted and Talented children and Reading Club and Games Groups for children needing to develop reading and number skills but in fun, less formal settings. All activities will be run in full accordance with our Inclusion and Safeguarding Policies.

## **Learning and Activities in the holidays**

It is our intention to fully maximise the opportunities to deliver learning, enrichment and extracurricular provision during holiday periods including core skills clubs (e.g. reading and calculating). We will also create opportunities for family learning out of term time such as hosting Games Days when students bring a parent or carer to teach and learn new skills or games to play at home which support learning.

## **A broad and balanced Curriculum Strategy**

In line with our vision ACS seeks to increase children's chances to be globally competitive from the moment they walk in the door, learning how to learn, unlearn and relearn. The curriculum will be focused on broadening and deepening learning through real-life problem solving, discovering the depth and complexity of foundational knowledge and skills. For example, children will not only learn about key points in local and national history, but examine industrialisation, the Great War, union strikes etc from multiple perspectives, looking at relationships over time, identifying and researching their own unanswered questions. Our school will emphasise social and emotional

learning to build intrinsic motivation as well as strong Assessment for Learning principles to optimise personalised learning.

Learning will be organised horizontally (along developmental groups) while some aspects of pastoral learning/support will be organised vertically (through houses). In the core subjects of English and maths, children will be grouped by their levels of attainment such as a high level 4/low level 5 class to enable refined differentiation and strategic planning. Having a small school will enable us to have flexibility to set and maintain these classes across year groups with an overlap of no greater than two years. However, this strong focus on literacy and numeracy skills will be carried throughout the spectrum of subjects through curriculum integration along parallel progressions of skills. We are exploring creative organisation of models such as competency-based learning including home base classes in Key Stage 3 with departmental specialist teams.

We see the personalisation of learning as a relationship between content and process, rather like two strands of DNA. For this to be achieved, a significant amount of re-conceptualisation is required. The shift from curriculum as content to curriculum as process (including skills and competences) is a substantial one. What follows from competency-based frameworks and other successful models for integrating learning along competences is an attempt to provide an outline for a curriculum model enabling personalisation. Through the combination of coaching with teaching and learning, children will progress through ACS learning and refining skills, competences and behaviours that are necessary to consolidate learning. With this repertoire, students can better develop their full potential as autonomous, self-directed learners who create and optimise opportunities to contribute to the larger community as they grow.

By extending Personal Learning and Thinking Skills, the components below will be present in learning situations from Year 7 through to Sixth Form provision:

Analysis and Synthesis	Critical Thinking	Negotiating Problem
Applying Learning	Demonstrate	Solving Review and
Causality	Understanding	Reflection Self-
Choosing and Prioritising	Design and planning	management
Creativity and Innovation	Memory	

ACS will use a thematic approach to learning which is grounded in a skills and knowledge-based curriculum to maximise learning time as well as build context for children to deepen their understanding of how their learning interacts with the wider world. For example, we are exploring successful models of thematic learning in secondary education (e.g. Petchey Academy curriculum) to inform our strategy for each phase. Our bespoke curriculum will be built around the four areas of learning of Communication and Expression, Exploration and Problem Solving, Innovation and Creativity, and Personal Development to provide organisation and structure for mapping the skills, knowledge and competences. However, lessons will be timetabled to ensure curriculum coverage according to the national guidance.

Through these areas, staff will have common themes to build holistic understanding of how each competency is applied with each curricular skill. This type of planning enables inclusion and strategic personalisation of all pupils, both with strengths and areas to develop in these competences. For example, a higher attaining pupil may excel at calculation but struggle with shape, space and measure whereas a lower attaining pupil excels in that area but has gaps in learning calculation methods.

The topics and content will be based around which skills will meet the needs and interests of the learners and the local community. We will begin to identify these needs and interests in consultation with our ACS Forums, continuing through the school cycle with audits of needs and interests through unit planning reviews, learning councils and advisory groups and questionnaires. Learning, including progression of skills for each area, will be grounded in the National Curriculum but enhanced and amended by global research of key skills for autonomous learning and employment in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Students will build a portfolio of academic and personal history and achievements into a Curriculum Vitae as they progress through school. In addition to qualifications like GCSEs, E Bac and A-levels, pupils will achieve certificates in enterprise learning developed with, and accredited by, the business community and/or the Institute of Leadership and Management. Standards of progress will stretch pupils to open up as many choices for the future including meeting the stretching entry requirements for Winstanley.

## **Curriculum content**

ACS will prioritise a larger than average proportion of lessons each week to English and maths, securing students' core skills to enable them to access the rest of the curriculum. However, the 'double lessons' will be split into two parts: the first part of the block is focused on discrete literacy and numeracy skills with the second half focused on applying these discrete skills in the context of the other subjects. For example, the first half of a maths block might be focused on data analysis and continue into the second half in which students draw conclusions that are consistent with the evidence they have collected and explain them using scientific knowledge and understanding.

## **English**

The English curriculum at ACS will begin with the consolidation of synthetic phonics and basic textual analysis as a first line of intervention for children starting Key Stage 3 well below the national average. Reading for pleasure to and with children will embed these mechanical skills in context with increasingly advanced skills of inference, textual analysis etc as they progress through each phase of learning. Teaching and learning of outstanding English writing skills will be grounded in reading, analysing and employing techniques of classic and popular texts and expert writers which will be the starting point for all learning of writing skills, while developing a love for reading.

We are exploring the benefits of teaching the writing process using the Writer's Workshop model and we are also exploring a range of programmes and strategies for teaching all levels of reading including [REDACTED] from which we will select the best aspects.

In addition to learning discrete reading, writing, speaking and listening skills, students will have a skills application lesson every day. These sessions will be part of the integrated curriculum and build context for learning along with demonstrating explicitly how these skills are used in enterprising activities. For example, students will write product descriptions applying their learning in non-chronological reports.

## **Mathematics**

In the same way, students will learn all aspects of maths in addition to daily sessions on applying learning in each strand through the integrated curriculum.

In lessons, they might apply shape, space and measure skills on designing

sections of our allotment or design graphs to scale to record findings from science investigations. ACS will deploy the resources to ensure that children will make at least two levels of progress from Key Stage 2 to 4 to provide opportunity to access learning to the highest levels at A-level. The Head of maths will be responsible for the leadership, including monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment through each phase. We will use the Secondary framework for maths as the foundation of the curriculum but we are also exploring innovative, practical learning systems such as Maths Made Easy to adopt certain aspects of best practice in teaching and learning maths.

While we seek high standards and attainment in this area, we are also very aware of the need to ensure lessons are focused on broadening and deepening understanding using applied learning and problem solving from resources such as NRich before accelerating to higher levels of the curriculum. We are learning from exemplary practice in Westminster and the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea where teachers' use of these types of learning activities has delivered a successful strategy for engaging learners in critical thinking, mathematical agility and problem solving. We will aim to use fun, contextualised and challenging activities to enable teachers to stretch higher ability learners while allowing for less able learners to access higher order mathematical thinking with the arithmetic skills they already have.

### **Enterprise Learning**

Chapel St believes learning is a life-long skill, which always relates to 'real life' and meaningful education is the key to building a better future for individuals and communities. Enterprise learning/financial literacy is a crucial area which is rarely developed for children and young people in their formal education, but which has the most immediate impact on their lives beyond school. Children, themselves, are often aware of this fact, frequently engaging more in activities when money is involved because they see its role in everyday life. Our vision is to bring together the concept of economic wellbeing with financial literacy and capability, enterprise learning and global awareness and ethical responses to that.

While aspects of the core curriculum are crucially important for cognitive and personal development, children's learning accelerates when there is context for the skills being learnt. Specifically, when a learner sees how s/he will use knowledge and skills outside of formal education, they have the intrinsic motivation to focus their efforts. For this reason, Chapel St will incorporate enterprise learning/financial literacy in the core curriculum to integrate and

contextualise learning across the disciplines.

Enterprise learning is not about training children to make money. It is about learning skills. [REDACTED], former [REDACTED] responsible for business and enterprise education for Ofsted, clarifies that “while a relatively small proportion of young people will become entrepreneurs, all young people need to be enterprising.”<sup>6</sup> Students will have the opportunity to be organised into enterprise teams that will meet on a regular basis led by one or two pupils in Year 10 and 11 learning a range of overall project management skills and advanced business development strategies. Our aim will be to prepare many of our students for setting up their own businesses and becoming proactive, productive and ethical employers.

We believe that the skills developed through our competency, enterprise and skills-based approach to subject learning will develop the following advantages for students.

**Cognitive advantage:** cross-curricular, develop problem-solving skills, develop modelling, predicting and other synthetic and evaluative thinking skills, develop higher order mathematical thinking, unify historical learning with maths, and give purpose to developing increasingly sophisticated literacy skills

**Personal advantage:** develop independent thinking and decision making, positive outlook with resourcefulness and resilience, collaborative team skills, build sense of personal achievement and embedding key skills including the range of project management and collaboration with others

**Economic advantage:** develop transitional skills for the market place regardless of sector, develop money management skills and understanding, create a more financially independent community.

Enterprise learning will include learning project management, financial literacy, business skills and entrepreneurship.

## Home Learning

Our use of the term ‘home learning’ is a very intentional departure from homework, which is often given because it is expected rather than for a specific intention. We are aware of children’s need to consolidate learning in meaningful

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<sup>6</sup> [REDACTED]

ways outside school while still enjoying a full childhood. Home learning activities will focus on consolidation and practice of key skills and providing time to enjoy reading and connect learning beyond the classroom. For this reason, developing relationships with parents and carers is a key factor in the impact of learning at home. Building partnerships with families, we will assign aspects of project-based learning at home along themes identified in pupils' learning councils and the Parents and Carers Forum on learning. To ensure all children are supported, we will offer support for those families who are unable to support certain aspects of their children's home learning through workshops and home learning clubs as needed.

### **Approach to Personalisation on the Spectrum of Needs**

While effective differentiation for all children will be the bedrock of teaching and learning in all classes, ACS will meet the needs of each child, from those who learn at accelerated rates beyond their age-related expectations, to those with special affinity for certain areas of learning, to those who need additional support to achieve.

### **Gifted and Talented**

Chapel St and the Steering Group are focused on raising aspirations of learners through helping each child discover and develop their gifts and talents to experience success and a sense of achievement. Working with a Gifted and Talented specialist on the Chapel St team, ACS will employ refined differentiation strategies and methodologies to plan and raise the bar for all students' learning. This refined differentiation will prioritise broadening and deepening learning for the most able to prevent creating gaps in understanding before acceleration through strategies including curriculum compacting where appropriate.

Teachers will apply the theory that a 'rising tide lifts all ships' by planning activities with very high expectations for the most able children while providing 'scaffolding' for less able learners to access the same material. Using this approach, teachers will employ a sports model for identifying each child's gifts and talents; students will be given a variety of opportunities and challenges appropriately pitched to their skill level. For example, teachers may observe that children less able in calculation excel in shape, space and measure when given a challenging activity in that area. This approach provides as many opportunities for building confidence and success as possible for all children. We also recognise that children who demonstrate an affinity for certain topics and subjects have great potential for excelling in these areas and we will



endeavour to support them to do so.

A register of the top 5-10% of each cohort (identified through a combination of statistical and behavioural indicators) will be used to identify higher ability children for monitoring to ensure they are being challenged and are learning at an accelerated rate to prevent stagnation when attaining higher levels. Students identified on the AG&T register will have excellent attendance and behaviour; this includes developing social skills in some gifted children who have difficulty working with peers. We seek to ensure that these pupils have a positive attitude to their learning and are involved in all aspects of school life (attendance records, achievement, representation at enrichment activities and participation in the school council). These pupils who speak English as an additional language will value their first and/or other languages as an economic asset for the future. The Inclusion Manager will provide leadership in identification, monitoring and resources in helping to ensure we are meeting the needs for these children in each area.

### **Special Educational Needs (SEN)**

Our partnership with Fred Longworth High School will significantly help us to excel in this area. Under the leadership of the Inclusion Manager, ACS aims to provide outstanding proactive support for children who have special educational needs to help these children achieve their full potential. Based on the recent data from several schools in the local area, we project about 11% of our students will have statement of special need or be on School Action Plus and about 8% on School Action. We expect that a significant proportion of these children will be identified with needs related to their behavioural, emotional or social development.

The Inclusion Manager will ensure that teachers are trained and consistently use sophisticated differentiation for whole class learning as the first line of provision. A basic standard for lesson judgments and performance management will be how well teachers implement identified actions in Individual Education Plans (IEPs) to differentiate learning. S/he will also be responsible for resourcing provision so each student's needs are being met using the most cost and time-efficient strategies including individual and small group support and Wave 3 interventions with Learning Support Assistants in each of the core subjects. Students with a statement will be allocated one-to-one learning support where appropriate. Using the school MIS, the Inclusion Manager will manage data on each child's provision with specific pastoral groups set up for intervention mapping and monitoring academic progress to ensure support allocated is of the highest quality and adding value to their education.

Our school will use a graduated response that encompasses an array of strategies. This approach recognises that there is a continuum of special educational needs and, where necessary, brings increasing specialist expertise to bear on the difficulties that a child may be experiencing. Children who have Special Educational Needs or Disabilities will have a range of provision from in-class differentiation to additional support where needed. IEPs will be used to identify personalised strategies to support the needs of all children on our register and consistently reviewed with parents and carers. In order to ensure our provision will be the most effective, we are currently consulting on national developments in SEN practice and we will take into account the key principles and guidance in the recent SEN Green Paper.

The Inclusion Manager will use the register to update and monitor provision and work with the Vice Principal to monitor the progress of children on the SEN register. We will ensure assessment and monitoring procedures aligned with P scales and target setting according to national conversion rates. This work will include ensuring the updated register is on the management information system to enable effective monitoring on SEN children at each status. The Continuing Professional Development programme will have significant focus on developing staff strategies for meeting the needs of children with Dyslexia and those with emotional and behavioural disorders as well as target setting from P scales based on the current Progression Guidance set out by the DfE.

Our inclusion policies will remove barriers to learning and we will use our experience of special needs teaching to deliver effective differentiated programmes for all regardless of language, culture, gender, physical, intellectual or emotional state or socioeconomic status. Pupils will be assessed for individual needs on entry and IEPs will be developed with parents' and carers' input where possible. Our Inclusion Manager will lead provision for all students on the spectrum of needs and will monitor the IEPs and ensure our delivery follows the SEN Code of Practice. Most pupils' special needs will be met by personalised differentiation in the classroom with short-term withdrawal for other focused support where needed. We will work with an appropriate range of expert agencies for those pupils requiring school action plus or for those with statements of special need.

### **Organisation of pupils**

Students in Key Stage 3 will be organised horizontally in registration groups in a modified home base model of self-contained classrooms to promote integrated learning. Classes will have 25 –30 children who are organised by year group in home bases and by age range and ability in the core subjects. With a staggered timetable, children will have lunch in a **family style** model that includes peers from other age groups in their Houses (see below). Sitting

around the lunch table, children from across the year groups and teachers from the school will be passing large plates of healthy food around, sharing their days. Each family group will stay together for the year, enabling the continuity of this model to be an important strategy for unifying the school beyond sharing the same premises, into a true community.

ACS seeks to create an environment that supports all children proactively, instead of responding too late to those with acute learning, social or emotional issues. We believe that the use of coaching will raise achievement and energise learning. In the inclusive environment in which we will be working will be children with a broad spectrum of needs. We will deliver strategies for each aspect of development, with strategic integration of working between teachers and mentors to ensure seamless provision. [REDACTED], [REDACTED] at the [REDACTED] is supporting our planning of the personal coaching programme. He was also [REDACTED] for the [REDACTED]. He has recently developed [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] for the [REDACTED]. With [REDACTED]'s expertise specifically in the area of [REDACTED], we will be planning a structured approach to using this facilitative model to support cognitive-academic and personal-social-emotional development of each student.

Personalised coaching moves beyond an older more experienced person sharing wisdom (particularly where there has been a pattern of multigenerational unemployment). Our approach is research based and rigorously tied closely with strategic intent. This type of coaching is based on a No-Excuses model which supports children to process and engage with any areas that are limiting learning and aspiration such as motivation, self-limiting beliefs, self esteem and a variety of pastoral issues responding to external factors. It also seeks to remedy specific learning deficit. Rather than the traditional form time, personal coaching time will be 1:1 developing strategies to deal with life and the challenges of learning, whether inside or outside the classroom. Each child will develop skills to succeed. Much of this draws upon the University of Bristol's Effective Lifelong Learning Inventory (ELLI). The aim is always to develop and support resilient lifelong learners.

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[REDACTED]

All ACS students will benefit from a personal coach providing consistent support and training throughout their school career. Coaching is a pedagogical tool recognising the central importance of well-being to effective learning:

- All members of staff will be trained and supported as coaches to students
- Coaches will support pupils and families in the design and implementation of personal development plans
- Coaches will support their pupils in the transition to secondary school by meeting the student in their primary setting with their key-worker in Year 6 and also undertaking a number of home visits in Year 6 and 7
- Coaches will meet with students for weekly one-to-one coaching sessions in Year 7, with regular meetings continuing in the following years.

Another level of support will be an innovative Orientation programme to help Year 6 pupils integrate into the ACS community before starting Year 7. We anticipate that a number of these children will have already become familiar with ACS through participation in a variety of activities including holiday programmes, but we also want to give children a head start in becoming full members of our school community. Orientation activities will include introducing basic procedures including sampling a school day, expectations for learning, uniform, how family style lunch works, our behaviour for learning system and meeting their personal coaches. This programme will be developed and led by rising Year 10s and 11s who will be the Orientation Steering Group but other children in Key Stage 3 would also be able to compete for places on the Orientation Teams. The Orientation Chair will be an outstanding Sixth Form student.

We will use vertical organisation of pupils to promote continuity, team spirit and community in our school. Organising children vertically across the age groups will occur in a variety of ways, from lunch times held in family style with the same group throughout the year through to extracurricular activities and clubs. The two main vertical structures will be the house system and the School Parliament.

The student body will be organised into a house system to provide team spirit, a sense of competition and fun. Within this system, we will pilot a peer mentoring programme to support younger students in transition while providing leadership and coaching opportunities for their older peers. Each house will have a head boy and girl who will have guest speaking rights when appropriate in School Parliament. Each house will have enterprise learning teams which will be another organisational structure for children to learn and experience the various aspects of enterprise through product and business development, marketing

and project management throughout their education. For example, students in Year 7 may have roles in production while those in Year 9 may focus on budgeting or marketing. The older students' roles on the team are focused on strategic planning while those in GCSE prep will be project managers and directors. Teams will meet regularly each term to work on specific projects.

The School Parliament will be the prominent student voice in ACS, helping to teach ways to positively engage with our national democratic process on a smaller, more practical relevant scale. Parliament will mirror that of Westminster, comprised of Members of School Parliament (MSPs) who will be representatives from each home base class in the school with a Cabinet headed up by the Prime Minister and a Deputy Prime Minister, who will be preferably in Key Stage 4. Sixth Form students will be offered representation as Fathers of the House. Selected cabinet members will head up specialised Select Committees focusing on a specific aspect of school life, along with learning councils that could draw upon pupils beyond the MSPs.

The School Parliament will be involved in several key aspects of the school including key input to their learning, the appointment of staff, the review of school policies (such as the policy on uniforms) and also the events and fundraising which take place at the school. We will explore allocating a small budget annually to fund resources and projects promoting enterprise learning and our school version of Department for International Development supporting our sister school in the developing world. The Principal will assist in the liaison between School Parliament, Senior Leadership Team and the governing body. We believe this structure of pupil voice is a key strategy in helping develop students' vision and understanding of their future citizenship and the opportunities that brings.

### **Pupil development and achievement: Assessment and accountability**

The Chapel St team know from experience that quality, consistent assessment drives excellent teaching and learning. We are committed to ensuring that children and their parents and carers understand how they are progressing and how to further improve in their learning. For this reason, teachers will use daily formative assessment to moderate summative judgments each term. The marking policy and its implementation will involve students in reflecting on their learning with self and peer assessment as well as teacher assessment to identify next steps to move forward.

For this reason, children will have 'learning to learn' sessions with their coaches in order to develop a common language of assessment and progress. They will also be self-assessing their capacity for learning using the ELLI project's online

tool to measure the Dimensions of Learning Power. These assessments will provide a basis for enabling students to understand the key aspects to their learning and how to identify key dimensions for development. These skills will enable them to better engage with subject-specific material presenting the most challenge.

To ensure the best transition for new students, ACS is committed to learning about children's strengths and areas for development to personalise their learning most effectively. In addition to liaising with their primary schools and analysing their Key Stage 2 results, we are investigating standardised assessments on cognitive abilities for diagnostic purposes, such as Cognitive Achievement Tests or MidYIS.

Frequent levelling of learning in core subjects will ensure consistency, accuracy and build children's motivation. The Vice Principal will have an instrumental role ensuring that assessments are accurate and consistent with the national standard using the assessment tools like Assessing Pupils' Progress grids. For this reason, summative judgments will be a balance of tests moderated with evidence of ongoing assessments in students' books.

### **Tracking pupils' achievement and target setting**

Working with our partners, Fred Longworth High School and Winstanley College, we will have up-to-date and intelligent local context information relating to target setting and data. Target setting will be reviewed each term in Pupil Progress meetings and strategic Pupil Progress Intervention teams where needed. Targets will be set in partnership with students, so they have ownership and understanding of next steps for each area of learning core skills. The Vice Principal will lead termly tracking that will reflect RAISEonline standards of analysis, including analysis against DfE significance factors using bespoke templates that use average point scores and automatically calculate progress. Department heads will be responsible for tracking and target setting in their subjects from Year 7 through to Sixth Form.

Tracking and monitoring attainment and progress for children on the SEN register will include appropriate target setting from P scales through to National Curriculum based on national conversion rates and guidance outlined in the SEN Progression Guidance to ensure children are appropriately challenged. Secured P scales will be used for core subjects where appropriate.

