

Bure Valley School.

Formal Proposal to become a Foundation School supported by a Charitable Trust.

1. Introductory Information

(a) School details:

Bure Valley School, Hungate Street, Aylsham NR11 6JZ

Headteacher - John Starling

Chair of Governors – Derrol Waller

Contact: 01263 733393 or office@burevalley.norfolk.sch.uk

Category of school: Community School

(b) Dates: the planned implementation date for this proposal is 3rd May 2011

(c) Objections or Comments

Further information is available on the school and cluster websites, <http://www.burevalleyschool.org.uk>

and <http://www.aylshamcluster.co.uk/> Any objections and/or comments need to be forwarded to the Governing Body by 28th March 2011 (28 days after this publication) and addressed to Mr Derrol Waller, Chair of the Governors, Bure Valley School, Hungate Street, Aylsham NR11 6JZ

2. Public Consultation

(a) Our formal consultation process began on 14th June 2010 and was completed on 16th July 2010 (5 working weeks during term time). During this period, 2 open forum meetings were held. Prior to the formal consultation, an introductory presentation and a Question and Answer session had been held with the cluster schools' staff on 19th April 2010. 250 Public Consultation packs were widely distributed. The School Council were asked to consider the proposals.

A detailed analysis of the response forms follows; 14 questionnaire forms were returned (5.6%), 1 letter was received. No parents arranged a meeting with the nominated Parent Governor and no staff requested a meeting with a nominated Staff Governor.

14.06.10	Public Consultation packs distributed / details 'live' on the website
06.07.10	School Council meeting
29.06.10	Open Staff meeting
29.06.10	Open Parents & Stakeholders meeting

Distribution List

- a) Young people currently on roll at the school;
- b) Parents/carers of pupils currently on roll at the school;
- c) Staff currently employed at the school, both teaching and non teaching;
- d) The governing body, teachers and other staff of other schools affected by the proposal;
- e) Families of pupils at others school affected by the proposal;
- f) Trade unions representing staff at the school and other schools affected by the proposals;
- i) Local Members of Parliament whose constituencies include the school (including MEPs)
- j) Local Borough, District or Parish councils where the school is situated;

(b) Further Informal Information and Consultation period

Following the formal consultation, the governors decided to offer an extended informal consultation stage to ensure all interested stakeholders had been given a clearer and simplified explanation of the advantages of trust status, and the opportunity to debate the proposal.

20.10.10	Open Parents & Stakeholders meeting
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At the meeting it was agreed to provide an opportunity through the school website for stakeholders to continue a dialogue with the school and with one another. This was set up on the website from November 1st and provided details of:

- Frequently Asked Questions pertaining to Trust status.
- Stakeholder Questionnaire
- Headteachers letter
- Question and answer open forum.

(c) Responses:

During the formal consultation period, stakeholders attended an Open Meetings shared with John of Gaunt Infant school, managed by the Chairs of Governors and the Headteachers. Key questions addressed at the Consultation Meeting are available on the cluster website.

Staff responses were also represented in meetings with the Headteachers.

The school council met with the headteacher which was followed by an assembly in which they identified activities which had already taken place within the cluster and they had enjoyed them.

Question 1: How do you feel about Bure Valley Junior School changing its status to become a Foundation School? Yes – 8 (57%); No - 3 (21.5%); I don't know – 3 (21.5%). Three comments were received.

Question 2: How do you feel Bure Valley Junior School acquiring a Trust? Yes – 8 (57%); No – 1 (7.5%); I don't know – 3 (21.5%); No response – 2 (14%) Three comments were received.

Question 3: Do you think that Bure Valley Junior School should develop long-term partnerships and work with the following organisations to achieve its educational aims? (out of 14 replies), Aylsham Cluster of Schools 13, Norwich City College 10, The Sainsbury Centre 8, The National Trust 7, An HE Institute 9, A health service provider 6, A voluntary Sector Organisation supporting young people and families 8, A co-operative business 3. Six comments were received.

Question 4: Do you think this new Governing Body model is right for the school? Yes – 7 (50%); Yes/Concerns - 1 (7.5%); Yes/More Trust Govs – 0 (N%); No – 1 (7.5%); I don't know – 2 (14%); No Response – 3 (21.5%). One comment was received.

Question 5: Do you agree with the proposal to establish a Stakeholder Council? Yes – 8 (57%); No – 2 (14%); I don't know – 3 (21.5%); No response – 1 (7.5%). One comment was received.

