

Consultation on the closure of Salisbury High School to establish an Academy on the site December 2009

1. Introduction

The purpose of this consultation is to seek your views about the closure of Salisbury High School, Westwood Road, Salisbury, SP2 9HS from 31 August 2010 to allow the establishment of an Academy on the current school site to open on 01 September 2010.

A decision about the school's potential closure is needed by mid April 2010 so that plans for the Academy can proceed. A Conditional Approval under Section 482 (1) of the 1996 Act for the establishment of an Academy is being applied. If the Academy does not open on 01 September 2010 the proposals will be referred back to Wiltshire Council Cabinet for fresh consideration and the notice to close the school will be rescinded.

2. Background

An Academy is a new type of publicly funded independent school, managed by independent sponsors. It will be run by the Academy Trust, a charitable company. An Academy's annual revenue funding comes from the Government at a level comparable to other local schools. Each Academy is unique and so is its sponsor. The sponsor has to establish an endowment fund for the Academy from which annual revenue is drawn to be used for the benefit of all pupils, but especially those in most need. This is used over the lifetime of the Academy to benefit the students and the community.

In 2008 the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) approached the Local Authority (LA) to consider the possibility of two Salisbury Academies as the LA response to the National Challenge Programme. The Church of England offered to sponsor both Academies and was accepted by the DCSF as the lead sponsor. An expression of interest (EOI) for one Academy in West Salisbury to replace Salisbury High School was submitted and has recently been approved by the DCSF.

The lead sponsor, through the Salisbury Board of Education already supports 11 Church secondary schools across the Diocese, with around 11,000 young people, and is currently sponsoring 3 Academy projects, one of which, St Aldhelm's Academy, is approaching funding agreement stage and serves a similarly disadvantaged area of Poole. Wiltshire Council has had recent experience of developing the Wellington Academy, with Wellington College as the lead sponsor. This would be the first Academy project for Bryanston School, an exciting opportunity for it to become centrally involved in bringing innovation and transformation to education for this community.

The sponsors wish to combine their considerable strengths to help transform secondary education in West Salisbury, further developing 11-18 co-educational education and full service provision, with this proposed Academy site as a 'hub' for wider health and community services. The sponsors see three key challenges:

- to drive up standards of achievement for each young person, offering closer individual support and enabling access to broader learning opportunities

- to build a strong inclusive community which works collaboratively to build confidence and promote greater resilience amongst individuals, families and communities
- to transform aspirations and expectations of success and significantly widen career progression

3. Why are the Local Authority and the Governors of Salisbury High School consulting you about the closure of the school?

The replacement Academy would be a new legal entity with different governance arrangements. We are seeking your views on three options:

Option 1: The closure of Salisbury High School on 31 August 2010 to allow an Academy to be established on the site.

Initially in the current buildings, the Academy would open on the 01 September 2010 with replacement accommodation planned by 2013. This proposal is subject to the Academy being approved by DCSF. The Local Authority believes that the creation of an Academy on the site will make a significant contribution to secondary education enhancing the learning experiences for pupils and the wider community and retaining pupils who currently go outside of the immediate area for their education. The Academy is planned to have sixth form provision.

By establishing the Academy, the DCSF will invest over £20 million to rebuild most of the current accommodation on an adjacent site. The educational vision for the Academy is to offer a broad and balanced curriculum to enable pupils to meet their full potential.

The lead sponsor is an active partner within a national network of 28 Church Academies, and from their joint experience believes the following concepts should underpin this project.

- employing 'stage not age' grouping within a highly flexible timetable and working day which puts the quality of learning first
- using a flatter staffing structure which challenges the commonly accepted roles of support and teaching staff
- exploiting the innovative learning styles researched within our two specialist subject areas right across the Academy, so that every learning experience is outstanding
- small school feel, 'schools within schools', house structures which draw together pastoral and teaching support structures for younger students
- innovative school buildings design with 'learning plazas' which enable large groups of students to be team taught, as well as small groups to learn one to one in flexible learning spaces

Option 2: No change, Salisbury High school continues as a Foundation in existing accommodation under the current governing body.

The Local Authority believes that this is a high risk option. There are a number of factors which lead to doubts about the sustainability of current arrangements in the long term with increasing population and curriculum pressures.

In 2008 the school was invited to join the DCSF National Challenge Programme which is designed to help and support school improvement where pupil attainment at GCSE is at or below 30% for 5 A*-C including English and mathematics. Salisbury High School was inspected in December 2008 and was judged to be providing a satisfactory standard of education. As part of the National Challenge Programme and in response to the inspection, the school is currently implementing a range of curriculum, organisational and management changes and standards are showing signs of improving. The Academy would be the next step in the school's improvement journey for staff and pupils to help raise standards higher and eventually new buildings will enable greater opportunities for pupils than are provided currently.

As the school expands due to future housing the current accommodation will become increasingly restricted, limiting the curriculum offer to pupils. Some investment would be available from the LA to address condition, suitability and sufficiency issues but this would be at a significantly lower level than DCSF funding for the Academy.

Option 3: Any other suggestion that might come forward during the period of consultation

We are putting this option forward in case there is a route for the schools which those producing this paper had not previously considered. It is perfectly possible for you to have an alternative idea and put that forward to us. If you wish to do this, then please complete the relevant section under Option 3 on the attached document explaining how your proposal would raise standards and best secure the future of the school.