A key aspect of the Vice Principal's role will be to help staff understand and use assessment data to continually improve practice. In this role, this leader will meet with teachers and support staff to identify key areas for development to target teaching and learning each term based on attainment in each assessment area. More importantly, the person in this role will work alongside

colleagues to coach staff to plan their teaching and learning more effectively.

Regular monitoring of attainment and progress throughout the term will enable staff to evaluate the impact of interventions (tracking using group filters) and personalise learning through movement between development groups for core subjects. Monitoring progress will also involve parents and carers in assessment and monitoring of individual children. Ways of working in this area may include posting live data on our learning platform to enable them to see their child's progress. The final aspect of monitoring and attainment is about analysing the data for class and school trends to identify priorities for continual school improvement. Led by the Vice Principal, phase leaders will track horizontally across their appropriate age groups to identify cohort issues, while heads of departments will analyse and identify current issues arising in their subject/s to create intervention strategies, whether across the school as a whole (usually identified by demographic indicators) or group, class or individual levels.

### **Measuring our success**

Knowing our community well means specifically identifying the key final measures, which will be to sustain and accelerate attainment and progress in maths through Key Stage 4 as well as committing to highest achievement of Level 2 qualifications in both English and maths. Working with our partner schools, we will also provide facilities for pupils to achieve the E Bac. However, we will also measure contributory factors to achievement including attendance and punctuality as well as other pastoral indicators such as exclusion rates as intermediate outcomes. ACS will also measure students' capacity to learn working with the ELLI project. Using an online survey tool, students will self-assess seven dimensions of learning power at the beginning and end of each year in school. Measurement of the dimensions outlined below provides insight both for students and ACS staff to identify potential factors of underachievement and areas for development for their personal coaching sessions.

Changing and learning  
Meaning making  
Critical curiosity

Creativity  
Learning  
relationships

Resilience  
Strategic Awareness

Achievement Targets for 2016-17

% of pupils attaining 5+ A*-C (or equivalent) at the end of KS4 including English and maths GCSEs	70%
% of pupils making 2 levels progress from KS2 – KS4 in English	80%
% of pupils making 2 levels progress from KS2 – KS4 in maths	80%

Intermediate Outcome Targets for 2013-14

% of pupils demonstrating increased capacity for learning in at least 4 of the seven dimensions of the ELLI measures	98%
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% Attendance	94
% of parents and carers who attend Parents' Evenings	85
% Unauthorised absences	0.8
% Persistent absence	2.0
% Punctuality	97
% Fixed term exclusions	1%
Permanent exclusions	0%

Additionally, we will be measuring pupil engagement in planning or working with local community initiatives by the end of their studies at ACS as indicators of enterprising learning and behaviour. Following our own model for evaluating impact, we will measure our success with intermediate outcomes to

demonstrate that we are on track to larger visionary outcomes of increasing attainment beyond the current levels existing locally, especially at the secondary level.

For this reason, a key intermediate outcome will be for 75% or more of lessons to be judged good to outstanding with an aim for continuous improvement exemplified in main teaching and independent, paired and group learning activities. We know our standard for these lessons will be characterised by the consistency of provision of activities requiring higher order thinking skills as defined by Bloom's Taxonomy, regardless of the ability of each group. For this reason, we will develop induction for new teachers on understanding the Ofsted criteria for good and outstanding lessons as well as principles of all aspects of assessment. High expectations will be evident in day-to-day learning and documented in monitoring of books and planning rather than solely in summative assessments. Another key outcome will be accuracy of teacher assessments judged in moderation across partner schools around Atherton.

We will see a growing love of learning with the numbers of children registered in extracurricular games and activities such as Maths Challenge and Poetry Competitions.

In addition to applying the expertise and experience of the ACS team, we will also work with our educational partners who have a proven track record of success in the above areas. For example, our secondary partner, Fred Longworth High School, had 62% of its pupils achieve 5+ A\*-Cs in English and maths GCSEs last year, consistently increasing the rates over the past three

years by 19%. This partner also has worked hard to sustain excellent standards for attendance which is 94.7% this year with an unauthorised absence rate of 0.7%. Combining our own innovation with learning from, and sharing staff with, Fred Longworth and Winstanley will propel our journey toward excellence in teaching and learning. For this reason, ACS has outstanding support in creating systems and strategies to affect both academic and pastoral targets.

## **Behaviour and Attendance**

### **Positive Behaviour for Learning**

We believe that children seek approval and want to do the right thing, though they may make the wrong choices. ACS is committed to developing respectful and responsible members of the community to build a low-stress, high-challenge environment for learning. Students will be taught and praised for good behaviour that makes great learning possible. Our rules will be few, but overarching and will be consistent in all areas and groups across the school, including our staff and parents and carers who will role model these.

Using a school 'traffic light system', all children and staff will have clear guidance on the school's response to all levels of positive and negative behaviour. This consistency is crucial in ensuring children feel secure in their learning environment, all being treated fairly and having very clear expectations. Our proposed framework for rules and responses (see below – produced by one of our Education experts) will be posted in all areas of the school that will be adapted for the local community. Because these 'rules' will always sit within a fair and loving framework based on our ethos they will not be punitive but positive and encouraging of each student's right to learn and develop.

Examples of behaviours at each level	Interventions
<p><b>Behaviour which may endanger self or others, or threatening to do so</b>            Physical contact to an adult            Hurting another child            Fighting in class            Serious damage to school property            Swearing at an adult            Using racist language            Continuation of disruptive orange zone behaviour after intervention</p>	<p>Fixed term exclusion (over 5 days)            Level 2 Internal exclusion (up to 5 days) – local authority informed            Meeting with parents and Head Teacher / Deputy Head Teacher            Level 1 Internal exclusion: from class / playground / dining hall            Sent to Senior Member of staff / Deputy Head teacher/ Head teacher (<i>Incident recorded</i>)</p>
<p>Speaking / behaving in a rude or disrespectful way            Using inappropriate language (e.g. swearing)            Covering up the truth            Breaking a safety rule or misuse of /damaging school property            Ignoring instructions            Disturbing learning            Physical contact to another child (low level)            Continuation of disruptive yellow zone behaviour after intervention</p>	<p>Contact parents (<i>recorded in behaviour file</i>)            Time out with TA or in partner class (10-15 minutes) with thinking sheet if wasting teacher's time OR Miss minutes of playtime if wasting child's time (<i>recorded in behaviour file</i>)            Move seat OR sit apart from group</p>
<p>Behaving in an unfriendly way to another child            Disturbing / disrupting the learning of other children            Off task (fidgeting, fiddling, talking, etc)</p>	<p>Warning / Name on board            Strategies for managing low level behaviour in class</p>
<p><b>Well done for remembering to follow our rules!</b>            We show respect – we speak politely and follow instructions            We are gentle            We are kind and helpful.            We look after property            We are honest and take responsibility for our actions            We try our best with our learning and let others get on with theirs</p>	<p>Children may earn a bronze / silver / gold award            Verbal praise            Positive note home            Positive phone call home            Incentive / positive consequences as agreed by class</p>

In addition to promoting positive behaviour for learning through one-to-one coaching and providing a system for understanding rules, rewards and consequences, we are aware of the need to teach these behaviours explicitly. We will draw on resources including those from the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) material. Explicitly teaching and including SEAL objectives across learning in all subjects will focus behaviour on learning skills to work as effectively and enjoyably as possible both independently and collaboratively. For this reason, including both social and emotional aspects in our strategic investment in behaviour for learning enables a more strategic approach to enterprise learning where working with others is fundamental.

We are also aware of the complex needs for children who experience emotional and behavioural difficulties. Because we believe that every child is fundamentally good, though they often make bad choices, ACS will put in place specific strategies to ensure that making a bad choice is never a good excuse. In addition to intensive coaching support, the Head of Personal Development will provide specific support with personalised strategies for teachers agreed with students and their parents and carers, including behaviour covenants for students to be encouraged and praised for exhibiting targeted behaviour for learning. Partnerships with other agencies such as Educational Welfare, educational psychologists, Children's Adolescent and Mental Health Services, Physical Education specialists will be used to help identify the underlying causes and strategise how to identify the root causes and meet the needs of

these children. It is not our goal to keep these children in school; it is our goal to support and challenge them to develop their gifts and talents to excel in their learning.

ACS knows that to create a low-stress, high-challenge environment, is to ensure that all areas and times at school are creatively and strategically supported to make this a reality. For this reason, we will also use a traffic light system for playground areas and other non-academic times and areas. Optimising our partnership with our Sixth Form as well as the local community, we will be offering lunch time clubs and play opportunities during play times alongside informal play and socialising. ACS will also develop a peer mentoring programme on the playground to support social learning and dispute resolution. Peer mentors will be trained in dispute resolution strategies as well as how to initiate and lead games for younger children.

Teaching and learning to promote positive behaviour will include strategies such as:

- Starting the day with positive engagement with Bright Ideas time (short games requiring analysis and other higher order thinking), listening to music, Drop Everything And Read (DEAR) time, debate/discussion on current events
- Using games for engaging and consolidating learning as a main learning strategy
- Coaching model of teaching to help address the limiting factors that affect students' cognition and engagement.

### **Partnering with Families**

Chapel St believes that working with children most effectively means working with their families. We know that parents and carers are the first teachers, and we will employ our Family Partnership model to build strong partnerships with parents and carers to draw on, and further develop, their expertise in their children's development. Specifically in supporting children's personal, social development as demonstrated through their behaviour, partnerships with their parents and carers is crucial for making the most impact as rapidly as possible. For this reason, we will provide targeted support with families to create behaviour improvement plans which are developed with everyone's input and agreed actions to build accountability at home as well as at school.

## **Exclusion policy**

Our policy on exclusions will follow the DfE guidance in this area and we will be as strategic as possible in working with pupils at risk of exclusion. Learning from successful projects such as The Lighthouse Group, we will explore the most effective and strategic interventions including using internal exclusions through a TOTAL unit (Time Out to Access Learning) to ensure that children are continuing their studies. The Chapel St team have been involved in the creation and development of a number of education projects that have seen children in danger of exclusion remain within and return to formal education. One example is A2B in Sutton and Merton using Art and Music education in a PRU context. Another potential strategy we will explore is providing learning opportunities in another school's internal exclusion unit when 1-5 day fixed-term exclusion is the only option. Additionally, we will closely monitor behaviour incidents and exclusions to avoid disproportionate groups and to identify issues to address. For those children who are demonstrating a pattern of behaviour putting them at risk of further, even permanent, exclusion, our Lead Behaviour Professional (Head of Personal Development) will use the Common Assessment Framework to engage with other agencies where necessary.

In the infrequent cases if our school is forced to permanently exclude a pupil after all interventions have failed, we will follow the clearly defined procedures to appeal to the governing body as outlined in the DfE guidance.

## **Attendance**

Attendance is a key priority for ACS, which will be central to our pastoral strategy. In order to ensure our strategy harnesses best practice from our team's experience as well as the successes of others, we will draw on the expertise at Fred Longworth High School in our initial planning stages.

Proactive measures in addition to engaging students in lessons and enrichment activities will include:

- Immediate identification on non-attenders with notification home by 'phone or text
- Highlight attendance and punctuality records in assemblies
- Give class awards to home base classes/cohorts with highest attendance and punctuality with a positive incentive as agreed with the School Parliament
- Praise students who maintain high attendance each term, including in letters home
- Engage School Parliament committee to suggest strategies for those with

persistent absence and lateness

- Allocate meeting times for phase leaders and the Head of Personal Development to discuss strategies and individuals causing concern
- Place a member of SLT at the front entrance to greet students with a smile and positive interaction to start the day.

Reactive measures to students who may be persistently absent will include partnership work with the student's parents or carers to identify underlying causes of absence. Where appropriate, we will engage the support of educational welfare or other agencies who can help address concerns.

### **Multi-agency support**

We have been in conversation about multi-agency partnerships with the Local Authority who are exploring different models to ensure provision is strategically deployed to children and families most effectively. We will be integrating with the local provision as it is designed for local needs through the leadership of the Head of Personal Development.

Additionally, Chapel St works with ICE Creates, pioneers of the Healthy Schools programme. ACS will identify children's health needs, select activities and interventions and review achievements with ICE Creates' new data tracking of health data on children.

### **Community Engagement**

#### **Partnering with Atherton Local families**

We recognise the vital role that parents and carers play in a child's learning and development. To this end, many children face limitations that traditional models of schooling struggle to overcome. The challenge here is as much familial as it is educational. ACS will develop family-focused interventions and strategies, fostering a covenant between the school and families and appointing trained staff to engage parents and carers in their children's learning. By doing this we aim to raise the attainment and aspirations for the whole family.

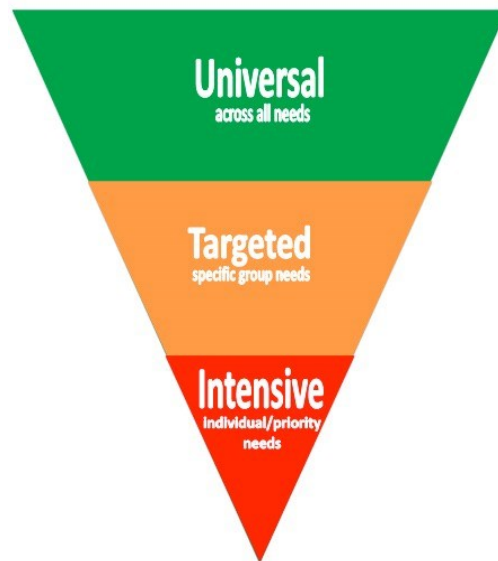
While providing excellent educational opportunities for every child, ACS will build learning communities that extend beyond the walls of the school. We understand our obligation and responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 and to that end we will make sure that every person is treated with respect, fairly and in line with the legal and moral obligations within this act which marry our own

ethos. We'll make extra training, development and life opportunities available to parents and carers as well, to support the essential role they play in their child's learning and development. Chapel St has researched strategies and principles

for building partnerships with families and developed our own model below which is currently being piloted at our Family Hub in [REDACTED]. The image below shows the overall strategy Chapel St designed for building partnerships with families by offering a range of activities and support depending on each family's needs.

Chapel St has designed a model for building partnerships with families which incorporates aspects of best practice both in parenting programmes, child protection and welfare, family justice and Local Authority family support interventions. The model is based on research into a range of family support models with a focus on supporting the development of all families through to supporting families in crisis with children in need and with involvement in the criminal justice system. These models include the Bodega Model outlined by Family Justice, Think Family in Lewisham, Triple P-Positive Parenting Program, Building Bridges and *The Parenting Puzzle* by the Family Links Nurturing Programme. Another source for this work was the Department of Health document *Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families* which provided the common assessment framework of needs for children outlining all factors of health and well being for children.

Our framework outlines a three-tiered approach to pursue the interests and meet the needs of families. For example, all families could benefit from universal offers (green section) such as meeting with their child's teachers or participating in a fun family event such as a football match between students and their parents and carers. However, some families may be interested in targeted offers (orange section) such as learning more ideas about improving their child's behaviour at home, supporting their child's reading skills, developing their own personal skills or identifying their own career paths. Finally, in a few cases, specific intervention (red section) may be necessary to safeguard the wellbeing of the child and sometimes his or her parents or carers, such as completing a CAF and liaising with the locality multiagency partnership.



Led by the Family and Community Liaison staff member, ACS will create and implement a development plan for building family partnerships. Strategies will include activities like an X-Factor competition. While we know that engaging parents and carers of younger children for these types of activities is easier than of adolescents, ACS aims to develop and strengthen relationships with families throughout their children's education as well as develop activities suitable for parents and carers of older children. Another strategy successful in similar communities is offering workshops on maths methods which are new to this generation, such as division by chunking. We are committed to learning from the Parents and Carers Forum the best ways to engage and partner with families. Enterprise learning partnerships, such as developing skills within the community we hope will eventually build a catering enterprise to serve the school.

### **Partnering with Atherton Local Community**

To maximise the interaction and support between the school and community, the Family and Community Liaison staff member will facilitate ACS Forums for different community members and interest groups. Engaging these various groups is part of the ACS strategy to strengthen our capacity with a broad spectrum of pupil, family and community voice in support of the United Kingdom's democratic values including respect for the basis on which UK laws are made and applied; respect for democracy. These groups will be open to parents and carers, business people and community members to feedback and contribute input to problem solving at the operational levels of school life.

ACS Forums will be convened in the following areas, be open to everyone and will regularly speak into and support the life of the school:



- **Parents and Carers Forum.** Providing parents and carers with regular opportunities to engage with school life
- **Family Forum.** Representing local families who do not yet have children attending ACS, helping us to develop our work with families and ensuring that our family services meet the needs of the local community, especially those more hard to reach families who are experiencing challenging and difficult circumstances
- **Staff Forum.** Ensuring that teachers and staff are represented in discussions around school governance
- **Local Business Forum.** Providing local employers and business people with a voice and opportunities to support the school
- **Community Members and Organisations.** Offering local community members and stakeholders the opportunity to be involved in supporting the life of the school.

Furthermore, ACS believes the best way to teach young people about citizenship and full participation in a democracy is providing real-life experience. For this reason, students will also play an important role in our school planning and decision making.

**Learning Councils and Student Parliament.** Providing students with an opportunity to voice their ideas, opinions and contribute to democratic decision-making in the key aspects of school life, especially their own learning.

In addition to these Forums' contributions at an operational level, the ACS governing body will co-opt Participation Groups to ensure these views are represented at the governance level (see Governance section below). It is our considered opinion that the governance and community engagement strategies outlined above will provide the range of expertise, blend of skills and strength of support necessary to the development of an outstanding Free School in Atherton.

## Section 5: Evidence of demand and marketing

You must demonstrate that you have sufficient parental demand for the type of provision and number of places proposed and have engaged with the wider community. Solid evidence of parental demand is a minimum requirement and you **must** provide the information required in order for your application to be considered.

### Information required

#### Evidence of parental demand

Provide information that clearly shows the number of parents that want to send their children to your particular school, ensuring that the evidence you have collected is consistent with your stated admissions policy (eg. age range, proximity to the proposed site etc.) However, please **do not** provide us with copies of individually completed survey forms.

Tell us the questions that you asked in your survey - which should be specific to your school.

Applications for 16-19 Free Schools may wish to show demand directly from young people of the relevant age.

Demonstrate how you have - or how you intend to - make the school known and attractive to pupils from deprived or disadvantaged families.

If you are proposing a faith school you should demonstrate that you have actively engaged with parents of other faiths and none.

You may consider providing wider demographic data and evidence about local need in the area to add context to the data from your survey findings.

#### Consultation and equality of opportunity

For all applications that are approved, the Academy Trust will need to carry out a statutory consultation – please set out your plans for consultation as set out under Section 10 of the Academies Act 2010; in doing so, you will want to consider your wider responsibilities under equalities legislation.

#### Marketing strategy

Provide a plan for how you will market the school to prospective parents. You will need to be able to achieve the demand you have identified for your school so that places will be filled in each intake year going forward.

Include details of any discussions you have had with the local authority to admit pupils, although having had such discussions is not essential.

## Evaluation Criteria

### Minimum Criteria:

- Evidence of demand from parents with children of the relevant age equivalent to a minimum of 50% of enrolment in your first two years of operation; and
- Confirmation from parents that they would select your Free School as one of their child's choices.

### Comparative Criteria:

- Demonstrate how you intend to reach out to the wider community, including children from a range of backgrounds and faiths (if relevant) and across the ability spectrum, (independent schools will need to demonstrate evidence of demand beyond their existing pupil and parent base);
- A clear plan for the statutory consultation which must be undertaken by the applicants (should the application be approved), including consideration of how you might respond to feedback; and
- A robust marketing strategy built on your educational vision and plan, taking into account your proposed intake and the demand that you have already gathered.

## Further Guidance

Statutory Consultation: [REDACTED]

Equality Act 2010: [REDACTED]

## Evidence of Demand

### Overview

The application for this Free School was a direct result of the weight of local feeling that the town of Atherton requires its own secondary school. Analysing the evidence of demand for Atherton Community School (ACS) reveals overwhelming support for the project from across the community. The current proposal is the result of research and planning with different community members and groups. We believe that this project not only reflects the demand of local parents and carers and community members but will go a long way to realising the aspirations they share for children, families and the community as a whole.

The local demand for ACS is substantial, comprising multiple factors and issues affecting children, families and the community at large. In this next section we give time to outlining each of these in some detail. Where the key drivers of demand for ACS are concerned, the headlines are as follows:

- **Community Demand.** There is overwhelming demand from the people of Atherton for a secondary school within the community
- **Parental Demand.** Over 97% of local parents and carers wish to send their children to a secondary school within the town of Atherton
- **Parental Choice.** With no local secondary school, the majority of local parents and carers also find themselves unable to send their children to the two next nearest schools of choice due to issues of demand, admissions and local catchment
- **Future Places Forecast.** Future forecasts demonstrate that the current rise in birth rate will create significant deficit in secondary places by the time ACS reaches steady state
- **Community Distinctive.** Research demonstrates the demand for a deliberately smaller school with a personalised approach to learning that engages parents and carers in their child's education and enhances family life
- **Christian Ethos Education.** While there are three Church of England primary schools in Atherton, there is a lack of options for parents and carers who want their children to enjoy a secondary education with a Christian ethos.
- **Atherton Primary Schools.** Primary teachers in Atherton are unanimous that families require a local school in order to achieve a successful

secondary transition for children and retain the engagement of parents and carers in the child's education

- **Local Secondary Schools.** Local secondary Headteachers recognise the lack of options for local parents and carers and the limited physical capacity of in-demand schools to take children from Atherton
- **Sixth Form Demand.** The wide and substantial displacement of Sixth Form students from within the area, across or outside of borough, and feedback from parents and carers, educators and community leaders point to the need for an academically focused, school-based Sixth Form in Atherton
- **Local Business and Enterprise.** Local business desires to raise the educational attainment of children and the aspiration of families across the community. The presence of an outstanding local school will grow the esteem and economic capacity of the community.

