

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

Church End Lower School: Forest End Campus, Marston Moretaine

1	The need to provide local schools for local children, ensuring a sense of community belonging and also promoting sustainable modes of travel.
	<p>Section 76 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a duty on local education authorities to promote the use of sustainable modes of travel to meet the school travel needs of their area. Ensuring the sufficiency of provision local to the areas of demographic demand supports this duty by reducing the need for car journeys and also limits potential growth in the cost of providing school transport on distance criteria to qualifying pupils to meet the Council's statutory responsibilities.</p> <p>Section 38 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 also places a duty on governing bodies of maintained schools in England to promote community cohesion. Promoting local schools enables children living in the same local community to attend the same school fostering a coherent community identity and enabling community ownership to build around a range of extracurricular activities.</p> <p>The expansion of Church End to a second school site, Forest End, has been managed extremely well as noted in the school's recent inspection report (November 2016). The school is committed to meeting local needs and is highly inclusive. As such, the school is in a strong position to ensure that the proposed second phase expansion at Forest End is equally successful.</p> <p>As the Marston Park housing development concludes, Forest End has grown to near capacity. In September 2017 it will be fully operational catering for the needs of over 170 pupils aged between 3 and 9. The larger Church End site having a capacity of 300 pupils, will be required to accommodate any additional pupils moving into the village until it also reaches capacity. It is anticipated that Church End will reach capacity in most Year Groups during the next academic year; 2017/18.</p> <p>If this situation becomes reality then the school will once again be declining admission applications from catchment children. The proposed expansion at Forest End would prevent this from happening.</p>
2	The need to create schools that are of sufficient size to be financially and educationally viable.
	<p>The financial viability of the school/academy has been confirmed by Central Bedfordshire Council Finance Department.</p> <p>Church End has grown considerably over the past four years. This growth has included absorbing an 'inadequate' independently managed pre-school and, in October 2015, the opening of the Forest End campus. Pupil numbers have grown from approximately 275 to 466, as recorded in the January 2017 School Census. This growth was noted by Ofsted as being managed 'extremely well'! This was because of the experience of the team involved in implementing the expansion. The same team is still in place to ensure that this second phase of expansion will be implemented equally as smoothly.</p> <p>The school is committed to providing the best possible service to its local community. The recent growth in pupil numbers has enabled the school to provide enhanced services to our community which has included employing a Play Therapist, an ICT Technician and Speech and Language Therapist. In particular, this has enabled the school to develop interventions to support our most vulnerable families.</p> <p>Having a growing staff has empowered the school in developing innovative approaches to school organisation and curriculum development which are efficient and highly cost effective. This, alongside working with a range of partners, has made the school an attractive place to work; helping to overcome the national difficulty in teacher recruitment and retention.</p>

	<p>The Governing Body is established and demonstrates the range of skills and attributes necessary to ensure that the school as a whole continues to thrive! Given the national agenda, it is the intention of the Governing Body to convert to Academy Status within the next academic year, 2017/18. They recognise that there are potential benefits and economies of scale by working closely with other local schools and so the longer term plan will be to join a Church of England Multi-Academy Trust.</p> <p>Once the expansion is complete the school will operate four forms of admission, two forms at both school sites, providing a whole school capacity of 600 places – 300 at each site. In addition we will continue to provide pre-school provision of approximately 72 FTE places, although this will probably equate to 100+ part-time places.</p> <p>Being such a large school will require the Headteacher and senior staff to spend much of their time developing key issues known to promote school improvement in driving the ethos of the school towards raising attainment and promoting high standards.</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>Church End has been at the heart of the village of Marston Moretaine since 1847. As the village has grown so too has the school. Our ethos is grounded in inclusion and access for all. We provide a traditional, yet innovative and creative curriculum, based on core values and high academic standards. Our focus on community and on providing each child the opportunity to experience a childhood centred in responsibility, curiosity, wonder and memorable experiences has helped the school to be remarkably popular. This was again demonstrated in our recent Ofsted inspection where an overwhelming number of parents recommended the school. This was endorsed further by a wholly positive response to the staff questionnaire.</p> <p>The expansion of the Forest End campus will be allowing a successful and popular school to expand. This success is demonstrated in pupil outcomes at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end Year 4. In both areas outcomes exceed both the CBC and National average for 2016.</p>
4	<p>The potential to further promote and support robust partnerships and learning communities</p>
	<p>The school is committed to working alongside other local schools. This has included supporting the induction programme of Newly Qualified Teachers, sharing expertise and developing CPD opportunities and mentoring and supporting newly appointed Headteachers.</p> <p>As previously stated, it is the school's intention to convert to Academy School status by the end of the next academic year (2017/18). The process for this conversion has been initiated and a consultant appointed. Initially, this will be as a 'stand-alone' academy but it is highly likely that we will join a Multi-Academy Trust within the next few years and this is likely to be a Church of England MAT.</p> <p>The school has always worked in close partnership with all aspects of CBC's Children's Services. This includes, the Headteacher currently representing Education on the CBC LSCB, the Deputy Headteacher taking a major role on the Voice of the Child Sub-Group, supporting the work of Relay, The Intake and Assessment Team, The Family Support Team, The Access and Inclusion Team, releasing staff to support other CBC schools as LA Moderators, Acting Headteacher, Headteacher Mentors etc.</p> <p>In addition the school is committed to working in partnership with all other agencies, service providers and charities – such as, the CBC LSCB, Jigsaw, The School Nursing Team, the NSPCC, The Ormiston Trust, CHUMS, and Aquarius (formally CAMH).</p> <p>The rapid expansion of the school over the last few years has brought with it significant opportunity to develop innovative management structures which have proved to be highly effective and efficient.</p> <p>The school's willingness to adapt and embrace technology has helped to transform curriculum delivery. The fibre optic connectivity between the two school sites has enabled the school to access technologies which have supported cost efficiencies in communication, printing and accounting. Having a larger staff has provided the opportunity to develop effective leadership of the curriculum and the teams required to deliver it. Robust accountability has ensured the high standards are maintained</p>

