



Department
for Education

Free school application form 2014

Special (updated August 2014)

BRISTOL AUTISM FREE SCHOOL

Contents

Completing and submitting your application	3
Application checklist	5
Declaration	7
Section A: Applicant details	9
Section B: Outline of the school	9
Section C: Education vision	10
Section D: Education plan – part 1	18
Section D: Education plan – part 2	19
Section E - Evidence of need – part 1	73
Table 1: For students with statements of SEN or with Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans	73
Section E: Evidence of need – part 2	74
Section F: Capacity and capability	92
F1 (a) Pre-opening skills and experience	93
F1 (b) Skills gap in pre-opening	98
F3 (a) Proposed governors	104
F3 (b) Skills gap for governing body	109
Section G: Budget planning and affordability	113
G3 Financial resilience to reductions in income	121
Section H: Premises	123
Annexes	124

Completing and submitting your application

Before completing your application, please ensure that you have read both the relevant 'How to Apply' guidance and the assessment criteria booklet carefully. Please also ensure that you can provide all the information and documentation required.

The free school application is made up of nine sections

- **Section A:** Applicant details and declaration
- **Section B:** Outline of the school
- **Section C:** Education vision
- **Section D:** Education plan
- **Section E:** Evidence of need
- **Section F:** Capacity and capability
- **Section G:** Budget planning and affordability
- **Section H:** Premises
- **Section I:** Due diligence and other checks

In **Sections A and B** we are asking you to tell us about your group and provide an outline of the school. This requires the completion of the relevant sections of the Excel application form.

In **Sections C to F** we are asking for more detailed information about the school you want to establish and the supporting rationale. This requires the completion of the relevant sections of the Word application form.

In **Section G** we are asking specifically about costs, financial viability and financial resilience. This requires the completion of the relevant sections of the Excel budget template and Word application form.

In **Section H** we are asking for information about premises, including information about suitable site(s) you have identified. This requires the completion of the relevant section of the Excel application form.

Section I is about your suitability to set up and then run a free school. There is a separate (downloadable) Word form for this.

Failure to submit all the information required may mean that we are unable to consider your application.

Sections A to H, i.e. the completed Word AND Excel templates and the budget plans, need to be submitted by email to the Department for Education (by the application deadline) to: special.fsapplications@education.gsi.gov.uk. Your email must be no more than 9MB in size.

The Word template should be: between 50 and 100 pages long; formatted for printing on A4 paper; completed in Arial 12 point font; and include page numbers. Annexes are excluded from the page limit and should be restricted to CVs for key individuals. Please do not include photographs, images and logos in your application.

The contents of the budget Excel template and Excel application form are excluded from the page limit.

Please include the name of your school in the file name for all Word and Excel templates.

You also need to submit two hard copies (of **sections A-H** and the budget plans) by a guaranteed method such as 'Recorded Signed For' post to: Free Schools Applications Team, Department for Education, 3rd Floor, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT

It is essential that the hard copies are identical to the version you email.

Section I, i.e. the **Personal Information form**, is required for each member, director and principal designate that has not submitted forms within the past 365 days, together with a list of those members, directors and principals designate who have submitted Section I forms within the past 365 days. These need to be submitted as hard copies with a copy of Section A (from the Excel template) by a guaranteed method such as 'Recorded Signed For' post to: Due Diligence Team, Department for Education, 4th Floor, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT.

Data Protection

Personal data is collected on the Word and Excel templates in order to consider an application to set up a free school and will not be used for other purposes. For the purposes of the Data Protection Act, the Department for Education is the data controller for this personal information and for ensuring that it is processed in accordance with the terms of the Act. The department will hold all personal information you supply securely and will only make it available to those who need to see it as part of the free school application process. All personal information supplied in these forms will only be retained for as long as it is needed for this process.

Application checklist

Name of task	Yes	No
1. Have you completed the pre-application registration form ?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Have you established a company limited by guarantee?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Have you provided information on all of the following areas:		
Section A: Applicant details	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Section B: Outline of the school	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Section C: Education vision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Section D: Education plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Section E: Evidence of need	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Section F: Capacity and capability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Section G: Budget planning and affordability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Section H: Premises	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Is the information in A4 format using Arial 12 point font, includes page numbers and is 50 to 100 pages (excluding annexes) in total?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Have you fully completed the budget plans?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Independent schools only*: have you provided a copy of the last two years' audited financial statements or equivalent?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Independent schools only*: have you provided a link to your school's most recent inspection report and completed a self-assessment form describing how your school would perform against the Ofsted Section 5 criteria	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Reapplications only. If you are reapplying after being unsuccessful in a previous round, have you changed your application in response to the written feedback you received?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<p>9. Have you sent an email (of no more than 9 MB in size**) with all relevant information relating to Sections A to H of your application to: special.fsapplications@education.gsi.gov.uk ? (See guidance for dates and deadlines).</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>10. Have you sent 2 hard copies of the application by 'Recorded Signed For' post to: Free Schools Applications Team, Department for Education, 3rd Floor, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT? (See guidance for dates and deadlines).</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Independent schools include existing alternative provision and special school institutions that are privately run*

*** If your application is larger than 9MB please split the documents and send two emails*

Section I of your application		
<p>11. Have you sent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a copy of Section A (tab 1 of the Excel template); and ▪ copies of the Section I Personal Information form for each member, director and principal designate that has not submitted one of these forms within the past 365 days; and ▪ a list of those members, directors and principals designate who have submitted Section I forms within the past 365 days <p>by a guaranteed method such as 'Recorded Signed For' post to: Due Diligence Team, Department for Education, 4th Floor, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT?</p> <p>(See guidance for dates and deadlines)</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Declaration

****This must be signed by a company member on behalf of the company / trust****

I confirm that the information provided in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I further confirm that if the application is successful the company will operate a free school in accordance with:

- the requirements outlined in the 'How to apply' guidance;
- the funding agreement with the Secretary of State;
- all relevant obligations and requirements that apply to open academies (e.g. safeguarding, welfare and bullying) – this includes statutory requirements (those that are enshrined in legislation) and non-statutory requirements (those contained in DfE guidance); and
- for non-statemented students, the School Admissions Code, the School Admissions Appeals Code and the admissions law as it applies to maintained schools. Any child where the school is named in the child's statement must be admitted. 16-19 applicants do not need to follow these codes but must have admissions arrangements and criteria which are fair, objective and transparent.

I have fully disclosed all financial liabilities and the full extent of each/any debt for which the company, trust or existing school is liable.

I confirm that I am not and have never been barred from Regulated Activity within the meaning given by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. I further declare that all current Members and Directors of the Company have confirmed to me that they are not and have never been so barred, and that if it comes to my attention whilst I am a Member or Director of the Company that I or any other Member or Director are or have been so barred I will notify the Department for Education. I and all other Members and Directors of the Company understand that the Company's free school application may be rejected if a Member or Director of the Company is found to have been barred from Regulated Activity.

I acknowledge that this application may be rejected should any information be deliberately withheld or misrepresented that is later found to be material in considering the application.

Signed: [REDACTED]

Position: Chair of company (please delete as appropriate)

Print name: [REDACTED]

Date: 09/10/2014

NB: This declaration only needs to be signed in the two hard copy versions of your application. Please use black ink.

Please tick to confirm that you have included
all the items in the checklist.



Section A: Applicant details

Please complete the Excel application form.

Section B: Outline of the school

Please complete the Excel application form.



SECTION A: APPLICANT DETAILS

1. Please complete the form as provided. **DO NOT CREATE NEW TABS OR ALTER THIS FORM IN ANY WAY.**
2. All applicants should complete section A, even if they have previously applied for a free school.
3. If you are submitting multiple applications it is only necessary to fill in section A once.
4. The text boxes can be made bigger by increasing the row height.
5. To insert a new line in a text box, press alt + enter.
6. Please answer all questions. If questions are not applicable, please put 'NA' in the box.

[Jump to about the company](#)
[Jump to further details about the group](#)
[Jump to links to other organisations](#)

Basic information

Pre-registration reference number	83108
Name of proposed school:	Bristol Autism Free School
Is this a route one application or a route two application?	Route 2
Name of lead applicant: <small>Note that all lead applicants must submit Section I forms to the Department. Please see pg 26 in the How to Apply Guide for details.</small>	<Redacted>
Address of lead applicant:	Merchants' Academy, Gatehouse Avenue, Withywood, Bristol, BS13 9AJ
Email address of lead applicant:	<Redacted>
Telephone number of lead applicant:	<Redacted>
How you would describe your group?	A chain of academies or free schools
If 'Something else' please describe your group:	
Have you applied before for this school, whether under the current name or something else?	Yes
If 'Yes' and the name of the school was different, please say what the original name was:	N/A
If 'Yes', when did you last apply? N.B. The options are dates of submission of applications, not the announcement of results.	Wave 6 Jan 2014

About the company

Have you established your trust in accordance with the DfE model articles of association?	Yes
Company name:	Merchants' Academy Withywood
Company address:	Gatehouse Avenue, Withywood, Bristol, BS13 9AJ
Company registration number:	5598063
Date when company was incorporated:	20/10/2005
Please confirm the total number of company members (must be a minimum of 3):	3
Please give the names of all company members:	<Redacted>
	<Redacted>
	<Redacted>

Please list all company directors, providing their name and the position they will hold once the school is open:	<Redacted>

Please provide the name of the proposed chair of the governing body, if known:	<Redacted>
--	------------

If any members of your group are also involved in other applications to open a studio school, studio school or free school in this application round, please give the names of the other applications:	
--	--

Further details about the group

Are any members of your group related in any way, including by marriage, to any other? NB this includes company members or directors, members of the project group, etc.	No
--	----

Are you an approved academy sponsor?	Yes
--------------------------------------	-----

How many existing free schools or Academies are run by your group?	1
--	---

If you already run one or more free school or academy or are part of some other group of schools, please state the name of your chain/group. This may be the same as the name of your company:	Merchants' Academy
--	--------------------

If you are an existing single school or provider seeking to establish a new school or an independent school looking to convert please provide your six digit ref number	URN 135597
---	------------

If you are an existing single school or provider seeking to establish a new school or an independent school looking to convert, please provide the rating of your most recent inspection	Good
--	------

If you are an existing single school or provider seeking to establish a new school or an independent school looking to convert, please provide a link to your most recent inspection report	http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/135597
---	---

If you are an existing single school or provider seeking to establish a new school or an independent school looking to convert, please provide a link to your performance data for the last 3 years:	http://dashboard.ofsted.gov.uk/dash.php?urn=135597
--	---

How many free schools are you seeking to open in this application round?	1
--	---

Links to other organisations

<p>Through its members, directors or otherwise, does the company limited by guarantee have any formal or informal links (e.g. financial, philosophical or ideological) with any other organisations within the UK or overseas? These may include: other free school groups; existing free schools or academies; independent schools; other institutions; charitable bodies; and/or commercial or non-commercial organisations.</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>If Yes, please provide the following information about each organisation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their full name; • their Companies House and/or Charity Commission number, and if appropriate the nature of the link; and • the role that it is envisaged they will play in relation to the free school. 	<p>Sponsored by the Society of Merchant Venturers (Charity Ref 264302) and the University of Bristol (Company Ref RC000648). It is envisaged that these two sponsors of the Academy will continue to support the Academy Trust through their appointed roles of governors.</p>
<p>Please specify any religious organisations or institutions connected to your group (local, national and international). This would include attendance at mosques, churches, gurdwaras, temples and other places of worship. In particular, please describe in specific terms the religious affiliations of your group, including where appropriate any denomination or particular school of thought that influences your group (e.g. Pentecostalism, Deobandism, Reform Judaism, etc.).</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Have you received help and support from the New Schools Network (NSN)?</p>	<p>NSN Development Programme</p>
<p>In addition to any support/advice from the New Schools Network, did you put together this application with support from another company or organisation?</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>If Yes, please list the name(s) of the organisation(s) and describe clearly the role they played in developing your application. Please also describe the role (if any) you envisage for them in setting up and/or running the free school if your application is successful:</p>	



SECTION B: OUTLINE OF THE SCHOOL

1. Please complete the form as provided. **DO NOT CREATE NEW TABS OR ALTER THIS FORM IN ANY WAY.**
2. The text boxes can be made bigger by increasing the row height.
3. To insert a new line in a text box, press alt + enter.
4. Please answer all questions. If questions are not applicable, please put 'NA' in the box.

[Jump to use of freedoms](#)

In which local authority is your preferred location?	Bristol, City of
Proposed opening year:	2016
Age Range:	4-16
If 'other' please specify	
Will your school be co-educational or single sex?	Co-educational
Is your school a hybrid type?	Not a hybrid
Do you intend your proposed school to have a faith ethos?	No
If 'Yes', please say which faith:	Please select
If you answered 'Other' to the question above or you would like to specify a particular denomination (e.g. Church of England), please specify:	
Will the school accept non stated pupils?	No
Proposed maximum capacity of proposed special free school for stated pupils - please use numbers only:	84
Proposed maximum capacity of proposed special free school for non-stated pupils - please use numbers only:	0
Please specify the maximum full time equivalent (FTE) for pupils over the full academic year. For instance a pupil attending two full days a week throughout the academic year is 0.4 FTE - please use numbers only:	84
Please specify the maximum full time equivalent (FTE) for pupils in the first academic year - please use numbers only:	0
Date proposed school will reach expected capacity in all year groups:	2018
Places committed by Local Authority (FTE)	84
Top up funding committed by Local Authority (funding per FTE place)	Range of £10,000 to £15,000
Primary intake of pupils	Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
Please select other needs that the school will cater for. Please select the most important intakes first as you will be asked to give financial information about these intakes in section G3. If you have more than four different intakes please put financial information in the 'other income' section.	Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
	Please select
If 'Other', please give further detail:	
Will your proposed school include residential provision?	No

If 'Yes', please give further detail:	
---------------------------------------	--

Are you planning to contract the management of your school to another organisation?	No
---	----

Have you already identified a principal?	No
--	----

If 'Yes', please give further detail about the proposed appointment including the process by which you identified the person. Please include personal information in section F of the MS Word application form.	
---	--

If yes please say when you propose the principal would start:	
---	--

Please say how many people will sit on your governing body:	6-10
---	------

Use of freedoms

Will you operate a non-standard school day?	No
---	----

Will you operate a non-standard school year?	No
--	----

Will you adopt the national curriculum?	No
---	----

Will you adopt non-standard terms and conditions for teachers?	Yes
--	-----

Please list any other freedoms you intend to use:	
---	--

Section C: Education vision

Section C1

Brief Overview

The Society of Merchant Venturers and The University of Bristol intend to establish an 84 place Special Free School. There will be 49 places for primary age students and 35 places for secondary. This will provide seven classes for YR to Y6 at primary and five classes for Y7 to Y11 at secondary. There will be established a multi academy trust to operate the existing Merchants' Academy and to establish high quality provision for students with statements/EHCs for Autistic Spectrum Conditions (ASC) from ages 4 to 16 through the Free School. The fully differentiated provision will cater for the full spectrum of need from high functioning students to students with global development delay. The Free School will cover the full continuum of need and, therefore, the full continuum of provision from highly personalised curriculum to access to mainstream with the partner Academy. There will be choice and variety so students can flourish and make significant progress.

We are creating the Free School as there is a lack of high quality specialist provision for students with autism in Bristol. There is a waiting list for places in the existing Autism Resource Base. In addition we are close to four further LAs – Bath & N.E. Somerset (B&NES), Somerset, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire. Our evidence indicates a shortfall in provision for these LAs too.

The MAT will be set up to oversee the Free School. The existing academy, Merchants' Academy together with any further schools that join or are set up, will form part of the Trust. The Merchants' Academy is a 3 to 19 mainstream provision located in the socio-economically deprived area of South Bristol. We will be building on present provision and experience as the Academy operates a very successful 28 place Autistic Resource Base (ARB) for Bristol LA for students aged 4 to 11. The existing ARB will close and the proposed Free School will expand primary provision by 21 places and provide 35 additional places for secondary. The FSM for the ARB is 33% compared to 41% for the Academy. Students from the locality can enter with very low aspirations. We have decided to apply for a Free School rather than expand our current provision so that we can take advantage of the freedoms this will bring.

Vision

We will raise attainment and aspirations for our students with ASC and their parents. Our vision is to ensure that all our students achieve more than they ever thought possible. Our vision will be achieved when all students leave us as:

- **Educational Vision 1 (EV1) Successful learners** with good qualifications and motivated to enhance their knowledge and skills to reach their full potential. Students with ASC can achieve more than they ever thought possible and we will provide the curriculum, resources, environment, strategies and expertise to do this.
- **Educational Vision 2 (EV2) Self-confident individuals** who can make informed decisions and communicate them based on their values and beliefs. Students with ASC can manage their difficulties with support and be able to develop their individual talents and abilities with confidence and enjoyment.
- **Educational Vision 3 (EV3) Responsible citizens** who respect others and take part responsibly in political, economic, social and cultural life. Students with ASC can take an

active role in society at all levels and we will offer them the work placement opportunities, career guidance and work skills to do so.

- **Educational Vision 4 (EV4) Effective contributors** with an energetic, can-do attitude who can lead or work in a team, meeting the challenges of the 21st Century. Students with ASC can contribute to their community and will provide them with the communication skills, social skills and career guidance to do so

The Free School will provide an outstanding, personalised and challenging education. Students will come from a variety of backgrounds but all will aspire to and attain the highest levels, academically and socially.

Rationale

Student achievement, attainment and aspiration

We plan to build on existing capability and over 20 years' experience in the existing provision to establish the new Free School and close the ARB. Merchants' Academy currently runs a 28 place primary Autism Resource Base for Bristol LA. The Free School will provide 49 primary places (21 additional) and create 35 secondary places. Thus providing a stress-free transition as students progress through their school life to ensure they make the maximum academic and social achievement. Students will be able to maintain the familiarity and continuity of environment rather than having their education interrupted by often stressful transitions into other settings. It will also allow students to maintain friendship groups and contact with known staff. Students will flourish and grow in our Free School. Their achievements, attainment and aspirations will all rise significantly and beyond previous or comparable rates of progress because we will provide outstanding teaching, support and guidance alongside a precisely tailored, personalised and challenging curriculum. This can be evidenced in our existing provision "students with complex learning needs who attend the Autism Resource Base often join the school with very low attainment levels. The strong support and nurturing they receive enable them to make good progress, not just academically but also in other personal and social development. They are helped to overcome the barriers to learning and achieve well" Ofsted 2014.

Increasing Parental Choice

Parents in the Bristol area have told us that they do not have sufficient choice in the education of their children with ASC as the automatic provision fills quickly and parents need to fight for other provision (see section E). The opportunities and achievements for these young people are not being well met. Therefore, the Free School will extend parents' choice and provide high quality provision. The Free School will allow parents greater security and choice in securing places for their children, and provide additional places for those students who receive late diagnosis and are struggling to access mainstream secondary provisions. It will give parents the choice of a high quality provision that will ensure their children make maximum progress. It will also allow parents to maintain links with an organisation in which they have already established trust and confidence.

The school will work in partnership with parents in recognition that parents have crucial information about their own child's needs and experience of strategies which may support them. We aim to provide consistency of management between home and school and will communicate daily with parents to ensure that this is facilitated.

Currently parents are given little choice if their child requires a specialist ASC secondary provision. 75% of students from the existing ARB transfer to either Brislington Enterprise College (BEC). BEC was rated 'Inadequate' by Ofsted in 2013 and 'Requires Improvement' in 2014. Parents do not have confidence in the quality of provision. If parents do not want or gain a place at BEC they then have to fight to get the right provision for their child.

For parents to have a real choice of appropriate schooling is crucial. Our Free School would be the only provision within Bristol which allows continuity of education from 4 to 16. Parents have great confidence in the primary ARB and want certainty and continuity of education for their child. Parents want the provision to continue from the primary. Parents' meetings are dominated by questions related to their concerns regarding transfer to secondary.

The provision accessed by 55% of students is part of a secondary school BEC which was rated by Ofsted as 'Inadequate' and is now 'in need of improvement'.

“Disabled students and those with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers. Although some of the additional support they receive is now effective, there has not been enough time for this to have its full impact. Like their peers, their progress in lessons over time has been slowed by variations in the quality of teaching.” (Ofsted report BEC January 2013). Previously in the report it states

“The proportion of students making expected progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11 is too low.” Therefore, similar progress for SEN to their peers is low.

Lack of places

In December 2013 Bristol LA issued “Bristol LA Organisation Strategy 2012-2017” (BLOS). The data in this document clearly outlines the significant demand for places for children with ASC and particularly places in South Bristol. The following are extracts from that document.

“A national increase of children with a medical diagnosis of ASD together with an increasing complexity of student needs, as medical advancements impact upon survival rates at birth and beyond, is well documented. This is equally true of Bristol which has the additional impacting factors of a specialist children’s hospital with the resulting strong palliative care arrangements for children with terminal illnesses...Bristol is a City which continues to grow and it is predicted that this will continue until 2020. This growth rate is higher than all other core cities and this is a further growth factor to consider when planning the continuum of specialist provision...”

“SEN Forecasts by need” (BLOS)

	ACTUAL					PROJECTION				
SEN Type	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
ASD	314	342	400	435	482	523	566	609	652	695

The ‘Bristol LA Organisation Strategy’ states that “Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) has increased by 35% between 2008 and 2012 and is projected to continue to increase up to 2017... Should the developments not take place these students are likely to be placed out of authority at a cost in the region of £4m on an annual basis.”

The ‘Bristol LA Organisation Strategy’ states the following for South Bristol. “Despite provision being available for ASD the projections indicate that significant additional provision will be required to meet the 64 place shortfall by 2017. There is also insufficient BESD provision to meet the projected demand of 28 places by 2017.” The following chart from the document shows this shortfall.

“SEN SOUTH”

	ACTUAL					PROJECTION					SHORTFALL SOUTH		
SEN Type	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Actual Special School 2012	Projected Specialist Provision 2017	Shortfall
ASD	114	124	146	158	175	190	206	222	237	253	5	69	-64

If out of county placements are added then the lack of provision is exacerbated.

“SEN PLACEMENTS OUTSIDE BRISTOL (“OUT OF AUTHORITY”)

	ACTUAL					PROJECTION					
SEN Type	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Change 2012-2017
ASD	6	6	7	8	9	9	10	11	12	13	4

The Academy ARB has a waiting list for admissions and frequently children are forced to attend expensive out of county provision because of the shortage of places locally that caters to their need.

The shortfall for places for children with autism for 2017 is 208 across Bristol. “The Council’s Organisation Strategy, which was approved by Cabinet on 31st October 2013, identifies a shortfall of 64 places for the whole of South Bristol”. Further information is in Section E.

Vision and key features of our Special Free School

The Free School will be part of the vision for the Society of Merchant Venturers (SMV) and University of Bristol as sponsors in actively promoting academic excellence and university engagement in Bristol. We will provide a centre of expertise and excellence catering for 84 students aged 4-16 with a diagnosis of ASC and a statement of SEN. Our vision is that every child will achieve more than they ever thought possible through provision of the highest quality of education. We are clear on the key achievements our students will leave with, as articulated through the four EVs (see earlier).

We plan to take students referred to us by Local Authorities- Bristol primarily, but also including neighbouring LAs such as South Gloucestershire, B&NES (Bath and North East Somerset) and North Somerset as need dictates.

Students who join at 4 years of age can continue their education up to 16. Other students will be able to enter the school at any age (4-16), according to need identified by Local Authorities and availability of places in the school. At 16 students able to succeed in Merchants’ Academy Sixth Form will transfer to this provision. Other students, using the exemplary careers provision, will transfer successfully to FE or employment with skills or training. The Academy has a good past record of transfer to the local ‘Skills Academy’.

The Free School will be part of the MAT, overseen by an Executive Principal alongside the Merchants’ All Age Academy. The special school will have access to the shared services of the MAT (such as finance, HR, IT, premises) which will provide a secure foundation for rapid establishment and growth.

The Free School will make use of academy freedoms to the full. We will have our own teachers’

terms and conditions, for example ensuring a working day from 8:20 to 17:00 and that all staff run an after school co-curricular activity. We will employ specialist staff and have the freedom to determine our pay policy and rates and performance management arrangements. We will create a curriculum according to individual needs as we will not have to follow the National Curriculum. We will also create an entitlement curriculum of extra activities to stretch and challenge the social, moral, spiritual and cultural lives of our young people. This is why we want to become a free school and not just extend provision.

The provision of high quality governors by the Sponsors will ensure outstanding governance. Governance of Merchants' Academy was graded outstanding by Ofsted. The proposal is to co-locate or locate primary and secondary provision as near to the relevant phase. This will allow access to the joint resources, facilities and curriculum as appropriate. For example, students who are working at or near national average could study subjects alongside mainstream students supported by an LSA (See section D).

The Curriculum

The great benefit of a free School is that we can adapt the National Curriculum to provide a highly personalised curriculum for the students. The school will provide a modified and adapted curriculum which has a clear focus on developing skills to enable students to be as independent as possible and which address the core areas of difficulty for students with ASC so that they will make optimum progress in all aspects of development and attain the highest possible academic standards. We will, therefore, supplement the national curriculum with a heavy emphasis on personal and social education and developing communication skills. Life skills teaching for older students will be vital to this, as well as aiming to equip all students with secure functional skills particularly literacy and numeracy.

The school will have a positive behaviour ethos, and will view all behaviour as means of communication. Staff will be trained specifically in ASC and the environment will be adapted to meet the needs of ASC students. Class sizes will be small (up to 7 students per class) and each class will have a minimum of two staff members, one of whom will be a qualified teacher with expertise in ASC.

Teaching and Learning

We will expect teaching and learning to be outstanding with appropriate monitoring, accountability and CPD to ensure it delivers. The school will use a variety of established approaches which are proven to be successful for students with ASC, including the TEACCH system, PECS, Makaton and sensory integration. The school will use Augmentative and Alternative Communication Systems for students as appropriate. The school will also be open to new research in the field of ASC that is seen to be successful for individual students as appropriate, in recognition that all students are individuals and may benefit from a range of approaches. (Our sponsors, the University of Bristol, will enable us to be at the forefront of new research in the field of ASC but we will also engage with Bangor and Birmingham Universities who are known for their expertise in ASC).

We will work in partnership with other agencies as appropriate in order to support students learning, particularly speech and language therapists, occupational therapists and educational psychologists. Safeguarding will be in line with the MAT, and the Free School will work in collaboration with social services in order to protect and support students. Through the curriculum and co-curricular activities there will be a breadth and depth of experiences which will ensure academic and social progress. Children and their parents will value the extent of support and challenge which delivers significant progress across all measures and creates confident young people who successfully transfer to the next phase of life to Higher or Further Education or a job

with training. Further detail will be found in section D.

Proposed Outcomes

Our standards and expectations will be high and progress above national averages. We will be aspirational for our student demographic. The cohort will all have statements of SEN for ASC but this will still be a mixed ability entry. Some students should be aiming for national age-related expectations and higher whilst others will be operating at P levels. The Academy is rigorous in its benchmarking and tracking and this rigour will be transferred to the Bristol Autism Free School (BAFS). Baseline data will be collated on entry and targets established for each child. Two levels of progress per key stage will be the floor target. (See Section D for full details)

Conclusion

This Free School is needed in this educational landscape because of the following.

- The Free School will respond to parental demand and LA need for places
- We will offer higher standards than local schools. We will raise the academic standards for the students, raise aspirations and significantly improve the life chances of these young people. 55% of students transfer to 'requires improvement' schools.
- Other students with ASC are accessing a range of specialist schools some without an ASC specialism.
- This Free School will add to the choice locally by offering a genuine alternative to existing provision through the features, ethos, opportunities and resources it will provide.
- There is no cross phase provision for ASD anywhere in the Bristol LA.
- The use of Academy features particularly relating to curriculum, staff contracts and length of day will ensure a high quality provision.

Our vision for BAFS is deliverable because of the following.

- We have a strong track record of creating a successful Academy
- The sponsorship provided by the Society of Merchant Venturers and the University of Bristol will ensure high quality leadership and governance
- The existing ARB is staffed by teachers and leaders with successful experience and appropriate qualifications in the education of students with ASC

Response to the DfE feedback from the application January 2014

The DfE feedback letter gave the following reasons for the failure of our application.

"Your application was weaker than others in certain areas, including:

1. How you would handle the transition from the current autism resource base to the free school. In particular, the panel did not feel you articulated in sufficient detail how you would deliver the secondary element of the proposed curriculum. For example, the panel felt that the small number of secondary teachers in the free school would not be able to deliver the secondary curriculum and this would lead to an overreliance on the mainstream academy.
2. The panel also felt there were issues with the staff from the current primary unit who are expecting to transfer to the free school but it is not clear if they are of a high enough quality based on the previous performance of the primary school.
3. The panel had concerns around the responses to questions on measuring and tracking student performance. We did not feel that you were able to sufficiently describe an assessment and tracking system that will allow student performance to be monitored. This

was particularly so for those students who would access the mainstream curriculum. It was not clear what systems would be put in place to track their progress within the mainstream academy to ensure that this learning aligned with their learning in the special school.

4. The panel also felt that the two letters provided by Bristol City Council were ambiguous and did not demonstrate sufficient commitment to commission places equal to the school's proposed capacity in the first and second year of operation.
5. We also recognise the trust still has challenges in the primary phase of Merchants' Academy and we were concerned about your capacity to take on a free school while that was the case."

Our response

1 and 3 Secondary curriculum and tracking progress

We have employed an expert, since Easter, on ASD (See Section F) to work with the existing Autism Resource Base and, if we had been successful support the setting up of the Free School. He has worked with us on both the secondary curriculum and an effective assessment strategy, measuring and tracking system to monitor student progress. Visits have taken place to successful ASD schools to inform the practice for the Free School.

Changes have been made to the existing systems for ensuring effective assessment, tracking and monitoring to ensure the right interventions are swiftly put in place to maximise progress. Section D has been completely re-written to cover these points and changes.