4. Who is being consulted?

This document is circulated to:

- Parents of current pupils of Salisbury High School
- Primary Schools and pre-schools with children likely to attend Salisbury High School
- All school staff and governors
- Salisbury City Council
- The local Councillor, Richard Rogers
- The local Member for Parliament, Robert Key
- The County Secretaries of the relevant professional associations and unions
- Head-teachers and Chairs of Governors of nearby mainstream schools

Further copies are available at the school, partner primary schools and on the Council website www.wiltshire.gov.uk

5. The proposed Academy

A detailed Stakeholder consultation about the new Academy led by the Church Academies Services Limited (CASL), consultants appointed by the DCSF, will be

taking place early 2010. A detailed consultation booklet will be available shortly and will be available on the Salisbury Diocese and Salisbury High School websites for reference. This consultation about the proposed Academy normally happens before the statutory consultation on the closure of a school. Because the timetable for opening the proposed Academy in September 2010 has to be condensed, the statutory consultation about the closure of Salisbury High School has to be conducted first.

Objectives

The Academy will have a strong ethos in which academic progress will be the fore. It will ensure the highest standards of achievement. Places will be offered in the age range of 11 – 19 with up to eight forms of entry (240 in each year group), together with post 16 provision for up to 250 making a total of 1450 pupils.

Standards and Diversity

The proposed specialism for the Academy will be mathematics and the arts. The Academy will be a single faith Academy. The ethos would be based upon Christianity but will support and respect students of all faiths or of none with their spiritual explorations. The Academy will help each young person to choose to lead the best life he or she can, using their unique gifts to become a responsible citizen who makes a positive contribution to society. It would be an inclusive school, welcoming all children and in particular serving the community.

Provision for post 14 including 16 – 18

All the available curriculum pathways will be available leading to a wide range of academic, vocational and other accredited outcomes post 14. It is expected that GCSE and vocational diplomas will be available. In the sixth form, the diploma programme and AS and A levels, are planned to be available to pupils. The Academy will collaborate with other schools and colleges, to offer a wide range of diplomas,

Need for Places

The table below shows projected pupil numbers of secondary school age. These projections are based on existing primary school populations, together with assumptions about the potential number of children likely to take up places. Generally, the LA has a sound record in forecasting places.

Pupil Nos	Sept 2008	Sept 2009	Sept 2010	Sept 2011	Sept 2012	Sept 2013	Sept 2014
Salisbury High School	821	814	823	849	822	816	811

The South Wiltshire Core Strategy, published in July 2009, proposes that 7480 new homes will be constructed in Salisbury over the period to 2026. A significant number of these homes will be developed in areas served by the proposed Academy and it is anticipated that a significant number of secondary pupils will be added to the school population in the table above resulting in higher numbers when the Academy opens.

Special educational Needs

There are no proposals to establish any specific SEN provision. Arrangements for pupils with SEN will be in line with the SEN Code of Practice. The Governing Body will adopt an SEN policy in line with regulations. The impact of the policy will be evaluated annually in line with statutory requirements.

The emphasis will be on early identification and intervention. Continued good liaison with feeder primary schools will enable continuity of provision for pupils with SEN. They will have an individual educational plan developed in consultation with parents. All staff will be expected to take account of the needs of individual pupils and plan their lessons accordingly.

Transport and Road Safety

All pupils attending Salisbury High School are expected to transfer to the Academy. As a result, existing pupils will not have to make any additional journeys or increase the distances they have to travel to school. The Academy will continue to serve Salisbury and the surrounding area. Community use of the Academy will be managed carefully.

Impact on the Community

All Academies have a statutory duty to share their facilities and expertise with other local schools and the wider community. The Academy will engage fully with parents. The use of its premises, including the Sports Centre, by the community will be encouraged. The curriculum may include provision for adult learning for members of the local community. Local businesses and organisations will make a crucial contribution to courses and pupils will be able to combine learning through appropriate placements with employers and local colleges.

6. Implications for employees

The sponsors recognise that the best way to achieve the vision and ethos for the Academy is by everyone working together to provide the quality of education that pupils deserve and they are committed to working closely with staff and professional associations.

The Academy will build on best practice that already exists at Salisbury High School and will retain and develop their good teachers. The Government takes a positive view of the TUPE Regulations. The policy of the DCSF is that Academy projects which involve the closure of an existing school should be conducted on the basis that the TUPE Regulations apply, unless there are exceptional circumstances which render this inappropriate. This is subject to a separate consultation process.

7. The process of change

It is important that you understand what will happen as a result of this consultation. There will be a period of six weeks during which you can express your views, including through a public consultation meeting at Salisbury High school.

The Cabinet for Wiltshire Council will consider the results of the consultation and will make a decision about the closure of Salisbury High school and the opening of an Academy. If positive, a Public Notice will then be issued. This will give a further six week period for you to respond to the Academy proposal. The final decision about

the closure of Salisbury High school will be made by Wiltshire Council Cabinet. All reports and decisions made by the cabinet are recorded for public access on the Wiltshire Council's website www.wiltshire.gov.uk

8. How to express your views

We want to know what you think about this proposal. You can do this by completing the attached reply slip with this consultation document,

If you want to respond in writing, please do so by no later than **26th January 2010** using the attached form.

Response to the consultation on the closure of Salisbury High School to establish an Academy on site.

Please give your name and your interest in the school (e.g. current parent, parent of primary or pre-school child, local resident, member of staff, governor, etc).

Name:

Interest:

1. Please indicate your preferred option

Option1: The closure of Salisbury High school to allow an Academy to be established on the site.

Option 2: No change

Option 3: Any other proposal. Please specify.....

2. If you have any further comments or questions, please write them in this box. Please also indicate your views about the proposed Academy.

Please return to:

Stephanie Denovan
Assistant Director, Department for Children and Education
Education Department
County Hall
Trowbridge, BA 14 8JN

To arrive no later than noon on **26th January 2010** or email to:
angela.grodzicka@wiltshire.gov.uk