

Appendix C

Criteria for the Evaluation of Proposals for Partnership

Proposal Name	Farm School Approach
Submitted by	Cllr Ruth O'Keefe
Date submitted	29 June 2016
Governing Body Approval?	The proposal does not have Governing Body approval. The Governing Body were not involved in drawing up the plan. The Chair of Governors has indicated that she believes that this proposal does not present a sustainable way forward for the school in light of the significant challenges the school is facing.
Evaluation Date	29 – 30th June 2016
Overall assessment	<p>The proposal sets out an approach to address the Ofsted priorities from the most recent inspection (March 2015) by developing a farm curriculum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This is not a credible proposal because:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ It does not address the challenges the school faces of low pupil numbers, financial stability, and pupil performance.○ No business plan has been submitted that provides evidence that the proposal will lead to financial viability.○ The proposal does not deliver any transformational approaches to teaching and learning. The approaches to teaching and learning suggested are already used at the school.• No explicit vision is stated. The proposal does not provide clear objectives, targets or milestones for implementation and the measuring of impact.

- The milestones do not drive and monitor the progress of the school from its current weak position to an Ofsted 'Good'.
- There is no indication as to how the proposed farm curriculum will meet all National Curriculum requirements and enable accelerated progress for the pupils at Pells. Therefore, there is no clarity about how the quality of education, outcomes and progress, will improve for all pupils who are vulnerable to underachievement at Pells.
- The issue of the required leadership of the school from September 2016 has not been addressed; this is a significant weakness of the proposal. The proposal does not refer to the leadership capacity required to improve and sustain improvement; there is no capacity resulting from partnership with another school which we would expect to see for this school.
- The proposal references a consultancy headteacher role (an ex Lewes headteacher). However, there is no indication of the time commitment of this role, or whether this is a substantive post. There is no evidence of the impact of this leadership approach on pupils' outcomes. The Pells school budget cannot support the cost of a consultant headteacher and the plan does not indicate how the day to day leadership role would be funded or undertaken.
- Staff development includes the use of Initial Teaching Trainers (ITT). There is no evidence regarding the capacity and quality of these personnel, how they will deliver teaching commitments across the year and whether their teaching will cover school or university weeks.
- This proposal does not demonstrate that it would lead to increased pupil numbers to ensure a sustainable budget in the future.
- The costings for set up and annual running costs of a Farm School are at least £100K and £50K each year thereafter. These costs could not be supported by the school budget and there is no evidence that this significant resource would address the challenges of the school's underperformance.
- Setting up a farm at Pells CE Primary School would require Planning Permission for change of use and for constructing any necessary buildings; this would take a minimum of 6 months and would incur costs of

	<p>approximately £20K (this cost is in addition to the £100K estimated above for the set-up of the Farm School). Any loss of playing field as a result of the proposal would also require Secretary of State approval. No work on setting up the farm could begin until planning permission was secured.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is no locally or nationally available evidence that a plan of this type will improve performance of pupils at the school, or increase its popularity in the community.
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Criteria for Evaluation:

All proposals will be assessed against the key areas set out below.

1. **Vision**
2. **Education Plan**
3. **Capacity and Capability**
4. **Evidence of strong track record**
5. **Financial Sustainability**

	Criteria	Comments
1	Vision	
	Is there a clear vision set out for the partnership?	No explicit vision is stated. The proposal broadly sets out how a farm approach could be implemented at Pells but not how this will improve outcomes for pupils. No partnership solution is proposed.
	Is there evidence that leaders of both schools are committed to the vision?	No. No specific school partners are named.
	Is the vision appropriate for the particular context of the schools?	The objectives are aligned to the Ofsted key priorities but are not sufficiently robust to address the detail of the actions that need to be undertaken in the timeline to the imminent Ofsted inspection.