Question 6: Do you have any other comments, concerns or suggestions that we should think about before we publish formal proposals? Four further comments were received.

The wide range of issues raised informed the governor's decision to go to a further, informal information and consultation period and formed the basis for the frequently asked questions. Full details from the formal consultation are available on the Cluster website at <http://www.aylshamcluster.co.uk/>; or from the school office. The public consultation feedback was issued to the stakeholder groups listed and put on the Cluster website. All applicable statutory requirements about consulting on proposals have been met. Copies of the consultation documents and responses are available on the Cluster website.

The prescribed alteration is:

- (i) A change of category to Foundation status**
- (ii) The acquisition of a Trust**

3. Current Education Standards

External examination results 2010:

KS2 level 4+ English 85%;

KS2 level 5 English 39%

KS2 level 4+ Mathematics 75%;

KS2 level 5 Mathematics 34%

Ofsted Report –October 2010 – Grade 2 (Good with some Outstanding features). The following is an extract from the inspectors letter to the children:

'I am writing to thank you for the way you welcomed us to your school recently and for your help in showing us how good your school has now become. We especially enjoyed meeting and talking to some of you and we are very impressed with your behaviour. This enables the teachers to concentrate on providing you with interesting and imaginative activities.

You told us how safe you feel and we can see how well the school ensures that you are kept safe and secure. The school is also excellent at using the strong partnerships with the local authority and with other local schools to support your learning.'

Impact on results if Trust status is not acquired:

The schools in the Cluster have worked together for the benefit of pupils and families and will continue to do so. However, without Trust Status, the unifying commitment that will underpin our collaborative work, along with opportunity to enhance it through Trust partnerships will be lost. Opportunities within the confines of an ever fragmenting local authority will be fewer and there will be a stronger sense of losing the ability to be in control of the strategic direction we need for our pupils to maintain and improve on these results. The school achieved outstanding for its work with partners, but we recognise the correlation between some lower performing children and hard to reach families. Our ability to improve even further could be through parenting support for the hard to reach families in the community; this will need external partners offering local solutions to local needs without which change and therefore higher results will be harder to achieve.

Impact on results if Trust status is acquired:

The holistic development of our pupils from birth to 16, alongside the academic excellence we strive to improve on each year, underpins the professional relationship we currently enjoy. This is well documented in our Cluster Development Plan, which is divided into 4 Key sections:

Teaching and Learning and Standards – The school remains focused on standards and has already made significant efforts to continue improve achievement. The recent Ofsted recognised that children are making good progress throughout the school. The school is ambitious for its children and considers trust status will allow it to work more effectively with its partner schools, analysing and sharing strategies to raise standards even higher for all groups of children.

Provision – working collaboratively across classes within each year and focussing on children's learning has already enhanced our provision and enabled the school to develop a successful lesson programme supporting professional development of our teaching staff. The focus on learning was commended by the recent Ofsted inspection and contributed to all teaching being good or better. The lesson study model has now been extended in collaboration with some of our partner schools.

Guidance, advice and support – Ofsted recognised that the school is outstanding in its current provision. Nevertheless, there is significant work we can do to further improve. We are seeking to further strengthen the welfare safety and development of the whole child through Parent Support Advisors, Family

Leadership and Management – We promote quality leadership at all levels across the cluster, currently focussing on the Continuing Professional Development of subject leaders; keeping it locally and accessible to all staff in Aylsham cluster, but also generating an income by allowing other schools to send delegates. In particular, the Cluster Learning Coordinators and an integrated approach across the cluster have developed a programme of courses aimed at support staff and linked with Anglia Ruskin University to provide the opportunity to research education through an MA.

The ability to open our minds to wider possibilities and rethink our ambitions is a real potential. Yet change is most powerful when we have a say in it. It energises us. The model for Trust status we are looking to acquire is a cooperative trust which has wider stake holders involvement. Partnerships at all levels therefore will have a key role in allowing us to live dreams or have dreams not yet dreamt. It can take us to the next level and enable us all to have a 'can do' attitude, which is so important particularly for small schools such ourselves and our partner schools in our cluster.

4. Changing Category to Foundation

Rationale:

To facilitate the organisation of the Trust, the school is required to alter its current status to become a foundation school and acquire a Foundation. In acquiring Foundation Status, the Governing Body and not the Trust, will assume new responsibilities including the employment of staff and the admission of students to the school. In addition, the Trust will hold the land and assets in trust for the school. The Governing Body will have day to day responsibility for managing the assets, as is the case now.

