

### **The University School, Bolton**

**The work of scientists, engineers, programmers, technicians and other highly skilled and vocationally-qualified people is vital to our economy, but the education and training of people in these key roles has often been undervalued and under-resourced. The University School, in partnership with the University of Bolton, the University Technical College and Bolton College aims to provide a combination of high-level academic and practical learning for students aged between 11-16, integrating academic requirements of a traditional school with more technical and IT driven skills.**

The University School is proposed to meet an urgent need for science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) skills in the North West region. Together with support from the University of Bolton and the UTC, we aim to provide the combined academic and technical education to equip local young people to take on highly skilled careers in the sciences and technology engineering. It is hoped that the new Free School, if approved, will be co-located within the University of Bolton campus, allowing it to benefit from an outstanding £10 million facility which includes specialist laboratories for optometry, clinical dentistry, pharmaceutical consulting, medical simulation, robotics, electronics and 3D printing. Students also have access to the University of Bolton Library Services and Bolton One sports facilities.

In addition to working closely with the University of Bolton and the UTC Bolton, we will work in partnership with local employers to provide industry-standard experiences for students. Students will plan their industry experiences to support their career goals, choosing from a STEM-themed enrichment programme, industry visits, specialist workshops and placements, to ensure that they have a portfolio of evidence to support their college, university and apprentice applications.

### **The increasing demand for school places**

Bolton has seen a huge rise in the demand for school places between 2009 and 2017. This increased demand has resulted in Bolton's primary schools currently accommodating around 5,000 additional primary school pupils compared to 10 years ago. These larger cohorts of primary school pupils are now transferring into the secondary sector, placing great pressures on school place provision. In addition, proposals for large-scale housing development in the Borough are expected to result in further demand for school places.

To meet this rising demand, Bolton County Council has already expanded seven secondary schools in order to allow extra pupils to be admitted in Sept 2018 and a new secondary free school will accommodate further Year 7 intakes in September 2019. However, an additional 180 Year 7 intake places will be required in September 2020 and there is likely to be a need for a further 180 Year 7 places by September 2023.

### **The University School and The Keys Federation Multi Academy Trust**

Our application is proposed to support the ongoing development of secondary education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and to meet the increased demand for school places in the Borough over the next six years which will result from the projected rise in pupil numbers in the area. This free school will have a STEM focussed and technology driven curriculum at the heart of the learning for all. We intend to support the pathway for each student with an AI learning platform, and maximise student resilience through our blended learning supported by student coaching. We believe that this approach will ensure our young people have the skills necessary to thrive as they move from school into the world of work.

The University School will play a key part in our community and look forward to connecting further with our local Primary schools in Bolton. With this in mind, working closely with the University of Bolton Group, we will be bringing together a family of primary and secondary schools under the leadership of the highly successful Keys Federation, an experienced MAT and DfE-approved Academy sponsor, that will provide additional support to the UTC in order to ensure that the young people of Bolton have access to the highest quality of education.

This family of schools will be a new type of Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) that will be different from other academy chains in its unique approach to education, school improvement and the development of learners. The Keys Federations' blend of coaching and digital learning delivers outstanding teaching and learning throughout the Trust schools. We are confident that bringing this model to Bolton, we can create a family of schools that will generate the learning conditions where every young person can reach their potential.

### **Meeting the demand and ensuring high quality teaching and learning**

The University School will not simply meet the demand for additional places, its curriculum design leads the way in a new era of secondary school learning. We are a teaching school for Century Tech, a cutting edge Artificial Intelligence learning platform. Our experience tells us that students are able to close their knowledge gaps faster and more consistently through using this diagnostic learning platform, whilst being supported to overcome challenge and develop critical thinking with our blended approach of coaching support. Student agency – the drive to have pride in themselves to succeed and the will to continue when things get tough, is a core part of how we do things. This is what we all require in life, not simply learning, and our young people need to have this inner resilience to support their learning and life chances. At the University School, we will provide this bespoke support.

Our curriculum will champion a Whole Education, driven by science, technology, engineering and maths, and delivered with a strong IT focus. To support this, each student will be given their own notebook to enable them to access our learning platform at all times. This will ensure that students make as much progress as possible, from as young an age as possible.

At the very core of the University School's mission will be a commitment to every learner in our schools to help them become the very best that they can be. This will involve treating every learner as an individual and with respect, recognising that they have a unique set of gifts to be nurtured. This aim will be achieved through the application of tried-and-tested personalised learning and school improvement strategies that will underpin the University School approach and deliver the following outcomes for all learners:

- Progress – All learners will make at least expected progress with the aim that 80 per cent of every cohort will make greater than expected progress
- Achievement – All learners will achieve in line with national norms and the great majority will outstrip this, breaking down the connection between elite schooling and the elite universities
- Learning skills – All learners will have a unique and personalised learner profile that will enable them to take control of their learning, understanding their areas of strength as well as areas to develop
- Curriculum entitlement – Alongside a strong focus on the core academic subjects, all learners will have access to additional experiences such as music, debating, service learning and leadership that will enrich their time at school as well as strengthening their view of themselves and their place in the world.