In May 2014 the Academy had its Ofsted inspection. The report says:

- *The academy makes detailed and accurate analyses of its performance at every level from Early Years Foundation Stage through to sixth form. Students are set challenging targets and leaders make very good use of this information in order to identify where extra help and support is needed to improve the progress of particular students.*
- *The curriculum is well matched to the abilities and interests of the students. Extensive use is made of partnerships with other schools to enhance the activities on offer, and give students extra support and guidance to improve their learning experiences and achievement.*

2 Quality of staffing to transfer

In the Ofsted report it states the following:

- *Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make good progress and expectations are high to ensure they progress at the same rate as other students. They receive targeted support, excellent care and encouragement to help them succeed.*
- *Students with complex learning needs who attend the Autism Resource Base often join the school with very low attainment levels. The strong support and nurturing they receive enable them to make good progress, not just academically, but also in their personal and social development. They are helped to overcome the barriers to their learning and achieve well.*
- *The specialist teachers and support staff in the Autism Resource Base provide well-chosen additional support including small-group work and one-to-one teaching. This develops students' communication skills, social skills and helps them build their self-esteem, confidence and ability to value others.*

There is one member of staff [REDACTED] and has been replaced by [REDACTED]. Staffing will be explicitly covered in the revised Section D

4 Bristol LA support

We contacted Bristol LA on receipt of the feedback from DfE and received confirmation of their continued support. They have provided a revised letter which is not ambiguous which is included in Section E.

5 Capacity to deliver

The issues with primary were raised after a very brief DfE visit on 2nd May 2014 not related to the Free School application. The priorities identified were mainly regarding leadership, staffing and schemes of work to accelerate progress.

The interim head (January 2014 to July 2014) made significant progress and working with the new Assistant Head brought about major improvements which were acknowledged by the DfE. The substantive head arrived in September and is of very high quality and extensive experience of delivering high standards. We have also added capacity by creating an additional Assistant Head's post to focus on raising standards at KS2. We have appointed an experienced new Assistant Head who has led KS2 for many years very successfully in a high attaining primary. We are fully staffed for September with high performing staff. We have also purchased and have training planned for the schemes recommended by DfE (Read, Write Inc, Maths Mastery etc) In addition the Ofsted Inspection (the week following the DfE visit with four Inspectors for two days) says "This is a good school" and rates the Academy as 'good' for all sections of the report. It was clear that many elements of the Academy were excellent. The report says the following.

- *The Principal's sharp focus on improvement is driven by a passionate belief that all students, irrespective of their circumstances, are entitled to the best education possible. This is a school where leaders are striving to create an all-age learning community where all have an equal chance to succeed.*
- *The drive for excellence shown by leaders and managers has strongly improved teaching and accelerated students' achievement.*
- *The very experienced governing body is exceptionally effective. Governors provide a high level of support and challenge.*
- *Leaders have been quick to implement the changes needed to address previous weaknesses in the quality of leadership and teaching, especially in Key Stage 1 and 2. Changes in staffing, combined with a clear direction for the development of teaching and learning, are already beginning to have a positive impact and students' progress is improving.*
- *Leaders' rigorous analysis of students' progress provides all teachers and governors with a clear understanding of the academy's performance. The academy's track record, reflected in the rising trend in achievement and effective teaching, demonstrates its capacity for continued improvement.*

Therefore, the capacity at primary to tackle the challenges is secure and in addition there is a Head of Secondary to continue the drive for standards at secondary and an excellent Head of Primary to transform standards. The security of leadership at primary and secondary will allow the delivery of the Free School to continue to be led by the Executive Principal who does not have day to day responsibility for either school.

Section D: Education plan – part 1

In the table below, please provide the proposed numbers in each year group at the point of opening and an explanation of how student numbers will build up over time. Please add additional rows/columns if appropriate. We would expect a special free school to reach full capacity by the fourth year of its operation.

If you are an existing independent school wishing to become a free school, please use the first column to show how many students you currently have. If you are proposing more than one school you will need to complete a separate table for each.

If you are proposing to open later than 2016, please leave the relevant earlier columns blank.

	Current number of students (if applicable)	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Reception		5	6	7	7			
Year 1	1	5	6	7	7			
Year 2	6	5	6	7	7			
Year 3	4	5	6	7	7			
Year 4	6	5	6	7	7			
Year 5	5	5	6	7	7			
Year 6	6	5	6	7	7			
Year 7	-	7	7	7	7			
Year 8	-	7	7	7	7			
Year 9	-	-	7	7	7			
Year 10	-	-	7	7	7			
Year 11	-	-	-	7	7			
Year 12	-	-	-	-	-			
Year 13	-	-	-	-	-			
Totals	28	49	70	84	84			

Section D: Education plan – part 2

Please find information about each subject and enrichment activities in the relevant sections in D1.

D1: The Curriculum Plan

“Being Autistic ... those who from birth/early childhood have tremendous difficulties in communicating, in social interactions, and they often have very specific interests. All of these are so changeable and so varied ... throughout the course of their development that the picture of Autism is enormously varied and we cannot consider it a condition so much as a spectrum.”

Professor Uta Frith on BBC Radio 4's The Forum, Saturday 30/08/14

Introduction

The existing ARB is highly rated by parents and Ofsted. Working with an [REDACTED] we have devised and implemented a School Improvement Plan that provides the context for delivery of outstanding level of student attainment in all aspects of the Education Vision. In 2014 the ARB, as part of Merchants' Academy, was graded 'good' by Ofsted. Section E will indicate the strong parental support.

A curriculum has been designed that builds and improves upon the present primary provision. This curriculum will be successfully implemented, monitored, and adapted. Many changes have indeed already taken place such that it is not so much a case of what BAFS will offer but what is already offered by the primary facility. We believe this provides the most efficacious way to build upon this primary offering with secondary too, and thus form, unique in Bristol Authority, a complete educational package for more Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) students from ages 4 to 16.

Free School status would provide us with an opportunity to develop and extend our capacity, expertise, and reputation. Our current curriculum, student target-setting, assessment and data tracking processes, governance and staffing provision and structure, and existing student need have been specifically designed to meet the needs of our current cohort. We therefore will show that this is a bid in which the requisite professionalism and care are present.

First of all we'll account for our curriculum plan by providing an outline of the principles underpinning it. From here we'll explore the curriculum rationale by assessing student needs in principal and practice. We've assessed both our current cohort (including attainment) and expected intake in order to do so. Students are at the heart of BAFS and meeting their needs is why we wish to exist. We then draw out key aspects of the curriculum followed by elements common to both primary and secondary provision. The latter includes the function of the Independent Education Plan, range of Pedagogic Styles and Methodology, Therapy Services, Learning Environment, and Classroom Management. This naturally progresses into details of the specific provisions themselves. We conclude D1 with our programme for successful student transitions, from entry into BAFS through to departure and successful post-graduate life.

Curriculum Principles

At the heart of the curriculum is the view that any child with ASC has the right and ability to develop into adults capable of flourishing as part of wider society (see EV1-4). The resulting ambitious curriculum will see BAFS being a centre of excellence always striving for outstanding levels of student attainment and teaching practice (see D2 and D3 respectively). This high level strategy is one to be achieved over the whole age range of provision and be rooted in an on-going assessment process (D2). This process will effectively identify and support each child's abilities

and learning needs, setting appropriate goals that allow them to fulfil their social and educational potential (D4 for fulfilment of Pre-Requisites for Learning). Each student at primary and secondary will have the option to access opportunities and learning provision in our partner Academy.

We have chosen to base the curriculum on an adapted National Curriculum in order to allow students the full range of opportunities available through it. This ensures the students have access to and can attain formal qualifications and career pathways in line with the majority of their peers. The National Curriculum is also being used in our partner Academy and, therefore, inclusion opportunities will be maximised. For many children the curriculum will need to concentrate on Communication, English, Maths, Science, ICT and PSHE&C. All compulsory National Curriculum subjects will be taught, alongside a Modern Foreign Language (MFL), and PSHE&C.

Throughout our curriculum plan we have 'tracked backwards'. Our founding rationale is always optimum attainment at KS4. In particular we wish our students to leave us with the appropriate skills that enable their successful transition to adulthood. What will our students need in order to become responsible citizens? What will they need in order to become effective contributors? We have therefore prioritised methodologies and a curriculum that provide a clear, flexible, developmental and linear pathway to those core principles in adulthood. This 'tracked backwards' approach means that from Early Years to the end of Key Stage 4 our compulsory curriculum emphasises functional skills, social skills, and independence (EV 1-4).

Curriculum Rationale

The Curriculum Rationale links the EV with an understanding of student needs both in principle and practice. The latter is extrapolated from current student constituency, levels of attainment, and BAFS's expected student profile.

Reminder of Educational Vision for BAFS's Students (see Section C)

1. They will be successful learners (EV1)
2. They will be self-confident individuals (EV2)
3. They will be responsible citizens (EV3)
4. That they will be effective contributors (EV4)

Student Needs in Principle

BAFS's proposed curriculum reflects the particular needs of those with ASC and Statements of Special Educational Needs (SEN). It will cater for students from right across the spectrum, as the ARB currently does, though with greater capacity at primary and in addition a whole secondary placement. We consider provision of a complete educational context, from ages 4 to 16, allows the most effective route through which students can fulfil their individual educational and social potential.

Children with ASC have learning needs characterised by the triad of impairments listed below. This will be typical of all our present and expected intake.

1. Difficulties in communication – both receptive and expressive
2. Difficulties in forming effective social relationships
3. Impairment of imagination and flexibility of thought

In addition students with ASC attending BAFS may also have sensory difficulties, suffer from extreme anxiety and have low self-esteem. Coping with daily life can be extremely arduous. BAFS will be dedicated to mitigating such suffering and this provides a fundamental reason why we wish to offer primary *and* secondary provision. We believe that doing so enables students to more

successfully cope with the physical and emotional changes that adolescence in particular triggers, thereby increasing the students' learning receptivity, attainment and skill base.

Our students will often experience the world as randomly organised and full of disconnected objects. Such a perception inevitably perplexes and/or overwhelms them. BAFS's environment and learning activities will therefore be designed to aid our students' understanding of the world as an organised, predictable, and meaningful place in which they can succeed and grow. Indeed it is all too easy to see ASC as a 'Disorder', that is, it is seen as divergent from the norm, a kind of fault to be corrected, or, and more likely, a fault that cannot. Unfortunately those with ASC can hold such unhelpful views themselves. This is not our belief. BAFS will consider students to be capable of far more than they, or others, thought possible. A central strategy in this is rejoicing and rewarding positive behaviour, educational success, and social/communication fluency. BAFS will believe ambition, achievement, meaningful communication leading to harmony and strong relationships are as much a part of life for an ASC student as one not considered so.

For our children, some of whom will be concrete learners, the continuity of environment and the adoption of this helpful, developmental perspective form the foundation for understanding the successful habits of daily living. This then provides the launch-pad for a student's grasp of the language labels associated with meaningful objects, events, and people. In turn this precipitates their ability to recognise the power of language in identifying their needs and how to communicate effectively in order to get these met. For secondary and Gifted and Talented (G&T) students predictable situations help to make new activities and expectations understandable, acceptable, and less stressful. This quality of experience is essential in preparing the students for a fulfilling adult life.

Student Needs in Practice

Overview of Current Primary Cohort – 2014-2015

Below is a table showing the ARB current primary cohort to indicate the likely cohort intake.

Total Number of Places:- 28	No of places filled 28	
BME (Black and Minority Ethnicity)	8	29%
EAL (English as a Second Language)	2	7%
CIC (Children in Care)	1	3%
Girls	4	15%
Boys	24	85%
FSM (BAFS Meals)	14	50%
Additional Medical Needs	13	46% CB-Hemi-hypertrophy, developmental delay, left sided reflux, left kidney reduced function JR – Cerebral Palsy/ chronic lung disease SB – Eczema/constipation/dietary needs AD – Tetralogy of Fallot/ Neurofibromatosis /Dietary Needs TH – Asthma HH – ADHD, chromosome 15 deletion LMF – Wheat, gluten, sugar and dairy allergy EP – Chronic asthma OS – Asthma/allergy to animals/raw eggs NT – Febrile fits if overheated/rectal prolapse

		SS – Clinical obesity
Accessing Respite	6	21%
Verbal	16	57%
Non-Verbal	12	43%
SLD (Severe Learning Difficulties – student is more than two years behind according to assessments)	10	36%
MLD (Moderate Learning Difficulties)	10	36%
No LD/Asperger's	7	25%
G&T (Gifted and Talented)	1	3%
Complex / challenging behaviour	6	21%

The above table shows the wide range of educational, social, personal and medical needs present in the 2014/15 cohort. It indicates that:

- approximately 36% of students have a severe learning difficulty, 36% have a moderate learning difficulty, 25% have no learning difficulty other than those associated with ASC and 3% are Gifted and Talented
- there are a wide range of health and medical conditions that will need to be considered in the formulation of each student's education, development and health plan
- approximately 43% of students have little or no verbal language
- there is a high proportion of students with challenging or complex behaviour
- 85% of students are boys
- the majority of students are of White British ethnicity

Current Year 6 Attainment

Child's Name	Literacy Speaking and Listening	Literacy Writing	Literacy Reading	Numeracy Number	Numeracy Shape Space and Measure	Numeracy Using and Applying	Numeracy Data Handling	PSHE&C
L S	P8	P8	1B	P8	P8	P8	1	P8
Y B	P6	P7	P8	1C	P7	P8	1	P6
M S	3/4	4	3/4	3/4	3/4	3/4	3/4	1
T W	2C	1B	2C	2B	1A	1A	1	1
M B	1A	P8	1C	1B	P8	P8	2	1
K B	2C	1A	2C	2C	1B	P8	1	1
D B	2C	2C	2B	2B	2C	1	2A	2
J M	P7	1C	1C	1A	1C	P8	1	1
L J	1C	1C	1A	1B	P8	1	1	1

Each child's level of attainment reflects their profile on the Autism spectrum. For example, student (YB) was virtually non-verbal while student (MS) was at the highly verbal Asperger's end of the spectrum. Their speaking and listening attainment reflect these aspects of ASC.

Such a wide variety of abilities and health issues is, therefore, evidence of the need for a highly personalised curriculum offering the relevant support and accreditation goals that enable success for each child. So particular and changeable are these characteristics that an educational environment offering provision from 4 to 16 minimises the deleterious effects of re-locating. Such

re-locating breaks a child's routine and the risk of the subsequent emotional disturbance can severely affect their ability to succeed. BAFS's proposal not only integrates primary and secondary education but is co-located with the partner mainstream Academy. Such an institution would be unique in Bristol and its surrounding (Local) Authorities, offers far more effective conditions for the establishment and monitoring of pathways, and therefore expands considerably the opportunities for individual students. This strategic position held by the proposed BAFS is rooted in the needs of its students and gives them the best conditions for the attainment of such a challenging EV.

BAFS's Expected Student Intake

We foresee, therefore, that for primary and secondary provision we will be supporting success for the following students. Those with a diagnosis of ASC, Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD), complex social, emotional, and medical needs, often with accompanying challenging behaviours, who will access full-time, small class-based learning in the BAFS. Those with Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD) who will spend the majority of their day in small class-based learning in the BAFS but will be able to access part of the mainstream curriculum and can have some inclusion into larger groups and mainstream lessons with support. Those with ASC but no learning difficulty other than those associated with ASC or Asperger's. Such students will be based in the BAFS in small class environments. Depending upon their ability they will also have access to the range of provision across the Academy at primary and secondary levels. They will join with the mainstream provision accompanied by a Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) and conditions to ensure their effective transfer and tracking as outlined in their Individual Education Plan (IEP). See Section D2 for more information.

Notes on Gender, Ethnicity, and EAL Students

1. Boys compose 85% of the current and expected intake. There is increasing research and much discussion of how ASC manifests in girls and the different conditions that their learning requires. All staff, led by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), will be apprised of the specific needs of each individual female student. They will be given support and training to establish a meaningful learning environment, class size and structure, teaching provision, curriculum and Independent Educational Profile (IEP). Although the intake of girls is expected to be low (only 4 of 28 current students in the ARB), they have particular needs and staff will be trained in supporting them. Girls will require support socially and emotionally, and BAFS will exploit every opportunity it can to allow girls to successfully mix with wider groups of girls in the wider Academy – either through individually established circles of friends or through small group PSHE&C lessons. Girls will need to be specifically planned for in all PSHE&C and Sex Education sessions.(EV1)
2. At present the majority of students are from South Bristol and are of White British ethnicity. This is expected to be the case for BAFS but in drawing from a wider area the proportion of Black and Ethnic Minority (BME) students may well be significantly higher than that in the partner Academy. BAFS will have stringent equal opportunities policies, reviewed annually, and adapt the curriculum in its delivery, materials and subjects to reflect all ethnic and cultural groups(EV1&2)
3. We are expecting a small number of students to have EAL. The current number is 2 of 28 (7%). If their needs are not met it can lead to low self-esteem and delay their learning development. Consequently they will have an opportunity to learn in their first language supported in partnership with their parents. Parents will also be invited to speak to all students and staff more broadly about the culture the first language is part of. If a child is SLD then we will use a picture recognition system, PECS or Makaton, designed to meet an individual student's needs (EV1&2).
4. Gifted & Talented (G&T) students are expected to comprise a micro-group based on current cohort numbers. They will need individually planned work at higher levels to match their learning profiles. Resources will be available to ensure students can, through an individually

differentiated curriculum, build on their skills and achieve results commensurate with their abilities. G&T students will have opportunities to work individually in BAFS at a level appropriate to their skills, as well as the full range of which they may be able to access with planned support in our partner academy. Accessing these with planned support and thorough tracking will ensure BAFS has devised provision that enables those students to attain formal qualifications and career pathways that make maximum use of their strengths and interests (EV1).

5. At present the ARB has only one student classed as being 'in care', but all Children In Care (CIC) students require individual planning and support to manage their emotional, social and educational needs. BAFS will support all children who are in care and the Principal will be responsible for monitoring their progress, liaising with social workers and carers in order to provide each student in care with a regularly reviewed IEP (EV1&2).

Key Aspects of the Curriculum

The EV and expected student intake make necessary a curriculum characterised by being:

1. Personal – individual levels, progress, and pathways will be assessed, established and reviewed to develop the child's unique learning potential. On entering the school a robust baseline assessment will take place. This will inform the student-centred planning process and highlight strengths and deficits in the child's emotional, social, and intellectual development. These assessment protocols will track progress, identify emerging skills, and inform specific curriculum requirements. They will be carried out across the whole age range and ability spectrum on an annual basis. Each student will have an IEP that is led by the National Curriculum and a Functional Curriculum based on the student's interests and skills. The IEP will be subject to ongoing review and set each term (in Bristol the academic year is divided into 6 terms).
2. Focused on developing independence, personal care and life skills, communication, choice-making and social skills.
3. Concentrated on building vocational skills and providing opportunities for work placements onsite and out in the community.
4. Therapeutic – each student will benefit from high level support for, and monitoring of, their ASC, sensory, behaviour, and emotional difficulties.
5. Co-curricular – an extended school day will offer a wide range of activities (such as sport, music, and dance) that reflects BAFS's Educational Vision. Integrated with the core curriculum this will ensure that each child develops a positive attitude to learning and an education that they enjoy.
6. Parentally inclusive – BAFS will recognise and value the view that successful education is attained when school and parents work together in cooperation. Through consultation, home visits, and opportunities for parents to be involved in their child's learning we will accomplish this.

Types of Curriculum

PRE-REQUISITES TO LEARNING (for all Key Stages)	NATIONAL CURRICULUM		NATIONAL CURRICULUM	
	KS 1	KS2	KS 3	KS4
<p>Functional Curriculum</p> <p>Structured Teaching TEACCH</p> <p>Behaviour Programmes Positive Behaviour Management Team-Teach</p> <p>Communication PECS Makaton Derbyshire Lang. Scheme Speech & Lang. Therapy</p> <p>Social Social Stories</p> <p>Sensory Sensory assessment Sensory Integration</p> <p>Physical PE (Higashi Model)</p> <p>Emotional Counselling Music Therapy Art Therapy Mindfulness</p>	<p>Curriculum</p> <p>EQUALS (SLD/MLD)</p> <p>Edison (MLD/Typical Learning Ability)</p> <p>MA Curriculum (Inclusion)</p> <p>Baseline Assessment PEP-3</p> <p>Statutory Assessment Statutory level 3-5 end of Key Stage tests: English reading, grammar, punctuation, and spelling Mathematics</p> <p>Assessment Sensory assessment (each term) P Levels (each term) CASPA (each year) PACE2</p> <p>Student-centred Development Cognitive (Verbal/Pre-verbal) Expressive Language Receptive Language Fine Motor Gross Motor Visual Motor Imitation Social Reciprocity Characteristic Motor Behaviour Characteristic Verbal Behaviour</p> <p>Qualifications ASDAN (New Horizons)</p>	<p>Curriculum</p> <p>EQUALS (SLD/MLD)</p> <p>ASDAN (SLD/MLD)</p> <p>Vocational Curriculum</p> <p>MA Curriculum (Inclusion)</p> <p>Baseline and Transition Assessment TTAP</p> <p>Statutory Assessment Key Stage 3 only</p> <p>Assessment Sensory assessment (each term) P Levels (each term) CASPA (each year) PACE2</p> <p>Student-centred Development Vocational Skills Vocational Behaviour Independent Functioning Leisure Skills Functional Communication Interpersonal Behaviour</p> <p>Qualifications ASDAN (Award of Personal Effectiveness, Preparing for Adulthood, Transition Challenge) Entry Level (Functional Skills, English, Maths, Horticulture and Photography)</p> <p>GCSE (as per student's ability)</p>		

Individual Education Plan

All aspects of each student's academic and therapeutic curriculum will be detailed in a comprehensive Individual Education Plan (IEP). This plan will form the basis for assessment of progress and modification of provision (EV1-4). The IEP will contain Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-bound (SMART) targets and be reviewed each term (6 times per year). It will be drawn up involving the student where possible, parents and other professionals who are involved in the child's development of skills, in particular the Speech and Language Therapist (SALT) and Occupational Therapist (OT).

The IEP is an essential environment for personalising the curriculum. It requires such frequent review because as noted students with ASC can differ markedly between each other. Peers can have very different abilities and these can change significantly from subject to subject and over relatively short periods of time. There are some common elements though that are features of both our planned primary and secondary curriculum and we outline these below. This is followed by specific descriptions of the two provisions.

Pedagogic Styles and Methodology

One of the factors affecting the educational development of students, indeed people in general, is their preferred style of learning. We each have preferences for particular ways of receiving information that helps us best process it. The tendency of ASC learners is that they are more likely to rely on only one style of learning. A process of observation will be used to determine his/her primary style of learning. For example, if an autistic child enjoys looking at books (e.g., picture books), watching television (with or without sound), and tends to look carefully at people and objects, then he/she may be a visual learner. If an autistic child talks excessively, enjoys people talking to him/her, and prefers listening to the radio or music, then he/she may be an auditory learner. And if an autistic child is constantly taking things apart, opening and closing drawers, and pushing buttons, this may indicate that the child is a kinaesthetic or 'hands-on' learner. Our chosen methodologies need to reflect these different ways through which learning takes place. Consequently we've chosen the methods/programmes outlined below (EV1).

Treatment & Education of Autistic and related Communication-Handicapped Children (TEACCH)
Autistic individuals often have difficulty with receptive and expressive language, sequential memory, and handling changes in their environment. The TEACCH method provides the individual with structure and organization to respond to these difficulties. It concentrates on five key areas: Physical Structure, Scheduling, Work System, Routine, and Visual Structure.

Once established the TEACCH system is primarily used to assist the autistic individual in better understanding his/her environment. Rather than be faded out over time the system works by consistent application across a variety of environments. BAFS will adopt the TEACCH method in five key ways:

1. Understanding the culture of autism
2. Developing an individualised person/family-centred plan for each client or student, rather than using a standard curriculum
3. Structuring the physical environment
4. Using visual supports to make the sequence of daily activities predictable and understandable
5. Using visual supports to make individual tasks understandable

In using the TEACCH approach BAFS will enable students to overcome the following difficulties that they commonly experience and that prevent them becoming successful learners (EV1):

- relative strength in and preference for processing visual information (compared to difficulties with auditory processing, particularly of language)
- frequent attention to details but difficulty understanding the meaning of how those details fit together
- difficulty combining ideas
- difficulty with organizing ideas, materials, and activities
- difficulties with attention (some individuals are very prone to distraction, others have difficulty shifting attention when it is time to make transitions)
- difficulty with concepts of time, including moving too quickly or too slowly and having problems recognizing the beginning, middle, or end of an activity
- communication problems, which vary by developmental level but always include impairments in the social use of language (called “pragmatics”)
- tendency to become attached to routines, with the result that activities may be difficult to generalize from the original learning situation and disruptions in routines become upsetting, confusing, or uncomfortable
- very strong interests and impulses in engaging in favoured activities, with difficulties disengaging once engaged
- marked sensory preferences and dislikes

BAFS Therapy Services

When we receive the Statement of EHC it will indicate the required therapies necessary for each child’s learning and attainment. This will include the types of therapy provision required. It is expected, given the cohort attending BAFS, that at least a SALT and Occupational Therapist will be required. Both will be purchased through the NHS.

In addition, to date, Statements have required a Music Therapist. This provision will be funded directly through the school as required. Some children already attending BAFS will also require additional therapeutic support as they make progress. Included in their Education, Health, and Care (EHC) Plan these therapies will be funded by the LA subject to ratification. Programmes designed by the therapists will be completed either by the Class Teacher or a Therapy Assistant (one of the HLTAs). This will be funded through the school.

Speech and Language Therapy

All of our students will have key difficulties in the areas of communication and social skills. We, therefore, will employ the services of a SALT to work with students, staff, and parents in developing IEPs for all students to develop their communication skills. The following methods will be employed to bring this development about:

- Derbyshire Language Scheme (DLS)
- Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) (EV4)
- Makaton® (EV4)
- Social Stories™ (EV2)
- Comic strip conversations (EV2&3)
- Tacpac® (Tactile and Communication Pack) (EV1-4)
- Intensive Interaction (EV4)

Children entering the school will arrive with different communication aides and methods. It is expected that the majority of children, given that children with ASC are visual learners, will come with PECS and in some cases Makaton (or equivalent sign language). The therapists will train staff in the different techniques required to enable students to freely communicate in the school environment. All staff will be skilled in PECS and Makaton and will use these communication

methods within the classroom on a daily basis. DLS will be used to identify those students with minimal language in the staff understanding their pre-requisites for communication. DLS provides a systematic assessment protocol that identifies different levels of student's needs and attainment. This assessment will identify learning sets for students across the age-range within English and Communication.

Wherever possible the therapist will work within the learning environment. It may be a requirement of their Statement that a student receive one-to-one therapy sessions outside of the classroom. If so, time will be allocated simultaneous to their peers' subject lesson. This ensures as fluid a re-integration as possible when the student is considered able to learn and communicate effectively within their ability grouping. It will be the responsibility of a HLTA to deliver the programmes and establish the conditions stipulated by the SALT. One-to-one therapy will most often be of 20-45 minutes per week, per student. The SALT will determine when the student is capable of returning to the main class. A report from the SALT will be part of the Annual Review process.

Occupational Therapy

An OT will provide individual treatment programmes to help our children carry out their daily tasks with more confidence and independence. The OT will be responsible for assessing each child's sensory and physical needs and providing an appropriate programme including:

- Sensory Integration (tactile, vestibular, and proprioceptive especially) (EV1-4)
- Functional difficulties such as dressing, eating, toileting
- School skills such as pencil and scissor skills
- Play skills
- Sensory abilities such as touch and balance
- Fine motor skills and gross motor and movement abilities
- Social skills
- Behavioural responses during the child's day

An OT will be employed on a part-time basis with the responsibility of completing the requirements specified in the Statements/EHC Plans. Often students will be withdrawn from their classrooms to work with the OT. The Sensory Room and a designated area within the Hall will be used for this. 20-45 minutes per week would be allocated dependent upon needs and attention-capacity of the student. The OT would determine when Occupational Therapy is no longer required. The OT will produce a report for the Annual Review process.

Music Therapy

A Music Therapist will be employed part-time to provide music therapy as specified in the Statements/EHC Plans. Music has proven to be useful in countering the difficulties that ASC students have in understanding, processing, and communicating their emotions. Emotional factors can severely affect learning potential and in utilising music therapy we can enhance our students' well-being. Being free from emotional disturbance significantly increases capacity for learning and all students' ability to realise their potential. Statements/EHC Plans will also indicate therapy time. This often equates to 30-45 minutes per week for each child over an 8-12 week period. The dedicated Music Therapy Room will be used to conduct this. The MT will produce a report for the Annual Review process. In some cases Speech and Language, Occupational, and Music therapy provision will be prescribed by the school Doctor or the student's Specialist Consultant/Paediatrician.

The Learning Environment

The existing ARB will close and all students will transfer to BAFS. The existing ARB could be the basis for accommodating the primary students with extension and refurbishment. This will be done to a high standard in order to meet the particular needs of our students. All rooms in both primary and secondary will be large with clearly designated areas for individual and group work. The primary facility will include a Calming Room, Sensory room, Therapy room, Hall, a designated Outdoor area, Food Technology areas, staff work areas, as well as classrooms for each year group. The secondary facility will contain facilities for exercise and gym, a Science room, Art & Design room, a dedicated Outdoor area, ICT and Food Technology facilities, a staff work room, a Calming room, Therapy room, specialist changing facilities, and, of course, classrooms.

BAFS's premises and the curriculum outline reflect an understanding that students with ASC need appropriate subjects and methods of curriculum delivery. We understand that, more than for most students, those with ASC need to have a strong sense of safety and security in order to meet the challenges of an ambitious EV. The pedagogical approaches, curricula and therapies therefore will be provided in an environment that reflects this. For example, the furnishings and decoration will create a 'low-arousal' setting. Furnishings, decorations and lighting will be of a type to minimise sensory distress and allow greater focus on work tasks. Research¹ has proved these to be the most conducive context for optimum learning. All students will have an individual workstation and all tasks will be presented to them in small, visually clear, and unambiguous stages to ensure optimum understanding. The total environment will be calm and ordered so as to reduce anxiety and aid concentration (EV1). Class teachers will lead on this and receive assistance and monitoring from Teaching Assistants (TA). The SLT will also monitor this as part of teacher assessments and annual reviews. Provision will be made for training if considered necessary (EV1).

Classroom Management

Students will be taught in a small class of 7 students of a similar age, and be supported by a teacher with specialist ASC knowledge and experience. This is crucial to ensure that all tasks are presented in a way that students can access, i.e. highly visual, structured, unambiguous and in graduated small steps. Students will also be in smaller groups which are ability based for KS2 and 3 literacy, numeracy, and science, as well as opportunities to work individually with their teacher and/or TA. Teachers will use a variety of communication techniques at all times informed by the careful assessment of each child's understanding of language. Each class will be supported by at least two Teaching Assistants, who will be similarly trained and experienced. The high student-adult ratio is necessary to support individual planning, assessment and learning, and will also allow flexibility in groupings within a class due to the wide spectrum of abilities (EV1).

