

Free Schools - Proposal Form

The Proposal Form asks you for details on the educational rationale, aims and objectives, parental demand and premises of the proposed Free School. It also asks questions about the suitability of the provider(s) involved. All new Free Schools will be opened with the same legal status as Academies, in a binding agreement with the Secretary of State.

Please note, all information provided in this form will be published on the Department for Education website.

INITIAL DETAILS

Name (Please specify if you are the nominated representative of an organisation that wishes to set up a Free School)

██████████.

(The nominated representative of Nishkam Education)

Name of your organisation

Nishkam Education Trust

(Charity registered as Guru Nanak Nishkam Education Trust)

Address (of organisation or individual)

██████████, Handsworth, Birmingham, ██████████

Email Contact ██████████

Telephone Number

██████████ (office)
██████████ (mobile)

Are you an existing independent school wanting to convert to a Free School?

No

If yes, please provide your 6-digit school unique reference number (URN)

N/A

If no, please confirm the nature of your organisation (educational group / charity / business / parent group etc)

A registered educational charity and company limited by guarantee.

Please confirm whether your organisation is incorporated i.e. set up as a Company which is registered at Companies House. If so, please provide the Company Registration Number, Company Address and details of the Directors and Secretary. If not, please indicate the approximate date by which it will be incorporated.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, our organisation is incorporated Company Registration Number: 04614219 Company Address: [REDACTED], Handsworth, Birmingham Details of Directors and Secretary: Chairman: [REDACTED] Secretary: [REDACTED]
<input type="checkbox"/> No, our organisation is not yet incorporated Approximate date by which it will be incorporated: NA

What is the proposed age range of the Free School? Please include details of planned pupil numbers in each year group.

The Nishkam Free School will serve children aged 3 -16 years.

The overall service will be developed as an 'all-through' school in two stages, as outlined below.

A. Stage 1: Will consist of the following three elements.

- a. The existing Nursery for 3 - 5 year olds (1 Form Entry setting, with a capacity of 58 pupils).
 - It has been operating since September 2009.
 - It makes an essential contribution to the overall education vision.
 - It is funded entirely by our parent organisation.
 - It will not require financial assistance from the DfE.
- b. A new primary school for 5 -11 year olds (2 Form Entry school, with a capacity of 420 pupils).
 - To open immediately to all age groups.
 - Planned pupil numbers (PPNs) in September 2011 are 240.
 - Reception classes will have a full cohort of 60 pupils.
 - Each of the other 6 year groups will have an average of 30 pupils.
 - PPNs will rise to the full capacity of 420 pupils in the following 2 years.
- c. A new secondary school for 11 - 16 year olds (4 Form Entry school, with a capacity of 600 pupils).
 - Also opening immediately to all ages.
 - PPNs in September 2011 for the Year 7 cohort will be 120.
 - Each of the other 4 year groups will have an average of 60 pupils.
 - Total recruitment in September 2011 will be 360.
 - PPNs will rise to the full capacity of 600 pupils in the following 2 years.

B. Stage 2: Consists of expanding the capacity in the following way.

- a. The Nursery enlarging to a 2 Form Entry (FE) setting.
- b. The Primary School established in stage 1 continuing as a 2 FE school.
- c. The Secondary School increasing to 5 or possibly 6 FE entry school.

continued

C. Summary.

This is an application for funding of Stage 1 of the initiative, to establish the Nishkam Primary School and the Nishkam Secondary School.

We are mindful of the complexities of opening the 2 elements simultaneously. We would wish to discuss these plans with the DfE and are open to alternative proposals, particularly in relation to our plans to open the School to all year groups in September 2011.

When do you hope the Free School will start operating (for your first set of pupils)?

We would hope to open Stage 1 of the initiative in September 2011 and Stage 2 to be established at later date.

The above project timelines have been developed in response to parental demands and the imperative to offer continuity of service to the children in the Nishkam Nursery.

Stage 1.

a. Nishkam Primary School to open in September 2011.

This demanding timescale is necessary and feasible because of the following reasons.

- There is significant parent demand to open as early as possible. (We are in a position to open much earlier in 2011).
- Our parent organisation already owns the premises which are partly refurbished.
- There is existing planning approval for educational use for majority of the buildings on this site.
- We have developed detailed design proposals for the site.

b. The Nishkam Secondary School also to open in September 2011.

This demanding timescale is necessary and feasible because of the following reasons.

- There is significant parent demand to open as early as possible.
- Our parent organisation already owns the premises.
- We do not expect planning issues. We have had positive preliminary discussions with the planning authority. The site was previously used as a training centre and offices.
- The existing buildings are in excellent condition.
- We have developed detailed design proposals for the site

Stage 2.

