

Appendix B: Holywell Academy Business Case

Business Case for proposed academy expansion for September 2018 implementation.

Holywell School, Cranfield

Please insert how the proposed expansion of your school meets each of Central Bedfordshire Council's 9 policy principles for pupil place planning - below . As a guide, please consider and delete the explanatory grey text provided in each section before inserting your text

1	The need to provide local schools for local children, ensuring a sense of community belonging and also promoting sustainable modes of travel.
	<p>This programme of expansion focused tightly on local and immediate need. The pupils who will populate this expansion are already present in the two key partner Lower Schools. The Local Authorities are also working on further expansion of these local Lower Schools where families and pupils will anticipate moving to their catchment Middle School.</p> <p>If this programme does not run then very significant numbers of local children will have to travel far out of area to reach another Middle School with any capacity to take them. Conversely this school will eventually be filled with pupils resident in its own conurbation together with pupils from Wootton where all those pupils would be entitled to use the school bus service.</p> <p>Those two conurbations, local children attending their local middle school, see the overwhelming majority staying on into their local Upper School. This strongly promotes a sense of community across the Holywell School catchment of these two conurbations.</p>
2	The need to create schools that are of sufficient size to be financially and educationally viable.
	<p>Holywell School has shown a consistent capacity to deliver good quality provision whilst living within the finances allocated to it at any given time. Its capacity to enhance the provision to pupils further because of the efficiencies associated with scaling up from around 600 pupils total to around 720 pupils total are very significant. Some roles in school do not need additional staffing (eg Finance, overall Site Management, front office reception) whilst others can be put on a more attractive pay scale and strengthen recruitment prospects for the school. Other roles can be brought into existence to give more specialised provision for pupils. (For example the school can consider a promoted post specifically to work with Lower Schools throughout the school year to enhance both transition and educational interface and pupil progress.)</p>

	<p>Holywell School will be at a recognised optimal size for a Middle School when it reaches 720 pupils overall. It has already worked diligently to put in places specialist subject teachers across the curriculum and pupils benefit very significantly from this. There is always further work that can be done in this area.</p> <p>For example in September 2017 84% of Science will be taught by fully qualified subject specialists. 16% will be taught by non-specialists. As the school moves towards 720 pupils it will be able to locate one of the additional teaching posts in the Science department and move to 100% of Science being taught by subject specialists.</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>Holywell School has a 'Good' rating from Ofsted. Pupil attainment is significantly above national standards. The school uses the national GL testing regime as an end of year measure for all four year groups in English, Maths and Science. This external assessment shows outcomes significantly ahead in all year groups in all these core subjects. It also demonstrates good rates of progress from entry to exit.</p> <p>Holywell School carries out an annual survey of parents following the Ofsted set of questions. In the 2016/2017 survey 92% of families responded to the survey. 97% of respondents said that their child is happy at the school. 97% said their child is making good progress at the school. This level of parent appreciation characterises all the survey responses. Only 1.4% reported that they would not recommend the school to another parent. The school is also very highly rated by its partner schools. As a result Holywell has been consistently oversubscribed for several years and will, once again, be forced to admit over its PAN in September 2017.</p> <p>As noted above, the GL test regime has enabled the school to demonstrate very comprehensively the high quality of its educational provision. It has also enabled the school to work still more forensically in all four year groups to identify relative weaknesses and address these directly. For example, this enabled the school to robustly address quality of leadership in Maths in 2015/2016, move to fresh external recruitment and attract one of the leading Maths teachers in Bedfordshire. Together with recruiting an additional subject specialist for 2016/ 2017 this produced a step change in the capacity of that team and GL results for all four year groups in 2017 reflect this transformation in leadership and teaching. The school's Science department is the only Middle School in the country to gain Gold Award in the 2017 assessment for Primary Science Quality Mark. English department is led by an experienced SATs marker, multiple observations by Ofsted graded Outstanding and utilised by other schools to provide high quality support and guidance.</p>

	<p>Holywell School has very recent experience of delivering expansion to its capacity in partnership with Central Bedfordshire. The most recent piece of work expanded the school's capacity by 11% in September 2015. That development was part one of a two part programme of which the current proposal represents the second half. The School worked with Central Bedfordshire's recommended consultant – Ben McCarthy – and he continues to work with both school and CBC on the current proposals. The 2015 expansion was delivered in good time and to a very high quality as confirmed by a variety of CBC officers.</p> <p>In 2017 Holywell was one of only a very few CBC schools to enjoy a successful CIF bid – for £420,000. Those works are being expedited and will be underway by the last week of term. This success with CIF follows on from a successful bid in 2016 for £320,000. The school managed that programme very tightly to ensure good value for money and quality final outcome.</p>
4	<p>The potential to further promote and support robust partnerships and learning communities</p>
	<p>Holywell School has a strong record of working with other schools and the broader educational community in Central Bedfordshire.</p> <p>It is recognised by the Teaching School for the excellence of its provision in Initial Teacher Training. In 2016/2017 it was highly commended for the way it picked up a trainee whose first term in the programme had proved extremely unsuccessful and then supported and mentored this colleague where he has gained an appointment at a high performing Central Bedfordshire school for September.</p> <p>Holywell has between 7 and 10 student teachers during the course of every academic year. It also has at least one, sometimes two, students from Bamberg University in residence.</p> <p>Over the past two years Holywell has provided outreach support in English, Science, History, Geography, and RE. (For example in the past month Head of History has delivered a Teaching School session on the Maya culture of Central America and the Head of English, working with English Heritage and the Teaching School, has delivered a session on using Wrest Park to support English provision.) The Head of Maths appointed for the start of this Academic year provided support and inter-school programmes in Central Bedfordshire in the year before she joined Holywell. Having successfully and effectively re-organised the Maths department to a very strong standard she will once again be in a position to pick up on that work in September 2017.</p> <p>Holywell enjoys very good and positive working relationships with its two key partner Lower Schools. This enables its staff to have a good grasp of detailed curriculum and pedagogy issues at transition. It also means that in relation to its work with non-catchment Lower Schools, which is also</p>