-
- ¹ Goodwin, M.S.; Groden, J.; Velicer, W.F.; Lipsitt, L.P.; Grace Baron, M.; Hofmann, S.G.; Groden, G. (2006). Cardiovascular Arousal in Individuals With Autism. *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities*, 21, 100–123.
 - Hirstein, W.; Iversen, P.; Ramachandran, V.S. (2001). Autonomic Responses of Autistic Children to People and Objects. *Proceedings. Biological Sciences/The Royal Society*.

Primary Education

The Curriculum at Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and 2

To afford students the greatest range of learning opportunities and promote greater inclusion the BAFS will follow the adapted National Curriculum delivered through highly specialised Autism-specific teaching. There will be an emphasis on the development of literacy, numeracy, communication, IT and personal and social effectiveness (EV1). When appropriate, students will be supported to learn alongside mainstream peers in the BAFS's partner primary and secondary Academy. These inclusion opportunities will include formal lessons and social settings (EV1). Curriculum enrichment will be provided by a supplementary sensory curriculum which will include sensory integration activities for students as appropriate. The school will complete a sensory profile on entry for each student and use this assessment to determine a full sensory outline of needs and design activities based on this. Music and art therapy will regularly be provided to meet student's emotional needs. Speech and language therapy will be given a priority to develop all possible aspects of communication for students. Students will be offered opportunities to manage their own anxieties with support through yoga/meditation classes and mindfulness training (EV2).

The curriculum will place significant emphasis on learning and practising skills in the community through regular outings and experiences. Doing so helps students to generalise learned skills and become responsible citizens who can play their role in their community. The school will have access to mini-buses to support trips into the wider community and is geographically located within walking distance of local shops and cafes which will be used to practise skills learned in class, as well as for independent skills like road-crossing (EV3).

There will be opportunities to work as individuals and as part of a team. Even at this early age we will develop leadership and responsibility through the curriculum which will help develop students as effective contributors (EV4). Students will be encouraged to mentor each other and there will be opportunities for older students to work alongside younger ones to develop the skills of both (EV2). There will be a 'buddy' system to support our students across the school and particularly during inclusion activities and the transition from primary to secondary (EV3). There will be a School Council with representatives from each primary and secondary year group. (EV4)

Our core offering is 37.5 hours per week. There will be an optional hour and a quarter per week if students join in with the Breakfast Club. Our school day will be from 8.45am until 4.30pm, including an optional breakfast club from 8.45 to 9.00 am. This will allow parents who have siblings in our partner schools to start their day at the same time. It will also allow those students (the majority) who arrive by taxi to enter the school at 9.00am. This is slightly later than the rest of the partner Academy and supports BAFS's stress upon creating a safe, calm, quiet and as reassuring an environment as possible in order to maximise its students learning potential.

The school will offer compulsory Co-curricular opportunities for all students from 3.30pm to 4.30pm. This will allow students to be included with their mainstream peers for the rich menu of activities or separate Co-curricular opportunities as appropriate. BAFS will also run its own Co-curricular opportunities for students which will be designed around meeting their needs. There will be a heavy emphasis on going into the community to practise skills learned during the day and in developing social skills in small groups. This will be an area where mainstream students with ASC can benefit from the activities on offer and able to access targeted social skills teaching and learning using the expertise of staff in the BAFS (EV1-4).

Students in the BAFS will take part in all national assessments as appropriate. All students who are working in Key Stage 1 will undergo the Phonics Screening Assessment in line with

government policy and all Key Stage 2 students who are working at a level 3 or above in the National Curriculum will undertake the National Curriculum Tests (EV1-4).

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years curriculum leading to Foundation Stage will be as that in the primary section of our partner Academy. Children will be able to choose and plan their own learning journeys with skilled intervention from adults. The provision will be set up to ensure that all six areas of learning are covered by all children, who will be able to work in depth at their own levels.

The areas of learning covered will be:

1. PSED Personal, Social and Emotional Development
2. PSRN Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy
3. CLL Communication, Language and Literacy
4. KUW Knowledge and Understanding of the World
5. PD Physical Development
6. CD Creative Development

There will be a focus on the direct teaching of play skills, communication, independent skills and phonics using letters and sounds. Access to outdoor learning will integrate with class-based learning, the outcome of which will be for children to maximise the depth and breadth of their learning potential. The Edison Curriculum will form part of the curriculum and assessment structure for students and teachers. It supports attainment for the former by creating goal-setting opportunities whereas for the latter it supports attainment in providing the assessment tools, planning options, and overall framework to see next steps in the context of the whole learning paradigm. Edison is a suite of materials to help in structuring schemes of work and lesson planning in foundation subjects.

Appropriate vocational subjects will be offered dependent upon student interests and abilities, including introductory horticulture classes and the opportunity to use technological devices such as tablets. This will give learning a natural depth and technological breadth that establishes a pattern to continue throughout a students' learning journey. Personal, Social, Health, Education & Citizenship (PSHE&C) will be part of our core curriculum. This reflects and addresses the difficulties experienced by students with ASC. If not effectively countered from Early Years these difficulties can undermine a student's potential to become independent and responsible citizens (EV4). Both PSHE&C and communication will be key areas – skills learnt will be transferable and necessary in accessing other aspects of the curriculum (EV1).

Key Stage1 Year 1

Subject/other	Hours	Mandatory/ Voluntary = (V)	Comments
English (including reading, writing, spelling and handwriting)	11.25	30%	Focus on speaking and listening
Mathematics	5.6	15%	
PSHE&C	4.4	12%	To include play skills
ICT	1.3	3%	
Science	2.6	7%	
Learning themes (art, design technology, geography and history)	5.6	15%	

Music	0.75	2%	
Physical Education	3.75	10% (V)	
Sensory Integration	0.75	2% (V)	
Relaxation programmes	0.75	2% (V)	
RE	0.75	2%	

We have prioritised English in our curriculum due to the difficulties all of our students experience in communication. Developing speaking and listening skills, as well as reading (with comprehension), will support all student's life skills and their access to learning in other areas. In Key Stage 1 we have given additional time to developing play skills as opportunities for the student to choose activities and subjects appropriate to their interests, skills, and abilities. 'Know[ing] Thyself' is particularly challenging for students with ASC but in BAFS we will maximise every student's ability to understand their own experience and the needs at the heart of it. Once established the students will learn the skills to both make decisions and communicate effectively in order to maximise their educational progress. BAFS believes that such skills provide a very solid foundation for other learning, whether in the school or community, especially in those unfamiliar to the extent that the student becomes confused and distressed. As effective communication plays such an important role in this process the school will employ a speech and language therapist to work individually with students and to advise staff and parents (EV4).

Edison will be used to structure goal-setting and each student's IEP. The EQUALS Curriculum will also be used to help guide this process and maximise the learning opportunities of children with severe or moderate learning difficulties who are working below level 1 of the National Curriculum on P-levels. Due to the difficulties that students with ASC can have in generalising learning, the school will use themes to link learning and add meaning and context. Art Therapy, Performing Arts and Dance will be offered for students who will benefit from exploring their emotions using these media (EV2). Physical activity is encouraged in structured PE lessons and regular soft play sessions. These physical activities reflect elements of Higashi Daily Life Therapy.

Key Stage 1 Year 2

Subject/other	Hours	Mandatory/ Voluntary	Comments
English (including reading, writing, spelling and handwriting)	10.5	28%	Focus on speaking and listening
Mathematics	5.6	15%	
PSHE&C Education	4.5	12%	To include play skills
ICT	1.1	3%	
Science	2.6	7%	
Learning themes (art, design technology, geography and history)	5.6	15%	
Music	0.75	2%	
Physical Education	3.75	10%	
Sensory integration	0.75	2% (V)	
Relaxation programmes	0.75	2% (V)	
MFL (Spanish)	0.75	2%	
RE	0.75	2%	

The Year 2 curriculum is exactly the same as Year 1 aside from the notable exception of MFL provision. This comprises 2% of curriculum time and English is now reduced by 2% (to 28%). We have designated Spanish as our MFL as it is taught throughout our partner Academy the rationale being to support inclusion for able students wherever possible (EV1-4). Students with ASC and particularly those with Asperger's can excel at languages as they enjoy the highly structured teaching and rules upon which the language is based. This can be of great help in developing a student's social understanding of different cultures, permitting them to interact more confidently as independent adults (EV4). For students who are non-verbal and/or have difficulty with understanding the English spoken word (at less than a 4-word level) will be studying Spanish culture without a language element. This will be determined on an individual basis (EV1).

Key Stage 2 Years 3–6

Subject/other	Hours	Mandatory/ Voluntary	Comments
English (including reading, writing, spelling and handwriting)	10.5	28%	Focus on speaking and listening
Mathematics	5.6	15%	
PSHE&C Education	4.5	12%	To include play skills
ICT	1,1	3%	
Science	2.6	7%	
Learning themes (art, design technology, geography and history)	5.6	15%	
Music	0.75	2%	
Physical Education	3.75	10%	
Sensory integration	0.75	2% (V)	
Relaxation programmes	0.75	2% (V)	
MFL	0.75	2%	
RE	0.75	2%	

The timetable for Key Stage 2 is the same as that for Key Stage 1. This provides continuity, an essential feature for students to feel secure in assessing (and helping to implement) how their interests and skills can be finely woven into their educational development. Throughout BAFS's curriculum this focus will help give the child awareness that though they may sense their difference from most children this is one of degree rather than kind. Consequently they can feel themselves to be as much part of society as anyone else, an environment in which they can feel at home and participate fully, independently, and responsibly. The IEP, central to this structure, will be able to adapt, following review, from term to term in order to accommodate differing rates of development. Children will be given appropriate goals and guided to find the right ability range for them at any one time. If a student's abilities change rapidly over a relatively short period we will phase pathways in gradually so as not to disturb their well-being. BAFS will recognise the value of continuity in providing a secure environment for a child's natural development to proceed unchecked both whilst at the school and beyond it.

Following the 'New Horizons' ASDAN course for students aged 9 to 13 will allow them to progress in key areas (such as Preparing for Adulthood). It will also provide a stepping-stone to ASDAN courses in Key Stage 4. Vocational subjects will also be offered and build upon those introduced as play from Early Years. Subjects may include Photography, Horticulture, and Expressive Arts.

Students with ASC tend to be highly visual learners and both motivated and skilled in using Information and Computing Technology (ICT). We will, therefore, prioritise ICT as a curriculum subject and as a tool for learning. KS1 and 2 students will have full access to ICT equipment and individual laptops or tablets if these are required as an augmentative communication tool (e.g. a child may use a voice activated software program to communicate if they are non-verbal). This is to prepare all students in becoming learners and able to safely use, and benefit from, the technology available in the 21st century (EV1).

The curriculum outline establishes how BAFS will provide a safe learning environment in which each child can develop at their own pace in different subjects. Students will be able to pursue anything from the mainstream National Curriculum to appropriate ability groupings (with their own P Level goals) that give every opportunity of maximising their primary education potential and providing the ideal conditions secondary transition.

Structure of the School Day

The compulsory school day will be from 9.00am until 4.30pm. For each student there will be an individual timetable which meets their specific needs. It will be designed to reflect the stage of learning rather than a student’s chronological age. Students will work at their own levels and their timetable will reflect this. We have scheduled lunch times and break times at the same time as those in our partner Academy in order to facilitate inclusion. Aside from such common features presenting a timetable is not possible so we’ve included a base structure to give you the composition of a typical day.

	8.45	9.00	9.45	10.30-10.45	10.45-11.30	11.30-12.15	12.15-13.15	13.15-15.30	15.30-16.30
M O N	Breakfast club	lesson	lesson	break	lesson	lesson	Lunch (incl. Clubs)	lesson	Co-curricular
T U E S	Breakfast club	lesson	lesson	break	lesson	lesson	Lunch (incl. Clubs)	lesson	Co-curricular
W E D	Breakfast club	lesson	lesson	break	lesson	lesson	Lunch (incl. Clubs)	lesson	Co-curricular
T H U R S	Breakfast club	lesson	lesson	break	lesson	lesson	Lunch (incl. Clubs)	lesson	Co-curricular
F R I	Breakfast club	lesson	lesson	break	lesson	lesson	Lunch (incl. Clubs)	lesson	Co-curricular

Enrichment Activities at Key Stages 1 and 2

The BAFS will offer Co-curricular activities every day of the week. We have made this decision to ensure that children enrolled at BAFS are in a daily routine for ease of arranging child-care for parents and for consistencies in taxi times (in recognition that the majority of our students will access local authority transport). Co-curricular activities will link with the Merchants' Academy Trust (MAT) although some activities will be for those students for whom smaller groups are necessary. There will be a range of subjects with a focus on independence skills and on physical skills at secondary. All students will be able to take part in a range of activities from Lego, trampolining, cookery, football, etc. (EV2 &4). Co-curricular activities will change per term in the primary school. For Key Stage 2 these would include activities such as sport, drama, music, cooking, gardening and film club. For Key Stage 1 staff from BAFS will organise their own Co-curricular activities with a priority on community trips and physical play (EV2 &3). There will be an hour for lunch. If considered appropriate, students, led by staff from BAFS, will eat lunch with their mainstream peers in family groups. Catering will be 'in house', building on the successful track record of the partner Academy in providing high quality food for students. The provision of a healthy diet is a key feature of the Academy. Ingredients are locally sourced and menus planned to ensure that meals are both tasty and healthy. Choosing from a rich menu, interacting with serving staff, and developing a wide palate of taste tolerances are areas which are commonly difficult for students with ASC. Key staff will ensure that skills are developed and that information on eating issues is communicated effectively to parents and carers (EV2). As noted BAFS will have its own designated outdoor/play areas at all Key Stages. Students will also be offered the opportunity of accessing the mainstream playgrounds and lunchtime clubs with support when needed.

A typical day for [REDACTED]

The table below gives a typical day for [REDACTED].

8.45	[REDACTED]
9.00	[REDACTED]
9:20	[REDACTED]
10:00	[REDACTED]
10:30	[REDACTED]
10:45	[REDACTED]
11:15	[REDACTED]
12:15	[REDACTED]

1:15	
2.15	
3.00	
3.30 -	
4.15	

Secondary Education

Our curriculum emerges out of our Educational Vision 'meeting' the specific needs of ASC students who have Statements/EHC Plans. The curriculum needs to be personalised, therapeutic, integrated with Co-curricular activities and involve parents as much as possible in their child's learning experience. As the students move into secondary education these factors remain at the heart of the curriculum offered for Key Stages 3 and 4. Particular emphasis during secondary education will be given to preparing students for independent life after they leave BAFS. The curriculum offered reflects this (EV1-4).

Students with SLD will receive a curriculum that supports their needs through the EQUALS schemes of work. They will also have the opportunity to continue or begin the New Horizons ASDAN course. There will be a significant focus on developing life skills as well as appropriate behaviour patterns. Personal, Social and Health Education as well as Citizenship (PSHE&C) will be emphasised. There will continue to be considerable time devoted to Communication, functional English, and maths. The TEACCH Transition Assessment Profile (TTAP) assessment will assist teachers in devising the most appropriate programmes for their students.

MLD students will receive the EQUALS Curriculum but will also have the opportunity to access a differentiated curriculum. This might include a differentiated National Curriculum supported by a Teaching Assistant or, if specialist facilities are required, the student will enter the partner secondary school. In addition, within BAFS the emphasis on Communication, functional English, and Maths will also include strategies to improve social integration.

Those with Asperger's will be taught in small classes or one-to-one. This will enable the young person to catch up or excel where appropriate with their studies. Depending upon their ability they will also have access to the range of provision across the Academy secondary levels. Students will join with the mainstream provision accompanied by a Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) and conditions to ensure their effective transfer and tracking as outlined in their Individual Education Plan (IEP). See Section D2 for more information. For some students a functional English and maths curriculum will be complemented by strategies to improve social integration. Students will be encouraged as they progress through secondary to access the community to enable them to become full participants within them whilst as students but also post-graduation as an independent and responsible adult.

IEPs will be established from Key Stage 2 experience and re-assessed, following Statutory Assessments, with class, subject teacher, class teacher, student, and parental input, to indicate an

appropriate pathway to fulfil the EV. Again this will be monitored and reviewed each term and adapted to meet the changes revealed. For students who are entering the Free School at Key Stage 3 a baseline assessment will be conducted in the first three weeks of entry to provide information which will be used to draw up an Individual Education Plan with parents. Key Stage 4 pathways will be determined through assessment data, and those students achieving a level 4 or higher on the National Curriculum will be able to go on to study those subjects at GCSE. A TTAP assessment will determine individual transition skills and provide a record of skills that will be required for each pathway taken. At Key Stage 4 students are likely to follow divergent courses in line with their abilities but the curriculum will also widen to encompass common practical skills – e.g. handling a budget, cleaning, making snacks, community skills, etc. We will prepare students for living as independently as possible in adulthood.

As our student profile is expected to be the same across all age ranges, we will provide a qualifications programme that supports students to follow, wherever possible, the National Curriculum resulting in GCSE examination. If a student is more suited to a vocational career path then ASDAN awards will form the goals of their curriculum (EV1-4).

Curriculum Outline Key Stages 3 and 4

All students at Key Stage 3 and 4 will follow the personalised National Curriculum or the EQUALS Curriculum Framework. This will maximise opportunities for inclusion with their mainstream peers and ensure entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum. Accredited courses will be offered which will match the varying needs and abilities of the students. This will be achieved through in-house tuition and via a small number of students attending mainstream lessons to participate in their KS3 and GCSE groups where appropriate (EV1).

The EQUALS Schemes of work for the National Curriculum are subject based schemes of work specifically designed for children with special needs who are working below level 1 of the National Curriculum on P-levels.

English is taught daily throughout the school as a discrete subject. In KS2 and 3 students are streamed and taught in ability groups. All literacy classes at this level begin with a short phonics session that can vary from listening to sounds found in our environment to learning and blending letter sounds as a key to enhancing reading. Writing and mark-making are taught daily. ICT is used in every literacy lesson as a tool for learning, an aid to communication and to enhance writing skills. In KS 4 students are encouraged to use their literacy skills to understand the world around them. Instead of phonics students will be taught to recognise words in their environment that will help their independence when they leave school. All students are assessed using PACE and a Phonics assessment. The EQUALS scheme of work is followed across the school (EV1).

KS2 and 3 will use a combination of Oxford Reading Tree, Spiral Starters and Rigby Star reading schemes. These have been combined and graded to be used by students across the key stages. More advanced readers in KS3 and 4 will follow the Rapid Reading scheme until they become free readers.

All students will experience maths on a daily basis. This may take the form of a lesson or activities using maths within their local community as part of their life skills. In offering students a wide variety of experiences to practice their skills we will aim for all to become as numerate as possible in environments where it is necessary for daily living. In Key Stages 2 and 3 the children are streamed according to their ability enabling them to access the curriculum at their level. Each child has a target set and reviewed by their group's teacher. Staff will use a variety of resources to teach the children and once a year the students will participate in PACE maths assessments.

There are opportunities to access maths within the primary and secondary school. We currently have one student accessing Key Stage 2 maths at the primary school.

All students will have a Science lesson once a week. They will be taught using a variety of teaching methods that make lessons interactive, explorative and involve students investigating themselves and the world around them. EQUALS schemes of work will be followed and all students assessed using the PACE tool.

Design & technology (D&T) provides practical learning experiences, which make it accessible to all students. Students use knowledge and understanding from across the curriculum and apply them in practical activities. Designing and making real products that can be used can give students a sense of achievement and improve their self-esteem. They benefit from seeing their own progress and taking greater responsibility for their own learning as they begin to evaluate the quality of their work. Students' personal involvement with tasks often improves their attention span, persistence and commitment. At KS3 students will follow the EQUALS scheme of work on a rolling programme. Students in KS4 will also follow an EQUALS programme of study and have their work accredited. The focus for this age group is upon daily living skills and students will practise essential life skills such as cooking a meal and clothing care and maintenance.

ICT has become central to the way we work and entertain ourselves. In teaching ICT we equip children to participate in a world of rapidly changing technology. We enable them to find, explore, analyse, exchange and present information. We also help them to develop the necessary skills for using information in a discriminating and effective way. This is a major part of enabling children to be confident, creative and independent learners. We will follow the EQUALS schemes of work with additional material as needed and operate on a rolling programme.

We've recognised that ASC students often become disoriented in new and altered environments. At BAFS therefore we will teach geography to enable all students to experience, explore and investigate the world with curiosity and confidence. A practical and progressive model will be implemented that trains students to begin with their own space, extending then to immediate surroundings, their class, their family, their school, their local community and thence to the wider world. BAFS will seek to guide each student, step-by-step, in extending awareness of their own experience outward to become aware of the world beyond it. As the EQUALS schemes of work has proven successful in enabling this BAFS will follow it, supported with additional material as needed and integrating development borne from latest research.

The teaching of the History subject gives students the opportunity to develop an awareness of the concept of factors such as "time" and "the past" and of the ways in which these concepts differ from the "present". In considering these factors, students may be helped to have a greater understanding of the present and the future and will enable students to develop a sense of chronology. We will follow the EQUALS schemes of work with additional material as needed.

Students will have a weekly PE session and follow a varied PE curriculum which includes learning team games, ball skills, athletics, dance, swimming and orienteering. KS2 and KS3 students will also swim every week at the local Leisure Centre. Each class has access to the partner Academy sports facilities one afternoon a week. KS4 will have sessions with specialist visiting coaches for cricket and football and they will have the opportunity to access the facilities at the Sports Centre.

When teaching RE, it is our aim to provide students with experiences, knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other religious traditions represented in contemporary society. We follow the EQUALS schemes of work with additional material as needed and these operate on a rolling programme.

Additional subjects studied: Modern Foreign Language and Performing Arts

Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) – See Primary Curriculum for details

- Towards Independence
- Transition Challenge
- Preparing for Adulthood
- The ASDAN Expressive Arts Short Course
- The FoodWise Short Course
- Personal Finance Short Course
- Sexual Relationships Short Course

Functional Skills at Entry Level – for students mainly with moderate learning difficulties who may find GCSE both emotionally and intellectually demanding:

- English (Speaking and Listening, Reading, and Writing)
- ICT
- Maths
- Award of Personal Effectiveness (AoPE)

Students in the Free School will follow different pathways according to their ability. Students that have achieved a level 4 and 5 at the end of year 9 would be able to access the GCSE curriculum in years 10 and 11; attending a mixture of lessons in both the mainstream and the Free School.

Free School students would be able to access the core subjects with a member of Free School staff providing 1:1 support. Students will have an individual timetable and the member of staff supporting the student will liaise with the class teacher and complete a joint planning proforma. This will allow the staff member supporting the student the opportunity to find out what they will be covering each term and time to discuss and implement with the class teacher strategies and differentiation so that the student would have full access to the lessons. This is current practice within Merchants' Academy, whereby teaching staff meet with support staff to discuss the learning needs and objectives term by term; setting SMART targets into their personalised educational plan. Students that are working below this level in year 9 would be able to access entry level English, Maths and Science within BAFS as well as other GCSEs and vocational qualifications.

Teaching staff would 'double-up' on their subject knowledge so that they could provide two subjects such as English and IT or Maths and Science, Food Tech, Creative Media, Photography, Art. This 'doubling-up' would be a focus within the recruitment process in identifying teachers' first and second subject specialism and it would allow the Free School to publish their offer on the school's website so that parents would be able to see curriculum pathway choices.

Students with ASC often display islets of ability to such an extent that they will have individual specific teaching within BAFS or enter the mainstream Academy's secondary provision to attend certain subjects commensurate with their specific abilities and aptitude. Below are the subjects available in our partner Academy and which our students will receive individual support from a HLTA in order to access. Further information is available on each subject. This provision will be prescribed in the EHC Plan completed in the Annual Review. Please see the Gifted & Talented information in D4 for more on this.

- English

- Maths
- Computing
- Design Technology
- Health and Social Care
- Art
- Music
- Drama
- Construction

BAFS has the expectation that all students can achieve to the very best of their ability. As many courses as possible will be nationally accredited, such as GCSE or ASDAN (vocational) awards, for whom this career path is more appropriate (EV1). The Key Stage 4 curriculum will focus on preparing students to become as independent as possible and achieve, academically and socially, to the best of their ability (EV3).

Enrichment activities will be offered as appropriate through the many clubs and activities available both in BAFS and our partner Academy. Activities at present include jewellery-making, yoga, tai chi, cycling, sports, and clubs such as ICT, Film, and Chess (EV2). Unique features of the secondary enrichment curriculum will be opportunities for students afforded by accessing the partner Academy resources such as:

- ACF (Army Cadet Force)
- Links with Bristol University and colleges of FE
- Vocational courses
- Careers, Work Experience and wider community links
- Inclusive opportunities with our partner Academy, for specialist subject-teaching, accommodation and resources (e.g. laboratories).

BAFS will plan for future transitions by supporting students to acquire the necessary life skills to prepare them for future educational institutions, such as in the partner Academy Sixth Form, Further Education College, University and work with training as appropriate. BAFS will support students in playing a central role in making plans for their future, deciding upon participation in work experience opportunities for example. All students will have access to the Careers Advisor and Work Experience Co-ordinator employed by the MAT (EV4).

BAFS will work in genuine partnership with parents and students in making plans that will allow each student to have as fulfilling and independent a life as possible as they approach adulthood (EV1-4). Parents too will be central to these transition plans. BAFS will work in genuine partnership with parents and students in making them. The range of ability and independence of each student will differ, sometimes considerably, to those in the partner Academy, yet BAFS will view the transition plan process itself to be part of a student's 'training' in living as fulfilling and independent a life as possible. Thus, we hope, the student will graduate with the knowledge, tools, skills, and confidence to achieve outside school just as they have been able to do within it. We see our EVs as not simply pertaining to BAFS but to the whole life-cycle, from Early Years to a graduate's old age.

Timetable at Key Stages 3 and 4

At secondary BAFS will operate a two-week timetable (37.5 hours per week) based on a 09:00 start and 16:30 finish. There would also be an additional, optional 75 minutes per week for Breakfast Club which will run at 08:45–09:00 hours. BAFS secondary students in KS3 with MLD or Asperger's, Years 7 and 8, in group (2) and (3) will also be able to access some parts of the

secondary partner Academy. Students with SLD will spend the majority of their day in small classes in the highly specialised ASC environment. Students at KS3 will follow the curriculum using a similar model to KS2 but this pathway will focus on building academic achievement, independence and social (including leisure) skills.

Weekly Curriculum Breakdown for Students with Severe Learning Difficulties

Subject/other	Hours	Mandatory/Voluntary	Comments
English (Functional Skills)	8	21%	
Mathematics (Functional skills)	6	16%	
PSHE&C	4	10.6%	To include leisure skills
ICT/Technology	3	8%	
Science	2	5.33%	
Humanities	2	5.33%	
Music	2	5.33%	
Art	1	2.6%	
Physical Education	4	10.6%	
Sensory integration	0.5	1.3% (V)	
Independence skills	2	5.33% (V)	
Relaxation programmes	1	2.6% (V)	
MFL	1	2.6%	
Drama	1	2.6%	
Total	37.5 hrs.		

All students attending BAFS will follow the EQUALS schemes of work across each discrete subject. BAFS will prioritise functional literacy and numeracy at Key stages 3 and 4. It will focus on developing the skills for students to become as independent as possible. We will include leisure skills in our PSHE&C scheme. Students will have the option of participating in a range of Co-curricular clubs that will enhance this. In order to support the transition from Key Stage 2 to 3 we will use 'New Horizons', an activity based resource which also supports the delivery of PSHE&C, and Careers Education at Key Stages 2 & 3. This will help develop skills aiming towards our longer term individual target for all students to complete a work placement in Key Stage 4. The activities also offer an opportunity to develop communication and numeracy skills in a life-skills setting (EV4). The programme has been developed for learners aged 9 to 13 who have a special educational need. It is suited to learners attaining lower levels of the National Curriculum than their peers, in particular those who will not sit Key Stage 2 tests. It is also suitable for learners working across the P Levels but allows progression onto the National Curriculum if students achieve higher than level P8 (EV4).

ASDAN's New Horizons Record Book contains activities within a framework of five modules: Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship and Relationships. The programme is learner-centred, offering structure and flexibility; it provides recognition for small steps in achievement. In each module there is a focused careers-related activity. Each student completes a Personal Skills section for each module undertaken. This will help them identify specific things they are good at in regard to the module theme (EV4). The final activity in each module is 'My Challenge'. This requires the learner, working with the tutor, identifying something new they would like to try in relation to the module theme (EV2 & 4). BAFS will use the option of having students' work externally moderated in order to add rigour and scrutiny to our awards.

For all our students therapies will be provided as specified in Statements/EHC Plans. This will occur both in classrooms and dedicated one-to-one therapy rooms. Please see the material in D4 that outlines how such therapy will fit with the curriculum. This includes how it will be assessed, prescribed, delivered, and supported, along with rationale underpinning therapeutic interventions.

Students with Moderate Learning Difficulties or Asperger’s will have the choice to solely follow a BAFS pathway or choose a combination with some GCSEs and BTECs. Their timetable would be a combination of the breakdown above but with some classes in our partner secondary Academy. The secondary curriculum will be tailored to meet individual needs. In our partner secondary Academy students study KS4 subjects in Year 9, 10 and 11, and BAFS students will also have this option, accessing English, Maths, Science, and Physical Education (non-examination subject) if appropriate. MLD and Asperger’s students will then make a choice from the options available. Below is a typical option structure.

Option MFL		Option HUM		Option A		Option B	
French	6	His 1	6	Drama	5	3 Sciences	
Spanish	6	Geo 1	6	Business	5	PE	
FCSE MFL	6	RE	6	PE	5	IT	
		Vocational	6	H&S C 1	5	Performing Art	
				Music	5	Construction	
				Art	5	Art	
				IT	5	D&T	

Underneath is an example of a timetable tailored for a KS3 Year 7 ASC student (with Asperger’s) entering as a Level 3 at KS2 in English and Mathematics.