The governing body will largely retain its present composition save for the impact of the school becoming a Foundation school and acquiring a Trust (which will appoint a minority of governors.)

All current staff will transfer across to the employ of the governing body under the appropriate regulations whilst maintaining their pension rights as part of the local government scheme. Existing and new teaching staff will continue to work under the terms of the 'School Teacher's Pay and Conditions Document' (STPCD). The Governing Body will set out the terms and conditions for new support staff which will be in accordance with nationally and locally agreed pay and condition negotiations. All staff will therefore always enjoy the same or better terms and conditions of employment as in any maintained state school.

The School will continue to teach the national curriculum and will be inspected by OFSTED at appropriate times.

The Governing Body will also become responsible for pupil admissions, but will work jointly with the Local Authority to administer the provision of pupil places within the requirements of the National Schools Admissions Code. Whilst not intending to alter admissions arrangements, the School has the right, as a Foundation school, to alter its admissions arrangements to ensure they support the agreed educational objectives which it shares with its partner associated schools.

5. Acquiring a Trust

(a) Name of the Trust:

The Aylsham Cluster Trust

(b) Rationale:

The school's Vision and Values and its expectations of students will form the basis for the work of the Trust and will be unaffected by the change in school status. It is envisaged that the new partnership arrangements will contribute significantly to a further improvement in the school's performance and see better educational experiences and outcomes for every young person and their family.

The principal aim of The Aylsham Cluster Trust is to provide an inspiring range of experiences to raise standards and aspirations and improve opportunities for all.

Essential features of the proposed Trust will be to: -

1. Raise Aspirations, by

- **Raising standards in literacy, numeracy and ICT**
- **Embedding learning & Increasing opportunities for all;**

2. Work with Families, to create

- **Healthy and Safe Communities**
- **Community Cohesion;**
- 3. Ensure Professional development for all, to**
 - **Increase leadership capacity**
 - **Continue workforce development;**
- 4. Develop Sustainable Schools, by**
 - **Working co-operatively to prepare for the challenges / opportunities for schools in a rural context**
 - **Ensuring effective procurement, commissioning and Value for Money.**

Our Trust will be a 'Community Development and Co-operative Model.' We have decided to use this model as it enables those who are directly involved in the school, parents/carers, staff and learners, to become engaged in its long-term strategic direction through membership of the Trust. It will also allow those more indirectly involved, such as other members of learners' families, to become involved. We believe that engaging members alongside the organisational partners detailed is essential if we are to achieve our vision of transforming educational opportunities for all in the community we serve.

The Co-operative values of self help, self responsibility, democracy, equality and solidarity and the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others give the Trust a firm foundation on which to improve standards of education.

The Trust gives a local platform to develop and enhance opportunities for young people and it creates a new way in which partners can work together under the themes of education and training, community cohesion and sustainability. .

The work of the Trust will enhance the work already undertaken and offer a longer term opportunity for the closer development and collaboration between the cluster schools and the Trust.

It is intended for it to be possible for all parents/carers, pupils and their extended families to join the Trust membership (subject to legal constraints) and gain benefits from doing so.

The Trust will have an ethos of co-operation and democracy consistent with the globally shared co-operative values. It will seek to empower learners and the community to achieve its aim of raising achievement and expectation of learning recognising that tomorrow's learners will live in an increasingly global economy, facing the challenges posed by rapid environmental and economic change. Fostering the values of self-help and self-responsibility it will help young people prepare for these challenges and their future as global citizens. It should also help to ensure that for our stakeholders we are increasingly seen as 'our' school, within 'our' community.

We wish to work towards structures for strategic partners to contribute to planning and delivering sustainable community development projects, which will raise aspirations, raise attainment and ensure that parents and families are well supported, through prevention and early intervention.

