

Free Schools - Proposal Form

The Proposal Form asks you for details on the educational rationale, aims and objectives, parental demand and premises of the proposed Free School. It also asks questions about the suitability of the provider(s) involved. All new Free Schools will be opened with the same legal status as Academies, in a binding agreement with the Secretary of State.

Please note, all information provided in this form will be published on the Department for Education website.

INITIAL DETAILS

Name (Please specify if you are the nominated representative of an organisation that wishes to set up a Free School)

██████████

Name of your organisation

Tauheedul Islam Boys' High School

Address (of organisation or individual)

██████████, Blackburn, ██████████

Email Contact ██████████

Telephone Number

██████████

Are you an existing independent school wanting to convert to a Free School?

No

If yes, please provide your 6-digit school unique reference number (URN)

If no, please confirm the nature of your organisation (educational group / charity / business / parent group etc)
Educational Group

Please confirm whether your organisation is incorporated i.e. set up as a Company which is registered at Companies House. If so, please provide the Company Registration Number, Company Address and details of the Directors and Secretary. If not, please indicate the approximate date by which it will be incorporated.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, our organisation is incorporated
Company Registration Number: 7353849
Company Address: [REDACTED], Blackburn, [REDACTED]
Details of Directors and Secretary: See key individual/trustees section
<input type="checkbox"/> No, our organisation is not yet incorporated
Approximate date by which it will be incorporated:

What is the proposed age range of the Free School? Please include details of planned pupil numbers in each year group.

The New Tauheedul Islam Boys' High School is seeking approval to open as a 525-place 11 – 18 secondary school for boys.			
The new school will open in stages and we set out below how we shall open with years 7 and 8 in our first year and 'grow' through the next five or six years until we are fully recruited at all ages up to 18.			
Year	AGE	Num of Pupils	Total of pupils in school
September 2012	Yrs 7 & 8	150	150
September 2013	Year 9	75	225
September 2014	Year 10	75	300
September 2015	Year 11	75	375
September 2016	Year 12	75	450
September 2017	Year 13	75	525

When do you hope the Free School will start operating (for your first set of pupils)?

The sponsors are planning to open the doors of the new school in September 2012.

They have taken a realistic approach to the planning and operational timescales associated with the launch of their Free School, to be known as the Tauheedul Islam Boys' High School.

Local parental pressure for an early start is considerable and for that reason the sponsors examined all the options open to them, but considered that the risks associated with a premature launch were too great given the size and importance of the task to be faced.

The sponsors have operated successfully in harmony with the local authority and intend to comply with the admission process it operates across the borough. Good progress is already being made:

- interim governance arrangements are in place, including a Steering Group to take the application and planning process forward;
- professional sub-groups and workstreams have been established drawing on staff and governors currently working in the Voluntary Aided Tauheedul Islam Girls' High School (TIGHS) as well as from the local community – and development plans are close to completion.

These practical blueprints for starting and operating the new school will reach into all operational areas of the school and specifically relate to:

- finance and resources;
- curriculum;
- teaching and learning;
- professional development;
- admissions, inclusion and extended services.

The Steering Group has also made a number of key operational decisions:

- its planning assumes that staff recruitment will commence in September 2011;
- the current buildings of the girls' school will be the home of the new school;
- should delay occur which prevented the girls' school moving to its new site this would not interfere with the timely opening of the new boys' school since there are 25 additional rooms in the new co-located mosque building which could be used for the boys' school;
- an asset management plan is in the process of being completed;
- a report on pupil place planning in Blackburn with Darwen has been commissioned.

The sponsors are of the view that while the pressure for a large boys' school opening at the earliest opportunity is considerable, there are grounds for taking a more measured approach. While it undoubtedly would be better for a variety of reasons, both operational (staffing, accommodation and finance) and strategic (impact, reach into the community and speed), if the school

opened with a substantial initial intake of pupils from day one, it makes sense to plan for a staged approach.

As a result the sponsors see that the benefits of a more modest intake each year can be balanced by securing local authority support which will bring security as well as a partnership that is important to them. Accordingly the sponsors believe that a lower yearly intake, coupled with an accelerated process of increasing the numbers of years of intake to reach the point where the school will be operational at all ages up to Year 13, should be approved.

An intake in September 2012 restricted to Year 7 pupils only would imply a gradual process of growth taking 7 years until all years were fully served by the school.

The preference of the sponsors would be to recruit pupils to years 7 and 8 in 2012.

