



**A Brand New Secondary School for Mill End, Maple  
Cross and Rickmansworth**

**Formal Consultation 2012**

## **An Introduction from Reach Learning**

On Friday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2012 The Department for Education pre approved Reach Learning to open The Reach Free School in September 2012. The Reach Free School will provide a brand new community focussed secondary school for Mill End, Maple Cross and Rickmansworth.

The proposal is for a four form entry secondary school catering for 120 pupils per year group (Years 7 to 13). Hertfordshire County Council has already acknowledged the need for additional secondary school places and The Reach Free School meets this emerging need.

In 2010 Hertfordshire County Council produced a report 'Meeting the Rising Demand for School Places'. This highlighted that in 2012/13 there would be a deficit of 38 secondary school places in the Rickmansworth area. This number was predicted to rise in future years. Hertfordshire County Council has subsequently adjusted its prediction in 2011 in its document 'Statement of Education Need' and presented an even worse situation facing WD3 children. It predicts that the WD3 community will face a secondary school place shortfall of over 4 primary school classes in 2015. This will continue to rise to over 10 primary school classes within 10 years.

The three secondary schools nearest The Reach Free School's proposed catchment area have selective criteria for a significant proportion of their admissions, pertaining to faith, ability and aptitude. These criteria limit the opportunity for the children in Mill End, Maple Cross and Rickmansworth to be offered a place, as these schools will first favour out-of-borough applicants who meet their admissions criteria over local children who do not. The need for a new, community secondary school is clear.

In light of this, Reach Learning would like to hear your points of view on the proposed new secondary school. We hope that you will find time to provide your thoughts, concerns and hopefully support to ensure that we can make this new addition to the local area everything it ought to be. To help you understand more about Reach Learning and The Reach Free School in general this consultation document has been divided into different sections:

Sections:

- Information about Reach Learning
- What is a Free School?
- The proposal for The Reach Free School
- The vision and ethos of The Reach Free School
- Who can apply and when?
- Special Educational Needs provision
- Behaviour strategy
- Attendance strategy
- Admissions arrangements
- Post 16 admissions
- The over-subscription criteria
- Additional Information
- Your comments and feedback

The consultation form can be completed online at [www.thereachfreeschool.co.uk](http://www.thereachfreeschool.co.uk). Here you will also find an electronic copy of this document.

Thank you for taking time to read this.

## **Information about Reach Learning**

Reach Learning was founded in July 2010 by teachers Richard Booth, Natalie Simpson and Martyn Essery. Subsequently they have been joined by local residents Mark Sutton and Carolyn Venn who have tirelessly campaigned for additional secondary school preferences for local children and for new secondary schools in the WD3 area of South West Hertfordshire.

Reach Learning is a company, limited by guarantee with the sole purpose of providing high quality education to young people and will be the Academy Trust responsible for The Reach Free School. Through the Funding Agreement, Reach Learning will be accountable to the Secretary of State for Education.

The founding members of Reach Learning have experience of setting up and running secondary schools and have spent the majority of their teaching careers in West London. They each bring something unique to The Reach Free School and are determined to see the school meet the needs of the local community.

## **What is a Free School?**

The Free Schools policy was announced by the Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove, in May 2010. This new approach to education allows parents, teachers, local community groups and others to apply to set up and run their own not-for-profit schools. These schools will be free from local authority control and funded directly by central government in the same way that academies are.

To date 79 Free Schools have opened and over 2,300 schools have now become academies. Free Schools are designed to function exactly like academies; they report directly to the Department for Education (DfE) and the Secretary of State for Education, but are allowed freedoms in terms of curriculum planning, setting the time of the school day and the academic year.

## **The Proposal for The Reach Free School**

The DfE has agreed that the proposal to create a Free School in South West Hertfordshire should now move to the next stage. This stage requires a formal consultation to be completed and its findings submitted to the DfE. If approved, the proposal for The Reach Free School would be finalised, Reach Learning would enter into a Funding Agreement with the Secretary of State for Education and preparations for its opening implemented.

This would release funding to create the necessary facilities on a site in the local area, thus enabling the first pupils to enrol in The Reach Free School in September 2013. This consultation needs to establish that there is support for the school and its curriculum.

The Reach Free School will be a four form entry secondary school catering for 120 pupils per year group. The school population will grow annually as each new year of entry is admitted. When full, the school will provide an education for 840 young people.