The subsequent stages will be developed to meet demand and after approval from the DfE. Our parent organisation already owns the site with sufficient capacity to meet our total stage 2 requirements.

In which Local Authority area will the school be based? If you are near to a LA boundary, please include name of neighbouring LA(s)

Local Authority - Birmingham

Neighbouring LAs - Sandwell, Solihull, Dudley and Walsall.

Is your Local Authority aware of your intention to set up a Free School?

Yes

(If Y please give details of your discussions with them so far)

We have been working closely both with Birmingham City Council and the Department since 2002. The initial discussions were initiated as a response to educational issues raised by local parents.

Between 2006 and 2008, the discussions intensified as our responses to the issues evolved into firm proposals and new education provision was developed. This provision supplemented the main stream programmes and contributed to broadening education in Birmingham.

We began to collaborate with both the [REDACTED], for [REDACTED], to develop firm proposals to achieve the following: expand primary and early years provision in Handsworth; contribute to the wider issue of a shortage of primary places in the area; increase diversity of provision; and raise standards. We were also successful in our negotiations with [REDACTED] to become a promoter of a VA Faith School and an Academies sponsor.

More recently we have started working directly with the [REDACTED], the [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. We are collaborating to take forward wider community regeneration projects and extend support for the education endeavours.

On 27 October 2008, the Secretary of State granted us Consent to Publish Proposals for a new Sikh-ethos primary school in Handsworth, on 3 main grounds:

- contribution to local diversity;
- strong local support; and
- contribution to raising the low education standards in Birmingham, which remained below the national average.

In relation to our current proposals, we have informed Birmingham Council of our plans and asked for an early meeting. We have sent a copy of this application both to the [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. We will continue to work closely with the LA in their new role as commissioner of education services and as a source of local support to education providers.

Have you discussed your proposal form with the New Schools Network?

Yes

(If Y please give details of your discussions with them so far)

The NSN has been supporting us since their inception. This support has increased in recent months. They are supportive of our proposal.

NSN has kindly provided feedback to this application.

SUITABILITY OF PROVIDER

The Secretary of State will consider each proposal on its merits, and take into account all matters relevant to that proposal. Generally, he would expect that all proposals will comply with all aspects of the rigorous suitability and vetting tests throughout the application process, including due diligence and CRB checks and will reject any proposers who advocate violence, intolerance, hatred or whose ideology runs counter to the UK's democratic values.

Do any of the following apply to the organisation (or any consortium member), or to (any of) its director(s)/partners/proprietor(s) or individual applicants (select Y/N):	
Is in a state of bankruptcy, insolvency, compulsory winding up, receivership, composition with creditors (including any Individual Voluntary Arrangement), or subject to an Administration Order or any legal proceedings concerning their solvency?	No
Has been convicted of a criminal offence?	No
Is involved in any illegal activities?	No
Has not fulfilled obligations related to payment of taxes?	No
Is guilty of serious misrepresentation in supplying information?	No
Is not in possession of relevant licences or membership of an appropriate organisation where required by law?	No
Is barred from certain work with children as a result of being:	
[a] included in the list of those barred from Regulated Activity with children, kept by the Independent Safeguarding Authority? Or	No
[b] included in the list kept under section 1 of the Protection of Children Act 1999(4) (list of those considered by the Secretary of State as unsuitable to work with children)? Or	No
[c] subject to a direction of the Secretary of State under section 142 of the Education Act 2002 (5) (or any other disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in such a direction)? Or	No

<p>[d] disqualified from working with children under sections 28, 29 or 29A of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000(6)?</p> <p>For further information on [a], [b], [c] and [d], please contact the CRB www.crb.homeoffice.gov.uk.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Is disqualified from registration under Part 10A of the Children Act 1989(7) for child minding or providing day care?</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Is disqualified from registration under Part 3 of the Childcare Act 2006(8)?</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Is a member, or has been a member in the past, of a proscribed organisation?</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>If the answer to any of these questions is “Yes” please give details below:</p>	

EDUCATIONAL RATIONALE, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Briefly outline your reasons for wanting to set up a Free School. Max 200 words.

We want to improve educational attainment; broaden the curriculum to promote spiritual and emotional wellbeing, family values; and integrate families and community into education. The School will also help to alleviate the shortage of primary school places and increase diversity of education in Birmingham.

The new school concept arose out of the work of a cooperative of parents, businesses and educationalists, supported by a faith based organisation, who developed a vision of education which would cherish children and childhood, wisdom, ethics, human dignity and interfaith understanding.