### **Building the case for demand**

In 2010 Chapel St was invited to work with a consortium of leaders in Atherton to create a new school for the town. The weight of support for a local secondary school had been clear from the community's response to the closure of Hesketh Fletcher CE High School. Over the past year, Chapel St and the Steering Group have conducted widespread research to understand both the scope of demand and to analyse the multiple factors that are driving the community's call for ACS. In carrying out this research Chapel St and the Steering Group undertook the following activities both to capture the levels and nature of demand and to ensure the widest possible community engagement in the project:

- Public meetings with various community groups and forums
- Interviews with 700 families in Atherton
- Creation of a database of families interested in sending children to ACS
- Review of local birth rates and future forecasting of school places
- Analysis and discussion of current admission challenges and school placement predictions with Local Authority officers
- Analysis of demand for A-Level provision and places in the community
- Analysis of current trends in Sixth Form take-up by families in Atherton and the level of displacement across and outside the borough
- Meetings with Rt Hon Andy Burnham MP, local Member of Parliament and Shadow Education Secretary

- Meetings with local primary Headteachers to assess the need for a school and the type of secondary setting that would provide smooth transition and accelerated learning for local children
- Meetings with local secondary Headteachers to understand the landscape of secondary education, drivers of existing parental choice and potential for partnerships and collaboration
- Meetings with local secondary teachers to address what type or style of education would most suit the needs of children and families in the community
- Interviews with parents and carers at Parents' Evenings in all Atherton primary schools
- Meetings with community stakeholders on community need and demand
- Meetings with local employers on community need and demand
- Meetings with local church leaders and groups.

The results of this research are detailed below.

### **Community Demand**

Following a series of public meetings and dialogues with different community groups in June and July 2010, it became clear that there was growing public demand to see a new community school in Atherton. In response to this demand, Chapel St and the Steering Group commissioned extensive research of the need, and support, for a new community school.

It has been the long-held view of the community that, for the sake of young people, families and the town itself, Atherton requires its own secondary school. Put simply, the issues of deprivation and low levels of aspiration and attainment require a local solution that tackles the deep-seated challenges that many children and families face in the community. Following the announcement of the closure of Hesketh Fletcher CE High School, over 2000 of the town's around 23,000 population signed a petition demanding that Wigan Borough Council provide a secondary setting within the town. It should be noted that while much of this initial activity was stirred by the announced closure of Hesketh Fletcher CE High School, it was the underlying view of the vast majority not that this school should remain open but that Atherton should have a new school or academy to meet the needs of the town in the twenty-first century.

The sense of expectation following the Secretary of State's acceptance of the ACS application has led to a growing sense of excitement from the local

community. Chapel St and the Steering Group have continued to meet with different leaders and groups to tailor plans to local need and aspiration and is building multiple partnerships with organisations and groups to ensure that ACS benefits from the support and active involvement of the local community.

## **Parental Demand**

Over the past year, members of the ACS Steering Group have carried out two surveys, interviewing 700 families from the local community. These interactions have occurred in a range of contexts and with a sample representing the whole demography of the town. While we have utilised online forums, the vast majority of interaction with local parents and carers has taken place face-to-face. The Steering Group believes that the quality of these interactions, and the subsequent ability to engage in open question and discussion, provides unparalleled qualitative data and feedback along with a unique opportunity to build strong relationships with local parents and carers.

Surveys have been carried out in the following contexts:

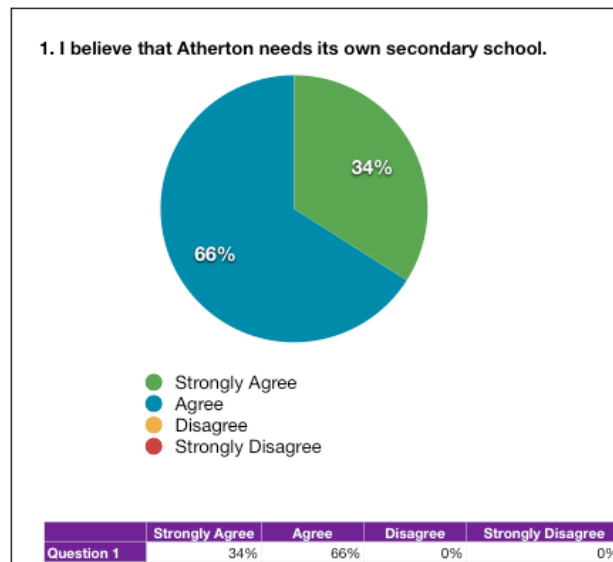
- Primary School Parents' Evenings
- By parents groups within the community
- By local community leaders and stakeholders
- Door-to-door in the local communities
- With local groups and community centres
- At local events and festivals.

The first aim of the ACS survey was to establish whether families believed that Atherton should have its own secondary school and subsequently how many parents and carers, with children currently attending local primary schools, would send their child to a new Atherton Community School. The results were conclusive. Of the 700 families interviewed:

- 100% of those surveyed believed Atherton should have its own secondary school
- 97% of those interviewed said that they would send their child to ACS upon opening
- 3% of families interviewed declared that they would be unlikely to send their children to ACS. In every case this was due to an older sibling already attending another school outside of the town.

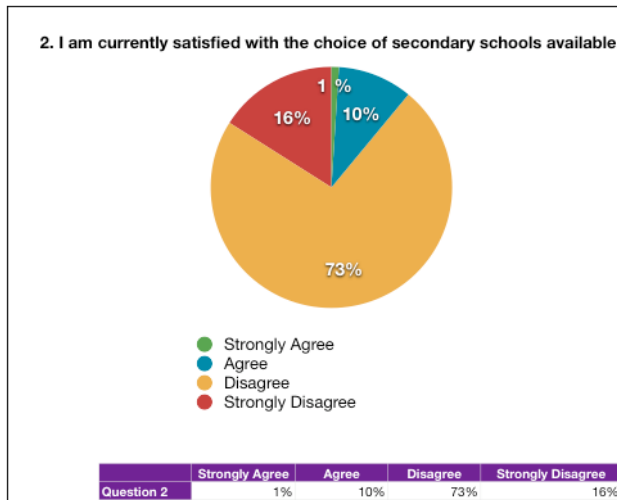
The ACS survey revealed the following additional data on the parental demand for a new Free School.

1. Parents are unanimous in their desire to see a secondary school in the town.

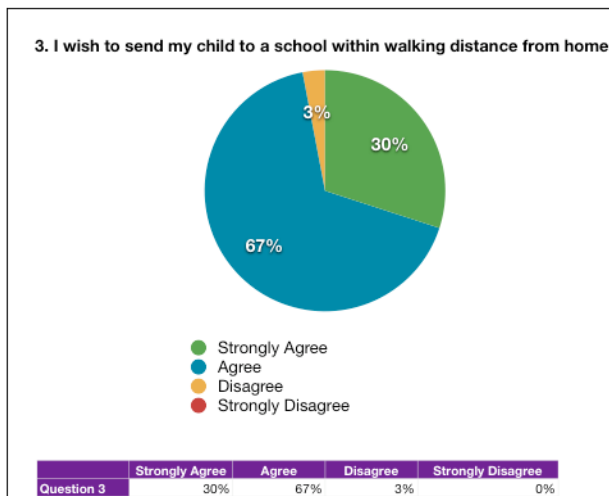


2. Parents are almost wholly dissatisfied with the current options available to them where secondary schools are concerned.

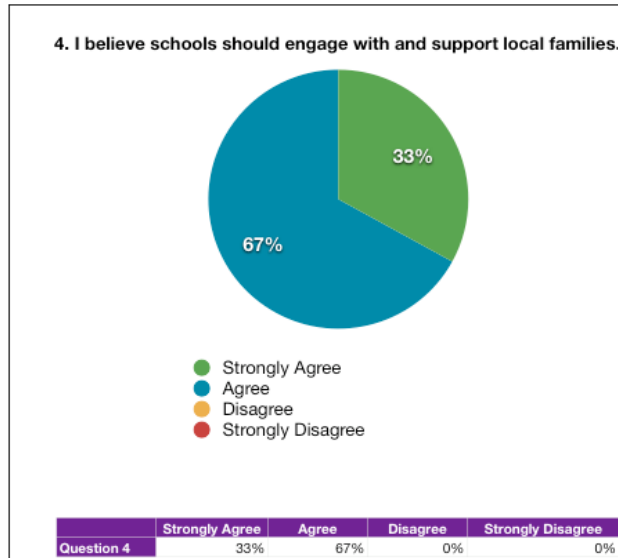




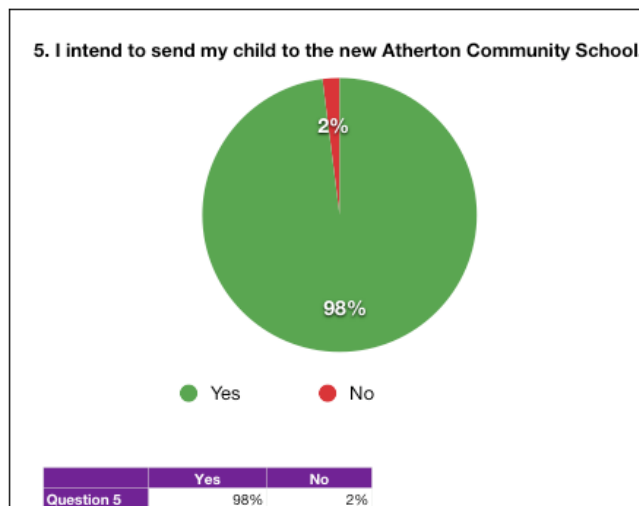
3. Parents are almost unanimous in their desire for a school in walking distance of their home.



4. All parents want a school that works hard to engage and support local parents.



5. 98% of parents with children in local nurseries or primary schools intend to send their children to ACS.



The drivers of demand for an ACS secondary setting are confirmed by the numbers of parents and carers so far who indicated that they will send their children to a Free School in Atherton as and when it opens. Below is the current number of parents and carers who indicated that they would send their children

to ACS. These numbers continue to rise on a weekly basis as we complete more surveys. Over the past months the percentage of local families indicating that they would send their child to ACS has not dropped below 97% and currently stands at 98%.

Year	Year Group	Number of Families interviewed.	Number of Students that would attend ACS
2012	Year 7	110	115
2013	Year 7	99	99
2014	Year 7	91	92

Our work locally has been extremely beneficial in determining parental preference. We now have a database of over 600 parents and carers with over 700 families interviewed, a very large percentage of which have children in Years 5 and 6 in local primary schools. We have kept records of all who have expressed preference at Year 7. Over 95% of all those interviewed are from the local catchment area with the remaining families coming from adjacent communities.

Having engaged with 700 families in the town, it is clear that the parental demand for Atherton Community School is compelling. The views of many are summed up in this letter to the Secretary of State of Education from a [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], [REDACTED]:

*“I was born in Atherton and had the opportunity as a child to be educated locally. I now work as a [REDACTED] in the area and know the central role a school has to play in the life of the community. I believe that to leave Atherton without the essential hub of the community would be a grave error.... I am certain that this new venture will be an inclusive and nurturing environment which will be capable of transforming the lives of the young people who attend. I also believe that the new school would allow me to exercise my right of parental choice.”*

## **Parental Choice**

With 100% of local parents and carers declaring their preference for a school within Atherton, and 98% indicating their desire to send their children to ACS, there is clear demand for a new secondary setting. Further analysis reveals that this demand is increased by the lack of choice that families in Atherton currently enjoy when it comes to secondary provision for their children.

There is widespread consensus that children should be able to attend secondary school within the town. 67% of parents strongly agree and 30% agree that children in the town should be able to attend a secondary school within walking distance of their home.

In 2006, 75% of secondary school students living in Atherton attended school within the community. As of 2011 this choice has been removed from the families of Atherton. In the absence of ACS, over 90% will be forced to commute to schools outside of the town. With no secondary school at the heart of the town, families in particular and local people in general fear for both their children and their community.

Parents and carers are particularly concerned about the time and costs entailed in travelling to schools in neighbouring towns and the increased likelihood that some students will fall out of secondary education as a result.

Where some families are willing to send their children across borough borders, parents and carers that are economically disadvantaged are far less likely to take this course of action. Furthermore, increasing the distance between school and the home decreases the ability of parents and carers to engage in school life and subsequently their children's education.

In a letter to Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Education, [REDACTED] writes:

*“As a result of the closure of Hesketh Fletcher CE High School this summer, there will be no secondary school in this town of some 22,000 inhabitants. The community suffers from a high deprivation index and will have little choice of secondary education. Furthermore the complicated bus journey to the nearest secondary schools with vacancies will act as a severe demotivation to school attendance.”*

Where parental choice is concerned, the lack of a local secondary school is further exacerbated by the inability of many families to secure what would be their second, or even third choice. This frustration is borne not just from the relative locations of prospective schools but also the perceived quality of outcomes. The following table shows recent performance data of Hesketh Fletcher CE High School and its three closest neighbours:

Secondary Schools	OFSTED		2010		2009		2008	
	Year	Grade	5 A*- C incl. Eng & Math	CVA	5 A*-C incl. Eng & Math	CVA	5 *-C incl. Eng & Math	CVA
Bedford High School	2011	2	51	1010.9	37	1002.2	37	1023.9
Fred Longworth High School	2010	1	62	1013	60	1017.3	43	1011.6
Hesketh Fletcher High School	2009	4	41	960.6	28	967.2	26	978.9
Westleigh High School	2007	2	35	990.6	40	1009.5	31	998.6

Secondary Schools	2010			2009	
	Eng Bac	Eng Prog KS2-4	Math Prog KS2-4	Eng Prog KS2-4	Math Prog KS2-4
<b>Bedford High School</b>	4	61	62	49	39
<b>Fred Longworth High School</b>	18	81	75	75	75
Hesketh Fletcher High School	0	58	38	47	30
Westleigh High School	1	42	47	63	47

Out of the four secondary settings currently in, or closest to Atherton, Fred Longworth, in Tyldesley, clearly represents the highest performing secondary school. In 2011, 341 students from Atherton postcodes attended Fred Longworth High School.



Despite this intake, Fred Longworth remains inaccessible to the majority of Atherton families. While popular with parents and carers Fred Longworth and Westleigh High School are increasingly oversubscribed leaving more and more families from Atherton disappointed. While Bedford High School retains a surplus of places, this is clearly driven by a lack of parental demand, hence the familial frustration that this is the only realistic option for many. This is illustrated by the tables below:

**Projections based on historical preference data**  
**Based on current PAN and preferences for 2010/11**

<b>2015</b>	<b>PAN</b>	<b>Projection</b>	<b>Difference</b>		
Westleigh	155	206	51		
Fred Longworth	255	288	33		
			84		
Bedford	242	153	89	Overall surplus	5

<b>2016</b>	<b>PAN</b>	<b>Projection</b>	<b>Difference</b>		
Westleigh	155	221	66		
Fred Longworth	255	325	70		
		Total	136		

Bedford	242	178	64	Overall shortage	72
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<b>2017</b>	<b>PAN</b>	<b>Projection</b>	<b>Difference</b>		
Westleigh	155	202	47		
Fred Longworth	255	313	58		
		Total	105		
Bedford	242	184	58	Overall shortage	47

<b>2018</b>	<b>PAN</b>	<b>Projection</b>	<b>Difference</b>		
Westleigh	155	194	39		
Fred Longworth	255	305	50		
		Total	89		
Bedford	242	163	79	Overall shortage	10

<b>2019</b>	<b>PAN</b>	<b>Projection</b>	<b>Difference</b>		
Westleigh	155	195	40		
Fred Longworth	255	358	103		
		Total	143		
Bedford	242	189	53	Overall shortage	90

<b>2020</b>	<b>PAN</b>	<b>Projection</b>	<b>Difference</b>		
Westleigh	155	209	54		
Fred Longworth	255	337	82		
		Total	136		
Bedford	242	185	57	Overall shortage	79

Following the announcement of closure at Hesketh Fletcher CE High School the majority of parents and carers in Atherton have identified Fred Longworth and Westleigh High School as their two first preferences. However, these schools are continually turning away more than 50 Year 7 students every year.

In addition, more families would choose Fred Longworth if it was perceived to be a realistic option. As a result, a significant number of families currently send their children across the border to outstanding schools such as Canon Slade CE High School in Bolton and Walkden in Salford.

Where Atherton's parents and carers are concerned, the lack of a local option and difficulty in gaining admission to Fred Longworth or Westleigh, mean that many are forced to make do with their third or fourth choice of schooling.

With a lack of secondary settings that are both attractive and realistic, parents and carers experience little choice where their children's education is concerned. The majority of secondary age students in Atherton are now taking places at Bedford High School. Despite this displacement of pupils from Atherton, Bedford High School is still predicted to have a surplus of over 80 places in three of the next four years, making it one of the least in-demand secondary schools in the borough.

The table below outlines the challenge for many parents and carers in Wigan in 2010/11:

School	Places	1st choice applications	Total applications	Demand
Fred Longworth High School	255	288	466	33
St Edmund Arrowsmith High School	249	278	519	29
Westleigh High School	155	180	549	25
Cansfield High School	202	224	513	22
St Peter's High School	178	198	487	20
St Mary's High School	260	278	566	18
Standish High School	250	254	574	4
Abraham Guest High School	205	199	392	-6
The Deanery High School	250	244	822	-6
Hawley Hall High School	188	173	320	-15
Rose Bridge High School	155	140	316	-15
Golborne High School	171	156	322	-15
St John Fisher High School	200	175	440	-25
The Byrchall High School	235	205	676	-30
Hindley High School	187	154	289	-33
Shevington High School	178	113	479	-65
Lowton High School	230	164	517	-66
Bedford High School	242	166	603	-76

This table shows the number of places in Year 7 for the academic year 2010/11. It also shows the number of 1st choice preference applications and the total number of applications for all preferences. The 'Demand' for each school is calculated by comparing the number of 1st choice applications with the number of places available.



In summary, parents and carers in Atherton do not enjoy the level of choice that this government aspires to offer where secondary education is concerned.

██████████ (██████████, Fred Longworth High School) sums up the issues facing parents and carers and local schools and points to the creation of ACS as a necessary long-term solution:

*“There is clearly a need for a high school in Atherton. As a school, we were vehemently opposed to the closure of Atherton’s Hesketh Fletcher High School especially at a point when demand for secondary places in the immediate vicinity is predicted to rise from 2015 onwards. Our traditional catchment area is based on Tyldesley, Astley and Mosley Common but, since the impact of Hesketh Fletcher’s closure has begun to bite, we have been taking increased numbers of pupils from Atherton (see attached breakdown).*

*“We are increasingly heavily oversubscribed (the most oversubscribed school in Wigan for at least the last 2 years) and are currently 31 pupils above our standard number, with 2 year groups carrying over 10 extra pupils in very restricted conditions. Despite this, we have managed thus far to accommodate those from our traditional catchment areas with some from Atherton. As the bulge currently going through the local primary schools hits the secondary sector, however, more Atherton pupils will lose out and will have to travel to Leigh for a secondary school with vacancies. We cannot and will not abandon our traditional catchment area in favour of these pupils, as this is simply passing on the same pain to another set of children. The solution lies instead in the creation of a new high school for Atherton.”*

## **Future Places Forecast**

While there are some surplus places in the borough at present, future forecasting demonstrates that the current rise in birth rate will create significant deficit in secondary places by the time ACS reaches steady state. By 2016, the current crisis for primary places in Atherton plays out in the secondary sector. This trend persists for the foreseeable future. See the table below.

## **Community Distinctive**

The parental demand for ACS does not stop with the creation of an outstanding school in Atherton. Interviews with parents and carers, community members and stakeholders demonstrate a desire for a different style of schooling to meet the particular needs of children and families in the town. These discussions have been formative for the ACS proposal.

In discussions concerning a prospective Free School, parents and carers, teachers and community leaders express the following aspirations:

- ACS should offer outstanding education and learning to the young people of the community
- ACS must facilitate a culture of discipline and respect where learning is valued and enjoyed
- ACS should offer something different from previous secondary settings in Atherton
- ACS should be smaller than most secondary schools providing a more intimate community for students and families
- ACS should engage families and the community as a whole in the life of the school
- ACS should develop a truly personalised approach to deal with the challenges and opportunities that local children and families face
- ACS should raise aspirations and attainment among young people in the community
- ACS should seek to raise the aspirations and abilities of parents and carers so as to lift the developmental ceiling for children in the home
- ACS should develop enterprise learning to engage students and families in learning through work and citizenship.

Among others, Chapel St and members of the ACS Steering Group have met with a range of local leaders, including Andy Burnham MP, to discuss how the new school might best serve the needs of the local community. These conversations have been constructive and have helped to refine and develop the proposals here outlined.

All in all, there is significant demand from parents, carers and community members to create and support a school that fosters high educational standards and enhances family and community life.

### **Christian Ethos Education**

While there are three Church of England primary schools in Atherton, there is a distinct lack of options for parents and carers who want their children to enjoy a secondary education with a Christian ethos. In fact, there is a relative lack of Church of England secondary schools in the East of Wigan. This is a cause of some frustration to sizeable groups of parents and carers.

The closure of Hesketh Fletcher further reduces the options for parents and carers who value an education with a Christian ethos and is reflected by the significant number of children from Atherton who travel across the borough to The Deanery High School. Also recognising the lack options in this regard, the governors of Lowton High School have applied to become a Church of England school.

██████████, ██████████ in Atherton writes:

*“It has long been the case that many parents, of different faiths and no faith, have demonstrated a preference for the distinct ethos, moral standing and respect that come with a school from within the Christian tradition. Sadly there has been a lack of choice for parents in this community and this has prevented them from benefiting from such a school for their children. With the creation of ACS this will clearly be a change for good.”*

ACS will be an inclusive community providing education that is attractive to parents and carers who value a Christian ethos education but not deterring families who do not share the faith. ACS will provide a new and inclusive model of schooling, while honouring the long tradition of Christian ethos education in the UK.