and any areas of identified weakness are supported and rectified quickly.

Working closely with the University of Bedfordshire and other Initial Teacher Training providers has helped the school to develop quality first teaching approaches to all that we do. This has ensured that as the school has grown we have been able to attract and retain a high quality teaching staff. Through close working with the Central Bedfordshire Teaching School we supported the development of our existing team as they assume inspirational leadership roles within the school.

5 The ambition to achieve a single phase of education 0 - 19 and reduce school transfer points

The geographical location of Marston Moretaine brings with it 'cross border complications'. Church End Lower School is part of the Wootton Upper School Community and as such, the majority of our pupils move on to the Marston Vale Academy, which is located in Bedford Borough and part of the Multi Academy Trust operated by the Chiltern Learning Trust. Upon leaving Marston Vale Academy the majority of former Church End pupils move on to Wootton Upper School which is proposing to join The Sharnbrook Academy Federation.

Added to this geographical complication is the political decision by Bedford Borough to support schools in moving from a three tier structure to a two tier structure. Although both Marston Vale and Wootton Upper School have no short term plans to amend their current admission arrangements to reflect Bedford Borough policy, it seems likely, not least because of the growing demographic pressures within the Wootton Pyramid catchment area, that a clear educational journey is certain.

Population growth within the Vale of Marston will inevitably require viable answers to be found to some very difficult educational questions.

As demonstrated in previous responses Church End has a strong sense of community and a desire to work in close professional partnership. These long established values are reflected in our working relationships with the two schools almost all of our children attend when leaving us at the end of Year 4; Marston Vale Academy, in Stewartby (80%) and Holywell Academy in Cranfield (16%).

In line with Central Bedfordshire policy the school will need to continue to develop integrated early years provision. Currently we have sufficient preschool provision to support the equivalent of 72 places; 48 at the Church End site and 24 at Forest End. It is important to ensure that sufficient provision is made available for Forest End to increase capacity from the current 24 places to match the 48 places that are provided at Church End. This would enable the school to offer parents more flexibility and the potential to offer the Government aim of 30 hour entitlement per week.

'Wrap around' before, after and holiday childcare is provided at both Church End and Forest End for children aged 4 – 11 ensuring that all parents, requiring it, have access to an extended and flexible early years offer so that they can access training or work.

The ambition to create one 0 -19 phase is incredibly challenging. Our motivation in bringing a failing pre-school under the management of the school was borne out of a desire to make the transition to school as smooth as possible. Having one policy, management, administration and curriculum has brought considerable benefits and improvements. Our desire to ensure that all schools benefit from working together can be demonstrated through a number of successful initiatives and projects covering areas as diverse as multi-cultural celebration to the development of pyramid wide approach to assessment.

The transition to middle school is challenging for most children. To assist with this we have benefitted from numerous approaches with both Middle Schools to support the transfer process.

This includes ...