## **The vision and ethos of The Reach Free School**

The Reach Free School's ethos and curriculum is designed, first and foremost to meet the needs of the young people living in the WD3 area, specifically Mill End, Maple Cross and Rickmansworth. Children in these areas live in a particularly disadvantaged community, specifically in terms of access

to selective education. By placing the Mill End Sports and Social Club at the centre of the priority catchment area, The Reach Free School will provide an education that benefits those living in the local community who cannot gain access to the selective schools.

Ensuring that The Reach Free School is at the heart of the community is a founding principle of Reach Learning. Alongside the commitment to academic excellence is the dedication to ensuring that pupils become proud, proactive and responsible members of their community.

The Reach Free School's core values are summarised as ACE:

**Achievement** - The Reach Free School has high expectations for pupils' achievement educationally and personally. Individual targets for attainment and conduct will guide pupils towards successfully achieving their potential as learners and as members of their community.

**Community** - The Reach Free School will foster a learning environment which is built on mutual trust and responsibility. Pupils will be taught to contribute to the school's effectiveness by actively engaging in decision-making and establishing and driving new initiatives and projects within the school and the local community. Working together to succeed will underpin learning and behaviour in the school. Cooperation and collaboration will ensure that The Reach Free School experience is enjoyable for pupils, staff, parents, guardians and carers.

**Enjoyment** - The Reach Free School will ensure that social and emotional aspects of learning are embedded in every lesson and activity that is delivered. Enthusiastic and energetic teachers will create engaging and energetic lessons; pupils will enjoy learning and enjoy their time at The Reach Free School as a result.

The Reach Free School's curriculum will be designed to meet the needs of all learners encompassing all abilities and backgrounds. Teaching strategies will be dynamic and engaging and pupils will enjoy their classes, developing positive relationships with peers and staff alike.

The Reach Free School will utilise modern equipment which supports outstanding teaching to engage all groups of learners and allow them to adapt their skills to rapidly changing technologies. All pupils will become confident in their use of information technology and will be able to apply the skills they develop to their successful school and professional careers.

### **The School Day**

The compulsory school day runs from 8.30am until 4.30pm, Monday to Thursday, with a 3.15pm finish on a Friday. A breakfast club will run from 8.00am until 8.30am Monday to Friday so that pupils are able to begin the day with a healthy breakfast. Formal lessons finish at 3.15pm with additional extra curricular activities taking place from 3.15pm until 4.30pm.

### **Years 7 and 8**

The Reach Free School will offer a broad, balanced and rigorous curriculum. At the core of the ethos and of the curriculum plan is a daily diet of English and Mathematics as the first two lessons of the day. This will help ease pupils in years 7 and 8 newly out of primary school into the secondary school environment by beginning the day with these subjects in keeping with a standard primary school education of literacy and numeracy in the morning. This will enable The Reach Free School to establish a learning culture focussed on the need for these subjects to become the foundation for success in other subjects and for life beyond school. Moreover, the literacy-rich ethos of the school will support the learning of pupils with special educational needs and/or with English as an additional language.

### **Year 9, Key Stage 4 and Post-16**

Beyond year 8 it is anticipated that pupils will start both academic and applied learning courses in a variety of subjects. As outlined above pupils will follow a broad and balanced curriculum and will be offered the opportunity to attain GCSE, BTEC and Baccalaureate qualifications. All pupils will gain qualifications in:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Humanities
- A Modern Foreign Language

Based on pupils' interests and future plans The Reach Free School intends to provide a wide range of option subjects which may include Art and Design, Business and Economics, Performing Arts, Media, Music, Design and Technology, Health and Social Care, Travel and Tourism, Construction and Physical Education.

### **Who can apply and when?**

The Reach Free School is due to open in September 2013. Primarily this school will serve the people living in the Rickmansworth area of South West Hertfordshire. Children currently in Year 6 will be able to apply for places from December 2012 onwards, starting their secondary education in September 2013. Applications for The Reach Free School will be processed in line with Hertfordshire County Council's published admission arrangements. Where there are more requests for places than those available the published oversubscription criteria will apply.

### **Special Educational Needs Provision**

At The Reach Free School, every pupil is regarded as an individual possessing unique needs, abilities and talents. As such, we are committed to offering all pupils a learning experience which is rich, varied and tailored to ensure that every pupil achieves their very best both academically and socially.