In the densely populated, deprived inner city area of Handsworth, low education standards, insufficient school places, poor public services, pressures on family life and lack of external investment continues to hinder the development of children. Children suffer narrow education, lack of parental support and limited opportunities. Such concerns are echoed by international studies (UNICEF Report 2007) and local research about 'a failed generation' of children. Birmingham is in receipt of emergency funding to increase school places and emotional behavioural support units are set to proliferate in city schools.

The co-operative formed an independent education charity, Nishkam Education Trust (NET), with support from the Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha (GNNSJ) - who are well known for nurturing grassroots initiatives, and responding to the needs and aspirations of the local community.

The School will have a unique multi-faith ethos to positively nurture the faiths of all children. It will work within the national guidelines for admissions, limiting faith criteria admissions to 50% Sikhs.

We have positive support from local community, businesses and universities, the Birmingham Faith Leaders Group and other religious bodies. We are active members of the West Midlands Faiths Forum. Our work is aligned to contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Please set out the Free School's aims and objectives. You should also describe:

- the teaching methods that will be used and whether the Free School will follow a particular philosophy (eg Montessori);
- the outline of the Free School's proposed curriculum, including any religious ethos;
- how the Free School will improve pupil learning and ensure strong discipline;

Max 2000 words.

1. Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of the Nishkam Free School are to promote the development of wholesome individuals, supportive families and a caring society. To cherish and nurture the potential in every human being to be gracious, act in a noble way and contribute to the good of society.

We subscribe to the statutory requirement of the Education Act Reform Act (1988) that maintained schools must offer a "broad and balanced curriculum" which:

"promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society; and

prepares such pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of adult life".

We accord fully with those sentiments expressed in the House of Lords debate that education is about:

"the training of good human beings, purposeful and wise, themselves with a vision of what it is to be human and the kind of society that makes that possible". (Hansard. 5 July 1996: Column 1691).

These starting points will suffused with the beliefs that:

- every child is precious, deserves to experience love, to have dignity, to develop inner confidence in being part of the wider world.
- each child needs good nourishment for the body, the mind and for the spirit that is within.
- all children have innate, positive dispositions which are be cherished and nurtured, in a learning culture where values and virtues are celebrated and practiced.
- all faiths are to be valued and respected; children of other faiths and those of no faith must all be welcomed and supported.

We value the government's recognition that faith schools are popular with parents and make a valuable contribution to helping this country to discharge its duty under Article 2 of Protocol 1 of the European Convention on Human Rights: "to respect the rights of parents to ensure education and teaching in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions". (Cont)

The Nishkam Education Trust is established to support children and parents of all backgrounds in this regard.

2. Curriculum Design Principles

The School will deliver the full National Curriculum, which will be organised into four main areas: English and Modern Foreign Languages; Mathematics, Science and Technology; Humanities (Geography, History, PHSE and RE); and Arts and PE.

Nishkam Education looks to extend and enrich the curriculum across all areas of learning with the following aims: academic excellence; spiritual nurture; strengthening wellbeing; love for nature and all creation; and with a sense of belonging and urge to contribute to the society.

2.1 Academic Excellence

- Primacy of self-discovery
- Proficiency in academic subjects
- Having wonderful ideas
- Habit of lifelong learning
- Experience of success and failure
- Inner creativity and imagination

2.2 Spiritual Nurture

- Prayer, reflection and service
- Personal insights of self, God or the transcendent
- Experience fulfilment and joy
- Practice love, forgiveness, faithfulness
- Awe and wonder, wisdom and humility
- Innovation and optimism in the face of challenge
- Quest for meaning in life, truth and ultimate values

2.3 Strengthening Wellbeing

- Emotional, physical and creative
- Empathy, confidence and caring
- Opportunities to succeed
- Cheerfulness and optimism
- Sense of identity and self-worth
- Valuing others

2.4 Love for Nature and Creation

- Sense of self in creation and nature
- Caring for the environment and the natural world
- Being a global citizen
- Practical skills

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2.5 Belonging and Contributing

- Nurture family values
- Family and community relations
- Pride in heritage and culture
- Selfless service and compassion
- Creating and enjoying a stable environment
- Value diversity and inclusion

3. Curriculum Content

The Nishkam curriculum will give pupils:

- experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic, and creative education.
- skills in speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy.
- personal, social and health education in keeping with the school's ethos and aims.
- appropriate careers guidance for those receiving secondary education.
- preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.
- opportunities to learn and make progress for all pupils, e.g. those for whom English is an additional language or those with a statement of SEN.

