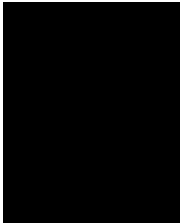




Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
Secretary of State

Sanctuary Buildings Great Smith Street Westminster London SW1P 3BT
tel: 0870 0012345 ministers@education.gsi.gov.uk



12/11 January 2011

Atherton Free School proposal, Wigan

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

I am interested in the discussions you have had with potential partners and recommend you secure the support of a strong educational partner to help further strengthen your proposal, during this next stage.

I understand that you are looking to open your new school in September 2012 and the Department will work with you to do everything it can to make this a reality. I am very keen for the first Free Schools to be innovative and responsive to parental demand, and I believe that the new school your group is proposing can carry through this vision.

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

Business Case


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

Admissions

All Academies and Free Schools are required to have inclusive admission arrangements which comply with the School Admissions Code. Officials will be happy to assist Free Schools in developing such policies in readiness for a 2012 opening, as you will be required to be within local co-ordination. You should therefore provide your local authority with your admission number and admission arrangements for inclusion in their admissions prospectus as soon as they are determined (15th April each year).

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

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

With ever, good wish,


MICHAEL GOVE