- Middle School staff visits to our Year 4 provision
- Numerous Middle School based Sports Festivals and Inter School Competitions – starting from Year 1
- Bespoke transitional arrangements for vulnerable pupils
- 1:1 staff liaison between SEND and Safeguarding Staff
- Year 5 staff attending termly Year 4 Curriculum Liaison meetings
- Shared CPD opportunities

	<p>This promotion of close collaboration amongst schools impacts on such issues as continuity of pedagogy, curriculum, expectations, progress, behaviour and ethos. Ultimately, it will have a positive impact on outcome and standards!</p>
6	<p>The need to support the Raising of the Participation Age (RPA).</p>
	<p>The school works closely with colleges and upper schools in ensuring that a significant number of older pupils are offered work experience and work based placements. Feedback suggests that Church End provides such students with a valuable and worthwhile experience. It helps to prepare young people for work places challenges such as taking responsibility and being accountable.</p>
7	<p>To seek opportunities to create inspirational learning environments for the school and to maximise community use.</p>
	<p>It is encouraging to know that Central Bedfordshire will adopt a high standard of design and community engagement as part of its evaluation of the proposals for major new and expanding school provision.</p> <p>Through close collaboration with Central Bedfordshire colleagues we hope to create a spacious and flexible learning environment which will complement the exemplary accommodation currently provided. It is anticipated that the new provision will enable teachers to provide children with learning experiences which maximise the potential of new technologies and latest research in how children learn.</p> <p>Through the application of the same principles which shaped the concept of the original building, the school will continue to maximise the potential to be fully inclusive in meeting individual learning needs; whether they be Physical and Sensory, Communication and Interaction, Behavioural, Social and Emotional or Cognitive!</p> <p>By working very closely with other educational professionals, staff have acquired numerous skills in supporting children with a range of additional needs. This offers parents of SEND children with a genuine choice of what best meets the needs of their children.</p> <p>As stated previously, the school is at the heart of, and committed to, the local and wider community. The existing school currently hosts the Marston Gymnastics Club, The Marston Park Residents Group, The Parish Council, a Community Choir and Vale Community Church. All of these organisations are inclusive and help to make the Vale of Marston an even better place to live.</p> <p>The school's commitment to supporting our wider community extends to organising training to the benefit of numerous schools which covers areas as diverse as Safeguarding Children, Inference and Understanding, Forest Schools and The Cornerstone Curriculum.</p>
8	<p>To promote the diversity of provision offered in Central Bedfordshire to increase opportunities for parental choice</p>
	<p>Church End Lower School is committed to providing educational opportunities for all its pupils and recognises, supports and encourages the principle of parental choice.</p> <p>The school was inspected by Ofsted in November 2016. The report states that the leadership team and Governing Body 'managed this rapid expansion extremely well' when referring to the Forest End expansion. Having a 'split site' school brings huge advantages as well as challenges. Some of these advantages have included considerable economies of scale meaning that the school is able to ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide enhanced learning opportunities – considerable investment in ICT provision for example • retain and recruit high calibre staff to key positions • develop innovative forms of communication – such as the extensive use of cloud based technologies • promote the school as being truly community focussed – hosting a growing and vibrant church community • become even more inclusive offering more specialist interventions for our more vulnerable pupils

- offer a more intimate feel to a child's education whilst providing the service that only a larger school can offer.

It is the desire of the Church End Governing Body to recommend that the school becomes a Church of England Academy within the diocese of St Albans. A consultant has been assigned to support the transition process and it is anticipated that formal consultation will begin in the Spring of 2017. It is anticipated that the school will ultimately join a Multi-Academy Trust with other local schools with the aim of finding innovative and viable solutions to accommodating the expected pupil growth in our local area.

It is our aim and ambition to continue to provide an excellent and fully inclusive education for every child in our care.

9 To support vulnerable learners in Area Special Schools and integrate appropriate Special Educational Needs provision within mainstream schools

Church End is a friendly and welcoming school. We invite all to share in our educational vision and journey. We have established strong professional partnerships which support our inclusive ethos. Our staff have the skills, and personal attributes, necessary to support children with a variety of needs. Partnerships with services such as Jigsaw are seen as vital in supporting some of our most vulnerable pupils.

Seeking advice and adopting creative solutions has enabled pupils with challenging behaviour to experience success and improve their chances of continuing that success as they transfer to their respective middle schools. Working closely with the Access and Inclusion Team has ensured that children at risk of missing education have experienced a more fulfilling childhood which will lead to improved 'life chances'.

Services supporting children most at risk such as Relay, The Intake and Assessment Team and Family Support Team have developed a wholly positive relationship with the school's designated safeguarding leads. The school is empathetic to those experiencing complex situations but is insistent that each child has the right to attend and access a good education.

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