8.45		9.00	9.45-10.50	10.50 – 11.10	11.10-12.15	12.15-1.15	13.20-14.25	14.25-15.30	15.30-6.30
M	Breakfast club	Preparation and guidance for the day	Lesson Two Science	Break Option to return to BAFS base	Lesson Three Maths	Lunch (incl. Clubs)	Lesson Four Tech	Lesson Five MFL	Co-curricular
T	Breakfast club	Preparation and guidance for the day	Lesson Two Science	Break Option to return to BAFS base	Lesson Three MFL	Lunch (incl. Clubs)	Lesson Four PE	Lesson Five IT	Co-curricular

W E D	Breakfast club	Preparation and guidance for the day	Lesson Two English	Break Option to return to BAFS base	Lesson Three IT	Lunch (incl. Clubs)	Lesson Four Tech	Co-curricular activities partner Academy	
T H U R S	Breakfast club	Preparation and guidance for the day	Lesson Two MFL	Break Option to return to BAFS base	Lesson Three Science	Lunch (incl. Clubs)	Lesson Four English	Lesson Five Tech	Co-curricular
F R I	Breakfast club	Preparation and guidance for the day	Lesson Two MFL	Break Option to return to BAFS base	Lesson Three Tech	Lunch (incl. Clubs)	Lesson Four Science	Lesson Five Maths	Co-curricular

BAFS will offer different pathways in KS4 for individual students in order for them to be successful learners (EV1). ASDAN awards will be offered to ensure all students gain qualifications (see above for details on ASDAN).

Enrichment Activities at Key Stages 3 and 4

In collaboration with its partner Academy BAFS will provide Co-curricular activities that give students a wide range of experiences that take them beyond the ordinary curriculum, fire their imagination, and broaden their horizons. Students will be able to select an activity each term. Some of those on offer are shown below:

- Rock climbing
- Acoustic guitar lessons
- Cheer leading
- Army Cadet Force
- Tai chi
- Yoga
- Drama
- Horse World (a local horse sanctuary where students can learn grooming and all aspects of horse care)
- Academy Orchestra
- Young Enterprise
- Sports

Students have the opportunity to try something new, meet other students in the Academy, and develop interpersonal skills in different settings. The table below sketches out a typical Wednesday for [REDACTED].

8:45-09:00	[REDACTED]	
09:00-09:30	[REDACTED]	
9:40-10:45 (Period 2 Academy site)	[REDACTED]	
10:45-11:15 (BAFS)	[REDACTED]	
10:50-11:10 (Secondary Break)	[REDACTED]	
11:10-12:15 Period 3	[REDACTED]	
12:15-13:15 Lunch	[REDACTED]	
Period 4 13:20-14:25	[REDACTED]	
14:30-16:30 Co-curricular	[REDACTED]	

Transition

BAFS understands that making transitions can be difficult for students with ASC and especially those registered SEN with Statements/EHCs. Handled poorly, the student's emotional, educational, and social well-being can be detrimentally affected, sometimes extremely so. The priority we place upon getting these transitions right, therefore, means all staff within the school will be involved, from the Senior Leadership Team through to students. It requires building excellent links with external agencies, parents, and carers. BAFS will identify three major periods of transition: into BAFS, from primary to secondary, and from secondary to life beyond (EV4).

Transition into BAFS (EV2)

BAFS will take students who have been referred by a Local Authority. They may come to the school at any age or Key Stage depending on the availability of places. We will build upon the ARB's strong links with local nurseries, play centres and other local primary schools. We will build too on the excellent links with Autistic Spectrum Disorder Outreach Team (ASDOT). They support students with ASC in Bristol mainstream provisions. ASDOT help identify students who need specialist provision and both their school-age and Early Years team will support students individually entering either the primary or secondary school.

For the process following the receipt of a referral from a local authority please see table below:-

1. Referral received	Decision?	Decision?
2. BAFS Admissions panel (HT/DHT/SALT) conduct weekly meetings to discuss new referrals and review transition arrangements for new students	NO BAFS not suitable and paperwork returned to LA	YES 
3. Pre-placement visit to student's current provision (or home) Parent invited to attend BAFS, complete a stress protocol and proforma with questions (All About Me) Interview with Principal		Report sent to Admission Panel
4. BAFS Admission Panel (HT/DHT/SALT) to discuss report and confirm placement with LA	NO BAFS not suitable and paperwork returned to LA	YES  Confirm placement and fee level to LA
5. Transition plan for student including transition visits, access arrangements and first 3 months of entry into BAFS		IEP drawn up following assessment period including curriculum pathway and inclusion

Each prospective student will be visited in their current environment by the Principal or other SLT member. This is a prerequisite for entry to guarantee that the prospective class attended by the new student is commensurate with their needs. Any assessment will include behavioural and learning elements. If a transfer is rushed or overseen by inexperienced staff this might lead to an inappropriate placement. The transition would then deleteriously affect both the behaviour and

learning of existing students. The Principal or other SLT member will therefore have overall responsibility for ensuring the transition is successful. For each student a Transition Plan (TP) will be drawn up involving the student's current placement, member of SLT responsible, the appropriate class leader, the student's parents, ASDOT, and if applicable the student themselves. Each plan will detail what support each child will need and what will need to be in place on their arrival into BAFS. This will go beyond physical needs and include knowledge of their interests and especially particular behaviours that allow them to be at ease. At least two visits to BAFS will be planned. Students will be accompanied by a member of staff for their visits from their current placement in the summer term for September start. Visual schedules and supports such as photographs and calendars will be prepared individually by the BAFS in line with each child's level of functioning.

If a student transfers into BAFS at a non-standard entry point as much of the above process will be covered. If an emergency placement is required this will take place over a 3-week period. It will involve at least one visit by the Principal to the current place of provision. If this is not possible (say, if a student arrives mid-term due to a long-distance home move from another part of the country), the Principal and Class Teacher will liaise with their counterparts and parents, drawing on effective current provision that includes strategies to avoid as much as those to implement. Parents will meet with the Principal separately and will have an opportunity to view the school and will have all paperwork needed before the end of the summer term.

Transition from Primary to Secondary

Although students will be familiar with the BAFS environment, as the secondary school (upon completion of the new facilities) could be on the same site as the mainstream secondary school, this still requires very careful management. It will be overseen by the Principal and Deputy Head. The teachers and TAs for Year 6 and 7 will rotate and take their class with them to Year 7 to ease the transition. There will be visits to the secondary facility and the partner Academy over the course of Year 6. Again overseen by the Principal and Deputy Head along with the Class Teachers and TAs the new students will be able to begin their new phase of education secure that they will be safe and can trust that their needs will be met. The flow of staff between the phases will also aid recognition of other adults in the new environment (EV1-4).

Upon moving in Year 7 the students will be assigned, when appropriate, an existing secondary student. The latter will have similar abilities, interests, and behavioural patterns in order to help the new student realise this is a place for them to make progress toward the EVs. This partnership will cover the whole of the first term and be phased out gradually as appropriate. Informal contact throughout the school day will be supported too, as sometimes helpful friendships will develop that benefit both parties. It will be supervised by the Year 7 teacher in consultation with the elder student's class teacher.

Parents will be involved throughout the transition process. They will be part of the IEP meeting and invited to accompany their child on visits to the secondary school. Being familiar with the teacher accompanying the transition, and in liaison with them, parents/carers will be asked to monitor the effects of the transition upon the child, especially detailing any concerns about the student's emotional responses (EV4). As systems, policies and practices will be consistent across BAFS the students will notice no difference in expectations, standards and practices.

Transition to Key Stage 4 (EV2)

Students in year 9 will have a Graduate Transition Plan (GTP). They will be assessed using TTAP and appropriate individual pathways will be determined. In Key Stage 4 students will be able study coursework in line with formal qualification expectations. For some students this will mean ASDAN awards, for others it will be Entry Level in the core subjects, and for others it may be

GCSEs. For many students it is anticipated that they will access a combination of formal courses both in the Free School as well as our partner Academy. Students will have a range of pathways according to their needs and abilities and these will need to be individually planned. Students will have individual timetables to follow, and skilled HLTA/TA-supported inclusion where appropriate. In Key Stage 4 the focus will be on developing the skills that they will need to be as independent and productive adults as possible.

Transition from BAFS (EV2)

Students will have a Statement/EHC Plan and will have annual reviews. Transitional planning will be a core component of the IEP review process and will determine (or more often as needed) what provision is most suitable to meet a student's needs. Every IEP will have in mind the student's departure from BAFS. It determines the most appropriate in-school strategies that condition beyond-school realities as expressed in EV1-4. For students moving on from BAFS, individual transition plans will be drawn up with receiving institutions. Learning Partnership West (previously Connexions), career guidance and multi-agency support will be used as appropriate. Each student will have a GTP drawn up in Year 9 which will clearly show progression routes and support needed to move on from the school into suitable further education/employment. All Year 9 students will have a transition meeting involving parents/carers and relevant agencies to discuss suitable work experience provision, post-16 transition, and residential options.

As a sponsor SMV will be involved in all aspects of BAFS. They have strong links with many local employers and endeavour to ensure that all Academy students have unparalleled access to professional advice in order to ensure employability. The University of Bristol is actively involved in the development of the Academy curriculum and allows students to access its excellent academic facilities. The University also offers support in other areas, such as mentoring and the provision of vocational work placements. These will be open to students from BAFS.

BAFS will work closely with the Careers Advisor and Work Experience Coordinator as part of the Multi-Academy Trust. There are also very strong links with Learning Partnership West. They will provide help and support to our young people aged 13-19 (up to 25 for those with learning difficulties and disabilities). As well as helping them make informed choices about their future they will also support students to address and remove barriers that are preventing them from moving their lives forward (EV2 & 4).

Working in partnership with all involved will ensure all our students enter and stay in education, enter training or employment and therefore achieve more than they ever thought possible (EV4). Whatever route is appropriate for the student staff will support them into their new placements and will be responsible for the careful exchange of information, ensuring that the receiving institution is clear about the individual's needs and has strategies in place to meet them.

When the student is 11, 14, and 16 years old the Annual Review meeting will discuss and report upon a Transition Plan (TP) for the young person that pays particular attention to the conditions BAFS will need to establish in order to support the young person through their teenage years and into adulthood. The TP draws together information from a range of people, including the young person's parents and any professionals involved the young person's life. The views of the young person will be included in the TP too (EV4). Whatever action needs to be taken to support the young person will be recorded with a named person to take responsibility for that action. It will include agreed actions for professionals involved with the young person, parent/s, and actions for the young person themselves.

Conclusion

We began this section with a quote from the renowned authority on ASC, Professor Uta Frith. She has done much to increase the understanding of ASC for those with the designation, their families, and for wider society. In the midst of detailing curriculum, their rationale, and the various qualification options students can aim for, it is possible to forget that the basic function of the proposed BAFS is to absorb such understanding and provide conditions that meet the very real needs that those with ASC have. For too long they have been faced with misunderstanding and this has brought much suffering and confusion for them. BAFS would be dedicated to alleviating such suffering and celebrating the unique attributes and qualities that ASC humans embody. In establishing a strong educational, therapeutic, sensory, and socially enhanceive environment BAFS will offer the best opportunity for students with ASC to shine, develop, and become successful learners. Whether in school, home or community they will able to adapt to changing situations and making sense and meaning from the sensory input they experience. At BAFS students will enhance their learning successes in becoming self-confident individuals, responsible citizens, and effective contributors. They will live as capable and respected members of wider society (EV1-4).

D2: Measuring Student Performance Effectively and Setting Challenging Targets

In Section C we outlined an ambitious Education Vision (EV) for our students. They indicate BAFS's students:

1. Will be successful learners (EV1)
2. Will be self-confident individuals (EV2)
3. Will be responsible citizens (EV3)
4. Will be effective contributors (EV4)

As we've already indicated in this application the needs of our students are varied and multi-faceted. Different curriculae and pedagogic approaches will be required for different children and this entails appropriate monitoring procedures, assessment models and targets. Data collected will be used to inform the Annual Review Process. This will be developed at a round-table multidisciplinary meeting chaired by the Principal. The meeting may include the Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO), Class Teacher, Subject Leader (secondary) or Year Group Leader (primary). Parent(s) will be invited to attend. The above fourfold vision will be the guiding light in developing the most appropriate Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), Targets, and Pathways for each student. The IEP, taking place each term, will draw these up, reset when necessary, and report all developments for the Annual Review. The IEP meeting will convene at the close of each term (6 times per year) with the necessary adjustments planned and disseminated to staff and parents/carers in time for implementation in the new term and before where appropriate (EV1).

Governor involvement will be essential throughout. They will be responsible for holding people to account and monitoring the targets through their role as governors and the scrutiny they will give to the performance of the Free School as set out clearly in the DfE Governors' handbook September 2014. The Executive Principal will work with the Principal in the role of Executive and will support and challenge as needed to ensure the information received by governors is calibrated and sufficient for them to undertake their role. (See Section F for further information).

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Targets

Our targets are for individual students and the school as a whole. This covers academic progress, attainment, attendance, student behaviour, well-being, participation, and student/parental satisfaction. They are aligned to the four elements of the EV. KPIs and Targets for teaching/staff will follow.

EV1 – Successful learners

- 100% of students who achieve level 4 at the end of Key Stage 2 in core subjects to achieve five or more grade C or better at GCSE (or equivalent) by the end of Key Stage 4.
- 100% of students who achieve level 4 in ICT at the end of Key Stage 2 to achieve grade C or better at GCSE by the end of Key Stage 4.
- 100% of students who are not entered for GCSE (or equivalent) to obtain an ASDAN or EQUALS qualification.
- 100% of students make at least 2 levels of progress per Key Stage during Key Stages 1 and 2 and three levels of progress from the end of Key Stage 2 to the end of Key Stage 4.
- 100% of students to achieve functional literacy and 95% numeracy by the end of Key Stage 4.
- 95% of students to achieve their termly Individual Education Plan targets for academic progress and personal development and their longer term plan for academic attainment. The 5% of students not attaining their termly IEP target will be placed on a 'learning risk'

register and will receive additional support through a HLTA. The Principal will monitor directly the progress of these students to ensure an appropriate provision map has been instigated, including outsourced support, and that students are attaining targets. Progress will be reviewed at the earliest IEP Meeting and subsequent ones throughout the school year.

- All students will receive a 'tool kit' to manage their behaviours and learning styles for life within the school, home, and community.

EV2 – Self-Confident individuals

- 85% students will develop the attributes of resilience and resourcefulness that will enable them to be more effective learners.
- 95% students will develop life and independence skills (supported where necessary) and make at least two levels of progress per key stage in a rigorous programme of personal, social and health education.
- Student attendance to be above 95% and for those where school refusal and non-attendance has been an issue their attendance will improve rapidly and be in line with the national average as soon as possible. Our attendance record for 2013-14 was 94.57% and for the current 2014-15 year 96.39% so far.
- 95% of student will successfully implement their Behaviour Management Plan
- There will be a 70% reduction in the number of incidents of challenging behaviour sometimes exhibited by students with ASC.
- 85% students will learn strategies for managing their own behaviour so as to live with dignity and as independently as possible.
- For the small minority of students whose extreme behaviour is managed with restrictive physical intervention a rigorously monitored restraint reduction programme will ensure a rapid reduction and timely elimination of the use of restraint procedures.
- All students will participate in a Co-curricular Programme which is an enrichment activity integral with the full curriculum, tailored to their individual needs and provided as part of the extended school day.

EV3 – Responsible Citizens

- 90% of students to successfully complete a careers programme with the careers adviser.
- 75% of students to complete a work placement in a local business or institution.
- 85% of students will develop skills to generalise learning through regular opportunities to apply and practise skills in the local community.
- 60%of students will undertake charity and community service.
- Dependent on the nature of each cohort we will aim to exceed the national average (currently circa 15%) of students with ASC who find and sustain employment at the end of statutory school.

EV4 – Effective Contributors

- For students to acquire the technological skills that will prepare them for 21st Century life enabling them to be safe, confident users of ICT.
- To learn the necessary social skills to enable students to form appropriate relationships and prepare them for adult college or working life.
- To capitalise on strengths and areas of interest, enabling students to excel in these areas and use these as a basis for informing transition and career planning.
- All students to gain enjoyment from learning and recognise the contribution they make to the school and community.
- All students to gain the skills needed for team work, team leadership and the acceptance and acknowledgement of responsibility for themselves and others in such settings.

Additional School targets

- Annually, full achievement of all quantitative and qualitative targets derived from the student targets stated above
- To provide a resource on all aspects of ASC for students, staff and parents in our partner mainstream schools.
- The quality of teaching and learning will be outstanding in 85% of lessons with 15% classed as good. Staff falling below this mark will be placed on Action Plans with SMART to ensure improvement with 4 weeks of recognition.

Assessment and Data Tracking

A particular concern fed back from the panel after reviewing our previous application was in relation to Assessment and Data Tracking. Will formats and procedures provide the information that links the effective teaching of one learning objective and the effective planning of the next? How will below-target results be monitored, reviewed, and rectified? We will address these concerns with:

- B Squared – produce assessment procedures across the curriculum for P Levels, National Curriculum, Foundation and the Pre-Entry Level and Entry levels of the Adult Curriculum.
- CASPA (Comparison and Analysis of Special Student Attainment) – CASPA offers a means of determining how students compare with others of a similar learning level in other institutions across the UK.
- Sensory Profile - The Sensory Profile enables teachers and their students to identify potential areas of difficulty and may enable them to understand why the difficulties exist. The profile considers each of the seven areas of sensory processing.
- PEP- 3 (Psycho-educational Profile third edition) – PEP-3 is a revision of the popular instrument that has been used for more than 20 years to assess the skills and behaviours of children with autism and communicative disabilities who function between the ages of 6 months to 7 years. The profile resulting from the PEP-3 graphically charts uneven and idiosyncratic development, emerging skills, and autistic behavioural characteristics. This test meets the need for an assessment tool to assist in the educational programming for young children (ages 3 through 5) with disabilities and is particularly useful in planning for older students' IEPs (Primary Baseline assessment).
- TEACCH Transition Assessment Profile (TTAP) – teachers will use this tool to assist individuals with ASC to prepare for a successful, semi-independent adult life (i.e., personal development, recreational living, adult integration into employment and residential arrangements, etc.). TTAP will also help the school identify the individual's principle transition goals, strengths and weaknesses. Second, a "Cumulative Record of Skills" (CRS), along with two data collection forms, provides an efficient method of ongoing assessment in community-based instruction. The TTAP can be used to facilitate educational and transitional planning.
- PACE2 – in addition to B Squared the school will pilot the PACE2 assessment programme assesses the attainment of students working towards Level 1 of the National Curriculum. The PACE2 Scheme offers a series of assessment tasks for every strand of every P Level in the areas of English, Maths, Science and PSHE&C. In this way it is possible to measure the P Level attainment of students rather than use best fit judgements. This promotes greater reliability. PACE2 also includes tasks up to and including Level 2a of the National Curriculum.

These processes will be monitored by the SLT, headed by the Principal. The Deputy Head will be responsible for the secondary elements, KS3 and 4. The Principal will oversee Foundational Stage

(FS), KS1, and KS2. A monthly meeting will identify assessments required and report on those completed. A chart to explain the assessments process in more detail is shown below.

Name of assessment	When?	How often? Who is overseeing?	Key Stage	Details
Pre-placement assessment (primary & secondary)	Before entry in to BAFS	Once	All Key Stages	To assess student in their current setting – all paperwork received
PEP-3	On entry in FS, KS1/2	Bi-annually Principal	KS1/2	Will assess each student's needs across a range of areas to allow individual planning based on emerging skills. Reports on programmes given to teachers and parents
Sensory Assessment	On entry in all Key Stages and then annually	Annually Principal for FS, KS 1/2 D. Head for KS 3/4	All Key Stages	Used to plan and review an individual 'sensory diet' for each student. Report and programmes to teachers'
Baseline curriculum assessments and teacher assessments	Termly assessments conducted by class teams, involving input from students and parents	Principal for FS, KS 1/2 D. Head for KS 3/4		IEP and Annual Review
B Squared/Connecting Steps	Teachers to input data 6 times per year	Per term Principal FS, KS 1/2 D. Head KS 3/4 Teachers	All	Will track progress individually for each student across national curriculum areas
PACE2	Assessment tasks to moderate levelling of data	Annually Principal FS, KS 1/2 D. Head KS	For students using EQUALS KS1/2/3	Will moderate teacher judgements when a student has achieved a level

		3/4		
SATS	Formal tests at KS1 and KS2	Once per year in Years 2 and 6 Principal FS, KS 1/2	For students who are KS2	For students working at appropriate levels to be tested e.g. KS2 to be working at a level 3 or above
Phonic screening check	Once	Year 1 Principal	KS1	A national check on development of phonics for all students
TTAP	Once	D. Head KS3		Will provide an assessment to plan transition to KS4 and adulthood.
CASPA	Once	Principal	KS 1/2/3/4	Will feed back to SLT, teachers, and Executive Principal/Governors

Critical to meeting the EV and the above KPIs is the careful and rigorous assessment and tracking of individuals, groups and cohorts of students. This will allow the SLT, Governors and the Executive Principal to ensure staff accountability and to revise individual student provisions and intervention strategies as appropriate. The process will begin in the Foundation Stage with on-entry assessment and continue six times a year throughout the school. Assessment data will be an integral part of the IEP reviews to ensure any gaps in learning are addressed promptly. Marking will be linked to student-friendly descriptors of each level. External moderation will be sought as often as possible and teachers will jointly moderate students work to assess levels. The use of PACE2 will assist teachers in moderating curriculum levels using activities designed to assess curricular progress using EQUALS.

BAFS believes that effective assessment practice will involve both formative and summative approaches. The children will be kept informed about the standards of attainment they have reached. They will be taught to communicate their understanding and evaluate their learning through the effective use of formative assessment. Students will also be encouraged to reflect upon their own learning needs and experience, indicating what new targets would help them mark their progress and what needs to be in place for successful achievement. This would link summative and formative approaches in the student's conception of their learning pathway. All markers of progress will be shared regularly with parents to enable the partnership between home and school to be optimized for the student's benefit. Assessment data will form the basis of the child's Annual Review and towards the Education and Health Care Plans as these are phased in over the next 3 years by Bristol Local Authority.

Assessment data will also be scrutinised 6 times per year by the SLT and be sent to parents. It will be presented formally via a report to parents, the governing body, DfE and the local authority at least once per year (EV1). Governors will receive information at least termly.

Key Stages 1 and 2

A number of assessments will be used throughout the course of a student's education journey. At Key Stage 1 & 2 PEP-3 will be used as a Baseline Assessment. There will be Statutory Assessment at levels 3-5 upon reaching the end of the Key Stages that cover English reading, grammar, punctuation, and spelling, along with mathematics. There will also be P Levels Assessment and B Squared each term, with CASPA once per year. CASPA allows students with similar profiles and who began at similar starting ages to be compared. BAFS will then track how its students compare with others across England & Wales. B-Squared breaks down the curriculum into smaller, achievable steps and therefore allow percentage measures of Level progress. With these indicators appropriate targets can be established and monitored from early P Levels right through to secondary (end of Key Stage 3). Overall school targets will also be compared nationally and appropriate targets established to ensure the progress of the institution as a whole.

There will also be student-centred development in the Functional Curriculum, including core numeracy, literacy, and communication skills. These will be assessed using the above protocols. Planning pathways toward student targets and individual student KPIs will be established and reviewed in the IEP Meeting. All data collected throughout the year will be held centrally and by the Year-group Teacher (primary) and Class Tutor/Teacher (secondary). From ages 9–13 these will be assessed in line with ASDAN (New Horizons) schemes with pathways set and reviewed in the light of new information drawn from formative (those listed above) and summative means. As previously mentioned (Section C and D1) BAFS would be a unique facility in the Bristol Authority area in offering education from 4–16. All reviews and establishing of pathways will take place with the long-term future of the student in mind and incorporate all elements expounded in the fourfold vision. BAFS will then be able to give the best possible conditions to result in educational success, psychological positivity, social and communicative dexterity, independence, and employment compatibility (EV1-4).

Please refer to the table above for the staff responsible for the assessments, recording and reporting. This responsibility also includes monitoring, commissioning and supporting the design of programmes, and providing analysis and commentary to the Executive Principal and Governing Body.

The G&T Curriculum may well involve a student being placed in the mainstream primary. Assessment would follow in the form of Statutory Assessment but this summative method would be supplemented by formative approaches. These would involve consultation with the student themselves, asking how they feel they are coping and whether this placement is suiting their needs. All assessment information will be recorded and discussed by the Year Group teachers in BAFS and the mainstream school, along with the HLTA accompanying the student. A report (with recommendations) will be passed to those participating in the IEP (the Year Group teacher will be common to both meetings) to ensure that learning opportunities and environments meet the student's needs (EV1).

There will be two formal Parent Consultation meetings and one full report each year. The progress data will be shared six times a year. Other meetings will be arranged with parents where there is concern over progress.

Key Stages 3 and 4

This curriculum will again be ability-dependent. The pathway for Key Stage 3 students will be based on the results, assessments and recommendations of the IEP at the close of the student's final year of primary schooling. Students themselves being involved in this process allow interests to be encouraged and pathways created to support these as an effective learning route. BAFS will run EQUALS schemes of work, assessed through PACE2, ASDAN, Vocational Skills and G & T

Curriculae to match these interests, abilities, and recommendations from the IEP. Baseline and Transition Assessment will be conducted using TEACCH Transition Assessment Profile (TTAP). Building on the Structured Teaching approach developed throughout BAFS this will provide assessment information to establish appropriate pathways that lead on to meet the EV and KPIs. TTAP will be especially useful in helping students participate in setting their own pathways through secondary school and beyond, cognizant that each conditions the other. It will help them become masters (sic), as it were, of their own destiny (EV1-4),

As students (and their parents) moving from the primary facility into secondary will already be familiar with this approach it provides the valued continuity BAFS is seeking to support. It will support all student-centred development, including vocational and leisure skills, independent functioning, functional communication, and interpersonal behaviour.

Teacher assessment will take place at Key Stage 3 and it would be these that would determine whether a student would access the mainstream curriculum. The results from this will provide strong summative factors for what will come in Key Stage 4. TTAP assessment will take place in year 9 and all students will have a Graduate Transition Programme (GTP) including a critical skills record so that students are constantly working on the skills they will need for adulthood (EV4).

At Key Stage 4 more emphasis is placed on developing independence. Skills such as bed-making, shopping, cleaning and making snacks will be prioritised to help students make the transition to adulthood. Students will follow individual routes according to the qualifications pathway they are on (EV1). Other summative assessments will come in the form of recognised qualifications. These will be available in ASDAN (Preparing for Adulthood and Transition Challenge), Entry Level in Functional Skills, English, Maths, Horticulture, and Photography, and wherever possible GCSE.

Please refer to the table above for the staff responsible for the assessment, recording and reporting. They will also monitor and support the design of programmes, providing analysis and commentary to the Executive Principal and Governing Body.

Behaviour Management

BAFS's Behaviour Management System (BMS) will see each child having their own Behaviour Management Programme (BMP). Integrated with the curriculum the BMP will be assessed and set as part of the IEP. It will be led, monitored, and delivered by Class Teachers. Data will be analysed using Team-Teach data sheets and the School Information Management System (SIMS – see below). A specific BMP will be adopted and all staff will become aware of the content. The class teacher will have the responsibility of keeping the information updated and pertinent to the child's needs. At each teachers' meeting students on the 'at risk' register (behaviour) will be discussed and programmes agreed. The overall responsibility will reside with the SLT and Principal of the School and monitored by the Governors. Parents will be involved in the programme and encouraged to support the child at home and in other environments. Medication will be discussed. Team-Teach techniques will be discussed with all staff who have contact with the child. Each child will be encouraged to actively participate in their BMP. For example, a Calming Room, available for all children, may become especially important for those struggling to deal with their confusing emotions. Such a child, as part of their BMP, will be invited to become responsible in the process of returning to emotional stability. It will be understood by teacher and student alike that the Calming Room is a space of safety and succour rather than a punishment facility under the control of teachers.

Students, as part of their self-awareness and knowledge of emotional disturbance can independently ask to go to these supportive environments. They can learn when it is helpful to do so, and that spending time in such places is not negative castigation by, and exile from, their

peers, but part of their learning journey. BAFs's approach to behaviour management is about encouraging students to understand what conditions help them become independent and able to take increasing responsibility for themselves in operating as effective contributors in school and the wider community (EV1-4). As such there is no time-out facility. Audits will be carried out after each lesson or at the end of the school day to enable effective monitoring (EV1).

All students will be provided with a sensory diet to alleviate and manage any sensory processing difficulty. In our experience, sensory issues, alongside difficulties with communication, often trigger stress and confusion for students with ASC. If not addressed their behaviour can become challenging for others. Through an ASC-friendly environment to minimise sensory discomfort, aid understanding and support physical needs, we believe that behaviour will improve. Techniques using Team-Teach strategies to positively redirect energies and cultivate calm will also support students. The successful implementation of mindfulness training will be appropriately adapted for ASC students explored to strengthen this. Rewards will be used to celebrate children's good behaviour. Social skill training offers each student increasing awareness of how their behaviour affects others. Role models in the wider Academy will be very helpful in encouraging students to understand and enjoy deciding to behave helpfully and harmoniously with others. Individual BMPs will also have this emphasis upon cultivating and rejoicing in positive behaviour. To support this BAFS will recognise that specialist help may be required and liaise with CAHMS, counsellors, and youth services as required.

We believe that the total ASC environment, structured approaches, specific individual interventions, individual behaviour planning and tracking of success will allow 85% of students to learn strategies to manage their own behaviour.

Team-Teach

BAFS will adopt the Team-Teach approach. This provides Positive Handling Strategies with the explicit function of reducing the number of serious incidents and/or restraints. Learning outcomes and behaviour should improve which in turn enhances team-work, co-operation and morale. The Positive Handling Strategies have sufficient range and flexibility to be appropriate across the age and development range. They are applicable to both to students who are intentionally challenging and to those whose behaviour is born from short-term confusion and distress. Team-Teach enables staff to feel more confident and competent in their management of disruptive and "challenging" behaviour, reducing stress by increasing safety and security for all involved.

School Information Management System (SIMS)

The SIMS procedures will involve recording and monitoring the ability, attainment, and progress of students through mark sheets, tracking grids, and performance analysis. The SIMS has already been adapted to track student behaviour across the school and will be extended to cover all additional students. It will allow class teachers, parents, and the SLT to see each student's individual record (for parents they will only have access to their own child's data) and will also be available for analysis when reviewing behaviour plans. SIMS will allow teachers to record positive and negative behaviours each session and will be adapted specifically for the needs of children with ASC.

