Free Schools in 2014

Application form

Alternative provision Free Schools

Completing your application

Before completing your application form, please ensure that you have read the alternative provision 'How to Apply' guidance carefully (which can be found here) and provide all the information and documentation we have asked for – failure to do so may mean that we will be unable to consider your application.

The Free School application is made up of nine sections as follows:

- **Section A:**   Applicant details and declaration
- **Section B:**   Outline of the school
- **Section C:**   Education vision
- **Section D:**   Education plan
- **Section E:**   Evidence of demand
- **Section F:**   Capacity and capability
- **Section G:**   Initial costs and financial viability
- **Section H:**   Premises
- **Section I:**   Due diligence and other checks

In **Sections A-H**, we are asking you to tell us about you and the school you want to establish and this template has been designed for this purpose. The boxes provided in each section will expand as you type.

Section G requires you to provide two financial plans. To achieve this you must fill out and submit the templates provided here.

Section I is about your suitability to run a Free School. There is a separate downloadable form for this information available here.

You need to submit all the information requested in order for your application to be assessed.

Sections A-H and the **financial plans** need to be submitted to the Department for Education by the application deadline. You need to submit one copy (of each) by email to **alternativeprovision.fsapplications2014@education.gsi.gov.uk**.

Your application should be: no more than 150 pages long; a Word document formatted for printing on A4 paper; completed in Arial 12 point font; and include page numbers. Annexes should be included within the page limit and restricted to documents relating to evidence of demand (e.g. letters of support from commissioners and maps) and relevant CVs. The financial templates are excluded from the page limit and should be submitted separately in Excel. Please include the name of your school in the file name for both your Word and Excel documents. Please do not include photographs, images and logos in your application (other than the demand map). Your email must be no more than 10MB in size.

You also need to submit two hard copies (of **sections A-H** and the **financial templates**) by 'Recorded Signed For' post to:

> Free Schools Applications Team
> Department for Education
> 3rd Floor
> Sanctuary Buildings
> Great Smith Street
> London SW1P 3BT

It is essential that the hard copies are identical to the version you email.

Section I must be submitted in hardcopy and sent by 'Recorded Signed For' post to:

> Due Diligence Team
> Department for Education
> 4th Floor
> Sanctuary Buildings
> Great Smith Street
> London SW1P 3BT

Data Protection

Personal data is collected on this form in order to consider an application to set up an alternative provision Free School and will not be used for other purposes. For the purposes of the Data Protection Act, the Department for Education is the data controller for this personal information and for ensuring that it is processed under the terms of the Act. The Department will hold all personal information you supply securely and will only make it available to those who need to see it as part of the Free School application process. All personal information supplied in these forms will only be retained for as long as it is needed for this process.

Application Checklist

Checklist: Sections A-H of your application	Yes	No
1. You have established a company limited by guarantee.	☒	☐
2. You have provided information on all of the following areas:		
Section A: Applicant details – including signed declaration	☒	☐
Section B: Outline of the school	☒	☐
Section C: Education vision	☒	☐
Section D: Education plan	☒	☐
Section E: Evidence of demand	☒	☐
Section F: Capacity and capability	☒	☐
Section G: Initial costs and financial viability	☒	☐
Section H: Premises	☒	☐
3. This information is provided in A4 format using Arial font, minimum 12 font size, includes page numbers and is no more than 150 pages in total.	☒	☐
4. You have completed two financial plans using the financial template spreadsheet.	☒	☐
5. You have provided written evidence from commissioners to support your evidence of demand.	☒	☐
6. Existing providers which are registered as independent schools only: you have provided a link to the most recent inspection report	☒	☐
7. Existing providers only: you have provided a copy of the last two years' audited financial statements or equivalent.	☒	☐
8. All relevant information relating to Sections A-H of your application has been emailed to alternativeprovision.fsapplications2014@education.gsi.gov.uk between 9am on 17 December 2012 and 6pm on 4 January 2013 and the email is no more than 10 MB in size.	☒	☐
9. Two hard copies of the application have been sent by 'Recorded Signed For' post to: Free Schools Applications Team, Department for Education, 3rd Floor, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT.	☒	☐
Checklist: Section I of your application		
10. A copy of **Section A** of the form and as many copies of the Section I Personal Information form as there are members and directors have been sent by 'Recorded Signed For' post to: Due Diligence Team, Department for Education, 4th Floor, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT, between 9am on 17 December 2012 and 6pm on 4 January 2013.	☒	☐

Section A: Applicant details

	Main contact for this application		
1	Name: ███████		
2.	Address: Education Links 195 Vicarage Lane, Stratford, London E15 4HJ		
3.	Email address: ███████		
4.	Telephone number: 020 8555 0850		
	About your group		
5.	Are any members of your group related in any way, Including by marriage, to any other? NB this includes company members or directors, members of the project group, etc.	☐ Yes ☒ No	
6.	If Yes, please provide more details:		
7.	How you would describe your group:	☐ A parent/community group ☐ A teacher-led group ☐ An existing Free School sponsor ☐ An Academy chain ☐ A federation or cluster of schools ☒ An existing provider ☐ A state maintained school/Academy ☐ Something else	
8.	If 'Something else', please provide more details:		
9.	Is your group seeking to open more than one Free School in this round?	☐ Yes ☒ No	
10.	If Yes, please provide more details:		

11.	In addition to any support/advice from the New Schools Network, did you put this application together with support from another company or organisation?	☒ Yes ☐ No
12.	If Yes, please list the name(s) of the organisation(s) and describe clearly the role they played in developing your application. Please also describe the role (if any) you envisage for them in setting up and/or running the Free School if your application is successful: Education Links is currently one of the delivery departments of Community Links Trust Ltd (CLTL), a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales with Companies House in Cardiff, and a charity registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales. For over 30 years, Community Links has been tackling poverty and social exclusion in the most deprived neighbourhoods in east London. Through a network of community projects Community Links helps thousands of disadvantaged children, teenagers, adults and older people each year, empowering individuals and communities to build a brighter future, and sharing the local lessons across the country to widen the impact and generate lasting social change. Initially growing out of activities for excluded young people delivered by the Youth Team, in 2009 Community Links established Education Links as a stand-alone department and registered this department as an independent school. Education Links is overseen by a sub-committee of the Community Links Board of Trustees (the Education Links Advisory Group) which, with the addition of a number of independent appointments, acts as the Governors for the school. The students at Education Links benefit from being part of the charity in that their education is embedded in wider community support for them and their families. This application has been developed by staff and Trustees of Community Links Trust Ltd. In order for Education Links to convert to an Alternative Provision Free School, we have established a company limited by guarantee to be the 'Academy Trust'. If our application is successful, the Academy Trust will benefit from the full support and expertise of the charity's staff and Trustees in progressing towards opening as an Alternative Provision Free School in September 2014. Please see section F for more detail of how we propose the Academy Trust will work, and the support it will receive from Community Links Trust Ltd once the school is open.	

	Details of company limited by guarantee		
13.	Company name: COMMUNITY LINKS ACADEMY TRUST		
14.	Company address: 105 Barking Road Canning Town London E16 4HQ		
15.	Company registration number and date it was incorporated: 8341194 – 24/12/2012		
16.	Does the company run any existing schools, including any Free Schools?	☐ Yes ☒ No	
17.	If Yes, please provide details: The newly formed Company does not run an existing school. However, Community Links Trust Limited runs Education Links, an independent special school (URN 136031). Community Links Academy Trust is owned by Community Links Trust Limited and the school will be transferred to the newly formed company during the process of becoming a Free School.		

Company members

Members of the company are its legal owners. We require that there are a minimum of three members. Founding members are those that establish the company and sign the memorandum of association that is submitted (with the company's articles of association) when registering the company with Companies House. Further members may subsequently be appointed.

18.	Please confirm the total number of company members: 4	
19.	Please provide the name of each member below (add more rows if necessary):	
	1. Name: Community Links Trust Limited	
	2. Name: ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮	
	3. Name: ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮	
	4. Name: ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮	

	Company directors
	Directors are appointed by the members and will eventually form the governing body that will oversee the management of the alternative provision Free School. At the point of setting up the company, members are required to appoint at least one director – this may be one of the members. All directors at the point of application must complete a Section I personal information form. All individuals on the governing body must be formally appointed as directors of the company and registered with Companies House.

20.	Where directors have already been appointed please provide the name of each and the positions they will hold (add more rows if necessary):
	1. Name: ▉▉▉▉▉▉▉
	2. Name: ▉▉▉▉▉▉
	3. Name: ▉▉▉▉▉▉
21.	Please provide the name of the proposed chair of the governing body, if known: ▉▉▉▉▉▉

	Related organisations	
22.	Through its members, directors or otherwise, does the company limited by guarantee have any formal or informal links (eg. financial, philosophical or ideological) with any other organisations within the UK or overseas? These may include: other Free School groups; other institutions; charitable bodies; and commercial or non-commercial organisations.	☒ Yes ☐ No
23.	If Yes, please provide the following information about each organisation: • their name; • their Companies House and/or Charity Commission number, if appropriate; and • the role that it is envisaged they will play in relation to the Free School. Community Links Trust Ltd – charity no: 1018517, company no: 2661182. Education Links is an independent special school owned by Community Links Trust Ltd. This application has been developed by staff and Trustees of Community Links Trust Ltd. In order for Education Links to convert to an Alternative Provision Free School, we have established a company limited by guarantee to be the 'Academy Trust'. If our application is	

	successful, the Academy Trust will benefit from the full support and expertise of the charity's staff and Trustees in progressing towards opening as an Alternative Provision Free School in September 2014. Please see section F for more detail of how we propose the Academy Trust will work, and the support it will receive from Community Links Trust Ltd once the school is open.	
24.	Please specify any religious organisations or institutions connected to your application (local, national and international). In particular, please describe in specific terms the religious affiliations of your group, including where appropriate any denomination or particular school of thought that influences your group (eg Pentecostalism, Deobandism, Reform Judaism, etc): None	
Existing Providers		
25.	Is your organisation an existing provider wishing to convert to a Free School?	☒ Yes ☐ No
25.	If so, is your organisation registered as an independent school? An organisation should be registered as an independent school if it provides full time education for: a) five or more pupils of compulsory school age; or b) one or more such pupils with a statement of special educational needs (SEN); or c) one or more such pupils who is looked after (within the meaning of Section 22 of the Children Act 1989). Under the Children's Act 1989, a child is looked after by a local authority if he or she is in their care or is provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority.	☒ Yes ☐ No
26.	Is your organisation an existing provider wishing to establish/sponsor a separate alternative provision Free School?	☐ Yes ☒ No
27.	Is your organisation an existing state maintained school or Academy wishing to establish/sponsor a separate alternative provision Free School?	☐ Yes ☒ No
28.	If Yes to any of the above questions, please provide your six digit unique reference number here:	136031
29.	If you are an existing provider, an independent or state maintained school or an Academy please state the age range and the current number of pupils on roll and your capacity:	11 to 16 years; 60 pupils on roll; Capacity 80 pupils

30.	If you are an existing provider, an independent or state maintained school or an Academy please provide the date of your most recent inspection and a link to the report on the Ofsted or other inspectorate website: If you are an existing provider that is not registered as an independent school but you have been inspected as another type of provider please also provide details of your most recent inspection (including a link where applicable): Inspection May 2011; monitoring inspection Dec 2011; http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/136031
31.	If you are an existing provider, an independent or state maintained school or an Academy, please provide a link to your performance data for the last 3 years: Performance data is available here - http://www.community-links.org/uploads/editor/EducationlinksKPI.doc This is to be found on our website at – http://www.community-links.org/local-services/education-links-policies-and-resources/ Link to DfE Performance Tables http://www.education.gov.uk/cgi-bin/schools/performance/school.pl?urn=136031
32.	If you are another type of organisation involved in education, e.g. an Academy sponsor, please describe that organisation. Please ensure you include your company registration number:

Please tick to confirm that you have included all the items in the checklist.	☒

Declaration to be signed by a company member on behalf of the company

I confirm that the information provided in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I further confirm that if the application is successful the company will operate an alternative provision Free School in accordance with the requirements outlined in the 'How to Apply' guidance, the requirements of the legislative framework for alternative provision Free Schools and the funding agreement with the Secretary of State. I acknowledge that this application may be rejected should any information be deliberately withheld or misrepresented that is later found to be material in considering the application.

Signed:

Position: Chair of company / Member of company (please delete as appropriate).

Print name:

Date:

NB This declaration only needs to be signed in the two hard copy versions of your application. Please use black ink.

Section B: Outline of the school

1.	Proposed school name:	Education Links
2.	Proposed academic year of opening:	2014
3.	Proposed age range of the school:	☐ 4-11 ☐ 4-16 ☐ 4-19 ☒ 11-16 ☐ 14-19 ☐ Other If Other, please specify:
4.	Cohort of pupils you intend to cater for (please tick all that are appropriate):	☐ Children with long term illnesses ☒ Children with behavioural issues ☒ Excluded children ☐ Severely bullied children ☐ Teenage mothers ☒ Other (please specify below) If Other, please specify: Children subject to fixed term exclusions; children with a statement of special educational needs for BESD, ADHD, ASD
5.	Proposed number of pupils when at full capacity:	Full time (FT): 77 Part time (PT): 3 Please specify the full time equivalent (FTE) for PT pupils over the full academic year. For instance a pupil attending two full days a week throughout the academic year is 0.4 FTE.
6.	Date proposed school will reach expected capacity in all year groups:	September 2014

7.	Will your proposed school be:	☐ Boys only ☐ Girls only ☒ Mixed
8.	Will your proposed school include boarding? ☐ Yes ☒ No	
9.	Do you intend that your proposed school has a faith ethos? NB Please refer to the 'glossary of terms' in the 'How to Apply' guidance for more information about faith ethos. ☐ Yes ☒ No	
10.	If Yes, please specify the faith denomination, etc, of the proposed school (please be as specific as possible):	
11.	If you have a preferred site, please give details, including the post code:	██████ , ██████ , London, ██████ ; ██████ ; ██████ , London, ██████ ; ██████ ; ██████ , London, ██████ ; ██████ ; ██████ , London, ██████ ; ██████ ; ██████ , London ██████ ; ██████ ; ██████ , London, ██████
12.	Please tell us how you found this site:	These six sites comprise our school as it operates at the time of writing. These premises have been part of the work of the parent charity for some years.
13.	Is the site:	☐ a private building? ☒ a public/government building? ☐ don't know?
14.	If you have **not** identified a site yet, please tell us the postcode of your preferred location:	

15.	Local authority area in which the proposed school would be situated:	London Borough of Newham
16.	If the preferred site is near to a local authority boundary please specify names of the neighbouring local authorities:	One site, ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮, is close to the boundary with the London Borough of Waltham Forest
17.	This application form is designed to be used for alternative provision applications (as defined in Annex A of the 'How to Apply' guidance). If the school you are proposing does not really fit the definition of 'alternative provision' but does not fit the definitions of mainstream, 16-19 or special schools either, you need to use the template that is the closest fit and explain how your school would differ. If this applies to your application please briefly outline the main differences below. You will also need to address these differences in more detail in the relevant sections of the application. As an existing independent school we offer alternative education as our main type of work. However, we also provide long-term places for pupils with a statement of special educational needs who have been hard to place in either mainstream or special schools. This may be because of their learning needs, or because of other issues, perhaps family circumstances. This is something we wish to continue doing, for a small number of places. Therefore we feel we meet the criteria as a hybrid school, alternative provision <u>and</u> special school.	

Section C: Education vision

Please refer to page 19 of the alternative provision 'How to Apply' guidance for what should be included in this section.

Education Links is an independent special school owned by Community Links Trust Ltd. We were registered in 2009 having grown from a part-time youth provision established in 1995. Our students, aged 11 to 18 years, are mainly drawn from the London Borough of Newham, where we are a preferred provider of alternative education. Young people are referred to us because they are not succeeding in mainstream school. They may have been excluded, or are at risk of exclusion, are transferring school through a managed move, or have been given a fixed term exclusion. Our aim is to work with them in such a way as to engage them in the process of learning, catering for their emotional, intellectual and social needs.

Our Vision
- To build a thriving, independent and sustainable Free School, using the opportunity provided by three years of direct funding from the DfE to unlock our potential to invest in and further develop our offer to the most vulnerable young people in Newham, creating confident individuals who can independently achieve success in their communities.

Our Purpose
- To be a specialist education provider to young people excluded from mainstream schools, using techniques of emotional mentoring to enable them to have a brighter future.

Our Ethos
- To recognise that every person has the ability to achieve, and to raise aspirations in all learners.
- To give each student a personalised programme that embraces their strengths and supports them to overcome the hurdles they face.
- To be supportive and empathic to students and families through our knowledge and understanding of their emotional needs.
- To provide a safe environment for students to share and learn and for staff to teach and support.
- To strengthen communities through building positive relationships with our students and their families.
- To celebrate the gifts, talents and skills of all students, and to promote a positive attitude to learning.
- To welcome and respect all who come to our school, regardless of ethnicity, faith, culture and sexuality.
- To teach by example, making a positive difference and guiding young people in their choices for the future.
- To never give up on young people, even when they give up on themselves.
- To be the ears, to have the heart and to take the time where others haven't.

Rationale for applying for Free School status
Our track record of working with young people is exemplary, and our partners (the London Borough of Newham and local schools) are keen to buy places with us for

their most troubled young people. We have made great progress in the last three years, becoming a registered independent school, securing a 'Good' Ofsted inspection, and achieving year on year improvement in outcomes for our pupils. We plan to progress further and aim to achieve an 'Outstanding' Ofsted rating.

However, the development of our current provision is held back by the fact that the majority of our contracts are for one year only. We have been working hard to persuade partners to commit to longer contracts but this has been hampered by the uncertainty within the education sector about future budgets. Although we are financially buffered by being part of the larger charity, this environment makes planning beyond one year difficult. One example of impact is the uncertainty for our staff, this can result in retention challenges for both teachers and non-teaching staff. Another is that whilst our core provision is now delivered in a dedicated, purpose-designed centre (the ███████ in Stratford), some of our groups are delivered in shared premises or rooms that we take on very short term leases, meaning that the educational environment is less than we would aspire to.

With additional funding from corporate partners we have invested in staff development and training. We plan to continue this initiative, ensuring all staff are provided with opportunities for continuing professional development, supporting all teaching staff to attain PGCE-equivalent qualifications, and putting in place structures to enhance performance, motivate and retain staff in a competitive environment.

We plan during 2013 to invest in a second dedicated centre (███████ in Plaistow), which will take up to three groups. In 2014, we hope to develop a third site (at ███████ in Beckton). This will give us three dedicated education centres, with an appropriate geographic spread around the borough to overcome any post-code issues.

Secure and sustained independent Free School funding from the DfE will unlock these investments, enabling us to plan for three years rather than one, developing the offer we make to young people, and underpinning improvements in outcomes for them. It will also enable us to make a competitive and cost effective offer to local schools, and to gradually move them towards longer term contracts themselves.

Our target cohort of pupils are:
- Aged 11 to 18
- Both boys and girls
- Struggling to succeed in mainstream schools
- Displaying challenging behaviour
- At risk of exclusion, been given a fixed term exclusion, or have been permanently excluded
- In need of emotional mentoring to address negative behaviour and low self-esteem
- Reflecting the diversity of Newham, a significant number of our students are from BME Groups (70% of Newham residents are from BME groups).

In addition, they will be experiencing one or more of the following :-
- Truanting
- Poverty
- Dysfunctional home life

- Abuse - physical, emotional, sexual, or neglect
- Mental health issues
- Involvement in crime, gangs, or violence
- Drug use and abuse
- Placed in care of local authority
- Subject to Child Protection Plan
- Referred to counselling

The Context and Need
In March 2012 the government's expert advisor on behaviour, Charlie Taylor, published his report 'Improving Alternative Provision'. This report highlighted that in 2011, 23,020 pupils were placed in alternative provision in England, in full or part-time placements. The reasons for these placements were mainly issues with behaviour. This report followed the Ofsted survey in June 2011 that revealed the inadequacy and inconsistency of alternative provision. Both documents discussed the impact of quality provision in improving a young person's life chances, although the overwhelming message is of poor outcomes for vulnerable pupils. Starting from the conviction that every young person should be able to succeed, our Alternative Provision Free School will raise the outcomes for the most vulnerable and disengaged pupils.

We know there is a real need for the education services provided by Education Links, in 2010-11, 2,140 young people in Newham were given fixed term exclusions from school, representing 4.21% of the school population. In that year, 189 pupils were referred to Education Links, 82 of them on short-term placements. We receive positive feedback from mainstream schools and the local authority, which see us as a vital partner in education provision in the borough. In 2011, an evaluation by the London Borough of Newham reported that 145 pupils held statements of special educational needs for behaviour, emotional and social difficulty, 23% of the total and the largest group. A survey of teachers, head teachers and professionals also identified a need for greater provision for BESD in general. (*Special Educational Needs in Newham, Where are we now and where next?, A Self Evaluation; Sept 2011, LBN*)

Based on official statistics, the previous Government's objective to reduce the number of permanent exclusions appears to have succeeded, in that they have steadily declined – falling by approximately one third since the late 1990s. Fixed period exclusions have also fallen to their lowest level since 2003-04. Despite these reductions, certain groups are particularly vulnerable to exclusion (for example, Black Caribbean pupils are four times more likely to be permanently excluded from school than White British pupils). The risk of exclusion is also associated with poverty, with children with special educational needs ten times more likely, and primary school children on free school meals five times more likely, to be excluded. Newham is one of the most multicultural boroughs in the UK, with only 27% of residents describing themselves as 'White British'. It is also the third most deprived borough in the country, as identified in the Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2010. Its underlying demographic therefore suggests that the propensity for fixed period exclusion remains high, and – in the current economic environment – the need greater than ever.

Despite the high numbers of children and young people on fixed period exclusions, local authority spending on specialist school provision is low in both actual and

percentage spend compared to other boroughs in east London.

Newham has one of the youngest populations in the country, 26.2% of the population is aged under 16 and a population increase of some 28% is expected by 2020.

Newham currently has high numbers of NEET young people, it ranks as the joint 6th highest rate in London. Independent research published by 15 Billion demonstrates that Education Links has an excellent track record of supporting pupils into Education, Employment or Training (EET) after they graduate from the school. In June 2012, only 6 pupils were NEET, which compares very favourably with other local providers.
(http://www.15billion.org/content_files/monthly_reports/April_2012_onwards/NEW_2012-06_Jun_-_web.pdf

Other Local Alternative Provision
In Newham there are two Pupil Referral Units - Tunmarsh School and New Directions School - which can cater for 120 pupils with behaviour or attendance issues, at risk of exclusion, or excluded, across 4 sites. However, this provides insufficient capacity, and the local authority has commissioned 36 places from Education Links in the current academic year, and up to 46 places in previous years. Places have been commissioned in this way since 2001.