However, they recognise that this could impact on partner secondary schools in the Borough and would require them to give due consideration to how they would mitigate this during the business planning stage. They also know that to build sufficient capacity for an initial intake of year 7 and 8 pupils from scratch will be challenging but are confident that they have the skills, expertise and resources to make this happen.

In which Local Authority area will the school be based? If you are near to a LA boundary, please include name of neighbouring LA(s)

Local Authority Blackburn with Darwen

Neighbouring LAs Lancashire

Is your Local Authority aware of your intention to set up a Free School?

Yes

(If Y please give details of your discussions with them so far)

The sponsors have held more than six meetings with Local Authority staff including officers at all levels including the [REDACTED] and the [REDACTED].

While differences of opinion exist (for example regarding the impact of the exercise of parental preferences on recruitment across the borough once the Free School opens), as well as of emphasis (such as how far Blackburn boys are disadvantaged under the current disposition of school places across the borough), discussions have been amicable and concessions made on both sides.

The matters under discussion have included:

- the expectations, indeed fears, of the local authority that the proposed boys school will prove to be so popular with local parents that it will result in significant numbers of vacant places arising at local schools. If these fears were borne out the local authority could find that the range and the richness of the educational experience available to the pupils at these schools would be diminished;
- fears, specifically from the financial perspective, that the new Free School by attracting pupils away from other schools in the borough due to be re-built as part of the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme, may lead to subsequent financial losses to the borough, as the PFI underpinning for the school building programme is affected.

The Free School sponsors, for their part, have made it clear that they wish to work with the local authority to manage sensitively and therefore mitigate any possible negative effects that could arise, as a result of the approval by the DFE of the Tauheedul Boys Free School.

Working closely with the local authority to address their concerns, the sponsors have given assurances that they will:

- reduce – and in their opinion significantly - the proposed admission number from 120 to 75 in recognition of the need to mitigate impact on existing provision;
- maintain their commitment (as Lead Education Partner) to continue working with Blakewater College to ensure that its intake is not under-subscribed and its new PFI building remains viable;

- re-affirm the determination (already expressly given and welcomed by the borough) to work with other PFI schools in Blackburn with Darwen to ensure that these schools are not under-subscribed as a result of the opening of the Free School;
- develop a wider communications and engagement plan than hitherto intended, which will hopefully ensure that the new school will attract students both from further afield and also back from the independent sector, which will lead to a recruitment outcome that in the first two years of operation will minimise the impact on other Blackburn schools.

The sponsors intend to invite the LA to join the steering group during the business planning stage, to ensure that whilst the school will be an independent state-funded school, it remains an integral part of the local education plan and can make a strong and sustainable contribution to delivering the council's core objectives.

Have you discussed your proposal form with the New Schools Network?

Yes

(If Y please give details of your discussions with them so far)

There have been a number of conversations between the sponsors and staff of NSN in recent months. These conversations focused on practical matters and on the likely extent of supportive interest from parents. As a result plans have been slightly modified and the formal expression of interest prepared by the Sponsors has been expanded and improved.

The advice received by the sponsors has both encouraged them to believe that they could be among the first proposals to gain the approval of the Secretary of State, and impressed on them the importance of making the plans exciting, ambitious but at all times utterly practical.

Accordingly the sponsors now fully recognise the stages they need to go through in order to create the local conditions, and secure the desired environment in which the school can operate effectively from the outset.

SUITABILITY OF PROVIDER

The Secretary of State will consider each proposal on its merits, and take into account all matters relevant to that proposal. Generally, he would expect that all proposals will comply with all aspects of the rigorous suitability and vetting tests throughout the application process, including due diligence and CRB checks and will reject any proposers who advocate violence, intolerance, hatred or whose ideology runs counter to the UK's democratic values.

Do any of the following apply to the organisation (or any consortium member), or to (any of) its director(s)/partners/proprietor(s) or individual applicants (select Y/N):	
Is in a state of bankruptcy, insolvency, compulsory winding up, receivership, composition with creditors (including any Individual Voluntary Arrangement), or subject to an Administration Order or any legal proceedings concerning their solvency?	No
Has been convicted of a criminal offence?	No
Is involved in any illegal activities?	No
Has not fulfilled obligations related to payment of taxes?	No
Is guilty of serious misrepresentation in supplying information?	No
Is not in possession of relevant licences or membership of an appropriate organisation where required by law?	No
Is barred from certain work with children as a result of being:	
[a] included in the list of those barred from Regulated Activity with children, kept by the Independent Safeguarding Authority? Or	No
[b] included in the list kept under section 1 of the Protection of Children Act 1999(4) (list of those considered by the Secretary of State as unsuitable to work with children)? Or	No
[c] subject to a direction of the Secretary of State under section 142 of the Education Act 2002 (5) (or any other disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in such a direction)? Or	No