Primary Curriculum

In the primary years the three main subjects studied will be English, Mathematics and Science. Other subjects such as Art, Geography, History, Music and Physical Education will also be taught. These will be tested through Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 examinations.

Secondary Curriculum

Pupils will choose from a wide portfolio of subjects to fulfill their personal aspirations, help with their applications for university or employment. The school will start by offering GCSE as the last assessment taken in compulsory schooling and go on to develop vocational programmes.

4. Teaching and Learning

Nishkam Education will support teachers to develop appropriate skills, knowledge and dispositions to fulfill the aims of the curriculum and the ethos of the School. They will have the freedom to: use a wide range of teaching and learning methods; and provide a stimulating, enthused and challenging learning environment to educate and develop the whole person.

Nishkam Education will support the personal and professional development of teachers, as well as their role in developing a distinct and pioneering curriculum.

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All aspects of teaching and learning, including teachers, resources and environment, will be brought together to:

- enable pupils to gain new knowledge and make progress, increasing their understanding, developing skills and acquiring good attitudes;
- foster the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest in work, and the ability to think and learn for themselves;
- provide well planned lessons, effective teaching methods, suitable activities and wise class time management;
- understand the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensure these are taken into account in the planning of learning;
- demonstrate appropriate knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught;
- effectively utilise classroom resources of appropriate quality, quantity and range; and
- assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly, and use information from those assessments to plan teaching for effective progress of pupils.

5. Improving Learning and Ensuring Discipline

Existing Nishkam Educational initiatives illustrate that our distinct ethos improves learning and engenders discipline in children. For example, at the Nishkam Nursery, there is an emphasis on giving love and attention to each child within a family-like environment, this helps to promote respect, enthusiasm and mutual support. It enforces a 'loving discipline', which encourages young children to be reflective and take responsibility for their actions.

Children are influenced by the mindset and behaviours of adults around them, hence adults must practise values and create positive relationships; to foster good habits and stimulate learning amongst children. Good nourishment and outdoor play will also be prioritised to support the all-round wellbeing of learners. Nutritious vegetarian meals will be prepared fresh on the premises and special attention given to fostering good eating habits.

For us, the 'hidden curriculum' plays a significant role in creating habits and conditions for improving learning. We aim to foster a culture which encourages self-discipline by developing content, confident, caring, reflective and generous learners. Disciplinary procedures should likewise promote an attitude of loving care towards others, reinforce the importance of responsibility and accountability.

In striving for excellence, our School will achieve high standards - we expect to be significantly above the Contextual Value Added national and local averages within our first 2 years, and in the top 25% nationally within 3 years.

The School will have a framework for evaluating pupil performance by reference either to the School's own aims or national norms.

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6. Extending Responsibility for Education

The Nishkam approach is built on a realisation that the raising of children is a collective approach. Parents, families, teachers, businesses, individuals, institutions and the wider community all have vital roles to play. We, therefore, create opportunities to collaborate with partners to deliver wholesome education. Business and community can contribute important skills and attributes to the school life. Valuing and strengthening the family, and community spirit will ensure children can be well nurtured in the home, school and local neighbourhoods. Faith-based organisations, we believe, have a significant role to play; the heritage they draw upon illuminates some of the deeper quests for meaning and value in human life, to inspire a broader vision and greater responsibility in our endeavours.

7. Religious Education and Nurture

We believe schools can play a key role in not only meeting the legal requirements for teaching RE, but go beyond to nurture and encourage the personal faith of each pupil, as well as building interfaith understanding. As families, society and civic organisations become increasingly secular, opportunities are being lost to be enriched by the positive legacy of faith traditions.

The Nishkam School will have, therefore, a multi-faith ethos, where each faith is valued and supported, and specific provision is made to nourish the personal faith of each child. Worship for the whole School and within specific religious groups will be a unique and innovative feature of the School. The Sikh Dharam is emphatic in respecting all faiths and hence not seeking converts to the Sikh faith. Its teachings and traditions are the inspiration for our multi-faith ethos.

Formally taught RE in the School will be based on national guidelines as adapted by the Birmingham Standing Advisory Council on RE. The Birmingham RE syllabus is based on the concept of learning from faith and learning about religious traditions, using the 24 dispositions. Having contributed to the development of this unique RE syllabus for Birmingham, Nishkam Education actively supports its aims and approach.

At the Nishkam School, both religious education and religious nurture will contribute to the development of the whole child as a spiritual, moral, social and cultured human being. It will also contribute to developing and building a cohesive society and creating spiritual capital.