(c) Membership of the Trust

Each school member, listed below will nominate 2 voting trustees to sit on the Trust Board: -

Aldborough Primary School
 Aylsham High School
 Buxton Primary School
 Bure Valley School
 John of Gaunt Primary School & Nursery

Erpingham VC Primary School (as External Partners)

St Michael's CE VC Nursery & Infant School (as External Partners)

Contributions from our external trust members: -

<p>The Benjamin Foundation (will nominate 1 voting trustee to sit on the Trust Board)</p>	<p>Our aim is to provide high quality services and opportunities that significantly improve the lives of children and young people and which may not be available to them if we were not in operation. The Benjamin Foundation was founded more than 15 years ago and exists to help people in Norfolk deal with many of the challenges that life throws at them; whether 'everyday' issues such as childcare or heartbreaking problems like abuse and homelessness.</p> <p>The charity provides a range of practical services, support and counselling which all aim to empower people and give them back a sense of hope and control. For example: -</p> <p>Parent Support Advisers are there to help parent and families deal with any worries or concerns they have about their child, including issues in their own lives that impact upon their child/ren.</p> <p>Time For You (T4U) is a high quality service offering support, advice and guidance for children and young people aged 4-19 facing issues impacting on their emotional well-being. This service is now delivered in over 40 schools across the county.</p> <p>We provide a broad range of youth work from centre based work, to outreach work to specialist provision for those with disabilities.</p>
<p>The National Trust (will nominate 1 voting trustee to sit on the Trust Board)</p>	<p>As a national charity, we have over 3.6 million members and 55,000 volunteers. More than 14 million people visit our pay for entry properties, while an estimated 50 million visit our open air properties. NT invests over £160 million a year in the nation's environmental infrastructure and works with over 40,000 companies, including 2,000 specialist conservation businesses. We are committed to working in partnership to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating opportunities for life-changing experiences • Providing places where people can be inspired and experience relaxation, enjoyment and enrichment • Inviting people on a journey of discovery by engaging in learning • Valuing learning for its own sake and for the equality of opportunity it brings <p>We will use our diverse properties as venues and catalysts for learning, enabling us to develop mutually beneficial relationships with local people by enabling inclusive and participatory access to our properties</p> <p>We are able to provide first-hand experiences that cannot be recreated in the classroom; experiences in the 'real' environment where young people can feast their senses, practise new skills and develop their creativity and love of learning.</p> <p>We want to put all our properties – built or natural – back at the centre of life in today's communities, to help grow a sense of belonging, and encourage local pride and identity.</p>
<p>The Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts (will nominate 1 voting trustee to sit on the Trust Board)</p>	<p>SCVA is an awe inspiring modern building which houses the Robert and Lisa Sainsbury Collection. The collection combines modern western art with fine and applied arts from Africa, Pacific, the Americas, Asia, Egypt, the Ancient Mediterranean and Medieval Europe, spanning 5,000 years of human creativity.</p> <p>We would like to use our facilities, resources and expertise open to show your students how art can reflect a whole world and widen cultural horizons. For example, how looking at art can both reflect the world and lead us to enjoy perceptions of a wider world; how art objects are a powerful starting point for thinking about wider aspects of peoples, cultures and histories; how encounters with objects can be enlightening or baffling, clear or mysterious and how, in the course of new encounters, we can look, discuss, speculate, share views, make links, research and learn. New things and new skills will emerge during these processes which may never previously have considered. Art really can provide a 'window on the world'.</p>
<p>City College Norwich</p>	<p>Building upon the existing strong relationships to demonstrate the value of further and higher education in enhancing life chances and</p>

(will nominate 1 voting trustee to sit on the Trust Board)	embedding life-long learning, CCN can provide expertise in the development and collaborative provision of new learning pathways up to and including the 14 -19 age group and beyond; support of vocational excellence through its position as a provider of six National Skills Academies – in Financial Services, Manufacturing, Creative and Cultural Industries, Hospitality, Retail and Enterprise - as well as support for leadership & management and shared services (eg HR, Finance, Estates, H&S, CPD, Data Analysis).
Norfolk County Council Children's Services (will nominate 1 voting trustee to sit on the Trust Board)	The Local Authority appointed trustee will be able to bring a wide range of knowledge and experience of schools and education service provision to enable the Trust to realise its vision and fulfil the objectives of raising standards and aspirations for all. They will be able to draw on the resources of Children's Services as a whole in relation to successful and innovative practice in Norfolk and elsewhere. They will also help, with other partners, to ensure that the cluster can continue to make a significant contribution to the development of the Norfolk family of schools.
The Trust will continue to work with the Co-operative College to identify a suitable partner from the co-operative sector.	By becoming a co-operative trust – we will become part of the global co-operative family. We will become members of the Schools Co-operative Society, the national network of co-operative trusts, and work with the Co-operative College to identify a suitable long term co-operative partner for the trust. The Co-operative College has extensive experience in both the general school sector and the co-operative trust sector. They organise the network of co-operative schools, of which The Aylsham Cluster Trust will be part. They will also help bring a global dimension to the school and assist in establishing national and international links with other co-operative organisations.

