

# Public Consultation

## Future secondary school provision proposal for South Leeds High School

**8 September – 17 October 2008**

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## **Public consultation on future secondary school provision proposal for South Leeds High School**

### **Contents**

- 1.0 Background**
  - 2.0 Why do we need to change provision in South Leeds?**
  - 3.0 What is an academy?**
  - 4.0 What options have been considered to improve outcomes for the young people of inner south Leeds?**
  - 5.0 The proposal – the vision**
  - 6.0 Alternative options**
  - 7.0 What happens if the proposals proceed?**
  - 8.0 What are your views?**
  - Appendix**
  - Response form**
- 
- 1.0 Background**
  - 1.1** The Government is encouraging all local authorities to include Academies within their Building Schools for the Future (BSF) proposals, particularly to address issues of underachievement.
  - 1.2** The Government's National Challenge, launched earlier this year, means all local authorities have to show how all schools will meet minimum standards of five or more GCSEs at grade A\*-C including Maths and English for 30 per cent or more of all pupils, by 2011.
  - 1.3** A formal Expression of Interest has been submitted for an academy to replace South Leeds High School and serve the Beeston and Holbeck, Middleton Park, and City and Hunslet wards of inner south Leeds. The Schools Partnership Trust has been identified as a prospective Lead Sponsor, with support from both universities in Leeds.
  - 1.4** This public consultation will help Leeds City Council make a decision on that proposal. We would like to hear your views to help inform that decision.
  - 2.0 Why do we need to change provision in south Leeds ?**
  - 2.1** We need to ensure improved educational outcomes for children in this area. South Leeds High School was formed in 2004 following the closure of Merlyn Rees High School and Matthew Murray High School. Both of these predecessor schools had been identified as needing special measures. Accumulated budget deficits from the previous schools limited its ability to accelerate improvements in standards, and South Leeds High School itself was identified as requiring special measures in June 2007. It was linked with Garforth Community College to support the necessary improvements. South Leeds High School has made satisfactory progress since being placed in Special Measures, however further action is needed to accelerate the improvement in outcomes for the young people of south Leeds.
  - 2.2** The National Challenge target is a key milestone for the school to achieve in order for it to change the outcomes for the young people of inner south Leeds. The local authority must consider options for changes to the status and governance of schools as part of its plans to meet these targets. This proposal allows the sponsor to build on the success achieved so far, and sustain improvement into the future.

**2.3** Provision in the South of the city has been reviewed as part of the Building Schools for the Future programme. Admissions limits and overall school sizes have been planned to meet the local population needs, whilst providing choice and diversity of provision. Planning for this investment was completed in 2003, and included a new building for the new South Leeds High School, with an admission limit of 210. This is appropriate for the size of the local population.

### **3.0 What is an Academy?**

**3.1** *“Academies are all-ability independent state schools with a mission to transform education where the status quo is simply not good enough. They are established and managed by independent sponsors, and funded by the Government at a level comparable to other local schools. No fees are paid by parents.”*

Source: DCSF Prospectus for Sponsors and Local Authorities

**3.2** The Government believes that independent status is crucial in enabling Academies to succeed. Strong, ambitious leadership, effective management, high aspirations for all students and good teaching are essential elements of any successful school.

**3.3** Sponsors provide financial support through an endowment fund. Sponsors come from a wide range of backgrounds including universities, individual philanthropists, businesses, the charitable sector, existing private schools, educational foundations, the faith communities and other established educational providers. They apply their success in their field to the Academies in long term partnership with experienced school managers. The vision is for sponsors to challenge traditional thinking on how schools are run and what they should be like for students. They should seek to make a complete break with cultures of low aspiration which afflict too many communities and their schools.

**3.4** The sponsors are aware of the intention to establish a Memorandum of Understanding that will determine how Leeds will work with any Academy sponsor to ensure the best outcomes for young people in the city. They are strongly supportive of this memorandum. They have also made a clear commitment to apply the existing admissions arrangements that operate in Leeds, to inclusive practice and avoiding exclusions.

### **4.0 What options have been considered to improve outcomes for the young people of south Leeds?**

**4.1** The three options we have considered are :

- Close South Leeds High school and establish an academy on its site – the proposal
- Close South Leeds High School and expand provision at other schools in the area.
- Leave South Leeds High School unchanged.

