

**Business Case for proposed school and academy expansion for September 2018 implementation.**

**ARNOLD ACADEMY**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | <p>The need to provide local schools for local children, ensuring a sense of community belonging and also promoting sustainable modes of travel.</p>   |
|   | <p>A school serving the local community has existed on the Academy site since 1958. Arnold Middle School became Arnold Academy in July 2011. Since then its pupil numbers have risen year on year and now stand at 596, just 4 places below the current published admission number of 600. Arnold Academy provides education for children aged 9-13, breakfast club and numerous after school activities. The pupils transfer from the feeder lower schools in Barton and the surrounding villages. Central Bedfordshire Council contract with the local bus companies to provide the transport service from and back to the surrounding villages. Arnold Academy regularly reviews its Travel Plan Policy in conjunction with this. In addition, as part of this project, the Academy has committed to working closely with CBC Highways in order to refresh and renew a number of traffic calming and parking relief measures. Local children are encouraged to walk to school. A bus escort, at the expense of the Academy is provided in order to ensure that fewer pupils feel the need to come to school by car.</p> <p>Arnold Academy has already agreed to admit up to a further 30 Year 5 children in September 2017, without increasing its PAN. On completion of the building expansion, a further 30 children per year will be admitted, rising to a maximum of 720 by 2020, to meet the needs of the local demographic. The Academy site currently provides a venue for a wide range of extra-curricular clubs, activities and events both after school and during school holidays. Arnold supports and participates in the local events such as the Christmas Tree Festival, Carol Service, Parish Council Activity Days, Summer Festival, encouraging community belonging. It also supports and participates in events organised for the children and parents of the other 12 schools within the pyramid. The proposed expansion is an exciting opportunity to develop community cohesion and foster a coherent community identity.</p> |
| 2 | <p>The need to create schools that are of sufficient size to be financially and educationally viable.</p>  |
|   | <p>The financial viability of the academy has been confirmed by Central Bedfordshire Council Finance Department.</p> <p>Independently audited accounts are submitted to the Education Funding Agency annually, which include a statement from the trustees and assurance from the Auditor that Arnold Academy continues to be a viable going concern. Budget forecasts are submitted in July each year, establishing that the Academy has considered its income and expenditure and can continue to operate in surplus. The effects of increased pupil numbers, income and expenditure were examined on the longer term budget forecast before the Trust agreed to proceed with the proposed expansion. More detailed evidence of this will be submitted to the E.F.A. when permission is sought to proceed.</p>   |

|   |  |
|---|--|
|   | <p>Arnold Academy has seen significant financial and educational benefits as it has evolved from a maintained school to a fully funded foundation school and then successfully navigating the conversion to Academy Trust status. Pupil numbers have consistently increased during this period of change. Strong, experienced leadership, committed Governors and staff have created a successful and efficient organisation that is well placed to take advantage of further expansion for the benefit of its current and future pupils.</p> <p>Providing the ideal 6 forms of entry (720 pupils) in terms of recommended middle school size, enhances the Academy's ability to achieve further economies of scale, particularly when negotiating contracts based on roll numbers. The Academy is committed to its broad curricular offer whilst maintaining the ethos and values appropriate for KS2 and KS3. It actively seeks to employ and retain sufficiently qualified staff to deliver this. Staff and Governors are attracted by the success, ambition and resolute determination of the Academy to improve the quality of education and whole school experience of the children and further the benefits of collaborative arrangements with the other schools in the HAST pyramid.</p> |
| 3 | <p>The ability to support the expansion of local popular and successful schools or to link expanding schools with popular and successful schools.</p>  |
|   | <p>Arnold Academy, a single academy trust is also a member of the Harlington Area Schools Trust (HAST), consisting of one upper school, two middle schools and ten lower schools. All the schools in the pyramid have 'Good' or 'Outstanding' Ofsted ratings. The pyramid has been working collaboratively for a number of years at all levels.</p> <p>Arnold Academy's most recent KS2 results were amongst the highest in the County. Pupils leave Arnold in Year 8 at a consistently higher than expected level and go on to achieve better GCSE levels than their peers. Arnold will continue to strive to improve standards and results in value added achievement, at primary and secondary key stages, based on its already proven sound educational plan and vision.</p> <p>A full breakdown of data is available on request.</p>  |
| 4 | <p>The potential to further promote and support robust partnerships and learning communities</p>   |
|   | <p>As one of 13 schools in HAST, the Academy is aware that the education 'offer' is significantly superior due to inter-school effective collaboration. Arnold's capacity for self-improvement, recruitment, training and retention of highly effective staff has been enhanced by the support systems in place. It provides for a seamless education with common goals throughout the pyramid to age 18.</p> <p>Arnold is fully committed to maintaining the partnership, its staff meeting regularly at a variety of levels from Trust Directors to Subject Liaison. Currently the HAST Board is investigating formalising the relationship by becoming a Multi Academy Trust. There is an excellent track record of supporting schools in the pyramid through the sharing of both support and teaching staff to fill temporary gaps, through shared training, collaboration of ideas and shared future planning by attending the HAST conference. Our headteacher has been nominated as the cluster representative on the local authority Partnership Vision Board.</p>   |