The East London Independent Special School provides an alternative education for children and young people with BESD, catering for students who have complex special needs, including Aspergers, high functioning Autism and Klinefelter syndrome. The needs of their students are more demanding than those of the students we work with.

There are a number of other smaller private providers however they do not provide the range of qualifications and accreditation on offer at Education Links which includes academic qualifications up to and including GCSEs as well as a range of vocational qualifications.

For a number of years Education Links has been meeting the needs of young people in Newham for whom there was no other more suitable choice, or where there has been insufficient provision through the local authority. This will continue to be the case in the foreseeable future. We receive positive feedback from mainstream schools and the local authority, who see us as a vital partner in education provision in the borough.

Our Methodology
In the 21st century schools are not simply a place of learning. Here at Education Links we understand that young people, and their parents, demand a quality of provision that matches their aspirations. But not everyone succeeds in mainstream school and a fresh approach can make all the difference to those who are struggling and under-achieving. We believe our provision offers a unique path for the disaffected and disengaged student. Our strengths lie in the methodology we use to support our students which is outlined below:

- Small group sizes and high staff to student ratios enable staff to give students the attention they need

- Staff form supportive relationships with students which enables young people to engage fully with their learning

- Regular staff contact with parents and carers reporting on the students' daily successes as well as dealing with difficult issues, building important relationships with families

- Individual programmes can be created to address both learning and behavioural issues

- A multi site provision creates the nurturing environment that vulnerable young people can thrive in, in their own locality, providing a base they can feel at home in

- The development of close working relationships with other agencies or professionals who can help support the needs of our students

- Close working relationships with corporate supporters, who provide practical as well as financial aid, including volunteers from business and industry working alongside us on school events

- Effective partnership working with the education authority and local schools, working together for the benefit of young people

We pride ourselves on being open and approachable and we build good relationships with all our students, their parents and their referring schools. Our approach is underpinned by our vision statement, and a commitment to help every young person to achieve their potential.

Deeply embedded in our philosophy is the belief that all our young people have talents and can succeed. Our dedicated and skilled staff offer students a nurturing, safe environment where there are opportunities for their development both academically and personally.

We have perfected our methods through practical experience of working with the most excluded young people. We have refined our systems and procedures, putting in place robust policies, developing our administrative systems and software, and strengthening management. We have improved training for our support staff, recruited more teaching staff, and broadened the curriculum. We have also increased the portfolio of accreditation on offer for students, and built good connections with local colleges to support our students to successfully progress onto further education. We have deepened our relationships with corporate funders and with commissioning agencies, including schools and the local authority. As a result we achieved a 'Good' rating in our first Ofsted inspection in May 2011.

The Education Links curriculum focuses on the core skills, aiming for each student to make progress in English and Mathematics as a minimum, alongside affecting an improvement in behaviour. We cater for the whole ability range, emphasising the importance of everyone doing their best, and so taking steps to being the best they can be. We strive to ensure each young person will find a programme that is relevant, accessible, engaging and inspiring, empowering them to cope with the barriers to their learning and make sustained progress.

In order to provide such a programme for each young person, we have developed the academic and vocational areas that our students, their families and schools tell us are important. Achieving 5 GCSEs including English and Maths is the right pathway for some; others are more motivated by practical and vocational work, especially in the creative arts; so we provide a creative strand of the curriculum through art, drama, music technology and media. For those who have missed significant time in school, improving literacy and numeracy is our first priority and an important step.

Alongside educational achievement is the vital need to support students to develop personally, to find the strategies to cope with anger, lack of confidence, low self-esteem, and insecurity, and to change the behaviour that has lead to exclusion. Sometimes young people make the wrong choices, or find themselves in circumstances that they cannot cope with. Every day we mentor, guide and teach the methods and strategies to enable our students to make the right choices, and to be able to continue doing so once they have left our care.

Schools and families also value good attendance and punctuality, and both are a priority. Some young people may come to us with an average attendance at the referring school of less than 50%, and in fact the lowest has been 14%. For that young person to achieve 42% in the first term was a remarkable personal best.

We see our work as being one phase of the journey for our young people. It is vitally important that we ensure they are prepared for the next step, which may be returning to mainstream school, or progression to post-16 destinations. We work closely with referring schools to manage the reintegration of students on a short term placement - fixed term exclusions, managed move procedures, or following permanent exclusion. Each year roughly half of our students leave us at the end of Year 11, and we guide them in choosing a suitable pathway – further education, training or employment. Most choose to apply to local colleges, and we advise them in finding the right type of course, subject area and level, then assist them in completing the application. In some cases we will also accompany a student to an interview. This is particularly important, of course, for students with a statement of special educational needs.

Key Aims for Students

- To improve behaviour, as measured by our Behaviour and Learning Skills Assessment
- To improve attendance, each student aiming for 90% overall
- To achieve academic progress, improving in English and Maths by at least 2 National Curriculum sub-levels per academic year
- To achieve external accreditation, at least one external examination per academic year
- To achieve positive progression, by returning to full-time mainstream education, or post-16 employment, education or training

Key Aims for Education Links as a Free School

- To achieve an 'Outstanding' Ofsted report by 2016
- To continue developing the curriculum, both the core and vocational areas, to provide a wide ranging offer to our students

- To operate the school at full capacity each academic year
- To achieve 100% student satisfaction each academic year
- To achieve 100% parental satisfaction each academic year

Having established the school we feel that conversion to Free School status will ensure the school continues to serve and meet the needs of the vulnerable and disaffected young people of Newham and its surroundings. This development will enable us to grow the school, building on our successes and creating new opportunities for our students to achieve even greater outcomes. Throughout the years that we have operated in alternative education we have seen many young people grow in self-esteem and confidence, taking responsibility for their actions, and exploring the reasons for those actions. From a position of self-realisation they have been able to focus on their personal goals, moving forward to make a better future for themselves than was predicted. Only through the process of personal development are they then able to re-engage with education successfully. Our way of working has shown to be effective in transforming the lives of these young people, and this in turn has a positive impact on their families and communities.

Our students and parents alike express a high level of satisfaction through our regular surveys.

	Parent responses - strongly agree/agree			
	Apr-08	Dec-10	Apr-11	Dec-11
My child enjoys Education Links	96%	92%	100%	100%
Education Links keeps my child safe	100%	100%	100%	100%
My child is making progress at Education Links	89%	100%	100%	91%
Education Links helps my child to have a healthy Lifestyle	91%	96%	100%	100%
Education Links informs me about my child's progress	100%	100%	100%	100%
Education Links expects my child to work hard and do his or her best	88%	100%	100%	100%
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future	70%	96%	100%	95%
There is a good range of activities including trips or visits to take part in.	82%	92%	88%	95%
Education Links treats my child fairly and with respect	100%	100%	100%	100%
Education Links meets my child's particular needs	n/a	100%	100%	100%

Education Links deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour.	86%	100%	100%	100%
Education Links has appropriate procedures for dealing with complaints	n/a	100%	100%	91%
I understand Education Links procedure for dealing with complaints.	89%	92%	92%	95%
Education Links takes account of my suggestions and concerns	91%	96%	100%	100%
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at Education Links	n/a	100%	100%	100%

Where the response n/a is given different questions were asked in 2008

Student Surveys - Summary

	Autumn term 2011				Autumn 2012			
	😄	😎	😕	😠	😄	😎	😕	😠
I enjoy being at education Links	63%	37%	-	-	13%	64%	3%	3%
Education Links helps me to be healthy	53%	38%	3%	3%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
I feel safe when I am at Education Links	60%	37%	3%	-	30%	53%	-	10%
Overall, teaching is good at Education Links	43%	54%	-	-	23%	64%	6%	-
Behaviour is good at Education Links	50%	47%	3%	-	20%	57%	13%	-
Staff care about me	57%	43%	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Education Links provides me with enough books and equipment, including computers, to help me learn	53%	40%	7%	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Teachers explain to me how I can achieve more	57%	33%	10%	-	23%	67%	3%	-
Education Links	67%	30%	3%	-	27%	44%	3%	3%

	takes account of my views								
10	Education Links encourages me to do things for myself and to take on responsibility	63%	27%	10%	-	23%	64%	3%	-
11	I feel Education Links respects me and my background and treats me fairly	67%	30%	-	3%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
12	Education Links helps me to understand and respect people from other backgrounds	505	47%	3%	-	30%	44%	13%	3%
13	Education Links helps me to prepare for the future	60%	37%	-	3%	30%	50%	3%	3%
14	The management in Education Links do a good job	44%	46%	7%	3%	30%	47%	6%	3%
	Comments	*Any discrepancies in % indicate this question was not answered in some cases.*				*Unstated % are result of questions answered 'Don't Know'. Data taken from Ofsted Point-in-time survey.*			

Key   😃 strongly agree   😖 disagree

        🙂 agree   😠 strongly disagree

Feedback from parents

Parent/carer Consultation Day 16/12/10 - comments

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Parent/carer Consultation Day 06/04/2011 - comments

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Parent/carer consultation day 16/12/2011 - comments

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Section D: Education plan – part 1

In the table below, please provide the proposed numbers in each Key Stage at the point of opening and an explanation of how pupil numbers will expand to fill the school by the end of the third year, at the latest. If you are an existing provider, please use the first column to show how many pupils you currently have. Pupil numbers should be given as full-time equivalents (FTE) over the academic year. For example if you have fifteen pupils who attend for one day a week for a term (in a school that has three terms in an academic year), that counts as one FTE pupil.

If you are proposing to open later than 2014, please leave the relevant earlier columns blank.

	Current number of pupils (if applicable)	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Key Stage 1								
Key Stage 2								
Key Stage 3	9	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Key Stage 4	53	65	65	65	65	65	65	65
SEN: commissioner referred	6	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
16-19: pupil application								
Totals	68	80	80	80	80	80	80	80

Please note that we have used the 16-19 row to display the student numbers relevant to SEN places

Section D: Education plan – part 2

Please refer to pages 20-23 of the alternative provision 'How to Apply' guidance for what should be included in this section.

Our vision for learning and teaching

- To recognise that every person has the ability to achieve, and to raise aspirations in all learners.
- To give each student a personalised programme that embraces their strengths and supports them to overcome the hurdles they face.
- To provide a safe environment for students to share and learn and for staff to teach and support.
- To celebrate the gifts, talents and skills of all students, and to promote a positive attitude to learning.

D1: Curriculum Rationale

At Education Links our approach to the curriculum is student-centred, ensuring we develop a varied curriculum to meet the needs of our students. They come to us from a wide variety of backgrounds and personal experiences, but all struggling to succeed and feeling the future is bleak. We recognise that when our students leave us they will need to be able to integrate easily into a more traditional learning environment, be it mainstream school or college, and so they need to be prepared for that. Therefore we need to provide a curriculum that they feel is relevant, accessible, and that will equip them for re-engaging with the learning process. We aim to provide a curriculum that encompasses the entire ability range, and that will enable students to make progress even if they are placed with us for a short period of time.

Referring to our target cohort of pupils as described in Section C, we have identified many manifestations of the issues young people face. For example,
- Young people who are struggling to succeed in class are usually performing below their peers in literacy, and so a focus on improving reading and communication skills is key
- Challenging behaviour can be a mask for learning difficulties, or emotional distress, so classroom routines de-escalate behaviour issues
- Unsettling home and family situations can prevent a student from focussing on their learning and they need adults around them they feel safe with and can form positive relationships with
- Risky behaviour away from home and school can distract from learning goals, and experienced mentors support young people to make safe choices

Our considerable experience of working with troubled young people has led us to perfect our curriculum and pedagogy.
- Students are assessed to determine their preferred learning style on entry, so that teaching approaches can be tailored accordingly
- Lessons must be well-planned and within a coherent scheme of work for

each subject area
- Lesson planning must include a high level of differentiation to provide for all the needs and abilities in the teaching group
- Differentiation takes into account baseline assessment, 'working at levels' through the year, and learning styles
- Individual student tasks must be challenging and stretching, whilst realistically capable of seeing success to build confidence
- Classroom routines and practices must be consistent across all teaching groups, for instance, the use of mobile phones, homework and marking practices, even break-time routines
- The code of conduct (Ground Rules) must be clear and well understood by students, and implemented fairly by all staff
- Students must feel they are offered a curriculum package that is relevant to their abilities and aspirations to ensure they remain engaged, and hence attend well
- Where students will be returning to a mainstream school they need to know they have been covering the National Curriculum core subjects and so will reintegrate more effectively
- For those students who will be moving on to post-16 education, they will be more confident in that transition if they are well-prepared and equipped with the best academic outcomes they can achieve

We have a core curriculum of English, Maths, Science and ICT, and also offer humanities, sport, and a creative strand through art, drama, music technology and media. Our students are entered for examination in Functional Skills English and Maths as a minimum, together with opportunities for Functional Skills ICT, and GCSE examinations in English Language, English Literature, Maths, Science and Additional Science. Each student will be entered for the appropriate examinations based on the length of time they are placed with us and their own needs and abilities. Some students may be entered for examinations by their referring schools and we support them in preparing for examination.

The range of examinations on offer is continually reviewed to ensure that students have access to qualifications that enable them to achieve their potential. Our staff have developed curriculum areas and taken on board new exam specifications to meet the needs of students, and we aim to respond to demand from our commissioners, too.

In academic year 2011-2012 we introduced BTEC First Level 2 courses in Performing Arts, Creative Media Production and Sport. With this range of courses we are able to cater for the needs of our students, who are often more engaged with practical activities than academic study, and who are also likely to have weak literacy skills. These BTEC courses have proved successful with students, as shown by their engagement and enthusiasm, and we intend to develop further opportunities for vocational education in the future. Responding to student and parent demand, we will plan to introduce vocational courses in catering and food technology, such as BTEC Level 1 Home Cooking Skills, BTEC Level 1 Basic Cooking Skills, or BTEC Level 1 Certificate in General Cookery in Hospitality. This curriculum development will coincide with the development of suitable facilities in one of our premises (the Playhut) as described in Section C.

We have often worked with students who are already following a vocational package, put in place by the referring school, which is succeeding well. We support the student and the mainstream school by liasing with the vocational provider, whilst providing the core skills and other curriculum areas required. Students on a mixed placement such as this can therefore achieve a better outcome. We have identified that the vocational area to develop in the future is catering, as there are realistic employment opportunities in the area, and it is a subject area that students are interested in. We will use external providers for the occasional student who requires a different specialism, such as construction or hair and beauty.

An important element of the provision is our Wellbeing programme - Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), which together with Citizenship addresses the issues that our young people face (see Section D6).

Sport is included for all. Creative skills are also encouraged through Art, Dance, Performing Arts and Creative Media. Life skills and social skills are integrated throughout the formal timetable.

Literacy is a key area, and a priority across the school. We have focused on improving literacy in the last 2 years, and reading ages improved by 80% in the last academic year. Students are able to demonstrate an improvement in literacy from the baseline assessment, as shown below.

Academic progress	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
% improved literacy	92%	89%	**90%**
% achieved literacy target	80%	58%	**79%**
% exceeded literacy target	20%	16%	**62%**
% improved numeracy	93%	85%	83%
% achieved numeracy target	81%	65%	63%
% exceeded numeracy target	26%	22%	**50%**
% achieving accreditation	83%	**89%**	**95%**
Total entered for examination	93	70	66
% improvement in reading age	n/p	58%	**80%**

(Figures in bold indicate an improvement on previous year's performance)

Numeracy skills have also been steadily improving, with a marked increase in students able to be entered for GCSE.

GCSE Maths	2010	2011	2012
Entries	14	16	28

Education Links uses a bespoke Virtual Learning Environment to support classroom delivery as well as offering an opportunity for independent learning. The VLE is used by students on the Media course to submit their films and animations to their teacher. Our SEN policy addresses the more specific needs of students with a statement, and we have a tailored programme for those young people. We identify students with particular literacy needs and provide literacy support on a 1-1 basis.

In addition the taught curriculum is supported by whole school events and enhancement activities.

Whole School Events
The taught curriculum is also supported by whole school events –
- International Day – celebrating the diversity of our part of London, and drawing together the work of the Humanities curriculum in an exhibition, performance and display of food
- Showcase – an exhibition of work from across the school, especially coursework from BTEC students, art displays and the Creative Writing Competition
- Sports Day – a combination of traditional and fun events, supported by corporate volunteers
- Alternative Curriculum Week – the normal timetable is suspended for a week as students have the opportunity to experience learning in a different way – outings and trips, outdoor adventure, team competitions, doing things that we can't fit into a usual week
- Presentation Day - the culmination of the student's hard work as Year 11 students leave, an event where parents and carers, and invited guests from schools, corporate sponsors and the local authority can share in the achievement of young people receiving their record of achievement portfolios, certificates and prizes for excellence.

Enhancement Activities
Each group also has the opportunity to experience learning outside the classroom through
- Museum visits
- Theatre trips
- Visits to sporting events
- Interview skills and CV writing workshops, both delivered by corporate supporters in an office environment

In addition workshops, demonstrations and theatrical performances are brought into the school. Sexual health talks and advice sessions are delivered by SHINE (Newham's Young People's Sexual Health Service).

We run Careers Week which provides the opportunity for Year 11 students to explore their options for the future and Connexions staff also visit Year 11 students to offer advice on progression to further education, training or employment. Many students feel unsure of what possibilities are available for them, knowing as they do that they now have reduced chances of gaining accreditation. They need reassuring of the kinds of options which are still open to them, or which pathways they may take that they were unaware of. For others they have to accept that it may take longer to achieve their original career goals, but we can help them to stay focussed on those goals.

The staff for each teaching group begin the process by showing students how to research the local colleges and courses available, and this leads into the action plan that they will complete with the Connexions staff. Our own Progression Coordinator will continue the process, liaising with the Connexions worker and the wider team. Most of our students will therefore leave Year 11 with a college place,

or other training placement, confirmed for the next academic year. More detail is given in Section D6. We continue to work with students throughout the summer break to help those who have not gained a place. We are able to use other departments in the main charity to support us in this, as there are a number of projects working with young people not in education, employment or training who we can refer our leavers to. In this way Community Links provides much added value to the school's operation.

D2 – Curriculum Plan and Organisation of Learning

Our teaching groups are organised around the programmes provided, hence we have 8 groups -
- BTEC Performing Arts (Chandos)
- BTEC Creative Media (Thames)
- BTEC Sport (Park)
- GCSE Year 11 (Lea)
- SEN (Roding)
- Foundation Learning (FL) (Tate)
- Key Stage 4 - Short Term Placements or STEP (Lyle)
- Key Stage 3 - including Long & Short Term Placements (STEP) (Queens)

Our groups are named for local place names, rivers and historic people, to give a local connection to young people who may not have family roots in the area. The names are given in brackets above.

Following interview and initial assessment, each student is placed in the most appropriate teaching based on the following criteria –
- Age and Key Stage
- Working at levels as supplied by referrer
- Outcome of initial baseline assessment as done by Education Links
- Student's preferred pathway, based on interests and aptitudes, or pre-existing GCSE options
- Likely length of time on placement

Each BTEC group has a programme centred on the main subject area, with English and Maths, and other subject areas as detailed below to give a balanced curriculum. The BTEC courses include literacy and numeracy skills, and staff work closely to ensure that all basic skills are covered.

The table below shows the number of periods or 50 minute lessons each group, and hence Key Stage, is allocated.

	ENGLISH	MATHS	ICT	SCIENCE	CREATE / MUSIC	CREATE / ART	CREATE / DRAMA	CREATE / MEDIA	HUMANITIES	LIFE SKILLS	WELLBEING	SPORT	READING /STUDY	TOTAL
KS4 BTEC	2	2		1		2		14			2	2		25
KS4 BTEC	2	2			3		13		2		2	1		25
KS4 BTEC	2	2		2		2			1		2	14		25
Y11 GCSE	6	5		4		2			2		2	2	2	25
KS4 STEP	3	4	2	3	1	3			2	1	2	3	1	25
KS3 STEP	3	4	2	2	2	1	1		2	2	2	4		25
FL	2	4	2	4		2			2	3	2	3	1	25
SEN	2	4	2	2		4	1		2	2	2	3	1	25

Our Curriculum Policy is set out in full at the end of the Section referenced Appendix 1.

PROGRAMME – Key Stage 4 BTEC
- Up to 30 students, 10 per subject area
- **BTEC First Level 2 Option**; 13 lessons per week, 52% of the timetable; leading to BTEC Diploma, BTEC Extended Certificate, or BTEC Certificate.
    - Creative Media Production
    - Sport Science
    - Performing Arts
- **English**; 3 lessons per week, 12% of the timetable; leading to Functional Skills English from Entry Level to Level 1 & 2; or Basic Skills Level 1 & 2; opportunity for entry to GCSE
- **Maths**; 2 lessons per week, 8% of the timetable; leading to Functional Skills Maths from Entry Level to Level 1 & 2; or Basic Skills Level 1 & 2; opportunity for entry to GCSE
- **Science**; 2 or 1 lessons per week, 8% or 4% of the timetable; Entry Level
- **Well being** (PSHE & Citizenship); 2% lessons per week, 8% of the timetable; Comprehensive in-house programme of workshops and group activities
- **ICT, Humanities, Create, Sport, Life Skills**; 3 or 4 lessons per week, up to 16% of the timetable, depending on the BTEC option; also delivered in cross-curricular themes through BTEC options, and through other events and activities

PROGRAMME – Key Stage 4 GCSE

- Up to 12 students
- **English**; 6 lessons per week, 24% of the timetable; leading to GCSE English and GCSE English Literature; plus Functional Skills English from Entry Level to Level 1 & 2; or Basic Skills Level 1 & 2
- **Maths**; 5 lessons per week, 20% of the timetable; leading to GCSE Maths; plus Functional Skills Maths from Entry Level to Level 1 & 2; or Basic Skills Level 1 & 2
- **Science**; 4 lessons per week, 16% of the timetable; leading to GCSE Core Science, with option of GCSE Additional Science
- **Well Being** (PSHE & Citizenship); 2 lessons per week, 8% of the timetable; Comprehensive in-house programme of workshops and group activities
- **Create**; 2 lessons per week, 8% of the timetable; innovative projects
- **Sport**; 2 lessons per week, 8% of the timetable; using various local facilities
- **Personal Study**; 2 lessons per week, 8% of the timetable
- **Humanities**; 2 lessons per week, 8% of the timetable; integrating Geography and History, through the LinkED programme.

