

Free Schools - Proposal Form

The Proposal Form asks you for details on the educational 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)

██████████ (Co-Chairman of Trustees) - nominated representative.

Name of your organisation

Priors Marston and Priors Hardwick School Ltd.
(Community Primary School established 1996 - registered Charity No: 1057108)

Address (of organisation or individual)

The Priors School

██████████,
Priors Marston,
Warkwickshire.

██████████

██████████

██████████
Web site: ██████████

██████████
Our reference number is 937/6098 (Department of Education)

██████████

Telephone Number

██████████

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

Yes

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

131055

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

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.

Yes, our organisation is incorporated

Company Registration Number: 3143086

Company Address: Priors Marston and Priors Hardwick School Ltd.,
[REDACTED],
Priors Marston,
Warwickshire,
[REDACTED]

Details of Directors and Secretary:

[REDACTED], [REDACTED], Priors Marston, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], Priors Marston,
[REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], Priors Marston
[REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], Priors Marston,
[REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], Priors Marston,
[REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], Hatton,
[REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], Warks.,
[REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], Priors Marston,
[REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], Daventry,
[REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], Nothants.
[REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], Napton, Warks.,
[REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], Priors Hardwick,
[REDACTED]

No, our organisation is not yet incorporated

Approximate date by which it will be incorporated:

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 Warwickshire

Neighbouring LAs Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire

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)
Our Community Primary School was opened in 1996 and we have been in contact with Warwickshire County Council since that date. We have informed them of this application.

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>	No
<p>Is disqualified from registration under Part 10A of the Children Act 1989(7) for child minding or providing day care?</p>	No
<p>Is disqualified from registration under Part 3 of the Childcare Act 2006(8)?</p>	No
<p>Is a member, or has been a member in the past, of a proscribed organisation?</p>	No
<p>If the answer to any of these questions is "Yes" please give details below:</p>	

EDUCATIONAL AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

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

In 1995 Warwickshire County Council LEA decided to close Priors Marston Primary School as a cost saving measure and directed pupils to another village.

The local communities of Priors Marston and Priors Hardwick (approx. 650 people) did not wish their local school to close as they believed it would accelerate the overall decline in the number of village inhabitants and quality of life in the villages.

Our community consists of a mixture of housing and incomes, ranging from Manor Houses to Council Houses and Social Housing.

An educational charity was therefore established and the villagers reopened The Priors School in September 1996 in the same school premises.

Since then pupil numbers have increased from the initial 12 to some 45-50 currently, including a nursery and playgroup.

The cost of operating the school has largely been funded by villagers' donations and fundraising but this cost has increased as the school has proved successful and expanded; the Trustees are now pursuing free school status to help ensure secure future financial stability.

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.

When the local LEA decided to close our village primary school, the villagers were particularly concerned that our rural community would decline further, having lost both village shops and one of the pubs. The main aim was therefore to maintain the school and thereby a vibrant and appealing facility to encourage younger families to stay or move into the 2 villages. This has been demonstrably achieved as the educational success of our school and the associated social events are now well recognised within the area and further afield.

Our original objective remains the same:

' The school strives to provide a secure, stimulating environment in which pupils will be happy, motivated and able to reach their full potential as both individual learners and confident, caring individuals. It seeks to maximise links with the community and utilise its environment to enrich both the education of its children and the life of the village.'

Our school has a open admissions policy to children within the villages and from elsewhere; we have accepted and do accept special needs pupils and have provided extra resources for them if possible and practical.

We particularly believe in reducing the carbon footprint by providing local facilities where most families can walk to school.

We would like to offer some places and our services to children from further away but have to date been limited financially.

The Priors School follows the National Curriculum with additional time on activities that include French, music, dance, poetry and tennis.

The school embraces all faiths but generally follows a Christian ethos, including a regular service in the school or adjacent Church of England.

The NURSERY Curriculum follows the guidelines laid down for the foundation stage covering 6 key areas of learning; activities are planned daily linked to each child's foundation profile, designed to achieve the Early Learning Goals by or before the end of the reception year.

KEY STAGE 1 and 2 Curriculum is based on the National Curriculum programmes of study from QCA but also incorporating subjects from the International Primary Curriculum. There is a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy, but we encourage integrated learning across the curriculum, especially in the areas of Science, History, Geography, Art, Design and Technology and ICT.

Assessments are used from the moment each child joins the school, using the Foundation Stage Profile.