	Criteria	Comments
2	Education Plan	
	Is there a curriculum plan which is consistent with the vision and pupil intake?	<p>The references to the curriculum draw on the context of farming as the context for learning. Many schools already use context based learning to engage pupils and provide a purpose for learning and indeed Pells School already offers a varied range of activities which are integrated with the curriculum. These activities progressively build on creativity and are carefully planned throughout the school year. Examples include:</p> <p>Topic: Into the Woods. This is linked to the Forest School which is on offer within the school and in partnership with Priory School. These offer real life challenges which necessitate depth of learning.</p> <p>Trips and Learning within the Local Community. Sussex Wildlife and Railway Land Live. This project allows students to collect evidence (e.g. mini beasts), research environmental issues and create podcasts.</p> <p>Topic: Battle of Lewes. This is linked to Priory Ruins and is a whole school project delivered in the summer with a comprehensive cross curricular approach. Every child visits the site and experiences a range of practical and academic activities e.g. cooking, gardening and research. This is followed up in school with workshops which develop writing with a purpose.</p> <p>Trips out: these include Lewes Foundry (art Based), Brighton Museum (History), Blacklands Farm (PSHE and PE). In addition there is participation in District Sports and</p>

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		<p>local; sports festivals and PATINA Moving on parade (a strong local community project which involves working with artists).</p> <p>It is not clear how the proposed approach would specifically bring about the rapid improvements required to improve outcomes for all pupils. The proposal does not deliver any transformational approaches to teaching and learning. The approaches to teaching and learning suggested are already used at the school.</p> <p>The proposal does not demonstrate sufficient attention to the make-up of the pupil cohort at Pells including the high numbers of FSM and SEN pupils and the impact that this approach will have on these pupils.</p> <p>A key challenge at the school is the development of the required skills in reading, writing and maths in cohorts of pupils who arrive with low prior attainment and low aspiration and lacking basic skills (e.g. speaking and listening). The school has already provided extensive coaching and support for staff, including being part of the 'maths triad' with other local schools.</p> <p>The proposal lacks detail about behaviour management, especially those with complex needs and presenting extremely high levels of challenge and need.</p> <p>Safeguarding is high profile and demands robust and rigorous systems, monitoring, intervention and support.</p>

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	Are the key issues/priorities for improvement clear?	No. Ofsted key issues are referenced but these are not all the key issues and priorities for improvement that the school has identified. There is no reference to how the issues of financial sustainability, substantive leadership, and the longer term viability of the school will be addressed.
	Does the proposal make reference to key issues from the most recent Ofsted inspection and/or external review?	The proposal only references the Ofsted key issues but does not link these to actions that will address these priorities.
	Does the proposal identify activity that will address the issues identified in the school's self-evaluation and, in particular, issues raised by the most recent data analysis?	No, there is no reference to the school's self-evaluation or data analysis. There is no reference to recent adviser visits where concerns have been raised regarding the time taken for recent initiatives to demonstrate impact.
	Are targets set for attainment, progress, attendance and quality of teaching, including for vulnerable groups?	No. There are no measurable criteria in the proposal.
	Are there short-term targets of interim milestones?	No
	Is it clear how actual performance will be measured against targets?	No
	Are clear success criteria/practice indicators identified for improving the quality of provision in the school?	No
3	Capacity and Capability	
	Is the leadership structure detailed, is there sufficient capacity?	The only leadership referenced is the 'leadership

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		<p>involvement of an experienced headteacher – no new cost'. These costs are not included in the proposal.</p> <p>The 'experienced Headteacher' referred to does not have experience of leading partnerships that have been successful in securing improvements. This Headteacher has had limited engagement in the Lewes Area Review and the final report. This would suggest that there is limited understanding of the issues that the school faces and of the capacity needed to bring about improvements.</p> <p>The issue of the required leadership of the school from September 2016 has not been addressed; this is a significant weakness of the proposal. The proposal presents insufficient capacity for leadership, there is no capacity resulting from partnership with another school which would be expected for this school given its size and context and which has been used to good effect whilst the school was in Special Measures.</p> <p>The intended use of pupil premium to fund elements of the proposal is likely to impact on current levels of staffing in the school. The school currently delivers small group teaching utilising the intervention teacher funded by the pupil premium grant.</p>
	Is there a clear staffing structure proposed?	No staffing is detailed other than the provision of Initial Teacher Trainers (ITT) students, who are referenced as providing teaching support via a learning hub and for