## Whole School Design

The University School will deliver outstanding student achievement by the adoption of a whole-school design that comprises six core elements. These six elements are the essential features of an outstanding school and each is underpinned by a set of proven practices that will be consistently adopted across the Keys Federation family of schools:

- 1. Leadership:** The University school will be driven by an ethos to ensure that all learners reach their potential both academically and socially. Such leadership will have a total and persistent focus on high quality teaching and learning, a rigorous, coherent and enquiry-led curriculum coupled with developmental performance management. Leadership will be shared within and across schools through the use of school improvement teams.
- 2. Personalised learning:** This includes the creation of personalised learning pathways, the active use of personal tutoring and the acquisition of a range of learning skills. These strategies are designed to ensure that The University School students will have high quality learning experiences, make excellent progress and are motivated to achieve the highest standards.
- 3. Curriculum frameworks:** The University School will have an unrelenting focus on literacy and numeracy within a wide-ranging curriculum entitlement. This will include the active use of learning platforms and new technologies, the creation of personalised curriculum pathways and cross-curricular learning that will enable learners to acquire the appropriate skills and qualifications that lead to employment, further education and higher education opportunities.
- 4. High quality teaching:** In The University School, high quality teaching will be ensured by a common framework for teaching and learning being adopted. This will be driven by evidence-based strategies for improved learning and teaching as well as the development of best practice through collaborative working across the network and supported by our AI learning platform.
- 5. Partnerships:** The University School will promote partnerships that increase capacity and improve outcomes for learners, schools and families through strong parental involvement, active community and employer connectivity, and excellent student progression from 11–16 years and beyond. In designing and developing partnerships to support this progress, there will be a strong emphasis on understanding community needs and collaborative working at all levels.
- 6. Accountability:** The University School is committed to meeting the most demanding of external and internal accountability measures including developing robust systems and processes to embed effective practices in school self- evaluation and track students' progress on a regular six-weekly basis.



## PARENTAL SURVEY

In order to demonstrate to the Department of Education that there is parental support for this proposal, we need parents of children in the current Year 5 to complete this survey. The Department of Education requires that you state on the survey that The University School would be your first choice of secondary school. We sincerely hope that this will be the case but we do recognise and understand that you will want to look round all of the secondary schools in the area in the years to come before making a final decision so an indication of first choice at this stage would certainly not be binding upon you. The information you supply will remain completely confidential and will have no bearing on the Local Authority admissions process. However, it would help us to establish that there is demand for a new Free School (The University School) and will mean that you will have a greater choice of secondary school for your children when you come to make this important decision in the future.

Please indicate the importance of the following factors in influencing your choice of secondary school

Factor	Very important	Quite important	Not important
High quality teaching and learning and well-qualified teaching staff			
Continuity of 'same site' education from Year 7 to end of sixth form and beyond			
Ongoing support for teachers and school leaders from outstanding schools in the Keys Federation MAT and its Alliance Partners			
Broad-based, balanced but challenging curriculum combining core academic subjects with a focus on practical STEM skills			
Encouraging high aspirations and valuing each student as an individual through personalised learning			
The innovative use of an artificial intelligence driven learning platform to support individual study in English, Maths and Science			
Provision of a wide range of sporting, creative and academic extension and enrichment activities such as music, debating, service learning and leadership			
Valued parental involvement and active community & employer connectivity, with a strong emphasis on understanding community needs and collaborative working			

Would you be interested in sending your son/daughter to the University School, Bolton?

Yes  No

Would The Univeristy School, Bolton be your first choice of secondary school?

(Please note that this is not a binding commitment)

Yes  No

In which year would your son/daughter need a place in Year 7

2020

2021

2022

Please provide your contact details\*

Name	
Address	
Postcode	
email	
Telephone	

Please let us know if you have any comments or suggestions relating to The University School, Bolton Free School project:


Please tick the box if you would like to be kept informed about the progress of The University School, Bolton Free School project

Further information and an online version of this survey form are available on our website at:  
[www.thekeysfederation.org.uk](http://www.thekeysfederation.org.uk)

Many thanks for taking the time to complete this survey. Please email the form by return to:  
[theuniversityschool@thekeysfederation.org.uk](mailto:theuniversityschool@thekeysfederation.org.uk)

or hand it into Head Office, or post it to  
The University School, Bolton (Free School Project)  
c/o The Keys Federation Academy Trust  
682 Atherton Road  
Hindley Green  
Wigan  
WN2 4SQ