



Buxton Primary School

Public Consultation

Jan/Feb 2011

Booklet One

Changing to Foundation School Status and Acquiring a Charitable Trust



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1. Executive Summary

The Governing Body of our school is proposing to change school category from Community School to Foundation School and to acquire a shared charitable trust, to be called the Aylsham Cluster Trust, in conjunction with Aldborough Primary School, Aylsham High School, Bure Valley Junior School and John of Gaunt Infant and Nursery School. This will be a Co-operative Trust.

The Governing Bodies of the following two schools, which already have existing foundations as Voluntary Controlled schools, have expressed an interest in becoming members of the proposed Trust, given the support of the diocese.

- Aylsham St Michaels CE VC Nursery and Infant School
- Erpingham VC Primary School

The Governing Body believes that the plan to develop the Aylsham Cluster Trust represents a natural progression from the successful collaborative work that has already taken place. The Trust will enable the development of a more formal, legal and sustainable partnership between the schools and introduce an influential range of external partners.

A Foundation School, while still being part of the Local Authority, has the opportunity to be supported by a Charitable Trust set up solely for 'the advancement of education and community cohesion' both in the schools and in the wider community.

The Governors are proposing to establish, through this Trust, a new and innovative partnership that will bring together the Aylsham Cluster schools and external partners including City College Norwich, Norfolk County Council Children's Services, The National Trust, The Sainsbury Centre, the Benjamin Foundation and the East of England Co-operative Society. This development will build on existing good relationships and will provide opportunity, continuity and stability for the individual schools and the Trust.

A Co-operative Trust model is being proposed as it enables those who are directly involved in the school, i.e. parents/carers, staff and learners, to become more 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 and the wider community, to become involved. We believe that engaging members alongside the external organisational partners is essential if we are to achieve our vision of transforming educational opportunities for all in the community we serve. (see Appendix B for a list of the co-operative values) The vision for the Trust is to extend our successful informal collaboration into a sustainable, formal partnership – to lay down a legacy that will ensure that children, families and the wider community are supported to maximise their potential in the rapidly changing world of the 21st Century.

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.

The Governing Body will gain new powers and responsibilities. It will become the employer of staff, although existing pay and condition arrangements will be unchanged as the school will remain a LA maintained school and be subject to school teachers' national pay and condition

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agreements. 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. The Trust will hold the land and capital assets for each school and the Governing Body will have (as now) day to day responsibility for managing these assets.

The full consultation documents – Booklet One ‘Changing to Foundation School Status and Acquiring a Charitable Trust’, and Booklet Two ‘Questions and Answers’ explain in more detail these proposals and outline the functions of the partners who will add capacity to the proposed Trust. Stakeholders have the opportunity to comment on these proposals during the consultation period which runs from 10th Jan to 7th Feb 2011 (4 weeks). The governors will then consider the outcomes of the consultation and decide whether to publish the statutory proposals on changing category and acquiring a charitable trust or to remain a community school. Details of the consultation process and how to respond are included in this booklet.

2. Vision and Focus

Our collaboration of schools aims to work in partnership with children, young people, their families and local communities, clubs and societies. Together we strive to provide an inspiring range of experiences to raise standards and aspirations and improve opportunities for all.

Our vision is for all children to learn in a rich and stimulating partnership that provides additional opportunities for us to work together creatively.

We endeavour to respect the individuality of the range of schools working within a supportive culture and building on our relationship of trust.

We also aspire to adopt the cooperative values of self help, self responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and community solidarity and the ethical values of honesty, openness, trust, social responsibility and caring for others to underpin our collaboration.

Through working together we can continue to become even better and even stronger by creating a lasting and sustainable partnership.

The principal objectives of the Trust will be to: -

1. Raise Aspirations, by

- Raising standards in literacy, numeracy and ICT
- Embedding learning for all
- Increasing opportunities for all
- Extending outdoor learning
- Meeting the needs of all our students (especially SEN and the Gifted & Talented)
- Improving links with Higher Education

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

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- Equip us to face any new challenges

4. Develop Sustainable Schools, by

- Working co-operatively to prepare for the challenges and opportunities for schools and pupils in a rural context
- Ensuring effective procurement, commissioning and Value for Money

3. What the Trust will do

A Trust School continues to serve its local community and remains part of the Norfolk Local Authority family of schools. Moreover, it will be supported by a charitable Trust which will appoint a minority of the Governors.

The Governing Body will continue to run the school and be responsible for its performance and Headteacher will continue to lead and manage individual schools. To make these changes the Governing Body of the school will be required to change the status of the school from a Community School to a Foundation School, and, at the same time, formally acquire a shared Trust – the Aylsham Cluster Trust. We are seeking your views on these two related processes.

The Aylsham Cluster Trust will support the partnership and help to create an environment where all learners of any age will have access to and support for a wide range of learning opportunities. It will help to raise standards and make a direct contribution to raising achievement and improving the well-being and aspirations of students.

The Trust will work with other people and organisations, as appropriate, in order to carry out its work. As the Trust develops its work in the future, it may be appropriate to consider additional partnerships. There will be a process involving existing Trustees to ensure that any future partners will comply fully with the vision, values and aims of the Aylsham Cluster Trust

4. 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 school as set out by the DfE, specifically by appointing a minority of the members of the Governing Body of each school and by holding the land and assets on 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).

Trustees will not be able to derive an income from the Trust, but the Trust may become an employer as it develops its objectives in providing services and/or commissioning services to 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 it will not seek to change the character (religious or otherwise) of a partner school.