### **Atherton Primary Schools**

Primary teachers in Atherton are unanimous in the view that local families require a local school in order to achieve a successful secondary transition for children and retain the engagement of parents and carers in the child's education.

Concerned about the imminent lack of a secondary school within the town, the head teachers of primary schools in Atherton were quick to lend their support to the work that the Steering Group had undertaken to assess the demand for a new secondary setting in the community. At the invitation of primary heads,

██████████ a ██████████ of the Steering Group, carried out interviews with over 400 families at Parents' Evenings in October and November in 2010.

Chapel St has conducted a series of meetings with local primary Headteachers over the past months. Headteachers shared their concerns that the most disadvantaged children and families would struggle to engage effectively with secondary schools in neighbouring towns.

Already frustrated by the number of ineffective transitions, primary teachers are looking for a local secondary school that will offer the following:

- Commitment to working with primary schools to plan effective transitions through investment in prospective students in Year 6
- Commitment to engage primary teachers in supporting the personalisation of learning towards certain students in Year 7
- Development of an intensive Year 7 curriculum and coaching pedagogy to provide a platform for future performance and attainment
- Sharing resources and expertise in family support

Chapel St and the ACS Steering Group are engaged in ongoing discussions with primary Headteachers in Atherton to develop and refine the plans for the school in line with the needs of local children and families.

### **Local Secondary Schools**

Headteachers, staff and governors at Fred Longworth High School, Westleigh High School and Wigan and Leigh College have expressed concerns over the number of Atherton children that cannot be accommodated due to excessive demand and restricted catchment areas.

For this reason the Headteachers of Westleigh and Fred Longworth would welcome a new secondary school in Atherton and have begun discussions with Chapel St to identify key areas for collaboration and partnership in the future.

██████████ (██████████, Fred Longworth High School) writes:

*“The solution lies instead in the creation of a new high school for Atherton. As it is clearly in the interests of the whole local community if the new free school goes ahead, we are prepared to support the new school and have been in preliminary discussions with the Chapel Street project leaders to explore how this could be done.”*

## Sixth Form Demand

Where Atherton has seen a welcome rise in vocational training for children post-16, the lack of outstanding Sixth Form provision is recognised by parents and carers, community members and policy makers alike.

In 2010, data published by Connexions indicated that 362 sixteen-year-olds left the borough to access post-16 provision. A staggering 357 of these students originated from schools in the east of the borough. This strongly suggests that the current in-borough provision is neither attractive nor meeting the needs of this cohort. In an effort to address this issue, the LA are funding additional skills provision in the east but have not addressed the demand for high-quality academic (rather than vocational) provision in the locality.

By partnering with Winstanley College, ACS will provide a gateway to higher education and achievement for up to 200 students. This offer provides young people in the east of Wigan with a unique opportunity to experience education from one of the UK's leading providers without a costly and time-consuming travel-to-learn journey. Winstanley has provided a first-rate A-level education for young people for many years. ACS is now seeking to extend this provision for the benefit of those living in and around Atherton who wish to benefit from an academically focussed and locally-based Sixth Form.

There are nine schools in the east of the borough that could potentially feed the ACS Sixth Form. Over the last three years the number of applications from these schools to Winstanley College in [REDACTED] has been as follows:

School	Enrol/Applications			Applications
	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>
Bedford	24/37	11/32	10/26	24
Fred Longworth	19/39	27/45	20/44	56
Hesketh Fletcher	7/19	9/13	6/12	10
Hindley	8/31	13/37	13/25	28
Lowton	32/51	35/57	26/54	56
St Mary's	6/16	12/36	11/20	20
Walkden	10/26	6/26	16/29	40
Westhoughton	11/20	3/19	0/7	8
Westleigh	7/19	1/8	14/18	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>124/258 (48%)</b>	<b>117/273(43%)</b>	<b>116/235(49%)</b>	<b>251</b>

The popularity of Winstanley College with families in the East of Wigan is clear to see from the number of students that apply for entry each year. Over 50% of these are disappointed. In addition, others do not go so far as to apply due to the length of travel, prohibitive costs and the 56 points required for entry.

Approximately 140 students from schools in the east of the borough already benefit from an E Bac style curriculum at Winstanley. This provides strong evidence of the appeal of the curriculum proposed in relation to the projected numbers for year one of the Sixth Form. With a reduction in the points score for entry and a significantly reduced travel-to-learn journey then it is reasonable to conclude that this number would rise proportionately.

A recent increase in transport costs and uncertainty around EMA and its successor discretionary support fund have led to a crop of expressions of concern from students from the east who no longer feel that making the journey across the borough is viable for them despite their wish to attend the college and access the quality of provision on offer. The following extracts are taken from the many letters written to [REDACTED] ([REDACTED], Winstanley College) by students of the college:

*“Even though I love this college and it has provided me with great opportunities the catastrophe [of increased travel costs] has resulted in me looking at other colleges to go to during my A2 year.*

*If I'd have known about these added costs I wouldn't have come to this college and I have spoken to students at my old school [Fred Longworth High School] who were considering coming to Winstanley but on knowledge of the new bus fares have changed their mind.”*

It should be mentioned that even without the increase in fares, the journey these students make is arduous, the bus setting out at 7.30am and arriving back at 5.30pm, often with only standing room available.

Discussions with Headteachers at Fred Longworth and Westleigh have underlined the frustration of teachers, parents and carers and students regarding the lack of local options for Sixth Form provision. Chapel St is in discussion with Fred Longworth as to how the ACS Sixth Form could provide strategic pathways for a proportion of their students.

Through greater geographical proximity and a lower points requirement, ACS will enable more students to access a 'Winstanley' Sixth Form education. This is clearly an attractive offer for students and families in the area. In addition, there are schools in Bolton and Salford who would be within the catchment area of the ACS Sixth Form who do not currently send any students to Winstanley thus widening the market further.

Chapel St and Winstanley recognise that the atmosphere of a 200 student Sixth Form within a wider secondary school will be distinct from that of the existing

Winstanley campus in Billinge. To this end we propose to develop a distinct and focused offering to students and families. The ACS Sixth Form will provide students with a school-based environment, emphasising core subjects in an E Bac-style offer, emphasising enterprise learning with a weekly work placement and delivering opportunities to support and mentor younger students in the school.

The current situation means that young people resident in the east of the borough do not have an equal opportunity to access Winstanley's outstanding educational provision. Winstanley's involvement in the Free School development will help to correct this imbalance, providing a strong imperative to maximise achievement in Year 11, raising standards in the local secondary schools, raising aspirations of young people in the district and raising the profile of the Atherton community.

### **Local Business and Enterprise**

Over the past months, Chapel St has worked with [REDACTED] to engage local businesses in the ACS project. Local employers are united in their desire to see a new school in the town and many business people and organisations have offered their support to ACS going forward.

Local business desires to see the educational attainment of children and the aspiration of families raised across the community. The presence of an outstanding local school will grow the esteem and economic capacity of the community.

In a letter to the Secretary of State for Education, [REDACTED] articulates the demand for the project from local business:

*“Having met with local business people, developers, General Practitioners, training providers and community leaders we have experienced a universal sense of excitement and support for the creation of a new Free School in Atherton. As a result, the news that the Secretary of State for Education had accepted Chapel St's application for the Atherton Community School has been the cause of great delight and anticipation among the many local leaders that we are working with. As [REDACTED] of the [REDACTED] I have spoken to many colleagues in the local commercial sector... The vision of a Free School that raises academic aspiration and attainment, develops enterprise learning to foster skills and knowledge that can equip young people for the workplace and supports the most challenged families is proving utterly compelling for my colleagues in the business community.*

*“We are now developing Atherton Community School Means Business, a*

*group for local business people and businesses providing input and support to the new school. Chapel St have invited me to take on the [REDACTED] of this group, an assignment that I am looking forward to greatly. The groups will be represented on the governing body of the school and provide ongoing connection between the life of the school and local business thus ensuring that the school is resourced by the community and enhances the local economy.*

*“In writing this letter, I wanted to add my support and speak on behalf of the many local figures and leaders who are both excited by and committed to the implementation of Atherton Community School in September 2012.”*

## **Conclusion**

Following the sizeable research and consultation outlined above, it is the considered opinion of Chapel St and the Steering Group that the current proposal for Atherton Community School meets the demand expressed by students, parents and carers, teachers, community members and local leaders for a new school that can transform the lives of children and families in the community.

## **Consultation: Moving Forward**

Chapel St had planned to hold a number of public forums and open evenings for parents and carers, local employers, residents and stakeholders as part of the business case phase. Given the reduction in time available, this work will now be blended with the statutory public consultation that is set to take place during the pre-opening phase. Upon moving into this phase of the start-up we will initiate a formal public consultation in line with the requirements of the Academies and Free School Act 2010. The key aspects of this consultation will be as follows:

- Public meetings for potential parents and carers, staff and students; and local residents
- Further consultation with LA officers in Wigan
- Consultation with LA officers in neighbouring Bolton
- Continued consultation with local Headteachers
- Consultation for local teachers and school staff
- Consultation with post-16 providers including Wigan and Leigh College, ProCo, Winstanley College, etc.
- Discussions with local councillors including [REDACTED] ([REDACTED]) and [REDACTED] ([REDACTED])



- Discussions with local MPs, Andy Burnham and Julie Hilling
- Engage SACRE to discuss RE curriculum, etc.
- Local community groups, including charities, churches and faith groups
- Creation of a council of reference and advisory board to ensure that the many key leaders and stakeholders that have supported the call for a new school have opportunities to contribute to the life and community for the school in the future.

## **Public Meetings**

Chapel St and the Steering Group have planned a series of public meetings and consultations for the pre-opening phase. These meetings were originally due to be facilitated as part of the business case stage but due to the shorter time period provided by DfE they will follow after. These will be aimed at three groups:

- Parent and carer Groups. Having had over 400 parents and carers confirm that they would send their children to the Atherton Community School and gathered the addresses of many more who wish to be kept in touch with the development of the project; we will arrange a series of meetings for these parents and carers
- Local Employers. Having met with many local employers in the last months we have a large number of business leaders who wish to support and contribute to the new school
- Local Community. The call for a new school initially came from hundreds of community members who recognise the impact that a thriving school can have in the regeneration of a community. Atherton Community School aspires to be a learning hub for the whole community
- 'Hard to reach' parts of the community. Recognising that some families, particularly from more deprived parts of the community, do not readily engage in school events and meetings we have explicitly used our local resources to engage directly wherever possible. This often means door-to-door canvassing.

ACS Consultations and public meetings will follow a particular format to ensure that the overriding message and opportunities for input and dialogue remain consistent and effective. Chapel St recognises that there are particular skills and expertise required to plan and deliver effective consultations.

Consultation processes are an extremely important part of confirming demand and need and to gain local community ownership, collaboration and excitement about the possibility of a new Free School opportunity. Our communication through this and other methods is therefore critical. We will define materials and methods to be used, as well as reporting results in a methodical and clear way that gives statistical evidence to support the narrative around consultation that has occurred and how it confirms the case.

We are confident that our team have the relevant experience and track record to deliver a successful and fruitful consultation. ACS public meetings will include the following key elements:

- Presentation of the Vision and Ethos of the School ( [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] )
- Outline of Educational Strategy and Curriculum ( [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] )
- Questions and Answers to Chapel St Panel and project team ( [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and/or [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] (based locally)
- The LA will be invited to send a representative.

Chapel St will provide consultation documentation for those that attend and gather names and addresses compliant with Data Protection needs for a database of interested people.

We understand that a separate but equally critical process will be necessary around any building works, both in terms of interaction about pre-construction/refurbishment with local residents and other stakeholders. The contractor will have a central role in this communication process. We hope that this may produce a positive response and involvement in the School by the local community. We will give more detail on this once the site is determined in the pre-opening phase.

### **Timeline for formal consultation**

We would want to begin this process immediately the business case has been approved – hopefully in September 2011 - and would expect our response report to be formulated by the end of October. We would like to conclude our consultation within this timeframe so we are best placed to attract as many admissions as possible at a time when people are choosing places for September 2012.

### **On-going Marketing and Communication**

An essential aspect of financial sustainability is effective marketing and communication. Unless we have enough students attending the school we cannot achieve this. We will, therefore, use the following methods to make sure that we retain student numbers and high-quality staff, as well as an overall positive and credible reputation.

Marketing is about bringing many disciplines together in a coherent strategy so that every aspect complements and strengthens the others. So, events make

good stories that need to be told to all stakeholders, to the press, on our website, our newsletters etc. Marketing is sometimes perceived as a 'dirty word' so we will focus on simply the telling of our story.

### **Telling our story**

It will be important to build credibility around the sponsor, educational offer and local ownership and expertise. With any new school there is some work to do to successfully overcome the inevitable questions that arise simply because it is new and so we will make sure that we do everything to meet this challenge. An important aspect to this work will be listening to key stakeholders such as parents and carers and responding to suggestions, comments and questions in a way that has integrity and is a real two-way communication process. The ACS Steering Group have been carrying out this work since the commencement of this process.

Brand development is absolutely key to a successful marketing campaign. This is not about simply corporate logos, 'house-style' fonts etc although signage and logos are part of it. It is critical that the brand expresses the essence of the school vision and community.

The aim of ACS is to develop autonomous life-long learners by building an environment that cultivates ingenuity, challenge, respect with responsibility, resilience, aspiration and enterprise in our children. The branding process that we will undertake will ensure that this vision permeates every aspect of school life and is thoroughly embedded in the culture of the school community. The essence of ACS can be summed up in the following words:

- A community school that breeds confidence in children and families
- A community school that heightens achievement for all
- A community school that fosters creativity in all
- A community school that prioritises collaboration and partnership
- A community school that equips every student to be an active citizen
- A community school that offers security and nurture through continuity
- A community school that provides personalised learning through coaching
- A community school that values and explores different cultures
- A community school that adheres to an inclusive Christian ethos, serving children and families of all faith and no faith.

### **Brand Development**

Our key messages, therefore, will be around our vision and ethos; our strong local presence and relationships with parents and carers, local potential staff, LA and local politicians, which reflects our passionate commitment to local

community regeneration; our educational expertise and credible offer, including exciting local partnerships with post-16 opportunities; our strong project management support; our credibility through the work of Chapel St as a committed organisation to public sector delivery; experienced leadership and governors; an intimate and family-orientated experience being a new school, as well as a Christian ethos that is utterly inclusive of all faiths and none.

We will also base our messages on experiences of our team in the implementation of Academy projects – from new starts – that have increased house prices, been oversubscribed from year 1 and have enticed high-quality staff who embrace the ethos of the school – all of which enhances the experience of the local community.

### **Marketing Tools and Communication Platforms**

The following are essential tools and marketing platforms to effective marketing and communication, which have enabled the process so far and will aid us towards the realisation of a new school. These cover key supporters, print/mailings, on-line, face-to-face, public meetings, social marketing, community events, press and local media.

As a governor, [REDACTED], will help to oversee the local communications strategy. Chapel St has an experienced [REDACTED] in [REDACTED] and is in the process of adding extra specialist support through the appointment of a Press and Media Officer. These personnel will work with the project management team to ensure that we carry out the following strategies effectively.

Although we are proposing that the school adhere to a Christian ethos, ACS is open to families of all faith and none. To this end, all discussion, consultation and planning has included individuals and groups of all faiths and no faith. It is central to the ethos of Chapel St that we exist to draw together all members of the community to work towards the common good. At every stage of the project, in every decision-making group and through every level of consultation the Steering Group has been representative of the community.

We are also mindful of the need to make sure we do not discriminate against anybody in line with the Equalities legislation – and we believe we have (and will continue to) made every proactive attempt to engage with all the community, irrespective of sexual orientation, faith, gender, age or any other defining factor, treating all feedback and input fairly and equally. We will also make sure that should language (for those with English as a second language) be a constraining factor, we will find ways to overcome this.

<p><b>Local Representatives</b></p>	<p>The best way to engage members of a community is through engaging members of that same community. The Steering Group have invested great time and effort over the past year to engage local community members and groups. We are in the process of formalising the involvement of the many community members who wish to work with us through the creation of a series of groups (Governors, Parents and Carers Community/Business Participation Groups, Advisory Board, Council of Reference, Facebook Group, etc.). These groups will be chaired by local people and increase the momentum of the school towards and beyond opening.</p>
<p><b>Project Manager</b></p>	<p>Chapel St is aware that the mechanics of school openings can become all consuming and will appoint a part-time project manager solely charged with the development of community engagement strategies and</p>

	programmes.
<b>Public Meetings</b>	<p>These have been planned to follow on from the business case stage. A number of prominent members of the community are hosting these meetings on behalf of ACS.</p> <p>Face-to-Face. In the same way that the research for ACS and local demand was carried out by one-to-one interviews, the project board and governors will equip local volunteers to personally engage the hundreds of parents who have declared a desire to send their children to the school.</p>
<b>Mailings</b>	The work undertaken so far in soliciting community support for the ACS proposal has enabled the creation of a sizeable database providing direct contact with over 30% of local families.
<b>Media</b>	Chapel St and the Steering Group have had numerous requests to appear in written and broadcast media. Due to the fact that the project is not yet into pre-opening phase and given some of the political complexities around this particular project we have politely declined to comment at this stage. Following the business case stage, Chapel St will use a Press and Media Officer to assist in the development of a media strategy that will create positive coverage and encourages parents and carers to send their children to ACS.

<b>Consultation document</b>	<p>This document will outline the plans for ACS and offer space for local community members to contribute to our plans through a questionnaire or open letter response. The document will be available in hard copy or on-line. [REDACTED], our [REDACTED] (based locally) will be available to follow-up enquiries and questions in person or to meet with community members for whom a written response presents significant barriers to participation and engagement for whom a face-to-face meeting would be beneficial.</p> <p><b>Feedback from Consultation</b></p> <p>Following the consultation the Project Board and governors will produce a report containing the views of local groups and individuals outlining how future developments at ACS will take local thoughts and</p>
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	<p>considerations into account. The content of the report will be disseminated through the channels outlined in this table and will provide the basis of further public meetings and events. It will also help to shape our strategic development of all aspects of ACS.</p> <p>The existing proposals for ACS are borne out of a consultation and conversation with the local community as to the need for a new and distinct high school in the town. The plans for ACS have been developed through continual consultation with families, teachers, community members and local leaders. We remain committed to engaging with the community to refine the project in line with community need and parental demand for years to come.</p>
<p><b>Website - online</b></p>	<p>We have developed an ACS website to be ready to go live as and when the project moves into pre-opening phase. This includes the school vision and mission, detailed information on school life, FAQs and recent information updates, including recruitment opportunities and educational plans, as well as a downloadable prospectus, policies etc. We will also use other partner websites to get our messages publicised – e.g. the LA, Chapel St, Atherton Online, etc.</p> <p>Social Marketing. ACS is using Facebook, twitter and other social networking platforms to engage local parents and carers.</p>
<p><b>Local Press Connections</b></p>	<p>Relationships between the Steering Group and the local press are strong. ██████████, a Steering Group member, has been responsible for overseeing the relationship of ACS to the local media. The key contacts are as follows: ██████████, Leigh Reporter; ██████████, Wigan Today; ██████████, Leigh Journal; ██████████, Bolton Evening News. In addition to local press there is ██████████, a local news web page and a number of local radio stations who are interested in following the story (Wish FM &amp; Tower FM).</p>



<b>Sensitivity</b>	As mentioned before, we have been careful to remain discreet over the past months. Once the project has entered the pre-opening phase, the team will roll out a local PR and Media strategy to include regular releases,
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	<p>advertises and articles which will be critical to build a positive reputation and deal with any unhelpful rumours. Releases would cover key aspects of the school development such as appointment of Principal designate; uniform; school name; branding; student voice; school opening; community liaison.</p>
<b>Key Spokespersons</b>	<p>When the Principal is appointed we will also use them to write pieces and be a spokesperson for the project, as well as the [REDACTED] of Chapel St who is currently the sponsor spokesperson. It will be important to agree a PR protocol with all stakeholders – especially where messages are being sent out in partnership with the LA for example – and on occasion with the DfE. Any positive coverage will be kept in a folder for the Reception area of the new School.</p>
<b>National PR</b>	<p>Unless there is a significant issue of national importance or a desire on behalf of DfE to be involved in a story or promotion of Free Schools, we will endeavour to avoid this. That said, given that the sitting MP is also the shadow Education Secretary, we are aware that this line may be challenged. Once again, Chapel St will develop proactive strategy and protocols between our Project Managers, Communications and Press Managers and the DfE to ensure that we are ready for issues if and when they arrive.</p>
<b>Leaflets</b>	<p>We have already put together a document that spells out who we are, our vision and ethos, and our educational plans. We will make sure that any future communication is comprehensive and inclusive – and is accessible by all parts of the community, as well as being copyrighted and trademarked as appropriate. A more detailed document will be drafted that covers all the previous issues as well as more detail around curriculum; staffing; pupil experience and voice; site and buildings; admissions; access and transport. This will be used to support the consultation process and ongoing communication.</p>
<b>Regular newsletters</b>	<p>We will develop these in hard and soft form and once the Principal is appointed these would come from them. We aim to involve the local community in as many parts of school life as possible and will invite them to meet with the Principal and senior staff to discuss how they</p>

	might be able to support the learning and other necessary work.
<b>Parent/Community/ Business Forums</b>	ACS will create Participation Groups in these areas. These groups will be supported in running forums for their various networks to assist communication and promotion of the school.
<b>Prospectus</b>	This will become the key piece of communication about the school and would reflect the school brand and ethos; vision; educational strategy and offer; as well as eventually key achievements and successes and approach to SEN, admissions etc. Our own students would be part of the prospectus images, subject to parental consent, and we would use this opportunity to teach about the importance of branding and marketing by running workshops.
<b>Stakeholder Engagement</b>	Individual meetings with the Principal for any stakeholder.
<b>Local Events</b>	The Steering Group have maintained a presence and involvement in numerous events over the last months. These will continue in the months to come.
<b>Engaging Local Primary Schools</b>	██████████ and Steering Group members have had meetings with primary heads over the past months. Recognising and affirming the preference of local parents and carers for a local school, Atherton primary headteachers have been committed to supporting and promoting ACS to their children and families. ██████████, ██████████ of the ██████████, ██████████ and ██████████ at ██████████, will work with the Project Board and communications team to implement a strategy to engage and inform all primary school parents and carers in the town.
<b>Local Governing Body</b>	We will be looking to appoint key leaders in the community who can represent the vision and mission of the school to those in the community.

