

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)

[REDACTED]

Name of your organisation

[REDACTED]

Address (of organisation or individual)

[REDACTED], Skelmersdale, Lancashire

Email Contact

[REDACTED]

Telephone Number

Landline ([REDACTED]) [REDACTED] or Mobile [REDACTED]

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

Yes

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

119843

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

Existing non-selective, School operating under the auspices of a charitable limited company.

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.

- Yes, our organisation is incorporated**

Company Registration Number: 01902341

Company Address:



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Details of Directors and Secretary:

Directors: [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED],

Secretary: [REDACTED]

- No, our organisation is not yet incorporated**

Approximate date by which it will be incorporated:

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

We are currently a 'through' school serving years Reception through GCSE and this is the age range that we will continue to provide for. Our initial capacity is 12 pupils per year. So our expected roll will total 144 children comprised of 84 children in the primary school and 60 pupils in the secondary school. We would be able to accommodate all of these children in our existing facility except for one year group. To accommodate this year group we expect to rent a portacabin to place in the back of the school for one secondary school subject. (We have done this successfully in the past).

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

We are already operating successfully and have been for many years. We are planning to be operating as a Free School from September 2011.

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 West Lancashire

Neighbouring LAs Merseyside

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 had a very pleasant and productive meeting with [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] - [REDACTED], [REDACTED] - [REDACTED], [REDACTED] - [REDACTED] in Preston in September.

In addition their team has visited our School on the 19th of October and they have offered to support us in our application. We continue to consult with them on services they can provide us once we are a Free School and on matters such as Admissions and Oversubscription criteria.

We have a meeting scheduled with our [REDACTED], [REDACTED], on the 12th of November.

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

Yes

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

We have registered our interest and have had conversations with [REDACTED] at [REDACTED] regarding our status and our intention of becoming a Free School by September 2011.

The New Schools Network have also been helping us to complete our draft application.

[REDACTED] of the [REDACTED] has provided valuable input and has now recommended that our form is ready to be forwarded to the DfE.

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

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

EDUCATIONAL RATIONALE, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

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

"Over the past ten years the gulf in achievement between the rich and the poor has widened and the attainment gap between fee-paying schools and state schools has doubled."

DfE, Schools Structural Reform Plan, July 2010

The Maharishi School is a fee-paying school by necessity and not by ethos. Based on reports from Ofsted and our GCSE results, our students' academic achievements rank amongst the highest in Lancashire and we have always had a strong desire to make our excellent system of education available to any student, regardless of economic status or previous academic record. In spite of an active Assisted Places Scheme there are many parents who simply cannot afford to send their children to our School, and the School simply doesn't have the money to offer too many free places.

Our catchment area is characterised by an economically disadvantaged population and state schools that bravely struggle to improve their reported academic results.

As reported in the DfE Achievement and Attainment Tables 2009 in relation to the economic status of local children:

"the community has significant pockets of social and economic disadvantage and this is reflected in the above average proportion of pupils entitled to free meals".

At one of the local Colleges, "SENs are twice the national average".

At another local College "proportion of students eligible for free meals is twice the national average".

Currently, there are only 3 Secondary Schools in the area - one is a Specialist Engineering College, the second is a Technology College and the third is a Sports College. All three are graded '3' - 'Good' in terms of academic performance. By becoming a Free School Maharishi School will be providing increased choice to parents in the area and providing a proven, excellent educational alternative to the poorest children.

For a performance table of Skelmersdale Primary Schools please see attachment "Skelmersdale Primary Schools Table".

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.

AIMS AND PHILOSOPHY OF THE MAHARISHI SCHOOL

Consciousness-based Education recognises that the educational process has a three-fold structure involving: the knower (the student); the known (the curriculum that the student studies); and the processes of knowing (which connects the knower with the known). All three aspects of education must be fully developed.