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8. Nishkam Education: its vision and its origins

The Nishkam Education vision emerged from over 30 years of voluntary work with children; helping us to realise that children crave time with their parents, revealing their longing for more attention, love and nurture; alongside the freedom to spread their wings. It is surprising how many parents are oblivious to the plethora of influences working against strong families and how quickly childhood passes into teenage years, when many children are influenced almost exclusively by their peers and the media.

To build practical solutions, the education cooperative sought the support from GNNSJ, the largest faith organisation in the area. This is a multi-faceted, faith-inspired organisation which is helping to extend Birmingham's unique heritage, where over the centuries faith communities have made significant contributions to build a vibrant city. The outcome is an approach which provides wholesome education that would bring out the finest qualities in a young person.

The Sikh heritage shows that spirituality serves to enrich all aspects of life, including education, and it can emancipate our inherent positive qualities and capacity to act in a noble way. It emphasises the vital role of parents as educators, and has long practiced respect for all faiths rather than seeking to convert others to the Sikh fold.

GNNSJ describes itself as having 'a greater challenge, to imagine and build a future, where each community not only recognises and learns from its own heritage, but also makes sacrifices for others to achieve an even greater degree of self awareness.' The word 'nishkam' encapsulates a spirit of serving others selflessly, out of a sense of love and as a duty to others, and without motive for personal gain. Hence, we want to provide an exemplary education for each child, regardless of family income, status or faith.

In supporting the development a pioneering school, GNNSJ is following a noble tradition of faith based organisations support for education, such as the longstanding contributions of the Church of England to education for all in the UK, to the recent development of the Sikh School in Hayes, which is now a beacon school providing support for schools in the area.

We also work closely with other faith communities in supporting initiatives to broaden the civic life of the City, including Faiths for the City Initiative and Birmingham Faith Leaders Group, all in collaboration with the University of Birmingham. We shall continue our collaboration with the City Council to ensure that the planned School plays its part in the local 'family of schools'.

What are your organisation's core areas of work / aims? Max 500 words.

The core aims of the Nishkam Education Trust are to:

- A. develop high quality, value based education services in deprived areas, within the context of a global village;
- B. engender a spirit of service and a shared responsibility, an international outlook, adventure and outdoor education; and
- C. promote partnership working and education enriched by contributions from: parents and community; industry and commerce; higher education; guiding institutions; and religion and dharam.

The core of our work are based in the UK, India, Pakistan and Kenya. Such work is possible because of the resources provided by our sole financial promoter GNNSJ.

1. In the UK, we support the following education initiatives:

- an extremely popular and successful supplementary education school for over 300 children of all ages, which has been running for nearly 30 years;
- summer school for children has been running for 5 years;
- the funding of a lectureship in Sikh Studies at the University of Birmingham and post-doctoral research in Faith, Civil Society and the UN;
- collaboration with Birmingham SACRE to embed value-led dispositions into RE;
- civic engagement and community development through the work of the Nishkam Civic Association (NCA);
- funded the newly established Nishkam Nursery, which has received excellent OfSTED inspection reports;
- creation of infrastructure and facilities for the School, with the acquisition of an 8.3 acre site, with a £7.5m loan; and
- for the Primary School the investment of nearly £1m on grade II listed buildings (1, 3, 5 and 7 Soho Road).

We also work with local schools to broaden educational opportunities for all children; to support parental involvement in their children's education; and to provide structured out-of-school activities for local children.

GNNSJ is an active member of the Birmingham University Community Advisory Board. We support teacher training students, from Newman College University, on overseas placements. Nishkam Education has effective partnerships with local colleges and training providers to deliver general and vocation education programmes.

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2. In India and Pakistan, we support the following education and community development projects:

- 29 Academies in deprived rural areas of Punjab, India and Pakistan;
- bursaries for women to undertake higher education medical studies; and
- redevelopment of the memorial site of Bhai Kanhaiya Ji, the renowned eighteenth century Sikh disciple who exemplified the concepts that inspired the modern day charities such as the Red Cross.

3. In Kericho, East Africa, the Trust has created the following infra-structure for indigenous Kenyan youth:

- an Institute of Business Studies and Technical Training, on a 4 acre site
- hostels and associated facilities for both male and female trainees, on a 6 acre site

4. Overseas Educational and Social Action tours. These are organised regularly for groups of young people to visit India, Pakistan and Africa to promote the appreciation of their roots; conserving heritage, traditions, and values; and for engaging in selfless volunteering.