PROGRAMME – Key Stage 3

- Up to 10 students
- **English**; 3 lessons per week, 12% of the timetable; leading to Functional Skills English from Entry Level to Level 1 & 2; or Basic Skills Level 1 & 2; or preparation for GCSE
- **Maths**; 4 lessons per week, 16% of the timetable; leading to Functional Skills Maths from Entry Level to Level 1 & 2; or Basic Skills Level 1 & 2; or preparation for GCSE
- **Science**; 2 lessons per week, 8% of the timetable; following per-GCSE Entry Level / preparation for GCSE
- **ICT**; 2 lessons per week, 8% of the timetable; leading to Functional Skills ICT from Entry Level to Level 1 & 2
- **Well being** (PSHE & Citizenship); 2 lessons per week, 8% of the timetable; Comprehensive in-house programme of workshops and group activities
- **Create**; 1 lesson per week, 4% of the timetable; innovative projects
- **Sport**; 4 lessons per week, 16% of the timetable; using various local facilities
- **Drama**; 1 lesson per week, 4% of the timetable
- **Music Technology**; 2 lessons per week, 8% of the timetable
- **Humanities**; 2 lessons per week, 8% of the timetable; integrating Geography and History, through the LinkED programme
- **Life Skills**; 2 lessons per week, 8% of the timetable; including workshops and activities focussed on social and life skills

PROGRAMME – Key Stage 4 Foundation Learning

- Up to 12 students
- **English**; 2 lessons per week, 8% of the timetable; leading to Functional Skills English from Entry Level to Level 1 & 2; or Basic Skills Level 1 & 2
- **Maths**; 4 lessons per week, 16% of the timetable; leading to Functional Skills Maths from Entry Level to Level 1 & 2; or Basic Skills Level 1 & 2
- **Science**; 4 lessons per week, 16% of the timetable; leading to Entry Level Science

- **ICT**; 2 lessons per week, 8% of the timetable; leading to Functional Skills ICT from Entry Level to Level 1 & 2
- **Well Being** (PSHE & Citizenship); 2 lessons per week, 8% of the timetable; Comprehensive in-house programme of workshops and group activities
- **Create**; 2 lessons per week, 8% of the timetable; innovative projects
- **Sport**; 3 lessons per week, 12% of the timetable; using various local facilities
- **Life Skills**; 3 lessons per week, 12% of the timetable; including workshops and activities focussed on social and life skills, and additional Literacy and Numeracy
- **Personal Study**; 1 lesson per week, 4% of the timetable
- **Humanities**; 2 lessons per week, 8% of the timetable; integrating Geography and History, through the LinkED programme.

PROGRAMME – SEN Provision
- Up to 6 students
- **English**; 2 lessons per week, 8% of the timetable; leading to Functional Skills English from Entry Level to Level 1 & 2
- **Maths**; 4 lessons per week, 16% of the timetable; leading to Functional Skills Maths from Entry Level to Level 1 & 2; or preparation for GCSE
- **Science**; 2 lessons per week, 8% of the timetable; following per-GCSE Entry Level / preparation for GCSE
- **ICT**; 2 lessons per week, 8% of the timetable; leading to Functional Skills ICT from Entry Level to Level 1 & 2
- **Well being** (PSHE & Citizenship); 2 lessons per week, 8% of the timetable; Comprehensive in-house programme of workshops and group activities
- **Create**; 2 lessons per week, 8% of the timetable; innovative projects
- **Sport**; 3 lessons per week, 12% of the timetable; using various local facilities
- **Drama**; 1 lesson per week, 4% of the timetable
- **Art**; 2 lessons per week, 8% of the timetable
- **Humanities**; 2 lessons per week, 8% of the timetable; integrating Geography and History, through the LinkED programme
- **Life Skills**; 2 lessons per week, 8% of the timetable; including workshops and activities focussed on social and life skills
- **Tutorial**; 1 lesson per week, 4% of timetable; content at discretion of Coordinator, to suit needs of group

Structure of teaching day

Our school day runs from 9 a.m. to 2.30 p.m. Each lesson is 50 minutes in length, with 5 lessons per day, plus a 20-minute mid-morning break and a lunch break of 50 minutes. This is the case across both Key Stages 3 and 4, and timetables allow teaching staff to travel between sites. We also have events and activities where 2 or more groups may come together for a period of the day, for example, to share a sports session.

Calendar

We follow the term dates of our local authority to better work with the mainstream

schools as well as being familiar to students and parents alike. Hence we provide 190 days teaching, in 3 terms, and utilise 5 days for staff in-service training.

School year 2014 – 2015

Proposed term dates

Autumn Term

	School Starts	**School Finishes**
Term 1	Monday 1st September 2014	Friday 24th October 2014
	Half Term	
Term 2	Monday 3rd November 2014	Friday 19th December 2014

Spring Term

	School Starts	**School Finishes**
Term 1	Monday 5th January 2015	Friday 13th February 2015
	Half Term	
Term 2	Monday 23rd February 2015	Friday 27th March 2015

Summer Term

	School Starts	**School Finishes**
Term 1	Monday 13th April 2015	Friday 22nd May 2015
	Half Term	
Term 2	Monday 1st June 2015	Monday 20th July 2015

Timetables

Example timetable for students following Foundation Learning programme leading to Functional Skills

██████████

Example timetable for students following programme leading to GCSE exams

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Example timetable for students following KS3 programme

██████████

Example timetable for students following SEN programme

██████████

Example timetable for students following part-time programme

██████████

Although each group has a structured timetable, there is flexibility within this to allow for workshops or activities to run for longer, e.g. with visiting facilitators, or for groups to travel to specialist premises or venues for sport, music or science.

Part-time students are integrated to existing teaching groups, and their individual timetable ensures they do not miss out on English and maths. Where necessary students are given extra tuition outside of this normal timetable.

Each student has an individual education plan (IEP), and, where appropriate, an individual timetable. The IEP is described in more detail in section D4.

Our curriculum content is designed to meet the needs of students who will attend for a short placement as well as long-term referrals. It is not always possible to separate students on a short-term placement from those who will be with us for the whole academic year. We have recognised that young people who left us after only a few days or weeks were unable to see the end of a piece of work, whilst those that remained for longer felt left behind. To address this situation we decided to pilot our own integrated curriculum – **LinkED**. This takes a themed approach to delivering across the curriculum in half-termly topics:

- **Discovery** – finding out new things is a human driver and affects things for better or worse
- **Celebrations** – there is value in recognising and observing special events through ritual and with joy and happiness
- **Structures** – formal arrangements and relationships underpin or give organisation to complex issues
- **Adaptability** – adaptability is demonstrated by the ability to cope, alter or change with new circumstances or environments
- **Consequences** – very few actions are neutral. Most actions create impact or change that then has to be dealt with
- **Risk** – progress involves exposing ourselves to and considering the impact of forms of danger, harm, uncertainty or opportunity

This approach gives students on short-term placements more chance to see the beginning and end of a topic, and will also keep the curriculum fresh and interesting for the students on long-term placements. We are piloting the approach in 2012-2013, and it will be developed into a 3-year programme, following review and evaluation at the end of the academic year.

Increasing our provision
In terms of future development, we will offer commissioning schools a programme that better meets the needs of those pupils on a very short term placement, such as a fixed term exclusion. This will be particularly appropriate for Key Stage 3, where the focus will be on challenging negative behaviour. The Short Term Exclusion Programme has the following key features:

PROGRAMME – Key Stage 3 Short Term Exclusion Programme
- A package developed exclusively for Key Stage 3 fixed term exclusion pupils
- Lead by staff trained and experienced in dealing with challenging behaviour
- Using techniques of emotional mentoring to confront negative behaviour
- Sets clear boundaries for behaviour, and a rapid response to poor attendance and punctuality
- Our own thematic curriculum, LinkED, integrating core subjects with topic work in short instalments
- Morning sessions spent on individual study, or LinkED topics

- Workshops each afternoon covering topics such as
  - Making positive choices
  - Aggression and aggressive behaviour
  - Impact on victims, and 'myself as a perpetrator'
  - Fear and anger
  - Consequences, including talk from School Police Liaison
  - Strategies to deal with negative behaviour
  - Reflections and personal targets
- Each pupil compiles a Portfolio of evidence, including certificates of achievement
- A Reintegration Pack for schools, parents and pupils reporting on progress

Example timetable for students following KS3 Short Term Exclusion Programme

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
9.00 a.m. to 9.10 a.m.	REGISTRATION	REGISTRATION	REGISTRATION	REGISTRATION	REGISTRATION
9.10 a.m. Session 1 10.00 a.m.	MATHS	ENGLISH	MATHS	MATHS	ENGLISH
10.00 a.m. Session 2 10.50 a.m.	ENGLISH	SCIENCE	MATHS	SCIENCE	ENGLISH
20 mins	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
11.10 a.m. Session 3 12.00 p.m.	HUMANITIES	LIFE SKILLS	CREATE	WELLBEING	SPORT
12.00 p.m. Session 4 12.50 p.m.	WELLBEING	HUMANITIES	CREATE	LIFE SKILLS	SPORT
12.50 p.m. Session 5 1.40 p.m.	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
1.40 p.m. Session 6 2.30 p.m.	WORKSHOP	WORKSHOP	WORKSHOP	WORKSHOP	WORKSHOP

D3: Staffing

As an existing independent school we have a full staff team in place. We will be maintaining this level of staffing, except as described in Section G in relation to reduced student numbers, if and when it occurs.

The current team is described below.

School Leadership Team (SLT)
- Principal: responsible for leadership and management, oversight of curriculum, finance and budget, contractual responsibilities with commissioners, student and parent relationships. Gives direction to growth of school; accountable to proprietors, Governors and Trustees. Member of Senior Management Team of Community Links Trust Limited. Acts as Quality Nominee for all BTEC qualifications. Acts as SENCO.

- Student Services Manager: responsible for receiving referrals from schools and local authority, placing students in appropriate programme / teaching group, overseeing initial interview and parent contact, and monitoring the pastoral care of all students once on placement. Manages major incidents of behaviour / causes for concern regarding all students, liaising with Group Coordinators and other staff as appropriate. Maintains links with external agencies and commissioning partners.
- Student and Staff Development Manager: acts as Well Being coordinator – writes scheme of work for PSHE and Citizenship, coordinating resources and workshops delivered by external agencies. Leads on staff training, acts as budget holder for training and liaises with corporate sponsor. Acts as Examinations Officer. Oversees Student Council.
- Finance and Administration Manager: responsible for financial management of the school, working with Finance department of parent charity. Oversees admin officer. Liaises with finance officers in commissioning schools for all matters relating to charges and payments, invoicing, etc.

Middle Managers
- Curriculum Manager for General Qualifications: responsible for planning and implementing the curriculum in respect of general qualifications, developing cross-curricular programme, developing Humanities curriculum, coordinating exam entries, line managing teaching staff. Also, Head of English.
- Curriculum Manager for Vocational Qualifications: responsible for planning and implementing the curriculum in respect of vocational qualifications, all aspects of communicating with Edexcel and BTEC officers, working with Quality Nominee in matters of quality assurance, line managing staff. Also, teaches and leads BTEC Creative Media Production.

These two managers jointly manage the whole curriculum, liaising with the School Leadership Team (SLT).
- Admissions and Reintegration Coordinator: responsible for all aspects of short term placements, including processing referrals, liaising with referring schools on the length of placement and suitability of programme for each individual, as well as overseeing the day-to-day arrangements, and ensuring a smooth reintegration; also manages issues relating to looked-after children, and those on the Child Protection register

Teaching staff
- Head of Maths
- Second Maths teacher, part-time
- Lead teacher for Science
- Lead teacher for BTEC Sport
- Lead teacher for BTEC Performing Arts, part-time
- ICT coordinator and teacher
- Teacher of Music Technology and Film Production, part-time

Other staff
- Family Engagement Officer: responsible for identifying students at risk of becoming persistently poor attenders, and working with students and families to identify and tackle the barriers which are resulting in poor attendance. Liaising with SLT and Admissions and Reintegration

- Coordinator to improve attendance of these individuals, referring to other agencies where appropriate.
- 8 Group Coordinators, responsible for the day-to-day running of each teaching group, including managing behaviour of students in class, supporting teachers. Carrying out initial interview of each student with Student Services Manager. Maintaining contact with parents / carers. Liaising with Student Services Manager in all causes for concern, attending meetings including Annual Reviews and Case Conferences relating to students in their group. Delivering 'Well Being' programme, Humanities, and Sport, liaising with relevant subject lead. Line managing staff.
- 11 Learning mentors, responsible for supporting Group Coordinators in managing the behaviour of students in class, supporting students as necessary. Some responsibility for delivering 'Well Being', Humanities, and Sport, with Group Coordinator. Maintaining contact with parents / carers. Attending meetings where necessary.
- Administration officer, responsible for administrative functions, including managing resources and ordering, and for data management.

At full capacity we will have 14 Learning Mentors.

Organisational chart showing accountability -
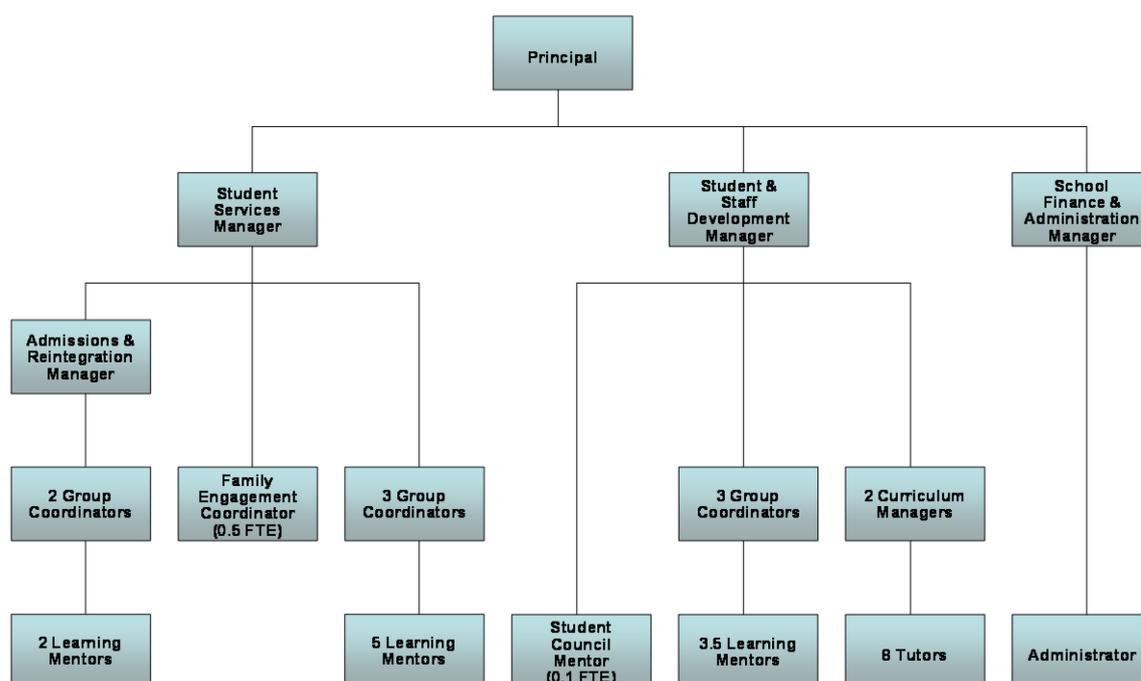
D4: Pupils with differing abilities

As mentioned in Section C, we recognise that our students have many different and often complex needs. These include:

- Struggling to succeed in mainstream schools
- Displaying challenging behaviour
- At risk of exclusion, been given a fixed term exclusion, or have been

permanently excluded
- In need of emotional mentoring to address negative behaviour and low self-esteem
- Reflecting the diversity of Newham, a significant number of our students are from BME Groups (70% of Newham residents are from BME groups).
- Truanting
- Poverty
- Dysfunctional home life
- Abuse - physical, emotional, sexual, or neglect
- Mental health issues
- Involvement in crime, gangs, or violence
- Drug use and abuse
- Placed in care of local authority
- Subject to Child Protection Plan
- Referred to counselling

Our student-centred ethos is paramount in our approach to meeting students' needs. We see each individual student as having unique skills and talents that need nurturing and developing. We recognise that children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

The teaching groups are well resourced for ICT in the classroom for both general and specialist use. This includes hardware and software for Media, Performing Arts and Music, as well as aids such as special access keyboards where necessary. Staff have the use of online student assessment recording and reporting software, Classroom Monitor, which ensures consistency of assessment practice. We also have our own bespoke administrative software system for recording and processing all student and general school information. This is all, of course, password protected and encrypted.

Our Curriculum Manager for General Qualifications/Head of English coordinates the support of students who are learning English as an additional language, and we have packages in place for use by the Learning mentor assigned to each one of them. Reading age assessments are carried out on entry, and additional assessments are sought where necessary, such as clinical psychologists etc, through Child and Family Consultation Service. Once identified as in need of support, the information is posted on our information management system, so that all teaching staff are alerted.

The Admissions and Reintegration Coordinator works closely with the relevant professionals in respect of children in the care of the local authority, including attending review meetings. The progress of these children is monitored through team meetings, and teaching staff can review academic progress at any stage through Classroom Monitor. Reports are prepared for Personal Education Plan meetings and often the whole team working with the student will attend to give their input.

Whilst the range of special needs that we cater for has been described elsewhere as BESD, ADHD, and mild autism, we are able to provide for other needs because of our approach of addressing individual needs. Previously we have supported

young people with visual impairments, we usually have a few with varying medical issues (diabetes, asthma, epilepsy, allergies) and occasionally more serious conditions ████████, as well as physical disabilities ████████. Our support staff are given training as appropriate for these medical conditions, and adaptations are made where necessary to classroom resources, computer hardware etc, to accommodate the physical disabilities. We regularly review our accessibility plan. All premises either have suitable adaptations for disabled access, or plans for improvements are in place. As we have several sites, a suitable placement can always be offered.

The flexibility of our approach, mentioned elsewhere, enables us to alter timetables or venues, to assign support staff to particular students, or to relocate resources, to ensure that no student is disadvantaged. We also work closely with other agencies and professionals to put measures into place. The suitability of a placement can be discussed with our partners within the authority – referring schools, the pupil referral units, the local authority support services – and the most appropriate arrangements are made.

If a student has medical issues, or school-phobia, that prevent them from attending full-time, or for limited periods, then the virtual learning environment provides a way for them to access classwork or download tasks set by teachers, and upload coursework or homework and leave messages for staff. Arrangements can also be made to meet support staff outside of lesson times, or in other, more accessible, venues to suit the needs of individual students.

Any variations in timetable, resources, or other provision will be recorded on the Individual Education Plan for the student concerned and reviewed regularly.

It is an important consequence of our long-standing relationship with the local authority and its officers that Community Links has been a member of the Fair Access Gate-keeping Panel for many years. We are the only non-statutory provider that sits on that panel. We work closely with other partners to deliver our curriculum, and more information can be found in Section D6.

We have a Special Educational Needs Policy which sets out our approach to supporting young people with differing abilities, some key elements of the policy are highlighted below:

We understand that children can be defined as having a learning difficulty if they have
- a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or
- a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local education authority.

We aim to:
- Identify as early as possible those students with SEN and the nature of their needs. This will include dyslexia as a specific learning difficulty.
- Ensure that every child has an equal opportunity to participate in all aspects of school life, irrespective of race, gender or special need.
- Provide equal access to a curriculum that provides for all the needs of the

students.

- Involve the student wherever possible in the planning and target setting of his/her programme of work.
- Monitor and review individual needs regularly, and to maintain clear records of any action taken.
- Maintain regular contact with parents at all stages of support, and work in partnership with them to meet the targets set for their child.
- Raise staff awareness of the need to differentiate work effectively.
- Provide regular training, coaching and development for all staff.
- Provide referrals to outside agencies where specialist support is required.
- To assist the proprietors in fulfilling their duties regarding provision for students with SEN.

Identification, Assessment and Review

Through the referral process, subsequent interviews, and initial assessments, the individual needs of each student will be determined, and this will form the basis of the placement and programme offered. Following initial assessment, provision may include literacy support, differentiated lessons, mentoring or counselling. Regular team meetings will plan and review Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Students and parents/carers will be informed and involved in the IEP writing process, and review with parents will take place at Parent Consultation meetings.

The Group Coordinator will often be the lead, and main point of contact for these issues, but teachers and other support staff are equally responsible for ensuring every student makes progress.

In the case of Statutory Assessment, if that is considered necessary, Education Links will follow guidelines given in the revised Code of Practice. The importance of close liaison with parents is recognised during the Statutory Assessment process. Where a student with an existing statement of Special needs joins the school, the SENCO will ensure that all information is gathered prior to admission, and that all procedures are adhered to thereafter.

Our Principal, Sandy Davies carries out the role as SENCO to develop the appropriate provision for each student with special education needs.

The Role of the SENCO

- To manage the day-to-day operation of the SEN Policy.
- Co-ordinating provision for students with SEN.
- Liaising with Student Services Manager and Group Coordinators in developing parental awareness and partnership.
- Liaising with Student Services Manager and Group Coordinators in working with external agencies and LEA officers including SEN officers (SENOs), Educational Psychologists (EPs), Connexions, Child and Family Consultation Service(CFCS), New Directions, and all other agencies as appropriate.
- In consultation with colleagues use information from student's previous attainment as well as baseline assessment to provide starting points for the development of an appropriate provision for the student.

- Liaising with Student Services Manager and Group Coordinators to identify, monitor and review students with SEN.
- Arranging and chairing review meetings including Annual Reviews and IEP meetings.
- Ensuring that ongoing observation and assessment provide regular feedback to all teachers and parents/carers about the student's achievements and experiences and that the outcomes of such assessment form the basis of planning for the next steps of the student's learning.
- Monitoring the provision for students on the Code of Practice in terms of planning, writing and delivery of IEPs when appropriate.
- Raising awareness of the school SEN policy.
- Ensure that assessments and submissions for Exam Access Arrangements are carried out as necessary.
- Liaising with Student Services Manager and Group Coordinators regarding the assessment and induction of all new students to Education Links.
- Providing leadership to subject teachers in ensuring that a differentiated curriculum is implemented to meet students' needs.
- Liaising with Student and Staff Development Manager to ensure in-service training of staff is appropriate.