(d) Trustees will be appointed by the organisations represented. They will have the opportunity to nominate an agreed number of Trustees from their organisation.

(e) The Governing Body will change from 13 to 12. The Trust will appoint a minority of Governors, no more than two of the total. The Governors will be represented by a balance of 4 elected Parent Governors; 2 Community Governors; 2 elected staff Governors; 2 Local Authority Governors, 2 Trust Governors in proportions which are laid down by the DfE. Parents will continue to make up at least one-third of the membership.

(f) Charitable objectives: As a non-profit making body, the Trust will use its resources to support and promote its charitable aims. The aims of the Trust are to promote education and community cohesion in the Aylsham area.

All parties in the partnership have a shared interest in developing a range of services and activities to support The Aylsham Cluster Trust. The Trust may support and commission services and provide a strategic direction to deliver the enhanced provision of:

- School and Professional Services
- Support services
- Curriculum, Personalisation and Inclusion
- Transition and Progression
- Extended School, Community and Family Learning
- Capital Programmes

(g) The Trust will meet the requirements on Trusts as set out in the School Organisation (Requirements as to Foundations) (England) Regulations 2007/1287

(h) The Trust will contribute to the advancement of education and help raise standard in the following ways:

- Greater participation through increased opportunity to foster social cohesion and responsibility to promote a safer community.
- Promotion of a healthy lifestyle through participation in sport, healthy eating and positive lifestyle choices

- Enhanced learning pathways with greater learner engagement will raise attendance and achievement levels. This will also increase the retention levels at post 16 and 18 and reduce the number of those not engaged in education or training.
- Through more focused curriculum entitlement, learners will have opportunities to experience learning in context through business, commerce and leisure partnerships.
- Improvements in learning resources on site for use by the whole community.

6. How the Trust will work

The Aylsham Cluster Trust will be a charitable, not for profit Trust, meeting the legal and other requirements as set out by the Department for Education (DfE). It will carry out its duties in relation to the schools as set out by the DfE, specifically by appointing a minority of the members of the Governing Body of the school and by holding the land and assets of each school on trust.

As a Co-operative Trust and in keeping with the principles of democratic member involvement, there will also be a Trust Stakeholder Council. This Stakeholder Council will elect a number of trustees directly from its constituent parts. This number will always be a minority of trustees.

As the Trust develops its work in the long term, it may be appropriate to consider additional partnerships. If this is the case there will be a process involving existing Trustees to ensure that any future partner will comply fully with the vision, values and aims of the Trust.

The Trust will be legally established with the Charities Commission and registered as a company limited by guarantee with Companies House. The Charities Commission will regulate its activities (as with all charities).

(a) Trustees will not be able to derive an income from the Trust, but the Trust may become an employer as it may wish to provide services and or commissioning services to the schools within the Trust. Any income generated by the Trust must only be used to support its charitable aims.

The Trust will not seek to alter the individual characteristics of the partner schools and will not seek to change the character (religious or otherwise) of a partner school.

(b) The Trust will meet three times a year (co-ordinated with school governance as required). The voting Trustees will be selected by the Trust member organisations and checked by the governing bodies to ensure that they comply with DfE legislation. This screening process will include a CRB check. The Chair of the Trust will be elected from the Trustees. A Trust officer and support staff will be allocated to work on behalf of the Trust and take day to day control in managing Trust business.

(c) The principle objectives of the Trust will build on what Bure Valley School does well already in working with other people. The Trust will help us raise standards further by bringing together community aspirations and expectations for children and young people through valuing education and training, embedding a life-long learning ethos and actively promoting involvement in the community of Aylsham and the Aylsham Cluster area. Acting as an enabler; it will make a direct contribution to raising attainment, securing economic and physical well being and improving the aspirations of the school's pupils. It is intended to provide opportunities for members of the community to acquire individual skills, knowledge and experience to enhance their qualifications, employability and social capital.

***How well did we do?**

We aimed to meet the following criteria in the formal proposal process; -

- Consult widely
- Make all aspects of the proposals clear
- Ensure that the documents are concise and accessible
- Give feedback on responses and show how the consultation influenced the outcome.

As part of your response, please feel free to comment on how well we have met these criteria, and to suggest ways of further improving the process.