What capacity and capability do you have (or have access to) in order to deliver the educational vision set out above? Please indicate the resources, experience and expertise (educational and legal) that you have or have access to. Max 500 words.

The Trust has extensive capacity and capability to deliver the above educational vision; it is supported by GNNSJ, and the cooperative of parents, businesses and educationalists. The capacity can be grouped under the following headings: our Core Infra-structure Network; the Trust's decision making structures; our experience of service delivery; and the access to external institutions and organisations. The support base is summarised below.

A. Core Infra-structure Network is made up of the following:

1. School Project Team. Has been working on the project for nearly 10 years. Currently it consists of 3 full time and three part time experienced people.
2. Education Advisory Panel. Membership is drawn from academics, managers and teachers from England, Australia, India and Kenya.
3. Specialist support teams. Members have experience of business and social enterprises, community development, inter-faith, parent engagement, alongside educational, legal, financial and project management.
4. Board of Trustees. This a visionary team with experience of education, management, business and social action.

The above capacity has enabled the Trust to support the wide range of educational projects in the UK and overseas, which are summarised in the earlier sections.

B. The Trust's decision making structures.

These are comprehensive, systematic and have evolved with the development of activities. We draw upon good practice models from business, the third sector and the faith based organisations. We have the capacity to manage community funds; and grant aid from government bodies, European Community and other Trusts.

The effectiveness of the structures can be witnessed in the following examples of our work.

- Establishing and operating a full day care nursery school;

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- achieving the S10 Consent from Secretary of State for Education;
- building up the extensive infra-structure for the school, through community fund raising activities and bank loans, over a period of 10 years;
- capacity to manage large grant aid. In building the Civic Centre, NCA were awarded European (ERDF) grant of £2.5 m and raised £4.9 m from community donations (total project value of £7.4 m). The ERDF grant was paid directly to the NCA without an external 'Accountable Body';
- NCA awarded the Queen's Award (2010) for voluntary service; Local Authority Building Control Officer's Association Award for quality of construction; the West Midlands Centre for Constructing Excellence Award for use of modern methods of construction.

C. Support of external institutions and organisations.

We work effectively with external organisations in the education, faith, community, business and public sectors. These relationships provide access to broader pool of expertise, and range from informal support, Memorandums of Understanding to formal contracts, as outlined below.

1. In education. The examples of collaboration includes:
 - Birmingham University. We have longstanding advisory, collaborative and contractual arrangements;
 - With Newman College University and the Queen's Foundation for Ecumenical Theological Education we are discussing bi-lateral partnerships; and
 - There is existing collaboration with Universities in Punjab, India.
2. Collaboration with community and faith organisations includes the following:
 - Birmingham Faith Leaders Group, West Midlands Faith Forum, European Council of Religious Leaders and Council for a Parliament for the Worlds Religions;
 - Jubilee Debt Campaign; and
 - Membership of the DfE Faith Group and Faith in the System Conference has given us access to colleagues, with substantial education experience, from the Christian, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh school's organisations.

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3. In relation to business partners, the following are a few examples of working relationships.
 - We have worked with and employed architects, consulting engineers and contractors;
 - Serco Education helped to draft this application through a Memorandum of Understanding; and
 - We are in discussions with Nord Anglia, E-ACT and the Synergy Group about possible future collaboration.
4. The following examples of relationships with public sector bodies, illustrate how the Trust is able to be attuned to public policy and works to influence policy.
 - Faith Communities Consultative Council (Dept of Communities and Local Government);
 - King Edward VI School, Handsworth along with other local schools;
 - Birmingham City Council and SACRE;
 - Midland Heart: largest housing and regeneration group in the Midlands; and
 - Heart of Birmingham PCT.

Do you have plans to work with a 3rd party organisation? If so, please include their details below and set out the intended nature of that relationship (for example, a contract, co-sponsorship arrangement, informal partnership).

The tripartite relationship between the Trust, GNNSJ, and the collaboration of the cooperative of parents, businesses and educationalists has produced a strong base of skills and capability. This relationship has also helped new values to emerge, such as: the commitment to develop high quality services in deprived areas; nurturing grassroots initiatives; responding to the needs and aspirations of the local community; aligning our endeavours to wider global context; and the desire to influence public policy based on the learning from grass roots experience. Our first inclination is to develop and strengthen the above tripartite relationship further.

We also recognise that there will be stages, during the current process, where we will need the assistance of external organisations to provide specialist support. We have been involved in initial discussions with organisations such as Serco Education, Nord Angia and E-ACT. At the moment we have an understanding to work with Serco Education to assist in writing the Stage 1 application on a Pro Bono basis. The contributions of both parties are being delivered without charge.