## Section 6: Organisational capacity and capability

You must demonstrate to us that your group / team has the capacity to set up and run a school, and has access to the relevant educational and financial expertise.

If your application is approved, we will then support you to secure additional expertise that you may need in relation to project management, ICT and sites and buildings.

Before submitting an application for a Free School, you **must** have established a Company Limited by Guarantee (also commonly known as an Academy Trust) with members and directors appropriately skilled to discharge their duties. The company number should be provided in Section 1 and copies of the registered Memorandum and Articles of Association should be appended to your application. We will not consider applications that do not have this information attached.

### Information required

#### Capacity and capability to set up a school

Provide details of the members of the company, their particular areas of experience and expertise, and the time they are able to commit to the project.

Show that you have considered the resources, people and skills that you will need to set up a school, and in particular demonstrate that you have educational and financial expertise on your long-term team.

Identify if there are skills gaps within your group / team at present and how you propose to address these if your application is approved. This could be through the involvement of people with expertise as part of the applicant group, through voluntary partnership with a provider, or through having procured this support from another organisation (once your application has been approved and you have agreed support arrangements with the Department).

Set out plans for recruiting your school's Principal Designate (headteacher) and the role you envisage him/her playing in the pre-opening phase. *If you have already identified your preferred Principal Designate you should provide their CV and evidence of their ability to deliver your educational vision and lead your proposed school.* You should be aware that if your application is approved, you will – subject to Departmental considerations – be able to appoint a Principal Designate and two terms in advance of the school's opening date.

Set out plans for appointing a committed Governing Body with the breadth of skills needed to oversee both the pre-opening and post-opening phases.

## Capacity and capability to run a school

Set out how you will have appropriate financial expertise to oversee the financial management of the school.

Set out your plans for the leadership and staffing of your school. This should reflect both the arrangements upon opening and as the school develops to full capacity, with clear delineation of roles and responsibilities.

## Evaluation Criteria

Minimum Criteria:

- Company Limited by Guarantee established; and
- access to appropriate and sufficient educational and financial expertise.

Comparative Criteria:

- the experience of the individuals involved in the project, and the time they will be able to commit to it, (where you are relying on external support, you will need a clear plan for accessing that support);
- an adequate staffing structure to deliver the planned curriculum, building up from year 1 to when the school is at full capacity. You will be asked to demonstrate the financial viability of this staffing plan later in the application form in Section 8: Initial costs and financial viability;
- a robust and realistic set of plans for recruiting high quality staff and governors in accordance with your proposed staffing structure and educational plans; and
- clear understanding of the respective roles of the Company, Governing Body and Principal Designate.

## Further Guidance

Companies House: <http://www.companieshouse.gov.uk/>

Procurement Guidance: [REDACTED]

Governance Guidance: [REDACTED]

## Section 6 – Organisational capacity and capability

### Objectives, set up and legal arrangements

#### Overview

Chapel St was founded to work with local communities in deprived situations to create successful schools and educational programmes. The Chapel St charity was established, with the help of [REDACTED], as a potential sponsor of schools and academies. Chapel St recognises the essential role of sound leadership and good governance in achieving these outcomes.

In order to achieve our vision to provide a dynamic educational hub, transforming the lives of children, enhancing the prospects of families and providing a catalyst for community regeneration, our governance arrangements will work as follows.

As the sponsoring trust of Atherton Community School (ACS), the Chapel St **Board of Trustees** will bear the ultimate responsibility for the effective implementation and running of ACS, overseeing issues of legality, employment and ethos.

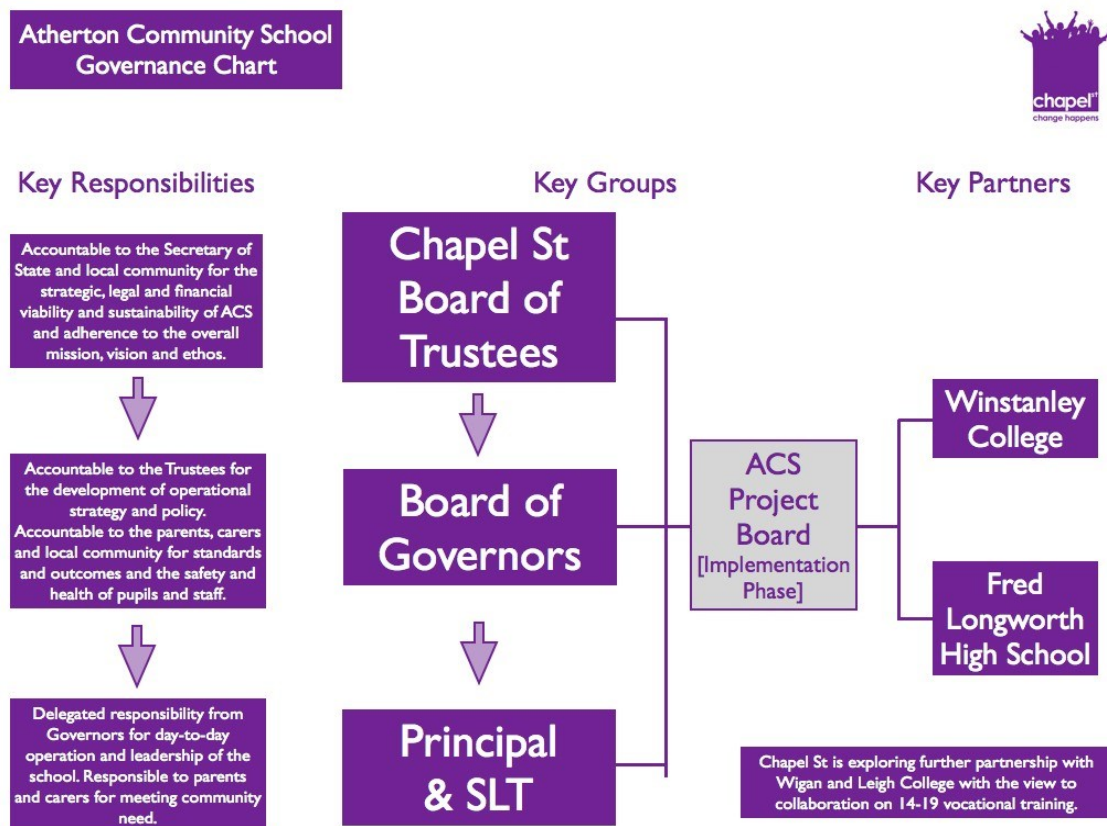
The trustees will appoint a **Board of Governors** to oversee the day-to-day running of the school and to ensure that the aims and objectives of ACS are met with regards to attainment, viability, sustainability, safeguarding and community engagement. Three Chapel St trustees will be appointed to serve on this Board of Governors to ensure continuity between these two groups.

Chapel St will appoint a **Project Board** to oversee the implementation phase of ACS, advise the trustees and support the governors and ACS SLT on a range of issues. This group will include representatives of the Board of Trustees and Board of Governors, as well as other key stakeholders.

Chapel St is working with **Educational Partners**. These local providers (please see below for more details) will ensure that the Board of Governors, SLT and staff can draw on the support, resources and expertise of outstanding local schools and colleges in the implementation of ACS.

ACS governors will appoint a range of Sub Committees and Participation Groups to oversee different aspects of the school's development. These groups will comprise relevant members of the Board of Trustees and Board of Governors, Project Board, educational partners, SLT, staff, parents and carers and community members

For an overview of the ACS governance structure, see below:

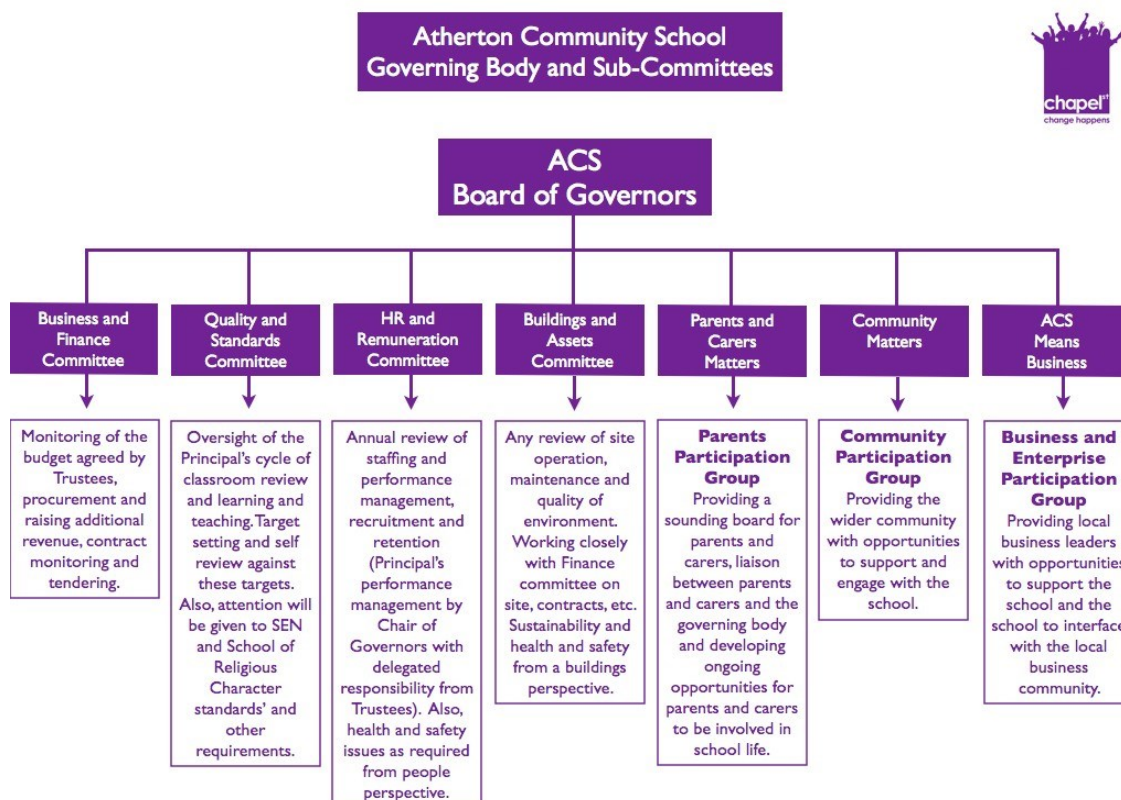


Chapel St has the following objectives in terms of governance and management of ACS.

- To ensure that the overarching vision and ethos of the trust are clear and tangible in each school. A focus on standards, aspirations and inclusion will be at the heart of the ethos
- To establish a transformational organisation to enable all students – whether staff, pupils or local community - to become life-long and successful learners and responsible members of society. To make sure their educational entitlement is secure
- To promote community cohesion through the work of the school
- To ensure compliance with all legal and statutory obligations as outlined within Charity, Company and Education law, including ensuring that the trust is compliant with all policies and guidelines issued periodically by DfE,

Ofsted and other agencies, making sure that the requirements of the Funding Agreement are met at all times

- To fully engage partners and key stakeholders to make effective contributions and build long-term commitment of parents and carers, local government and the local community including enterprising businesses, other local schools and educational providers, in order to enhance and extend the educational offer
- To build an effective business model that combines personalised and successful education provision with a financially sustainable organisation, by sharing local and central resources to broaden provision and make it more cost effective and to enable central procurement to facilitate in this objective
- To ensure quality assurance and best practice in all areas of operation, management and leadership
- To ensure that all employment responsibilities are of the highest standard – and to demonstrate that people are at the heart of the organisation by going for appropriate kitemark qualifications and making sure that there are clear development plans and career progression for each member of staff
- To make sure that all policies are in place – especially around SEN, designated teacher for children in care, inclusion/exclusion, admissions, Free School Meals, information sharing through a prospectus, etc.





## **Board of Trustees**

The legal responsibility for ACS will ultimately reside with the Chapel St Trustees, as well as the ethos and overarching vision. The Chapel Street Trust will be accountable as sponsor for the work in setting up ACS, as well as the following.

- Educational standards, in terms of overall progress and target setting, sign off and general approach - including SEN provision
- Employment responsibilities – including CRB registration and checks (delegating operational aspects to Board of Governors, sub-committees and staff)
- Financial accountability
- Central procurement and resourcing as appropriate
- Asset & overall property management
- Overall policy setting
- Insurance
- Recruitment of senior staff and career progression.

To retain focus and operational continuity three trustees will drive the project forward and retain the Chapel Street vision for ACS.

The trustees combine extensive experience in the delivery of large-scale projects, public service delivery and education. This team is presently devoting significant time to the development of the Atherton Free School. They have the capacity to continue allocating several days a week to continuing the work of developing ACS.

The trustees of Chapel St are as follows:

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[REDACTED] ([REDACTED]). [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]. [REDACTED].

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[REDACTED] ([REDACTED]) [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

The Chapel St trustees will assume a fundraising responsibility to increase the income streams available to ACS. Acknowledging the challenges involved in delivering transformative education in deprived communities, the Chapel St charitable trust will be responsible for creating and developing an endowment fund to provide extra financial resources for the work of the school with students, families and the community. Following the model formerly utilised by Academy schools, whereby sponsors set up an endowment to support and extend the work of the school, the Chapel St trust will utilise in-house personnel and an external fundraising agency to create an endowment fund to resource the life of ACS.

**Project Board**

In developing the vision, delivery of the business case and provision of in-house project management the trustees will draw on the expertise of an advisory group. This group is presently made up of a team of people with significant experience in the establishment of new schools and academies.

The role of these individuals and groups will be to provide specialist advice to the trustees, governors and SLT to ensure the effective running and success of the school. Along with the three trustees and founding governors, they will form a Project Board to oversee the implementation of the school for September 2012. This group will be joined by the Principal, upon appointment.

The Project Board will include the following:

[REDACTED] ([REDACTED]) [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] ([REDACTED]) [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] ([REDACTED]) [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] ([REDACTED]) [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] ([REDACTED]) [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] ([REDACTED]) [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] ([REDACTED]). See biography in [REDACTED] section below).

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This Project Board will work with the founding governing body and give way to the full Board of Governors upon the opening of ACS. At this point the Project Board will revert to an Advisory Board supporting the trustees and governors with specialist expertise to support the long-term strategic governance and

leadership of the school. Chapel Street Trust will act as the parent body responsible for its work.

### **Educational Partners**

In addition to the support of the trustees, governors and Project Board, ACS will benefit from the support of two Educational Partners in Winstanley College and Fred Longworth High School. Both of these outstanding institutions will be represented on the governing body and provide strategic and practical support through the implementation and development of ACS. In addition, Chapel St has begun discussions with Wigan and Leigh College to establish a similar partnership arrangement. While both Winstanley College, Fred Longworth and Wigan and Leigh College will be invited to contribute to the overall project, there are clearly particular areas where their specific expertise and resources can contribute to the operation, leadership and governance of the school. These include.

- Curriculum design and development and achieving outcomes for attainment
- Strategic leadership including support and mentoring for SLT members
- Support and advice on a range of operational issues including, staffing, mentoring our Director of Finance and Operations and overseeing the implementing of school finance systems and processes, logistics, procurement and business development:

To build capacity around school finance, we are already in discussion with someone who has over 15 years' senior management experience in the Public Sector, more recently in secondary school education. Roles have included [REDACTED].

- Joint commissioning and procurement of certain services as strategic and appropriate
- Developing integrated strategies and pathways to ensure breadth and depth of provision for young people and families across the community
- Building partnerships with other providers and organisations.

## **Board of Governors**

Chapel St Trustees will work with the founding governors to design a strategy for school governance. Governors will be appointed formally and elected according to best practice with the following groups represented on the governing body:

- Parents and carers
- School Staff
- Winstanley College (Sixth Form provider and educational partner)
- Fred Longworth High School (educational partner)
- Atherton Primary Schools
- Business and Employers
- Community Members and Organisations
- Local Authority.

Responsibilities of the Board of Governors will include:

- A clear focus upon the progress of the School Development Plan, with sufficient reporting and control of school progress
- A 'critical friend' to the school primarily through the Principal and leadership team – challenging but positive and proactive support
- Guardian of the ethos, vision and values as expressed within its local context – and of course making sure that success is celebrated regularly
- Engagement with local stakeholders and businesses and to fundraise for appropriate initiatives
- Local reputation and PR in supporting the work of the Principal and staff
- Pupil recruitment to ensure that the success of the school is not a well-kept secret and to ensure the school always has a full complement of students as it grows towards capacity. To make sure all admissions processes are adhered to
- Parental engagement is a strong focus for Chapel Street and the local governing body will have specific responsibility in this area
- Local admissions will be supported by the local governing body within the framework set up by the Board of Trustees – including the appeals process
- Use of the property for the benefit of students and the local community
- Recruitment of staff
- Trips and visits within the framework of the centrally set policy
- Being involved in wider school life – attending events when possible and getting to know staff and students.

## **Board of Governors (Founding Membership)**

Chapel St appointed a Steering Group to develop the application for ACS. Along with the three Trustee Governors (above), the ACS Steering Group will transition to a founding Board of Governors to oversee the school. Over the past months, the Steering Group have received offers and requests from many local people to be considered as prospective governors of ACS. This once again underlines the demand for the school in the community and the desire of local people to support the project in any way that they can. At the commencement of the pre-opening phase further governors' positions will be advertised and applicants interviewed by a panel representing Chapel St trustees, the ACS governors and with representation from the DfE.

The founding governors of ACS will include:

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██████████ is a local parent with a vision for what outstanding teaching and learning could do for the children and families of Atherton. ██████████.  
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the pre-opening phase, the trustees and founding governors will extend the governing body so as to provide a full complement of governors. Governors will be recruited and elected according to best practice. The timetable for this will

be as follows:

- Commencement of pre-opening phase. The existing Steering Group and Trustee Governors will form the ACS founding governing body. This group will work with the Project Board to implement ACS
- September/October 2011- Appoint Vice Chair and other early appointments confirmed
- September/October 2011. Arrangements and processes confirmed for further governor appointments and recruitment
- September 2012. Nominations and elections of governors to represent staff and parents and carers.

### **Sub Committees**

To ensure the effective implementation of ACS, the Board of Governors will charge the following sub committees to oversee specific areas of school life:

**Finance Committee** – monitoring of the budget agreed by Trustees, procurement and raising additional revenue, contract monitoring and tendering.

**Standards** – Oversight of the Principal's cycle of classroom review and learning and teaching. Target setting and self review against these targets. Also, attention will be given to SEN and School of Religious Character standards' and other requirements.

**HR and remuneration** – Annual review of staffing and performance



management, recruitment and retention (Principal's performance management by Chair of Governors with delegated responsibility from Trustees). Also, health and safety issues as required from people perspective.

**Buildings and Assets** – any review of site operation, maintenance and quality of environment (working closely with Finance committee on site contracts etc). Sustainability and health and safety from a buildings perspective.

### **Participation Groups**

To increase the participation of key groups within the community at the governance level and to provide a range of stakeholders with a voice in terms of the development of ACS, we will create three Participation Groups. These will be open to parents and carers, business people and community members to join and will provide opportunities for the school to listen to the community and for the community to be involved in the life of the school. Some of these participants may also be part of the ACS Forums which provide opportunity for feedback and problem solving at the operational level of school life. Members will be elected from these groups to the Board of Governors.

- *ACS Parents and Carers Matters* - Parents and Carers Participation Group: providing a sounding board for parents and carers, liaison between parents and carers and the governing body and developing ongoing opportunities for parents and carers to be involved in school life.
- *ACS Community Matters* - Community Participation Group: providing the wider community with opportunities to support and engage with the school.
- *ACS Means Business* - Business and Enterprise Participation Group: providing local business leaders with opportunities to support the school and the school to interface with the local business community.

### **Membership of Permanent Board of Governors**

We will recruit trustees as well as organising the local governing body (by appointing a Chair, Vice Chair, Company Secretary (already appointed) and sponsor appointees) and we expect to generate job descriptions and ensure we have a robust recruitment process in place. Chapel St understands fully the requirements of establishing the governing body and will plan to train appointees in sufficient time.

We will make sure that the minimum quorum for regular meetings are established, this to be three members, but understand that at present we need to have a maximum of 15 governors. Chapel St will appoint sponsor reps, but some of these will be local people who are already committed to this project.

We will make sure that there are representatives from local community groups and businesses; the Local Authority (1); teaching and support staff (1 of each); parents and carers (2); student advocate (an adult specifically to represent the needs of the students (although students will regularly engage with the governors and report issues of interest and concern); and the Principal (ex officio). We understand the Secretary of State can choose to flood the governing body should circumstances dictate that this is necessary.

Governing Body Sub-committees or delegated activities will be initiated prior to opening but after Funding Agreement. This will include Admissions and Exclusions appeals panels. We will seek contact with YPLA at the earliest stage to ensure that fiduciary controls can be easily implemented. Please also see Section 4 on admissions.

It is the intention that should the number of schools in the Chapel Street family grows, the role of the Principals working together in their own forum will be critical to the sense of being a family sharing resources and expertise.

Importantly, we will ensure that governors are equipped to oversee all of the Legal Agreements required by the Free School as outlined above.

Our Articles of Association will provide the constitutional document of the Free School. The articles make it clear that the school is to be a non-profit making charitable company and that any surplus it makes cannot be distributed among its members.

