

Atlantic Coast Co-operative Trust

Trust School Proposal - Statutory Proposals

1 Introductory Information

a) School Details

This is a proposal to form a partnership of schools by acquiring the Atlantic Coast Co-operative Trust and to change category from Community to Foundation. The schools in the partnership that propose a change of category are:

Appledore Community Primary and Nursery School, Richmond Road, Appledore, Bideford, Devon, EX39 1PF

Hartland Primary School, North Road, Hartland, Bideford, Devon, EX39 6BP

Pynes Community Infant School and Nursery, Coronation Road, Bideford, Devon, EX39 3DD

Woolsery Primary School, Woolsery, Bideford, Devon, EX39 5QS

b) Dates

The proposed implementation date is 3 June 2013.

c) Objections or comments

Within four weeks from the date of publication of these proposals, **by noon on 11 April 2013**, any person may object to or make comments on the proposals by writing to any of the schools (addresses above).

d) Consultation

A great deal of consultation has taken place with regard to these proposals.

- i) Our consultation documents were issued on 14 January 2013 to all consultees listed in Appendix A of the Consultation Booklet 1 and published on the school websites. Additional copies of the consultation documents were available from the school websites and in each school for collection.
- ii) The results of this extensive consultation exercise were summarised in a report for each Governing Body and this report is attached (at Appendix 1).
- iii) In total approximately 863 consultation documents were distributed to parents, staff, students, governors, councillors and all other stakeholders required by statute.
- iv) There were separate staff, parent and community meetings held to discuss the proposed alterations and a meeting also took place with the unions.
- v) Simultaneously with the public consultation, learners in each of the schools were consulted through a school council event.
- vi) This process gave overwhelming support for the proposals.

- vii) By the end of the consultation period, on 11 February 2013, a total of 106 response forms had been returned, with 102 supporting the proposals, 2 respondents being 'unsure' and one response indicating opposition to the proposals (see Appendix 1).
- viii) There were 66 response forms returned by parents/carers, with 63 supporting the proposals and two being 'unsure' and one response indicated opposition to the proposals (see Appendix 1).
- ix) There were 28 response forms returned by members of staff, with 28 supporting the proposals. No responses indicated unsure or opposition (see Appendix 1).
- x) In the response forms and during the staff meetings there were some understandable concerns raised by staff regarding the impact that the change of employer would have on their terms, conditions and pension rights and these were echoed by the union responses (see Appendix 1).
- xi) The concerns expressed by some staff and their unions, where they relate to the change of status and the role of the proposed Trust, have been clarified and addressed within the consultation (see Appendix 1).
- xii) As the information provided in this section demonstrates, all statutory requirements about consulting on these proposals have been met. The Governing Bodies of the four schools met separately to consider the consultation responses and the issues raised by them on 26 February 2013.

e) Changes made in response to consultation responses

Following careful consideration of the responses to the consultation, the Governing Bodies of each of the four consulting schools decided that no alterations to the proposals were necessary.

f) Alteration Description

Notice is given in accordance with section 19(3) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 that:

The Governing Body of Appledore Community Primary and Nursery School intends to make a prescribed alteration to Appledore Community Primary and Nursery School which is a Community School located at Richmond Road, Appledore, Bideford, Devon, EX39 1PF

The Governing Body of Hartland Primary School intends to make a prescribed alteration to Hartland Primary School which is a Community School located at North Road, Hartland, Bideford, Devon, EX39 6BP

The Governing Body of Pynes Community Infant School and Nursery intends to make a prescribed alteration to Pynes Community Infant School and Nursery which is a Community School located at Coronation Road, Bideford, Devon, EX39 3DD

The Governing Body of Woolser Primary School intends to make a prescribed alteration to Woolser Primary School which is a Community School located at Woolser, Bideford, Devon, EX39 5QS

The proposed alteration in each case is to change school category from Community to Foundation and, together with one or more of the proposed partners, to acquire a trust established otherwise than under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

2. Changing Category

- a) The Governing Body of each school believes that forming a trust will provide opportunities to improve learning in our community.
- b) Each school will have a foundation established otherwise than under the SSFA 1998.
- c) No school is proposing a change of category to foundation from a voluntary aided school so no consent is required.
- d) The Trust does not already act as a foundation for any foundation or voluntary school.

3. Acquiring a Trust

- a) The name of the trust that Governors intend to acquire from the 3 June 2013 is the "Atlantic Coast Co-operative Trust".
- b) The "Atlantic Coast Co-operative Trust" partner organisations plan to work in partnership and collaboration with our schools. Forming the Trust body formalises that working relationship and ensures that relationships survive changes of personnel for the benefit of all schools in the wider area acquiring the same Trust.

The Atlantic Coast Co-operative Trust will collectively value excellence of achievement, a happy working atmosphere and a close relationship with our parents and our local communities. We shall continue to strive to provide support to children and their families to give them the best possible chance of success. This includes engaging with outside agencies and drawing on our collective expertise to make learning and development accessible to all. Through our work, we aim to develop a lifelong love of learning in all members of our schools. We believe in providing a stimulating learning environment through a creative, challenging curriculum. The creation of the Trust will provide a strong and well-tested legal entity through which to collaborate with our partners for the benefit of all our children.

