

Lead Sponsorship for Plymouth Academies

Plymouth is a city with a strong culture of collaboration amongst its schools. We are enthusiastically setting about developing a vision for an 'inclusive citywide learning campus'. Raising the ambitions of all young people to achieve their potential is a main challenge over the coming years.

All our secondary schools have features that are 'outstanding' (Ofsted inspection judgements) and all have leadership and management teams that are committed to providing the highest quality of educational opportunities for their students. All have specialisms and contribute expertise to the benefit of the entire city. Given the uneven level of challenge facing some schools, we are looking to the transformational benefits of creating new academies as a way of further lifting attainment and the aspirations of entire communities.

Our specific aspirations in partnering with lead sponsors

New academies in Plymouth will be expected to operate in harmony with the principles and policies outlined in this paper. In terms of teaching and learning the local authority hopes that the following statements will guide the creation of unique and embracing mission statements, which will not only transform the life chances and further narrow gaps in attainment but also stimulate the economic prosperity of whole communities.

- Innovation in teaching and learning will be encouraged and the freedom to innovate is valued.
- High and improving levels of achievement and attainment are expected, will be celebrated and valued at all levels and a positive 'can do' culture is strengthened.
- Our assumption is that there will be very high rates of post sixteen provision and the expectation that the majority of students will continue in further and higher education either as full or part time students.
- Vocational education and preparation for work, particularly supporting the city's six key business sectors, is to be a strong focus. Business involvement will be encouraged.
- Students will be expected to have a key role in the life of the school and to be involved and consulted on the majority of school issues where appropriate.
- Pastoral support, coaching and mentoring aims to build self-esteem and confidence across the school community so that aspirations are raised and a culture of continued success is generated.
- Local contexts for learning will make the curriculum increasingly relevant and worthwhile for young people and their teachers.
- Parents and whole community engagement in learning will be fostered so that the school is actively supporting community regeneration and the 'world class skills' agenda.
- Students will be encouraged to improve their thinking and self-management skills and be taught how they best learn in order to sustain their ability to be creative and make the most of new opportunities.
- Leadership, management and business skills will be developed so that potential young entrepreneurs can be identified, encouraged and supported.

Academy sponsorship in Plymouth

In selecting potential academy sponsors the needs and character of Plymouth and its young people have been paramount as has the local political dynamic. The Strategy for Change Team, within the Services for Children and Young People department, has led the process of developing a 0-19 overarching strategy that engaged all stakeholders and although there has been strong anti-academy feeling a real consensus of opinion has now been reached in favour of establishing academies as part of the city-wide approach to raising aspirations. Cross party support and council backing has been achieved by reassuring our educational community that:

- Lead sponsorship of academies will be secured with organisations that can add value to the work of schools and that have a passion and history of community engagement in Plymouth;
- Lead sponsors will have a long term commitment to Plymouth and that their work within the academy should not be achieved in isolation from the broader economic regeneration of the city;
- All sponsors should ideally represent major local contributors to the economy and community;
- The local authority itself will become a co-sponsor in each academy.

The following bullet points do not represent an exhaustive list but an indication of what the local authority values in our prospective partnership with the following sponsors.

The University of Plymouth – lead sponsor for ‘Tamarside Academy’

- A powerful agent for change within Plymouth with the Executive Dean chairing the Local Strategic Partnership’s WISE theme group that brings clarity to our shared ambitions to drive up educational standards and develop culture and Plymouth’s unique heritage.
- A new home for initial teacher training in the city and across south Devon that has already excellent relationships with the majority of our schools.
- A centre of excellence with an international reputation for research especially in the marine sciences which is one of the city’s key business sectors.
- An existing key player in continuing professional development for our teachers and potential teachers through our shared delivery of the Student Associate Scheme.
- The university is delivering effective activities through ‘Aimhigher’ to boost aspiration amongst our poorest students in particular so that higher education becomes more accessible and gaps due to deprivation are narrowed further.
- As a major employer in the city the university has interwoven its future success in the economic regeneration of Plymouth and it shares our moral imperative to secure improved skills for local young people that will drive this transformation.
- Excellent standards of teaching and learning and a passion to challenge the educational community to raise its game further and embrace innovation. As an existing partner on the Children and Young People’s Overview and Scrutiny Panel and also on the Standards Advisory Group for Education this work has already started.
- The benefits to Tamarside school of being a part of an innovative and tight cluster of networked Trusts and Academies to share expertise and to provide mutual support and encouragement.
- The university’s international links will add value to those that the existing school has developed and provide an impetus for education in global citizenship.