We will proceed to the next stage, if approval is given by the Secretary of State, under the guidance of the DfE and other advisors. The nature of any relationships with external agencies is still to be decided.

Our initial thinking about the types of relationships we may need to have with third part organisations is summarised below. However, these are initial ideas and will need to evolve.

Stage 2. Preparation of the detailed Business Case and Implementation Plan.

This will be supported by a commercial contract between the two parties, including appropriate financial recompense (we envisage such payment funded from development grant aid from DfE).

Stage 3. The establishment and operation of the school.

Looking further ahead, we have started to explore the possibility of extending the remit and capacity of the Trust to support the development of other community schools in deprived areas.

Please name the key individuals / trustees involved in setting up the Free School (if available). Please also indicate whether trustees have been chosen and their roles confirmed. Please provide details of employment of these individuals and any conflicts of interest you believe might arise.

Nishkam Education Trust operates under the auspices of the Board of Trustees; the delivery of the project is supported by the School Project Team, with additional support provided by the Education Advisory Panel and a specialist support team. Details of the key individuals and their input in each area of the organisation is summarised below.

A. Board of Trustees.

Board is [REDACTED] by [REDACTED], who provides the [REDACTED].
[REDACTED] is a [REDACTED], who is readily available to give
[REDACTED] at very short notice.

B. School Project Team.

The Team has been working on the project for nearly 10 years. The following 3 key full time members are supported by other part time members.

- [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED],
[REDACTED];
- [REDACTED]; and
- [REDACTED]

continued

C. Education Advisory Panel.

Membership is drawn from academics, managers and teachers from England, Australia, India and Kenya.

All members provide overall guidance and support the development of the vision. The key members listed below are involved on a more regular basis and are available at short notice.

1. Key members.

- [REDACTED]: [REDACTED] and [REDACTED];
- [REDACTED]: [REDACTED];
- [REDACTED]: [REDACTED];
- [REDACTED]: [REDACTED] at [REDACTED]; and
- [REDACTED]: [REDACTED].

D. Specialist Support Team.

This consists of volunteers with experience of: construction and infrastructure development; business and social enterprises; community development; inter-faith, parent engagement; alongside educational, legal, financial and project management knowledge. Key members are:

- [REDACTED]: He has over [REDACTED];
- [REDACTED]: [REDACTED] at one of the UK's [REDACTED];
- [REDACTED]: [REDACTED]; and
- [REDACTED]: [REDACTED], [REDACTED] with a keen interest in [REDACTED].

EVIDENCE OF DEMAND

What evidence of local parental demand do you have? For example, a petition or a declaration from interested parents or pupil number projections for the area. Max 200 words.

The evidence of local parental demand for the new school has arisen from the following activities. The expression of need from local parents and community; parents of pupils attending the supplementary school and nursery have all endorsed the project; since 2003 we have conducted surveys and held consultation meetings; formal consultation with other faith communities; and the shortage of school places in the area will increase according to City Council projections.

The surveys evoked strong support from nearly 2000 families, of which over 400 were Sikh families seeking places for their children. We repeated the survey during the last 2 weeks and confirmed that there is a strong demand from the local community for the School.

Birmingham School Places Planning Report of June 2009, concluded that "the pressure for primary school places, particularly in the central area of the city, has increased significantly over recent years", and there is a clear shortage in the Soho ward; and "Demand for secondary school places, expected to fall until 2013, will begin to increase quite rapidly from September 2014". In February 2010, the update report stated that "... adequate provision can only be made by innovative ways of working with building firms and other land owners to develop a land strategy, ...to fill the affordability gap..."

The Secretary of State wrote in our Consent Letter of 27 October 2008:

- "the School would contribute to an already strong level of diversity within the local authority, further enhancing parental choice."
- "There is clear evidence that those consulted are in favour, including support from a number of faith and community groups, as well as mainstream schools."
- "Standards in the authority are below the national average and the Secretary of State expects that the new school will work with the local authority in its endeavour to increase standards across the authority."

What is the proposed capacity (number of pupils)? Max 200 words.

This is an application to establish a 1020 capacity all - through school, consisting of a 2 FE primary and a 4 FE secondary school, with the existing nursery continuing to offer 58 places.

The medium term objective is to establish an all - through school for 1300 children. This would consist of a 2 FE nursery, a 2 FE primary and a 6 FE secondary school.

