**St Paul’s Way Expansion Programme 2014 – 18 with particular emphasis on Sixth Form Provision**

**Local Context**

A recent HEFCE report ‘Higher Education Participation for 18–19 year olds’ places LBTH close to the bottom of all Local Authorities in England. The report takes into account both social factors as well as GCSE outcomes and yet still finds that students in LBTH are far less likely ‘en masse’ to go onto Higher Education than in almost any other Borough or County in the country. It is the size of the problem, across all of Tower Hamlets that sets us apart from the vast majority of LAs. St Paul’s Way Trust School ‘intake’ wards, such as Mile End and Globe Town (ranked 31st lowest of the 7,967 wards in England) stand out on HEFCE’s map for their poor performance. This is a very strong reminder to all of us seeking to improve the outcomes, for our young people in Tower Hamlets, that we still have a great deal to do. This proposal, from Governors and Senior Staff, will play a key part in our strategy to address the Higher Education participation and destination problem. In short, we are seeking to provide greater access to high quality 16–18 provision for our students by dramatically expanding the VI Form.

**School Context and Pupil Numbers**

As our popularity has increased the range of our curriculum provision has extended to include both Primary and Sixth Form teaching and learning. Student numbers have risen very significantly. Our census 2012, lists just 725 students. Our 2014 census, lists 1222 students. By September 2018, as the Primary provision fills and our VI Form expands, it is projected that the school population will rise to 2,000 students.

The size of the school budget has also increased significantly from £7.4 million (2012/13) to £13.5 million (2014/15). We have a projected income of £18 million by 2018.

An ‘Outstanding’ school, we have an important outreach role as a National Teaching School and a National Support School. Both of these roles give us the opportunity to extend our human resource capacity. Currently we are regularly called up to ‘export’ our practice and this brings additional funding from a number of agencies. It is projected that this aspect of our work will increase significantly over the next few years.

**Understanding the Need for a New Management Structure**

Governors have been introduced to the ‘small school’ concept that has been developed and implemented very successfully in the USA. Indeed, the concept ‘schools within schools’ has already been adopted by a number of ‘large’ schools in the UK. ‘Small schools’ are innovative ‘organisational constructs’ that are introduced in order to maintain the quality of relationships and community cohesion likely to be underdeveloped, or lost, in larger schools (typically defined as 1200+).

Governors have worked with senior staff to re-design the management structures within the school in order to reflect this idea of critical size. To this end there are now three ‘schools’ within St Paul’s Way Foundation Trust:

St Paul’s Way Foundation School (Ages 4-13)\*

St Paul’s Way Trust School (Ages 13-19)

St Paul’s Way School of Education (Leading on Pedagogy Ages 4-19)

\*the transition at age 13 (beginning of Year 9) to the Trust School is designed to overcome the integration issues that we anticipate for the 60 students automatically transferring to the main school building in Year 7 by 2020 and for the 180 students that will be new entrants to the school. There are also a number of pedagogical factors that support transition ‘across schools’ at this point.

**Understanding the Three Schools**

Governors and senior staff are also keen that, as the three-school model becomes embedded ‘strategically and operationally’, the physical environment should reflect this unique approach. Through the innovative development of our main school building we need to ‘articulate’ the three-school concept.

There have already been discussions with AStudio, the architects that designed the current St Paul’s Way Trust School, to explore potential changes to the way that the current building works. A key suggestion is that the main entrance should remain the ‘Trust School’ entrance, a redesign of the entrance at the far end of the building (at the nearest point to the Primary provision) should become the ‘Foundation School’ entrance. The ‘School of Education’ should be placed at the centre of the building in the area originally designed as the staffroom.

Governors and Senior Staff understand that such work needs to be considered as part of a broader plan to ensure that the school estate can accommodate 2000 students by 2018. The next part of this paper explains how the 2018 student projection number has been reached.

**Understanding the Need for an Ambitious Building Programme**

Trustees are asked to consider the next steps that Trustees and Governors might take in order to secure a high quality learning environment for approximately 2000 students by 2018.

Currently our capacity across our three sites can cater for a maximum of 1410 students. This includes four temporary classrooms provided by the refurbished Burdett Centre and three learning spaces in the Research Centre. The original school was built to accommodate 1200 students.

Our current projection for September 2015 brings 60 extra students joining Reception, at least 40 extra students across years 12 and 13, and we will have 110 additional students in the main school (11-16). This, being a legacy from poor recruitment in 2010 which has led to a situation where only 130 Year 11s will leave us in July 2015 whilst 240 will join Year 7 in September 2015. On this basis our projection for the school roll in 2015 is 1432 (22 above ‘capacity’\*).

\*It is likely that decisions regarding temporary accommodation will be necessary throughout the period 2015-18 (starting in September 2016).

By 2016 it is planned that part of the permanent site for the Infant and Junior school will be in place and students will move from the temporary accommodation. Building work is scheduled to ‘keep up’ with the growing Primary ‘roll’ therefore the greatest area of concern is related to capacity within the main school building.

In 2016 there will be 30 extra Year 7s than Year 11 leavers due to Year 11 having been under-subscribed. It is very likely that the number of students eligible to join our Sixth Form will rise significantly. Of the 210 year 11 students leaving we anticipate that around 100 will meet our Sixth Form entry requirements (up to 60 more than the preceding year) and this increase, without any external students, will further increase the size of the sixth form. Therefore, although our building capacity in 2016 will have only risen to 1470 our roll is likely to have reached 1580, suggesting the need for at least four temporary classrooms.

In 2017 all of the increased pressure on capacity will come from the Sixth Form. The 2017 Year 11 will be the first of our academically strong year groups and we anticipate that as many of two thirds of the year group (160 students) will wish to stay on into the sixth form. Even if we were to refuse to admit any external students we anticipate, unless we are to raise entry requirements\*, that student numbers will rise to approximately 1700 students on roll.

\*Governors and senior staff have carefully considered whether raising the entry requirement to enter the VI Form should take place. However it is strongly felt that this would not be in keeping with the community ethos of the school and would be unlikely to address the local issue identified in the HEFCE report.

From 2018 we project a sustainable Sixth Form of around 320-350 students (Years 12 and 13) recruited solely from our Year 11 cohorts (similar VI Form numbers are already found at both Mulberry and Central Foundation, both schools, with a similar PAN). There will be around 1800 students on roll, across both sites, with 120 more coming into the new build Primary provision by 2020 making a fixed total roll of 1,920 learners across the Foundation Trust.

However, Governors and Senior Staff have projected a figure of approximately 2000 students as we remain keen to have a mixed and diverse Sixth Form and feel that the whole school and Sixth Form have benefitted greatly from the ‘ideas’ and ‘diversity’ that new entrants bring from other schools.

**Next Steps**

Governors and Senior Staff seek advice from Trustees on our proposal to develop a building plan and business case to be considered fully by Trustees at a later date. The proposal would consider the development of new buildings, associated infrastructure such as library, canteen facilities and other spaces to cater for a sixth form of 400 students by September 2018, earlier if possible. The proposal would also consider ways in which the additional resources planned, alongside our existing resources particularly sports facilities, might be better used by the local community when the school is out of session.