Target setting is the means by which we identify specific and measurable goals for individuals, groups or whole school and within the small class sizes it is possible to cater for the pupils' individual needs.

It is proposed to introduce Performance Indicators In Primary Schools (PIPS) to help us in the future.

Strong discipline is ensured through our community ethos and creating an environment which encourages and enforces good behaviour. We have an emphasis on classroom management, clear rules and procedures, rewards and sanctions and staged responses to unacceptable behaviour. A key element to our good discipline is the close knit community spirit and the ability to communicate quickly and work closely between teachers, parents and other residents.

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

Priors Marston and Priors Hardwick School Ltd. is solely involved with the management of our village community primary school.
Our main aims are to provide excellent teaching and learning, leadership, attainment and safeguarding.
We have concentrated on school improvement and self improvement initiatives ensuring that our operational Staff are enabled to gain additional qualifications and training relevant to their responsibilities. Our recently appointed new Head Teacher is spearheading an updated improvement programme.
Due to the financial challenge of funding our community school during the last 14 years we have of necessity not been able to do everything we would wish. However, we believe we have demonstrably achieved our core operational aims detailed above; furthermore, we do currently have the capacity to take more pupils from within the village or further afield to provide these high standards to others.

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.

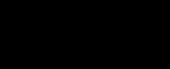
Our [REDACTED], [REDACTED], has [REDACTED].
The full time teaching staff all have appropriate teaching qualifications and are encouraged to take further training, as are the part time and volunteer teachers from within the community, many of whom have significant teaching experience and qualifications.
The Trustees have a wide range of knowledge and experience which is briefly detailed below and many of the village residents also help in providing specialist advice.
We are fortunate in having a good school infrastructure with the ability and space to provide further facilities should funds be available.

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).

No, but we do attend events and share information with other schools

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.

Our aim is to have a diverse team of Trustees with a range of expertise and skills covering, but not limited to, education, business, legal, social and environmental knowledge; in addition we have many other members of the local community who provide particular expertise, advice and assistance as required and on specific occasions.


The only obvious conflict of interest is in peoples' time availability but by having a mixture of working and retired Trustees/volunteers this has not proved to be a particular problem during our 14 years of managing the school.

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.

The Priors School opened in 1996 with 12 pupils and 1 teacher; since then the school has increased pupil numbers to an average of 45-50 including a playschool and nursery, with 4 fulltime staff, 5 parttime staff and many volunteer helpers.
The latest village plan census response recorded 98% of villagers thought The Priors School was 'important or very important' to the future of the village.

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

One of the core principles of The Priors School is small class sizes and on average there have been 10-15 children per class. The Trustees believe the maximum number of pupils in the primary school should be 60 in 3 classes given our facilities and resources. A third dedicated classroom was commissioned in 2003.

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

From 4-11 years old with a nursery/playgroup providing facilities for 2-4 year olds including wrap around care.

Pupil numbers have varied as follows during the 14 years operation of the school:

Playgroup: 5-20	currently 15
Nursery: 3-15	currently 8
Reception (Class 1): 4-22	currently 7
Class 2 (years 1,2,3): 5-17	currently 8
Class 3 (years 4,5,6): 3-11	currently 8

Based on the village demographics and historical evidence, it is anticipated that future local demand will be between 10- 15 per class i.e. approx. 40 children aged 4-11 in the 3 primary school classes.

However, as mentioned previously, this predicted total number could be increased to around 60 given the existing resources and subject to sufficient funding availability.

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

The Priors School opened in September 1996

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.

Site and premises have been operational as a village school since 1847. The school has been expanded and upgraded by both the LEA and more recently by The Priors School Educational Charity. The land and buildings have been left by a trust in perpetuity to the village for use as a school; our educational charity is responsible for general maintenance and development. There are 3 purpose built classrooms - the original 1847 room, an LEA extension (1960's) and a new classroom built in 2003 by the Trustees. The Trustees also commissioned the building of a purpose built nursery school in 1998 attached to the main school, plus an all weather outdoor area completed last year. Parents have built a community adventure playground next to the school which is used by both the school and the general public. Within the school perimeter is a playing field of approx. 1 acre. Both the school premises and the field are made available for use by the local community. A new ICT area with laptop computers was installed last year and it is the intention to offer these facilities to local residents who do not have their own facilities.

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
freeschools.registration@education.gsi.gov.uk

You will hear back from a named official at the Department for Education within two weeks, 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.