<p>[d] disqualified from working with children under sections 28, 29 or 29A of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000(6)?</p> <p>For further information on [a], [b], [c] and [d], please contact the CRB www.crb.homeoffice.gov.uk.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Is disqualified from registration under Part 10A of the Children Act 1989(7) for child minding or providing day care?</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Is disqualified from registration under Part 3 of the Childcare Act 2006(8)?</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Is a member, or has been a member in the past, of a proscribed organisation?</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>If the answer to any of these questions is “Yes” please give details below:</p>	

EDUCATIONAL RATIONALE, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Briefly outline your reasons for wanting to set up a Free School. Max 200 words.

“This gives me hope that my son can fulfil his dream. He could be the first from our family to go to university. His ambition is to become a doctor”
(Blackburn Parent)

The Governing Body of Tauheedul passionately believes that boys in Blackburn deserve to attend an unambiguously world-class school. Creating a boys school with the same all-embracing philosophy as the Tauheedul Islam Girls’ High School (TIGHS) has long been a unifying ambition for the people of Blackburn.

The Tauheedul ‘brand’ has triumphed – in one of the bleakest urban landscapes in England. Outstanding GCSE grades have lifted girls from under-privileged homes into higher education and the professions.

Standards of attainment in local schools, in spite of efforts to drive improvement by the LA, nevertheless fall substantially short of those repeatedly recorded in TIGHS.

In most LA schools fewer than 50% boys achieve 5 A*-C GCSEs including English and Maths - only two schools do better but faith-based admission policies mean few Muslim boys can attend them. In TIGHS, 98% of girls from similar communities achieve 5 A* - C with English and Maths.

The Tauheedul Mosque will become the religious authority for the Free School and the new institution will be established in such a way that it benefits from:

- the same philosophy of teaching and learning as TIGHS;
- access to resources and specialist expertise derived from TIGHS;
- empowerment of learners as a result of innovations adapted from TIGHS.

Pressure from parents, the logic of establishing a school for boys that will match the astonishing success of TIGHS and lift the achievements of traditionally disadvantaged boys, not to mention the determination of a committed group of successful entrepreneurs and public sector leaders who have rallied behind the opportunity to create a Free School, have driven the proposal forward.

For these reasons and to these groups of people the case for its approval seems irresistible.

Please set out the Free School's aims and objectives. You should also describe:

- the teaching methods that will be used and whether the Free School will follow a particular philosophy (eg Montessori);
- the outline of the Free School's proposed curriculum, including any religious ethos;
- how the Free School will improve pupil learning and ensure strong discipline;

Max 2000 words.

Vision/ Mission.

The Free School will be a new institution that delivers educational excellence for boys in Blackburn with Darwen, offering a curriculum structured to meet their academic, social, spiritual and career needs.

It will provide a specialist educational resource delivering excellence in entrepreneurship and sport.

Whilst on the one hand aiming to set standards that match those considered 'elite' the sponsors are clear that they are not aiming to establish an elitist institution. The Free School will aim to inspire young people drawn from the whole community in Blackburn with Darwen.

Combined with a climate of rigorous learning, and a personal ethos that expects the achievement of the highest possible standards, the boys in the Free School (like the girls in TIGHS) will undergo what will amount to a 'transformational' experience.

The Free School will adopt values that prioritise the potential of the individual, but at the same time expect its pupils to realise they contribute to society's well-being. To this end the sponsors expect them to progress towards a new, relevant, and inspirational qualification: the Tauheedul Diploma.

This belief that the interaction of individual goals with obligations to society reflects the underlying spirit of the Free School initiative.

The confidence is not based on a fuzzy dream of a future built on nothing more than hope. Rather it is rooted in the actual experience of working with a disadvantaged but ambitious section of the local Blackburn with Darwen community – and from that experience the sponsors know they can create a school for boys in which high-achievement becomes the norm.

Aims.

The Free School will aim to develop a template of educational levers that will lead its pupils to success. Boys from the age of 11 will experience a rigorous learning process that prepares them for the excitement of achievement by:

- undergoing a progressive and modern education;
- learning in a specialist centre of excellence in Entrepreneurship and Sports;
- studying a curriculum addressing their personal, academic, spiritual and social needs;

- undergoing an education that prepares them for working life;
- using the most modern methods of curriculum delivery including electronic and digital technology;
- embracing an organisational ethos based on faith (Islam), aspiration, rewarding excellence, valuing achievement, community service, personal effectiveness, and creativity, alongside a climate expressing rigour and discipline in learning.