Individual Education Plans
A standard format of IEP is used for all students at Education Links. The IEP process is constantly under review and formats will change to take account of individual student needs. Fundamentally all IEPs will contain the following information:
- the short-term targets set for or by the student
- the teaching strategies to be used
- the provision to be put in place
- when the plan is to be reviewed
- success and/or exit criteria
- outcomes recorded when the IEP is reviewed

The IEP highlights both the under-achieving as well as the gifted and talented. We will be adopting formal assessment methods to identify these gifted and talented students more rigorously, but our student-centred approach means that we never lose sight of the differing abilities of our students.

The Annual Review for Statemented students

Procedures for Annual Reviews for Statemented students follow procedures laid down in Chapter 9 of the revised Code of Practice.

- The LEA advises the SENCO of Annual Review dates for Statemented and Exceptional Needs students
- SENCO, working with the Student Services Manager, invites parents and all external agencies to attend Annual Review and requests appropriate reports from external Agencies involved with the student
- For Year 9 Transition Reviews and for all reviews where amendments to the statement are likely the Special Education Needs Officer (SENO) is also invited
- Annual Statement Review Meeting takes place and is chaired by the

SENCO
- The SENCO completes the Annual Review Outcome Report provided by the LEA and submits this to LEA within 2 weeks of Annual Review, including all appropriate documents
- A copy of the Annual Review Outcome and new IEP is sent to the parent/carer and all those invited
- LEA informs SENCO and parents of the outcome

Our Special Educational Needs Policy (set out in full at the end of the section referenced Appendix 2) follows the guidelines set out in the SEN code of practice.

We provide staff training designed to meet our students' needs:

- All support staff trained in Learning, Development and Support Services, also drug use and abuse

- All support staff given opportunity to train in classroom delivery through PTLLS

- All staff fully trained in Safeguarding and First Aid, positive handling techniques, and awareness of dyslexia, autism and Asperger's syndrome

- Selected staff trained in use of epi-pen, management of Vater's Syndrome, care of Brittle Bone Syndrome.

D5: Pupil Achievement

Targets for our students are around improving attendance, academic achievement, progress made/distance travelled and progression to further education or other destinations. Our targets are:

- To improve behaviour, as measured by our Behaviour and Learning Skills Assessment.
- To improve attendance, each student aiming for 90% overall.
- To achieve academic progress, improving in English and Maths by at least 2 National Curriculum sub-levels per academic year.
- To achieve external accreditation, at least one external examination per academic year.
- To achieve positive progression, by returning to full-time mainstream education, or post-16 employment, education or training.

These targets have been measured over recent years as shown in the following table:-

Key Performance Indicators 2009 - 2012

Figures in bold indicate an improvement on previous year's performance

Academic progress	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
% improved literacy	92%	89%	**90%**
% achieved literacy target	80%	58%	**79%**
% exceeded literacy target	20%	16%	**62%**
% improved numeracy	93%	85%	83%

	81%	65%	63%
% achieved numeracy target	81%	65%	63%
% exceeded numeracy target	26%	22%	**50%**
% achieving accreditation	83%	**89%**	**95%**
Total entered for examination	93	70	66
% improvement in reading age	n/p	58%	**80%**

Survey outcomes - summary	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
% 'I feel safe'	100%	96%	**100%**
% 'School helps me to be healthy'	96%	76%	**100%**
% 'School takes account of my views'	96%	**97%**	96%
% 'I enjoy being here'	100%	81%	**100%**

Attendance record	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
% attendance whole school	61%	**63%**	**69%**
% achieving 90%+	17%	**23%**	**35%**
% achieving 70%+	40%	**50%**	**66%**
% achieving 50%+	67%	**70%**	**78%**

Progression / Destinations	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
Total Yr 11 leavers in June	50	41	33
% in further education	54%	**80%**	64%
% in other training	20%	19%	6%
% in work-based training	0	2%	**3%**
% in employment	4%	0	0
% moved	4%	0	**6%**
% NEET	18%	**2%**	21%
Total on roll	167	189	147
Fixed Term Exclusions (FTE) returned to school	n/a	82	54
All other types returned to school	57	54	54
Returnees (not FTE) as percentage of total	34%	72%	73%

NEET figures in 2012 affected by change in reporting valid destinations

Behaviour	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
Pupils improving behaviour/learning skills	n/p	60%	**87%**

n/p = data not provided

Comments on these performance indicators

Academic progress
We have targeted literacy in recent years, having identified the changing pattern of need in our students. Whilst we expected to receive referrals for young people seriously underachieving in literacy, we had begun to see an increase in referrals for students who were expected to do well in GCSE examinations, but who were held back by their poor literacy. At the other end of the spectrum, we were still working with students who could barely read or write, and many scored a reading age of only 6 years, at age 14 or 15. Consequently we focussed on literacy and

have seen a great improvement in key outcomes in this area, including GCSE results.

All students are set a target of improving their 'working at' levels by 2 National Curriculum sub-levels in the academic year. We have seen an increase in the percentage of students exceeding this target following specific intervention and support, and the numbers entered for GCSE maths has increased as a result of small focus groups working with Learning Mentors.

The number entered for examinations overall varies from year to year as a reflection of the number of students on long-term placements. However, we also support students who are entered by their mainstream school for GCSE or other examination.

Survey outcomes
We enjoy a high level of satisfaction from students and parent alike, as shown in the surveys. We plan to increase the level of surveying by introducing an exit questionnaire, but anecdotal comments show that even the shortest placements are welcomed by parents. We also receive positive feedback from referrers, which we intend to collate more formally in future, but anecdotal evidence and the fact we continue to receive referrals shows a high level of satisfaction.

Attendance record
This is another priority area, and we have been fortunate to receive corporate sponsorship to invest in improving students' attendance. Our Family Engagement Coordinator is able to work more closely with students and their parents/carers to resolve attendance issues – this is described more fully in Section D6.

Progression / Destinations
All our staff feel strongly that the work we do will continue after the student leaves if we have supported them into sustainable destinations. Our processes for achieving this are described in Section D6, as this comes under the remit of the Wellbeing programme. We will continue to work with local colleges, other training providers, schools, Connexions and the local authority to ensure our students continue to succeed after leaving us. We will also work with these partners to establish a method for reliably tracking students once they leave.

Behaviour
Improved behaviour is evident on a daily basis, and we intend to improve our recording of this target similarly. Becoming a Free School will enable us to invest in more thorough assessment and recording systems, but our current system, a questionnaire based on a Jane McSherry model, shows an improvement in outcomes year on year.

Characteristics of the school
As our students come to us by referral, the statistics of ethnicity and other characteristics serve to illustrate the range of assessed need of those students. However, it is important to note that the number of girls referred to alternative provision increases each year.

Assessment and Reporting Schedule

The Assessing and Reporting Schedule for the academic year is shown below. The baseline assessment is carried out for all students on a long-term placement regardless of when they join, and is repeated each September for those who carry on with us from one year to the next.

Calendar	Assessment or Reporting Item
Baseline Assessment (September, or when student joins school)	- Literacy - Numeracy - Reading Age - Behaviour and Learning Skills - ICT - Science - Attendance - Target Setting
End of half term, October	Student Attendance
End of Autumn term	- Student Attendance - Behaviour and Learning Skills - Target Setting - GCSE Mock Examinations (Dec.) - Report to Parents, copy to referrer
End of half term, February	Student Attendance
End of Spring term	- Student Attendance - Behaviour and Learning Skills - Target Setting - Report to Parents, copy to referrer
End of half term, May	Student Attendance
End of Summer term	- Record of Achievement reports for Year 11 leavers, end of June - Student Attendance - Behaviour and Learning Skills - Reading Age - Report to Parents, copy to referrer

Formal reporting to parents and carers takes place on our termly Parent Consultation Days, but informal reporting happens on a daily or weekly basis. Support staff maintain good contact with parents and carers which increases the effectiveness of our intervention.

External Accreditation

GCSE Exam Performance 2010-2012
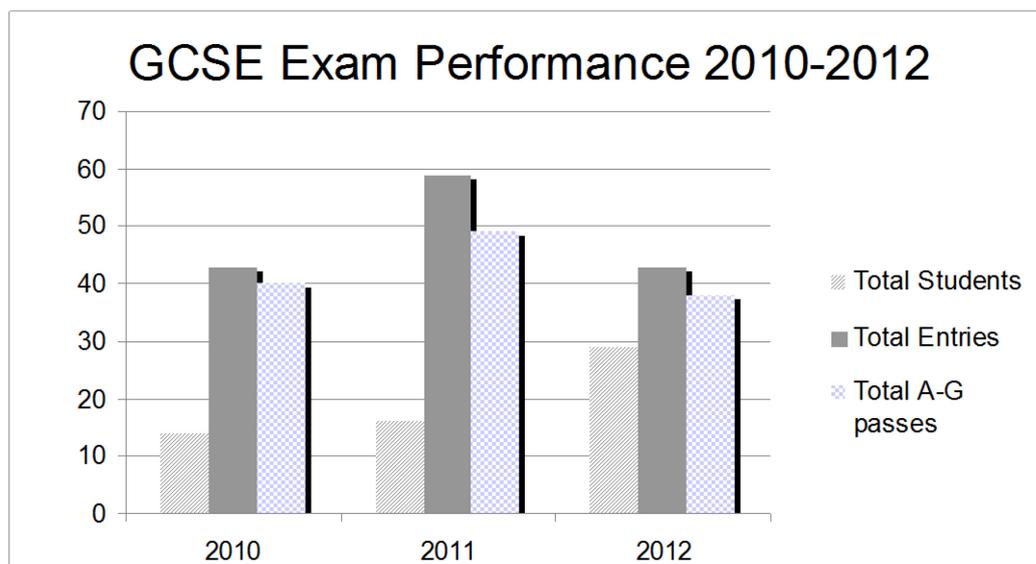
GCSE Results	2010	2011	2012
Total Students	14	16	29
Total Entries	43	59	43
Total A-G passes	40	49	38

Summary of grades achieved -Pass rate by subject -

Grade	2012	2011	2010
A	0	0	0
B	0	0	0
C	4	8	3
D	5	16	18
E	6	14	11
F	14	7	3
G	9	4	5
U	3	8	2
X	2	2	1

% Pass A-G	2010	2011	2012
English	100%	75%	100%
English Lit	90%	83%	100%
Maths	93%	94%	86%
Science	88%	80%	80%
Add. Science	100%	78%	100%

Data drawn from results for Functional Skills English and Maths at all levels entered.

Non-GCSE Exam Results 2010-2012
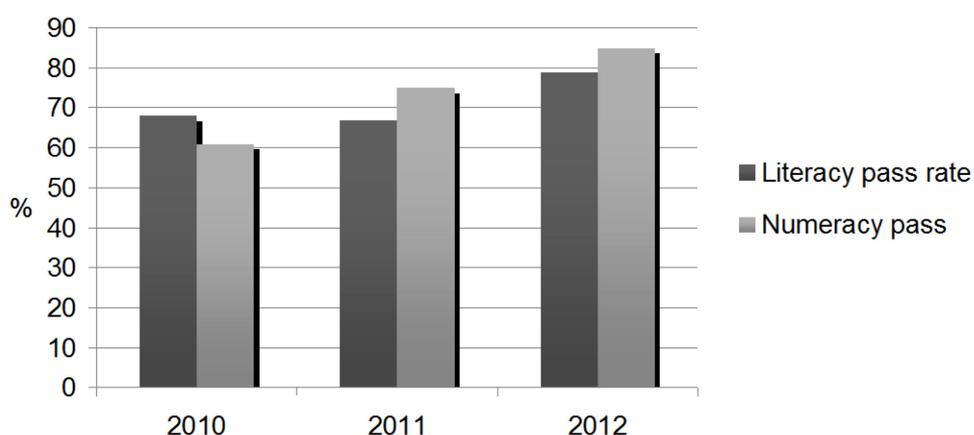
Non-GCSE Results	2010	2011	2012
Total Literacy Entries	85	54	56
Total Literacy Passes	58	36	44
%	68	67	79
Total Numeracy Entries	80	61	47
Total Numeracy Passes	49	46	40
	61	75	85

To see a continued improvement in exam results will only come with a continued improvement in teaching. Lesson observation results show that teaching staff achieve 100% good, whereas support staff when delivering average satisfactory – by introducing training in PTLLS we will see an improvement in lesson delivery by support staff.   We have invested in the Quality Framework for Learning and Teaching by Edison Publishing, which we expect to have a measurable impact on delivery, and on performance across the whole school. This impact will be reported to Governors, referrers and others as it is implemented throughout the current academic year.

Our electronic systems previously described - Classroom Monitor and our own information management system – capture the data and aid in analysis and planning. The School Leadership Team review this data regularly, and identify further indicators and methods of capture required to give us the information we need for planning and tracking. Some of those items have been described elsewhere in the document. Overwhelmingly, we will collect data that is relevant and useful, and have always been proactive in improving systems and methods to ensure we can demonstrate impact.

D6: Pupil behaviour, attendance and well-being

Our students' well being is paramount to our success as an independent school. 96 percent of our students feel safe in school (Education Links Student Survey 2011) and they identify school as the area of their lives they are most satisfied with when compared to other areas (Education Links Well Being survey 2012). We identify the following reasons for this: -

- Small learning groups of 10/12 students with a minimum of 2 staff in any lesson, allowing for time to listen to individuals and build close relationships with them and their families

- Close mentoring of each student allowing them to reflect on their behaviour and attitude towards school

- Comprehensive training for staff allowing for the best support to be given to each student

- Opportunities for students to join a student council which gives them the opportunity to share their voice on variety of topics, and to interview new staff

Behaviour

To promote good behaviour and attendance we have a clear Behaviour and Discipline Policy for the school. This is a statement of good practice, which covers all aspects of life at Education Links contributing to the development and maintenance of good behaviour and a positive ethos within the school environment. All members of Education Links, students, staff, parents and visitors are expected to help maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning, with courtesy and mutual respect as basic requirements. Some key features of the policy are set out below:

Aims of the Policy:
- To encourage adherence to an agreed set of principles of behaviour by students.
- To support effective teaching and learning.
- To contribute to mutual respect.
- To promote self-discipline and proper regard for authority among students.
- To regulate students' conduct.

The basic code of conduct of school centres around attendance, behaviour, punctuality, making a contribution and mutual respect. There are clear guidelines set out about behaviour expected both in class and in general (our Behaviour Policy is set out in full at the end of the section referenced Appendix 3).

The Behaviour policy is underpinned by our Discipline Policy which determines the boundaries of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, the hierarchy of rewards and sanctions and how they will be fairly and consistently applied.

Where the code of expected conduct is breached, students have a right to expect fair and consistently applied sanctions for poor behaviour, which make a clear

distinction between serious and minor infringements of the code of conduct. An appropriate sanction is one which is designed to put matters right and encourage better behaviour in future.

Where sanctions become necessary the following procedure is followed:

First line is the individual staff sanction. This may be for minor misdemeanours. Where this fails or the breach of conduct continues, the student may be referred to the school's management team who will take necessary steps to address behaviour.

Where the breach is serious or consistent, and warrants the student being sent home or taken off premises, the Principal of Education Links will take that decision having made contact with the referring agency, parents and other concerned parties.

At all stages, contact with parents, referring agencies and other such parties is made and meetings arranged accordingly. Records are kept of any action taken.

Supporting the Code of Conduct Policy

The following practices support the implementation of the policy:

a) **Setting good habits early**: to help students establish regular attendance and good behaviour from the start, involving parents and referring agencies in the process
b) **Early intervention**: prompt intervention is needed where there is poor behaviour or unexplained absence, so it is clear that this will not be tolerated
c) **Rewarding achievements**: positive recognition of individual students or classes achievements in good attendance and behaviour, through letters to parents and referring agencies, certificates or prizes
d) **Supporting behaviour management**: behaviour management techniques, assertive discipline, individual behaviour programmes and circle of friends can help improve and maintain high standards of behaviour and discipline
e) **Identifying underlying causes**: attention, anxiety, diet, habit, developmental level
f) **Work with parents and referring agencies** including social services and educational psychologist where necessary to address any underlying causes
g) **Parental support**: assisting the parents (where required) to enable them to offer parental advice and support

Wellbeing

At Education Links, wellbeing is at the very core of everything we do. Our very start in 1995 as an impromptu service showed a need for an environment where young people would arrive to share their fears of school or family lives to their trusted youth workers. This meant our youth workers became mentors too and, without the distraction of a dislike for school, students really felt they were being listened too about family and school issues. It was only then that the act of learning could take place. The majority of our students come from families with complex needs, who might experience poverty, homelessness, abusive relationships, addiction, divorce and separation, bereavement - our wellbeing

delivery is paramount to the development of our students.

<u>Wellbeing in Lessons</u>

An emphasis on developing personal skills and social awareness is at the core of the school's aims. *(OFSTED, 2011)*

Our structured wellbeing sessions are coordinated by the PSHE Coordinator (Staff and Student Development Manager). A diverse range of topics are discussed and explored that address the range of complex needs of students. Run over a two year programme the wellbeing lessons cover aspects of the PSHE and Citizenship curriculums which are most relevant to the students, also interjected with topical issues that would be effective learning tools for students. Students have, and will continue to have, a minimum of 100 minutes of structured Wellbeing lessons per week and follow the key concepts of the secondary PSHE guidelines

The key concepts for PSHE education in personal wellbeing are:
- personal identities
- healthy lifestyles
- risk
- relationships
- diversity

Economic wellbeing and financial capability topics are:
- career
- financial capability
- risk
- economic understanding.

Examples of programmes that will be used with students are:-

<u>Emotions and mental health</u>: What makes a happy life, differences between emotional and material wealth, media representations of beauty and healthy self image, anger, depression, positivity, bereavement, happiness, stigma, and resilience.

<u>Relationships</u>: Safe relationships, sexual exploitation, Ideal relationships, power and control in relationships, sexual health, contraception and STIs, sexuality and homophobia, attraction, risky sex, locating sexual health services, domestic violence, types of abuse, peer pressure, gangs, and parenting.

<u>Alcohol and Drugs</u>: Drug classifications, consequences, dealing with alcohol overdose, drugs and effects, safer alcohol, reducing the risks of drugs, links between drugs and risky behaviour.

<u>Careers and financial capability</u> - Career pathways, apprenticeships and what to expect, CV writing, money and budgeting, financial capability, enterprise.

<u>Community:</u> responsible citizens, local government and making changes, stereotypes, community and social action, racism, policing, crime and punishment.

'A well-structured and effectively resourced course in personal, social and health

education (PSHE) is provided' (OFSTED, 2011)

Wellbeing lessons are supported by materials from reputable organisations such as Tacade, Stonewall, NSPCC, Red Cross, Miss Dorothy, St John Ambulance, BBC, Frank, and Family Planning Association. The lessons and time table are also supplemented with support from organisations who we work closely with to provide holistic support to our students.

We aim to develop at least one new relationship per academic year with an organisation we can work with that will benefit the lives of our students. One such relationship in 2012 – 2013 is 'The Challenge' which will be working with our year 11 students. The Challenge[1] is a charitable organisation –

'The Challenge is an intense four part programme for 16 and 17 year old delivered as part of the government's National Citizen Service (NCS). The programme is comprised of physical and team challenges and social action projects'. [2]

From our long-term placements we will be aiming to send 10 students on to this course with the aim that this will allow them to mix with students from other backgrounds, giving them more confidence for their progression from year 11 to year 12.

Wellbeing and external organisations

We will always seek the support of external organisations where they have an offering which supplement sand complements our own delivery, or where a student or group of students may have specific needs that require specialist intervention. We are fortunate that some of the most appropriate interventions can be found within the parent charity, Community Links, through the work of the other departments – Employment and Training Links, and the Early Action Team. Across these departments we share experience and expertise that supports troubled families throughout East London, and Newham in particular.

Over the number of years that we have been developing our programmes and delivery we have sought expertise from statutory agencies as well as other charities and private providers, seeking the most appropriate methods for our young people. Understanding the issues our students face, and using the techniques that they are most likely to engage with, are the main criteria for identifying suitable programmes and facilitators. Whilst some organisations are no longer working in the field, others have become long-term partners.

Khulisa: Khulisa is an organisation which delivers programmes with children and adults around anger and violence. In particular they run a series of workshops called 'Face It'. Khulisa describe the programme as:-

Face It is an experiential learning programme based on therapeutic methods that leads to significant behaviour-change, self-awareness and motivation on the part of participants. Having been initially developed as an offender rehabilitation programme in South Africa, it has been tailored to suit school-age audiences in the

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[1] http://www.the-challenge.org/index.php/programmes
[2] See above

UK with a focus on prevention and diversion from crime and conflict. The programme is particularly well-suited to young people facing significant personal barriers in their lives, who may either be at risk of offending or becoming involved in gangs or who have been victims or witnesses of crime' Khulisa (2011) [3]

The students that took part in this project believe that they learnt from the experience and have even requested to be mentors on the next course to provide encouragement to the new participants to make the most from their experience. We will continue to offer Khulisa programmes to those most at need. The participants will be identified by discussions with the Student Services Manager, PSHE coordinator, support staff, school counsellor, family and/or social services. Once these students are identified they will be placed on one of the two yearly programmes.

<u>Prison Visits</u>

Because of the nature of our students, and the possibility that some have already been involved with the police, it has been obvious that many can easily fall into a world of committing crime with and for peers. Whatever the circumstance of the way into crime be it personal or social, Education Links feel it is imperative to warn of the dangers of such a lifestyle with the consequence of such actions resulting in possible custodial sentence. One particular programme that we are involved with is Keep Out. This is a workshop in the unusual and hard hitting setting of an adult prison. Time is spent with offenders to try and show the reality of prison life and the effect on real lives of committing crime and being convicted:-

Keep Out is unique. This is the first ever crime diversion scheme to be delivered by dedicated teams of serving prisoners – managed by civilian and seconded prison staff – inside UK prisons. Prisoners are trained by Keep Out to run intervention programmes for young people that inform, support and divert those between 13 and 17 who are either at risk of entering the criminal justice system or are already involved in criminal activity' Keep Out (2011) '[4]

We believe that this programme has an effect on the way the students view themselves and their offending. Evaluations by Keep Out have shown that 71% of students attending the workshop have their attitudes towards prison changed when they attended the project (2011).

Because of the reported benefit of the programme we will send 3 groups of 15 males to HMP Coldingley and 1 or 2 groups of 15 female students to the female prison HMP Send.   The selection process for the attendance to the project will come from our close relationships with our schools police officer team who will discuss our students on roll and identify those who are at risk of repeat offending.