We will procure/secure legal services to support all of the Legal Agreements needed throughout the project pre-opening and implementation phases, including Land Transfer, Funding Agreement (the agreement between the Secretary of State and the Free School Trust) and any Transfer Agreement that may be applicable (involving the Local Authority). We will encourage legal support to brief governors and trustees fully.

In addition, property arrangements and any lease agreements will be set up as appropriate. We will work with the Local Authority and PfS in this respect.

Our governance model will be based on standard DfE documents and place particular attention to strategic aims of Chapel Street as a sponsor and for the management of the school itself. Clear lines of accountability between the

Board of Trustees and Board of Governors will be demonstrated as above.

AGM's will approve accounts and other reports submitted by the governing body, and the governing body shall meet at least once a term.

We will register as a 'School of Religious Character' although we will be a school

that has a totally inclusive admissions policy 'open to all faiths and none' and understand we will be subject to Section 48 Inspection requirements. The trust will ensure that provision is made for Religious Education to be given to all pupils at the school in accordance with the tenets of the specified religion or religious denomination of the school. The trust shall comply with the requirements of section 70(1) of, and Schedule 20 to, the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 as if the Academy were a foundation school with a religious character or a voluntary school, and as if references to 'the required collective worship' were references to collective worship in accordance with the tenets and practices of the specified religion or religious denomination of the school.

It is our considered opinion that the governance and community engagement strategies outlined above will provide the range of expertise, blend of skills and strength of support necessary for the development of an outstanding Free School in Atherton.

### **Recruitment of staff**

There are many important factors that we have already considered and once the business case is approved we can progress a number of initiatives to secure the right staff for such a fantastic opportunity. Fully appreciating that this is a new school with no existing staff we do recognise the need to mitigate risks involved in recruiting sufficiently. Our rationale and objectives that support us to recruit effectively are:

As this is a new school, ACS will not have the complex negotiations and workload aligned with TUPE arrangements of predecessor school staff. However, the converse is true that recruitment of new staff will be from scratch. However, we are confident that this is a manageable risk because of the following reasons, which include key selling points that we will exploit:

- The number of staff being recruited is small because of the progressive nature of the growth of the school over a number of years
- Because of the wealth of support for the ACS locally, there will be local professionals who are keen to work for the school
- Because of the closure of the Hesketh Fletcher High CE School this year there may be good staff who are keen to become part of this new school, because of the opportunities it presents
- The geographical location is helpful because of easy access to major areas like Manchester, Salford and Bolton
- Strong links with training colleges give opportunities for NQTs (newly-qualified teachers) who may thrive in a new set up
- Local agencies and networks within Wigan and beyond to recruit suitable staff
- Future Leaders – we have good contacts here which we are beginning to explore

- Advertising – in TES and other industry publications as appropriate.

Key selling points are:

- Our ethos of inclusion – school of religious character – highly regarded and wanted by local parents and carers
- Primary and Sixth Form – ability to benefit from an wide-age approach that gives exciting opportunities for learning and dealing with transition phases more innovatively
- New school – someone can be a part of building a school from scratch giving a rare opportunity to put their stamp on something evolving and dynamic
- Ability to work with an outstanding Sixth Form College in Winstanley and Secondary school in Fred Longworth.

### **Recruitment of the right Principal**

The recruitment of an experienced and capable Principal is critical to the success of the school. Consistent, efficient, inspirational and visionary leadership will play a very large part in this success. We believe that Atherton Community School provides a fantastic leadership opportunity and an exciting prospect for a new leader to help us deliver a critical resource for the whole community.

Chapel St will be robust in its recruitment procedures and will not depend on one way of recruiting as the project implementation timeline will be compromised if we cannot recruit effectively on the first time. We require a Principal designate in place for one term before opening in September 2012.

Therefore, the timeline is already tight. We need to start straight away after sign off in order to give someone time to offer a term's notice. We urgently require 'sign off' from business case in order that we can progress recruitment tasks for this position in particular. The process we expect to take would be as follows. However, we may need to tailor this to meet advertising and other deadlines:

1. Meet the sponsor event (publicised in the TES, through the LA, websites and other vehicles) – where the CEO and Education Development Director from Chapel St explain the vision, ethos, educational strategy and the Atherton local context, as well as what Chapel St would be like as their long-term employer. Potential employees would have the opportunity to meet others involved in Chapel St and ask any questions they may have face to face. Recruitment packs would be available at the event
2. Advertisements in the TES – at least 2 – of a sufficient size not to be missed – highlighting the opportunity. People could obtain packs on-line

- via the school and other websites
3. Consider using agencies such as Hays or Veritas – although we would go through a procurement process for this
  4. Contacting leadership development organisations such as Teach First, SSAT, NCSL, Future Leaders, and New School networks. This would be especially useful for direct contacts for other senior leaders and teaching staff
  5. Recruitment via LA and other local contacts
  6. Establishing a recruitment panel, including a representative from the LA, DfE, sponsor reps, other educational experts and students – as well as our own governing body and trustees
  7. Recruitment packs to include – school background and local context, sponsor vision and ethos, educational strategy & pedagogy, data, working and living in Wigan, job description and person spec, how to apply, equality & diversity form
  8. The shortlisting and interview process will be managed through a point scoring system to ensure equitability
  9. Interview – 2 days – to include the following:
    - a. Welcome by sponsor and explanation of the organisation and school in brief
    - b. Group session with all candidates to indicate ability to work as part of a team
    - c. Data analysis test
    - d. Critical incident interview – what was their best response to such an incident and their worst and what they learnt
    - e. Panel interviews – Curriculum/teaching & learning; leadership & management
    - f. Student interview – asking their pre-prepared questions in front of the main panel who simply observe the dynamic between each candidate and the students. The students would then give feedback afterwards on each of the candidates in their view
    - g. Day 2 candidates only – presentation on agreed strategic subject – ethos and educationally led
    - h. Ideally a visit to the locality to see the closing school site – if appropriate, particularly as this seems to be the most likely site that would be used for ACS. Candidates may need to arrange this independently

## **HR Policies & Procedures**

We understand that there are HR policies which need to be provided to meet legal requirements and we already have access to some current best practice examples. These are as follows:

- Pay & remuneration

- Disciplinary
- Allegations against staff
- Grievance
- Whistle blowing
- Equality & Diversity
- Recruitment & Selection

We are also committed to producing other policies including:

- Professional development
- Performance management

We will liaise with our partner organisations, Fred Longworth and Winstanley as well as other best practice models to develop our own policies. We understand that it is best practice to get our policies recognised and can do so either via local union reps or at a national level and will need to decide how we will do this, but our thinking is to go for national/central discussions to take the workload from this and any other Chapel St schools in the future.

### **Terms and conditions**

We intend to issue contracts to staff with terms and conditions in accordance with the Burgundy book (teachers' pay and conditions) or the Green book (NJC support staff), as well as confirming information such as adherence to directed time (hours worked) for teaching staff and agreement on hours for support staff; salary; annual leave etc.

### **Pensions**

We intend to follow the agreed pension schemes teaching staff and possibly to support staff and understand that we are committed to following the employers' contributions for teachers which at present is 14.1%. We will mirror the scheme to which we are affiliated for the local government pension scheme. We are aware that we need to make sure we don't have any inherited liabilities but as there is no TUPE involved in this school that won't be an issue currently. We will subscribe to Local Government Employers to keep updated on changes in pension schemes arrangements.

### **CRB**

We intend to secure an umbrella body under which we can make sure all CRB paperwork is professionally and legally produced. We will want to make sure they are able to deal with electronic CRBs and are cost effective.

### **Centrally and locally provided systems**

- Payroll system – we will investigate the best system which will be locally managed, and centrally purchased. Something like Strictly Education may be a good starting point given they are a bespoke educational system
- Recruitment – we would expect the school to manage all recruitment except for key senior positions where Chapel St would need to be involved
- Disciplinaries/capabilities/grievances – local ownership but with central support.

Insurance – we will invest in insurance in order to cover our school(s) for costly litigation/tribunals should they ever arise – we will procure from the DfE framework in order to contain this risk.

### **ACS Staff Structure**

ACS will create a staffing structure that will deliver an innovative curriculum model to ensure that all pupils and students reach their potential. ACS will work from the presumption that every student can have success in learning and staff will work tirelessly to avoid any student failing or being excluded.

The Vice Principal (Curriculum and Standards) will liaise with the Head of Personal Development to monitor progress of personal learning and identify how and where personal development is impacting academic progress. We will optimise our staff creatively which means we will have opportunity to evolve our structure of responsibilities.

Support staff will be trained and used strategically to lead focused intervention activities to develop specific aspects of students' literacy and numeracy skills. Strategy for interventions needed and subsequent staff deployment will be led by the Vice Principal.

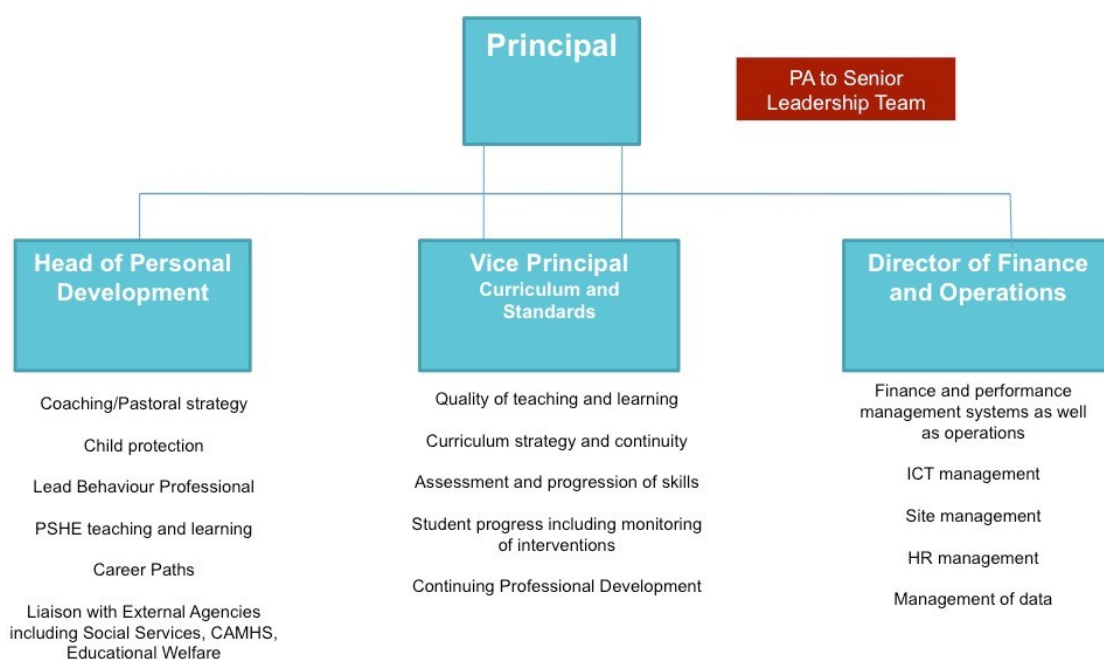
Learning Streams will integrate subjects in order to draw together learning along themes to ensure the skills and knowledge of each subject are learnt in relation to the core life skills of that stream. To ensure their success in these subject areas, the Stream Leader will lead a core subject and the integration of those skills with the other subject leaders in that team. For this reason, the total number of staff on the teams is more than the actual number of staff in school.

The Head of Personal Development will be responsible for the quality of teaching and learning in PSHE throughout the school as well as overseeing the work of the Family and Community Liaison. This leader will draw together common themes arising in coaching sessions and the Parents' and Carers' Forum ensuring the themes are effectively addressed in PSHE lessons as needed. Through whole class learning, individual coaching and partnerships with families, ACS will identify barriers to learning which are created by social and family relationships and circumstances.

The Lead Behaviour Professional at ACS will be the Head of Personal Development, though he or she will work with the Principal where needed. The first port of call for parents and carers is the member of staff responsible for family and community liaison. He or she will refer to the student's home base teacher or appropriate member of staff where necessary.

Working with our educational partners, we are exploring increased efficiencies through shared staff to build capacity for a broader, richer curriculum, such as in the expressive arts which is a particular strength at Fred Longworth High School. Additionally, our PE and sports provision will be delivered in partnership with Leigh Centurion Rugby Football League Club and Leigh Miners Ranger Amateur Rugby Football League Club (one of the UK's largest amateur clubs working with 800 young people in the area). For this reason, some staff may be listed as fractional on the spreadsheet.

### Senior Leadership Team



**The needs of pupils transitioning from primary schools will be identified early and support provided, and student interventions may include catch-up sessions or additional one-to-one coaching. Also, the Head of Sixth Form will be a direct report to the Vice Principal to ensure progression of learning throughout ACS. However, this role will also work with the Principal in other aspects of leadership.**

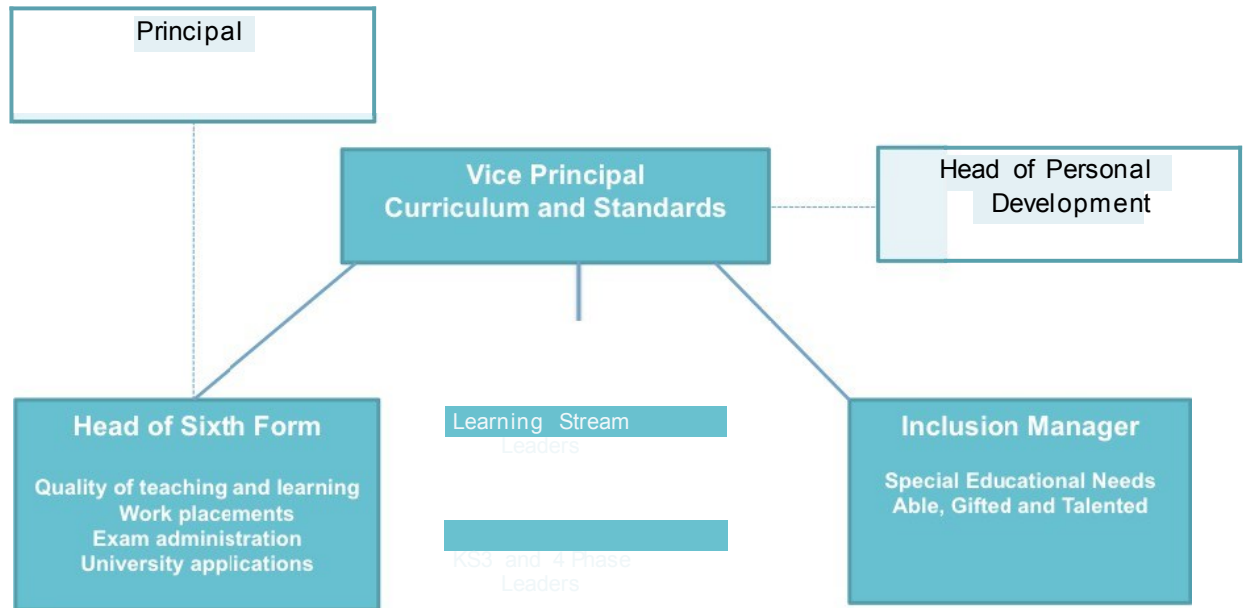
**Sixth Form learners will have separate study and recreation facilities. However, the role and influence of the Sixth Form in contributing to the positive ethos of the whole school will be instrumental in raising**



**aspiration and achievement. Sixth Formers will work with younger students, taking responsibility for running activities through their work placements as well as providing additional support and acting as role models.**

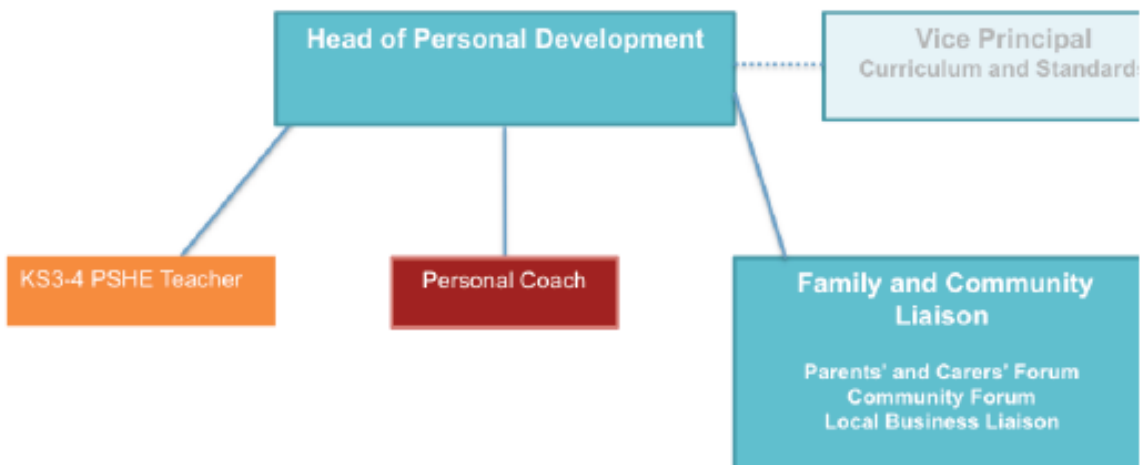
**Please see below for our full staffing structure:**

## Academic Leadership Team



Responsibility for phase leadership will be allocated at the time of appointment. Phase leadership potentially could be part of Stream Leaders' or other TLR posts.

## Personal Development Team



## Communication and Expression Team



## Exploring and Problem Solving Team



## Innovation and Creativity Team

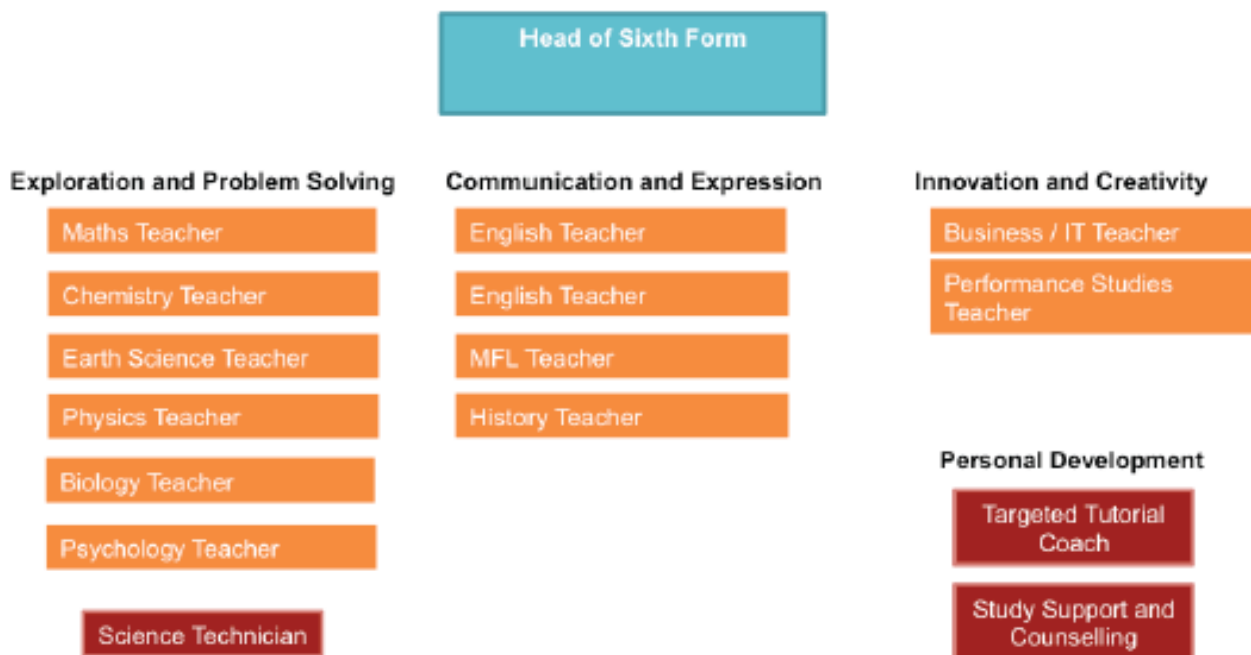


Innovation and

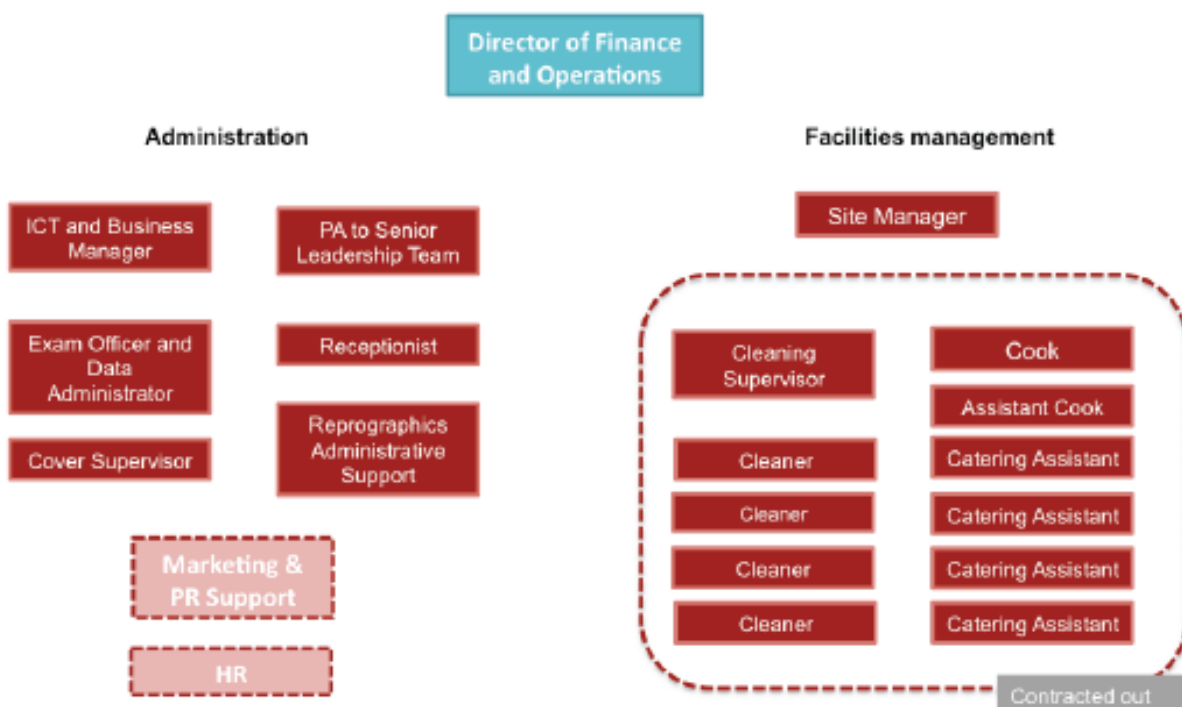
## Phase Leadership Team







### Administration and Facilities Team



## Continuing Professional Development

ACS will ensure purposeful Continuing Professional Development (CPD) with routine robust impact evaluation using established methodology trialled by a member of Chapel St team. Below is an example of an Impact Evaluation model on tracking the impact of a school leadership development programme. ACS will use this type of model to ensure that CPD initiatives are tightly linked to school improvement targets and provide value for money.