Objectives.

The Free School's principal objective will be to ensure that those boys graduating at 16 or 18 are equipped with the skills, attitudes and qualifications to enable them to progress to:

- further study in higher education and in advanced further education;
- enter the world of work in organisations based locally or nationally; or
- enter a wide range of occupations as trainee professionals.

In addition, the Free School will see its own responsibility as:

- making its pupils active and effective contributors to their local communities as active citizens in society; and
- helping its pupils be ready to undertake a leadership role in their chosen field of activity and to be enterprising in all that they undertake.

Ethos.

The sponsors believe that distinctive approaches to teaching and learning will need to be deployed. The emphasis will be on process and practice rather than simply on course content:

- Faith will be at the heart of the pastoral curriculum; the ethos of the School will be Islamic but with an approach that has connections with and relevance for people of all faiths;
- Excellence in both process and outcomes will govern every aspect of the school's work;
- healthy competition will permeate the life and conduct of the school;
- a green and sustainable agenda will be vigorously pursued;
- Internationalisation must be at the heart of every thing the school does;
- Service, respect and citizenship – developing the responsibility of the individual to himself, to his peers, to his local community and to the broader society
- the School itself will become a resource in and for its community.

Curriculum.

The School's curriculum must clearly be in step with the overall objectives of the Tauheedul 'brand'. Tauheedul as it has been deployed in TIGHS represents a unique and valuable message that has blended high aspiration, personal commitment, individual support and advice with a teaching philosophy that has targeted high standards of achievement for all.

To achieve the transfer of the success achieved in the Girls' School to a new

boys' school the curriculum must operate at three levels and address its pupils' academic, personal and social development. In addition there will be an internal institutional qualification which will provide a framework for all pupils to work through.

To provide this staged ladder of achievement, all students will work towards the Tauheedul Diploma in addition to G.C.S.E. and G.C.E. 'A' levels. The Tauheedul Diploma will provide a means of recognising, and accrediting, the advanced generic and effective skills that they will have developed through additional curriculum experiences.

Through its taught and its extra-mural curriculum, the School will become a specialist centre of excellence in entrepreneurship and sports. Its ethos will be compatible with the government's vision of a Big Society. By that the sponsors mean that pupils will assume greater personal responsibility, and recognise that as citizens they have a duty to participate in the society they belong to.

The Free School intends to deliver the full National Curriculum but to engage this structure with a tri-partite learning and support framework.

The three individual layers of curriculum richness will provide different components for the pupils:

1. Academic level

At the core of the Free School will be a specialist and obligatory menu for all pupils of academic subjects (leading to the proposed English 'Bac') including English, mathematics, sciences, languages, humanities, arts and technology, with content driven by the syllabuses and specifications of national examinations and delivered to the curriculum principles described below.

2. Personal level

Concurrently with the core academic level, pupils will participate in a programme of personal development including sports, cultural, creative and other extra-mural activities. This will help pupils develop key personal skills and aptitudes including oral communication, personal effectiveness, entrepreneurship, self-actualisation, problem-solving and enhanced emotional intelligence. These extra-curricular parts of the learning offer to the pupils will be at the heart of the school.

The sponsors will establish, and urgently seek to raise contributions to, a Tauheedul Islam Boys High School Endowment Fund. To make the Fund contribute an essential element to the new school, the Fund will operate as follows:

- High profile local, national and international businesses will be approached to be 'Ambassadors' for the school;
- Other smaller donors will be asked to become regular financial contributors to this fund;
- Every student of the school will be allocated an annual allowance to undertake extra-curricular activities (outside the school) they might not otherwise be able to afford.

3. Social development level (Preparing for the Big Society)

Thirdly, the curriculum for older students will be structured to help the development of citizenship, social enterprise and community service. This approach will be in addition, but complementary, to the National and International Citizen Service being proposed by the government. Senior pupils will acquire, through a range of individualised programmes, insights into social education and experiential community activities, with 'hands-on' and participative learning to the fore. The sponsors see this part of the overall academic agenda as contributing to the emerging 'Big Society' concept as outlined by government.

