

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

# A SCHOOL FARM FOR GREY COURT?

**Q: Who will run the farm? Will it be managed professionally?**

A: Grey Court School Farm will employ a Farm Manager/Head of Land Based Studies who will have Qualified Teacher Status. The Farm Manager will be supported by a Farm Technician who will carry out practical tasks relating to the farm and who will be experienced in farming and animal husbandry.

**Q: What sort of animals will you be introducing to the farm?**

A: Our business plan is based on the introduction of four calves, eight sheep, two pigs, eight chickens and two goats. Great care has been taken to choose breeds appropriate to the size and the nature of the smallholding.

**Q: Is this project too ambitious? Is it too big?**

A: Best practice across the country shows us that a smallholding of this size is manageable, and appropriate to the site and scale of enterprise. This scale allows for meaningful educational activity and will enable everyone to experience the farm as a real, functioning workplace, producing food for the community.

**Q: Will the farm be hygienic? Will it attract rats?**

A: Grey Court School Farm will be managed to the highest standards. As a visitor farm and a demonstration unit for best practice, the farm will be kept clean and tidy thus making it unattractive to rodents. Vermin control will also be carried out to ensure infestations do not occur.

**Q: Will the farm smell?**

A: Management of the manure will ensure that smells are kept to a minimum. Remember, Grey Court School Farm will be a smallholding with only a few animals thus reducing the likely impact. Other School Farms, such as Oathall Community College in West Sussex and Saffron Walden County High School in Essex, are in residential areas and have been in existence for over 40 years. Local residents have not found their lives adversely affected by the presence of a farm.

**Q: Will the farm be noisy?**

A: As a smallholding, the farm will not require the use of the heavy machinery often associated with large farming enterprises. Whilst the majority of farm activity will take place during school hours, there will, of course, be some out-of-hours activity, but this can be confined to the barn interior.

Please be assured that cockerels will NOT be invited onto the farm!

**Q: Will the site be secure?**

A: Grey Court School already has perimeter fencing and uses CCTV. A camera will cover the Farm site with access managed by the Farm Manager and Farm Technician.

**Q: How can I help?**

A: Community volunteers are key to the success of school farms. If you would like to get involved in either the smallholding or the community allotment, please get in touch, or come along to one of our community briefings, details below.



**WHAT?**

Over the last 12 months, Grey Court School has been looking at the possibility of introducing a school farm into the grounds of Grey Court.

Based on other successful school farms across the country, Grey Court is considering a three acre smallholding on site: a purpose-built educational resource providing practical experience of farming and land use. It would have a range of livestock including cattle, sheep, pigs, goats and poultry.

The farm site would be made up of a barn-style farm building for animal housing, storage, office and teaching space, and a farmyard with four paddocks surrounded by stock proof fencing.

**WHERE?**

Subject to approval, the proposed site for the farm would be on the school fields to the west of the sports pitch. It would also use a small area alongside The Avenue that could be fenced to provide extra grazing (please refer to sitemap for details).

**WHY?**

School farms – along with allotments, city farms and community gardens – have proved to be an excellent way of demonstrating the benefits of fresh, local food and healthier lifestyles.

We believe that a school farm can provide both a valuable education resource and a community project that will benefit the pupils of Grey Court School, members of the local community, other schools in the area, youth organisations and social groups.

This project will allow Grey Court to offer NVQ Level 1 in Land-based Studies, adult education courses in animal husbandry and add 'a Rural Dimension' to the school's specialist areas.

Together with its community allotment, Grey Court School Farm will bring together teachers, students and local residents to produce and market fresh and affordable food that can be proudly branded as 'Local to Ham'.

**HOW?**

Supported by local group School Food Matters, we have now produced a full business plan that is available to all on request. Our steering group, made up of representatives from Grey Court School, local community groups, School Food Matters and the School Farm Network, will be putting together community briefings, giving local residents an opportunity to learn more about this exciting project.

**WHEN?**

The business plan has been presented to the local authority and we will be advised on the planning process. We are also awaiting the outcomes of several funding applications. Planning and funding approvals will determine how quickly we can move the project forward.

**WANT TO FIND OUT MORE?**

Please see overleaf for **Frequently Asked Questions** and inside for a detailed sitemap. We welcome your feedback, so please contact Maggie Bailey at Grey Court School or Stephanie Wood at School Food Matters.



Saturday 7th February - 10am-12 noon - Ham Library  
Tuesday 10th February - 3pm-4:30pm - The Ingenium, Grey Court School  
Saturday 14th February - 10am-12 noon - Outside Tesco, Ashburnham Road  
Saturday 28th February - 10am-12 noon - Ham Parade



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