<u>Policing</u>

Our relationship with our local police force is paramount to building relationships between the police and our students. Quite often our students' only experience with the police is negative. Our schools officers are an integral part of our school

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[3] http://www.khulisa.co.uk/programmes-and-training/khulisa-programmes
[4] http://www.crimediversionscheme.org.uk/

and changing the opinions of our students. We will continue this relationship and build on this by having structured meetings between the officers and the Student Services Manager to enable better information sharing. We have two schools police officers who are responsible for visiting our centres and regularly meet with the staff team to offer support and guidance on a range of topics.

CFCS – Child and Family Consultation Services

We have and will continue to have close links with CFCS (Child and Family Consultation Services) who work with children and families with complex needs. A specialist family therapist will work closely with all our students that wish to speak to him/her. There are regular meetings with members of the School Leadership Team (SLT) to discuss concerns about students and CFCS workers will attend meetings with families and school staff to encourage positive change. CFCS has been and will continue to be invaluable when working with parents of students, allowing space for parents to speak to a therapist in an environment where they feel comfortable thereby evoking a change in the attitude of the family. CFCS referrals can be made by any of our staff team if they have concerns for a student's welfare. All staff have child protection training to support this and the SLT have Designated Safe Guarding officers training for completeness. In the event of a safe guarding issue (see attached policy) CFCS will also be notified and /or will make a referral as well.

CSSS – Child Specialist Substance Misuse Service

Like CFCS, CSSS (Child Specialist Substance Misuse Service) has and will continue to have close links with the school. We refer young people usually because of coordinators or family concerns about drug use. When a referral has been accepted by CSSS the worker will usually come to the school and speak to the student to make an assessment of the student's drugs routine, if they have one. If CSSS feel the student is at risk of drug abuse then remedial work begins to divert them from drug use and to attempt a realisation of the dangers, and importantly to identify the emotional problems surrounding drug issues. This will also be discussed with the CFCS team in order to create a holistic drug counselling experience for the student.

Shine

Newham Shine is the NHS sexual health support service for 16-24 year olds in the authority. Shine also deliver sex education to under-16s at secondary schools. We have and will continue to have a series of rounded sexual health lessons delivered to our groups. Potentially lessons could cover issues such as homo / transgender phobia where coordinators identify this as a relevant issue for their group. Workers from Shine can also sign students up for C-Cards (Condom Cards) - this means students will be able to access condoms from local chemists to promote safer sex. Shine also has abortion services to which young people can refer themselves. Our staff can also call Shine services directly for advice and guidance surrounding sexual health issues for their students.

Links4Life

Links4 Life is a Community Links project which Education Links refers its students to if it is felt that the student needs extra mentoring outside school.

Links4Life staff build a deep value relationship with vulnerable 14-19 year olds and support them on their journey to a positive and sustained outcome of improved educational attainment, employment or improved behaviour or attendance at school.

Our involvement with Links4Life provides another constant and supportive role model in the life of our students. Referrals are made directly to the Links4life team of specialists who assign a mentor based on the life issues of the young person. The mentors will meet with the young person on a regular basis, until they feel they have helped to resolve some of the issues that that young person is facing. They are in close contact with our staff team and will regularly update our staff on the progress the student is making.

<u>Families programme</u>

If the worker on the Links4Life team, or our own staff, feel there are issues of poverty, debt, housing, childcare, health and wellbeing and or unemployment within the family then a referral can also be made to the Community Links Families Programme which gives the family a dedicated advisor who will support them with all of the above challenges.

<u>Corporate Sponsors</u>

We have many corporate volunteers that work with us. We will continue working with them to offer our students knowledge and understanding of the world of work. We aim to start work experience placements with corporate sponsors as soon as possible, but will also continue a broad programme working with corporate volunteers. These include:-

1.'International Women's Day' – at BNY Mellon; tours for our female students by women in high power jobs discussing their roles within the bank and then having lunch, followed by beauty treatments and discussions about aspirations for the future.

2. 'World Health Day' - representatives from UBS bank catering division attend   to promote healthy lifestyles

3. Annual Sports Day – corporate employees from companies such as Accenture or Bank of New York Mellon participate at sport events alongside students providing positive role models for students.

4. Business days – at the offices of UBS, BNY Mellon or Accenture, corporate employees hold workshops helping young people to develop their CV writing skills The volunteers also talk about their own backgrounds and how they secured their first jobs which helps raise the young people's aspirations.

5. Interview practise days – following on from the CV writing workshops, the same corporate supporters offer interview practice to Year 11 students to help prepare them for the next step in their lives. The opportunity to visit the offices of multi-

national organisations, right 'on our doorstep' in East London, open the minds of our students to the possibilities for their own future.

6. We aim to develop our programme of work experience to help increase our students self esteem and broaden their horizons so that they feel more confident about taking next steps into further education, training or employment. Work experience placements can be a great success for students and employers alike, but only by correctly matching the young person to the right setting, and supporting them through the placement. We will work closely with our corporate partners, and others, to place students appropriately. We have received a positive response in this area, and one partner, OCS, will be able to offer apprenticeship placements for suitable candidates.

In all of these activities, our own staff support students at the events and facilitate the volunteers, so that all may gain the most from the experience. The Fundraising team of Community Links Trust Limited work with us to initiate contact, manage the relationship with the corporate partner, and plan events. Some of the senior staff at these global organisations come to know us and our students very well, and the relationship is rewarding on both sides. Our students, are really touched to meet adults who can be genuinely interested in them, their lives and aspirations, and who can offer advice from their own experiences. In return, the corporate employees working at large Canary Wharf and City firms gain insight into the lives of young people living in areas a stone's throw from their offices. We value these relationships and will aim to continue developing the range of opportunities available for our students as a Free School.

Connexions and Careers

A Connexions Worker visits our year 11 students regularly and creates action plans with them. Our Staff and Student Development Manager supported by two members of staff, works with our Year 11 students providing support and guidance to enable young people to work through the actions set out in their Connexions action plan.

We will also be joining with Community Links employment arm Employment and Training Links to create a Job Fair for their users and our students. We know that many further education and employment providers will attend, offering opportunities for our students that they might not have otherwise had the opportunity to apply for. The Job Fair will also be open to students' families and so will potentially also impact on parents and other family members who need support into employment.

Urban Futures

A further source of support is the Urban Futures programme -

Urban Futures is a youth project designed to engage, motivate and enable young people aged 14-19 to stay in education, employment or training. It consists of tailored activities, mentoring support, skills training, financial and social incentives, and health, fitness and outdoor activities.

The workers from this team run workshops around employability for our Key Stage

4 students, and supplement the action plans from Connexions, as well as our own support. Urban Futures also tracks the progress of the participants beyond their intervention.

Wellbeing within the small group environment.
We provide small group learning in groups of no more than 12 students. Each group also has a Group Coordinator and at least one Learning Mentor with it at all times. This allows for increased building of relationships with students and their families. We hold meetings on a termly basis with all group staff so that information can be shared between all parties and concerns can be raised and dealt with (including as discussed referrals to CFCS and CSSS).

All our staff have training in first aid, child protection and safeguarding, and positive handling techniques as standard. With clear guidelines in place for our staff and students.

At Education Links, the safety and protection of young people at the School is paramount and has the highest priority. A comprehensive child protection policy is operated and all staff are given an induction in this regard (our Child Protection Policy is set out in full at the end of the section referenced Appendix 4). Additionally, all staff are CRB checked before commencement, references are taken up and staff are given regular Child Protection Training. The School premises also provide a safe environment for all young people to learn.

Our Child Protection policy covers:

- Recognising the signs of child abuse including physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect
- Recognising parental signs of child abuse, i.e. particular forms of parental behaviour that could raise or reinforce concerns
- Procedures for dealing with suspected child abuse
- Monitoring and Record Keeping

Supporting Child Protection: To support our policy and procedure, Education Links ensures the following:
- Continued development of staff awareness of safeguarding and the importance of understanding Child Protection (especially its application to children with disabilities and SENs) and their responsibilities in identifying abuse
- All staff being regularly reminded of the policy and referral procedures
- Monitoring of children who have been identified as being at risk
- Involvement of outside agencies to support young people as appropriate
- An environment where children feel safe and secure to have their viewpoints valued and are encouraged to talk and are listened to.

Wellbeing survey

To gather a snapshot of the wellbeing of our students we are working with New Philanthropy Capital to undertake regular wellbeing surveys (results included). We piloted the questionnaire last year in the autumn and will use the survey again this year to show us where the students have particular difficulties, for example, in 2011 school was an area of their lives that they were happiest in, and family life

and friends were where they were least happy. We were then able to target wellbeing lesson plans around families and difficulties arising in families so that some of these issues might be worked out. This also applied to the 'friends' area of the questionnaire and also resilience.

More specifically, we found low scores for the girls when compared to the boys in all areas, including self-esteem and emotional wellbeing, reflecting the feelings of girls about themselves. Consequently, we are putting more girl-only activities into place (e.g. International Women's Day, and separate workshops and discussion groups). We aim to run the questionnaire again with each year's cohort, providing evidence over time of the impact of our intervention, as well as aiding planning.

APPENDICES – School Policies

Appendix 1 – Curriculum Policy

Curriculum Policy

Education Links works in partnership with Newham Education Authority and local schools in providing education opportunities for young people who are experiencing difficulties within the mainstream education system. We aim to help these young people to meet the challenges they face and to ultimately return to full-time education. The Curriculum Policy ensures a balanced programme to achieve these aims.

Objectives

The School aims to offer each young person:

- A Programme which is relevant to their particular needs and aspirations.
- The opportunity to develop their self-esteem and their confidence.
- The opportunity to improve their personal achievement.
- The opportunity to develop and improve their life and social skills.

Great emphasis is placed on the students taking responsibility for themselves, their **learning**, their **achievements**, their **attitudes** and their **behaviour**.

The **School Contract** underpins the young person's commitment to this process. Each student is required to

a) Attain a previously agreed attendance target set by the school
b) Maintain agreed standards of behaviour and attitudes
c) Achieve previously agreed educational goals.

Ethos

The School aims to provide an environment in which young people can feel safe and valued, can achieve their potential, and can leave with the confidence to take their place in the world. The relationship between staff and student is critical, and

this is at the heart of our work. Students are expected to strive to do their best, and are rewarded appropriately. Parents and families are an important part of the process, and good relationships are fostered between staff and parents. Close links are maintained with the referring schools, the local authority, the community and sponsors.

Curriculum

The structure of the curriculum is designed to provide core skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT, as a priority, together with science, humanities, art and drama. A comprehensive PSHE and Citizenship programme deals with many of the issues that face the young people. Sport is included for all. Creative skills are also encouraged through Art, Dance, Performing Arts and Creative Media. Life Skills is delivered through the formal timetable, but the role of continuing mentoring is important. Social skills are addressed through group work and recreation time.

The elements of the curriculum form a balanced programme to enable students to grow and develop on a personal as well as an academic level. Their progress is monitored and recorded, and termly reports to parents are made.

Students are entered for examinations in Functional Skills at Entry Level, Level 1 and 2, GCSE, BTEC First, and other qualification types, thus ensuring the full ability range is catered for. The range of examinations on offer is continually reviewed to ensure that students have access to qualifications that enable them to achieve their potential. Functional Skills is available to all ages, and students will be able to progress through the levels depending on the length of their placement. Students are entered for GCSE examinations after consultation and according to ability, and with due regard to the length of time in the school. Some students will be entered by their referring schools, especially if coursework has already been submitted there, and we support them in preparing for examination.

Students are given every assistance and encouragement to overcome barriers to learning as well as gain accreditation. They can then move on to further education well equipped for their future. The curriculum on offer is not only about gaining certificates, as the personal development of each student is the priority, and certification is a tangible piece of evidence of their achievements.

The curriculum is supplemented by workshops and activities, and an off-timetable Alternative Curriculum Week allows for exploring new creative areas, such as dance, and different sport activities. The school also uses a bespoke virtual learning environment to support classroom delivery as well as offering an opportunity for independent learning. This would apply to those who are unable to attend normal lessons, e.g. through illness or for students who are school phobic

Learning and teaching

Teaching staff work collaboratively to produce schemes of work appropriate to the needs of the students. The class work is differentiated and appropriate to the ability range. A variety of methods and resources are used, including individual teaching and small group sessions. Support in the classroom is effective, and all students experience one-to-one support at some time. Students are involved in evaluating their own progress, as well as staff assessment and recording. The

overall quality of student attainment is good.

The quality of teaching is monitored and evaluated, and schemes of work are planned and distributed to ensure a coherent delivery. The plan promotes progression, and systematic assessment tracks the progress of individual students.

Development

The Curriculum Policy is monitored and evaluated, and reviews and revisions ensure it is fit for purpose. Developing new areas of the curriculum is driven by the needs of the students, and acknowledges changes in National Curriculum and examination criteria. The policy will always reflect the aims of the School.

Appendix 2 – SEN Policy

Special Educational Needs Policy

Introduction

At Education Links we value every young person as a member of our community with unique strengths and aptitudes. Staff members are committed to providing the best possible opportunities for students to reach their full potential educationally, emotionally, physically and spiritually. This is done in an inclusive atmosphere, and working in partnership with parents/carers, other agencies and the wider community.

At Education Links we recognise that children have special educational needs if they have a *learning difficulty* which calls for *special educational provision* to be made for them.

- We understand that children can be defined as having a learning difficulty if they have
  - o a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or
  - o a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local education authority.
- All teachers at Education Links are teachers of children with special educational needs.
- We are committed to meeting the needs of students with special educational needs.
- The views of the students will be sought and taken into account.
- Parents and carers have a vital role to play in supporting their child's education and their views will be taken into account.
- Children with SEN will be offered full access to a broad, balanced and relevant education

Policy Aims

- To ensure that every child has an equal opportunity to participate in all aspects of school life, irrespective of race, gender or special need.

- To provide equal access to a curriculum that provides for all the needs of the students.
- To establish good home school communication.
- To involve the student wherever possible in the planning and target setting of his/her programme of work.
- To raise staff awareness of the need to differentiate work effectively
- To provide regular training, coaching and development for all staff.
- To monitor and review individual needs regularly, and to maintain clear records of any action taken.

Policy Objectives

- To identify as early as possible those students with SEN and the nature of their needs. This will include dyslexia as a specific learning difficulty.
- To maintain regular contact with parents at all stages of support and work in partnership with them to meet the targets set for their child.
- To determine any resource implications and establish whether they will be provided within school or through external sources.
- To establish programmes for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the effectiveness of the provision.
- To decide if specialist advice is required from outside agencies and make appropriate referrals.
- To assist the proprietors in fulfilling their duties regarding provision for students with SEN.

This policy follows guidelines in the SEN Code of practice, which came into effect in January 2002, and links to other policies and documentation in the school.

Roles and Responsibilities for Special Educational Needs

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The Role of the SENCO
- To manage the day-to-day operation of the SEN Policy.
- Co-ordinating provision for students with SEN
- Liaising with Student Services Manager and Group Coordinators in developing parental awareness and partnership.
- Liaising with Student Services Manager and Group Coordinators in working with external agencies and LEA officers including SEN officers (SENOs), Educational Psychologists (EPs), Connexions, Child and Family Consultation Service(CFCS), New Directions, and all other agencies as appropriate
- In consultation with colleagues use information from student's previous attainment as well as baseline assessment to provide starting points for the development of an appropriate provision for the student.
- Liaising with Student Services Manager and Group Coordinators to identify, monitor and review students with SEN.
- Arranging and chairing review meetings including Annual Reviews and IEP meetings.
- Ensuring that ongoing observation and assessment provide regular feedback to all teachers and parents/carers about the student's

achievements and experiences and that the outcomes of such assessment form the basis of planning for the next steps of the student's learning.

- Monitoring the provision for students on the Code of Practice in terms of planning, writing and delivery of IEPs when appropriate.
- Raising awareness of the school SEN policy.
- Ensure that assessments and submissions for Exam Access Arrangements are carried out as necessary
- Liaising with Student Services Manager and Group Coordinators regarding the assessment and induction of all new students to Education Links
- Providing leadership to subject teachers in ensuring that a differentiated curriculum is implemented to meet students' needs.
- Liaising with Student and Staff Development Manager to ensure in-service training of staff is appropriate

The Role of the Group Coordinator and Subject Teacher
- To identify the needs of students with special educational needs
- To liaise with the Student Services Manager to discuss strategies to support the students
- To take account of students' and parents' views
- To plan for the differentiation of activities and tasks to ensure that the curriculum is accessible to all students
- To manage the classroom including lesson planning, and working collaboratively with Learning Mentors
- To assess and keep records demonstrating progress and attainment including setting targets
- To monitor students' progress and report through team meetings
- To write IEPs, or to contribute to IEPs, as appropriate, through team meetings
- To contribute to Annual Reviews

Identification, Assessment and Review

Concerns about a student may be raised by Parents, Carers, any member of staff or professional involved with the student, or occasionally, by the student. Initial concerns will be brought to the attention of the Student Services Manager, and these concerns will be discussed at the team meetings, or sooner in an urgent case. Other agencies or professionals will be involved as appropriate.

Through the referral process, subsequent interviews, and initial assessments, the individual needs of each student will be determined, and this will form the basis of the placement and programme offered. Following initial assessment provision may include literacy support, differentiated lessons, mentoring or counselling. Regular team meetings will plan and review IEPs. Students and parents/carers will be informed and involved in the IEP writing process, and review with parents will take place at Parent Consultation meetings.

In the case of Statutory Assessment, if that is considered necessary, Education Links will follow guidelines given in the revised Code of Practice. The importance of close liaison with parents is recognised during the Statutory Assessment process. Where a student with an existing statement of Special needs joins the school, the SENCO will ensure that all information is gathered prior to admission,

and that all procedures are adhered to thereafter.

Individual Education Plans

A standard format of IEP is used for all students at Education Links. The IEP process is constantly under review and formats will change to take account of individual student needs. Fundamentally all IEPs will contain the following information:
- the short-term targets set for or by the student
- the teaching strategies to be used
- the provision to be put in place
- when the plan is to be reviewed
- success and/or exit criteria
- outcomes recorded when the IEP is reviewed

The Annual Review for Statemented students

Procedures for Annual Reviews for Statemented students follow procedures laid down in Chapter 9 of the revised Code of Practice.

- The LEA advises the SENCO of Annual Review dates for Statemented and Exceptional Needs students
- SENCO, working with the Student Services Manager, invites parents and all external agencies to attend Annual Review and requests appropriate reports from external Agencies involved with the student
- For Year 9 Transition Reviews and for all reviews where amendments to the statement are likely the Special Education Needs Officer (SENO) is also invited
- Annual Statement Review Meeting takes place and is chaired by the SENCO
- The SENCO completes the Annual Review Outcome Report provided by the LEA and submits this to LEA within 2 weeks of Annual Review, including all appropriate documents
- A copy of the Annual Review Outcome and new IEP is sent to the parent/carer and all those invited
- LEA informs SENCO and parents of the outcome

Complaints Procedures

This policy is covered by the school Complaints Procedures, as are all policies. This is published and available to all parents/carers.

Review of Policy and Procedures

This policy will be reviewed by the Education Links Advisory Group, acting for the proprietors, as part of the regular review of policies.

Appendix 3 – Behaviour Policy

<u>Behaviour Policy</u>

Ethos: This policy is a statement of good practice that covers all aspects of life at Education Links that contribute to the development and maintenance of good behaviour and a positive ethos. All members of Education Links are expected to help maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning, with courtesy and mutual respect as basic requirements.

Aims:
- To encourage adherence to an agreed set of principles of behaviour by students.
- To support effective teaching and learning.
- To contribute to mutual respect.
- To gain the agreement and support of tutors, support staff and parents.
- To promote self-discipline and proper regard for authority among students
- To regulate students' conduct.

1. The Basic Code of Conduct:

a) Attendance
b) Behaviour
c) Contribution
d) Punctuality
e) Mutual Respect

2. In Class: The following is expected from everybody in the classroom in order to make it easy for both teaching and learning:
a) Attend every class
b) Arrive on time
c) Listen carefully
d) Follow instructions
e) Contribute
f) Ask for help when needed
g) Be sensible and considerate at all times
h) Turn off mobile phones, pagers and personal stereos
i) Do not disrupt
j) Raise hand to ask or answer question

3. In General: The following acceptable behaviours must be observed in and out of class:
a) Speak politely to staff, volunteers and visitors
b) Use language that is not offensive or abusive
c) Respecting others' points of view
d) No spitting
e) No Smoking on premises or drinking of alcohol
f) No graffiti
g) Keep walls and furniture clean
h) Do not litter
i) Dress appropriately
j) Use all facilities and amenities responsibly
k) Do not attend the School under the influence of drugs or alcohol

Disciplinary Policy & Procedure

The aim of the discipline policy is to determine the boundaries of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, the hierarchy of rewards and sanctions and how they will be fairly and consistently applied.

Where the code of expected conduct is breached, students have a right to expect fair and consistently applied sanctions for poor behaviour and which make a clear distinction between serious and minor infringements of the code of conduct. An appropriate sanction is one which is designed to put matters right and encourage better behaviour in future.

Where sanctions become necessary the following procedure will be followed:

First line is the individual staff sanction. This may be for minor misdemeanours. Where this fails or the breach of conduct continues, the student may be referred to the management who will take necessary steps to address behaviour.

Where the breach is serious or consistent, and warrants the student being sent home or taken off premises, the Principal of Education Links will take that decision having made contact with referring agency, parents and other concerned parties.

At all stages, contact with parents, referring agencies and other such parties will be made and meetings arranged accordingly. Records must be kept of any action taken.

Supporting the Code of Conduct Policy

The following practices will support the implementation of the above policy:

h) **Setting good habits early**: to help students establish regular attendance and good behaviour from the start, involving parents and referring agencies in the process
i) **Early intervention**: prompt intervention is needed where there is poor behaviour or unexplained absence, so it is clear that this will not be tolerated
j) **Rewarding achievements**: positive recognition of individual students or classes achievements in good attendance and behaviour, through letters to parents and referring agencies, certificates or prizes
k) **Supporting behaviour management**: behaviour management techniques, assertive discipline, individual behaviour programmes and circle of friends can help improve and maintain high standards of behaviour and discipline
l) **Identifying underlying causes**: attention, anxiety, diet, habit, developmental level
m) **Work with parents and referring agencies** including social services and educational psychologist where necessary to address any underlying causes
n) **Parental support**: assisting the parents (where required) to enable them to offer parental advice and support

Appendix 4 – Child Protection Policy

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Child Protection Policy

Background: At Education Links, the safety and protection of young people on the School is paramount and has high priority. It is the responsibility of Education Links to ensure that a comprehensive child protection policy is operated and all staff are given a basic induction in this regard.