For example, Key Stage 4 students may have the opportunity to undertake an extended placement working for a charity or for another community organisation. Key Stage 5 students might undertake a 'finishing' element to acquaint them with the customs, mores, behaviours and expectations of contemporary adult and professional life.

The overall structure of the curriculum and the flexible approaches to students' own learning support will allow brighter students to be 'fast-tracked' through G.C.S.E. and A Level syllabuses; it will also allow '1-to-1' and small group support to be delivered to students who require it.

As a result each student will be supported to move to external examinations at the speed that is best for them. Personalised excellence is not easily delivered in a school which contains pupils from all backgrounds and with differing capacities. Nevertheless the sponsors recognise that every pupil has it in him (or her) to achieve excellence in one or more areas and the Free School will ensure that progress towards individual excellence features in the report cards of every pupil.

The principles that will be applied through the proposed curriculum approaches will have real significance in shaping pupils' moral and spiritual development and will make a substantial contribution to their overall education and development.

Learning and Teaching.

The School will employ a 'managed' approach to teaching, with staff supported in maintaining the highest standards of good practice. Special arrangements for appointing teaching staff and operating individualised in-service development programmes will be built into the school's management processes.

TIGHS has already successfully fostered valuable links with local universities. The Free School will also aim to benefit from the curriculum, teaching and staff development opportunities the spread of these links to the boys' school can offer.

The sponsors will look at the options available for workforce reform and at the structures of the school day, week and year during the business planning stage.

Pupils will be encouraged and supported to maximise their attainment, and positively motivated to secure the highest levels of success in external examinations.

Each student will have a personalised learning plan and undergo regular target setting and review meetings with a member of the senior leadership team. Students failing to meet their personal target will be expected to attend intervention and 'one-2-one' lessons until they are back on target. All students will attend an intense programme of revision study during evenings, weekends and holidays.

Both pupil and staff performance will be at the centre of learning Quality Management through the smart use of data tracking and structured target setting, progress reviews, a full academic tutorial system and a robust quality assurance process, including a focused programme of self assessment, observation and feedback. The approach will be one of progressively setting - and achieving - challenging targets for both teachers and students.

The School will make full use of technology. Every class-room will be equipped with interactive whiteboards and all pupils will be provided with their own laptop. Since all students employ highly personal learning styles, the school will help students to choose their own preferred learning materials and, so far as is possible, adapt the curriculum to offer diversity in approaches to learning.

Every Child Matters.

The sponsors recognise that they have wider statutory responsibilities under the Child Protection duties embedded in the Children's Act. This requires a range of conscious efforts both by the school and in concert with other public bodies including the local authorities and the health authorities to share information about vulnerable children.

To indicate the Free School's commitment, however, we propose to:

- provide a comprehensive Information, Advice and Guidance service for all students;
- establish an 'Every Child Matters' (ECM) Panel to monitor and track the progress of children at risk or thought to be at risk;
- a personal tutor for every pupil who will be regarded as part of a form group and house system;
- work closely with TIGHS and also with a 'cluster' of local primary schools to ensure that a complete range of integrated children's services are available and accessible.

The school will develop through its Business Planning process a comprehensive pastoral system. The objectives of the system will be to provide a prevailing culture that could perhaps be described as 'Tough Love' - offering rigorous support but expecting nothing but the best in terms of effort and endeavour from the pupils.

Special Educational Needs.

The school's policy will reflect the Blackburn with Darwen SEN strategy drawn

up by its SEN Strategy group.

Provision will be in line with all other secondary schools in the district and with best practice.

Parental Engagement.

The School will seek to engage parents extensively. They will be expected to make a commitment to this effect during the induction process.

The School will seek to establish a 'hard-edged' register of parental engagement through the development of a detailed programme, that will include a 'performance report card' process presented to parents on seven occasions during the year. This will be followed up with performance review meetings with parents on seven occasions during the year.

The school will establish a system of live daily updates to parents on their child's progress and performance, delivered electronically.

The Extended School.

The Free School plans to develop rapidly as an 'extended school' and make itself a resource for the whole community. This will help to develop the objective of parental engagement. It is expected that the Free School will establish a wide range of community support activities including, for example, educational psychology and counselling, adult workforce development, and the training of teachers.

The Free School will bid to host a 'National Centre for Community Organising' based at the school, intended to train community organisers who will then help their own communities to tackle the individual social challenges they face.