	<p>very positive, Holywell staff engage in a knowledgeable manner. Holywell staff attend the moderation meetings of the wider group of Lower Schools in its broad educational family.</p>
5	<p>The ambition to achieve a single phase of education 0 -19 and reduce school transfer points</p>
	<p>As noted above, Holywell is located in a very close knit educational community where pupils overwhelmingly remain within the Wootton Area family/pyramid from reception through to GCSE. This continues to mean that vertical and horizontal partnerships work very effectively to support best provision for families and children in the area.</p> <p>Holywell is recognised as playing a very active and leading role in this educational family.</p> <p>In addition to the work with Lower Schools noted above, Holywell has led on a number of key lines of work to enhance the experience and most effective delivery for pupils as they move through to Upper School. For example, driving forward a consistent external testing regime across the two Middle schools now means that the Upper School has consistent data for well over 90% of its intake. We have also promoted their pick up of the year 7 test results so that they can get a picture of their new intake immediately the names are known – ie that transition discussion is now populated in March, not late June.</p> <p>The Upper School has also been sending staff to spend time in Holywell to look at lessons, discuss book scrutinies with Holywell staff and meet with Holywell pupils to discuss their learning. These programmes are greatly enhancing setting their level of challenge high on arrival at Upper School.</p> <p>The disproportionately successful picture of former Holywell pupils at GCSE at Upper School also reflects a consistent effective form of preparation and challenge to our pupils for their subsequent years in education.</p>
6	<p>The need to support the Raising of the Participation Age (RPA).</p>
	<p>As noted in section 6, Holywell has been relentless in promoting longer-term educational goals and aspiration for its pupils. We believe that this gives strong support to work at the Upper School in relation to RPA.</p>
7	<p>To seek opportunities to create inspirational learning environments for the school and to maximise community use.</p>
	<p>The school has shown in the last expansion programme how it focuses closely on creating inspirational learning environments whilst delivering within tight budgets.</p>

	<p>For example that programme produced one of the most inspirational Libraries in any CBC school. The school spent money on providing easier access for external users, providing an outstanding meeting space for the local community. The Parish Council use the Library fortnightly and it has been used for other important local community meetings.</p> <p>The interface between classrooms and the outdoor space was quite unique and the school's approach to design has ensured the easiest of DDA access to all areas.</p> <p>In that programme the school also took the opportunity to transform Music facilities from chronically limiting to an outstanding space by knocking through into neighbouring corridors and small rooms. It is now used by Bedfordshire County Band as a rehearsal space and the school enjoys one of the highest uptakes in individual musical instrument take-up.</p> <p>The early outline design work for this expansion programme similarly reflects a thorough combination of awareness of the curriculum need by the time the school is fully expanded with judicious use of the site so as to retain the elements of its physical layout and character that support the much appreciated current experience for pupils whilst enhancing provision of learning spaces further.</p>
8	<p>To promote the diversity of provision offered in Central Bedfordshire to increase opportunities for parental choice</p>
	<p>Although this is not about diversity of school offer, it is worth noting that Holywell is the most significantly ethnically diverse school within CBC. This situation in part flows from the numbers of children from overseas whose parents are studying at Cranfield University. The school benefits from the longest serving and most experienced EAL specialist in the Authority and she leads on the EAL Professional Development Group.</p>
9	<p>To support vulnerable learners in Area Special Schools and integrate appropriate Special Educational Needs provision within mainstream schools</p>
	<p>The school has played a very active role in delivering excellent support for vulnerable pupils. It has successfully avoided recourse to permanent exclusions despite dealing with a number of extremely challenging pupils. (One permanent exclusion in 9 years.) Conversely it has taken in a number of pupils who have been permanently excluded – several of these for very extreme physical violence. The school has been enthusiastically praised for the way these pupils have been handled and enabled to gain a positive experience of education and thereby make genuine progress in their learning.</p>

	<p>A similar picture applies in relation to Looked After Children, where the school has had a higher level of pupils in this category than would reflect CBC figures. This is partially driven by several experienced and knowledgeable carers checking out schools very carefully and then requiring the relevant local authority to support the child being placed in Holywell. Several of these children present with extremely distressing and challenging life stories and therefore the security and quality of care given in the school has been immensely important to them and equally immensely appreciated and praised by carers and associated professionals.</p> <p>The school's SEND department has shown very strong capacity for effectively supporting pupils across a range of significant physical disabilities as well as a more standard range of learning disabilities. By way of example, Bedford Borough professionals were clear that the very serious and increasing physical difficulties affecting one child at Lower School meant that he could not possibly transfer to Middle School. Parents fought the case to have him attend Holywell and the outcomes both socially and educationally are recognised as outstanding.</p>
10	Capacity to Deliver the proposed expansion.
	<p>Please see responses on page 2, second half of question 3.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working with a preferred CBC external consultant – Ben McCarthy – who has now been working closely with the school on this and other projects since 2013. - Previous success in delivering major 2015 expansion, working closely with CBC - Successful bids for CIF – in 2015 for £325,000 and in 2016 for £420,000 - Holywell School budget has been consistently effectively managed and delivering quality provision with a sustained end of year contingency figure even in challenging years. -