The phasing is designed to respond to the parental demands expressed in our consultations and meet the shortages in school places that exists in the area. In responding to these needs we will need to open the school doors to all ages from the beginning. Our projections show that both phases of the school will have sufficient demand to fill the above capacity.

We understand that, in both phases, this is likely to result in an initial "jagged" pupil population. That is full cohorts in Reception, Year 1 and Year 7, and probably progressively less full in the upper years of each phase. However, our projections show that both phases will be full to capacity within the first 2 years of opening.

A 420 pupil primary is a large school - the national average is little over 200. This means that we will be able to perform well in relation to the key factors of effectiveness and efficiency. The latter approach being particularly important when school budgets may be cut in real terms, there will be economies of scale in terms of staffing and other resources.

The initial capacity (of 600 pupils) of the 4 FE secondary school will be give a comparatively small school, however we will grow to the normal capacity of 900 as the school becomes established. During the development period it will be a challenge to ensure a full core curriculum offer within the available budget. We will provide the additional resource from the economies available from managing the primary and secondary schools as a single school. We have done some initial modelling, which we will develop in more rigorous detail as part of writing the Business Plan.

PREMISES

What steps have you taken to identify a potential site? Please include details of the geographical area the school seeks to serve; a list of any sites you have considered; and any discussions you have had to identify a suitable site. If known, please include the proposed location, premises and postcode of the Free School.

The Nishkam Free School will serve Handsworth and the surrounding areas in the north west of Birmingham.

During the early stages of the project the supporters of the Trust spent nearly 5 years trying to negotiate the acquisition of suitable sites from Birmingham Council and other partners. Following many unsuccessful bids, GNNSJ, our parent support organisation, acquired the the following two sites, because we anticipated a shortage of suitable land as the City Centre developments began to expand into Handsworth.

1. Site A.

██████████, Handsworth, Birmingham, ██████████.

This site is located within a densely populated and inner city deprived area of Handsworth in the immediate vicinity of the GNNSJ headquarters. GNNSJ acquired the ██████████ which make up the plot over a period of 5 years. The first building was refurbished in August 2009 to accommodate our nursery school.

We have drawn up plans to develop the ██████████ as composite development to accommodate the proposed 2 FE primary school. The pre-planning application documents have been submitted to the City Council.

██████████ already have existing planning approval for education use. We are advised by our architects and building team that the refurbishment work can be completed within 6 months. Current working estimates put the cost at £ 5.16 m.

2. Site B.

██████████, ██████████, Hockley, Birmingham ██████████.

This extensive, 8.3 acre site, consists of modern offices, warehousing and large car parking areas. It is less than a half mile from the ██████████ premises.

The pre-planning application documents have been submitted to the City Council, to convert the buildings into a school in two stages.

continued ...

Stage 1: The 4 FE secondary phase. Estimate time of refurbishment and building time is 6 months. Cost of work estimated at £ 4.93 m

Stage 2: The additional 2 FE nursery, giving 4 FE nursery; and the expansion of secondary capacity to 6 FE.

3. In summary.

Both sites are owned by GNNSJ and there is sufficient capacity for the proposed schools. We have developed plans for the refurbishment and redevelopment works to cater for the initial stages of both primary and secondary schools.

The following are the key considerations for this application.

- We would apply to the DfE for the costs of the refurbishment and redevelopment totalling £10.09 m (ex VAT).
- GNNSJ has so far paid £2.8 m in purchasing the sites, interest payments and refurbishment costs.
- GNNSJ continues to be responsible for the interest payments on the £7.5 m loan.
- In addition GNNSJ has paid all consultancy and project support costs so far.
- Our ethos requires that, in undertaking redevelopment and building works, we are frugal, and create aesthetically pleasing and functionally effective buildings with the lowest possible impact on the environment.

We will apply these high standards during the design and construction of the proposed school buildings.

Further information

Please note, all information provided on this form will be published on the Department for Education website. Information that you supply on this form may be shared with (a) the New Schools Network and (b) the Local Authority in which you wish to set up the Free School. Information about the New Schools Network can be found at [REDACTED].

Submission of this form will be treated as consent, from both you and anyone else whose personal data is contained on this form, to the sharing of this information as set out above.

In addition, information that you provide on this form, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes, primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.

Next Steps

Please email completed Proposal Form to [REDACTED]

You will hear back from a named official at the Department for Education within two weeks, who will offer you advice on how best to progress your application. The Secretary of State will make a judgement on the potential of the project based on criteria relating to educational aims and objectives, evidence of demand, potential premises, suitability of provider and any other relevant considerations to decide whether the proposed Free School project should move into stage 3, namely that of drawing up a business case and plan.