The Free School will host a Big Society Day each year to which all local schools will be invited: the purpose will be outward-looking and collegiate, contributing to the growth of a common community purpose and signifying a willingness to share in the raising of standards and aspiration across the town. In everything it does, the Free School will work co-operatively with the local authority as well as with all other schools in Blackburn with Darwen as part of a shared commitment to raise standards through partnership, illustrating how the school will stand four-square at the heart of the borough and support curriculum excellence and higher levels of attainment everywhere.

Admissions.

The School will be located in an area of Blackburn that includes some of the most deprived wards in the country, and the School will serve this local community as well as being available for pupils living elsewhere in Blackburn. The sponsors are quite determined that the Free School shall become, and be seen to have become, a fully inclusive school.

The admissions policy will give priority to students with Special Education Needs and also to the small but vulnerable group of children in the care of the local authority.

The Free School, like its sister school (TIGHS), will adopt a faith-based criterion to govern the admission process for 50% of the places at the school.

The sponsors are working with stakeholders to agree the specific faith-based criteria for the school. The other 50% of places will be allocated to pupils who are of other faiths or who express no faith commitment at all.

The admission policy will also give preference to families with social and other needs. By these means, which will be publicised prominently, the Free School will signal to the wider community as well as to public bodies, employers and other educational institutions that it is for the community as well as part of it.

The Free School will make itself a key part of the network of local schools and not a separate entity that lacks social cohesion. Accordingly the Free School is determined that to succeed it must:

- ensure key bodies and individuals are aware of the Free School and its modus operandi;
- engage fully with parents, both prospective and enrolled, so that they come to share in the school's vision for the entire community while involving themselves actively in the education of their own children;
- develop comprehensive ways (such as Open Days, visiting speakers, using local media, organising pupil exchanges, school twinning arrangements) of reaching out to more deprived pupils and their families in Blackburn with Darwen; and
- function innovatively as an educational resource for the whole community.

What are your organisation's core areas of work / aims? Max 500 words.

The sponsoring organisation that is driving the Free School application is well-qualified both to bring the new school into existence and successfully to manage its launch and in the longer run its effective operation.

Given its history over almost 30 years (6 years in the governance of a VA school) the Governing Body of one of the most successful and most improved schools in England (according to government and OFSTED statistics) are the sponsors of the Tauheedul Free School.

Manifestly, they have knowledge and expertise of a school start-up and the credit for a striking pupil improvement that will be transferable. TIGHS has already acquired 'Outstanding' status as an 11 – 16 school (is due for re-designation as an 11 – 19 school in 2012) and has strong grounds for its confidence.

The Free School sponsors can also show the effectiveness of their core business. For example, TIGHS has :

- been included in the top 100 English schools based on its Contextual Value Added (the extent to which pupil performance has improved when compared with schools with similar prior attainment);
- an almost unique identity as a Specialist Humanities College with Citizenship as its lead subject;
- seen the numbers of pupils securing 5 A*-C GCSE passes including English and Maths in 2009 reach the astonishing figure of 98%;
- been identified by OFSTED as an 'Outstanding School'

Its willingness to share its expertise and to support other schools as they strive to improve themselves can be illustrated by its:

- involvement in the sixth-form and Higher Education partnership with Blackburn;
- prominent role as Lead Education Partner on the East Blackburn Learning Community Trust.

In the expectation that the Tauheedul girls' school will over the next few years establish a network of schools under the Tauheedul 'brand', a Strategic Plan has been drawn up, which will explain how the model pioneered in Blackburn might be 'franchised' across the country to community groups that support its underpinning philosophy.

Although the proposed timescale is speculative at the moment, TIGHS will be hoping to work with the Department for Education to support other groups of parents who wish to explore the Free School model. Such an offer to help would be extended to groups in any part of the country, and equally to those groups of parents aiming at a Tauheedul model and to those aiming at their own 'brand' of Free School.

It should also be noted that the sponsors have in the past, and will in the future, consistently maintain an outward-looking perspective on faith and on community cohesion. This stance will reassure other schools in the area, and also local employers, that the Free School will be a 'team-player', and a

strong partner for employers in developing the skills they require. The local authority should be able to regard the Free School as an asset in its strategic planning for regeneration, social cohesion and longer-term prosperity across the region.

What capacity and capability do you have (or have access to) in order to deliver the educational vision set out above? Please indicate the resources, experience and expertise (educational and legal) that you have or have access to. Max 500 words.

The governors of TIGHS successfully established it as a VA school and saw dramatic improvements in GCSE scores, so much so, that it is currently rated by OFSTED as an 'Outstanding' school.

As the sponsoring organisation for the Free School it has both internal strengths on which it can draw, plus a team of external advisers of the highest calibre that will provide the Sponsors with business acumen and high-level expertise.