		Evidence
Inputs	Two outstanding practitioners with leadership experience seconded one day each per week in Autumn 09	Proposal Agreements Invoices Timetables
	One-to-one support with SLT and selected middle leaders to increase leadership capacity, including a focus on dissemination strategies for sustainable school improvement for Maths and English leaders	
	Modelling to distinguish leadership from management, school-wide standards, action planning	
Outputs	Leaders glean experience from successful practitioners	Leaders feedback Leadership coaches' feedback Targeted teachers' feedback Action plans
	Leaders have clearer framework for understanding consistent school-wide standards of outstanding teaching and learning for Maths and English	
	Leaders can isolate non-negotiable principles within their specific areas from teacher-initiated creativity	
	Leaders align subject action plans with the school improvement plan	
Intermediate Outcomes	Aligned and effective action planning	Action plan evaluations Policies Termly tracking Records of sessions Targeted teachers' planning & observations Monitoring reports
	English and Maths policies are grounded in shared understanding of outstanding practice	
	Leaders work with staff colleagues effectively through coaching and shared planning	
	English and Maths teaching and learning is consistently good to outstanding	
	Incise standards-based monitoring which provides timelined action points	
Final Outcomes	Increased leadership capacity, continuing model internally within staff	School-based data PM records Observations Assessments SIA visit reports
	Improved teaching and learning, especially in English and Maths	
	Increased attainment in English and Maths	

Drawing on a professorial model of CPD with shared resources across schools, both locally and with other Chapel St schools, the senior leadership team will provide expertise and high-quality teacher coaching and collaboration for continual school improvement. Our secondary educational partner, Fred Longworth High School offer particular expertise in raising standards in the core subjects with Advanced Skills Teachers in English, maths and Science who will support ACS staff to ensure we hit the ground running with outstanding teaching and learning from the first year. Building on dialogue with local Head teachers, ACS will participate in a local schools' consortium in which we collaborate on CPD to develop practice across the community of schools, such as moderation of summative assessments. We will also optimise our partnership with Winstanley to draw on their experience in using CPD to build capacity of staff to raise standards rapidly. Another aspect of CPD will be to include professionals

working with classes on project-based learning (committed to coming in each term and coaching) to offer opportunities of teaching specialised material.

## **Project Planning and Control**

Wherever possible, Chapel St will seek to utilise existing resources to fulfil the obligations of the project. We will of course seek to make best use of our existing networks of specialists and advisors to support and guide us through the project to ensure that we achieve the stated outcomes and importantly to conform to DfE guidelines. Chapel St is already supported by proficient education and project management expertise that understands the ethos, vision and values and local context and processes required to successfully open schools.

The business case outcomes and deliverables will include the following:

- We believe it vital that [REDACTED] play a leading and active role as CEO
- Whilst we have strong links and connectivity with community groups in the locality, we do not envisage any other partnering arrangements within the constituency of the trust. We will, however, take great opportunity to work with other establishments that will support the successful outcomes of the school as we progress through pre-opening and implementation stages and after opening
- At all times we will seek to access the best expertise to ensure pre-opening tasks are undertaken diligently
- Once viable site and school budget solutions are agreed we wish to ensure that we can progress through Funding Agreement and then to implementation prior to opening in September 2012
- In developing the outline of the proposed Free School we will work closely with the LA, DfE and other community-based stakeholders to ensure we have a robust plan to achieve the best environment to deliver a school with a curriculum that transforms education and learning in the most appropriate facilities that demonstrate value for money
- Chapel St wish to adopt rigorous project management controls and protocols and intend to initiate project board meetings, standard DfE management reporting, regular and timely risk assessment and budgetary controls. We believe that we have assembled an experienced team to do this and will pay particular attention to ensuring we are supported by key stakeholders



- We recognise the sensitivity to the community of this project and in the early stages we will instil necessary communication/media protocols and ensure that progress is reported appropriately. We will, of course, support our work with a coherent marketing strategy and plan to help us win 'hearts and minds'. Our locally-based Project Manager is critical to this success as is a centrally-based Communications Manager (more detail is provided elsewhere in this business case.)
- We will ratify at the earliest possible stage any issues associated with Land Transfer including any LA legacy/contract issues
- As we prepare to open we will pay particular attention to ensuring that roll, curriculum model, accommodation schedule and financial planning is robust and that key issues and decisions are subject to scrutiny of the principal stakeholders
- Although this is not a traditional Academy project per se, we will ensure that we adopt many of the project control deliverables that were previously evident in the old style Product Breakdown Structure (PBS) as these are relevant tools to support the overall effective project management requirements:
  - Project Brief and list of deliverables
  - Project Plans and workstream reporting
  - Risk and Issue Logs
  - Notes and records of meetings with minuted action logs
  - Budget spend profiles
  - Monthly reporting to DfE criteria.

Once site options have been fully determined, a new more detailed plan will emerge where all tasks associated with acquiring and commissioning the chosen site will be covered. It is expected that this more detailed plan will incorporate any procurement activities associated with equipping the site. See Section 7 Site.

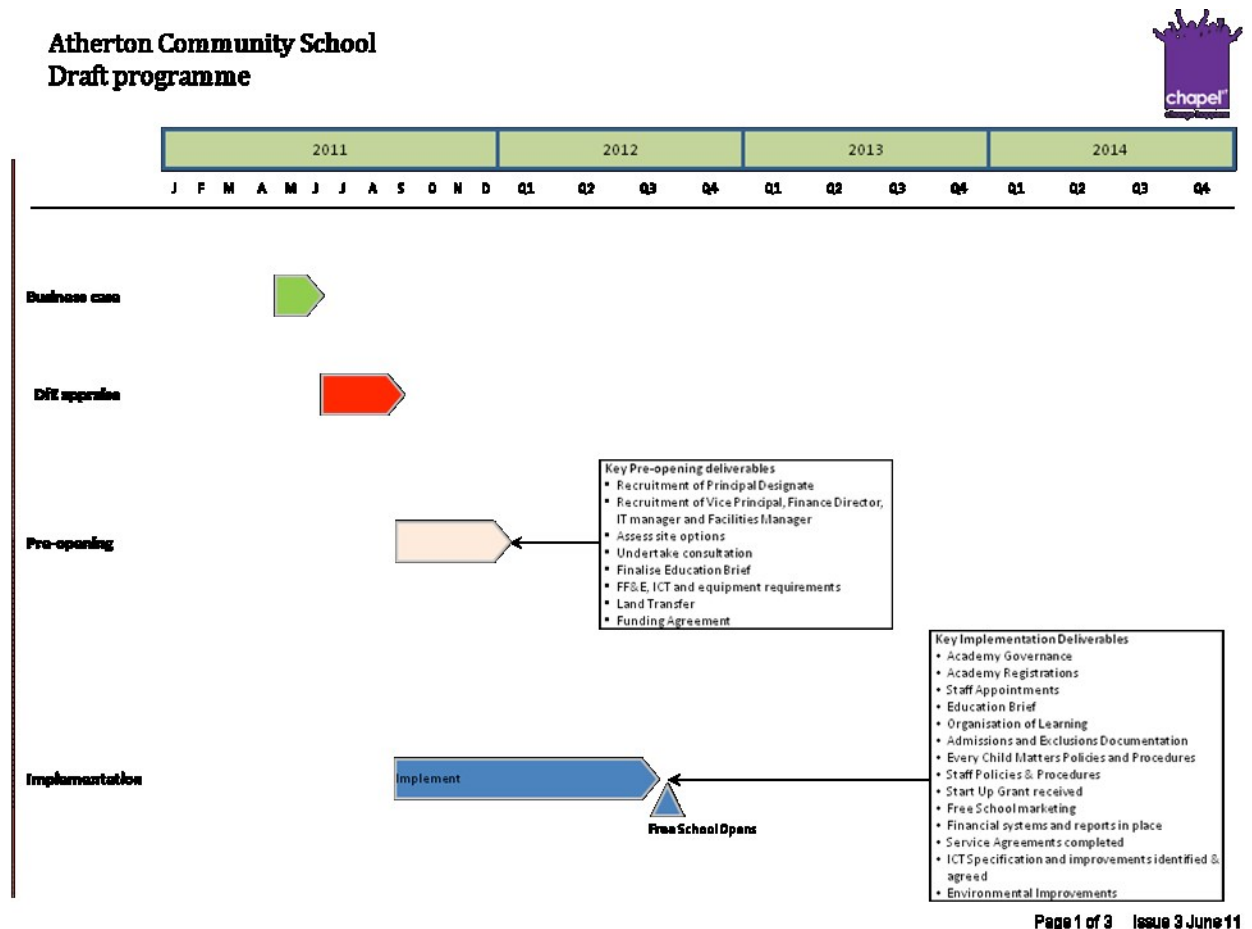
All admissions arrangements have been covered in the pre-opening section of the project plan and Section 4 admissions details the current admissions arrangements and timescales. A crucial factor here is to ensure that we can issue a prospectus in time for September 2011 admissions cycle.

Staff recruitment is included in the implementation section of the plan and is needed to commence in September 2011 for key Leadership team appointments. This is crucial in that the Senior Leadership Team will be instrumental in shaping the School Development Plan once on board. It will be the role of the Principal and SLT to take responsibility for leading and managing day-to-day operations of the school once the school is open. The Principal is accountable to the governors for target-related performance indicators.

The development of new policies and procedures is a significant task during implementation and we expect to generate a detailed checklist to progress all of the required documentation.

## Draft Programme

We have divided the programme into 3 distinct phases. The first has been used to provide an outline of the project and has allowed us to focus upon the business case tasks in particular whilst creating an understanding across the team of overarching milestones, goals and targets:

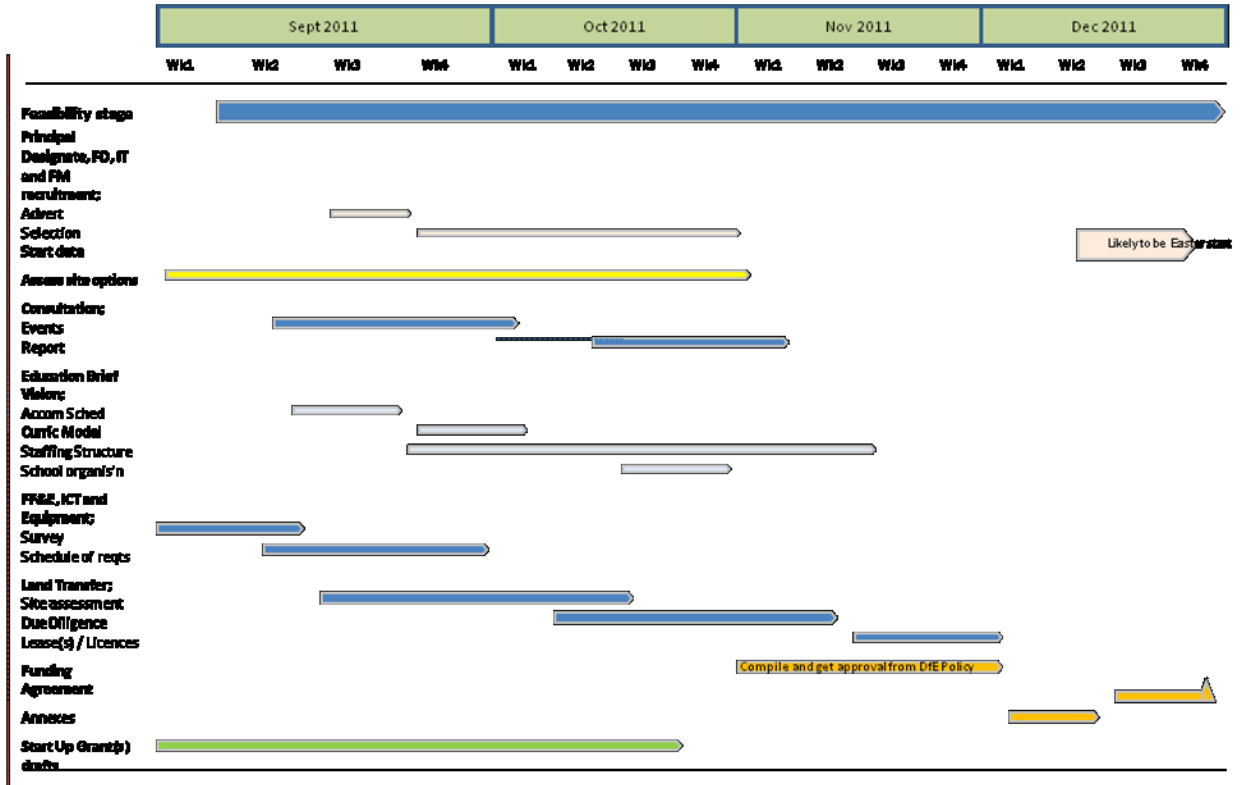


The second page of the overall project plan shows the critical key pre-opening tasks that will enable the Funding Agreement by December 2011. The critical path activities at this stage are predicated upon clear determination of the site and ensuring that the curriculum model can be delivered from the facilities available. Land Transfer activities are also critical and once the business case is approved Due Diligence work must be undertaken to ensure that the site and facilities are health and safety compliant and fit for purpose. Where applicable, we will ensure that we have the necessary indemnification from the LA for any legacy issues.

Recruitment of leadership and the Principal Designate is considered key to the success of the project and as soon as we can be given authority we will initiate suitable recruitment plans. We do understand that there are significant recruitment leadtimes and that a new venture such as this may not yield a

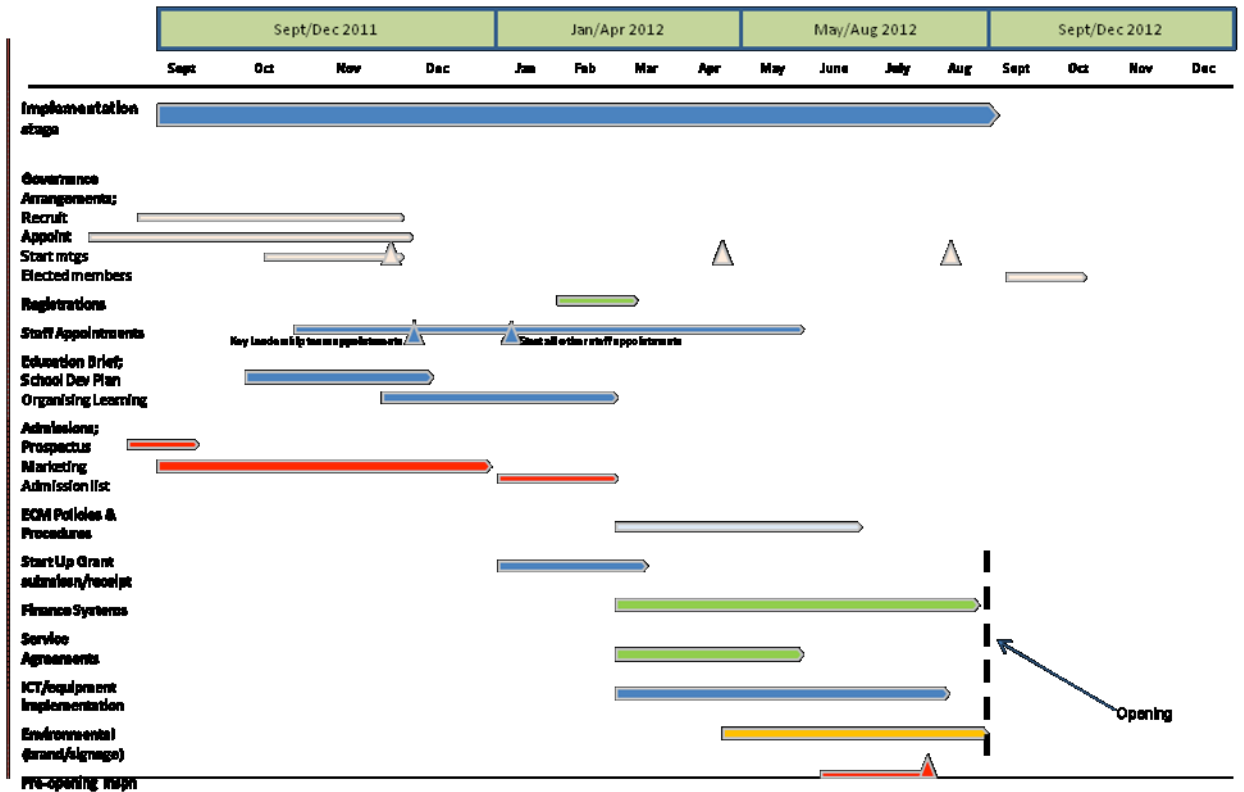
successful candidate immediately (see previous copy with more detail on this):

**Atherton Community School  
Pre-Opening stage**



The third part of the project plan provides much greater detail upon implementation objectives and focuses upon implementing the necessary systems, processes, policies and procedures needed for a successful opening in September 2012. We expect to break many of these tasks into greater detail (sub-plans) as we progress the project:

# Atherton Community School Implementation stage



## Risk Register and Issues Logs:

At Appendix 2 we have included a draft Risk Register and at Appendix 3 a draft Issues Log that will be used to ensure tracking and progress of project risks and issues.

We will use Risk workshops to engage stakeholders in the project once we have achieved business case approval.

## Section 7: Premises

You will need to set out the range of possible site options available for your Free School including details of the preferred site. This information is to allow Partnerships for Schools (PfS) to evaluate your site options. PfS are assisting Free School applicants to secure sites.

You are not required to enter into any negotiations for sites and **must not** do so at this stage. Where an application meets the minimum criteria for consideration, PfS will undertake visits to assess proposed sites for their suitability, procurement plans, and consideration of any work required. We will make an overall cost and value for money assessment of your proposed site options. You must be aware however that if it proves impossible to identify a preferred feasible site by mid-July 2011, it is highly unlikely we will be able to approve your application for opening in 2012. You should bear in mind that those applications that are able to achieve the best overall cost and best overall value for money will naturally be prioritised for approval over those that do not.

### Information Required

#### Possible site options

Please provide brief details of the steps you have taken to search for suitable sites and what sites (if any) are available in the local area.

#### Details of your preferred site

Please set out (where you can):

- your reasons for choosing this site;
- the address of the proposed site;
- the current use of the proposed site;
- the current freeholder of the proposed site;
- a brief description of the site including size (in sqm) and the proposed pupil numbers; and
- the availability of the site and the nature of the tenure.

You **must not** enter into any negotiations for sites at this stage if you are hoping for Government support to purchase your site.

#### Capital investment

Please detail any sources of funding available to you to support site acquisition.

## Evaluation criteria

Minimum Criteria:

For this section, there are no minimum criteria that must be met at the point of submitting your application; however, please note that if it proves impossible to identify a preferred feasible site by mid-July 2011, it is highly unlikely we will be able to approve your application for opening in 2012, simply because of the time available to do whatever is necessary to prepare the site for the opening of the school.

Comparative Criteria:

- We will make an overall value for money and cost assessment of your preferred site options. Applications which are able to achieve the best value for money and best overall cost will naturally be prioritised for approval over those that do not.

## Further Guidance

Guidance on accommodation requirements:

[www.teachernet.gov.uk/curriculumanalysis](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/curriculumanalysis)

Partnerships for schools: <http://www.partnershipsforschools.org.uk> and <http://fsk.partnershipsforschools.org.uk/default.htm>

### Site selection

Fundamental to the vision of Atherton Community School is that it has a fit-for-purpose site that is capable of delivering the educational vision. PfS have been assessing site options on behalf of Chapel St and have conducted an appraisal of available local sites. The long-term requirement for secondary places changes for this area and there is a significant and growing need to provide for places from 2015/16. Investing in a school building that is closing in 2011 will significantly reduce capital and start up costs in later years when a new building will otherwise be required.

The school will have a total of 650 pupils across an 11-19 age range - a 3FE secondary school (450 pupils) and a Sixth Form provision for 200 pupils. The school will grow incrementally, with an intake of 90 into Year 7 in 2012, and growing by 90 secondary places in each subsequent year. Sixth Form provision will commence in 2012 with a cohort of 75 students, a further intake in 2013 of 75 and then 100 per year thereafter. Year on year increases in roll will equate to reaching capacity at Primary phase by 2018/19, Secondary phase by 2017/18 and post-16 by 2014/15. The full capacity at the school will be 650 and this will be achieved in 2016/17.

Phase	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Secondary	90	180	270	360	450	450	450
Post-16	75	150	175	200	200	200	200

To provide for this number and age range of pupils, it is estimated that the school will require a maximum of 5,635 square metres, to deliver the proposed curriculum model. While the school has a tailored curriculum offer, the school requires standard generic secondary aged classrooms, specialist accommodation (e.g. Science, Music and Art, Sports/PE, Drama) and core spaces such as a hall and dining areas. Many areas will be shared by secondary and Sixth Form provision.