Ultimately the degree of success of education lies within the consciousness of each student. Whereas other education depends for its effectiveness on whatever receptivity, intelligence, creativity, and neurophysiological integration the students may already have, the Consciousness-based system of education directly develops these characteristics in all the students irrespective of their background, attitudes, gender, or abilities, by developing the student's level of consciousness.

This understanding reflects the fundamental concept of Consciousness-based Education; knowledge is structured in consciousness. This is the core of the educational philosophy of the Maharishi School. By developing the full potential of each student, Consciousness-based Education can bring success to all students. By developing the 'container' of knowledge, the student's own consciousness, the highest ideals of education can be realised by every student.

THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME

A broad and balanced curriculum

The Primary Curriculum

The purpose of the Maharishi School's primary curriculum is to create the stable foundation for all future learning and educational success. This curriculum is designed to enliven the children's experience of inner happiness and self-confidence, enrich their imagination and provide varied opportunities for positive social interaction. The teachers carefully select those learning materials and activities that refine and enliven the five senses in the context of a rich curriculum. A special emphasis in the primary curriculum is the establishment of the tender bond between the teachers and children which nourishes the young children in their first school experience. On this basis the child's receptivity to learning is established.

The Secondary Curriculum

The academic curriculum for the secondary level provides the highest quality of traditional education through a broad and balanced curriculum that includes the study of Mathematics, Science, English Language and Literature, the Humanities and Art. The curricular approach of the Maharishi School reflects the ideal of "the world is my family" — different cultures, races, and genders are appreciated and upheld, and all are understood to have the same infinite potential for creativity, happiness, and success in life.

The Development of Consciousness

The Maharishi School's commitment to systematically developing the full potential of every student and teacher is realised through their daily practice of Transcendental Meditation. Transcendental Meditation is an easily learned, simple mental practice that can be learned by anyone regardless of religious belief or background, which promotes ideal education through the development of consciousness. Through this practice the student's latent potential begins to unfold. The wide range of cognitive, psychological, and physiological benefits from the practice of TM have been extensively validated by over 500 published, peer reviewed scientific research studies, conducted at more than 200 universities around the world.

The different components of the programme for the development of consciousness are:

- Children from the age of four to nine years practise the special young children's TM technique for a few minutes at the beginning and end of each school day. It strengthens and integrates their nervous system and develops greater orderliness and coherence in their thinking and behaviour.
- Students from the age of 10 years old practise Transcendental Meditation. This is integrated into the daily schedule for a few minutes at the beginning and end of the school day and before the lunch break.
- Students are eligible at the age of 13 to begin the Transcendental Meditation Sidhi programme, which structures a profound level of coherence in the physiology and promotes mind-body integration.

Maharishi School teachers and administrators also practise Maharishi's Transcendental Meditation or Transcendental Meditation Sidhi programme. As a result they experience greater energy, clarity, creativity, equanimity and fulfilment both in their own lives and in the classroom.

Maharishi's Science of Creative Intelligence (SCI) and Vedic Approach to Health

At the primary and secondary levels, SCI is presented as the study of principles of intelligence governing order and growth in human life and nature. These universal principles of intelligence form a framework for integrating all subjects and giving coherence to the innumerable parts of knowledge; they make every area of study relevant to the student's experience of growth of consciousness.

In the SCI curriculum, the Principles, Fundamentals, and Qualities of Creative Intelligence are expressed and learned in language and activities appropriate for the age of the students. Learning activities are carefully structured to provide concrete experiences that allow the students to discover and explore the range of natural law, and the variety and fullness of its expressions in their own lives and in the world around them. For example, in the infant and reception years the children gain an understanding of these principles through play rather than through intellectual analysis. At the junior level, the children discover the universality of natural law by observing its diverse expressions in the world around them. At the secondary level, the addition of SCI to the standard academic curriculum connects the parts of knowledge to the

wholeness of knowledge, and the wholeness of knowledge to pure consciousness, the deepest level of the student's experience.

Maharishi's Principles of Teaching

This is a body of ideal teaching principles that constitute an integral part of Consciousness-based Education and which form the common core of teaching philosophy and practice at the Maharishi School. These principles enliven five Fundamentals of Education:

Receptivity — Intelligence — Knowledge — Experience — Expression.