Annual Reviews(AR)

The function of the AR is to bring together all the data collected from the academic year and compare this with previous reviews tracking the student's pathway from the entry assessment. It will be led by the Principal accompanied by others on the SLT. It will also have present, for primary, the Year Group Teacher, and for secondary, the Form/Class Teacher. It will also draw on reports and recommendations from the IEP Meetings and other resources as applicable to the particular student. The primary functions of the Annual Review are to assess and decide upon:

1. The child's progress towards meeting the long term objectives specified in the Statement/EHC Plan and to collate and record information that the school and other professionals can use in planning their support for the child (in the case of the first annual review). Subsequent to the Statement/EHC Plan being made the AR will consider the child's progress towards meeting the targets agreed and recorded in the IEP's. Future ARs will assess progress towards the goals listed in the IEP's and established at the previous review.
2. The special provision made for the child, including the appropriateness of any special equipment provided in the context of the National Curriculum and associated assessment and reporting arrangements. Where appropriate, the school should consider providing a profile of the student's current levels of attainment in basic literacy, numeracy and life skills for those being assessed with P Levels, and English, Maths and Science for students under National Curriculum Level 1. A summary of progress achieved in other areas of the curriculum, including the National Curriculum, would also be necessary. Where the Statement/EHC Plan involves a modification or inapplicability of the National Curriculum, the school should indicate what special arrangements have been made for the child.
3. The continuing appropriateness of the Statement/EHC Plan in the light of the student's performance during the previous year, any additional special educational needs which may have become apparent in that time, and if any needs that have been met and are no longer an issue. The AR will thus consider whether to cease to maintain the Statement or whether to make any amendments, including any further modifications or inapplicability of the National Curriculum. If the Statement is to be maintained, the Annual Review will set new targets for the coming year, progress towards which will be considered at the next review.

In Bristol the move towards replacing Statements with Education and Health Care plans is being phased in over a 3 year period but other local authorities have already introduced them for students. It is anticipated that for the first few years following opening, BAFS will need to run both AR meetings and EHC Plan reviews in conjunction with other agencies.

Quality of Teaching, Professional Development, and Retention

With such an EV and ambitious KPIs BAFS will ensure that teaching and teaching assistance is of the highest quality. We will seek to recruit candidates in all posts of the highest calibre. For teaching and support staff our interview process will be rigorous and stringent and always involve an observation of their teaching. We will appoint new members of staff who can deliver outstanding results in pre-learning skills, curriculum delivery, qualification attainment, behaviour management, successful post-school placement, and student and parental satisfaction. This will be thoroughly monitored and evaluated by adopting and building on all the stringent methods currently undertaken by the partner Academy.

BAFS will provide a thorough induction for new staff which will support their introduction to the school provide Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities throughout the academic year. This will be linked to staff appraisal. For all staff, Appraisals will take place annually and be linked to student performance. Lesson observations will be undertaken by the Principal and Deputy Head Teacher at least 6 times per year. Any teacher who is underperforming (an observed lesson which is less than good or outstanding) will be given support to improve. This will be detailed in an Action Plan drawn up by the teacher in conjunction with the observer of the lesson. The Action Plan will set targets for key improvements and detail any support needed in order to reach them. CPD will be a contractual requirement of all staff and led by example by the SLT. The latter will monitor this and report to the Principal and Governors regarding their own CPD. Upon completion of training a date will be set for a repeat observation and key points will be

expected to have been addressed. BAFS will adopt all of the Academy's existing policies in terms of staff appraisal, and there are stringent capability and disciplinary procedures.

Teachers will be given an opportunity to observe outstanding practitioners in our partner Academy and in other outstanding institutions (EV1). The Principal will, on a monthly basis, meet individually with each teacher to discuss their classroom practice, student progress, and general management of the classroom. BAFS will be proactive in supporting outstanding teaching practice. Teachers and TAs will be encouraged to expand upon their professional interests, knowledge and experience by attending courses in external institutions. The excellent links with the sponsor, the University of Bristol, provides a clear pathway to such development. There are also other institutions nationally who provide excellent further training in ASC such as the Universities of Birmingham and Bangor. Staff will be encouraged to share good/outstanding practice and skills with each other and to actively improve these through quality CPD. The SLT will oversee this throughout BAFS.

If awarded the flexibility of Free School status we will consistently review remuneration packages and fiscally reward excellence throughout its teaching, and non-teaching practice. Recommendations will be passed from the SLT to the Principal for consideration by the Governors and form part of the annual Appraisals and Academy Review.

BAFS will consider that its EV applies as much to staff as it does to students. The environment we wish to create is one in which teachers, assistants, indeed all staff, can thrive. In addition to CPD and flexible fiscal arrangements, therefore, key components in supporting success and morale are well-being and a subjective sense of satisfaction. All staff will have to work with challenging behaviour at times, and coupled with the demands of contributing to a successful institution always seeking to improve can see some struggling. This can be exacerbated by inter-staff tensions or problems emerging outside the school. When this is the case staff will be given access to appropriate resources to help them manage these stresses. The Action Plan will contain such recommendations and delivery will be monitored by the SLT. For example, Mindfulness training could be introduced that offers practical exercises and guidance upon working with unhelpful attitudes and painful emotions/feelings. This and other proven approaches will be considered. The SLT will be responsible for all reviews being conducted in a culture of care and support rather than fault-finding and punishment.

BAFS will create an environment in which conditions for success are established throughout the school, integrating approaches for students, teaching staff, and leadership. For teaching staff in particular these conditions involve consistent attainment of outstanding levels of teaching practice, supporting and boosting staff morale, developing expertise and the passion for it, and retaining what and who is working.

Parental Involvement

Parents/carers will be involved at all stages of their child's education. The school will have an 'open door' policy to parents. Each child will have a home-school diary which goes across both settings. Staff will record information on each child every day and share with parents. Similarly parents can share details of their child at home via the diary. This daily two-way correspondence will allow both staff and parents to be consistent in their approaches with students and to support each other toward common goals. Meetings between staff and parents will occur at least once per term to discuss their child's progress, share information, and priorities. A written report will be sent home at the end of each term which outlines the child's progress. Parents will be consulted regularly using questionnaires and able to receive daily feedback through home-school diaries as to their child's progress and/or significant incidents in school (EV1-4).

Home visits will be conducted by request as for some parents BAFS may be geographically far from their home and they may struggle with transport access (see Home Visits Guidelines). The school will be flexible in building relationships with parents and will also offer workshops on subjects which will help the child both at home and at school – such as behaviour/sleeping difficulties/sensory integration/e-safety, etc. The school recognises that parents have valuable knowledge and skills with their own child that can be extended into the school environment. Similarly, the school will be able to share its expertise, resources, and knowledge of the curriculum with parents. Consistency between home and school is vital in order for students to be calm, alert and able to learn in school and to ensure that skills learnt in either setting can be generalised.

BAFS already has good links with parent-led organisations, such as The National Autistic Society (Bristol Branch) and Supportive Parents². BAFS will offer parents a venue for regular coffee mornings so that parents can have the opportunity to meet each other and attend relevant training appropriate to the needs of their children.

Introduction to Staffing

The diagram below gives a breakdown of the proposed Multi-Agency Academy's management structure, and details the specific staffing provision we've outlined for BAFS. We believe this plan, once established, will give children with ASC the greatest chance of success. Outstanding teachers, leaders, and support staff committed to our vision are essential if this is to happen. Also essential is a high staff-to-student ratio, so we will employ 12 teachers, 24 TAs, 3 HLTAs (appointed with key responsibilities in numeracy, literacy, inclusion, and therapy programme delivery), premises and administrative support. This is in addition to the Principal and Deputy Head. All newly appointed staff will have the highest levels of experience and ambition for students to meet the Education Vision.

² A charity providing the Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIAS) for Bristol, North Somerset & South Gloucestershire.

Leadership

There will be a Principal of BAFS and a Deputy Head. The Executive Principal of the Multi-Academy Trust will oversee the work and core provision for all schools and academies in the Trust. The Principal and Deputy will be located one at each phase. If the Principal Designate is a secondary specialist with experience of working with adolescents with ASC we would therefore appoint a primary specialist Deputy Head and vice versa.

██████████, ██████████ If Free School status is granted and BAFS formed a new Principal and Deputy Head would be appointed. Making the transition will require very effective leadership and in ██████████ we have the strength of experience and vision to provide a basis for the most sure-footed start whether she is personally appointed or not.

The role of Executive Principal is to lead the strategic planning, use and development of the Trust's physical, human and financial resources in order to secure optimum educational benefits for all students. This role will also lead and implement the quality improvement programme across the schools. The Executive Principal will also engage with potential new schools and manage their transition into the Trust.

Teaching and Learning Responsibility Allowances will be awarded to teachers as the school develops and expands. The criteria for awards will change according to the needs of the school at any particular time. For example they may involve Key Stage responsibilities or specific leadership in areas of development specified in the BAFS Improvement Plan. Teachers successful in TLRs will receive financial and peer recognition, and further support for CPD.

All teaching and support staff will be supported to succeed in leadership responsibilities. Recognised, celebrated, and leading to career development opportunities this support will ensure greater retention of high quality, experienced personnel. Staff are an essential aspect of EV fulfilment and we hope to have shown some of the ways BAFS will invest in their leadership potential, support ambitious achievement, encourage best practice, institute a culture of shared expertise, facilitate peer-to-peer collaboration, and integrate the development of students with that of their educators.

Teaching and Support Staff

The number of staff we have budgeted for is based on the staff to student ratios that exists locally and nationally and as recommended by experts. For teaching staff this is a ratio of 1 per 7 students and for TAs this is 2 per 7. The only exception to this is that once we are at full capacity in the secondary phase we have included an HLTA over and above the 2:7 ratio to allow for support when attending the partner Academy. In addition we will appoint two HLTAs to lead on targeted intervention for literacy and numeracy to ensure students make rapid progress.

Staffing is based conservatively on the premise that every student will have band 3 top-up funding from their respective local authority. We recognise, however, that some students, as in our current cohort in the ARB, will have higher support needs and therefore be receiving higher levels of funding at bands 4 and 5. This will mean greater flexibility in terms of staffing and offer career pathways for staff.

Primary and Secondary Schools

In the previous application the Panel were concerned that the cohort of Teaching Staff (in the ARB) were not of the high quality necessary to realise BAFS's Education Vision. This was based upon the 'satisfactory' inspection of Gay Elms Primary School. Since this time and indeed since the previous application we have had an Ofsted Inspection which rated Merchants' Academy

(including the ARB) as 'good' (see section C) and a number of teaching staff have been replaced. The new staff have been chosen to meet the needs noted in the ARB Improvement Plan.

Collectively, our present teaching staff are operating, or have previously operated as, subject leaders. Some have experience of secondary curriculum delivery and held leadership posts in previous employment. Members of the current team have also been directly involved in overseeing students' successful transitions into placements beyond secondary schooling, whether employment, further training, or new support environment. In other words though they have been appointed to a primary school our present teaching staff have the experience and vision to ensure a successful pathway perspective throughout 4-16 schooling and beyond. Should the BAFS application be successful then new staff will be appointed both at primary and secondary. These will be done to match the needs of the improved curriculum outlined earlier. All teachers will have had their teaching observed during the recruitment and selection process. All teachers will take at least one curriculum subject lead.

Teachers will provide the input across mathematics, English, ICT and all other subjects for students who are solely based in BAFS. They will help develop, along with others attending the IEP Meetings, individual programmes for the students. Class/Form teachers will also support any learning that takes place in the partner Academy, liaising each week with the HLTA accompanying the student and the Subject Leader teaching them. Teachers from the partner Academy will deliver Physical Education (PE), and MFL.

Teaching Assistants

The high quality TAs currently employed within the Resource Base could form the core of the TA provision for primary. Additional staff will be employed for increased numbers of students and for the secondary provision. They will deliver basic vocational qualifications, therapeutic support and provide study and lesson support. In addition, TAs will play a lead role in the social and emotional aspects of students' development. BAFS will value this active assistance and accord it sufficient pay and conditions in recognition of the importance it places on TAs as fundamental elements of classroom success.

Administrative and Premises Staff

The school will need a Receptionist, an Administrative Assistant, and a Finance Assistant. It is likely that the leadership of finance will come from a shared service allocation from the Trust Finance Team rather than a member of staff within the BAFS.

The Premises Team will comprise of 1 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) to be within BAFS. Since BAFS could be located on existing or adjoining Academy sites it is likely to be in the form of a shared service charge from the Trust. The Premises Team will deliver site and cleaning services across the institutions. This will ensure coverage across the day and week enabling any normal activity or emergencies to be fully covered at all times.

Other

The MAT will provide the core services of HR, payroll, Finance Director and Facilities Management. In addition there will be a centrally-located Careers Adviser and Work Experience Coordinator. BAFS will employ under contract specialists such as SALTs, Educational Psychologists, Play Therapists and Music Therapist

D4: Meeting Students' Needs

BAFS will cater for students from KS1 to KS4 who have an ASC and a Statement of Special Educational Needs/EHC Plan. We've listed some of the specific needs above, when establishing our curriculum rationale. We've also included ways in which these needs can be met. This section will explore some of the common needs students with ASC have and more on specific cohort groupings that will overlap to some degree with what's in D1.

Curriculum

We have built a curriculum which addresses the difficulties faced by students with ASC – primarily in communication and social skills. As referenced right at the beginning of this section the spectrum of abilities, medical, and emotional needs of those with ASC can differ greatly between individuals and within an individual's learning journey. In launching BAFS our curriculum will address the needs of the anticipated student cohort (see D1, Student Needs in Practice).

The curriculum is flexible with different pathways open to students of varying abilities. All pathways will have clear markers of success and end with formal qualifications (for all). As noted (EV4 in particular) BAFS will emphasise building successful futures for its students as full members of society and place great value on all undertaking work experience placements, voluntary community-based work and charity fundraising (EV4).

Religious and Sex Education

Religious Education will be provided using the model operating throughout Bristol in order to reflect the faiths of the diverse community that the school is part of. Sex Education will be provided using the policies and procedures in our partner Academy but also working closely with social services and parents to ensure that any individual programmes and lessons are differentiated and adapted to match the challenges and needs of each student (EV1).

Enrichment Activities

An extended school day encompassing Co-curricular activities will see students benefit from additional teaching and learning opportunities during the school week. Creating a culture of learning as a life skill is particularly pertinent for ASC students as they can have great difficulty generalising new knowledge and skills. In making Co-curricular activities compulsory BAFS seeks to inculcate this attitude within each student and enable them transfer learning and life skills into the home, local community, and beyond (EV4). See above.

BAFS will be co-located at both primary and secondary levels with our partner mainstream Academy. This will ensure that a flexible and inclusive curriculum can be offered and that staff in all settings can share expertise. It also ensures that students throughout the Academy can have greater opportunities which are matched to their individual needs. We will also use this proximity to enable a greater sense of inclusion. For students in BAFS this will mean developing an understanding, ability-dependent, of their differing characteristics with a view to these being valued as part of mainstream society. For students in the mainstream school this proximity will promote, through a mainstream-located resource, an appreciation for and value the contribution people with ASC can make to society at large. Although they may go to dedicated schools they are part of one society that values all equally.

An illustration of the pathways available in BAFS for different ability groups is given below.

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Standard BAFS Core Offer + 'New Horizons' + AoPE/ ASDAN Bronze + Work experience opportunities	Standard BAFS Core Offer + Inclusive opportunities in Primary and secondary Partnership school + NVQs and BTECs + Work experience opportunities	Main School Curriculum Key Stage 1-4 + GCSEs + Work experience opportunities

The Role of Senior Leadership

BAFS will develop School Improvement Plans (SIPs), to be rigorously monitored by senior leadership and the governing body to ensure all targets are met and successful progression is made to achieve an outstanding provision. The role of Governor is:

Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction

Holding the headteacher [Principal] to account for the educational performance of the school [BAFS] and its students, and the performance management of staff

Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent." (DfE Handbook 2014)

External moderation of the school to judge the efficacy of provision will occur annually and BAFS will employ consultants to do this. After reviewing their findings the Executive Principal will give clear actions to address weaknesses and support success, again employing consultants as required. BAFS will also continuously review research and national policies that impact upon teaching and curriculum practice.

Environment and Staffing

The total environment at BAFS will be tailored to the needs of students with ASC so that they can make optimal learning progress. Due to their sensory needs and lack of understanding of their environment, the interior of the building will be designed with visually recognisable pathways and low-arousal environments. The classrooms will have clearly designated spaces with individual workstations for each student in line with TEACCH methodology. All resources and areas will be visually clear and the school will have Calming Rooms in all phases. ASC specific interventions will be used as we have outlined previously.

The staff will have both ASC and curricular expertise and be trained in the interventions outlined. They will be lifelong learners and regularly undertake quality CPD to ensure they are providing the latest (evidenced-based) interventions. Staff will have thorough knowledge of the latest curricular and ASC developments. They will provide an outstanding teaching and learning environment through activities that are highly motivating and matched to each student's needs. Thus, staff will maximise each student's attainment opportunities. Stringent monitoring, regular observations, and performance appraisals will ensure staff maintain outstanding standards.

Discrimination

BAFS is opposed to all forms of discrimination based on a person's ethnic origin, class, religion, nationality, age, gender, disability, ability or sexuality. We will collectively (staff and governors) work towards ensuring that our practices both within and outside the classroom are anti-discriminatory with regard to our interactions with everyone in the school community (EV1-4). All staff and governors will promote equal opportunities and educational inclusion. Our collective efforts, supported by visitors, parents and carers, will help to ensure that all our students and their families are valued and treated equally. At BAFS we will strive to have a school community where everyone is valued equally because, rather than despite, of their individual differences.

All incidents of racial discrimination will be recorded and action will be taken to address the particular incident and underlying issues. Parents will be regarded as partners in this and will help us work individually with students to alleviate the pain of the victim and remove the views of the perpetrator. The curriculum will support multi-culturalism and diversity and all resources used will reflect our own community and the wider Bristol community (EV1-4).

Non-verbal and Verbal Learners

Approximately a third of the ARB's current cohort are non-verbal learners. BAFS will work closely with parents and SALTS in order to design and implement programmes to increase the communication skills of these children, first and foremost by providing an environment for them which is appropriate to their needs. All staff will be trained to moderate their language to the skill level of the student, and to supplement instructions visually (either with symbols, pictures, real objects or in some cases Makaton sign language). All work activities presented will be visually clear and presented in small, achievable steps. Augmentative communication systems will be used where appropriate as our priority is for children to communicate their needs and wants as effectively as possible. The use of ICT will be important for these students and BAFS will keep up to date with new technologies in order to develop the communication skills and opportunities for them. For instance, some students may use iPad minis as their augmentative system. The Derbyshire Language System will provide a structured teaching and learning system to support development of language and understanding and will be used throughout the school if the student is at this stage in their communication (pre-complex language) (EV4).

For other, more verbally-able students, communication will remain an issue, albeit their difficulties being more subtly presented. Staff will be trained in recognising these and be aware of their own use of language when communicating to students. For example teachers must explicitly teach idioms, give clear and direct instructions, and provide explanations/rationale to enhance social understanding.

A SALT will provide direct interventions when appropriate and programmes will be integrated into the curriculum by classroom staff throughout the day. The SALT will also regularly train and update staff and parents on each child's programme (EV4).

EAL Students

Our experience shows that a number of factors need to be taken into account when working with EAL students (at present 7%). They may have SLD with little or no verbal ability. The student may also be in a domestic environment where English is spoken and heard infrequently. If both of these are the case the parents/carers will be encouraged to use picture symbols to communicate English words that match key words used in the primary language. PECS will be employed for favoured items to monitor progression of language and communication skills (EV1&4).

If a child has greater verbal ability we would encourage parents to speak to them in English as much as possible, giving them exercises and a progressive programme that raises the student's ability. Skills in EAL teaching for those with ASC will be a criterion used in assessing applications for new posts and we will aim to have in-school expertise. If further training is required this will be undertaken and reviewed as part of the School Improvement Plan. Wherever there are shortfalls in provision we will bring in experts in the field, including a Speech and Language Therapist and specialists in EAL delivery for children with ASC (EV1&4).

Support for Girls

Based on our current intake in the ARB, as well as national figures, girls are likely to be in the minority in BAFS. Their needs will require careful consideration and opportunities specific to their requirements will be implemented in line with individual needs and the latest research. Girls are also likely to require support in managing puberty, in particular menstruation, as well as keeping safe as they mature physically. Girls will be given opportunities to mix with those of similar ages in our partner Academy in order to provide them with a wider peer group and role models. They will have different and differing needs in PSHE&C and Sex Education and BAFS will therefore work closely with parents and each student to ensure consistency across environments and respect for cultural differences (EV1).

Gifted & Talented Students

Careful consideration will be given to the particular needs of such students. We see our responsibility as ensuring the provision of a curriculum, methodology, and pedagogic approach appropriate to their level of, and potential, ability. Opportunities will exist to work individually and in the wider Academy and as tasks will be differentiated according to their profile the student will have all the necessary conditions to attain the highest formal qualifications possible commensurate with their abilities and interests.

Diet

Many students with ASC have restricted dietary choices and we will work closely with the Nutrition Service, SALTs, School Meals Teams (currently Eden), and parents to support students access to a healthy, nutritional and varied meal each day. Students will be encouraged to learn to shop and prepare their own meals. In cooking sessions from Early Years right through the school students will be encouraged to extend the range of tastes and textures they will tolerate eating. BAFS will ensure that students understand what constitutes a healthy diet and have an appropriate approach in helping a student tolerate and even enjoy a food they think they dislike but which provides important nutritional properties.

Sensory Integration

We know from research, direct experience, and personal accounts from adults with ASC that altered sensory perceptions can be painful, confusing, and have a direct impact on a student's ability to focus on any learning task. We have, therefore, designed an addition to our curriculum to support students in this area. This will identify needs, design programmes of support, and record progress with their skills/tolerances (EV1). To address sensory issues arising from assessment individual programs of support may be drawn up and a sensory diet offered to help. There are further assessments which can be used to determine specific student targets, especially when identifying taste tolerances.

The school will offer each student a 'sensory diet'. A full sensory assessment will be conducted on entry into the free school so that any difficulties in sensory processing can be identified. Parents will also be consulted as part of the assessment. Each student will then have a plan – which may include individual activities such as sensory integration (using the school's swings), as well as a complete package of tolerances/intolerances and careful and supported access to de-sensitisation strategies if needed. For some students this may involve the use of headphones, weighted jackets, 'chewy tubes' or 'move and sit' cushions to provide proprioceptive feedback when they are working. Sensory integration 'swings' will be available in all classrooms and staff will be trained (in conjunction with an OT) to deliver sensory integration sessions to students who have been identified as requiring support in this. Students will be encouraged to manage their own sensory differences as they mature and will be introduced to strategies showing how to do so. The Occupational Therapy Service will be brought in as appropriate for regular advice concerning individual students and all staff will have regular training in managing students' sensory needs (EV1-4).

Sensory learning is often integrated with, and extended throughout, the curriculum and individual priority objectives are also allowed to develop through topic-related activities. Topics provide a context for learning for some children. It is essential that skills are maintained in everyday environments and that children are allowed to develop and generalise skills in context (EV1). Intervention strategies to improve sensory integration will need to be recorded in order to demonstrate their efficacy. Proforma are available to do this and dedicated lessons for sensory work must demonstrate the teaching and learning aspect of the curriculum they capacitate. Progress will be monitored, assessed, and future intervention schemes planned. This will be overseen by the IEP meeting. Sensory skills will be developed and enhanced through music therapy either individually or in small groups and the use of the school's sensory room.

Safeguarding

BAFS will follow the secure procedures currently in place in our partner Academy for safeguarding. (See Ofsted report) The Principal of the school and the Deputy will be trained to Level 3 in safeguarding. Overall responsibility for this will rest with the Principal monitored by Governors. Staff will all undergo Level 1 training annually.

The particular needs of our students and the phasing in of EHC Plans over the next three years will ensure that we will continue to develop close working relationships with other agencies and partner. Many students will have their own Social Workers from the Disabled Childrens' team, and their additional needs as shown in Section C clearly illustrate how closely we will need to work with professionals from other agencies. Please see D1 for more information on how a SALT, OT, and Music Therapist will be commissioned and their input integrated into the curriculum.

Emotional Management and Challenging Behaviour

Students with ASC may exhibit some behaviour which is inappropriate and challenging. BAFS will view all behaviour as a form of communication and will adopt the following positive intervention strategies to manage students' behaviour in a consistent way and help them become effective contributors and responsible citizens (EV3 &4). Staff will teach all students how to recognise and deal with their own emotions, as well as identifying and responding to others' emotions. This may be at a very simple level to begin with. Children will be given the freedom to express their own emotions and staff will support this by directing them to visual cues in order to do so. Examples of these include using Feelings Charts, Emotional Barometers.

All staff will be trained in Team-Teach techniques and have the skills to manage behaviour safely, with the aim of supporting students in developing strategies in managing their own behaviour. To this end Calming Rooms (see above for more details) will be provided in each phase of the school. BAFS will bring in the services of a trained ASC Counsellor to support staff as part of the Behaviour Management System (BMS). Teachers, SEN, and the SLT will liaise also with Community Mental Health teams to ensure the safety of its students at all stages of their learning. In this particular attention will be given to the stages of transition into the school, from primary to secondary, into work placements, and those completing their final year.

Having ASC with difficulties in sensory perception, communication and social understanding can affect a student's mental health. They may also have an additional mental health diagnosis. Depression and anxiety are experienced by some students in our current cohort and research suggests that the trials and tribulations of adolescence place greater strain upon those with ASC. We will therefore work closely with CAHMS and other mental health agencies to ensure that students with additional needs in this area are identified and supported (EV2).

Below we've listed some of the intervention strategies we will use to manage challenging behaviour, support emotional well-being, and help students become more emotionally intelligent and communicative.

Positive Attention

In order to reinforce appropriate behaviour staff will use positive attention strategies, including:

- praise
- happy expansive body language
- affirmation that children are on target
- pointing out good role models

Responding to Triggers

Staff will be aware of certain triggers for some children's behaviours, and also to be aware of behaviour beginning to escalate. They can diffuse situations by:

- distracting the child
- offering an alternative activity
- giving a timescale for desired activity/object e.g. "You can have a turn in one minute."
- giving reminders of rewards for good behaviours
- adapting the timetable to respond to individual needs

Rewards

- Rewards will be used to encourage appropriate behaviour. Rewards are whatever is motivating for the child, and could, therefore, be tangible or intangible – objects or actions. Edible rewards will be used when appropriate, as for some children this is highly motivating.
- Reward systems involving food will be agreed with parents.
- Rewards will be given immediately after behaviour has occurred, although for some children who are able to understand and wait for a reward, they may be given after a longer period. Some children will be able to understand a token system e.g. exchanging tokens/coins for bigger rewards.
- Any such reward will also be accompanied by immediate verbal praise.

- In any reward system the child needs to understand why they are being rewarded.
- Reward systems will be visual if possible.
- Children should be involved in identifying their own targets and rewards, as appropriate.

Reducing Anxiety

Staff will recognise that all children with an ASC can be extremely anxious at times. Staff will help to reduce this through:

- massage/pressure – shoulders, head, back, hands
- touch – reassuring hand-holding/linking arms etc.
- using quiet, calm voices
- offering quiet, soft, safe places to go
- giving the child choices
- offering headphones with soft music playing
- offering familiar, calming activities
- ear defenders
- mindfulness training

Additional Medical Needs

We currently have a high proportion of students with additional medical needs in the ARB (46%). We will work closely with the health teams to support these students. TAs will have training in administering medication, manual handling, and First Aid. There will be two designated TAs trained in First Aid in each phase of the school. For some students additional training will be provided in order to support them with their specific needs, for example to manage epilepsy and cerebral palsy. Each student with additional medical needs will have an Individual Health Plan (IHP). This will be drawn up by the school Nursing Team, the child's teacher, and parents.

As mentioned previously, all Statements will convert in the next few years to become EHC Plans. These will detail all relevant parties involved with a student and a joint plan based around the needs in health, education and social care will be written. Where students are still under a Statement the AR will incorporate advice from all professionals involved to be given by report and upon invitation to the AR meeting. Students will be able to contribute to their own plans and particularly in Key Stage 4 their views will be central to the plan (EV4).

Journeying to/from School

BAFS recognises it may not be the most local school to a student's home. Travelling to school may be difficult for parents (particularly if there are younger siblings). We are also aware that there are some issues which are more appropriate to talk about at home, particularly if it is about behaviour that is happening in that context. It can be useful for staff to help support parents with strategies or visual schedules when they can see the practicalities that they are dealing with every day at home. The 'open door' policy accorded to parents, regular questionnaires, coffee mornings, invitation to IEP Meetings and ARs will all contain opportunities for parents to express and clarify these practical domestic difficulties.

Support for the Student at Home

It can also be very useful for students to see that staff and parents can share information and be in both environments. In addition to the above BAFS will offer parents a home visit at least twice per

year to support them with strategies, to ensure that all information is shared, and to establish consistency between the two settings. If a child is in a LA care facility we will do the same for their accommodation, whether temporary or permanent. BAFS staff will also support students who are accessing respite. They will work closely with staff in those provisions (and parents) to ensure consistent practice and information exchange so that the student is supported appropriately throughout the day and night. Staff from respite provisions will be invited to ARs and will contribute to the EHC Plan for any applicable student.

Additional Support and Resources

The school will employ three Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTA). One will facilitate inclusion across the school, into work placements and our partner primary and secondary schools. The other two will be responsible for targeted intervention for literacy, numeracy, PHSE&C across BAFS to ensure students make rapid progress in the core skills. The HLTAs will share the responsibility of implementing the recommendations of the SALT.

All students will have access to a planned place of refuge (particularly the Calming room) where they can go when their anxieties become so great that they cannot manage them. These places of refuge will be understood by the student to be available at all times of the school day, whether they are immersed in a classroom activity, break-period, or lunchtime. Having specific places of refuge is extremely important when their circle of friends, a buddy, or mentor are not available. The student will understand these supports for their difficulties and gradually be educated to decide for themselves (and communicate clearly) what support is most appropriate to meet their needs at any one time. Students will learn to see these spaces as refuges as part of their curriculum and their value in supporting curricular and Co-curricular success.