The Trust will meet a minimum of three times per year (co-ordinated with school governance as required). The voting trustees will be checked by the Governing Bodies to ensure that they comply with DfE legislation. This screening process will also include a Criminal Records Bureau check. The Chair of the Trust will be elected from the Trustees. A Trust Officer and support staff will be appointed to work on behalf of the Trust and take day to day control in arranging Trust business.

5. Foundation Status

To facilitate the organisation of the Trust, the school is required to alter its current status to become a Foundation School. In acquiring Foundation status, the Governing Body and not the Trust, will assume new responsibilities, including responsibility for 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 in the present situation.

The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools)(England) Regulations 2007 provide for all the rights, powers, duties and liabilities to transfer existing staff from the Local Authority to the Governing Body.

Existing and new teaching staff will continue to work under the terms of the 'School Teacher's Pay and Conditions Document' (STPCD). Each school's Governing Body will set out the terms and conditions for new support staff which will be no less favourable than those applying to existing staff. All staff will, therefore, always enjoy as a minimum the same terms and conditions of employment as in any maintained state school.

The schools will continue to teach the National Curriculum and will be inspected by Ofsted at appropriate times.

The school's Governing Body will continue to have day to day control of the school's land and assets (which the Trust will hold 'on trust' for the school) and will work in collaboration with The Local Authority to ensure strict adherence to the Schools' Admissions Code within the local context.

6. What does this mean for young people & parents?

The school will remain part of the Local Authority's family of schools. It will continue to have a fair admissions policy and not introduce selection by ability. Parents will apply for places at each school as part of the Local Authority process. The school will continue to work in partnership with the Local Authority to ensure that pupil places are given fairly in line with the published admissions criteria which conform to the School Admissions Code.

It is not envisaged that the number of Parent Governors will alter. The current situation of appointing Community, Local Authority and Staff Governors will be maintained.

School policies, including objectives relating to behaviour and performance will be unchanged. The shared vision, values and aspirations for students will form the basis for the work of the Trust and will be unaffected by the change in status. It is envisaged that the new partnership arrangements will contribute significantly to a further improvement in the schools' performance and a better educational experience and outcomes for every young person and their family.

7. What does this mean for employees?

The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools)(England) Regulations 2007 provide for all rights, powers, duties and liabilities to transfer existing staff from the Local Authority to the Governing Body. Employees will be employed by the school's Governing Body instead of the Local Authority and all professional associations will continue to be recognised. The existing rights of teachers will be fully protected if the school changes status as the Governing Body still be bound by the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document

The GB of each school will set terms and conditions for support staff. However, terms and conditions will be safeguarded as per the prescribed regulations for existing staff and they will maintain the same employment rights as Local Authority employees. Governors have no intention to alter any Conditions of Service which would disadvantage any existing and new support staff against those of the Local Authority.

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Employees will still be represented on the Governing Body, as elected by their colleagues, as well as there being representatives from parents, the community and the Local Authority as is the case now.

8. Your Views - the Consultation Process

Please let us know what you think about the proposal. There are a number of ways in which you can do this: -

- a) Complete the 'Your Views' Consultation Questionnaire
- b) Send in your written comments to the Head at the school (marked 'Trust Consultation')
- c) If you are a parent or member of staff, come to the appropriate meeting to discuss the proposal with the Headteacher and Governors
- d) If you are a parent, talk to the nominated Parent Governor (Matthew Fruish). In order to arrange this, please contact the Head at the school
- e) If you are a member of staff, talk to the nominated Staff Governor (Mary Stevens)

The consultation meetings will be held thus: -

Location	Date and Time for Parents/Wider Community Consultation meeting	Date and Time for Staff Consultation meeting
Buxton Primary School	Thurs 27 th Jan 2011 from 2pm til 3pm	Thurs 27 th Jan 2011 from 3.15pm til 4pm

- f) Students at the school will be consulted through the School Council.

You can comment at any time until Monday Feb 7th 2011. The Governors will review all the comments and will decide whether to go ahead (and whether to amend the proposals to reflect your suggestions and concerns). The feedback will be made available on the school website at <http://www.buxtonschool.co.uk/>. There will be another chance to comment on any formal proposals which might be made before a final decision is taken.

A detailed question and answer document is available from each school. Ask for Booklet Two 'Questions and Answers'.

A translation service is available if required.
A larger type version is available on request

In addition to paper copies of the consultation documents, all are available to view or download from the cluster website <http://www.aylshamcluster.co.uk/>

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Appendix A - List of Consultees

As part of the consultation process, the school will consult with the following: -

- 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 any other school that may be affected by the proposals;
- e) Families of pupils at any other school that may be affected by the proposals;
- f) Any trade unions who represent staff at the school and representatives of any trade union of any other staff at school that may be affected by the proposals;
- g) Local Members of Parliament whose constituencies include the school. (including MEPs)
- h) Local Borough, District or Parish councils where the school is situated;
- i) the Early Years Development and Child Care Partnership, or those who benefit from a contractual arrangement giving them the use of the premises.

If you feel that there are other stakeholders who should be consulted, please contact the school.

Appendix B - Co-operative Values

Co-operatives throughout the world share this set of values that give them their distinctive character: -

Self-help

In co-operatives, people help each other whilst helping themselves by working together for mutual benefit.

Self-responsibility

Individuals within co-operatives act responsibly and play a full part in the organisation.

Democracy

A Co-operative will be structured so that members have control over the organisation - one member, one vote.

Equality

Each member will have equal rights and benefits (according to their contribution).

Equity

Members will be treated justly and fairly.

Solidarity

Members will support each other and other co-operatives.

Ethical Values

In the tradition of their founders, co-operative members believe in the ethical values of:

Honesty; openness; social responsibility and caring for others.