- Action research projects led by the university will help develop innovative approaches to the curriculum and to teaching and learning.
- Having the University of Plymouth as a lead sponsor of Tamarside Community College will make a powerful statement to all the students about raising their aspirations, will foster social mobility and give hope to generations of students that would never have considered higher education an option for them.

Church of England – lead sponsor for ‘John Kitto Academy’

The Exeter Diocesan Board of Education has a clear commitment to securing:

‘A Church of England Academy open to all, serving the needs of everyone in the local community. Helping to raise aspiration and educational attainment, providing the best possible education for all its students within a context based on the values and beliefs of the Church of England.’

- A national institution with a long and distinguished history of delivering learning and with significant evidence of quality outcomes when compared with other settings with a complementary national structure of support.
- The academy will be part of a large and growing family of Church of England academies in England, providing excellent opportunities for the sharing of good practice.
- An inclusive and personalised ethos that engages with the whole student spiritually, morally and physically.
- The Church of England has a strong commitment to opening up opportunity for all and strengthening community participation and engagement.
- A sense of stewardship that transcends political expediency and that promotes continuity, stability and sustainability.

The University College Plymouth St Mark and St John – co-sponsor for John Kitto

- UCP Marjon is a Church of England foundation, with educational strengths in areas including teacher education, youth work and health care, and with strong community links across the City of Plymouth. It has therefore many existing links with the lead sponsor.
- There are increasing opportunities for using the strengths of UCP Marjon in supporting staff in schools with strengthening their continuing professional development. UCP Marjon will be able to use John Kitto Community College to develop the new Masters in Teaching and Learning programme for example.
- UCP Marjon are already developing a Foundation Degree route for the integrated children’s workforce so this could potentially support all staff groups in the proposed academy.
- UCP Marjon already provides higher education to a significant number of local students who are often the first undergraduates in their family. As a co-sponsor this will make a powerful difference to all the students at John Kitto about raising their realistic aspirations further. Student coaching and mentoring from UCP Marjon undergraduates will add considerable value to this outcome.
- Access courses will also open up the possibility of education benefits to the wider community.

- Excellence, particularly in sport and physical education, will enrich the curriculum and extend the participation in competitive sport as well as recreational exercise for students and staff.
- Sports coaching and mentoring programmes are planned that would directly benefit students' motivation, health and wellbeing. This could mean that undergraduates work closely with students who benefit from individual attention.
- There are possibilities to develop a residential revision week using the College's facilities.

Cornwall College – co-sponsor for Tamarside

- Experience in delivering transformational education in partnership with the University of Plymouth that can add value and energy to the leadership and management of change.
- A nationally recognised 'centre of vocational excellence' with key strengths that will complement the academy's specialisms. These include IT systems, Marine Engineering and Technology, Tourism and Customer Care and Food and drink Technology.
- Falmouth Marine School is part of the Cornwall College Group and has an international reputation for Marine and Marine Engineering. This will add world class opportunities that will strengthen further this specialism for the academy.
- Excellent understanding and experience of engaging with the business community locally, regionally, nationally and internationally with a tangible focus on ensuring the employability of students.
- Benefit from a positive relationship with a family of Trust schools to network and share good practice.
- One of the largest further education colleges in the country with a 'can do' entrepreneurial culture that challenges current thinking and provides creative potential solutions that are student centred.
- Excellent links with various government initiatives to provide world class skills for the workforce including apprenticeships. This will benefit the entire community and provide routes into learning, training and retraining.

The local authority of Plymouth – co-sponsors to both academies

- Plymouth LA is making a positive difference to the life chances of children and young people. A key factor in achieving this is due to our belief in the strength of partnership working that achieves true collaborative advantage. Plymouth is a well networked city that collaborates effectively at a number of levels. We want to demonstrate that our mature attitude to collaboration can succeed within the co-sponsorship of new academies. We are confident that we will be an asset to an academy as a co-sponsor.
- Our visioning document 'Investment for Children' describes an all embracing 0-19 citywide learning campus. The local authority invested significant time and energy in engaging with all stakeholders in order to develop a strong consensus about what education in Plymouth could look like by 2020. This is an exciting journey that we want to continue to support from the inside and not as an observer in our new academies.