Conclusion

In conclusion, BAFS's expected intake will include a wide variety of sub-group specific and individual needs. We recognise that these arise from their ASC profile and additional psychological, medical, cultural and/or social conditions. We will equally value each student, plan for their needs, and respect each student for the contribution they bring to our community. They will be provided with an outstanding educational environment which will ensure they have attained the highest levels and are as independent as possible (EV1-4). Transition from BAFS will be carefully managed. We will ensure that all students leaving BAFS at the end of Key Stage 4 will have the support they need in approaching adulthood by working closely with external agencies, including Learning Partnership West, Youth and Community workers, Further Education providers, and local companies. Any transition will be individually planned in Year 9 and a clear (revisable) pathway from BAFS established for each student (EV4).

Section E - Evidence of need – part 1

Table 1: For students with statements of SEN or with Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans

	Year 1				Year 2			
	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D
Reception	5	5	0		6	6	0	
Year 1	5	5	3		6	6	0	
Year 2	5	5	3		6	6	3	
Year 3	5	5	4		6	6	3	
Year 4	5	5	8		6	6	4	
Year 5	5	5	2		6	6	8	
Year 6	5	5	10		6	6	2	
Year 7	7	7	8		7	7	10	
Year 8	7	7	9		7	7	8	
Year 9			5		7	7	9	
Year 10			4		7	7	5	
Year 11			5				4	
Year 12								
Year 13								
Totals	49	49	61		70	70	56	

Section E: Evidence of need – part 2

Section E1

Shortfall of places for ASC

Contextual evidence of need

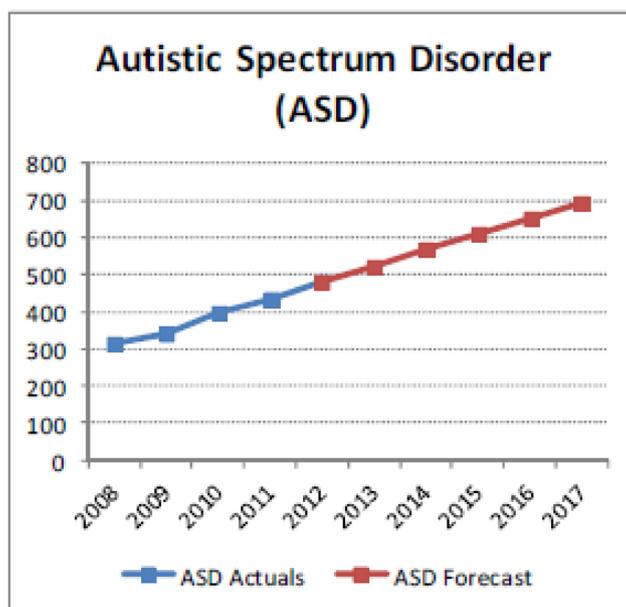
In December 2013 Bristol LA issued “Bristol LA Organisation Strategy 2012-2017” (BLOS). The data in this document clearly outlines the significant demand for places for children with ASC and particularly places in South Bristol. The following are extracts from that document.

“A national increase of children with a medical diagnosis of ASD together with an increasing complexity of student needs, as medical advancements impact upon survival rates at birth and beyond, is well documented. This is equally true of Bristol which has the additional impacting factors of a specialist children’s hospital with the resulting strong palliative care arrangements for children with terminal illnesses...Bristol is a City which continues to grow and it is predicted that this will continue until 2020. This growth rate is higher than all other core cities and this is a further growth factor to consider when planning the continuum of specialist provision...”

“SEN Forecasts by need” (BLOS)

	ACTUAL					PROJECTION				
SEN Type	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
ASD	314	342	400	435	482	523	566	609	652	695

The ‘Bristol LA Organisation Strategy’ states that “Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) has increased by 35% between 2008 and 2012 and is projected to continue to increase up to 2017... Should the developments not take place these students are likely to be placed out of authority at a cost in the region of £4m on an annual basis.”



The ASC figures show a constant rise. The 'Bristol LA Organisation Strategy' states that for South Bristol the position is as follows:

“Despite provision being available for ASD the projections indicate that significant additional provision will be required to meet the 64 place shortfall by 2017. There is also insufficient BESD provision to meet the projected demand of 28 places by 2017.” The following chart from the document shows this shortfall.

“SEN SOUTH”

	ACTUAL					PROJECTION					SHORTFALL SOUTH		
SEN Type	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Actual Special School 2012	Projected Specialist Provision 2017	Shortfall
ASD	114	124	146	158	175	190	206	222	237	253	5	69	-64

If out of county placements are added then the lack of provision is exacerbated.

“SEN PLACEMENTS OUTSIDE BRISTOL (“OUT OF AUTHORITY”)

	ACTUAL					PROJECTION					
SEN Type	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Change 2012-2017
ASD	6	6	7	8	9	9	10	11	12	13	4

Overview of Current SEN provision

The following chart from Bristol LA Organisation Strategy shows that there is no standalone provision for children with ASC. Children with ASC need the personalised provision we have outlined in Section D to thrive and become young people and adults ready and able to play their part in the world. We will be able to staff our provision and make use of external expertise and agencies to provide the very best education explicitly for students with ADC.

School	Age	Sex	SEN
Briarwood	2-19	Mixed	SLD
Bristol Gateway	14-19	Mixed	SEBD
Claremont	2-19	Mixed	PMLD SLD PD
Elmfield	3-16	Mixed	PD SpLD
Kingsweston	2-19	Mixed	AD MLD SLD
Knowle DGE	5-19	Mixed	BESD MLD PD
New Fosseyway	6-19	Mixed	SLD
Notton House	9-16	Boys	BESD
Woodstock	7-11	Boys	BESD
Brislington EC (BEC)	11-18	Mixed	ASD
Easton CE Primary	4-11	Mixed	Speech & Language
Filton Ave Jnr	7-11	Mixed	BESD
Merchants'	4-11	Mixed	ASD

Academy Primary			
Greenfield Primary	4-11	Mixed	BESD
Ilminster Ave Nursery	3-7	Mixed	ASD PMLD SLD
Henbury Court Primary	4-11	Mixed	HI
Long Cross Primary	3-7	Mixed	ASD PMLD SLD
New Oak Primary	4-11	Mixed	HI
TOTAL ASD			

Meetings with Bristol LA and support for application

There have been a sequence of meetings and other communications to establish demand from Bristol LA. We held a meeting with [REDACTED] on 13th June 2013. The meeting fully discussed the needs of the LA and the proposal to set up an 84 place Free School. [REDACTED] indicated that the LA had undertaken a 'forensic review of special school provision across the city' which we discussed. She then stated that the Free School proposal was [REDACTED]. A second meeting was held on 1st October with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. Again we gained information on the demand across the city and the proposals being considered by the LA. The details of the provision for the Free School were shared and again they were positive.

A third meeting was held on 3rd December with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to discuss the queries remaining from [REDACTED]'s letter of 5th November. They confirmed their support and would help in any way they could. The LA have received sections C and D. The meetings took the LA through the details as contained in the letter of 11th November plus additional information on the provision. We also discussed their commitment to post 16 provision too and we stated that this could follow and that we had had preliminary discussions with EFA about provision post 16 in the future.

Letter to Bristol LA 11th November 2013

Dear [REDACTED],

Support for Bristol Autism Free School

Thank you for your letter of 5th November. I am delighted with the support your letter indicates. You noted two matters for further work relating to parental choice and diversity not being unintentionally compromised as a consequence of the proposal. Is it possible for us to meet soon to discuss this further?

Since we met we have clarified further the plans we will submit so I will take this opportunity to confirm the details we have already discussed with you and the developments since our meeting.

The Merchants' Academy is a 3 to 19 mainstream provision located in South Bristol. The Academy, at present, operates a 28 place Autistic Resource Base (ARB) for Bristol LA for students aged 4 to 11. We want to establish high quality provision for children with statements for Autistic Spectrum Conditions (ASC) from ages 4 to 16. Our intent is to set up an 84 place Special Free School. There will be 49 places for primary age students and 35 places for secondary. This will provide seven classes for YR to Y6 at primary and five classes for Y7 to Y11 at secondary.

We aim to establish a multi-academy Trust to operate the Academy and to establish high quality provision for children with statements for Autistic Spectrum Conditions (ASC) from ages 4 to 16. The fully differentiated provision will cater for the full spectrum of need from high functioning to students with global development delay. The Free School will have the full continuum of need and, therefore, the full continuum of provision from highly personalised curriculum to access to mainstream with the partner Academy. There will be choice and variety so students can flourish and make significant progress.

We will raise attainment and aspirations for our students with ASC. Our vision is to ensure that all our students achieve more than they ever thought possible. Our vision will be achieved when all students leave us as:

- **Educational Vision 1 (EV1) Successful learners** with good qualifications and motivated to enhance their knowledge and skills to reach their full potential. Students with ASC can achieve more than they ever thought possible and to do this we will provide them with the curriculum, resources, environment, strategies and expertise to do this.
- **Educational Vision 2 (EV2) Self-confident individuals** who can make informed decisions and communicate them based on their values and beliefs. Students with ASC can manage their difficulties with support and be able to develop their individual talents and abilities with confidence and enjoyment.
- **Educational Vision 3 (EV3) Responsible citizens** who respect others and take part responsibly in political, economic, social and cultural life. Students with ASC can take an active role in society at all levels and will offer them the work placement opportunities, career guidance and work skills to do so.
- **Educational Vision 4 (EV4) Effective contributors** with an energetic, can-do attitude who can lead or work in a team, meeting the challenges of the 21st Century. Students with ASC can contribute to their community and will provide them with the communication skills, social skills and career guidance to do so

Key aspects of our provision

- Education from 4 to 16 to avoid challenges faced by transition to a different institution
- A clear sense of values lived out in the school.
- High expectations for all students in meeting their targets and becoming as independent as possible
- A specialist unique autism curriculum designed and personalised to meet the needs of students from across the ASC spectrum
- A class per year group with 7 students per teacher plus two LSAs
- 3 additional HLTA to provide rigorous intervention for literacy, numeracy and employability
- Specialist ASC teaching which will draw upon and lead exemplary practice
- Strong emphases on personal and social education and communication
- Supplementary curriculum focussing on sensory skills
- Co-location with relevant mainstream phase to access facilities and opportunities in our partner Academy as well as social integration
- Access to full time careers advice and work experience for all secondary students with secure transition to post 16
- Opportunities for students to practice their skills in the community
- Genuine partnerships with parents and recognition of their key role in education
- An ASC specialist environment throughout the school

- Extended school day which will provide an extensive range of Co-Curricular opportunities for all students.
- Significant advantages through the opportunities provided by our sponsors.
- We will work with LAs in spirit of co-operation and partnership

In order to complete our application to the Department for Education to open the Special Free School we need to show evidence of demand. Part of this includes showing the support of the Local Authority and it's commitment in principle to name our school in Statements of Special Education Needs for students with the type(s) of SEN for which our school will be designated. Following our next meeting I hope we will be able to obtain your confirmation that you would be happy to name our school in students' statements and approximately what number we might expect.

We plan to offer these children a Special Free School that ensures that all our students achieve more than they ever thought possible. This is the vision statement for Merchants' Academy and this vision statement will extend to the new Bristol Autistic Free School and we believe it encapsulates how we will raise attainment and aspirations for our students with ASC and their parents. The Free School will provide an outstanding, personalised and challenging education. Children will come from a variety of backgrounds but all will aspire to the highest levels, academically and socially.

In order to offer this education we would expect there will be a cost for local authorities commissioning individual placements of different amounts according to the needs of each student which on average will be [REDACTED] after taking into account the £10,000 per place base level of funding provided by the Education Funding Agency to special Free Schools. Some students will be less funding and others more.

Please can we meet soon as we need to submit our draft bid to the New Schools' Network by the end of the month? [REDACTED] will be in touch to arrange a time good for us both.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further queries regarding our plans or the process to open the Free School.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

We have discussed the proposed top up fee with Bristol LA and with [REDACTED] at a meeting on 16th December. They both agreed that the range and proportion at each level was appropriate. The alternative, for some, would be expensive out of county places so this provides value for money.

The following letter from Bristol LA confirms the need for places and that they will name the Free School in statements/EHCs.



Free School Application Team
Department for Education
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London
SW19 3BT

Reply to [REDACTED]
Telephone 0117 922 4836
Fax 0117 903 7963
E-mail [REDACTED]
Our ref [REDACTED]
Your ref [REDACTED]
Date 8 October 2014

Dear Sir/Madam

Confirmation of Support for Bristol Autism Free School

We confirm that the Local Authority of Bristol supports Bristol Autism Free School's application. We understand that Bristol Autism Free School is provision for children with statements/FHCPS for Autistic Spectrum Conditions (ASC) from ages 4 to 16. The intent is to set up an 84 place Special Free School in Bristol which is proposed to open in September 2016.

We recognise that Merchants Academy already provides excellent provision for primary aged pupils and parents have indicated a wish for this provision to become 'all through', so that their children can remain at Merchants with their mainstream peers. We would support such choice where appropriate and would seek to commission the resulting additional places from Merchants Academy.

Bristol LA would expect to purchase a minimum of 49 places in year one and 70 places in year two at the Bristol Autism Free School at a top up of [REDACTED]. The exact cost may differ depending on the specific needs of the child and this will be discussed with Free School Trust on a case by case basis. Based on previous years' figures we anticipate that we would be able to make approximately seven referrals of full time equivalent (FTE) places per academic year. Indications are that on demographics and past experience referrals that 7 per year group in every year is sustainable and realistic. We consider that the Free School would be full within two years and the LA would be prepared to look at options for Merchants to accelerate the school opening numbers by increased referrals within the primary range at opening which would pre-populate and support their secondary provision being at capacity within the required timescales.

Recent strategic analysis work has indicated that there is a shortfall of ASD places within Bristol. Bristol is in line with the national trend of requiring increasing places for children who have needs within the full range of the Autistic spectrum. In addition, ONS data indicates that Bristol has one of the fastest growing

People Directorate

Education
City Hall
College Green
Bristol BS1 6TR

[REDACTED]
Education & Skills

Website
www.bristol.gov.uk

populations nationally and South Bristol has significant free land areas which the Council is working on plans to develop.

We confirm that based on our 'Bristol LA Organisation Strategy 2012-2017, we agree there is a need for the type of proposed provision in the local area and we will consider naming in line with our statutory duties in appropriate pupils' statements/EHCPs of SEN.

The funding arrangements within Bristol operate on a banding model which relates to the needs of individual children. From the discussions which have taken place, it is likely that the provision would support young people within bands 2 - 4. As a consequence, working on the basis of an average of Band 3 is an appropriate stance for the promoters to take.

Yours sincerely



, Education & Skills

cc:  Additional Learning Needs

Section E2

The demand from parents and the community

Currently parents are given little choice if their child requires a specialist ASC secondary provision. Figures for the last five years of Y6 leavers from the primary ARB indicate the following transfer to secondary:

- 55% Brislington Enterprise College (BEC)
- 20% Kingsweston
- 13% New Fosseway
- 6% Fosseway School
- 3% Sheilings
- 3% Out of County

As indicated in the quotations from parents later in section E, there is usually no choice and much stress at the point of transition from secondary to primary. Our experience over the last 5 years is that parents are highly stressed about where their child will go to secondary school and the possible difficulties for their child in making the transition. The lack of specialist ASC places in Bristol has created immense anxiety and has offered little choice for parents, with 12% opting to take their child out of the Bristol area to secure appropriate secondary schooling. (In the figures above- Fosseway School and Sheilings school are in other authorities). BEC should be the usual transfer for students from the ARB but BEC has filled its places with students with different needs. It also does not have the confidence of parents following its Ofsted Inspection (see later). Therefore, parents are left feeling they have no choice and have to undertake a battle to get their child a place in high quality and appropriate provision.

Our Free School would be the only specialist provision within Bristol which allows continuity of education from 4 to 16 for ASC students. Parents have great confidence in the existing ARB and want certainty and continuity of education for their child. For most parents they want the provision to continue from the primary. Parents' meetings are dominated by questions related to their concerns regarding transfer to secondary.

The provision accessed by 55% of students is part of a secondary school BEC which was rated by Ofsted as 'Inadequate' in 2013 and 'Requires Improvement' in 2014.

"Disabled students and those with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers. Although some of the additional support they receive is now effective, there has not been enough time for this to have its full impact. Like their peers, their progress in lessons over time has been slowed by variations in the quality of teaching."

NB Previously in the report it states

"The proportion of students making expected progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11 is too low." Therefore, similar progress for SEN to their peers is low.

This is not giving parents' confidence in the quality of provision and not giving students the best

opportunities for progress and achievement.

Parents want a school for their child which is all age, provides certainty of transfer unless the needs of the child change and provides high quality provision. This Free School will provide this.

To engage parents in the bid for the Free School and to gather their responses we:

- Held three meetings for existing parents to explain the bid we are making and to answer their questions.
- At the meetings we gave a leaflet with the key headlines.
- Following the meetings we collated questions and produced a 'Frequently Asked Question' sheet that was distributed to all parents.
- Created a Facebook page and section of the Academy website
- Set up an online survey
- Contacted local autism groups
- Contacted parents whose children have left to inform them and gather their feedback.
- Contacted local schools to gather their feedback

Leaflet

The leaflet with key headlines we initially issued to parents follows without photos and logos.

Merchants' Academy Free School Proposal and Consultation

Dear Parents/carers,

Merchants' Academy is committed to improving the education and life opportunities of all students in our community.

The Academy has been looking at ways to do this, and is applying to the Department of Education to open up a Free School which will give a high quality education to students with ASC from 4 to 16 years old.

The proposal is that the current ARB will close and that there will be a new Free School opening up in its place. Our intent is to set up an 84 place Special Free School. This will create 49 places for primary and provide 35 places for Secondary.

Existing students will have the opportunity to have an all-through education in the same way that the mainstream students currently have at Merchants' Academy. The LA have agreed that they will change the name of school on children's statements/EHCs to the Free School.

The Free School will have its own headteacher and be a separate school from the rest of the Academy. Both will be under the control of a multi-academy trust. Students will have the opportunity for inclusion with mainstream both at primary and secondary but could also spend the whole of their timetable in an ASC specific small class setting if that is appropriate. There will be separate play areas at both Secondary and Primary for students who may find the mainstream ones too difficult.

The Free School will take the same type of student that the current ARB does at primary. All students will have a statement/EHC of SEN and will have a diagnosis of ASC. The local authority will continue to send us students by referral. We also anticipate that other local authorities may

also take places.

We plan to submit our application to the Department of Education in October 2014. If we are successful the school would open in September 2016 going to full capacity over the first two years.

Before we do so, we need an indication from you of whether you would be interested in your child attending the Free School. Please complete the enclosed sheet and return to the Academy.

The following was issued after the meetings held with parents to clarify points raised at the meeting and after. (NB photos removed)

BRISTOL AUTISM FREE SCHOOL

Brief Overview

Our intent is to set up an 84 place Special Free School. There will be 49 places for primary age students and 35 places for secondary. We aim to establish a Trust to operate Merchants' Academy and the Free School thus to establishing high quality provision for children with statements for Autistic Spectrum Conditions (ASC) from ages 4 to 16. The fully differentiated provision will cater for the full spectrum of need from high functioning to students with global development delay. The Free School will have the full continuum of need and, therefore, the full continuum of provision from highly personalised curriculum to access to mainstream with the partner Academy. There will be choice and variety so students can flourish and make significant progress.

High quality specialist provision

We are creating the Free School as there is a lack of high quality specialist provision for children with autism in Bristol. In addition we are close to four further LAs – Bath & N.E. Somerset (B&NES), Somerset, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire. Our evidence indicates a shortfall in provision for these LAs too.

The Trust

The Trust will be set up to oversee the Free School. The existing Merchants' Academy together with any further schools that join or are set up, will form part of the Trust. The Merchants' Academy is a 3 to 19 mainstream provision. We will be building on present provision and experience as the Academy operates a 28 place Autistic Resource Base (ARB) for Bristol LA for students aged 4 to 11. The existing ARB will close and the proposed Free School will provide 49 places for primary and provide 35 places for Secondary.

Educational Vision

Raising Attainment and aspirations

We will raise attainment and aspirations for our students with ASC and their parents. Our vision is to ensure that all our students achieve more than they ever thought possible. Our vision will be achieved when students leave us as:

Educational Vision 1 (EV1) Successful learners with good qualifications and motivated to enhance their knowledge and skills to reach their full potential....(A full version of EV1 to EV4 is shown on Pages 9 & 10)

The Key aspects of the Curriculum plan

A clear sense of values lived out in school

High expectations for all students in meeting their targets and becoming as independent as possible..... (the full version given to Parents is on pages 19 & 20)

The Bristol Autism Free School will be a centre of excellence and a distinctive addition to the provision for students with autistic spectrum conditions in Bristol and the South West. This distinctiveness will be evident in:

the all-age (4 to 16 years) provision;

the high emphasis placed on opportunities for inclusion both within the Free School and within its partner academy..... (a full version given to Parents is on Page 20)

The Bristol Autism Free School Curriculum Framework

Personalised Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students will be challenged at every opportunity.• Personalised pathways according to each individual's talents, abilities, interests and strengths• Emphasis on personal and social education as well as communication skills• Inclusive opportunities at each key stage in our partner Academy
-------------------------	---

(The full chart of the Curriculum Framework given to Parents is in Section D)

The Free School will provide an outstanding, personalised and challenging education. Children will come from a variety of backgrounds but all will aspire to the highest levels, academically and socially.

Rationale

Student achievement, attainment and aspiration

The Free School will provide 49 primary places (21 additional) and create 35 secondary places.

Thus providing a stress-free transition as students' progress through their school life to ensure they make the maximum academic and social achievement. Students will be able to maintain the familiarity and continuity of environment rather than having their education interrupted by often stressful transitions into other settings. It will also allow students to maintain friendship groups and contact with known staff. Students will flourish and grow in our Free School. Their achievements, attainment and aspirations will all rise significantly and beyond previous or comparable rates of progress.

Increasing Parental Choice

We know that parents in the Bristol area do not have sufficient choice in the education of their children with ASC. The opportunities and achievements for these young people are not being well met. Therefore, the Free School will extend parents' choice and provide high quality provision. The Free School will allow parents greater security and choice in securing places for their children, and provide additional places for those students who receive late diagnosis and are struggling to access mainstream secondary provisions. It will give parents the choice of a high quality provision that will ensure their children make maximum progress. It will also allow parents to maintain links with an organisation they have already established trust in.

The school will work in partnership with parents in recognition that parents have crucial information about their own child's needs and experience of strategies which may support them. We aim to provide consistency of management between home and school and will communicate daily with parents to ensure that this is facilitated.

Currently parents are given little choice if their child requires a specialist ASC secondary provision. We want to change this.

FAQs for parents

What is a free school?

A free school is a school that is not local authority controlled. It is the same as an academy and has many of the freedoms that an academy has. Because we are planning to increase our numbers up to 84 we will be classed as starting up a brand new school- a free school, rather than an academy.

Why a free school model and not just extending LA provision?

We want to take full advantage of the autonomy that being a Free School brings and create provision that fits the needs of our young people. Being a Free School allows us to do this. .

Why choose an 84 place school?

We want our children to be taught in year groups, in the same way that children in the mainstream school do. We want , therefore, to have classes for each year group- at primary this means 7 year groups (Reception, year1, year2, year 3, year 4, year 5, year 6) and at secondary there are 5 year groups (year 7, year 8, year 9, year 10, year 11). With 7 students in each class this will equal 84 altogether. To begin with, until the school is at full capacity, we may have to do key stage groups, but our aim is to have 7 students in each class who are all the same year group or close in age.

What are the benefits for students?

- *They will have continuity throughout the school from 4 to 16- no difficult transitions on to secondary.*
- *Students will have the full range of the facilities on offer in the mainstream primary and secondary schools- e.g. they will be able to be included in lessons where appropriate and be able to use the sports hall, libraries etc.*
- *They will get additional resources – the bigger the school the more ASC specific resources we can access to help all students.*
- *Maintain friendship groups with students as they move through the free school rather than, as happens at the moment, being split up into at least 4 different secondary provisions.*
- *Continuing friendships with peers in the main primary school all the way until they are 16 and possibly into the Sixth Form.*
- *They will be able to be in classes with their own year groups.*
- *They will be able to be in ability groups for literacy and numeracy to work together at levels which are targeted to meet their needs.*
- *They will be able to access all the co-curricular opportunities after school in the primary and secondary and have access to ASC specific clubs such as Lego, ICT, dance etc.*
- *They will have more opportunities to concentrate on building skills in the community*
- *For those students who have siblings in the mainstream academy they will be able to go through school life in partner institutions.*

What are the benefits for staff?

- *A bigger staff team will mean more expertise- not only in ASC but also in subject areas.*
- *Career progression opportunities*
- *Single year groups per class so that planning is simpler and more age appropriate and that links can be made with mainstream year groups for inclusion.*
- *Ability to plan for students from 4 to 16, so that we can work on skills at a young age that will help children succeed as adults.*
- *The school will have as its sole purpose the education of children with ASC and will attract funding, resources and CPD opportunities that are all relevant for staff.*

What are the benefits for parents?

- *Security of knowing that their child will have a school place until they are 16 if this is the right provision for them.*
- *Stress-free transition for their children*
- *More resources and bigger community of support*
- *Clear plans for their child on moving on from school into colleges, work etc.*
- *Quality education for their child from 4 to 16*
- *Additional support at home- through advice, home visits and workshops/training that can be offered.*
- *Parents who have children in Merchants' Academy and also a child with ASC could have all their children in partner schools at both primary and secondary.*

What will the curriculum be like?

- *We plan to use an adapted national curriculum as our basis so that children can be included in mainstream and so that they can get the full breadth and depth of the opportunities on offer for any other student.*
- *We will supplement the curriculum to work on sensory skills, behaviour and we will focus heavily on communication skills.*
- *We will focus on developing students' social skills so that they can access more fully college courses/work opportunities etc. when they leave.*

What will be different?

- *The school day will be longer 9-4.30*
- *School uniform will be different*
- *School name will be changed*
- *New build or refurbished premises*
- *Curriculum will be more focussed on ASC specific issues- such as developing social skills and communication*
- *More curriculum and Co-Curricular opportunities*

What qualifications will be offered for students?

- *All students in primary will take the National Curriculum tests if they are working at the right level to access them.*
- *All students in the secondary will be able to take GCSEs/BTECs if they are working at this level.*
- *All students will be able to gain ASDAN awards at whatever level they are working at – focussing on building work and independence skills.*
- *All students will be offered the opportunity, support and guidance to be able to experience work and volunteering placements.*

- *All students will have a plan at 16 which will support them on to further education, work or supported living arrangements.*

Who will run the free school?

- *The school will have a Headteacher and a Deputy Headteacher – one based at the primary and one based at the secondary. There will be adverts and a recruitment campaign for these too.*
- *It will have its own governing body.*
- *It will be linked by a Trust to Merchants' Academy.*
- *It will be sponsored by The Society of Merchant Venturers and the University of Bristol*

Is it true that free schools don't employ teachers?

Some free schools choose a model that includes people with expertise in other areas- usually curriculum subjects to teach classes, but not all. In our school each class will have a fully qualified teacher as it does currently in the ARB, as well as two LSAs per class of 7 students.

Do free schools rely on parents to run them?

Some free schools are set up by parents and have parents running them, but not all. Our model is that parents are partners but that the school will be run by people who have educational qualifications and experience in the same way that other schools and academies do.

Will the free school be separate from the mainstream Academy primary and secondary and will inclusion suffer as a result?

Inclusion with Merchants' Academy primary and secondary is written into the application bid itself and is the model of the school we are proposing. This will mean that the free school and the mainstream schools will be linked and that children can be included into mainstream lessons/activities in the same way that they do currently.

Are there are other ASC schools that have adopted this model of free school?

Yes- not in our locality but across the country many academies are now converting their ASC/SEN bases into free schools or opening new provision. We are planning to visit a few of them in the coming months.

Facebook, online survey and contact with autism groups

Following our meetings with parents we were inundated with offers of support from them. Working in partnership with parents, we created the Facebook group and the online survey. Staff and parents are personally linked to all the key autism groups and have gathered support e.g. 'Supportive Parents' and the local 'NAS'. This has disseminated information to parents and groups across Bristol and the wider area and given feedback via the online survey or comment sheets. We have received very positive feedback from our existing parents and from those we have reached via NAS and other groups.

The parents survey asked the following.

- Child's date of birth
- Postcode
- Details of any special educational need statement
- SEN statement already in place – I would request for this special Free School to be named on my child's statement of SEN (Yes/No)

- No SEN statement – This special Free School would be my first choice. (Yes/No)

We had 49 responses all stating they would want their child to attend the Free School and named on their statement. In addition the feedback from New Oak and other schools contacted would add to this figure.

Feedback from parents

Feedback from parents indicates the personal response that our evidence above indicates. The following are indicative of the responses we have received.

Parents with children in the Academy ARB at present

[REDACTED]

Parents with children in the Academy ARB previously

[REDACTED]

Feedback from local schools

As a Principal of a Primary Academy with an ASD base I would like to share my support for the starting up of a Free School for children with ASD in South Bristol. The proposed Free School would be attached to Merchants Academy which already has a well-established and successful ASD base for Primary aged children.

My Academy's Base began only 2 years ago to allow local children with ASD to attend a local school with opportunities for inclusion as well as specialist provision at a time of great need. We agreed to open in September, 2011 with 5 children with the base raising to 7 children at the end of the year. By the October, 2011 we were at the capacity of 7 and by the following September, 2012 our numbers had risen to 12 – we are now at 14 with no room for expansion.

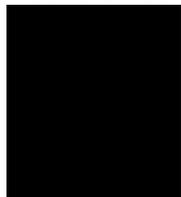
My concern is that when these children reach Secondary age (5 will do so in 2015) there will be no specialist facility for them. This is a concern for ourselves as educators but also a major source of stress and anxiety for their families. There is a Specialist Resource Base in a neighbouring school however there are not enough places to meet the ever increasing demand. A purpose built school in the local area will give these children and young people a real chance to excel and their families

real choice – something denied them due to the complex nature of their child’s disability.

I hope that the Department of Education sees fit to allow this Free School to develop and I would be very happy to share my view further.

Kind regards

Yours sincerely



Summary

The evidence of need from the LA, parents and our context is clearly evidenced above.

- There is a need for additional placements for students with ASC.
- There is a need for higher quality of provision.
- Parental response has been universally supportive.

Should we be successful we are committed to engaging fully with Commissioners, parents and the community in the pre-opening phase to ensure successful relationships are established and that we are providing the very best education for our young people. Once the Free School is open we will build on this secure base to grow the Free School quickly with the confidence of LAs and parents.