DTZ, under Pfs' instruction, have undertaken a site search within Atherton, the geographic area that the school will serve, and slightly further afield (Appendix 5 Site Evaluation Schedule).

A site evaluation has been completed (Appendix 4 Atherton School Site Search Appraisal) that considered the sites against a number of criteria. The prime consideration was location of the site as the school will serve the population of the fairly discreet area of Atherton. Many of the sites identified were considered too far from the determined catchment area for the school.

Only four potential sites, which are within the Atherton area, were considered to be worthy of further consideration. The key strengths and weaknesses of the sites are provided in the attached site options appraisal (Appendix 4 Atherton School Site Search Appraisal). Two of the sites were preferred for reasons of suitability, location and feasibility - the [REDACTED] site and the [REDACTED] site. They are summarised here:

- a) [REDACTED] is an existing [REDACTED] site in LA ownership ([REDACTED] will close in Sept 2011). The LA is establishing [REDACTED] and approximately half of the site would be available for the school to use. Further work is required to determine the sufficiency of the accommodation to meet the school's needs, but at this stage it is anticipated that the buildings will provide at least half of the accommodation that ACS requires. Any shortfall would need to be new build or provided on an alternative site (for example Sixth Form provision could be located elsewhere see b).

There are some covenants on the site that the LA is currently investigating to ascertain if they could restrict development.

The LA has provided detailed information on the condition of the accommodation and it is anticipated that significant refurbishment would be required to make the school operational. There are good sports facilities on the site that the school would access, effectively sharing use with the [REDACTED]. It may be possible to share other facilities with the [REDACTED]. Informal discussions with the [REDACTED] provider have taken place about co-location and how it might be beneficial to both parties.

It is expected that this site would be made available on a leasehold basis at a peppercorn rent, subject to negotiations with the LA. Although this has been discussed informally, the LA is not prepared to enter into formal discussions until the ACS business case has been approved.

- b) Commercial property: [REDACTED] (up to 300,000 sq ft). The site provides two options – (i) land that could be developed for the school, subject to planning, and (ii) some commercial accommodation that could be leased. The commercial property is not sufficient for the school's planned number on roll and some new build would be necessary. There is some greenspace that could be incorporated into a school site, but a park also is located nearby. The leasehold rate to acquire the commercial space is £4.50 per sq ft or freehold it is £65 per sq ft. While the site is available for design and build development on a lease basis, land purchase is another option.

The [REDACTED] site is considered to be expensive, in the context of the [REDACTED] site. The built commercial accommodation could however offer the potential for a short-term interim solution for the school, although it would require some remodelling.

In summary, the [REDACTED] site appears to offer the most deliverable solution and as such it is the preferred site. Further information is provided below about the capital cost and timeline for developing the site.

Discussions with the LA about the site have to date only been informal, with officers providing information upon request. There is, therefore, a need to progress formal discussions with the LA about acquisition of part of the site for the Atherton Community School (ACS) and the terms upon which the site would be available.



## **Site procurement**

While discussions have not yet been held with the LA, it is anticipated that the LA would lease the site to the trust on a 125-year lease basis, at a peppercorn rent, using the standard documentation developed for Academies. It could be necessary for the school to also contribute to the costs of sharing some of the facilities on the site, such as sports pitches or the [REDACTED], which are likely to be retained for the [REDACTED]. Discussions to date with the [REDACTED] provider about co-location have been positive.

## **Capital works**

The LA has recently provided PfS with information and data on the [REDACTED] site and buildings (Appendix 6 [REDACTED]). Following business Case approval, technical advisors [REDACTED] will be instructed to undertake a thorough investigation of the site to determine its feasibility for ACS, and in particular what would be needed to make the school operational.

The LA's plans to use part of the site for a [REDACTED] suggest that insufficient buildings would be available for the school's needs. It also suggests that some of the existing core spaces would not be available and these would therefore need to be provided, such as hall space. Estimates of the capital cost to make the site operational are included below based on two scenarios – a) the accommodation is sufficient and only refurbishment is required to address building condition issues and b) that the existing buildings only provide 1000m<sup>2</sup> of accommodation and significant new build is required. Following further survey work, it is anticipated that the real position will be somewhere in the middle.

An initial curriculum analysis has been developed, which has been used to identify the numbers and types of space that the school will require in an indicative accommodation schedule. The school will operate with some shared areas of accommodation, such as dining facilities which will be designed to serve all age ranges, and shared assembly and performance spaces. It is possible that the school day may be staggered for different age groups and there would be staggered timetabling of areas of shared use. There are preferences for some areas to be separate, for example, separate entrances for secondary and post-16, separate resource centres and play spaces.

The secondary phase accommodation will facilitate learning across year groups. The curriculum will focus on personal learning and thinking skills, with a degree of personalisation within a core curriculum model. Pupils in Key Stage 3 will be taught in home bases with teachers more mobile than pupils for parts of the curriculum that do not require access to specialist accommodation. The home bases would be of standard classroom size for 25-30 pupils.

Technical advisers will consider the accommodation schedule against the layout of the rooms in the existing school buildings that would be available for ACS to use. This will

allow us to determine what revisions would be required and the extent of any new build accommodation.

### **Planning**

There are some planning risks associated with the [REDACTED] site, even though it is an existing school. While the site is large (with significant areas of greenspace and sports facilities), access is currently constrained and there is limited car parking. Planners may object to increases in traffic. Preliminary discussions with planners would need to take place at the earliest opportunity.

### **Interim solution during construction works**

While there is an aspiration for the school to occupy its permanent accommodation from September 2012, this is not likely to be achievable given the timescales to which we are working. During the construction phase, there could be a requirement for interim accommodation. This will depend upon the scope and extent of capital works required for the permanent build solution. The school plans to open in September 2012 with Year 7 intake of 90, which would require accommodation for 90 pupils as well as 75 Sixth Form students. Temporary accommodation units may be required or the leasing of alternative space. Until further details are known, this cannot be costed.

### **Capital costs**

The capital costs as set out below for this project are based on a formulaic approach determined by the planned pupil number and assumptions about the extent of remodel/refurbishment of existing accommodation and any new build requirement.

The change in age range and increase in pupil numbers since the original proposal has impacted on the capital requirement. In relation to the Hamilton Street site, the school's original proposal had anticipated that the school would be able to occupy a greater area of existing accommodation than may be the case. The LA's decision to establish the 14-19 Centre on the site has restricted access to current buildings, creating a potential need for some new build for the school. This is why two different scenarios have been presented to show the likely range of capital cost. Investment in the site would be subject to a value for money exercise.

The capital costs in this business case are only indicative and it should be noted that, depending on the final site solution, they could increase or decrease.

In terms of the construction and F&E budgets, the ACS proposers will develop a scheme that offers value for money and minimises capital expenditure. This approach is already reflected in the school's curriculum model. Every attempt will be made to minimise capital expenditure where possible. For example, procuring used rather than new furniture will be considered and discussions held with the LA about the potential to use legacy furniture from the closing [REDACTED], [REDACTED], if they meet Health and Safety Regulations.

These costs are fully inclusive of new build and internal remodelling works, external works, services, contractor preliminaries, overheads and profit, inflation, project contingency and professional fees, abnormals and any

temporary accommodation requirement.

**Indicative formulaic funding allocation (450 11-16, 200 post-16)**

Item	100% Refurbishment	Refurbishment (1,000m2) and new build extension	Notes on formulaic assumptions
Construction	██████████	██████████	The ratio of new build to refurbishment will alter the allocation. This assumes significant rebuild is required and limited refurbishment.
FF&E	██████████	██████████	Assumes all new F&E, whereas there could be some legacy or second hand. The allocation will also depend on F&E required to deliver the curriculum.
ICT infrastructure	██████████	██████████	██████████ per pupil – the final allocation could be lower, depending on existing infrastructure.
<b>Total D&amp;B</b>	██████████	██████████	
ICT hardware	██████████	██████████	██████████ per pupil. Cost model = (██████████ ███████████) – see
<b>Total</b>	██████████	██████████	

The cost of ICT infrastructure works will depend on the level of infrastructure within any existing buildings. At this stage it should be assumed that the full ██████████ per pupil will be required. The school, however, recognises the cost of installing data in older buildings and will, therefore, consider carefully the

location of activities that require hardwired data cabling (Media, Arts, ICT, CAD/CAM and Music areas). The cost of the broadband connection is not yet known and may need to be treated as an abnormal, additional cost on top of the allocation above, if it is particularly expensive to install.

In terms of capital expenditure on ICT, PfS has developed an initial cost model for ICT hardware and software that would meet the school's needs. This generates an allocation of slightly less than [REDACTED] per pupil, but further work needs to be undertaken to refine this. The school also has a list of other ICT requirements (see ICT section below). PfS will support the proposer in procuring the ICT solution and, therefore, there will be no need for them to incur costs in consultancy support in this regard.

### **Procurement Strategy for Site Works:**

At this stage it is assumed that the building works will be procured and delivered via the PfS Contractors Framework, with the procurement managed by Partnerships for Schools. It is possible, however, that the LA may agree to procure the works through a local framework or for the works to be developed as a second phase of the development of the site for the [REDACTED].

An indicative timescale for the development of the scheme and its procurement and delivery is set out below:

The programme for the site works procurement is:

Instruct T&T to investigate site & develop drawings	01/08/2011
Progress discussion with LA to agree site acquisition/lease	01/09/2011 –
01/12/2011	
Develop procurement documentation	08/11/2011
Issue PITT	08/01/2012
Issue ITT to shortlist	22/01/2012
ITT period	25/01/2012 – 17/03/2012
Preferred member appointment	20/03/2012 – 16/06/2012
Sign Contract	19/06/2012
Commence site works	19/06/2012

For a September 2012 opening, a temporary interim solution may be required based on this procurement timeline. This will be confirmed once there is further clarity about the scope and phasing of works.

### **Site Surveys**

It is anticipated that the following surveys will be required for the works. These will be commissioned as and when appropriate:

- Full building survey including reports on existing fabric, structure and mechanical and electrical installations
- Topographical survey
- Measured survey
- Geotechnical/Site Investigation
- Asbestos (particularly in the buildings proposed for demolition) Type 3
- Drainage
- Ecology/Environmental (Bat survey should be carried out in May 2011)
- Historic land use
- Contamination
- Utilities review
- Flood risk assessment
- Traffic survey
- Legionella risk assessment
- Inspection and testing of existing electrical installation BS7671:2008
- Highways Engineer to provide Scoping Report for agreement with LA Highways

### **Contingency plan**

Should the [REDACTED] site prove unsuitable or unavailable as the site of ACS, the [REDACTED] site would be given further consideration and an alternative site search would be undertaken to ascertain if any other suitable sites have become available. It is likely that an interim solution would be required while an alternative site was procured. The [REDACTED] site could be one possibility for the short-term.

### **Site development**

The Local Authority is also developing a [REDACTED] with Wigan and Leigh College on our preferred site at [REDACTED]. During the next phase of development we will look to develop a Site Operational Board that might also include use of joint facilities for the developing partnerships around 14-19 provision. The partnerships with Fred Longworth High School and Winstanley College offer significant potential to develop a learning village both on site and virtually with Wigan and Leigh College. We will look to work together with Wigan and Leigh College providing support in vocational training and personalised pathways to Further Education and Higher Education.

## Section 8: Initial costs and financial viability

You must demonstrate that the cost of establishing your proposed school and bringing it to full capacity represents value for public money, making best use of available resources while maintaining the school's educational vision and objectives.

You will also need to demonstrate that once at full capacity, the Free School will be financially viable in the long term and sustainable within the per pupil funding which it is likely to receive. Funding for years 2012/13 and beyond is yet to be confirmed and is subject to work on the wider reform of the school funding system, so Free School funding figures for 2011/12 will need to be used when completing this section.

### Information Required

#### Financial spreadsheet and long-term viability

You will need to demonstrate that your proposed Free School will be financially viable and sustainable within the per pupil funding that it is likely to receive once it is at full capacity ('steady state').

**A financial plan template spreadsheet ( )** is provided as a framework to enable you to build up indicative income and expenditure academic year budgets for the proposed school from opening until pupil numbers are forecast to have reached capacity in a consistent way. You should ensure it covers a minimum of five years.

This financial plan template must be used for all proposals for primary, secondary, 16-19 and all-through Free School applications. It should not be used for proposals for alternative provision or special schools – instead, a separate template will be available for those proposals. Instructions for completing the spreadsheet are contained within it.

Your application should also include detailed assessment of how you would manage your budget and remain financially viable if only 90% of places were filled, and/or if the number of pupils eligible for Free School Meals was less than planned, as you would only be receiving funding for the pupils recruited. You might find it best to provide this as an amended version of the financial spreadsheet.

If you are assuming significant income from sources other than DfE grant e.g. third party contributions, you should provide a detailed assessment of how you would manage your budget and remain financial viable if these contributions were significantly less than expected. You might find it best to provide this as an amended version of the financial spreadsheet.

There may be uncertainties in some parts of the budgets. In these areas, you should use your current best estimates, referenced to established benchmark information where available. You should clearly state the assumptions which you have made in the appropriate place in the financial template.

Companies Limited by Guarantee, known also as Academy Trusts, are not permitted by their Funding Agreement to enter into borrowing arrangements without the specific approval of the Secretary of State. Such approval may only be granted in limited circumstances. Academy Trusts are not permitted by their Funding Agreement to carry over excessive balances (presently 12% in total of which 2% can be revenue). Your financial plans should not therefore be predicated on your school being able to borrow or to carry over significant balances of funding from one year to the next.

Your completed financial template(s) should be submitted alongside your main application.

### **Start-up funding**

Start-up funding is intended to enable a new school to cover essential costs when the school opens, such as employing a headteacher and buying books and equipment, where these costs could not otherwise be met by the per pupil funding initially received.

Start-up funding guidance and a template is included in the financial spreadsheet to allow you to see how much of this funding is likely to be needed by your Free School proposal. Most elements of start-up funding are calculated on a formulaic basis which is based on the number of pupils the school will have.

**Formulaic** elements of start-up funding include funding for books, materials and equipment, post-opening recruitment costs and some initial senior staff training. These formulaic elements will automatically complete in the financial spreadsheet once you have entered pupil and teacher number information.

There is also some funding available to meet the diseconomy of scale costs of employing senior staff when the school opens, when not all of the pupil cohorts are yet at the school. This funding is calculated on a school by school basis, depending on the way the pupil cohorts are building up and which senior staff are essential for a particular school to be able to operate. The **staffing diseconomy** lines of the spreadsheet are blank for you to complete, so you will need to estimate how much diseconomy funding your school will need as a minimum while building up your pupil cohorts. As a guide, a school which has 500 pupils and is starting with 100 pupils will have 20% of its pupils in the first year, so might expect diseconomy funding to cover 80% of the headteacher's salary in the first year. Diseconomy funding should reduce proportionately as

pupil numbers build up.

~~Please note that independent schools becoming Free Schools will not normally be eligible for start-up funding.~~

### **~~Prior year audited financial statements (existing independent schools only)~~**

~~Existing independent schools seeking to become Free Schools should submit their last two years' audited financial statements with their completed application form. An up to date set of audited accounts must be produced before we can approve your application. If you are unable to provide audited accounts please explain why and supply an alternative.~~

## **Evaluation Criteria**

Minimum Criteria:

- **Demonstrate that the proposal to establish the school represents value for money in the use of public funding - any additional funding considered necessary e.g. staffing diseconomies, above that provided through the per pupil funding formula and any formulaic start-up funding, should be kept to the absolute essential items to provide a balanced budget whilst ensuring that the educational vision of the school can still be delivered;**
- **Demonstrate that the planned school will be financially sustainable once there is a cohort of pupils in each year (as an expectation, this means generating in year operating surpluses);**

Comparative Criteria:

- **Show that the planned school would be financially resilient to reductions in income caused by failure to recruit pupils to your best estimate recruitment pattern or failure to receive contributions from third party sources (where these are expected to be significant) - as a minimum, this means demonstrating that there is sufficient flexibility in the budget so that the school will be able to realistically change its expenditure to keep within reduced levels of income, without detriment to the delivery of the educational vision;**
- **Financial plans that are consistent with other aspects of the application and are based on supportable and realistic assumptions about income and expenditure; and**
- ~~For existing independent schools, show that the existing school has a good track record of financial management and that there are no other existing financial issues which would impact on the transfer to academy~~



status.

## Further Guidance

Academy Financial Handbook – [REDACTED]

Visit the Schools Benchmarking website to see examples of maintained school finances: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

### Financial Plans

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### Financial Planning

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**For the Financial Plan Templates please see Appendix 7 and 7a (90% intake model).**

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**Background and data used in the plans**

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## Pupil numbers build up and start up phase

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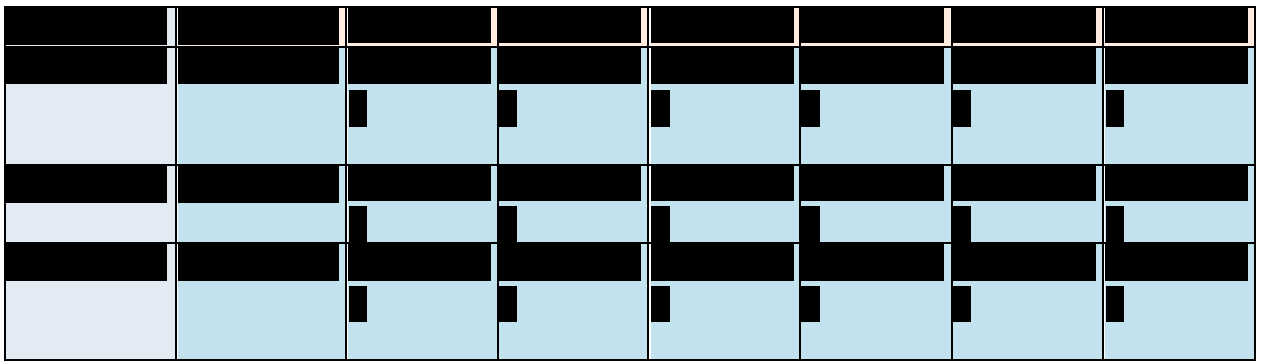
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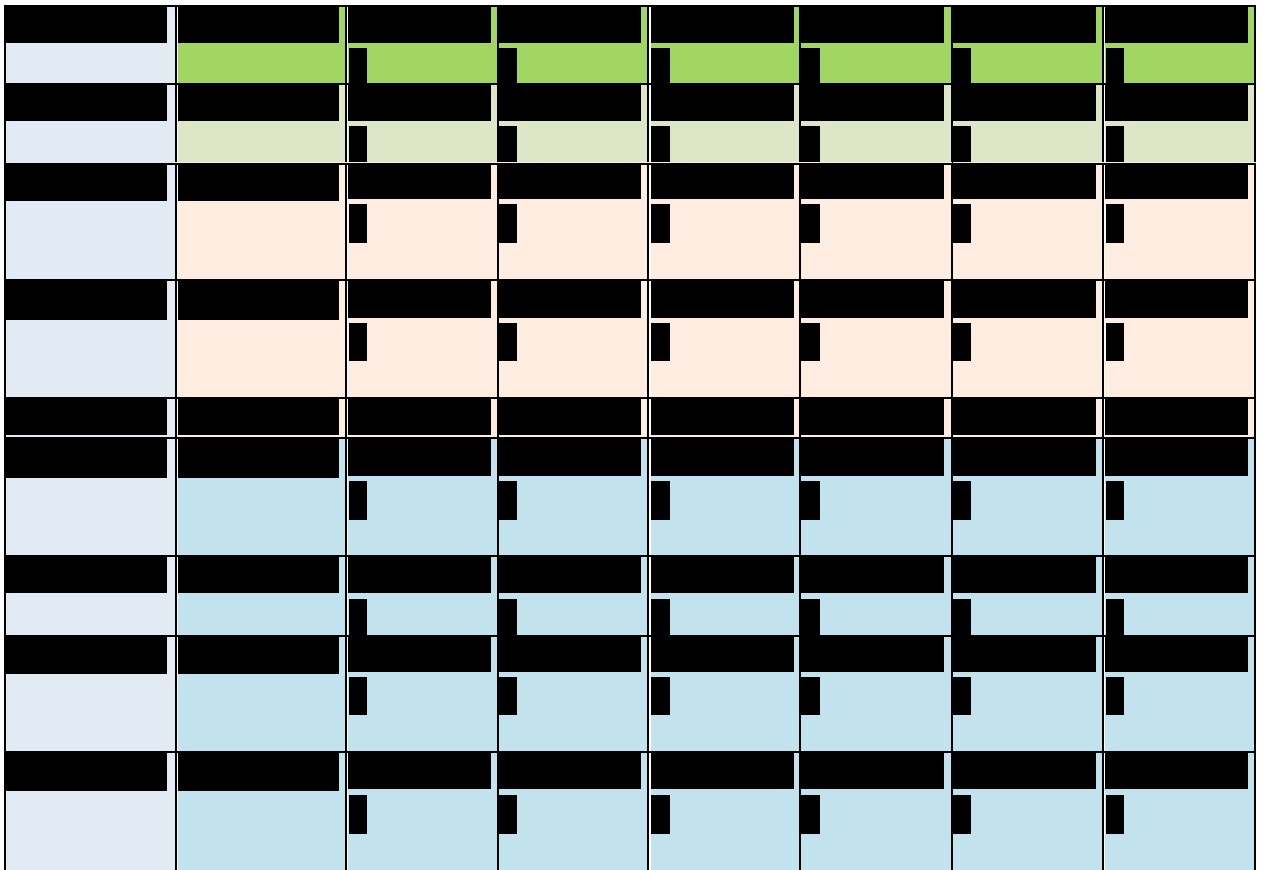
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