We will do this by:

- making the quality of teaching and learning our highest priority
- developing a support structure which ensures children can achieve their potential, both by ensuring a safe and happy environment and by knowing each child as an individual
- seeking to make every child feel a part of the community by increasing their ownership and participation
- celebrating achievement and creativity
- engaging parents in an equal partnership to support their child
- investing in our staff to increase our skills and experience
- celebrating and supporting innovation and research in teaching and learning by our colleagues
- working closely with our community to raise aspiration and create opportunities and contribute fully to the life of the community

- collaborating with our partners for the benefit of our children and staff.

c) The proposed members of the Trust are:

- Appledore Community Primary and Nursery School (2 Trustees)
- Hartland Primary School (2 Trustees)
- Pynes Community Infant School and Nursery (2 Trustees)
- Woolsery Primary School (2 Trustees)
- St George's C of E (VA) Infant and Nursery School (2 Trustees)
- St Margaret's C of E (VA) Junior School (2 Trustees)
- St Mary's C of E (VC) Primary School (2 Trustees)
- University College Plymouth St Mark and St John (1 Trustee)
- Devon County Council (1 Trustee)
- Diocese of Exeter (1 Trustee)
- The Co-operative Movement, initially represented by the Co-operative College (1 Trustee)

(In the case of the two trustees which each consulting school shall appoint to the Trust Board, these shall be the Head Teacher and Chair of Governors – or the Chair's nominee.)

It is proposed that the Trust would perform in the most effective and democratic manner if it were to be established and operate in accordance with the co-operative values of self help, self responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. The co-operative model provides a level of community engagement and participation that is essential if the adoption of trust school status is going to achieve the schools' vision for education in the community; it will assist in the promotion of community cohesion.

Accordingly, membership of the Trust would be open to anyone approved by the Trustees, who is willing to be bound by the provisions of the Trust's constitution and who is eligible for membership of any one of the following five membership constituencies:

- learners attending the School*
- parents and carers of those attending the School*
- staff working at the School*
- members of the local School* community
- local community organisations as appropriate to the School.*

(*‘The School’ is taken to refer to any school for whom Atlantic Coast Co-operative Trust will act as its legal foundation.)

The Trust will have a Stakeholder Forum, composed of members, which will be able to appoint Trustees. The Stakeholder Forum will discuss issues affecting the Trust, make recommendations to the Trustees, and appoint Trustees. As the Trust develops, it will welcome other schools joining the Trust.

The first members of the Stakeholder Forum will be appointed by the Trustees. This is because it is very difficult to get the Stakeholder Forum into place until after the Trust is up and running. At the Trust's first AGM, the Trustee-appointed members of the Stakeholder Forum step down, and are replaced with members elected by the Trust's members.

The involvement of each of the partners in this project in no way prejudices their relationships with other education providers.

d) The Trust will appoint a minority of governors (namely two) to the Governing Body of each school as defined in Appendix 1.

e) Each partner will appoint trustees as shown in 3c (above). The Stakeholder Forum will appoint some Trustees.

f) The proposed constitution of each Governing Body is shown at the end of Appendix 1.

g) The Trust's charitable objectives will be to advance the education of the learners in Atlantic Coast Co-operative Trust, with a remit to advance the education of other members of the community, and otherwise to benefit the community; it being acknowledged that in carrying out the objects the Trust must (where applicable) have regard to its obligation to promote community cohesion under the Education Acts.

h) The proposed Trust does not act as a Foundation for any other school at present.

i) The Trust will meet the requirements on Trusts as detailed in the School Organisation (Requirements as to Foundations) (England) Regulations 2007.

j) The partnership will play a key part in the next phase of development of education in our local area. The ethos of the participating schools aligns very well with the co-operative values and principles of the Co-operative Movement. Co-operative principles will underpin the work of the partnership and we believe will contribute significantly to strengthening our schools – and our links with the local communities.

The Trust will be focused on securing the best possible outcomes for all our children through: shared use of resources, opportunities and expertise; collective brokering of services and opportunities for children and staff development; strong local accountability, with priorities responsive to our local situation and diverse collection of schools.

The Trust's priorities will be to secure the future of existing good practice already operating within the Bideford Learning Community so that it is sustainable for the future; to work along side our partners to bring new learning and development opportunities to our children and our communities; to ensure our local focus remains sharp and responsive to the developing national educational landscape so that our schools have the capacity to achieve excellence; to use the Trust's charitable status to attract funding and investment opportunities for the benefit of our children and schools.

k) The schools acquiring the Trust already work with other schools. This work will continue so that the entire Trust area, and not just the schools acquiring the Trust, will offer community cohesion and development for our local communities and will contribute to the diversity of educational provision in the area.

l) After considering responses to these proposals, the Governing Body of each of the schools will decide whether it wishes to acquire the Trust. If the Governing Body of an individual school decides that it does not wish to acquire the Trust, that decision will not preclude the other schools from acquiring the Trust.

Dated 14 March 2013

Signed:


Leigh Strange
Chair of Governors
Appledore Community Primary and Nursery School



Rob Cunliffe
Chair of Governors
Hartland Primary School



Bruce Pollit
Chair of Governors
Pynes Infant School and Nursery



Phil Spittles
Chair of Governors
Woolsey Primary School