- We have secured cross party political support for our ‘investment for children’ strategy based on the understanding that the Authority would be standing shoulder to shoulder with sponsors, supporting transformation in Plymouth. The degree of anti-academy feeling mooted at the start of our journey has evaporated due to our more inclusive and moderated position on the academy agenda. Plymouth does not seek to maintain ‘control’ of all schools but is so excited about the potential that it wants to be an active participant.
- Plymouth also has ambitious and aspirational plans to stimulate economic regeneration, community cohesion as well as cultural and sustainability agendas. These issues embrace all schools and will be able to add value to academy leadership and provide opportunities for students to actively participate. The two academies will be an essential part of Plymouth’s 2020 vision to be a leading world maritime city.
- With the growing importance of the localities agenda the local authority is well placed to ensure that academies are fully benefiting from the smooth coordination and communication needed to target services for the community.
- The Local Authority believes that by positioning itself alongside sponsors it safeguards to some degree the necessary collaboration that will make the city realise its vision of being an inclusive citywide campus without diluting the dynamic and creative energies or authority of our chosen sponsors.
- Our lead sponsors have expressed confidence in Plymouth LA as co-sponsors and are reassured that our active participation will add value to the collective partnership that will drive transformation for students, their families and their local communities.
- Plymouth Children’s Trust will actively facilitate the locality partnership which will enable academy managers to play a full part in community leadership.

Our 0-19 Strategy for Change ‘*Investment for children*’ sets out a clear policy framework that aims to guide the evolution of education in Plymouth over the next decade or so. Of particular interest to potential academy sponsors is Annex A ‘Principles and Policies’. These can be downloaded or read on line at www.plymouth.gov.uk/strategyforchange

Plymouth has fully embraced its new commissioning role and does not seek to ‘control schools’ but to ensure that they are challenged and supported and transformed through dynamic partnerships with external organisations. The following principles and policies have been selected here as being of particular significance to our future academy partners.

Choice, Diversity and Fair Access

- A diverse pattern of school provision will be commissioned and maintained. Trusts, academies, voluntary schools and federations will be encouraged and supported, providing that they confirm their commitment to collaboration, so that collective responsibility for the children and young people in the city further improves.
- The Council takes its responsibility for commissioning schools seriously and will endeavour to reconfigure the pattern of provision across the city and promote and support community-facing networks of schools supported by trust, academy, diocese, voluntary and community partners. Such networks will be organised so as to improve transitions for pupils 0-19 years and meet community and locality needs.
- Specialist schools will be supported as part of a city-wide campus.

Governance, Leadership and Management

- Schools will be encouraged to explore formal collaborations with other schools, including trusts, academies and federations, so that strong partnerships are developed based on shared principles and community needs.
- Wherever possible schools will be encouraged to cluster to serve the needs of a defined community or locality, so that multi-agency engagement is made more effective and community cohesion and economic regeneration more achievable.
- It is up to each school, in consultation with the Council, local communities and, where appropriate, diocesan bodies, to choose which organizations they seek to work with, so that such choices bring in the appropriate partners to add value to the school's work and priorities.
- Over time, the planning and commissioning of some targeted and specialist services for children and families will be undertaken within localities, informed by and reflecting local community needs. Schools will be at the heart of this development and new locality partnerships that have greater multi-agency representation will begin to shape local provision, including that delivered from school sites.
- Plans for the location of services for children and families will be agreed between multi-agency partners, in consultation with local communities. There is a high level of multi-agency commitment to develop opportunities to combine capital funding to achieve maximum community impact, locality by locality.

Inclusion

- The Council expects all schools in Plymouth to be inclusive and share a collective responsibility for all children and young people. The Council will ensure that all new maintained buildings can offer facilities to complement the city's interconnected provision. The city has a successful track record of narrowing the gaps in attainment related to deprivation, disability, gender and ethnicity and will target new developments to ensure that this improves further.
- Schools are key assets in the local community, providing access to, and signposting, specialist services that can contribute towards the city's work in reducing teenage conception and harm from substance misuse. Through the *Strategy for Change* the Council will address challenges related to promoting community cohesion and seek to provide appropriate health facilities on school campuses for the benefit of the whole community.

Integrated and Extended Services

- The Council's aim is to create sustainable neighbourhoods throughout the city. This means places where people choose to live that are safe, have good housing, a good quality environment, and with access to good schools, services and economic opportunities and that have strong and healthy communities. Schools are key assets in the local community, providing access to, and signposting, specialist services that can contribute towards the Council's work in promoting community cohesion and supporting vulnerable children, young people and their families.
- The Council will target the most deprived neighbourhoods to reduce the gap in the quality of life, prosperity and well being between those neighbourhoods and the rest of the city.