Section F: Capacity and capability

Please refer to the relevant section of the 'How to apply' guidance and the assessment criteria booklet for what should be included in this section.

All applicants must complete sections F1-F8 as set out in the table below:

Type of applicant	Which sections to complete
Route 1 applicants (both single and multiple)	F1-F6*
Route 2 applicants applying for one free school in this round	F1-F4*
Route 2 applicants applying for more than one free school in this round	F1-F6*
Route 2 applicants applying for one free school in this round who already have an open academy	F1-F6*
Independent schools wishing to 'sponsor' a new free school	F1-F6*
Independent schools wishing to become free schools	F1-F4 and F7-F8

F1 (a) Pre-opening skills and experience

You must complete a separate line for each member, director and anyone else that is part of your project group. Please include CVs for all named individuals in the annex. Guidance on what should be included in each CV is in the assessment criteria booklet and a template is included as an annex to this document.

Name	Member of core applicant group (Y or N)	Where live (town/city)	Role(s) in pre-opening	Summary of relevant expertise	Available Time (hours per week)
██████████	Y	██████████	██████████	██████████	Two days per week
██████████	Y	██████████	██████████	██████████	5 hours – more as needed
██████████	Y	██████████	██████████	██████████	One day per week
██████████	Y	██████████	██████████	██████████	One day per week
██████████	Y	██████████	██████████	██████████	2 hours per week

██████████	Y	██████████	██████████	██████████	One day per week
██████████	N	██████████	██████████	██████████	3 hours per week

Capacity to deliver

The sponsors, governing body and leadership team of the partner Academy have a proven track record of successful change management and are well placed to manage further change and successfully open the Free School.

The team that will be utilised for the application, planning and implementation phases of the Free Schools bid to open an autism specialist school will be drawn from the considerable resource readily available within the MAT and the two sponsors, The Society of Merchant Venturers and the University of Bristol.

Merchants' Academy was opened in 2008 when it replaced a failing secondary school. It opened in a new building on an existing site which was constructed whilst the old building remained in use. The Academy opened on time and was built under budget. Merchants' Academy expanded to become an 'all through' Academy in 2012 when it merged with Gay Elms Primary School which includes a specialist Autism Resource Base (ARB). This project was similarly run on time and to budget. Both projects were undertaken by combining full time employees, and governors who were able to contribute specialist skills. External consultants have been appointed, together with administration support to ensure capacity to deliver. In addition the resources of the two sponsoring organisations are invaluable.

This project will similarly be run utilising the internal resources of the MAT, external agencies we work with already, plus specialist input from Governors and the two sponsoring organisations. The specific capacity and capabilities of the various elements of the team are as follows:

Educational Expertise

██████████, will be the overall project lead. Her role will be to ensure that the team has all the required areas of specialist input both internally and externally. Whilst ██████████ there is an exceptional head of the secondary phase of the Academy and an excellent head of the primary able to run these parts of the Academy on a day to day basis in the pre-opening phase. (See CV). Additional capacity will be put in place to ensure standards are maintained during the time they will focus on the Free School. This has already been identified and have also employed additional leaders in both phases to add capacity. The project team for educational expertise will also include ██████████ and ██████████. (See CVs)

██████████. He will also be engaged to ensure additional capacity in the ARB to maintain high standards here.

Therefore, the team has the skills, experience, knowledge and capacity to lead the planning and development of the curriculum and structures in the Free School to ensure all students make outstanding progress whilst also ensuring there is no drop in standards in existing schools.

Project Management and Finance

Project management will be led by ██████████. We will also use part of the pre-opening grant to employ an external Project Management Team. We have discussed various companies with other schools that have used them and identified those with a successful track record in delivering Free Schools to time and specification. We are considering companies with a secure record in project management and if they have worked with groups to develop Free Schools this will be an advantage. The Project Managers will ensure the project is kept on track, liaising with all relevant parties and ensuring all milestones are met. The Principal will hold them to account.

The internal project manager for the pre-opening phase will be [REDACTED] who as Finance Director has responsibility for the finance and resourcing of Merchants' Academy and will lead on finance for the Free School. (See CV). In addition [REDACTED] brings financial expertise (see below) and [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Sponsors' Skill and Support

The Society of Merchant Venturers (SMV) has an Education Committee at present but is setting up an Umbrella Trust, the Venturers Trust, which will ensure that appropriate challenge, support and resources are made available to all of their schools. The creation of a Trust is at an advanced stage of creation and will be finalised by the end of 2014. Currently the Society has three 'clusters' of schools which will form the Trust with additional schools expressing an interest in joining. Merchants' Academy is one cluster. Colston's Collegiate, an independent school forms the second cluster. The third cluster is Colston Girl's Trust, which is now an Academy having converted from a fee paying independent school. Since converting to an Academy it has established a primary school and has taken over a failing second primary school. Colston Girls gained Outstanding at its Ofsted in 2010 and gained record results this summer and last with its first Academy cohorts.

[REDACTED], will form part of the team for this project. [REDACTED]. (See CV). The resources of Bristol University will be provided to this project for research and for widening participation. Both sponsors will contribute to the governance of the Free School.

Buildings

The contract to construct Merchants' Academy was overseen by [REDACTED]. In addition the Academy accesses the services of a Facilities Director who manages building and renovation work for the Academy and will lead and co-ordinate this project. As this is through 'Delegated Services', a not for profit support for the education sector, we will be able to increase the amount and time we use [REDACTED].

Recruitment/HR

The Academy works with the 'HR Depart.', a leading provider of HR advice to businesses and schools nationally. They advise and act for all HR matters including the TUPE of staff from Gay Elms to the Academy in 2012. [REDACTED], has significant HR experience from 14 years of headship. The Academy also employs its own HR Assistant to process the administration of recruitment and personnel. Once approved the Multi Academy Trust will move HR to a part of the core provision for all its schools.

Legal

The Academy employs [REDACTED] for legal services. In addition [REDACTED]. (See F2)

Marketing/Media Communications

Initially the project will access the Academy's in house PR staff which also uses an external agency [REDACTED] for major events. [REDACTED] has also been involved in the marketing of schools throughout her headships.

F1 (b) Skills gap in pre-opening

Please refer to the relevant section of the 'How to apply' guidance and the assessment criteria booklet for what should be included in this section. Please add additional lines as required.

Skills/experience missing	How you plan to fill the gap
HR	Although we have the skills and experience and already employ external HR support we will need additional capacity for the recruitment and possible TUPE process. Therefore, we will purchase additional support from The 'HR Dept.' and employ the HR Assistant for additional time as part of the MAT. The 'HR Dept.' could respond promptly if we are successful.
Acquiring and developing the site	Although we have the skills and experience we will need additional capacity. Therefore, we will purchase additional time from 'Delegated Services' for ██████████ (Facilities Director) as part of the MAT. There would be little delay in increasing this.
Project Management	Although we have the skills and experience we will need additional capacity. Therefore, we will employ a Project Management Team. Contact with other schools and through the Society of Merchant Venturers have identified possible companies, therefore, these could be employed swiftly. An open and transparent process for employing the Project Management will be undertaken. We have not met with any companies or entered into any agreement
PR	We will buy in additional PR consultancy from ██████████ or another PR company.

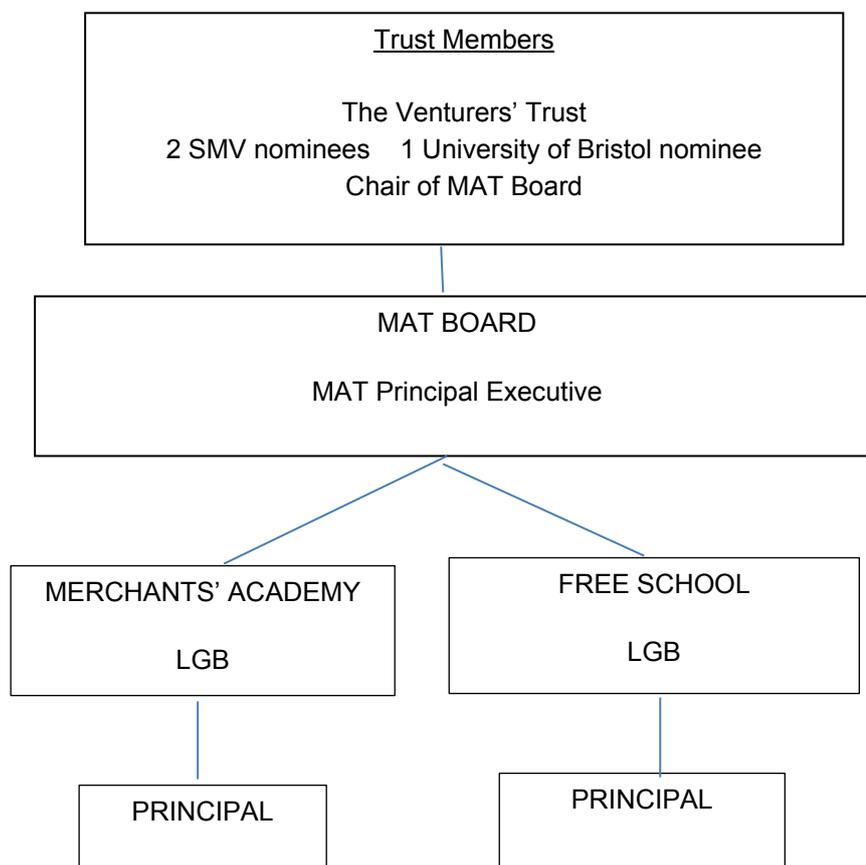
Section F2

Current Structure

Merchants' Academy is currently a single legal entity, a company limited by guarantee, through which Merchants' Academy, an All Age Academy, is carried on. The principal Sponsor is the Society of Merchant Venturers ("SMV") and the co-sponsor is the University of Bristol ("UoB").

Proposed Structure

In our earlier application we contemplated a structure comprising an Umbrella Trust and two separate academy trusts: one for the existing Merchants' Academy, and one for the Free School. Our principal Sponsor, SMV, however, is in the course of establishing an Umbrella Trust (to be called "the Venturers' Trust") through which its sponsorship of academies will be carried on. It is now proposed, therefore, that Merchants' Academy Withywood will become a multi-academy trust ("the MAT") to include the Free School as well as the existing Merchants' Academy. There will be an overall Board of the MAT and two Local Governing Bodies ("LGBs"), one for the Free School and one for Merchants' Academy. The diagram below shows this structure.



Members

The Members of the MAT will be as follows:

- The Venturers' Trust, the Umbrella Trust through which SMV's activity as sponsor of academies will be carried on
- Two members nominated by SMV / The Venturers' Trust as Principal Sponsor, namely [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]
- One nominee of the University of Bristol as joint Sponsor, namely [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED].

Role of Members

Members are in the nature of shareholders, and so their role will be akin to the role applicable to Members or shareholders of most companies. They will be entitled formally to appoint and remove a majority of the Directors of the MAT Board, and they will receive reports on the finance and strategy of the MAT from the MAT Board.

Governance

This section gives further detail about the structure and roles of the Board of Directors of the MAT and of the LGB of the Free School. Merchants' Academy's governing body will become an LGB and will operate very much in the same way as the Free School, with Governor committees appropriate for the running of Merchants' Academy.

The MAT Board will have a maximum of nine Directors, of whom up to five will be nominees of SMV and up to two will be nominees of UoB. Other Directors will be appointed by virtue of their special skills and/or experience; they will be appointed by unanimous resolution of the then existing Directors. A minority of Directors of the MAT Board will also be members of the Free School LGB, as explained below.

The MAT Board will be accountable to the Sponsors and to the DfE, the EFA and other accountable bodies for the attainment levels, finances, management and all other aspects of the performance of the Free School and of all other schools within the MAT. Additionally the MAT Board will have responsibility for the effective and efficient provision of those services which are operated and delivered centrally by the MAT: these will include finance, HR and the management of premises and facilities. The MAT Board will also have high-level oversight of the MAT's activities: its strategic direction, its vision and values and its development, specifically the admission into it of other academies.

The Executive Principal of the MAT (mentioned below) will be the executive leader of the MAT and will have ultimate executive responsibility for, and will be answerable and accountable to, the MAT Board for all aspects of the performance of all the schools within the MAT, including the Free School.

The MAT Board will be entitled to appoint and remove all the members of the Free School LGB. The MAT Board will also define and have control over the powers, duties and responsibilities delegated to the LGB and will therefore be entitled to reduce or limit them in the (hopefully unlikely) event that the MAT Board should consider this necessary. In addition the Free School's annual budget, the Free School Annual Improvement Plan and the Free School longer-term strategic plan will require the approval of the MAT Board, as will all matters proposed to be implemented by the Free School which are outside its ordinary course of activity. In addition to its residual right to appoint and remove all members of the LGB the MAT Board will have power to intervene directly in the affairs of the Free School where it considers that the incumbent LGB and /

or the Principal of the Free School are not properly discharging their roles and responsibilities.

The MAT Board will include the Chair of the Free School LGB, the Chair of the Free School Finance and General Purposes Committee, and the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Free School LGB Curriculum Committee. The intention is that a minority of members of the MAT Board will also be members of the Free School LGB. This, together with the MAT Executive Principal's close engagement with the Free School and its LGB will enable the MAT Board to have early visibility on any matters affecting the Free School which require the intervention of the MAT Board.

The MAT Board will meet not less frequently, and probably not more frequently, than four times a year. It is not envisaged that there will be any Director committees of MAT except, if required or considered appropriate, for an Audit Committee to provide assurance on the internal controls and financial reporting and management information in relation to the schools within the MAT. Such an Audit Committee would be chaired by an appropriately qualified MAT Director who is not a member of any LGB within the MAT.

The quorum for meetings of the full MAT Board will be five Directors, of whom a majority must be nominee Directors of SMV.

One of the Directors will be its Chairman. Except in exceptional circumstances the Chairman will be a nominee Director of SMV.

There will be a MAT Executive Principal who will be employed by the MAT. He or she will be accountable to the MAT Board for the overall performance of the MAT and of all the schools within the MAT. He or she will line-manage, and will provide mentoring and advisory support to the Heads of the Free School and of Merchants' Academy, but subject to the MAT Executive Principal's ultimate responsibility for the performance of the MAT it is these latter Heads who will be directly answerable to the LGBs of their respective schools for the performance of their schools. It is expected that the first MAT Executive Principal will be [REDACTED]

The Free School LGB will comprise a maximum of 12 Governors. Seven of these will be nominees of SMV and two will be nominees of UoB. The others will include the MAT Executive Principal, a parent Governor, a Staff Governor, and Governors with specialist knowledge of, and experience in, autism (and in particular autism education), inclusion, behaviour and SEN: see section F3.

The LGB will, therefore, have operational control of the Free School subject to the rights of approval, intervention and the limits of delegated authority mentioned above on the part of the MAT Board, and subject to it agreeing with the MAT Board the overall strategy, direction, vision and values of the Free School.

The Free School LGB will meet not less frequently than three times a year. In the period leading up to the establishment of the Free School and during the first year of its operation the full LGB will probably meet more frequently, as required.

The quorum for meetings of the LGB will be five Governors.

One of the members of the LGB will be its Chairman.

The Free School LGB will have three committees, namely

- a Finance and General Purposes Committee. It will have responsibility for all financial and resource aspects of the Free School, including staffing and premises

- a Standards and Curriculum Committee, whose responsibility will be for attainment, curriculum, co-curricular, admissions and other areas of Free School performance
- a Safeguarding and Support Committee, which will have particular responsibility for all aspects of the wellbeing of the students of the Free School, including (but not limited to) those students falling within child protection categories. The duties of this committee will include ensuring that appropriate professional expertise and facilities specific to the needs of students on the autistic spectrum are available to and in the Free School.

Each of these committees will meet not less frequently than four times a year. The committees will provide rigorous mentoring and hold senior staff to account. Each committee will be supported by one or more members of staff at the Free School whose expertise and/or sphere of activity covers any of those of the committee. These members of staff will normally be required to prepare reports for consideration by the relevant committee (and/or for the full LGB) on matters specified by the committee and to attend meetings of the relevant committee to provide further information or explanations as appropriate. For example, the Standards and Curriculum committee will scrutinise the Key Performance Indicators and receive a termly report from the Executive Principal. Annual data for governors will include the CASPA report, quarterly finance reports, quarterly HR report, marketing and student admissions, curriculum development and design, benchmarking assessments recording and reporting, premises and resources, safeguarding.

The committees will not have full decision-making powers: these will vest in the full LGB itself. Any decisions of a committee will therefore require ratification by the full LGB.

There will be a Free School Principal who will have executive responsibility for the operations and performance of the Free School. He or she will be accountable to the Free School LGB (and to its committees) for all aspects of performance of the Free School.

Governor Engagement

There will be expectations of high levels of engagement on the part of Governors with the Free School, so that Governors can properly and with authority and knowledge challenge the Free School Principal and the other members of staff on the information and opinions provided to them, whether in written form or when speaking face to face. SMV has produced a written booklet headed “Excellence in Governance – a Guide for Governors” which sets out in some detail the expectations of SMV in relation to its Chairmen, its Governors and its Heads/Principals. The Guidance includes (amongst many other things) expectations that all Governors will

- make regular visits to the school during its working day to observe and acquaint themselves with the working practices of the whole school community and to inform themselves of progress in specific areas of the school improvement plan which justify particular scrutiny.
- support occasions such as prizegiving and school drama, music and major sporting events
- undergo periodic training.

These engagements will give Governors a real “feel” for what is happening in the Free School, they will enable Governors to meet with staff and parents in a relatively informal way, and they will give Governors a good platform of understanding from which to be able to make judgements about the School in the course of their formal work as Governors.

In addition Merchants’ Academy operates a “Link Governor” system, by which a Governor with relevant experience or expertise is assigned to each member of the Academy leadership team.

The Governor provides both mentoring support to the leadership team member and uses this line of access to develop a detailed knowledge and understanding of the particular area for which the leadership team member has responsibility and of the issues and problems specific to that area. It would be the intention to extend this system to the Free School.

Conflicts of Interest

There are occasions when individuals may find themselves in a conflict of interest in relation to a particular matter being considered at a Directors', LGB or LGB Committee meeting. Such a conflict could arise in the case of a Governor of the Free School who is also a Governor of Merchants' Academy, were a conflict of interest to arise between the Free School and Merchants' Academy, for example in relation to the provision of services by one to the other. In this case those who are members of both LGBs would not vote on the related decision by either LGB.

A conflict could also arise in the case of a person who is both a Governor of the Free School and a Director of MAT. In such a case such person would not vote on the decision of the Free School.

Other conflicts of interest will arise from time to time in the case of Governors who are also teachers, non-teaching staff members, parents or Local Authority or community representatives. Such conflicts are usually, but may not necessarily be, readily apparent, especially where the circumstances of the conflict are personal to the individual Governor.

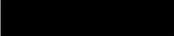
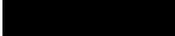
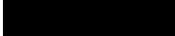
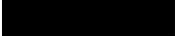
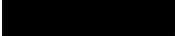
In all these cases it may on occasion be appropriate to ask certain Governors to leave the meeting while a specific matter is discussed. This could particularly apply, for example, where an item on the agenda gives rise to a conflict of interest involving one or more staff Governors.

The Articles of Association of the MAT will include provisions governing conflicts of interest (as do the Articles of Association of Merchants' Academy); the SMV Guidance for Governors has a section on the subject of conflicts of interest; and Governors will be advised in their induction and periodically thereafter of the need for sensitivity to the possibility of conflicts and that a conflict must be declared as soon as a Governor becomes aware that it might possibly arise – whether or not it actually does arise. Governors will also be advised and reminded periodically that the duty of every Governor lies to the school as a whole rather than to any sectional interest, and that if appropriate a conflicted Governor may be asked to step out of a meeting for the particular agenda item and/or to abstain from voting on any matter which is relevant to the conflict of interest.

In addition the Clerk will be required to keep a register of Governors' interests, for which Governors will be asked to make a return annually. Governors will also be required to declare new interests as they arise.

F3 (a) Proposed governors

Name	Where live (town/city)	Role on governing body	Role(s) in pre-opening	Summary of relevant expertise	Available Time (hours per week)
██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	3-4 but flexible
██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	5-6 but flexible
██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	5-6 but flexible
██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	8-10 but more at times as necessary
██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	5-6 but flexible
██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	8-10 but flexible
██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████	5-6 but flexible

					8-10 but flexible
---	---	---	---	---	--------------------------

F3 (b) Skills gap for governing body

NB: If you do not have a proposed chair of governors please include details of the relevant skills and experience that you will be looking for in this table.

Skills/experience missing	How you plan to fill the gap
Autism education, Inclusion, behaviour, SEN	<p>At executive and/or consultancy level there is a great deal of expertise and experience in these areas. The gap in these areas is currently at Governor level, to be filled by Governors whose experience and knowledge will assist them in challenging the executives when necessary or appropriate. We envisage two Governor positions here, to be filled as follow:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • we have retained [REDACTED], to advise and assist the project team on the establishment of the Free School. He has many contacts in the field of autism education • we have direct access to the ASC research team at the University of Bristol by virtue of the University's co-sponsorship of the MAT. Interest in engagement with the Free School has been expressed by individuals in this team and we have direct contact with the Head of Education of the National Autistic Society
Parent and Staff Governors	<p>We will appoint a Parent Governor. It is likely that the first of these will be identified from the cohort of students coming into the Free School from the existing Merchants' Academy Primary Autism Resource Base. We have already had serious expressions of interest about this from some excellent candidates, including a former Gay Elms Primary Governor who was outstanding as an ARB Parent Governor. After the first year we will conduct an election process for a Parent Governor in the normal way.</p> <p>We will also appoint a Staff Governor, if possible by staff election from the full cohort of staff when appointed, but if necessary on an interim basis from the staff of the existing ARB which will become part of the Free School.</p>

Skills Gap Analysis

The “skills content” of the proposed Free School LGB is very much assisted by having at its core a group of people who have been Governors of Merchants’ Academy, in many cases for the whole of the six years during which Merchants’ Academy has been open. The May 2014 Ofsted Inspection Report of Merchants’ Academy states: “The very experienced Governing Body is exceptionally effective. Governors provide a high level of support and challenge.” The Report also states that the Governors “have a detailed and accurate awareness of how well the Academy is doing... and an excellent understanding of students’ performance data, and regularly update their training need.”

We have carried out skills gap analyses for the MAT Board and (separately) for the Free School LGB. We will want to encourage, so far as possible, a high level of autonomy in the LGBs of the Free School and of Merchants’ Academy in relation to their respective schools, with the MAT Board having a “light-touch” oversight role only, and one which ensures appropriate linkage and coherence between the Free School and Merchants’ Academy.

There is a considerable degree of commonality in the skills required for the MAT Board and the Free School LGBs, and the analysis below is applicable to both bodies, except where indicated.

Our skills gap analysis shows existing high level strengths in:

Leadership	Finance	Strategy;
Legal	Education	Buildings & Premises
ICT		

There is then a group of skills which the core group of Directors/Governors mentioned above will bring to both bodies as part of their career experience. They have all been involved in different ways in:

- Procurement of and merging service contracts
- Human Resources
- Health and Safety
- Performance Management
- Marketing and Communications.

In all these areas this core group would, from time to time and if or as necessary, call upon external professional help and/or on the executive resources of Merchants’ Academy and/or on the expertise available through SMV. For example, Merchants’ Academy has its own appointed Health and Safety as well as Marketing and PR Advisers, as does SMV. Merchants’ Academy makes use of an external HR advisory consultancy. All the core group in their commercial or other leadership roles have extensive experience of performance management. A Health and Safety Governor would be nominated for the Free School, probably [REDACTED].

It would not, therefore, be considered a priority to have on the Free School LGB people appointed for their particular skills or experience in any of these areas.

This then leaves a set of areas of knowledge and expertise as follows:

- | | |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|
| • Inclusion | • SEN provision |
| • Behaviour | • Autism, including autism education. |

These are dealt with in the 'Skills Gap' table above. It is relevant to note that inclusion, behaviour and SEN provision are all areas in which Merchants' Academy is deeply involved. To the core group of Governors, therefore, these areas are already very familiar, but not from a personal professional point of view.

Training

Merchants' Academy conducts training sessions for its Governors. The Directors of MAT and the Governors of the Free School will be able to participate in these. Many of the subject areas of this training will be relevant to Directors or Governors of all three entities: MAT, the Free School and Merchants' Academy. Merchants' Academy (and SMV) have an induction programme for new Governors covering areas such as the legal and more general responsibilities of Governors, what is expected of Governors as "critical friends" of management, their expected involvement in the schools and how they should keep themselves independently familiarised with all aspects of school life.

Areas covered in ongoing training include

- understanding key attainment, attendance, behaviour and other measures
- analysing and drawing key messages from data in these and other areas
- child protection and general safeguarding
- Health & Safety and other regulatory areas.

Although the MAT Board and the Free School LGB will include one or more "experts" in autism education there will be those (including the core group mentioned above) whose understanding and knowledge of autism would benefit from training – or rather induction. We envisage visits to existing ASD schools, opportunities to talk with ASD professionals in schools and other areas, contact with the National Autistic Society, and specific training in the particular needs of students with ASD (recognising that this covers an extremely broad spectrum of special needs) and invest practice as to how the Free School can most effectively offer its students the prospect of leading a full life.

As importantly, Governors of Merchants' Academy are expected to attend regularly at the Academy to observe lessons and co-curricular activity, to attend events and performances, and to interact directly with students and staff. This approach will be encouraged in Directors of MAT and Governors of the Free School.

Section F4

Identifying a high quality Principal

The identifying and recruiting of a high quality Principal is crucial to the success of this Free School. We aim to employ an outstanding leader who shares in our vision and can make the vision a daily reality and achieve our ambitious targets.

The job description and person specification are crucial to attracting and employing the best person for this post.

Job Description - Principal, Bristol Autism Free School (NB shortened version – full JD available)

To provide leadership in the organisation and management of the Free School to ensure students achieve more than they ever thought possible.

Key responsibilities:

- To provide vision and strategic direction for the Free School and advise the Governing Body on strategy.
- To formulate and achieve the aims and objectives of the Free School as agreed with the Governing Body.
- To raise the educational performance of the Free School's students to a level consistently above expected benchmarks.
- To ensure the effective teaching and learning of students of all ages and abilities.
- To monitor and evaluate staff performance and to hold to account to raise standards.
- To manage the internal operations of the Free School through the clear formulation and implementation of policies, plans and practices, and the direction of staff therein.
- To ensure that the Free School's students are effectively cared for and supported, with due regard to safeguarding and other relevant legislation.
- To represent and promote the Free School to the wider community.
- To ensure effective use of resources

(NB full version includes specific clarification for each of these bullets)

Person Specification – Principal - Bristol Autism Free School

We are seeking to appoint a Principal with significant experience in leading SEND provision with a particular specialism in

ASC. They must have a track record of raising standards for all students and preparing them for the next stage of life.

The Governors are seeking to appoint a Principal who shares their commitment to the:

- Vision and aspirational targets outlined in the Free School bid to the DfE.
- Pursuit of high aspirations and standards amongst students and staff.
- Close collaboration with the Trust.
- Strong emphasis on the role of Co-Curricular activities.
- Full and effective use of ICT in teaching, learning and management.

In addition the successful candidate will demonstrate depth of understanding, experience and track record of:

- Teaching, curriculum planning and assessment particularly related to ASC
- The use of data in monitoring, evaluating and continuously improving the quality of teaching, learning and outcomes particularly for ASC.
- Practical strategies to raise aspirations, achievement and attitudes to learning
- Inclusion and issues surrounding provision that caters for the needs of all students.
- How children learn including the use of Co-Curricular learning.
- Effective strategies for improving outcomes and successful transition for children with ASC.

Leadership qualities

- The drive, the commitment and the passion to lead Bristol Autism Free School and to inspire success through the efforts of students, staff and parents.
- Ability to think strategically, to develop the vision and success of the Free School involving governors, sponsors, staff, students, parents, employers and the community.
- Ability to lead, and develop a new team, delegating effectively and bringing to it fresh ideas.
- Ability to encourage and develop leadership at all levels, including students.
- Ability to be decisive after considering all facts and viewpoints.

Management and communication skills

- Strength in school improvement planning.
- Ability to evaluate standards, set targets for improvement and ensure effective professional development.
- Ability to manage performance and change.

- Good administration skills, including understanding of finance and budgeting.
- Knowledge of developments in education and the ability to identify and introduce best practice from around the world particularly related to ASC.
- Ability to manage external relationships and build support for the Free School.

Key personal qualities

- Character, presence and stature to lead, motivate and inspire.
- Excellent communication skills, oral and written and able to network to a wide audience.
- Ability to work under pressure and get things done.
- Ability to hold a vision but also able to adapt to changing circumstances.
- Ability to listen and take on board a wide range of views but with the moral strength to pursue unpopular policies where necessary.
- Enthusiasm for challenge and innovation and for the use of the independence that Free Schools enjoy.
- Integrity, warmth and a good sense of humour.
- Ability to work with young people who may sometimes show challenging behaviour.

Recruiting a high quality Principal Designate

The team has significant experience in appointing school leaders. The Sponsors have appointed two Principals to Merchants' Academy in addition to Executive Principals and Heads to their other schools. The Sponsors have used external support and would use specialist support relevant to special education. The Principal has recruited and appointed to 12 leadership posts throughout her Headships.

To recruit the best possible candidate we will need to:

- Attract the best possible applicants.
- Advertise effectively at the right time of year.
- Market the post thoroughly and attractively.
- Undertake a secure and robust recruitment process.

Attract the best possible candidate

The salary to be offered is [REDACTED] (L19 – L23). The advert will clearly state that there could be more for an exceptional candidate together with relocation expenses. Having reviewed advertisements in the TES for a three week period during September's busy recruitment time this is pitched at an appropriately attractive level.

Advertising

We will advertise in the 'Times Educational Supplement' and position the advert in the Special Leadership jobs' section. We will also put a smaller advert in the secondary and primary sections to attract candidates operating in units or Resource Bases in mainstream schools. We also use ETeach so will place the advert here too. If the advert does not attract sufficient high calibre candidates we will use a recruitment agency experienced in this field such as 'TES Prime', 'Capita Education' or 'Veredus'.

Marketing

The information provided to candidates will be clear on the role and responsibilities required but will also provide thorough information for applications to follow:

The vision, values and ethos of the Free School.

The unique selling points of our Free School.