When these fundamentals are fully enlivened through ideal teaching, learning is effortless, joyful, successful and fulfilling. The learning environment is structured to support and nourish all students regardless of learning style, abilities, background, or gender. Primary emphasis in teaching is given to providing comprehensive learning experiences, for students of all ages, which allow them to move through the cycle of:

Knowledge → Action → Achievement → Fulfilment.

Students are encouraged to work actively with the knowledge they are gaining, and to share it with others in a variety of ways. When these principles are fully lively in the life of the school, the hallmarks of ideal education are realised: enthusiasm for learning; thirst for knowledge; self-referral experience; and appreciation for the teacher.

Discipline

The purpose of education at the Maharishi School is to unfold the creative genius of every student, enabling them to live a life free from problems, mistakes, and suffering. Through the regular practice of the Transcendental Meditation and Transcendental Meditation-Sidhi programme, they grow in the ability to perform spontaneous right action that serves the needs of the individual and society simultaneously.

While students are growing in the ability to spontaneously perform right action, outer forms of discipline also help guide their growth and progress. A disciplined life means a life that is balanced, orderly and coherent, and is always moving towards success. Parents, the school and society all provide boundaries through which creative intelligence can flow with fullness, purposefulness, and direction. It is the responsibility of adults to advise students on what is right and what is wrong, and to guide them in a dignified, moderate manner, full of love, respect and compassion.

The purpose of rules in the school is to provide clear, consistent boundaries to help students know what is acceptable and appropriate behaviour. If some inappropriate behaviour does occur, it is a mistake based on stress and confusion, and that no one really wants to do wrong.

- Children should grow up in a disciplined orderly way. A disciplined life means always moving to success.
- Discipline of the child is important. Like supporting a young tree from all directions, discipline assures the child's straight growth and progress

toward living life in accordance with natural law. Discipline is always maintained with an inner feeling of love.

- Children have to be nurtured in love and corrected if they are wrong, to help them succeed in life at all levels.
- If a student has committed a wrong it should be addressed in some way. In our system of education, however, when purity is growing day by day, we have the theme of building up character, not emphasising for any length of time or intensity the students' wrongdoing.

Pastoral

To assist students with any support issues they may have Maharishi School has in place a mentoring system organised by year group.

SEN

[REDACTED] has, after receiving appropriate training, been appointed our [REDACTED]. We currently have a child with Tourettes Syndrome, Dyslexia and Pervasive Developmental Disorder - Unspecified.

Curriculum

For Secondary School Curriculum details please see attachment "Curriculum Summary KS 3+4". Just by way of clarification, these subjects are offered and assessed GCSE subjects.

In the Primary School we teach the following ten subjects: History, Geography, Literacy, Numeracy, SCI, Physical Education, Science, Music, Drama and IT.

Assessment is performed through a combination of using subject assessments built-in to the teaching schemes used, teacher assessments, and internally graded SATs in years 4, 5 and 6.

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

The Maharishi School's purpose is to develop the full mental, emotional and social potential of every child. Over 600 peer-reviewed, published, scientific studies establish that daily practice of Transcendental Meditation (TM) enables every child to develop their full potential regardless of race, creed, or socio-economic background.

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.

Maharishi School has been functioning very successfully for two decades. We have a teaching staff highly regarded by Ofsted, a management team with proven financial management skills, an existing building and of course - pupils!

From Ofsted's 2009 inspection:

EVALUATION OF THE SCHOOL

"The Maharishi School very successfully meets its aims. It provides an outstanding quality of education for all of its pupils that is well tailored to their individual needs. As a result of the outstanding curriculum and the good and often outstanding teaching, pupils make outstanding progress from their individual starting points. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, as is their behaviour..."