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		<p>whom there is no cost. The proposal details the staff development budget to develop existing staff however it does not present the budget plan for this.</p> <p>National research shows that it is not good practice for untrained teachers to support those pupils who are most vulnerable to under achievement and that there would be a lack of understanding of the requirements needed to improve performance through high quality teaching.</p>
	Is there a detailed plan for the implementation of the proposal?	No. There is no timeline for implementation. This plan would need to be in place by September 2016 but this would not be achievable.
	Are there timescales for actions?	The timescales provided are not broken down and are too broad.
	Is it clear who is leading on each aspect of the proposal?	No. No personnel are referenced other than an ex-headteacher in a consultancy capacity. No time/financial commitment is specified.
	Is it clear how the proposal will be monitored, and by whom?	No. There is no monitoring built into the proposal.
	Is it clear how the impact of the proposal will be evaluated, and by whom?	No. There is no evaluation built into the proposal. Although there is a column entitled 'Impact Evaluation Measurement Tool', the contents do not provide a robust evaluation method.

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	Is the role of governors in evaluating progress clear?	No. There is no reference to governance built into the proposal.
	Is the proposal manageable and achievable?	No. The proposal is not sufficiently robust to be either manageable or achievable.
	Will the proposal enable the school to move up to the next inspection category within the agreed timescale?	No this cannot be achieved; please see comments below about the planning permissions required to set up the Farm School which indicate that this would take at least 6 months. There is no evidence that this would secure improvements in pupil achievement.
	Is there a clear partnership agreement in place or a timetable to ensure an agreement is in place?	There is no school named for an agreement, nor any timescale for identifying a school, implementing a partnership agreement or working in partnership.
4	Evidence of Strong Track Record	
	Do those submitting the proposal have a strong track record in successful partnership working?	No evidence of a good track record of partnership working from those submitting the proposal.
	Do those submitting the proposal have a strong track record of improving pupil outcomes, including for vulnerable groups?	No evidence of a good track record of improving pupil outcomes from those submitting the proposal.
	Do those submitting the proposal have a strong track record of financial management?	No evidence of a good track record of financial management from those submitting the proposal.
5	Financial Sustainability	

	Criteria	Comments
	Is it clear how the proposal will be financially affordable for the next three years?	<p>The plan references a £38,000 carry forward and an unspecified amount of pupil premium funding to be used to deliver the proposal. There is no 3 year budget plan. The £38,000 carry forward arose from additional resource provided by the Council for interim leadership and additional staff capacity in the academic year (£28k) and £10k from the health improvement grant. These resources have been allocated within the current school budget against current expenditure. Pupil Premium Funding is already committed to staffing costs and is not additional monies.</p> <p>Costs for setting up and running a farm school have been provided by a school that already have this model. They have advised that the costs for the set-up would be in the region of £50,000 and that running costs per year are £55K per year which includes animal feed and associated costs and staffing for a farm manager and farm assistant that provide cover 365 days a year. The school budget cannot support either the set-up costs or the on-going funding costs of a farm school.</p> <p>Setting up a farm at Pells CE Primary School would require Planning Permission for change of use and for constructing any necessary buildings. As the school is adjacent to a conservation area and within the South Downs National Park, it would also need a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and possibly an</p>

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		<p>Environmental Impact Assessment, in addition to the usual considerations of impact on neighbouring properties. Planning Officers at the County Council have estimated that we would need a minimum of 3 months to draw up the application and then a minimum of 8 weeks to determine the application. In total it is advised that this would require 6 months for the application and determination process and around £20k for the costs, which would have to include employing the experts needed to undertake the specialist assessments. This timescale and costings assumes that there are no appeals. No work on setting up the farm could begin until planning permission was given.</p> <p>Any loss of playing field space would also require Secretary of State permission.</p>
	<p>Is it clear how the proposal will have a positive impact on the schools' financial income/increase pupil numbers?</p>	<p>There is no detail in the proposal on how it will increase pupil numbers to allow greater financial income. A similar approach is already in place at a farm school in East Grinstead with pupils attending from across East Sussex, therefore there may not be further demand for this type of provision in East Sussex.</p> <p>There is no evidence that the majority of the local community that choose to send their children to other Lewes schools would support a Farm School by sending their children there instead.</p>