All pupils will enjoy a stimulating learning environment in which teaching approaches are dynamic and varied to maximise pupil engagement and outcomes.

All pupils will enjoy a range of extra-curricular activities to enhance their classroom experiences and develop their transferable and social skill set.

All pupils will have access to a robust pastoral support system to ensure their safety and wellbeing both in school and beyond.

The Reach Free School recognises that special provision must be made for pupils with additional learning needs to ensure equal access to the curriculum and that they are supported to achieve their academic potential, feel secure in the school's community and enjoy their learning experiences.

More details regarding the Special Education Needs provision can be found online at [www.thereachfreeschool.co.uk](http://www.thereachfreeschool.co.uk).

## **Behaviour Strategy**

The Reach Free School's approach to pupil behaviour promotes self discipline and independence. Positive behaviour will be acknowledged and rewarded through house points, good news postcards and positive phone calls to parents, guardians and carers as well as award certificates in assemblies. High expectations for behaviour for learning will pervade the school's environment.

Working together to succeed will underpin learning and behaviour in the school. At the beginning of each academic year, staff will meet with year 7 pupils' parents, guardians and carers to outline the expectation of working together to promote positive behaviour and attendance. Parents will be expected to send their children to school in good time, in the appropriate uniform and with the appropriate equipment for learning. Similarly, The Reach Free School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all of its pupils in its care. In addition, parents will be expected to keep the school informed of any health and wellbeing issues relating to their child and similarly of any changes to address or contact details. The Reach Free School is committed to keeping parents informed of their child's progress and plan to enable parents to access information on the school IT system so that they can track their child's attendance and progress. A hard copy of this information will be sent out at the end of every half term.

The Reach Free School will hold regular Parents' Evenings and Subject Evenings so that parents, guardians and carers are fully informed with school developments and curriculum plans. Communication with parents will be via email, text message, telephone and letter to inform them of any immediate matters. In line with the Equality Act 2010, the school, where possible, will provide school documents in the home language of pupils.

The terminology used with regards to sanctions at The Reach Free School will reflect the responsibilities of the workplace to emphasise the pupils' responsibility for self discipline. As such, lunchtime detentions will be referred to as a 'working lunch' and an after school detention will be called 'overtime'.

The Reach Free School will adopt a staged approach to behaviour management incorporating full dialogue with pupils and their families to afford pupils the opportunity to reflect and improve upon their behaviour and attitude to learning.

However, it is recognised that behaviour for learning must be taught by staff and learnt by pupils and as such some pupils may not always adhere to the school's rules and ethos. Therefore, any behaviour which disrupts learning or wellbeing will be sanctioned in line with The Reach Free School Behaviour Policy.

The Behaviour Strategy for The Reach Free School is available online at [www.thereachfreeschool.co.uk](http://www.thereachfreeschool.co.uk).

## **Attendance Policy**

Attendance will be monitored rigorously in line with The Reach Free School Attendance Policy. All pupils will attend a morning registration session at the beginning and end of the school day. The Reach Free School will work towards 100% attendance for all pupils. However, every pupil's attendance target will be set at 96% as a minimum expectation.

An Attendance Officer will be responsible for ensuring that morning registers are completed in an accurate and timely fashion and that any unexplained absence is explored with parents, guardians and carers and that overall, absences are below 4%. If a pupil's attendance drops below 96%,

parents, guardians or carers will be contacted to alert them to their child achieving below expected attendance.

In the event that a pupil's attendance continues to decline to below 90%, parents, guardians or carers will be invited in to the school for a meeting to discuss the reasons for this. An Individual Attendance Plan will then be devised with specific targets for that pupil to achieve before they can graduate from the plan.

In the event that a pupil's attendance continues to decline to below 85%, parents, guardians or carers of the pupil will have to attend an Attendance Panel and potentially receive notice of a penalty fine or court proceedings.

In the event that a pupil has to take a day's leave of school for illness it is the expectation of The Reach Free School that parents, guardians or carers will make telephone contact with the school before 8.30am on the same day. If the School Secretary has not received notice of a child's absence, 'TruancyCall' will be activated, requiring parents, guardians and carers to make contact urgently to explain the absence.

Lesson by lesson attendance will also be tracked through class registers. This data will be recorded through the school IT system and the Attendance Officer will be alerted to any pupil who was marked present in the morning but absent for a lesson.