Additionally, all staff are CRB checked before commencement, references are taken up and staff will be given Child Protection Training. The School premises also provide a safe environment for all young people to learn.

Types of Child Abuse:

1. Physical
2. Sexual
3. Emotional
4. Physical neglect

Recognising Symptoms:

1. Physical Abuse

This involves physical injury to a child including deliberate poisoning, where there is definite knowledge or a reasonable suspicion, that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented.

Typical signs of Physical Abuse are:

- **Bruises and abrasions –** especially about the face, head, genitals or other parts of the body where they would not be expected to occur given the age of the child. Some types of bruising are particularly characteristic of non-accidental injury especially when the child's explanation does not match the nature of the injury or when appears frequently.
- **Slap marks –** these may be visible on cheeks or buttocks

- **Twin bruises on either side of the mouth or cheeks –** can be caused by pinching or grabbing, sometimes to make a child eat or to stop a child from speaking.
- **Bruising on both sides of the ear –** this is often caused by grabbing a child that is attempting to run away. It is very painful to be held by the ear, as well as humiliating and this is a common injury.
- **Grip marks on arms or trunk –** gripping bruises on arm or trunk can be associated with shaking a child. Shaking can cause one of the most serious injuries to a child; i.e. a brain haemorrhage as the brain hits the inside of the skull. X-rays and other tests are required to fully diagnose the effects of shaking. Grip marks can also be indicative of sexual abuse.
- **Black eyes –** are mostly commonly caused by an object such as a fist coming into contact with the eye socket. **NB:** A heavy bang on the nose, however, can cause bruising to spread around the eye but a doctor will be able to tell if this has occurred.
- **Damage to the mouth –** e.g. bruised/cut lips or torn skin where the upper lip joins the mouth.
- **Bite marks**
- **Fractures**
- **Poison or other misuse of drugs –** e.g. overuse of sedatives

</div>

- **Burns and/or scalds –** a round, red burn on tender, non-protruding parts like the mouth, inside arms and on the genitals will almost certainly have been deliberately inflicted. Any burns that appear to be cigarette burns should be cause for concern. An experienced person will notice skin splashes caused when a child accidentally knocks over a hot cup of tea. In contrast a child who has been deliberately 'dipped' in a hot bath will not have splash marks.

2. Sexual Abuse

The involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children and adolescents in sexual activities they do not comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent or that violate the social taboos of family roles. Typical signs of sexual abuse are:

- **A detailed sexual knowledge inappropriate** to the age of the child.
- **Behaviour that is excessively affectionate or sexual** towards other children or adults.
- **Attempts to inform** by making a disclosure about the sexual abuse often begin by the initial sharing of limited information with an adult. It is also very characteristic of such children that they have an excessive pre-occupation with secrecy and try to bind the adults to secrecy or confidentiality.
- **A fear of medical examinations.**
- **A fear of being alone –** this applies to friends/family/neighbours etc
- **A sudden loss of appetite, compulsive eating, anorexia nervosa or bulimia nervosa.**
- **Excessive masturbation is especially worrying when it takes place in public.**
- **Promiscuity.**
- **Sexual approaches or assaults on children or adults.**
- **Urinary tract infections (UTI), sexually transmitted infections (STI)** are all cause for immediate concern in young children, or in adolescents if his/her partner cannot be identified.
- **Bruising** to the buttocks, lower abdomen, thighs and genital/rectal areas. Bruises may be confined to grip marks where a child has been held so that sexual abuse can take place.
- **Discomfort or pain** particularly in the genital areas or anal areas.
- The drawing of **pornographic or sexually explicit images.**

3. Emotional Abuse:

The severe adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection. All abuse involves some emotional ill treatment – this category should be used where it is the main or sole form of abuse.

4. Physical Neglect:

The persistent or severe neglect of a child (for example, by exposure to any kind of danger, including cold and starvation) which results in serious impairment of the child's health and development, including non-organic failure to thrive. Persistent

stomach aches, feeling unwell, and apparent anorexia can be associated with physical neglect. However, typical signs of physical neglect are:

- **Underweight –** a child may be frequently hungry or pre-occupied with food or in the habit of stealing food or with the intention of procuring food. There is particular cause for concern where a persistently underweight child gains weight when away from home e.g. when in hospital or on a school trip. Some children also lose weight or fails to gain weight during school holidays when school lunches are not available.
- **Inadequately clad –** a distinction needs to be made between situations where children are inadequately clad, dirty or smelly because they come from homes where neatness and cleanliness are unimportant and those where the lack of care is preventing the child from thriving.

Physical neglect is a difficult category because it involves the making of a judgement about the seriousness of the degree of neglect. Much parenting falls short of the ideal but it may be appropriate to invoke child protection procedures in the case of neglect where the child's development is being adversely affected.

Other Symptoms:

Stress and Distress:
When a child is suffering from any one or more of the previous four categories of abuse, or the child is at risk, he/she will nearly always suffer from/display signs of stress and distress.

An abused child is likely to show signs of stress and distress as listed below:
- Lack of concentration and a fall-off in school performance
- Aggressive behaviour
- Moodiness, depression, irritability, listlessness, fearfulness, tiredness, temper tantrums, short concentration span, acting withdrawn or crying at minor occurrences
- Difficulties in relationships with peers
- Regression to more immature forms of behaviour e.g. thumb-sucking
- Self-harming or suicidal behaviour
- Low self esteem
- Wariness, insecurity, running away or truancy – children who persistently run away from home may be escaping sexual/physical abuse
- Disturbed sleep
- General personality changes such as unacceptable behaviour or severe attention seeking behaviour
- A sudden change in school performance

Parental signs of Child Abuse:

Particular forms of parental behaviour that could raise or reinforce concerns are:
- Implausible explanations of injuries
- Unwillingness to seek appropriate medical treatment for injuries
- Injured child kept away from school until injuries have healed without adequate reason
- A high level of expressed hostility to the child

- Grossly unrealistic assumptions about child development
- General dislike of child-like behaviour
- Inappropriate labelling of child's behaviour as bad or naughty

Procedures for dealing with Child Abuse:

1. **Any member of staff with an issue or concern relating to Child Protection (It should be made clear to students that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in respect of child protection issues) should immediately discuss it with a senior member of staff. Allegations of child abuse must always be given the highest priority and referred to the School Leadership Team.**
2. **The Line Manager will then decide on an appropriate course of action based on the London Borough of Newham Guidelines**

If a child chooses to tell a member of staff about possible abuse, there are a number of things that should be done to support the child:
- Stay calm and be available to listen
- Listen with the utmost care to what the child is saying
- Question normally without pressurising
- Don't put words into the child's mouth, but note main points carefully
- Keep a full record – date, time, what the child did, said etc.
- Reassure the child and let them know they were right to inform us
- Inform child that this information has to be passed on
- Immediately inform the School Leadership Team

Monitoring and Record Keeping

It is essential that accurate records are kept where there are concerns about the welfare of a child. These records should be kept in a secure and confidential place, separate from the child's school records. It is important to recognise that regulations published in 1989 do not authorise or require the disclosure to parents of written information relating to Child Protection. Although the preferred practice is for parents to be informed of, and agree to any referral being made (unless it relates to sexual abuse).

Staff must keep the School Leadership Team informed of:
- Poor attendance and punctuality
- Concerns about appearance
- Changed or unusual behaviour
- Concerns about health and emotional well being
- Deterioration in educational progress
- Discussions with parents about concerns relating to their child
- Concerns about home conditions or situations
- Concerns about pupil on pupil abuse (including bullying)

When there is suspicion of significant harm to a child and a referral is made as much information as possible should be given about the nature of the suspicions, the child and the family. Use of previous records (if available) may prove to be particularly useful in this respect.

NB: any referral to Social Services by telephone must be confirmed with the specified written form and a copy kept on the confidential school file. A note must be made of the Duty Social Worker and the time at which the call is made. **If parents have not been informed (or if they have agreed to the referral being made) this must be reported to the Social Services.**

Reports may be needed for Child Protection Case conferences or the criminal/civil courts. Consequently records and reports should be:
- Factual (no opinions)
- Non-judgemental (no assumptions)
- Clear
- Accurate
- Relevant

Supporting Child Protection: To support the above policy and procedure, Education Links will ensure the following:
- Continued development of staff awareness in this regard and the importance of understanding Child Protection (especially its application to children with disabilities and SENs) and their responsibilities in identifying abuse
- All staff being made aware of referral procedures
- Monitoring of children who have been identified as being at risk
- Ensuring that outside agencies are involved as appropriate
- Creation of an environment where children feel safe and secure, to have their viewpoints valued and are encouraged to talk and are listened to.

Appendix 5 – Anti-Bullying Policy

Anti-Bullying Policy

1.0   Introduction

> Education Links does not tolerate bullying and seeks to promote a safe environment for all its students. It will endeavour to investigate promptly any reports of bullying and arrange support for victims of bullying. Action to address the problems of the bully will also be taken.

2.0   What is Bullying?

Bullying is the wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone else. Any behaviour which uses power to hurt others is bullying behaviour.

This may take the form of physical intimidation but can also be psychological. For example, deliberately excluding someone from a group or saying hurtful things constitutes bullying, along with threats of violence or actual physical harm.

2.1 Identifying the Bully

Bullies can be:

- Unpopular or insecure students
- Secure, happy students who like to dominate others
- Academically low achievers
- Achieving as well as – if not better – than their peers.

However, there are often common factors present:

- Bullies tend to have aggressive attitudes
- Bullies tend to lack empathy; they fail to consider how the victim may feel.
- Bullies tend to lack a sense of guilt; they rationalise that the victim somehow 'deserves' the bullying treatment.
- Bullies may have learnt their behaviour outside school.

But never rely on stereotypes. (You may be quite wrong!)

2.2 Identifying the Victim

Bullies, whether individually or in gangs, pick on young people. Victims may be students who:

- Are new to the school
- Are achieving at a higher standard than others
- Are different in appearance, speech or background from other students
- Are unable to 'keep up' with others in a group
- Suffer from low self-esteem
- Demonstrate extreme reactions when bullied
- Are more nervous or anxious

Nevertheless, a seemingly quiet, self-contained student may be suffering in silence.

Never rely on stereotypes. [You may be quite wrong!]

What might happen to a victim when the problem is not addressed?

Some victims recover and come to terms with the experience. Others bury the experience. From studies around the country, the following reactions have been recorded:

- Truancy from school
- Running away from home
- Depression and mental breakdown
- Underachievement in school
- Suicide

3.0 Action by the School

3.1 Positive, preventive measures

All schools will encounter instances of bullying. Education Links acknowledges this and has set up measures to address bullying and prevent it happening wherever possible.

Silence and secrecy are important factors in protecting the power of a bully. They undermine the power of the teachers and the school to tackle the situation.

The following measures will be incorporated into our work with students, in the following ways:

- Assertiveness training for all students

  This helps pupils understand the means of achieving what they want /feel is right through means other than aggression. It helps the victim and also begins to re-educate the aggressor.

- Open discussion of Bullying

  This enables students to discuss openly issues which have affected them without necessarily identifying bullies/victims. Open discussion forces bullying out of the realms of secrecy and shows students that it is a subject that can be raised with staff.

- How to make friendships / relationships work

  The focus is on three elements for good relationships: **R**espect, **E**mpathy, **G**enuineness.

3.2 Additional opportunities to prevent bullying come through

- Praise and reward offered for co-operative work.
- Discussion of the expectations of the school in relation to student behaviour and respect for others
- The peer mentoring scheme
- School council representatives meeting to discuss bullying issues

4.0 Action in the Event of Bullying

On being informed of an occurrence of bullying by a victim or other individual:

- DO take the matter seriously. (Never minimise the incident or report)
- DO take action as quickly as possible
- DO a written report of the incident and submit to your Line Manager (in the first instance)

- DO offer concrete help, advice and support to the victim.
- DO ensure the bully knows you are aware of the behaviour and disapprove.

The Line Manager will decide on the merits of each case which of the following it is necessary to implement:

- Refer the matter to a member of the School Leadership Team
- Send a letter home to parents / carers of the victim / bully
- Ask parents / carers to visit school to discuss the incident
- Set up a constructive plan to offer to the parents / carers of the bully for supporting him / her in the future

4.1   For the bully

The situation will be explained clearly and concisely to the bully. A record of this incident will be kept in the student's file. The bully will be told that this behaviour is not to occur again. If it does not, the matter will not be raised again. The parents / carers and the instigator of the bullying will be made aware that should there be a further incidence it will result in a period of exclusion, with a record in the student's personal file.

4.2   For the victim

A constructive plan will be offered to the parents / carers of the victim for supporting the young person in the future. The young person will be encouraged to develop strategies to help him / her. Strategies for conflict resolution and peer mediation will be offered where appropriate.

Appendix 6 – Attendance Strategy

<u>Student Attendance and Punctuality Strategy</u>

Students are given a target of 90% attendance and 100% punctuality.

- Group Coordinators and Learning Mentors assigned to each teaching group are responsible for entering the daily attendance record on the electronic Education Links Administration Database. Teachers are responsible for maintaining their class registers. Group Coordinators have initial responsibility for addressing attendance issues.

- The Administrator or Finance and Administration Manager will send weekly attendance reports to referring schools for their pupils, and deal with any general enquiries. The Administrator will issue certificates for 90%+ attendance on a half-termly basis, and at the end of year.

- Parents/carers have an obligation to contact the Group Co-ordinator to report the first, and subsequent, day of illness. Medical and dental appointments should be made outside of school hours where possible, and appointment cards/letters should be produced as evidence <u>before</u> the appointment. Other appointments should be similarly treated. If an appointment card/letter is not

produced before the appointment, it should be shown to staff as soon as possible afterwards. A letter from a parent/carer to cover illness should be kept with the student file.

- One day unauthorised absence – staff to phone home - which must be recorded on Telephone Conversation Sheet for student file. If the student is unwell, the parent/carer should be asked to provide a letter on the student's return. The attendance register should be amended with the appropriate code.

- Three to five day unauthorised absence – staff to phone and then letter sent to home - which must be recorded in student file. A standard letter (Non-attendance Letter) is on file. Copies to be kept. Any reply from parent/carer to be filed.

- One week unauthorised absence – the concern to be brought to the attention of the Student Services Manager. Further action will be decided on, either calling an interview with the student and parent/carer, referral to another agency (if there are health or other issues), or similar. At this stage the Group Coordinator has responsible for leading, but the Family Engagement Coordinator may take over – this to be agreed by all concerned.

- Non-attendance lasting beyond 4 weeks is to be viewed as a serious issue, and the Student Services Manager must be kept informed of all actions and developments. The Group Coordinator will alert the Family Engagement Coordinator and share all necessary information. The Family Engagement Coordinator will contact the parent/carer and initiate appropriate action, depending on circumstances. Referral to external agencies may follow – CFCS, CSSS, Links4Life, etc – or contact with existing agencies, e.g. Social Care, YOT.

- The Family Engagement Coordinator will monitor student attendance on a weekly basis through the Education Links Administration Database. Any student whose attendance falls below 75% in any one half term will also be brought to the attention of the Student Services Manager. The Family Engagement Coordinator will follow up each case by contacting parents/carers and student to investigate causes of poor attendance.

- In the case of students referred to Education Links by New Directions (L2S placements) the Student Services Manager and/or the Family Engagement Coordinator will liase with the Attendance and Welfare Manager, New Directions. For all other schools, the Student Services Manager will notify the appropriate contact person of issues and actions taken.

- Following intervention, and on review, if there has been no improvement, a referral back to the referring agency may be necessary. It is important that any supporting information is attached to the referral as court action maybe initiated. In some cases the referring agency may have existing procedures, or the Education Welfare Service may be involved. All actions and outcomes to be recorded.

It is very important that staff record every action made in respect of a student's continual unauthorised non-attendance.

Punctuality

Students are expected to arrive by 8.45 a.m. at their centre, and to return on time after the lunch break.

Students arriving late will be kept in class at break or lunchtime, or after 2.30 p.m., to make up the time lost.

Students will not be kept back for more than 30 minutes without notice. If students are to be detained for more than 30 minutes parents/carers will receive 24 hour notice.

Punctuality and attendance will be monitored and reported to parents/carers and referring schools as necessary.

Appendix 7 – Sex and Relationships Policy

***Education Links Sex and Relationships (SRE) Policy - Extract***


Introduction

Description of Education Links

We have provided alternative education for young people excluded from school since 1995. All students attend the programme full time. Some return to mainstream education. Others take their exams at a Education Links centre. The programme enjoys high levels of achievement through awards, exams and students going on to Further Education. We work with schools in Newham and neighbouring boroughs. For young people at risk of becoming involved in crime, we offer a range of positive and inclusive activities. At the heart of these is teamwork but we also develop individual skills and confidence to help everyone reach their full potential.

Development of Policy

The People Involved

The policy was initially developed / reviewed by a working party which consisted:
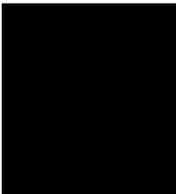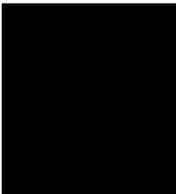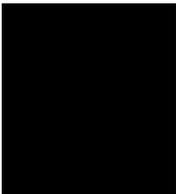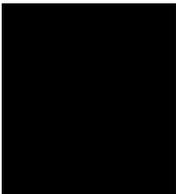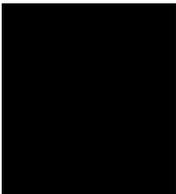
- ███████
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- ███████

The Process Undertaken

- *The working group was briefed by Newham's SRE advisor*
- *The previous sex education policy and equal opportunities policy were all reviewed*
- *An audit of sex education in each year was undertaken by teaching staff.*
- *An audit of resources used in the school was undertaken*
- *Pupils were consulted on previous SRE provision and what might be included in SRE provision including members of Junior Sacre*
- *Staff were consulted on the policy*
- *Parents were consulted on the policy*

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to explain the aims of SRE within Personal, Social, Health and Economic education (PSHEE). It also describes what we teach and the approaches we use.

This policy helps to ensure that the whole school community, parents, staff, governors and pupils have a shared understanding of the important area of the curriculum.

Within **Every Child Matters** there are elements of all 5 outcomes that directly relate to the teaching of SRE:

Be Healthy
Sexually Healthy
Healthy Lifestyles
Mentally and emotionally healthy
Stay Safe
Safe from maltreatment, neglect, violence and sexual exploitation.
Safe from bullying and discrimination
Safe from crime and anti-social behaviour in and out of school
Enjoy and Achieve
Attend and enjoy school
Achieve personal and social development and enjoy recreation.
Making a Positive Contribution
Engage in decision making and support the community
Engage in law abiding and positive behaviour in and out of school
Develop positive relationships and choose not to bully and discriminate
Develop self-confidence and successfully deal with significant life changes and challenges
Achieve economic well being
Engage in further education, employment or training on leaving school
Live in households free from low income

*The national **Teenage Pregnancy Strategy** (1999) aims to drastically reduce pregnancy among under-18s by 2010. In Newham there are higher than average rates of a STIs and unplanned Teenage Pregnancy. As a school we want to equip our pupils with the relevant knowledge, skills and attitudes to develop the self-confidence and self esteem to ensure they do not engage in early sexual activity. National and local Teenage Pregnancy Strategies identify effective SRE as an important contributory factor in the reduction of under-18 conception rates.*

*The **National Healthy School Standard** (NHSS, 1999) aims to support schools in the development of a whole school approach to health. Effective sex and relationships education is one criterion for a healthy school. Having an up to date SRE policy is a requirement for Healthy Schools status which the school is currently working towards.*

Links with other policies and programmes

*SRE is taught within the **PSHEE programme** across all years.*

The school has a drugs policy that shares common criteria with the SRE Policy.

*The **confidentiality policy** has been developed separately from the SRE policy and is available on request. Confidentiality is referred to later in this policy.*

*Education Links is working towards **Healthy Schools Status** of which an effective SRE policy and Scheme of Work is a requirement.*

*The school also has an **anti bullying policy** to help ensure pupils are free from discrimination.*

Behaviour policy

Child Protection Policy

Moral and Values Framework

The students bring with them a rich mixture of cultures and religions and Education Links make every effort to emphasise the respect for the variety of beliefs and to recognise the concerns and sensitivities of these different cultures. Many of the students have low self-esteem and have difficult histories in their schooling. We are committed to the active promotion of self-esteem in all our students and the encouragement of the development of their self-confidence and sense of personal worth.

The sex education programme will reflect the school ethos and demonstrate and encourage the following values:

- *Respect for self and others.*
- *Take responsibility for their actions and the impact actions have on their family, friends, school and wider community.*
- *Respect for their family, friends, school and wider community*
- *The value of positive friendships, relationships and family life including marriage.*
- *Respect for an individual's religion, race, disability, culture, gender and sexual orientation.*
- *To be safe and free from harm including freedom from exploitation.*
- *Empower young people to understand their rights, self determination and autonomy and their self potential to make their own decision.*

Faith and Cultural Perspectives in SRE

Education Links believes that all young people from all faiths and cultures in the school have an entitlement to SRE that can support them on their journey through

childhood to adolescence and adulthood. SRE should be sensitive to the range of different faiths in the school.

The school will ensure wide consultation with parents and the wider community to when developing its Scheme of Work and the resources it uses to be sensitive to the range of cultural and faith beliefs and values and to reassure parents.

When appropriate certain aspects of the SRE programme may be delivered in single sex groups.

The school will take account of religious festivals and celebrations to ensure as many pupils as possible can access the SRE programme.

Aims of the SRE Programme

"SRE is lifelong learning about sex, sexuality, emotions, relationships and sexual health. It involves acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes" (Sex Education Forum, 1999).

Sex education will be taught in the context of relationships. Topics and themes will be repeated from year to year in greater depth taking account of the pupil's development.

In line with Government guidance **(Sex and Relationship Education Guidance, July 2000***) the school sex and relationship education aims to prepare young people for an adult life in which they can:*

- *Develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide their decisions, judgements and behaviour;*
- *Be aware of their sexuality and understand human sexuality*
- *Understand the arguments for delaying sexual activity*
- *Understand the reasons for having protected sex*

In accordance with government guidance (The Learning and Skills Act, 2000) we want to make sure that young people:

Learn about the nature of marriage and its importance for family life and the bringing up of children; and are protected from teaching and materials which are inappropriate having regard to the age and religious and cultural backgrounds of the pupils concerned.