It already has proven expertise in setting up and running a school, specifically by:

- managing the transition in 2006 from Independent to a VA School;
- providing school improvement support through the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (SSAT) and the Association Of Muslim Schools;
- supporting other Faith Schools secure VA Status (e.g. working with Bolton Muslim Girls' School);
- becoming Lead Education Partner on the East Blackburn Learning Community Trust;
- supporting (with great success) Blakewater College through the National Challenge Scheme since December 2009;
- developing partnerships at local, national and international levels;
- managing 'Organisational Development' and 'Change Management' programmes through planning for the local BSF programme;
- contributing to the Blackburn Education Improvement Partnership - a network where schools together produce efficiencies and economies of scale.

The Sponsors of the Free School have assembled a team of nationally recognised partners. They feel fortunate to have access to such nationally recognized firms and feel confident that given the DFE approval to commence the Free School project, the role of the partners will assume greater significance in building the under-pinning structures and management systems for the school.

Each brings with it a variety of management skills that will give critical assistance to the sponsors over the two years of planning for opening.

██████████ – project management expertise
are large ██████████ ,

who are used to handling complex and demanding projects.

They will provide project management and support to the Free School application assisting to manage the business case and strategic plan development process.

Following successful approval, they will assist with the establishment of the new school as required.

Their specific roles, as well as project management oversight and advice, include:

- accommodation, building adaptations, deadlines and quality assurance;
- contract letting, procurement, and managing on-time delivery.

██████████ - accountancy excellence

One of the largest accountancy and business service providers across a significant number of sectors, ██████████ can bring a vast range of expertise to the project.

Tauheedul is currently supporting with its own in-house finance team Blakewater College as it tries to reduce its deficits - however the services of ██████████ to provide specialist financial advice during the business planning process will include:

- advising over the management of all aspects of project funding;
- cash flow controls;
- Value for Money.
- benchmarking with other educational establishments

The partnership with ██████████ will also be critical if the sponsors are to succeed in developing a network of Tauheedul schools, and their help with the 'product development' phase of this project will be important.

██████████ - contractual and legal affairs

██████████ is an experienced and internationally renowned law firm; it has indicated to the sponsors that it is willing to provide legal and HR support.

These areas of expertise will be of importance at all stages of the project and ██████████ will be on board from the start. Offering advice on many aspects of the project but perhaps especially:

- property;
- contracts and contract law;
- procurement and compliance;
- HR and personnel matters.

Do you have plans to work with a 3rd party organisation? If so, please include their details below and set out the intended nature of that relationship (for example, a contract, co-sponsorship arrangement, informal partnership).

The sponsors believe they have already successfully assembled a project team of quality and experience, it is not their intention to involve a third party to deliver the overall project.

Indeed the sponsors believe that in developing the project with the support and collaboration of the local authority and other neighbouring schools and institutions it will be important to continue to demonstrate continued membership of the community in which Tauheedul exists.

Accordingly the Free School will aim to:

- become a full member of Blackburn with Darwen Education Improvement Partnership;
- consider procuring ICT and some of the managed services from the LEP established as part of the Blackburn with Darwen Building Schools for the Future Programme;
- consider entering into Service Level Agreements with the local authority where appropriate;
- develop so far as possible methods for working with TIGHS on the shared use of facilities, back-office services, appointments etc.

Please name the key individuals / trustees involved in setting up the Free School (if available). Please also indicate whether trustees have been chosen and their roles confirmed. Please provide details of employment of these individuals and any conflicts of interest you believe might arise.

This proposal is being driven by the Governing Body of TIGHS. The sponsors intend to draw on this experience in the running of the new school and in establishing appropriate governance arrangements for it.

They will put in place a structure to secure the same faith, educational values and engagement with the local community as exists in TIGHS. This will involve clearly stated key principles and clearly defined roles for trustees and governors.

Accordingly, the initial Trustees and Governors of the Free School will be appointed by the Governing Body of TIGHS.

It is also expected that the Governing Body of the new school (once its future is confirmed) will also come to reflect the wider community through representation from parents, staff, the local authority and its own religious authority.

The key individuals and trustees involved in setting up the school are listed below. They have already formed a Steering Group and identified the key responsibility for which each has agreed to take the lead. Already work on preparing for these individual areas of responsibility have borne fruit and detailed plans for each are now close to completion.