Information relating to the Sponsors and the Multi-Academy Trust.

Relevant information about Bristol for applicants moving to the area to show how wonderful the city is and the quality of life it brings.

Prospective candidates will be given direct contact details to further discuss the opportunities of the post and invited for visits ahead of applying. Relocation expenses could be paid to attract candidates to move.

Secure and robust recruitment process - The timeline for recruitment will be as follows:

3 July 2015	Small advert to alert that a main advert will follow
4 September 2015	Advert in TES newspaper and online. All information ready on website to be accessed by candidates.
16 September 2015	Closing date for applicants. Long listing process for

	references.
23 September 2015	Shortlist candidates for interview.
1 October 2015	Interviews culminating with selection of candidates for Day 2
2 October 2015	Final candidates' interviews and presentation
1 January 2016	Principal takes up post.

The interview process will test the breadth and depth of candidates' experience, skills and personal characteristics. Governors (including the autism expert) and the Executive Principal will be involved in the recruitment process

Day 1

Introduction to the Free School and meet key people.

Tour of existing ARB and sites/meet students.

Data task.

Group task/problem solving.

Teaching/lesson observation

Interview panels e.g. Leadership, SEN and autism, Raising standards, engaging stakeholders and working with external agencies.

Day 2

Presentation with question and answer.

Final interview to cover all aspects of the role.

5 October 2015 Liaise with present employers of successful candidate to establish how much time the Principal Designate can be released. Use October break if possible too.

5 October – 31 December 2015 Use this time to ensure the Principal Designate is fully up to speed with our plans so they can be involved in any decision making or appointments during this time and be ready to make an effective start on 1 January 2016.

NB As the Society of Merchant Venturers is an existing recognised sponsor of academies there is no need to complete the remaining sections of section F.

Section G: Budget planning and affordability

Please refer to the relevant section of the 'How to apply' guidance and the assessment criteria booklet for what should be included.

You need to demonstrate that the school will be viable within the expected levels of funding available both while it builds up and when it is at full capacity. You must provide an overview of how you developed your plans and the thinking behind them. As part of this, you should explain how you have delivered value for money, and describe how your budget plans support your education vision and plan.

In addition you should complete the Excel budget templates.

██████████:

██████████

██████████.

██████████.

Budget Line (area of expenditure)	Description of how expenditure would be modified/plans adapted – top [10] changes	Year(s) savings would apply	Savings in each year against original budget (£k)
██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████
██████████	██████████	██████████	██████████

Section H: Premises

Please refer to the relevant section of the 'How to apply' guidance and the assessment criteria booklet for what should be included in this section.

Please complete the Excel application form.



SECTION H: LOCATION AND PREMISES

1. Please fill in details for each of your preferred sites, taking care to complete every section. **DO NOT CREATE NEW TABS OR ALTER THIS FORM IN ANY WAY**

2. The text boxes can be made bigger by increasing the row height.

3. To insert a new line in a text box, press alt + enter.

4. Please do not put any site information in the Word form. Additional information about sites should not be attached to your main application. Instead it should be sent to premises.freeschools@education.gsi.gov.uk. Please put the name of your proposed free school in

[Jump to second choice site](#)

[Jump to third choice site](#)

[Jump to fourth choice site](#)

[Jump to section for independent schools](#)

Please describe the location in which you propose to set up your school being as specific as possible. This could include the name of the area in which you would like to put the school, the part of a city, town or suburb. Please also consider how flexible you are - how far from your preferred location are you willing to go? Please include an annotated map as an additional file and send it to premises.freeschools@education.gsi.gov.uk if	Withywood, South Bristol
---	--------------------------

If you have not identified a site yet, please tell us the postcode of a central location in the your preferred area. It must be a full postcode e.g. SW1P 3BT, not	<Redacted>
--	------------

Your calculated building space using the EFA formula. See section H in the free schools criteria booklet.	2000
---	------

Any comments on your calculated building space:	This will be split across two sites, one for the Primary and one for the Secondary, to be alongside <Redacted>.
---	---

Preferred site

Full address and postcode. It must be a full postcode e.g. SW1P 3BT, not SW1:	BS13 <Redacted>
---	-----------------

In which local authority is your preferred location? - this information is brought through from section B	Bristol, City of
---	------------------

If the preferred site is near to the boundary with another local authority, please say which:	North Somerset
---	----------------

If the preferred site is near to the boundary with a third local authority, please say which:	Bath & North East Somerset
---	----------------------------

If the preferred site is near to the boundary with a fourth local authority, please say which:	South Gloucestershire
--	-----------------------

Please tell us how you found the site:	It is located within <Redacted>
--	---------------------------------

Please confirm the tenure:	Lease
----------------------------	-------

If other, please explain further:	
-----------------------------------	--

Please Include information on purchase or lease price if known:	We would expect this would not attract a cost as <Redacted>.
---	--

Who owns the site?	<Redacted>
--------------------	------------

Is the site available/on the market? (please attach agents' particulars as an additional file and send it to premises.freeschools@education.gsi.gov.uk if available)	No
--	----

Name and contact details of owner:	<Redacted>
------------------------------------	------------

Name and contact details of agent or local authority representative where available:	
--	--

If your site is local authority owned, please state if the local authority have confirmed that your free school may use it if you are successful:	No
---	----

What kind of site is it?	<Redacted>
--------------------------	------------

What is the current use?	<Redacted>
--------------------------	------------

If government building or 'other' - please describe:	
--	--

Why have you chosen this site? What makes it suitable for your free school?	<Redacted>
---	------------

If known, how big is the building and the site? Please attach any site and building plans as an additional file and send it to premises.freeschools@education.gsi.gov.uk:	Details have already been sent to <Redacted>. These have not changed from when we last applied.
---	---

Please comment on the condition of the building. Please attach photos if available as an additional file and send it to premises.freeschools@education.gsi.gov.uk:	The sites we have identified that could be used have buildings on them which are in poor repair. We would propose that they are knocked down and rebuilt to fit the new use.
--	--

Second choice site

Full address and postcode. It must be a full postcode e.g. SW1P 3BT, not SW1:	The second choice site would be on the grounds of <Redacted>. This would mean losing some of the <Redacted>. This is all within the <Redacted>
---	--

In which local authority is the site?	Bristol, City of
---------------------------------------	------------------

If the preferred site is near to the boundary with another local authority, please say which:	North Somerset
---	----------------

If the preferred site is near to the boundary with a third local authority, please say which:	Bath & North East Somerset
---	----------------------------

If the preferred site is near to the boundary with a fourth local authority, please say which:	South Gloucestershire
--	-----------------------

Please tell us how you found the site:	<Redacted>
--	------------

Please confirm the tenure:	Lease
----------------------------	-------

If other, please explain further:	
-----------------------------------	--

Please include information on purchase or lease price if known:	
---	--

Who owns the site?	Please select
--------------------	---------------

Is the site available/on the market? (please attach agents' particulars as an additional file and send it to premises.freeschools@education.gsi.gov.uk if available)	No
--	----

Name and contact details of owner:	<Redacted>
------------------------------------	------------

Name and contact details of agent or local authority representative where available:	
--	--

If your site is local authority owned, please state if the local authority have confirmed that your free school may use it if you are successful:	No
---	----

What kind of site is it?	Cleared site requiring new build
--------------------------	----------------------------------

What is the current use?	<Redacted>
--------------------------	------------

If government building or 'other' - please describe:	
--	--

Why have you chosen this site? What makes it suitable for your free school?	This is very much a second choice option as it would mean sacrificing some of the playing field space <Redacted>
---	--

If known, how big is the building and the site? Please attach any site and building plans as an additional file and send it to premises.freeschools@education.gsi.gov.uk:	
---	--

Please comment on the condition of the building. Please attach photos if available as an additional file and send it to premises.freeschools@education.gsi.gov.uk:	
--	--

Third choice site

Full address and postcode. It must be a full postcode e.g. SW1P 3BT, not SW1:	
---	--

In which local authority is the site?	Please select
---------------------------------------	---------------

If the preferred site is near to the boundary with another local authority, please say which:	Please select
---	---------------

If the preferred site is near to the boundary with a third local authority, please say which:	Please select
---	---------------

If the preferred site is near to the boundary with a fourth local authority, please say which:	Please select
--	---------------

Please tell us how you found the site:	
--	--

Please confirm the tenure:	Please select
----------------------------	---------------

If other, please explain further:	
-----------------------------------	--

Please include information on purchase or lease price if known:	
---	--

Who owns the site?	Please select
--------------------	---------------

Is the site available/on the market? (please attach agents' particulars as an additional file and send it to premises.freeschools@education.gsi.gov.uk if available)	Please select
--	---------------

Name and contact details of owner:	
------------------------------------	--

Name and contact details of agent or local authority representative where available:	
--	--

If your site is local authority owned, please state if the local authority have confirmed that your free school may use it if you are successful:	Please select
---	---------------

What kind of site is it?	Please select
--------------------------	---------------

What is the current use?	Please select
--------------------------	---------------

If government building or 'other' - please describe:	
--	--

Why have you chosen this site? What makes it suitable for your free school?	
---	--

If known, how big is the building and the site? Please attach any site and building plans as an additional file and send it to premises.freeschools@education.gsi.gov.uk:	
---	--

Please comment on the condition of the building. Please attach photos if available as an additional file and send it to premises.freeschools@education.gsi.gov.uk:	
--	--

Fourth choice site

Full address and postcode. It must be a full postcode e.g. SW1P 3BT, not SW1:	
---	--

In which local authority is the site?	Please select
---------------------------------------	---------------

If the preferred site is near to the boundary with another local authority, please say which:	Please select
---	---------------

If the preferred site is near to the boundary with a third local authority, please say which:	Please select
---	---------------

If the preferred site is near to the boundary with a fourth local authority, please say which:	Please select
--	---------------

Please tell us how you found the site:	
--	--

Please confirm the tenure:	Please select
----------------------------	---------------

If other, please explain further:	
-----------------------------------	--

Please Include information on purchase or lease price if known:	
---	--

Who owns the site?	Please select
--------------------	---------------

Is the site available/on the market? (please attach agents' particulars as an additional file and send it to premises.freeschools@education.gsi.gov.uk if available)	Please select
--	---------------

Name and contact details of owner:	
------------------------------------	--

Name and contact details of agent or local authority representative where available:	
--	--

If your site is local authority owned, please state if the local authority have confirmed that your free school may use it if you are successful:	Please select
---	---------------

What kind of site is it?	Please select
--------------------------	---------------

What is the current use?	Please select
--------------------------	---------------

If government building or 'other' - please describe:	
--	--

Why have you chosen this site? What makes it suitable for your free school?	
---	--

If known, how big is the building and the site? Please attach any site and building plans as an additional file and send it to premises.freeschools@education.gsi.gov.uk:	
---	--

Please comment on the condition of the building. Please attach photos if available as an additional file and send it to premises.freeschools@education.gsi.gov.uk:	
--	--

For independent school convertors

Please say whether you will be increasing PAN when becoming a free school:	Please select
--	---------------

if yes, from what to what?	
----------------------------	--

Please confirm the size of your existing site:	
--	--

Please confirm the size of your existing buildings:	
---	--

Please confirm the tenure of your site/buildings including details of any loans or mortgages:	
---	--

Annexes

CV's

CV template		
1.	Name	██████████
2.	Area of expertise (i.e. education or finance)	██████████
3.	Details of your last three roles including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ name of school/ organisation ▪ position and responsibilities held ▪ length of time in position (This should cover the last four years. If not, please include additional roles)	██████████
		Name:
		Position:
		Dates:
		Name:
		Position:
		Dates:
4.	For finance only: details of professional qualifications, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ date of qualification ▪ professional body membership number ▪ how your qualifications are maintained 	
5.a	For education only: if you are in a leadership position in your latest school (where available): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the school's results for the years you were in 	██████████

	<p>post – these should include, as appropriate, Key Stage 2 results, 5A*-C GCSE including English and maths results or, for 16 to 19, average point score per entry and per student for level 3 qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If these results are not available, set out the track record of your school in terms of developing literacy and numeracy skills, qualifications achieved and preparing students for later life ▪ school's best 8 value added scores for the years you were in post, if applicable 	
5.b	<p>For education only: if you are in a teaching or head of department role in your latest school (where available):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Your subject/department's results for the years you were in post, compared to your school's averages – these should include, as appropriate, Key Stage 2 results, 5A*-C GCSE including English and maths results or, for 16 to 19, 	

	<p>average point score per entry and per student for level 3 qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If these results are not available, set out the track record of your subject/department/school in terms of developing literacy and numeracy skills (where appropriate to your subject and department), qualifications achieved and preparing students for later life 	
6.	Brief comments on why your previous experience is relevant to the new school	██████████
7.	Optional: brief comments on how the role you played helped to raise standards in any or all of your three previous roles.	██████████
8.	Reference names(s) and contact details	██████████

CV template		
1.	Name	██████████
2.	Area of expertise (i.e. education or finance)	██████████
3.	Details of your last three roles including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ name of school/ organisation ▪ position and responsibilities held ▪ length of time in position (This should cover the last four years. If not, please include additional roles)	██████████
		Name:
		Position:
		Dates:
		Name:
		Position:
		Dates:
4.	For finance only: details of professional qualifications, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ date of qualification ▪ professional body membership number ▪ how your qualifications are maintained 	██████████
5.a	For education only: if you are in a leadership position in your latest school (where available): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the school's results for the years you were in post – these should include, as appropriate, Key Stage 2 results, 5A*-C GCSE including English and maths 	N/A

	<p>results or, for 16 to 19, average point score per entry and per student for level 3 qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If these results are not available, set out the track record of your school in terms of developing literacy and numeracy skills, qualifications achieved and preparing students for later life ▪ school's best 8 value added scores for the years you were in post, if applicable 	
5.b	<p>For education only: if you are in a teaching or head of department role in your latest school (where available):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Your subject/department's results for the years you were in post, compared to your school's averages – these should include, as appropriate, Key Stage 2 results, 5A*-C GCSE including English and maths results or, for 16 to 19, average point score per entry and per student for level 3 qualifications ▪ If these results are not 	

	<p>available, set out the track record of your subject/department/school in terms of developing literacy and numeracy skills (where appropriate to your subject and department), qualifications achieved and preparing students for later life</p>	
6.	<p>Brief comments on why your previous experience is relevant to the new school</p>	<p>██████████</p>
7.	<p>Optional: brief comments on how the role you played helped to raise standards in any or all of your three previous roles.</p>	
8.	<p>Reference names(s) and contact details</p>	<p>██████████</p>

CV template		
1.	Name	██████████
2.	Area of expertise (i.e. education or finance)	██████████
3.	Details of your last three roles including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ name of school/ organisation ▪ position and responsibilities held ▪ length of time in position (This should cover the last four years. If not, please include additional roles)	██████████
		Name:
		Position:
		Dates:
		Name:
		Position:
		Dates:
4.	For finance only: details of professional qualifications, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ date of qualification ▪ professional body membership number ▪ how your qualifications are maintained 	
5.a	For education only: if you are in a leadership position in your latest school (where available): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the school's results for the years you were in post – these should include, as appropriate, Key Stage 2 results, 5A*-C GCSE including English and maths 	██████████

	<p>results or, for 16 to 19, average point score per entry and per student for level 3 qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If these results are not available, set out the track record of your school in terms of developing literacy and numeracy skills, qualifications achieved and preparing students for later life ▪ school's best 8 value added scores for the years you were in post, if applicable 	
5.b	<p>For education only: if you are in a teaching or head of department role in your latest school (where available):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Your subject/department's results for the years you were in post, compared to your school's averages – these should include, as appropriate, Key Stage 2 results, 5A*-C GCSE including English and maths results or, for 16 to 19, average point score per entry and per student for level 3 qualifications ▪ If these results are not 	

	available, set out the track record of your subject/department/school in terms of developing literacy and numeracy skills (where appropriate to your subject and department), qualifications achieved and preparing students for later life	
6.	Brief comments on why your previous experience is relevant to the new school	██████████
7.	Optional: brief comments on how the role you played helped to raise standards in any or all of your three previous roles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ██████████
8.	Reference names(s) and contact details	██████████

CV template		
1.	Name	██████████
2.	Area of expertise (i.e. education or finance)	██████████
3.	Details of your last three roles including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ name of school/organisation ▪ position and 	██████████
		██████████
		██████████

	<p>responsibilities held</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ length of time in position <p>(This should cover the last four years. If not, please include additional roles)</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p>
4.	<p>For finance only: details of professional qualifications, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ date of qualification ▪ professional body membership number ▪ how your qualifications are maintained 	
5.a	<p>For education only: if you are in a leadership position in your latest school (where available):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the school's results for the years you were in post – these should include, as appropriate, Key Stage 2 results, 5A*-C GCSE including English and maths results or, for 16 to 19, average point score per entry and per student for level 3 qualifications ▪ If these results are not available, set out the track record of your school in terms of developing literacy and numeracy skills, qualifications achieved 	<p>[REDACTED]</p>

	<p>and preparing students for later life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ school's best 8 value added scores for the years you were in post, if applicable 	
5.b	<p>For education only: if you are in a teaching or head of department role in your latest school (where available):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Your subject/department's results for the years you were in post, compared to your school's averages – these should include, as appropriate, Key Stage 2 results, 5A*-C GCSE including English and maths results or, for 16 to 19, average point score per entry and per student for level 3 qualifications ▪ If these results are not available, set out the track record of your subject/department/school in terms of developing literacy and numeracy skills (where appropriate to your subject and department), qualifications achieved and preparing students for later life 	

6.	Brief comments on why your previous experience is relevant to the new school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [REDACTED]
7.	Optional: brief comments on how the role you played helped to raise standards in any or all of your three previous roles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [REDACTED]
8.	Reference names(s) and contact details	[REDACTED]

CV template		
1.	Name	██████████
2.	Area of expertise (i.e. education or finance)	██████████
3.	Details of your last three roles including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ name of school/ organisation ▪ position and responsibilities held ▪ length of time in position (This should cover the last four years. If not, please include additional roles)	██████████
		Name:
		Position:
		Dates:
		Name:
		Position:
		Dates:
4.	For finance only: details of professional qualifications, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ date of qualification ▪ professional body membership number ▪ how your qualifications are maintained 	
5.a	For education only: if you are in a leadership position in your latest school (where available): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the school's results for the years you were in post – these should include, as appropriate, Key Stage 2 results, 5A*-C GCSE including English and maths 	

	<p>results or, for 16 to 19, average point score per entry and per student for level 3 qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If these results are not available, set out the track record of your school in terms of developing literacy and numeracy skills, qualifications achieved and preparing students for later life ▪ school's best 8 value added scores for the years you were in post, if applicable 	
5.b	<p>For education only: if you are in a teaching or head of department role in your latest school (where available):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Your subject/department's results for the years you were in post, compared to your school's averages – these should include, as appropriate, Key Stage 2 results, 5A*-C GCSE including English and maths results or, for 16 to 19, average point score per entry and per student for level 3 qualifications ▪ If these results are not 	

	<p>available, set out the track record of your subject/department/school in terms of developing literacy and numeracy skills (where appropriate to your subject and department), qualifications achieved and preparing students for later life</p>	
6.	<p>Brief comments on why your previous experience is relevant to the new school</p>	<p>██████████</p>
7.	<p>Optional: brief comments on how the role you played helped to raise standards in any or all of your three previous roles.</p>	
8.	<p>Reference names(s) and contact details</p>	<p>██████████</p>

CV template		
1.	Name	██████████
2.	Area of expertise (i.e. education or finance)	██████████
3.	Details of your last three roles including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ name of school/ organisation ▪ position and responsibilities held ▪ length of time in position (This should cover the last four years. If not, please include additional roles)	██████████
		██████████
		Name: Position: Dates:
4.	For finance only: details of professional qualifications, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ date of qualification ▪ professional body membership number ▪ how your qualifications are maintained 	
5.a	For education only: if you are in a leadership position in your latest school (where available): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the school's results for the years you were in post – these should include, as appropriate, Key Stage 	

	<p>2 results, 5A*-C GCSE including English and maths results or, for 16 to 19, average point score per entry and per student for level 3 qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If these results are not available, set out the track record of your school in terms of developing literacy and numeracy skills, qualifications achieved and preparing students for later life ▪ school's best 8 value added scores for the years you were in post, if applicable 	
5.b	<p>For education only: if you are in a teaching or head of department role in your latest school (where available):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Your subject/department's results for the years you were in post, compared to your school's averages – these should include, as appropriate, Key Stage 2 results, 5A*-C GCSE including English and maths results or, for 16 to 19, average point score per entry and per student for level 3 	

	<p>qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If these results are not available, set out the track record of your subject/department/school in terms of developing literacy and numeracy skills (where appropriate to your subject and department), qualifications achieved and preparing students for later life 	
6.	Brief comments on why your previous experience is relevant to the new school	██████████
7.	Optional: brief comments on how the role you played helped to raise standards in any or all of your three previous roles.	• ██████████
8.	Reference names(s) and contact details	██████████

CV template		
1.	Name	██████████
2.	Area of expertise (i.e. education or finance)	██████████
3	Details of your last three roles including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ name of school/ organisation ▪ position and responsibilities held ▪ length of time in position (This should cover the last four years. If not, please include additional roles)	██████████
		██████████
		Name: Position: Dates:
4.	For finance only: details of professional qualifications, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ date of qualification ▪ professional body membership number ▪ how your qualifications are maintained 	
5.a	For education only: if you are in a leadership position in your latest school (where available): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the school's results for the years you were in post – these should 	

	<p>include, as appropriate, Key Stage 2 results, 5A*-C GCSE including English and maths results or, for 16 to 19, average point score per entry and per student for level 3 qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If these results are not available, set out the track record of your school in terms of developing literacy and numeracy skills, qualifications achieved and preparing students for later life ▪ school's best 8 value added scores for the years you were in post, if applicable 	
5.b	<p>For education only: if you are in a teaching or head of department role in your latest school (where available):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Your subject/department's results for the years you were in post, compared to your school's averages – these should include, as appropriate, Key Stage 2 results, 5A*-C GCSE including English and maths results or, for 16 to 19, average point score 	

	<p>per entry and per student for level 3 qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If these results are not available, set out the track record of your subject/department/school in terms of developing literacy and numeracy skills (where appropriate to your subject and department), qualifications achieved and preparing students for later life 	
6.	Brief comments on why your previous experience is relevant to the new school	██████████
7.	Optional: brief comments on how the role you played helped to raise standards in any or all of your three previous roles.	██████████
8.	Reference names(s) and contact details	██████████

CV template		
1.	Name	██████████
2.	Area of expertise (i.e. education or finance)	██████████
3.	Details of your last three roles including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ name of school/ organisation ▪ position and responsibilities held ▪ length of time in position (This should cover the last four years. If not, please include additional roles)	██████████
		██████████
		Name: Position: Dates:
4.	For finance only: details of professional qualifications, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ date of qualification ▪ professional body membership number ▪ how your qualifications are maintained 	
5.a	For education only: if you are in a leadership position in your latest school (where available):	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the school's results for the years you were in post – these should include, as appropriate, Key Stage 2 results, 5A*-C GCSE including English and maths results or, for 16 to 19, average point score per entry and per student for level 3 qualifications ▪ If these results are not available, set out the track record of your school in terms of developing literacy and numeracy skills, qualifications achieved and preparing students for later life ▪ school's best 8 value added scores for the years you were in post, if applicable 	
5.b	<p>For education only: if you are in a teaching or head of department role in your latest school (where available):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Your subject/department's results for the years you were in post, compared to your school's averages – these should include, as appropriate, Key Stage 2 results, 5A*-C GCSE including 	

	<p>English and maths results or, for 16 to 19, average point score per entry and per student for level 3 qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If these results are not available, set out the track record of your subject/department/school in terms of developing literacy and numeracy skills (where appropriate to your subject and department), qualifications achieved and preparing students for later life 	
6.	Brief comments on why your previous experience is relevant to the new school	██████████
7.	Optional: brief comments on how the role you played helped to raise standards in any or all of your three previous roles.	██████████
8.	Reference names(s) and contact details	██████████

CV template		
1.	Name	██████████
2.	Area of expertise (i.e. education or finance)	██████████
3.	Details of your last three roles including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ name of school/ organisation ▪ position and responsibilities held ▪ length of time in position (This should cover the last four years. If not, please include additional roles)	██████████
		Name: Position: Dates:
		Name: Position: Dates:
4.	For finance only: details of professional qualifications, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ date of qualification ▪ professional body membership number ▪ how your qualifications are maintained 	
5.a	For education only: if you are in a leadership position in your latest school (where available):	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the school's results for the years you were in post – these should include, as appropriate, Key Stage 2 results, 5A*-C GCSE including English and maths results or, for 16 to 19, average point score per entry and per student for level 3 qualifications ▪ If these results are not available, set out the track record of your school in terms of developing literacy and numeracy skills, qualifications achieved and preparing students for later life ▪ school's best 8 value added scores for the years you were in post, if applicable 	
5.b	<p>For education only: if you are in a teaching or head of department role in your latest school (where available):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Your subject/department's results for the years you were in post, compared to your school's averages – these should include, as appropriate, Key Stage 2 results, 5A*-C GCSE including 	

	<p>English and maths results or, for 16 to 19, average point score per entry and per student for level 3 qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If these results are not available, set out the track record of your subject/department/school in terms of developing literacy and numeracy skills (where appropriate to your subject and department), qualifications achieved and preparing students for later life 	
6.	Brief comments on why your previous experience is relevant to the new school	██████████
7.	Optional: brief comments on how the role you played helped to raise standards in any or all of your three previous roles.	
8.	Reference names(s) and contact details	██████████

CV template		
1.	Name	██████████
2.	Area of expertise (i.e. education or finance)	██████████
3.	Details of your last three roles including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ name of school/ organisation ▪ position and responsibilities held ▪ length of time in position (This should cover the last four years. If not, please include additional roles)	██████████
		██████████
		██████████
		██████████
4.	For finance only: details of professional qualifications, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ date of qualification ▪ professional body membership number how your qualifications are maintained	
5.a	For education only: if you are in a leadership position in your latest school (where available): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the school's results for 	

	<p>the years you were in post – these should include, as appropriate, Key Stage 2 results, 5A*-C GCSE including English and maths results or, for 16 to 19, average point score per entry and per student for level 3 qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If these results are not available, set out the track record of your school in terms of developing literacy and numeracy skills, qualifications achieved and preparing students for later life ▪ school's best 8 value added scores for the years you were in post, if applicable 	
5.b	<p>For education only: if you are in a teaching or head of department role in your latest school (where available):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Your subject/department's results for the years you were in post, compared to your school's averages – these should include, as appropriate, Key Stage 2 results, 5A*-C GCSE including English and maths 	

	<p>results or, for 16 to 19, average point score per entry and per student for level 3 qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If these results are not available, set out the track record of your subject/department/school in terms of developing literacy and numeracy skills (where appropriate to your subject and department), qualifications achieved and preparing students for later life 	
6.	Brief comments on why your previous experience is relevant to the new school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [REDACTED]
7.	Optional: brief comments on how the role you played helped to raise standards in any or all of your three previous roles.	[REDACTED]
8.	Reference names(s) and contact details	[REDACTED]

CV template		
1.	Name	██████████
2.	Area of expertise (i.e. education or finance)	██████████
3.	Details of your last three roles including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ name of school/ organisation ▪ position and responsibilities held ▪ length of time in position (This should cover the last four years. If not, please include additional roles)	██████████
		██████████
		██████████
4.	For finance only: details of professional qualifications, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ date of qualification ▪ professional body membership number ▪ how your qualifications are maintained 	
5.a	For education only: if you are in a leadership position in your latest school (where available): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the school's results for the years you were in post – these should 	

	<p>include, as appropriate, Key Stage 2 results, 5A*-C GCSE including English and maths results or, for 16 to 19, average point score per entry and per student for level 3 qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If these results are not available, set out the track record of your school in terms of developing literacy and numeracy skills, qualifications achieved and preparing students for later life ▪ school's best 8 value added scores for the years you were in post, if applicable 	
5.b	<p>For education only: if you are in a teaching or head of department role in your latest school (where available):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Your subject/department's results for the years you were in post, compared to your school's averages – these should include, as appropriate, Key Stage 2 results, 5A*-C GCSE including English and maths results or, for 16 to 19, average point score 	

	<p>per entry and per student for level 3 qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If these results are not available, set out the track record of your subject/department/school in terms of developing literacy and numeracy skills (where appropriate to your subject and department), qualifications achieved and preparing students for later life 	
6.	Brief comments on why your previous experience is relevant to the new school	██████████
7.	Optional: brief comments on how the role you played helped to raise standards in any or all of your three previous roles.	
8.	Reference names(s) and contact details	██████████

CV template		
1.	Name	██████████
2.	Area of expertise (i.e. education or finance)	██████████
3.	Details of your last three roles including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ name of school/ organisation ▪ position and responsibilities held ▪ length of time in position (This should cover the last four years. If not, please include additional roles)	██████████
		Name: Position: Dates:
		Name: Position: Dates:
4.	For finance only: details of professional qualifications, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ date of qualification ▪ professional body membership number ▪ how your qualifications are maintained 	
5.a	For education only: if you are in a leadership position in your latest school (where available): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the school's results for the years you were in post – these should include, as appropriate, Key Stage 2 results, 	██████████

	<p>5A*-C GCSE including English and maths results or, for 16 to 19, average point score per entry and per student for level 3 qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If these results are not available, set out the track record of your school in terms of developing literacy and numeracy skills, qualifications achieved and preparing students for later life ▪ school's best 8 value added scores for the years you were in post, if applicable 	
5.b	<p>For education only: if you are in a teaching or head of department role in your latest school (where available):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Your subject/department's results for the years you were in post, compared to your school's averages – these should include, as appropriate, Key Stage 2 results, 5A*-C GCSE including English and maths results or, for 16 to 19, average point score per entry and per student for level 3 	

	<p>qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If these results are not available, set out the track record of your subject/department/school in terms of developing literacy and numeracy skills (where appropriate to your subject and department), qualifications achieved and preparing pupils for later life 	
6.	Brief comments on why your previous experience is relevant to the new school	██████████
7.	Optional: brief comments on how the role you played helped to raise standards in any or all of your three previous roles.	██████████
8.	Reference names(s) and contact details	██████████



Department
for Education

© Crown copyright 2014

You may re-use this information (excluding logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence or email psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at www.education.gov.uk/contactus.

This document is available for download at www.gov.uk.

Reference: DFE-00551-2014