The sex and relationship education programme at Education Links school will:

- *Teach about relationships, love and care and the responsibilities of parenthood as well as sex;*
- *Focus on boys as much as girls*
- *Build self esteem by developing positive attitudes and confidence in pupils;*
- *Teach the taking on of responsibility and the consequences of one's actions in relation to sexual activity and parenthood*
- *Provide young people with information about different types of*

contraception, safer sex and how they can access local sources of further advice and treatment;

- *Use young people as peer educators, e.g. teenage mothers and fathers;*
- *Give young people a clear understanding of the arguments for delaying sexual activity and resisting pressure*
- *Link sex and relationship education with issues of peer pressure and other risk taking behaviour such as drugs, smoking and alcohol;*
- *Ensure young people understand how the law applies to sexual relationships*
- *Discuss different types of relationships and different sexual orientations.*
- *Provide information which is easy to understand and relevant and appropriate to the age and maturity of the pupils;*
- *Include the development of communication and social skills;*
- *Encourage the exploration and clarification of values and attitudes.*

Organisation of Sex and Relationships Education

- *Co-ordination*

Sex education will be co-ordinated by the PSHE co-ordinator.

- *Who teaches SRE*

Group coordinators and support workers

Through Science and the wider curriculum

External Visitors

School Nurse

- *Where SRE is taught*

Through the National Curriculum Science

Through PSHCE lessons

Informally through 1 to 1 s with Project Staff and School Nurse

Invited Agencies including ShiNE and community police officer

Health Drop ins

Healthy Schools Multi Agency Health Conference Days

- *Content of sex education*

Year 7, 8 and 9
- *Puberty*
- *Cervical and testicular cancer*
- *Appropriate Language*
- *Pregnancy and how a baby is conceived*
- *Choices in Relationships*
- *Basic contraception*
- *STIs*
- *Services*
- *Safe relationships*
- *Sex and the law*

Year 10 and 11
- *Testicular / Cervical / Breast Cancers*
- *Contraception*
- *STIs*
- *Abortion*
- *Assertiveness skills*
- *Cultural and religious perspectives*
- *Teenage Pregnancy issues*
- *Parenting Skills*
- *Marriage*
- *Making relationships work*

NB: Topics will be repeated and differentiated throughout all the years depending upon the needs of the students.

- **How SRE is taught**

Learning methods, which involve children's full participation, will be used as much as possible. For example: whole class groups, smaller groups of pupils, case studies, role-play and drama, as well as individual quizzes / questionnaires and storyboards.

Single gender groups will be used as deemed appropriate and relevant.

Presentations from relevant external agencies and health professionals

Drop-ins, including 1 to 1 opportunities

SRE for children and young people with learning difficulties

The school believes that children with learning difficulties should have equal access to the SRE program. Advice is taken form school nurses, the local sexual health providers and the speech and language therapy service. The content of the SRE program for pupils with learning difficulties is roughly divided into:

- *Body parts*
- *Gender*
- *Feelings*
- *Public and private*
- *Relationships*
- *Life cycle*

Active methods of group work are used. These methods use a variety of ways of communicating and are not only verbal. They include circle work, matching and sequencing pictures, storytelling, drama and mime. Some of the ways that we work include:
- *Setting up working agreements from the start, such as no-one will be expected to ask or answer a personal question; it also provides clarity about*

what will need to be passed on if there is a genuine concern

- *Use of distancing techniques, e.g.: case studies*
- *Using group building activities to form a co-operative and safe group*
- *Giving a variety of opportunities for developing and practising skills like decision making and assertion*
- *Using distancing methods like stories, case studies, drama and 3D models to allow discussion about matters without referring to people in the group*
- *Using ritual and repetition to promote learning, for example using the same song or activity to start the session*
- *Building on what has gone before by returning to similar content at each stage*
- *Drawing on a wide range of materials, including visual, aural and tactile.*

SRE, Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

Education Links is committed to working towards equality of opportunity in all aspects of school life.

The school will work to ensure that the policy and programme is relevant to:

- Boys as well as girls
- The range of cultures and faiths of pupils at the school and within UK society
- Pupils with special needs
- Lesbian, gay and bisexual pupils

All resources and methods will be as inclusive as possible and guidance will be sought on the most accessible resources relevant to the needs of the pupils in our school.

Section E: Evidence of demand – part 1

Please complete the table, using the information below to assist you.

If your school is new provision:

- In **column A** please provide the proposed number of places in each year group.
- In **column B** please provide the anticipated demand from your commissioners or, for 16-19 year old students, the numbers of students that have confirmed that the proposed school will be their first choice.
- Leave **column C** blank.
- In **column D** please express the demand (column B) as a percentage of the places available (column A). i.e. $D = (B/A) \times 100$.

If your school is an existing provider applying to become an alternative provision Free School:

- In **column A** please provide the proposed number of places in each year group.
- In **column B** please provide the anticipated demand from your existing commissioners or, for 16-19 year old students, the number of students already on roll at your school.
- In **column C** please provide the anticipated demand from your additional commissioners, if applicable, and, for 16-19 year old students, the numbers of students that have confirmed that the proposed school will be their first choice.
- In **column D** please express the total demand (column B + column C) as a percentage of the places available (column A). *i.e.D = ((B+C)/A) x100.*

	2014				**2015**			
	A	**B**	**C**	**D**	**A**	**B**	**C**	**D**
Key Stage 1								
Key Stage 2								
Key Stage 3	10	9	1	100%	10	9	1	100%
Key Stage 4	65	59	6	100%	65	59	6	100%
SEN: commissioner referred	5	4	1	100%	5	4	1	100%
16-19: pupil application								
Totals	80	72	8	100%	80	72	8	100%

Please note that we have used the 16-19 row to display the student numbers relevant to SEN places

Section E: Evidence of demand – part 2

Please refer to pages 24-29 of the alternative provision 'How to Apply' guidance for what should be included in this section.

Referral process

Referring schools typically fall into two categories; those that agree a Service Level Agreement before the start of each academic year for an agreed number of places, forming a contract for long-term or short-term placements, or a mixture of both; and those that make ad-hoc referrals throughout the year as the need arises. In the past we have had a combination of both type of referrals and the balance has increasingly moved to ad-hoc referrals. However, we are beginning to see a change back to SLA contracts.

For many years we have had SLA contracts with the local authority, through the pupil referral units, for contracted places of both alternative education long-term placements, and short-term holding provision for permanently excluded students. Although the authority has not wished to appear partisan in supporting our application, we have always had good feedback from the officers we work with, and the contracts have been renewed on a one or two-yearly basis. These contract places typically number between 36 and 46 per year.

Whether a SLA contract is signed or not, the initial contact from a referrer is usually by telephone to discuss the suitability of a particular student for our provision. After this informal approach, it will be agreed that a written referral will be made, or it may be agreed that the student would be more suited to a different setting – this is not usually the case, as our feeder schools know us well. Occasionally it may be agreed to operate a trial period. The referral is not made without the agreement of a parent/carer, except in the case of Fixed Term Exclusions for a very short period.

We have a detailed standard referral form that commissioning schools must complete. The first page forms a contract that head teachers must sign, or at least a deputy who has the delegated responsibility. The information required on the form includes personal details of the pupil, family background (number and age of siblings, etc), previous schools, Key stage results and predicted GCSE grades, reason for referral, and involvement with other agencies (Youth Offending Team, Social Care, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, etc).

ADMISSIONS POLICY

1.   INTRODUCTION

Education Links provides a much needed service for excluded young people within the local community. Placements are agreed with referring agencies under a Service Level Agreement, or single student contract. However, as spaces are sometimes limited, it is important that there is a clear policy on how places will be allocated.

2. OBJECTIVE

To give guidance to ensure that services are accessible to as many young people as possible.

3. SCOPE

All young people's services.

4. THE POLICY

Admissions currently come via three routes:

- Local Authority Referrals. These young people are not permanently excluded and are placed with Education Links, with parental approval, by the Local Authority after a meeting has taken place to assess the suitability of the young person in terms of their ability to access the provision that Education Links is able to provide.
- School Referrals. Such students are usually disengaged, either in terms of poor behaviour or truancy, and not permanently excluded. In such cases schools purchase the student place and are in contact with the students throughout their time with Education Links. The students may be on a long term placement, or a fixed term exclusion period.
- Permanent exclusions. These students are placed with us within six days of their exclusion from school. They sometimes spend a few weeks with us prior to their reintegration into mainstream schooling but usually they remain for two terms. Such referrals come from the Local Authority.

4.1 We will advertise the services of the School within East London and the London Borough of Newham specifically.

4.2 The main criteria for place allocation will relate to the needs of the student as given on referral, following a risk assessment where necessary.

- Age range, including the terms of any statement of Special Educational Needs .
- Suitability for the programme, including a consideration of potential accreditation pathway
- Permanently excluded students will be placed within 6 days exclusion.

4.3 A high priority will be given to students with 'Looked After' status. A place would be offered to a young person if their full needs could be met; this would include the programme, the staff ratio and support from relevant agencies

4.4 Where a waiting list is required, places on the waiting list will be allocated taking into account the above criteria, the length of time an individual has been waiting as well as whether the young person is defined as a 'child in need'.

4.5 Complaints from parents / carers about how this policy has been implemented will be dealt with under the Complaints procedure.

5.   WELFARE PROVISION FOR STUDENTS WITH STATEMENTS.

All our students remain on roll with either a mainstream education provider, the pupil referral unit or are the responsibility of the London Borough of Newham, primarily, or other authority. As such we are able to access the education welfare support for students with Special Educational Needs and other resources and agencies as appropriate.

6.   PROVISION FOR STUDENTS FOR WHERE ENGLISH IS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE.

We assess the students' needs on a case by case basis. We work closely with the referring agencies to ensure appropriate provision is in place. We have a member of staff who leads on EAL issues.

<u>Form of contract</u>

The following is the agreement signed by referring schools and Education Links, and outlines the responsibilities of both parties in reviewing the placement.

Agreement between the referring school and Community Links Trust Ltd - Education Links, in respect of the student named on the attached referral form - .... (student name); Short Term Exclusion Provision ☐ from ……………….………………… to ……………………………………. (……………..no. of days)
 OR Managed Move ☐   OR Long-Term Placement ☐(please tick)

1.Purpose

The purpose of this agreement is to identify the respective roles and responsibilities of the referring school and Community Links Trust Ltd – Education Links and to highlight activities necessary to achieve the agreed objectives for the student allocated to the programme.

2.Aim and objectives of the programme

The aim of Community Links Trust Ltd - Education Links is to provide programmes to meet the educational needs of the named student. For further details, see our website and/or enquire at the office (0208 555 0850).

3.Activities and Services to be provided by Community Links Trust Ltd – Education Links:

A structured programme of learning delivered by appropriate staff; the named student and their parents/carers will be provided with all relevant programme details, i.e. term dates, whom to contact, timetables, etc. Education Links will comply with all statutory requirements and designate a member of staff to liaise directly with an opposite number in the referring school in all matters relating to the named student.

4.The Referring School will:
   .
Provide in writing all requested information prior to the student taking up the placement including the full completion of the Education Links referral form; gain parent/carer agreement to the placement; designate a member of staff to liaise with Education Links;

remain accountable for the named student during the placement, particularly if there are issues of education welfare or if the placement breaks down. The school agrees to support Education Links in all matters relating to the named student. **Referrals will not be processed unless signed by the Head Teacher / Deputy Head of the referring school.**

5. Payment arrangements:

(a) The referring school will pay the daily rate for the agreed period of this contract, deemed in effect from the start date of the placement and payable on receipt of either half-termly invoices in advance from Community Links, or immediate invoices in respect of Fixed Term Exclusions; and as agreed until i) the named student leaves for post-16 provision or another destination, ii) the referring school terminates the provision or iii) Education Links terminates the provision. In case of points two and three, this will be after consultation. If the named student is a managed move placement, then the referring school agrees to pay for his/her provision until the new school confirms the student is on their roll; the new school will then pay for the named students' provision until an admissions meeting has taken place.

(b) The referring school will pay all fees relating to public examination entries for the participant, any work experience programme, and any other reasonable fee for extra provision that may arise, as agreed by all parties.

(c) All invoices will be sent within the financial year to which they relate. The referring school will pay all invoices within 30 days.

6. Monitoring & Evaluation

Education Links and the referring school will be jointly responsible for monitoring and evaluating the programme. **Education Links reserves the right to recommend when the end of a placement will be.**

Evidence of Demand and Ongoing Engagement

The following table summarises the statistics of our roll in recent years.

Characteristics of school	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
Total on roll	167	189	147
% male	77%	75%	73%
% female	23%	25%	27%
White British	40%	25%	20%
Asian Bangladeshi	16%	16%	18%
Asian British	10%	1%	4%
Mixed race	8%	9%	9.50%
Asian Pakistani	0	6%	7%
Asian Indian	0	3%	3%
Asian Other	3%	2%	0.50%
Black African	0	6%	7%
Black Caribbean	7%	16%	9%

Black British	6%	0.50%	4%
Other	5%	0.50%	3%
Black Other	3%	6%	3%
White Other	3%	5%	1%
Roma	0	1%	2%
Turkish/Cypriot	0	0.50%	0.50%
Afghan	0	0.50%	0
White Eastern European	0	0.00%	3%
Pupils entitled to Free School Meals	59%	56%	52%
Pupils in care of local authority	8	15	11
Pupils with Statement of Special Needs	6	15	9
Pupils on School Action +	3	15	18
Pupils with Child Protection Plan	4	10	6

Included below are copies of the evidence of demand received from schools so far. We have had verbal assurances from Head teachers, and will continue to pursue them for the written evidence. As can be seen in the table above, we have had over 100 referrals each year in the last three years, and indeed going back for 7 years.

In addition, our Principal and School Leadership Team visit local schools regularly to discuss past, present and future referrals, and we have made presentations to the Newham Association of Secondary Heads in recent months about our provision. We also have regular contact with the Special Needs Officers of 2 local authorities regarding students they place with us. We have invested in a professionally produced brochure, 2 promotional videos, and information leaflets for parents, and these materials are also available on the website (http://www.community-links.org/local-services/education-links/).

Further evidence for demand will be presented to the DfE as it becomes available, and when requested.

Free Schools Applications Team
Department for Education
3rd Floor
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT

Cumberland School
Oban Close
London
E13 8SJ

Dear Sir/ Madam,

Confirmation of support for Education Links

Cumberland School confirms that we support Education Links' application. We understand that Education Links is an independent school and provider of alternative education in Newham, which will open as an Alternative Provision Free School in September 2014, If they are successful in their application.

However I am unable to indicate how we may use this provision in terms of pupil referrals, in the years to come.

Signature:

Print Name:

Date: 27/11/12

Brampton Manor Academy

www.bramptonmanor.org

Principal

Roman Road
East Ham
London E6 3SQ

Telephone: 020 7540 0500
Fax: 020 7540 0510
Email: info@bramptonmanor.org

13 December 2012

Free Schools Applications Team
Department for Education
3rd Floor
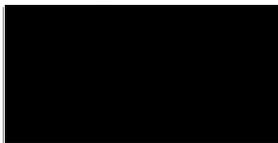Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3BT

Dear Sir/Madam

Confirmation of support for Education Links

I can confirm that we support Education Links' application. We understand that Education Links is an independent school and provider of alternative education in Newham, which will open as an Alternative Provision Free School in September 2014, if they are successful in their application.

We anticipate making at least 10 referrals of full time equivalent (FTE) places to Education Links over the first academic year following the school's opening and 20 referrals in the second year.

Yours sincerely

Principal

Success through **Effort** and **Determination**

Stratford School Academy
Upton Lane
London
E7 9PR

Free Schools Applications Team
Department for Education
3rd Floor
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3BT

Dear Sir, Madam

Confirmation of support for Education Links

Stratford School Academy confirms that we support Education Links' application. We understand that Education Links is an independent school and provider of alternative education in Newham, which will open as an Alternative Provision Free School in September 2014, if they are successful in their application.

We anticipate making two referrals of full time equivalent (FTE) places to Education Links over the first academic year following the school's opening and two referrals in the second year.

OR

Based on the school's planned top up of between ▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆ per Full Time Equivalent pupil, we believe that we would refer _____ of full time equivalent (FTE) places per academic year. We confirm that whatever referrals we do make we will make to Education Links.

Signature: ▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆

Print name: ▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆

Date: 19.12.12

Free Schools Applications Team
Department for Education
3rd Floor
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3BT

Dear Sir, Madam

Confirmation of support for Education Links

Eastlea School confirm that we support Education Links' application. We understand that Education Links is an independent school and provider of alternative education in Newham, which will open as an Alternative Provision Free School in September 2014, if they are successful in their application.

We anticipate making ___5___ referrals of full time equivalent (FTE) places to Education Links over the first academic year following the school's opening and _up to 10_ referrals in the second year.

OR

Based on the school's planned top up of ████ per annum, for a single placement, or for a group contract of 10 places ████ per annum, per Full Time Equivalent pupil, we believe that we would refer ___10___ of full time equivalent (FTE) places per academic year. We confirm that whatever referrals we do make we will make to Education Links.

Signature: ████████████████████

Print name: ████████████████████

Date: 13/12/12

Section F: Capacity and capability

Please refer to pages 30-33 of the alternative provision 'How to Apply' guidance for what should be included in this section.

We have established a company limited by guarantee to be the 'Academy Trust'.

Members

The founding members of the Community Links Academy Trust are:

* Community Links Trust Limited
* █████████
* █████████
* █████████

The three individual founding members identified above are ███████████.

Other members will be:

* Up to seven members who may be appointed by Community Links Trust Limited (please note that we have received advice on this point from our own lawyers and from Companies House)
* The chairman of the Governors
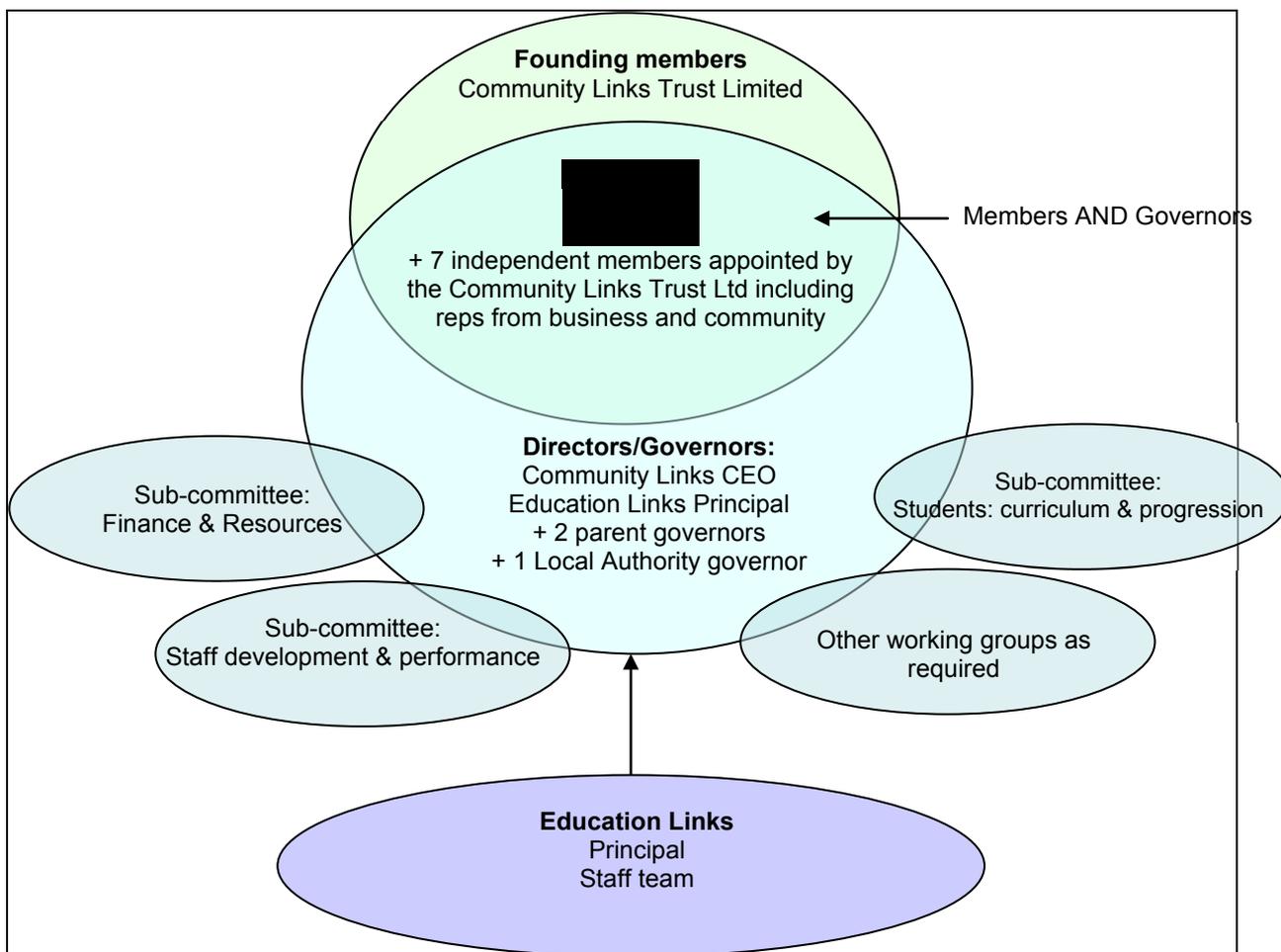* One member appointed by the Secretary of State

Governors

The Governors (Directors) of the Academy Trust will include:

* The three individual founding members
* The seven members who are appointed by Community Links Trust Ltd. These will include one member from business, and one from the local community
* The Chief Executive Officer of Community Links
* The Principal of Education Links
* Two parent governors, elected by the parents
* One governor appointed by the Local Authority

The Secretary of State may appoint additional Governors. The Chairman will be elected by the Governors.