Pupils who arrive after registration closes will be required to 'work overtime' at the end of the day.

Requests for exceptional leave – Should a family wish for their child to miss a day or days from school for exceptional circumstances, they will need to complete a request for exceptional leave ten days in advance (where this is not prevented by the nature of the circumstances). This request will be reviewed by the Headteacher and Governing Body as to whether this period of absence should be authorised or unauthorised, taking into account the pupil's attendance record to date and the impact the absence will have on that pupil's educational progress and social wellbeing. Exceptional leave does not include requests for holidays during term time and under no circumstance will this be granted by The Reach Free School.

### **Admissions arrangements**

The Reach Free School will have a Pupil Admission Number (PAN) for Year 7 of 120. In its first year The Reach Free School will fall outside of the usual admission dates. Instead applications made by parents, guardians and carers will be managed internally by the school.

The Reach Free School will admit applicants in the following order:

1. Pupils with statements of Special Educational Needs where The Reach Free School is named on the statement.
2. Looked After Children or previously Looked After Children
3. The distance measured in a straight line from the entrance of the Mill End Sports and Social Club to the pupil's front door.

### **Post 16 Admissions**

Although Post 16 admissions will not commence until September 2018, the current arrangements for Post 16 education will be published. The capacity for Year 12 is 120. Open evenings for The Reach

Free School's Sixth Form will take place when the first cohort of Year 11 pupils complete the autumn term. Application forms will be available from and returnable to The Reach Free School and online at [www.thereachfreeschool.co.uk](http://www.thereachfreeschool.co.uk).

The number of places available for external applicants will be dependent on the number of The Reach Free School's Year 11 pupils who apply to continue to Year 12 and meet the entry requirements outlined below.

From 2018, if all pupils progressing from Year 11 in The Reach Free School to Year 12 fill all 120 places, then The Reach Free School will not admit external applicants. If the number of pupils progressing from Year 11 to Year 12 is less than 120 then places will be available to external applicants.

### **The Oversubscription Criteria**

If there are more than 120 applications for places, the school will use the following criteria, in the order shown, to decide which children to admit:

1. Looked after Children and previously Looked after Children<sup>1</sup> who are the responsibility or interim responsibility of a Local Authority under the provision of the Education (Admission of Looked After Children) Regulations 2006;

2. Children who currently have a brother or sister\* as a pupil on roll at The Reach Free School and who would reasonably be expected to be still attending at The Reach Free School at the time of admission.<sup>2</sup>

\*This includes:

- legally adopted brothers/sisters, half brothers/sisters and step brothers/sisters living at the same address
- It does not include cousins or any other children or family members living at the same address.

3. Children living nearest The Mill End Sports and Social Club, Penn Road, Mill End, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire, WD3 8QN (measured in a straight line from its main entrance to their parents, guardians or carers' permanent home as set by Ordnance Survey points of reference using the computerised Geographical Information System (GIS)<sup>3</sup>).

**Tiebreaker:** In the event of two or more pupils having equal priority, the decision on the allocation of the place will be determined through random allocation, which will be conducted by an independent third party.

Hertfordshire County Council monitors all schools' compliance with the School Admissions Code and will include The Reach Free School in that process.

The Reach Free School is committed to adopting best possible practice and takes its obligations under the Schools Admission Code seriously. In operating a transparent, fair and equitable policy, it seeks to avoid conflict and disappointment.

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<sup>1</sup> Previously Looked after Children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order).

<sup>2</sup> Applicable for admission from September 2014 onwards

<sup>3</sup> This must be that of the child's permanent home with his/her parents, guardians or carers. If a child spends time at two addresses, the residence which is registered with the General Practitioner will be used.

### **Staffing Arrangements**

Outstanding teaching and learning is the single most important feature of successful schools, and therefore a range of specialist qualified teachers will be appointed, especially those are or have the potential to become outstanding practitioners. All members of staff will be integral to the school's community and in turn to the school's impact on the local community.

The Reach Free School will adopt a clear staffing structure with clear lines of accountability.

### **Additional Information**

The Statutory Consultation will run for a period of six weeks from Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2012 until the close of business on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2012. Once a site for The Reach Free School has been secured a further consultation of local stakeholders will be carried out over a two week period.

