

## STUDIO SCHOOL

Stratford-upon-Avon College is investigating the possibility of opening a Studio School with its first intake in September 2013. The School would specialise in Hospitality and Catering and the Performing Arts which are key strengths for the college and important sectors for the local economy.

### Background

College managers feel that this option should be considered for a number of reasons;

- The demographics for 16-18 year olds is declining nationally.

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
16 year olds	738,031	733,707	738,765	719,600	707,334
17 year olds	760,092	743,841	739,454	744,452	725,222
18 year olds	281,825	769,608	753,270	748,784	753,636
<b>Total 16-18</b>	<b>2,282,959</b>	<b>2,249,168</b>	<b>2,233,502</b>	<b>2,214,850</b>	<b>2,188,207</b>
Reduction since 2011		-1%	-2%	-3%	-4%

(Office of National Statistics)

A Studio School attached to the college would support the retention of the level 16-18 numbers in a declining demographic.

- 14-16 year old recruitment from the local schools is declining substantially. This is due predominantly to financial constraints and the restrictions on transport. This fall in numbers not only reduces the income derived from these programmes but also has the potential for reducing progression onto post 16 provision.
- The Studio School curriculum model is appealing to the college. The use of personal coaches is consistent to the college's development of Learning Mentors. Development of employability and work skills through meaningful work placements, embedded themed projects and practical work is a strength in the college's vocational provision.
- The approach to teaching and learning would offer a new and different option for learners and their parents that is distinct from the experience that is provided by traditional schools.
- Funding available would enable the college to improve and upgrade its accommodation.
- As an Academy, this would provide a new funding stream to the college.
- Being strong curriculum areas with a higher education offer, the college would be able to provide progression route for local young people from the age of 14 all the way through to HE.

The Wolfe Report (March 2011) made recommendations on how to strengthen and improve access to high quality vocational instruction. Among the recommendations was '*Make explicit the legal right of colleges to enrol students under 16 to ensure that funding procedures make this practically possible. Colleges enrolling students in this age group should be required to offer them a full KS4 programme, either alone or in collaboration with schools, and be subject to the same performance monitoring regime (including performance indicators) as schools.*'

One way in which the Government is responding is the introduction and promotion of Studio Schools. Michael Gove has described Studio Schools as *'a bold new approach to education involving practical learning and paid work. Studio Schools will help young people develop the knowledge, skills and experiences they need to succeed'*

What is a Studio School?

Studio Schools are a new type of learning environment for 14-19 year olds designed to equip young people with the knowledge, skills and experiences they need to succeed in life and work. They are at the forefront of innovation in the English education system, offering a bold new practical approach to learning rooted in the real world. They will offer a new mainstream option for young people of all abilities.

At the heart of the Studio School model are seven essential elements;

- Employability and enterprise skills
  - The learning is mapped against the CREATE skills framework which is designed to embed employability skills into the programme
- Key qualifications
  - Qualifications vary according to local circumstances. All schools will deliver GCSE Maths, English, Science and IT together with other vocational and academic qualifications.
- Personalised curriculum
  - Each student will have a Personal Coach who will work with them to tailor the curriculum to their individual needs.
- Practical learning
  - Studio schools will pioneer an innovative practical approach to learning involving enterprise themed projects.
- Real work
  - All students must undertake real work placement, four hours per week for 14-16 year olds and two days per week paid for 16-18 year olds
- Small schools
  - Studio Schools will be small schools, offering a personalised and supportive learning environment.
- Students of all abilities

These elements provide a framework for all Studio Schools and will be built upon by individual schools, who will tailor the model to meet the needs of their local community and labour market.

The academic year is split into three units (terms) of seventeen weeks, meaning that the Studio School is only closed for the Christmas week. Students are entitled to seven weeks holiday per year, which are bookable as if in employment.

Proposal

The college would initially plan an intake of 75 14 year olds (year 10) and 75 16 year olds (year 12) in September 2013. Once fully established the aim would be to have a school 300 14-19 year olds.

In order to be approved for a Studio School the college will need to work up a proposal for submission to the Studio Schools Trust. We have had an initial meeting with the Studio Schools Trust who have provided positive feedback on a proposal. The next stage is to become a member of the Studio Schools Trust (£8,000) who then appointment of a consultant from the Trust who will support the college in developing its bid. The Trust also commits to ongoing support such as curriculum resources, additional resources for stakeholders and bespoke training for the School's staff.

If approved the college will be able to access capital funding to improve or upgrade accommodation for the School. The funding is up to £800,000, though typically it is between £400,000 and £500,000. The grant can be used to upgrade existing accommodation but not for a new build. Although the School would be on our campus, it must have a separate defined area that exclusive to the School. School students would however be able to access specialist college facilities such as the training kitchens and restaurant and performance spaces as well as open access areas and recreational facilities.

The Studio School would be linked to the college. It would however, have its own Board of Governors, Principal and staff which must include personal coaches and a Business Manager who will organise and manage the mandatory work placements and engage with local and national employers in the specialist sectors.

More information can be found on the Studio School Trust website; [www.studioschoolstrust.org](http://www.studioschoolstrust.org).

#### Recommendation

College managers recommend that the Corporation approve the further investigation of developing a Studio School at Stratford-upon-Avon College.

Charles Anderson