|   |   |
|---|---|
|   | <p>From a financial, business and administrative perspective, the Business Managers from each of the schools meet termly to collaborate, share best practice, resources, benchmark costs, identify savings and economies of scale, thereby contributing to efficiency and increasing the money available for the learning community.</p>  |
| 5 | <p>The ambition to achieve a single phase of education 0 -19 and reduce school transfer points</p>  |
|   | <p>Arnold Academy commences its transition planning early in the school year. The KS2 Leader works in collaboration with all the feeder lower schools to establish visits and pre-transfer days for children to visit Arnold and for Arnold staff and children to visit the pupils who will be moving to the Academy. Early information evenings and visits for Year 8 pupils moving to Harlington Upper School are also embedded in the HAST diary. SENCo's meet and take children to their destination schools to spend time and familiarise themselves with their new environments and teaching staff. Similar arrangement are in place for the ASD Provision at Arnold.</p> <p>Arnold Academy has received outstanding feedback from parental surveys in regard to the transition arrangements. The alignment of curriculum, policies, assessment, values and ethos through the pyramid eases the path of change for all pupils in the transition process. This will be further enhanced as the pyramid moves toward forming a multi academy trust.</p> |
| 6 | <p>The need to support the Raising of the Participation Age (RPA).</p>  |
|   | <p>Arnold Academy aims to provide all children with a lifelong love of learning. Staff have very high expectations and children are encouraged to achieve their very best. Outcomes are very good at all key points, KS2 and Year 8.</p> <p>The Academy believes that achieving at a consistently high level will have a positive impact on the aspirations of children for their future learning. An exciting rich curriculum provides many opportunities for this. The Options curriculum offers a variety of additional subjects for the children to try outside of the normal lessons studied, providing a broader and enhanced experience, giving them the confidence to explore other subjects in the future.</p> <p>A number of foreign, team building and residential trips arranged by Arnold and other cross-phase events in sport, music, maths and drama strive to ensure the children have an exceptional experience to take with them to the next stage of their education and beyond.</p>  |
| 7 | <p>To seek opportunities to create inspirational learning environments for the school and to maximise community use.</p>  |
|   | <p>Arnold Academy has a range of buildings and works hard to maximise the benefits of them, irrespective of their age and design. The Academy employs its own Site Manager, Caretaker and cleaning team and has a preventative programme of maintenance and development to ensure the best value for money is gained from the facilities available. There are dedicated facilities for art, design &amp; technology, drama, science, music and physical education, used by pupils and wherever possible, the community.</p> <p>Expansion will enable the Academy to maximise its current facility use for sports, extra-curricular activities and local events. The aim is to improve and provide additional inspirational learning environments, for example the relocation of the library with inside and outside learning space.</p>   |

|    |  |
|----|--|
|    | To promote physical and mental wellbeing and healthy lifestyles by providing a sports facility to meet the needs of 720 children that will also be available for community use. To provide more dedicated facilities for science and creative arts together with flexible learning spaces that are adaptable for a variety of subject learning, optimising the opportunities available.  |
| 8  | To promote the diversity of provision offered in Central Bedfordshire to increase opportunities for parental choice  |
|    | <p>Arnold Academy supports this objective and it is reflected through an intake which is becoming ever more diverse as the local communities change. The school has also become a popular choice for parents.</p> <p>The Academy is committed to developing its education provision in innovative ways to meet need, provide opportunity and support the CBC principle.</p>  |
| 9  | To support vulnerable learners in Area Special Schools and integrate appropriate Special Educational Needs provision within mainstream schools   |
|    | <p>Arnold Academy has a dedicated ASD Provision which currently provides six places, is fully subscribed and has been consistently rated as Outstanding.</p> <p>Comprehensive support is offered to other vulnerable groups by a qualified SEN department, a dedicated Pastoral Team and Hub, Learning Mentors. The Academy provides full access for disabled learners, all upper floors accessible via designated lifts.</p> <p>Arnold has a successful track record for providing SEN support within the mainstream.</p>   |
| 10 | Capacity to Deliver the proposed expansion.  |
|    | <p>The Academy has practical experience in delivering building projects within scope and budget. As a middle school, the learning space was significantly expanded with a two storey extension. As an Academy, disabled access was provided to the upper floors of the original building, incorporating additional administrative space.</p> <p>Arnold most recently completed a Safeguarding Project, improving its CCTV, Alarm System, emergency lights and replacement internal doors to meet fire safety standards, using funds successfully bid from the Condition Improvement Fund.</p> <p>Following the recommendation by C.B.C., that various feasibility studies should be completed, AMR Consult Ltd was appointed to act on the Academy's behalf to explore how the school could address the key issues relevant to the expansion and organisational arrangement. They have proposed that a design build approach would be beneficial and that this has been the preferred method with a number of other CB projects. Assuming the project were to proceed professional project management services would be employed to administer any building works.</p> <p>AMR are engaged to assist with EFA applications in addition.</p> <p>School Governors and Trustees include persons with significant experience in property construction, project management and finance and a sub committee engaging those skills is established to support the Academy Senior Leadership Team.</p> |