They have all agreed that, in addition to attending regular fortnightly meetings for the first year of the Free School's operation, reducing to monthly meetings in the second and third year, in the longer term all governors will attend termly

meetings and participate in sub- committees as required.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



EVIDENCE OF DEMAND

What evidence of local parental demand do you have? For example, a petition or a declaration from interested parents or pupil number projections for the area. Max 200 words.

There is clear evidence of considerable demand for a Boys school since TIGHS was formed in 1984, and more significantly since 2006. A petition has been produced with over 1,000 names from the local community, and a Boys' School Supporters Group has been established.

The sponsors are confident that this figure represents the tip of an iceberg. Parents from faith and non faith categories are genuinely excited at the prospect of a boys school.

At this stage the sponsors can point to:

- Over 350 parents of primary aged boys from the local community have already completed pre-application forms to indicate a firm intention of attending the new boys school. Our assessment is that more than 40% are for applicants seeking places for 2012 or 2013;
- the Free School will be the only faith school for boys in the borough. Ethnographic research clearly suggests that should the GB decide to encourage applications more widely at this stage, the Free School could expect an over-subscription of 200% if not more. As an inclusive school we aim to reach out to Muslim and non-Muslim students from across the borough.
- evidence drawn from LA data produced for the BSF programme clearly indicating that there is a significant demand for faith based provision in the borough and a lack of Muslim faith based provision at secondary level for the community in the borough to meet parental demand. Each year approximately 50-60 boys migrate to the independent sector;
- a community adjacent to the proposed location of the free school where the population is projected to grow significantly with a 22.5% increase in birth rate by 2015;
- indeed, by developing a boys school the sponsors will be contributing to the much-needed additional capacity for boys secondary school places in the area, and thereby balancing gender provision across the schools in the borough.

The sponsors will work with the LA on a report to examine pupil projections and place-planning for secondary schools in Blackburn.

What is the proposed capacity (number of pupils)? Max 200 words.

The sponsors aim to establish a 525 place 11 – 18 School for boys. The earlier section of this Proposal explains the rationale and the discussions held with the local authority.

Financial implications have been considered and modeled, leading to the production of an initial outline budget for the Free School. The sponsors are confident that the planned pupil numbers are adequate for the transformational Tauheedul curriculum to be fully delivered.

The budget has been benchmarked with schools from across the country with similar student numbers, showing realistic financial and planning assumptions.

The finance committee has also produced a medium-term plan for the new school, which builds in incremental growth for the school (using indicative student numbers and staffing) on a yearly basis over 5 years.

As a result of this exercise, the sponsors can demonstrate that the new school will be in good financial health throughout this period.

PREMISES

What steps have you taken to identify a potential site? Please include details of the geographical area the school seeks to serve; a list of any sites you have considered; and any discussions you have had to identify a suitable site. If known, please include the proposed location, premises and postcode of the Free School.

The Sponsors have been able to produce a practical and feasible accommodation strategy for the Free School. It will require premises from 2012 and this timeline will fit in with current plans for re-locating TIGHS at that point.

It has already been agreed with the local authority that TIGHS will be re-located from its current site ([REDACTED], Blackburn, [REDACTED]) to a new site as part of the BSF Programme in 2012. At that point the new Free School would take over the Bicknell Street buildings.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The BB98 requirements for a teaching area for a 525 place 11-18 school is 2178 sqm. The new school will have approximately 5000 sqm available. The site is located in the heart of the community and as such has limited outdoor facilities. The boys school will enter into a partnership arrangement with the girls' school for sharing the use of its outdoor sports facilities once it has moved.

The Asset Management Plan for the new Free School is currently being updated. The sponsors envisage only modest works of improvement being necessary prior to a 2012 opening, involving relatively small funding to make the premises ready for the new school.

Further information

Please note, all information provided on this form will be published on the Department for Education website. Information that you supply on this form may be shared with (a) the New Schools Network and (b) the Local Authority in which you wish to set up the Free School. Information about the New Schools Network can be found at <http://www.newschoolsnetwork.org>.

Submission of this form will be treated as consent, from both you and anyone else whose personal data is contained on this form, to the sharing of this information as set out above.

In addition, information that you provide on this form, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes, primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.

Next Steps

Please email completed Proposal Form to



You will hear back from a named official at the Department for Education, who will offer you advice on how best to progress your application. The Secretary of State will make a judgement on the potential of the project based on criteria relating to educational aims and objectives, evidence of demand, potential premises, suitability of provider and any other relevant considerations to decide whether the proposed Free School project should move into stage 3, namely that of drawing up a business case and plan.