A report on the findings of this consultation will be presented to the DfE. It will summarise all the feedback generated by this consultation, any issues, and the manner in which those issues are being addressed or remedied.

For additional information about The Reach Free School, Reach Learning and Free Schools in general please visit the websites listed below.

The Reach Free School

[www.thereachfreeschool.co.uk](http://www.thereachfreeschool.co.uk)

Free Schools

[www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/freeschools](http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/freeschools)

Model Funding Agreement\*

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/freeschools/guidance/a0074737/funding-agreement>

\*Please note that the model Funding Agreement is due to be updated at the end of October 2012. The online version of this consultation document will contain the most recent version.

New Schools Network

[www.newschoolsnetwork.org](http://www.newschoolsnetwork.org)

## Your comments and feedback

Reach Learning believes it is important to give all stakeholders every opportunity to be as informed as possible about the proposed Reach Free School and it is important that everybody is able to have their say.

As part of the consultation process, Reach Learning is keen to seek the views of all stakeholders. If you have any comments or feedback for us on any of the content of this consultation document or the detail on the supporting websites please complete this form online at [www.thereachfreeschool.co.uk](http://www.thereachfreeschool.co.uk). Alternatively print a copy and send it to:

The Reach Free School  
c/o Nathan Summers  
Hunterlodge Advertising  
171 High Street  
Rickmansworth  
Hertfordshire  
WD3 1AY

The consultation is live and cumulative, but must be completed by close of business on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2012.

Free School applications are governed by The Academies Act 2010. Prior to signing the Funding Agreement, Section 10 of the Act requires consultation by applicants on whether they should proceed. To comply with this statutory requirement Reach Learning and The Reach Free School invites answers to the following questions.

### 1. We would like to know if you support the proposed Reach Free School? (please tick one)

Yes                       No                       Unsure

Please give your comments and feedback below

### 2. Do you support the principles outlined in the 'vision and ethos' section?

Yes                       No                       Unsure

Please give your comments and feedback below

**3. Do you support the admissions policy for The Reach Free School?**

Yes

No

Unsure

Please give your comments and feedback below

**4. Do you agree that Reach Learning should enter into a Funding Agreement with the Secretary of State for Education to allow The Reach Free School to open as a Free School in September 2013?**

Yes

No

Unsure

Please give your comments and feedback below

**5. Do you have any additional comments or feedback you would like to make?**

## About You

### 6. Gender

- Male  Female

### 7. Which of the following best describes you?

- a parent, guardian or carer  a pupil  a teacher  
 a community member  an elected member  a governor  
 a local resident  Local authority employee  a trade union  
 a local business owner  a local business employee  
 other (please specify)

### 8. Which of the following best describes your ethnic origin?

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Afghan                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Iranian             | <input type="checkbox"/> Serbian                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> African Asian                | <input type="checkbox"/> Iraqi               | <input type="checkbox"/> Sinhalese                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Albanian                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Kashmiri Pakistani  | <input type="checkbox"/> Sri Lankan Tamil            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arab                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Kashmiri Other      | <input type="checkbox"/> Traveller of Irish Heritage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian and Other Ethnic Group | <input type="checkbox"/> Kosovan             | <input type="checkbox"/> Turkish/ Turkish Cypriot    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Kurdish             | <input type="checkbox"/> White – English             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black – Somali               | <input type="checkbox"/> Mirpuri Pakistani   | <input type="checkbox"/> White – Irish               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black Caribbean              | <input type="checkbox"/> Nepali              | <input type="checkbox"/> White – Scottish            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bosnian – Herzegovinian      | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Asian         | <input type="checkbox"/> White – Welsh               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Black         | <input type="checkbox"/> White and Black African     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Croatian                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Black African | <input type="checkbox"/> White Eastern European      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greek/ Cypriot               | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Ethnic Group  | <input type="checkbox"/> White - Other               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gypsy/ Roma                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Pakistani     | <input type="checkbox"/> Other White British         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Indian                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)       |  |  |

Please provide us with your contact details and sign below. This information will be kept strictly confidential.

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Telephone Number:

Email address:

Signature:

Would you like to be kept up to date with developments at The Reach Free School and receive feedback from this consultation?

Yes

No

If you do not want your specific responses to this Statutory Consultation to be made public in the follow up report please tick this box.

Thank you for taking time to respond to the consultation.