The proposed structure is set out in the diagram below:

Founding members
Community Links Trust Limited

+ 7 independent members appointed by
the Community Links Trust Ltd including
reps from business and community

Members AND Governors

Directors/Governors:
Community Links CEO
Education Links Principal
+ 2 parent governors
+ 1 Local Authority governor

Sub-committee:
Finance & Resources

Sub-committee:
Students: curriculum & progression

Sub-committee:
Staff development & performance

Other working groups as
required

Education Links
Principal
Staff team

Roles and Responsibilities

Members

The roles and responsibilities of the Members are:

- To set the vision and ethos of the Academy Trust
- To appoint the Directors/Governors to oversee the company
- To authorise any changes to the Memorandum and Articles of Association
- To guarantee to contribute £10 each in the case that the Academy Trust becomes insolvent

Governors

The roles and responsibilities of the Governors are:

- To commit to and keep under review the vision and ethos of the Academy Trust
- To give strategic direction to the Academy Trust, setting overall policy, defining goals and objectives, setting targets and evaluating performance
- To ensure that the Trust complies with its governing document, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations
- To ensure the financial stability of the Academy Trust and its effective and

efficient administration
- To safeguard the good name and reputation of the Academy Trust
- To appoint a Principal to whom they delegate the day to day running of the school
- To approve the statutory accounts
- To appoint auditors
- To act as a 'critical friend' to the Principal and the School Leadership Team

In addition to the above responsibilities, Governors will use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the Board reach sound decisions. This will include scrutinising board papers, leading discussions and providing guidance on new ideas and initiatives.

The Principal

The Principal of the Academy Trust is appointed by the Governors, reports to and is accountable to them. The Principal is responsible for the operational management of the school.

Authority and Accountability

We will put in place a clear Scheme of Delegation of Authority which sets out who is responsible for which decisions at which level. This will cover:

- Strategy
- Business Planning
- Annual Budgets
- Bids and Contracts
- Purchases
- Investments
- Capital Expenditure
- Monitoring and Reporting
- Risk Management
- People Management
- Policies and Procedures

The Scheme of Delegation will also set out the sanctions for failure to act within this framework.

Meetings

The Members and Governors will meet each year for the Annual General Meeting, at which they will receive the annual report and statement of accounts and agree the School Development Plan for the coming year.

The Governors will meet twice each term. The Principal will provide a report to each meeting which will include:

- Progress against the School Development Plan including statistics on key indicators
- An update on:

- student issues
- staffing issues
- resources (including performance against budget)
- partnerships and relationships
- An update on emerging issues including external policies or developments that are likely to affect the School

The Governors will establish sub-committees for:

- Finance and Resources
- Staff: development and performance
- Students: curriculum, attendance and progression

Each sub-committee will have a clear Terms of Reference, setting out its purpose and scope. Sub-committees will meet at least once each term, scheduled to fall at least two weeks in advance of a General Meeting, and will provide a report to that meeting which outlines recommendations, which the General Meeting will be requested to ratify. Sub-committees may co-opt additional members who are not Governors to provide specific expertise or knowledge.

Other sub-committees and working groups will be established as required.

Managing Conflicts of Interest

We recognise that the structure we propose may give rise to conflicts of interest from time to time. We propose to manage these as follows:

The Chair of the Community Links Board of Trustees will represent Community Links Trust Ltd as a Member but will not also be a Governor of the Academy Trust.

The three founding individual Members who are currently ▇▇▇▇▇▇▇, will, when attending Community Links Board of Trustee meetings, declare an interest and absent themselves from discussions when a conflict arises.

The seven Member/Governors appointed by Community Links Trust Ltd will be entirely independent of Community Links i.e. not employees, directors or members.

The Member/Governors of the Academy Trust who ▇▇▇▇▇▇▇ will follow the procedures set out in 6.8 of the Memorandum and Articles i.e. declaring an interest, absenting themselves from discussions where a conflict arises, refraining from voting on these issues. Clear minutes of the rationale for all decisions taken will be kept.

Securing expertise

Educational Expertise

The three individual founding Members of the Academy Trust have developed their educational expertise through a variety of roles and have the following skills and experience:

▇▇▇▇▇▇▇.

██████.

██████.

The Founding Members of the Academy Trust can provide the equivalent of two days each per month to support ████████ with the process of transitioning to becoming a Free School should our application be successful.

██████.

Financial Expertise

Financial and budgetary oversight will be provided by the Finance and Resources sub-committee of the Governors which will include a member who holds relevant CCAB ("Consultative Committee of Accounting Bodies") qualifications. The sub-committee will provide detailed financial oversight of the school's activities and the Chair of the sub committee will report to the Governors at each meeting. The Chair of the sub-committee will also explain and present budgets, financial reports and annual accounts to the Governors for their consideration and approval.

Other Relevant Expertise

From the Governing Body
In addition to the Founding Members of the Academy Trust, all the members of the current Education Links Advisory Board would consider becoming members/governors of the new Academy Trust. The current Advisory Body (Governors) for Education Links has a total of 8 members, including representatives of the parents, the local community, and other education experts with key skills including specialisms in school attendance, managed moves, child protection and safeguarding. The Governors also include a local head teacher who is also chair of the Newham Association of Secondary Heads. We are in the process of recruiting a member from the business community to the Education Links Advisory Board.

The Chair of Governors will lead a review of skills and expertise of Governors, identifying gaps and working the Members and Governors to recruit additional expertise as required. The Academy Trust will adopt the following recruitment policy:

- A clear role description is developed to fill the gaps identified
- The opportunity is advertised widely – including to School Governors One Stop Shop, an independent charity set up by the Department for Education to help schools recruit Governors
- Potential candidates are assessed and interviewed by a 'selection' sub-committee
- Prospective Governors attend at least three meetings, without voting rights. On the third meeting the appointment is ratified (or otherwise) by a vote of all the Governors.

- New Governors receive a full induction programme and are given a 'buddy' from the existing group to support their first year.

This review of skills and expertise will be repeated annually.

From Community Links Trust

Community Links Trust Ltd has an outstanding track record of setting up new initiatives, including We Are What We Do, the not-for-profit behaviour change company, and Apnar Ghar refuge and domestic violence project for Asian women. Community Links was also a key contributor to the establishment of Richard House Children's Hospice and New Philanthropy Capital. Community Links currently provides Education Links with strategic, financial and HR expertise, use of assets, premises and facilities management, via the engagement of its Chief Executive, Finance Director, Director of Support Services and Business Planner.

Once the transition period is complete, as a separate legal company from Community Links, the Academy Trust will put in place arrangements for:

- Rent of premises and short life assets (furniture, desks, chairs and consumables)
- Maintenance and cleaning, provision of utilities
- IT maintenance and network facilities
- HR management, advice, and payroll services
- Financial management, reporting, processing
- Procurement and purchasing services
- Provision of working capital and overdraft facilities
- Fundraising services, applications for funding.

We propose that the Academy Trust draws up a clear specification for the services and support required and then secures contracts with Community Links Trust Ltd or other appropriate providers. We propose that the performance and value for money of all relevant contracts for support services is reviewed annually by the Governors.

We recognise that a contract with Community Links will give rise to a conflict of interest which we will manage as set out above. None of the Governors in the structure will benefit personally from these contracts, and a minority of the Governors would be considered to benefit because of their involvement in Community Links as employees, Directors or members as set out in clause 6.10(c) of the Memorandum and Articles.

Roles and Responsibilities during the Free School Transition Process

The Founding Members of the Academy Trust are committed to making available the time, resources and expertise necessary to transition from the current structure to a sustainable Free School. Each of the three existing Trustees have pledged the equivalent of two days per month to provide direction and input. The Trust will draw on senior resources from within Community Links Trust Limited – the ███████ ███████, the ███████ ███████, and the current ███████ ███ – to lead on and provide specialist input into consolidating the legal, financial and educational structures respectively. Expert external guidance and support will also be drawn on as necessary.

Legal and Governance Matters

████████, the ████████ of Community Links Trust Limited will lead on this element of the transition process, drawing on expert legal advice. The Academy Trust has already been established. The Chief Executive will support the founding Members to fully establish the Academy Trust in accordance with the Memorandum and Articles of the Company, ensuring that the there is a transparent and robust process for appointing new Members and Governors, a full induction is provided, a Chair is elected, sub-committees are established and resourced, and that there is a seamless transition of authority from the Advisory Body to the Governing Body. She will liaise with the Department for Education on all matters pertaining to the legal status of the school. She will ensure all roles are clearly defined and that the processes of governance are in place. She will trigger a review of the transition process after a period of six months.

████████.

Financial Matters

████████, ████████ of Community Links Trust Limited will lead on this element of the transition process. He will draw up a clear specification of support services which the Academy Trust will procure, and define the basis on which these are procured, to be agreed with the Members. Services will include financial, IT, premises, HR, and utilisation of any other assets. He will draw on the existing school's business plan and strategy to articulate a sustainable forward financial model, taking into account the working capital requirements during transition, and the future funding and fundraising need. He will negotiate any overdraft or other facility required to manage the transition. He will revise existing reporting templates to ensure a clear separation of accounts, presented in a manner to be agreed with the Governors and Finance & Resources Sub-Committee. He will draw up and propose financial processes and vehicles – such as a scheme of delegation – for consideration by the Governors, and will support the implementation of these. He will support the appointment of auditors, and produce the Annual Report and Accounts.

████████.

Educational Matters

████████, the current ████████, and ████████, will lead on this element of the transition process. Since the school is an established entity, the predominant requirement during the transition process is to ensure the stability and continuation of academic provision. The Principal will manage the relationships with existing pupils and their parents, making them aware of the rationale of transitioning to Free School status and updating them on progress, addressing their concerns as required. She will manage the relationships with teachers and staff, ensuring all are aware of any implications of the transition, and drawing on expert human resource advice from Community Links Trust Limited, as required. She will be the principal point of contact for all educational matters with the Department for Education, Ofsted, and all other relevant external agents. She will oversee the development and delivery of the curriculum in line with the existing business plan. She will regularly report to the Governors and Sub-Committees on the operational and educational aspects of transition.

████████'s full CV is provided at the end of this section.

Staffing

As a registered independent school Education Links has its staff cohort in place.

Our Principal ███████ (█████████) █████████.

We recognise that the Department for Education may wish to assess our Principal.

Our current staff team totals 35, there are 9 teaching staff (two of whom are curriculum managers), 8 group coordinators plus the Family Engagement Co-ordinator, who tackles poor attendance, 11 learning mentors one of whom organises the student council, an administrative assistant, an Admissions and Reintegration Coordinator, and 4 senior staff. A tutor has the additional responsibility of progression, overseeing students applying to college, and other additional responsibilities include assessment, ICT, and literacy and sport support.

In recent years staff training has been boosted by support from a corporate funder, and this funding for training will continue to 2014. We have seen a significant impact on student outcomes through improving the skills of our staff. We will see 4 teaching staff achieve Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector, and classroom support staff will have the opportunity to achieve Preparation for Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector Award.

To support performance management, and management of teaching and learning, we aim to invest in the Quality Framework for Teaching and Learning, published by Edison Learning, with the accompanying training.

We provide all staff with opportunities for continuing professional development, supporting all teaching staff to attain PGCE-equivalent qualifications, and putting in place structures to enhance performance, motivate and retain staff in a competitive environment.

The extract below from Education Links' Ofsted Report shows that the standard of teaching by our current staff cohort is good.

'The quality of teaching and assessment is good. Teachers are dedicated to supporting the pupils, who express their appreciation of the guidance they receive. Staff have positive relationships with the pupils. They have high expectations for pupils' ability to learn and demonstrate good strategies for classroom management. Pupils recognise the high expectations set by their teachers and this encourages them to cooperate with one another when asked to work in groups. Lessons are planned effectively to provide a wide range of opportunities for developing pupils' knowledge throughout the range of subjects and, as a result, they make good progress. In a mathematics lesson, pupils engaged strongly with the lesson when they recognised their ability to solve the problems set by the teacher. Because lessons are well structured they proceed at a good pace. Questioning is used effectively by teachers to challenge pupils to think independently and to encourage those who lack confidence. This helps to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills.

Teaching assistants play an effective role in lessons and all staff demonstrate a good understanding of pupils' personal as well as learning needs. All pupils identified as

having special educational needs, including those who have statements of special educational need, receive good support which is guided by the school's effective assessment and monitoring procedures. Individual educational plans (IEPs) are provided for all pupils, including pupils with statements of special educational needs. The school recognises that some IEPs require more detail to match fully the good quality of support and learning provision. Specialist support for English as an additional language is always available and meets the needs of pupils well.'

Recruitment of High Quality Staff

The process of recruiting staff for the school is as follows:

- The School Leadership Team identify a staffing gap and agree job description and person specification
- Community Links' Human Resources Department review and comment upon the job description and person specification in line with the charity's recruitment and selection policy
- The relevant Line Manager at Education Links liaises with HR on what method of recruitment process to ultilise, ie external advert, use of recruitment agencies, internet job sites etc
- Job advert placed, generally two agencies are used by the School, Academics and The Education Network
- Two interview rounds including tests are conducted with selected candidates, the interview panel will include at least one representative from the Student Council
- References are taken up and appropriate checks made.

Sandy Davies CV

Name:	███████
Address:	████████████████████████
Telephone:	███████ / ███████
Email	███████
Date of birth:	███████

Qualifications

- ███████

Education

- ███████

Employment and Work Experience

- ███████.

Other Experience

- ███████

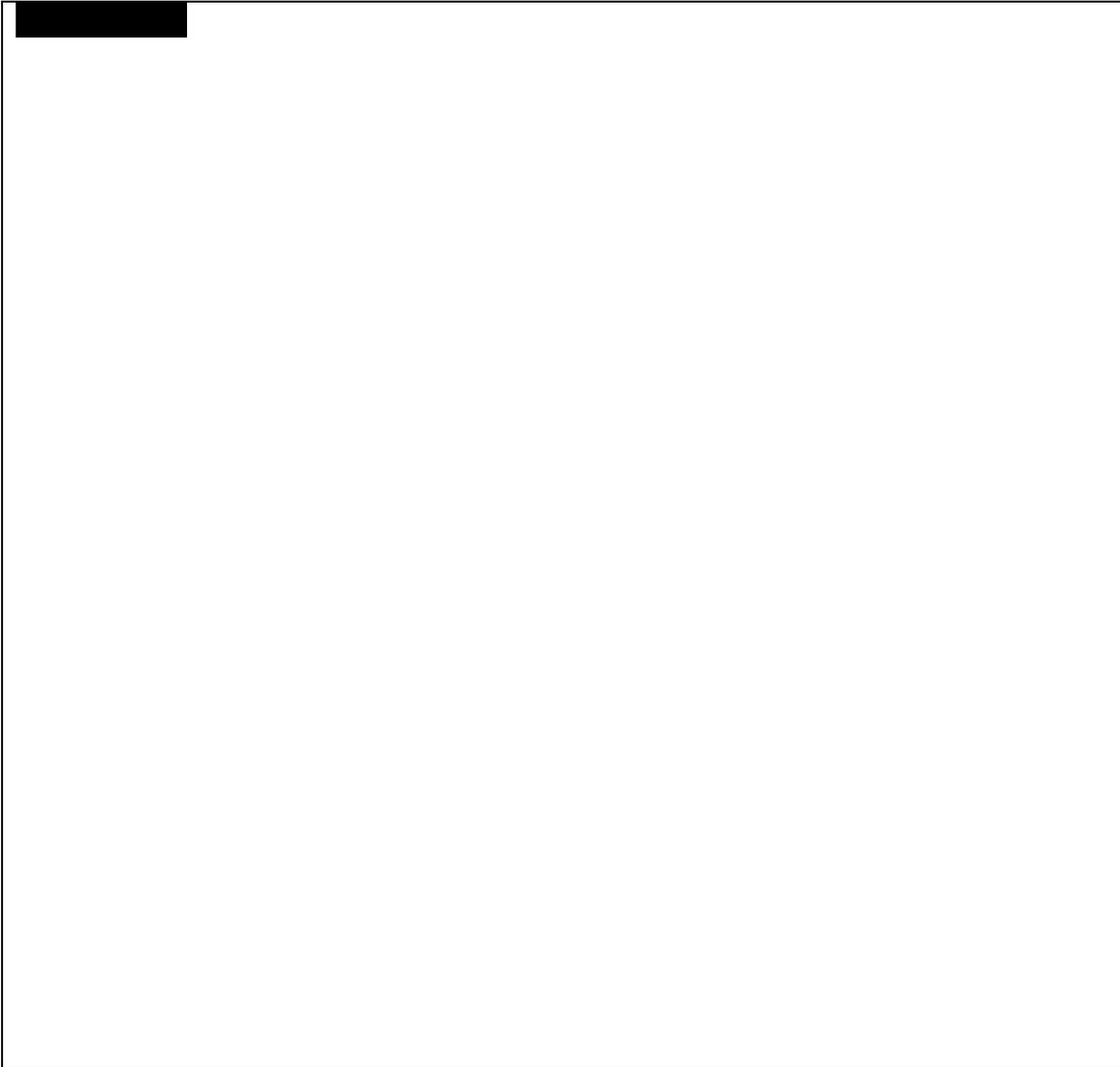**Other interests**

- ███████

Section G: Initial costs and financial viability

Please refer to pages 34-38 of the alternative provision 'How to Apply' guidance for what should be included in this section. As explained in the 'How to Apply' guidance you are required to complete the necessary financial planning spreadsheets as well as providing a supporting narrative. The templates can be found here. Please use this section for the narrative.

Section H: Premises

Please refer to pages 39-40 of the alternative provision 'How to Apply' guidance for what should be included in this section.

Education Links currently operates from six sites around the London Borough of Newham with the school operating on a campus model. The use of several sites means the students can be based according to their geographical needs, plus individual needs around particular issues leading to the young person's exclusion from school can be addressed. So for instance in cases of bullying or peer pressure we will locate young people at a site away from such negative distractions to enable them to focus on their education.

New Canteen, 195 Vicarage Lane, Stratford, E15 4HJ
In September 2006 Education Links moved into the New Canteen a Community Links property that had been refurbished specifically for the purpose. The centre has 3 classrooms, an IT suite, a small kitchen, staff office, training/resource room, a storage facility and good size outside area. The centre has good access to local parks and other council facilities including sports cages.

The New Canteen has been providing an excellent base for our education work now for the last six years. The centre caters for up to 30 students.

Community Links owns the freehold on the building, the building size is 485.51 square metres.

Play Hut, Central Park, High Street South, East Ham, E6 6ET
The Play Hut is a purpose built children and young people's centre commissioned to a design by Community Links. It is a light and airy building which maximizes natural light. The site currently consists of one large hall which includes generous storage space for supplies. This provides a classroom for one education group. In addition to the large hall, there is a small kitchen, separate toilet facilities, a small IT suite, a small multi-sensory room and a large open plan reception/office. There is a garden outside and BBQ area plus easy access to the park which the building is located adjacent to and access to some council sports facilities. The building is currently solely used by Education Links and it is our intention that this will remain the case in the foreseeable future.

One group totalling 10 students is based at the centre. The building is owned by Community Links, the land is leased from the London Borough of Newham with 21 year lease. The building size is 283.82 square metres.

Queens Park Terrace Centre, Plaistow, E13 9AL
This centre consists of a large open plan room, with a separate kitchen, office and toilets. It was previously a community centre. The classroom is well lit and welcoming, with ample storage. There is an area outside for recreation. It is sited in a quiet residential area, and staff have good relationships with local residents.

The centre caters for up to 10 students. We have access to the building under license from the London Borough of Newham with the potential to take a lease on the building should we wish to use it longer term. The building size is 148.55 square metres.

Chandos East Community Centre, 90 Chandos Road, London, E15 ITT

Chandos East is a multi-purpose community hub, which is located right next to the Olympic Park. It is Community Links' newest and largest centre and was designed to the charity's specifications. It has a large hall, four multi-purpose rooms, a multi-sensory room, music room, kitchen, separate toilets (and additionally children's toilets) and reception. The Centre's proximity to the Olympic Park means that when the Park re-opens there will be unparalleled access to local sporting facilities.

Education Links currently uses one of Chandos' rooms as a classroom for one group of up to 10 students.

Community Links will be securing a 20 year lease from the London Borough of Newham but currently have access to the building under license. We rent the building on a peppercorn basis from the local authority.

The building size is 822.84 square metres.

Newham City Farm Visitors Centre, Stansfield Road, London, E16 5LT

Newham City Farm was established in 1977 and Community Links have been running it on behalf of the local authority since 2009. As well as being home to a wide number of farm yard animals the Farm also has a Visitors Centre which provides classroom facilities. The Visitor Centre has two large rooms, one of which is a classroom space for a group from Education Links, a smaller room, a kitchen, office, separate toilets and a storage room.

The building is leased from the London Borough of Newham on a peppercorn rent basis and we have 17 years remaining on the lease. The building size is 459.13 square metres.

Six students are based at the Visitors Centre. This is our setting for students with a statement of special educational needs, and their needs are typically BESD, ADHD, and moderate learning difficulties. Being based at the Farm, which is situated within a park, the group have access to the natural environment, and opportunities to interact with animals, which enriches their curriculum.

East Ham Nature Reserve Visitors Centre, **Norman Road, London, E6 6ET**

East Ham Nature Reserve has been home to a group from Education Links since 2009. The centre has a big classroom which is fully equipped for science lessons, a smaller room, kitchen, toilets and storage room. The Visitors Centre is adjacent to the Nature Reserve which provides a haven for range of plants and animals, ranging from lizards to rare snails and blue bells to black caps. The Nature Reserve provides an excellent backdrop for science lessons.

The building is sub-leased from the London Borough of Newham (who lease it from the church) on a peppercorn basis with 17 years remaining on the lease. The building size is 202.81 square metres.

We aim for each of our centres to have the ICT facilities to deliver the core curriculum, including internet access and printing facilities. In addition, we have

the specialist equipment required for the delivery of BTEC courses, and new vocational courses, which is regularly reviewed and upgraded in a coordinated plan.

Some of our premises are also equipped for specialist subjects, such as performing arts – staging, lighting, etc – and media – hardware and software for editing. The funding for this is generally sought from corporate donations or grants.

Further development of our Premises
We plan during 2013 to invest to redevelop the Playhut building to create a second dedicated education centre. This would involve converting the open plan reception/office area, IT suite and multi-sensory room into a further two classrooms and a small office. As a second stage of development we might also consider converting the domestic kitchen into a fully equipped catering kitchen to provide training opportunities for our young people. Once converted the Playhut will take up to 3 groups of education students.

In 2014, we hope also to further develop a third site at our Newham City Farm in Beckton, so that we can have two groups based there rather than the existing one group. This will give us three dedicated education centres, with an appropriate geographic spread around the borough to overcome any post-code issues.

Secure and sustained independent Free School funding from the DfE will unlock these investments, enabling us to plan for 3 years rather than one, developing the offer we make to young people, and underpinning improvements in outcomes for them.

Annexes

The annexes:

- are included within the page limit and restricted to documents relating to your evidence of demand (e.g. letters of support from commissioners and maps) and relevant CVs;

- should be submitted as part of your application i.e. as one Word document; and

- do not include the financial templates (which should be submitted separately in Excel and are excluded from the page limit).

Department
for Education