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

"The quality of education is outstanding overall because individuals and their needs are at the heart of the school's work, from the Early Years Foundation Stage onwards. There have been continuous improvements since the time of the previous inspection. The outstanding curriculum meets the needs of all pupils effectively by focusing closely on their individual needs and the development of the whole person. A significant element of this is the school's work on developing Transcendental Meditation and its teaching of the Science of Creative Intelligence along with the Maharishi Vedic Approach to Health. This work is particularly effective at allowing pupils to learn self-calming and thinking skills...The quality of teaching and assessment is outstanding overall..."

SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE PUPILS

"Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.

The school's focus on individuals and its use of meditation and the quest for

balance underpins all that it does. As a consequence pupils are calm, confident, self-assured, polite and considerate. They are eager to acquire knowledge and skills and enjoy learning. All members of staff treat pupils with respect and sensitivity and value their views. Excellent relationships throughout the school have helped to create a very effective learning environment, where all feel safe and are eager to learn.

Pupils say that the daily practice of Transcendental Meditation and teaching the Science of Creative Intelligence helps them to be calm, have clear enquiring minds and be good at learning. Through this work pupils develop a strong sense of right and wrong. Their behaviour is outstanding and many are keen to take on responsibilities, as when older pupils were seen helping the younger pupils."

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).

Maharishi School is a highly respected partner of an international Maharishi educational organisation coordinating similar aims across countries globally. This organisation provides training, curriculum and policy support to Maharishi School.

The International Foundation of Consciousness-Based Education

The International Foundation of Consciousness-Based Education was founded by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi in 2005. Its purpose is to develop Consciousness-Based educational materials for use in every country. These materials include curricula for all levels of school and university; individual courses; faculty development programs for Consciousness-Based universities and schools; professional training programs for different areas of society, including health, agriculture, architecture, and administration; guidelines and manuals for implementing Consciousness-Based educational projects; and short courses for continuing and distance education.

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.

[REDACTED]	-	[REDACTED]	,	[REDACTED]	([REDACTED])
[REDACTED]	-	[REDACTED]			
[REDACTED]	-	[REDACTED]			
[REDACTED]	-	[REDACTED]			

These are key individuals for the current School.

Trustees of the current School are:



We may add one more Trustee in the near future.

Appointed by the Trustees are the School Councilors - these number from 7 to 12 and will be freshly appointed for the Free School.

We also have access to legal advice from two sources:

- 1) On call legal advice is available through our School insurance policy with [REDACTED] whereby we have access to both a legal advice helpline and commercial legal services
- 2) For more involved requirements we use [REDACTED] at [REDACTED] in Ormskirk, Lancashire

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.

Based on our current School role and the number of letters we have received from parents, we expect to be oversubscribed from our first year.

We currently have approximately 70 children. A meeting was organised with existing parents to discuss the plan to become a free school. The only issue raised was that parents wanted to ensure that the philosophy, curriculum, policies and practices would remain to support Consciousness-based education at the School. We were able reassure them on this point. All existing parents have indicated that they will be keeping their child in the School when our application for Free School status is approved.

More and more letters of intent from parents of prospective pupils come in each day. So far these represent demand for a further 100+ children. These letters have primarily come from parents who:

- 1) have visited the School but could not afford the fees for their children,
- 2) from parents who have had to withdraw their children because of financial pressures and also
- 3) from parents of reception age children who would like their children to start at the School in September 2011.
- 4) From parents who have heard of the School and would like to enrol their older children

All of these letters indicate they the parents would like to send their children to the school when our application to become a Free School is successful.

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

As stated previously our intended roll is 144 pupils, 84 in the primary school and 60 in the secondary school.

PREMISES

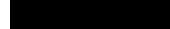
What steps have you taken to identify a potential site? Please include details of the geographical area the school seeks to serve; a list of any sites you have considered; and any discussions you have had to identify a suitable site. If known, please include the proposed location, premises and postcode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

We currently operate in a small school building in which we have significant equity, but still have a mortgage.

The current address is



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We have attached photos of our existing school premises. With the addition of one portacabin we will be well positioned to meet our school roll projections.

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

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.