- Locality working will provide locally accessible, targeted and specialist services for parents, children and young people. In due course, the planning and commissioning of some services will be undertaken within localities, informed by and reflecting local needs.
- All schools recognise the value of working with key stakeholders to influence the development of children and young people and that parents should be enabled to become full partners in their children's learning.
- The design of school buildings should facilitate new ways of working. Opportunities will be taken to meet the *Every Child Matters* and 'extended schools' agendas through the co-location of integrated children's services and the incorporation of facilities within schools.
- Facilities will be required within each locality for multi agency teams to meet and for the co-location of core teams of workers.
- Greater community use of school facilities will be promoted to support the 'lifelong learning' agenda and contribute to the success of the Council's *Adult Learning Plan* and the 'world class skills' agenda.
- Locality commissioning partnerships, representing key multi-agency partners, will make recommendations concerning the shared facilities to be provided in schools on a neighbourhood basis and opportunities to lever in additional capital funding will be sought.

Youth Offer

- The development of the Youth Service is part of the much bigger *Integrated Strategy for Young People (0-19)* and will involve greater partnership working with other agencies. Schools are seen as a key element in this partnership. The youth service in Plymouth has been restructured to more effectively meet the needs of young people and reflect the move to locality-based service delivery.
- Participation of young people themselves will be a key element in all the decision-making processes.
- The Council will seek to co-locate youth service provision within campus developments where this best meets local demand: the views of young people will be central to inform these decisions.
- The Council will seek to ensure that youth groups as part of the Aiming High and Positive Futures agendas can use facilities both inside school buildings and on school grounds.

14-19 Provision

- The city's 14-19 Strategic Partnership, is one of the best in the Country. Plymouth is one of only 5 local authorities that will be introducing all 10 of the new diplomas from 2009. However, this brings added challenges to ensure that suitable accommodation with specialist facilities is provided to enable high quality delivery.
- All new key stages 4 and 5 provision will be commissioned with the involvement of the 14-19 Strategic Partnership, which represents all providers, including employers.
- The Council will work closely with the Learning and Skills Council to develop a pattern of post-16 provision that puts the learner at the heart of the process and widens choice and opportunity for the learner.

- 
- The Council will endeavour to avoid duplication of investment by only creating specialist facilities in locations that best fit local demand and the broader city collaborative perspective, shared agreements and protocols.
 - All providers are committed to equity and excellence for all and it is therefore our responsibility to ensure that appropriate resources are targeted at those young people from vulnerable groups at risk of underachievement.
 - The Council will work collaboratively with schools, FE and HE Colleges and training providers to ensure that all young people make successful and appropriate transitions into, within and beyond the 14-19 phase, so that they can all progress into their chosen career and/or higher/further education pathway.

Information and Communication Technology

- ICT will continue to change the culture of school design and classroom management. The expectation is that access to ICT is brought to the learner whenever they need it, anywhere within the physical school environment and beyond.
- Future developments in ICT will make a significant contribution to teaching and learning across all subjects and ages, inside and outside the curriculum; be used to improve access to high quality learning and teaching resources for all learners with a diverse range of individual needs, including those with SEN and disabilities and be used as a means of enabling learning to take place more easily beyond the bounds of the formal organisation and outside the school day.

Learning Environments

- The quality of the learning environment is vital to raise aspiration, motivation and well-being and hence, contribute to raising attainment and academic success. Children and young people have told the Council how important to them are the outdoor environment and social spaces in schools.
- Children and young people are actively involved in the design and ongoing development of school buildings;
- The needs of the learner are central to school design;
- All schools will have high quality 'outdoor classroom' environments, to include quiet places for learning, reflection, social networking and environmental studies
- Given the increasing importance of food production, spaces are created within school grounds for children and young people to understand and learn about growing and cooking their own food.
- Sporting facilities are a valuable asset to the whole community and impact positively on the physical and emotional well being of children and young people. Designs of future schools should encourage and support the community use of the school outside traditional schools hours.
- Schools with a site area capable of supporting full-sized playing pitches should enter into a Sport England community use agreement for community team sporting activity. Playing fields and playgrounds should become safe places for all children and young people to play outside school hours, and facilities should be developed to encourage managed public use of this space.
- In developing high quality facilities within school grounds it is important that strong networks are achieved with sporting and recreational groups so that lifelong opportunities exist to develop talent and promote positive activities, volunteering, healthy living and emotional well being. School sporting facilities should be seen as contributing to the city's network of sport infrastructure.