### **5.0 The Proposal – The Vision**

**5.1** The academy proposed at South Leeds High School, sponsored by the School Partnership Trust (SPT) will be established on the principles on the Sponsors’ core principles, namely

- To advance and enhance the development and education of people of all ages and without distinction
- To advance the health and welfare of pupils and their families
- To promote community cohesion

- To provide or assist in providing facilities for recreation and leisure time activities at all times of the year
  - To work with schools in challenging circumstances with the purpose of developing long term sustainable relationships for the benefit of children and families within the local community.
  - To create an environment where all learners of any age or background will have access to and support for a wide range of learning opportunities. It will help to raise standards and make a direct contribution to raising achievement, improving the well being and aspirations of students.
- 5.2** The academy will build upon existing good practice embracing the concepts of community partnerships and regional multi agency educational and community networks. The School Partnership Trust has at its core the values that underpin local comprehensive, non selective, high quality educational provision for families firmly rooted in the priorities of the local community.
- 5.3** The academy will be centred on promoting individualised learning in an inclusive ethos of student support and progression. The specialisms will allow a wide range of distinctive pathways to be developed both in vocational as well as academic studies and address key issues of social cohesion within the south Leeds wider community.
- 5.4** The specialisms will promote an entrepreneurial climate within the Academy and encourage all students and staff to be creative and innovative in their work together. The Academy will seek to equip all learners with the necessary skills to engage in learning throughout their lives. The academy will use its specialisms to develop new partnerships within the local community, specifically with the focus on vocational learning bringing in partnerships with local businesses and community partnerships.
- 5.5** The academy will seek formal associations with other groups in addition to the partner organisations of the SPT. These additional groups will include:
- University of Leeds and Leeds Metropolitan University
  - Community Groups
  - Children Leeds
- 5.6** In practical terms in forming an academy in South Leeds the SPT will commit to:
- 1) An admissions policy without any form of selection serving primarily the communities of South Leeds and sitting within the national code of practice for admissions and operating in the context of the city wide admissions policy.
  - 2) The SPT will recognise all trade union and professional association of employees and would adhere to national agreements for pay and conditions of service for teachers in relation to the 'Blue Book'. The SPT would also support local conditions of service for non teaching colleagues as established by Leeds City Council benchmarks and would adhere to equal pay decisions taken locally and, if appropriate, nationally.
  - 3) The SPT will adhere to Leeds schools' holiday patterns.
  - 4) The SPT in reforming the governing body of the academy will ensure effective local representation from parents and other stakeholders (including staff and local community groups).
  - 5) The SPT will appoint Trust representatives to the governing body to ensure the vision and values of the Trust in partnership with the local governing body are promoted and maintained.
  - 6) The SPT will establish the academy as a centre of vocational and

academic excellence with a clear focus on pupil and student attainment. The SPT will seek to establish the academy as a specialist school with humanities and vocational education as its specialism. The curriculum will support the rapid and effective development of a highly personalised curriculum in partnership with other SPT schools.

- 7) The SPT will support and develop the sixth form at the academy in partnership with other SPT schools and within the emerging regional framework for 14-19 education. The academy will offer 300 sixth form places.
- 8) The SPT will establish the academy as a highly inclusive school and will promote a zero exclusion policy by working in partnership with local agencies and supporting a personalised curriculum offer for all students and pupils.

**5.7** In conclusion the SPT believes in local solutions for local needs and best practice derived from and established through local partnerships. The SPT embraces the unique characteristics of the local community and places the importance of the family at the heart of its values.

**5.8** The SPT believes that an academy in south Leeds is the best opportunity within the context of these guiding principles for rapid and sustained improvement in educational standards and in the promotion of community cohesion and social mobility.

## **6.0 Alternative options**

### **6.1 Close South Leeds High School and expand provision at other schools in the area**

**6.2** Commitments are already in place throughout the remainder of the south of the city to rebuild schools and balance provision in line with local demographic need. Many of these building projects are nearing completion. Closure of the school would be highly disruptive to pupils, rather than continuing to build on the recent improvements at the school.

### **6.3 Leave South Leeds High School unchanged**

**6.4** In the context of the National Challenge it is simply not acceptable to leave the status and governance of the school unchanged. Further action is needed to accelerate the improvement in outcomes for the children and young people of the area, meet The National Challenge, and make a stronger contribution to the region of Inner South Leeds.

## **7.0 What happens if the proposals proceed?**

### **7.1 Where would children be offered places?**

**7.2** All of the children on the roll of South Leeds High School when it closes in August 2009 would transfer, if they wished to do so, onto the roll of the new academy in September 2009.

**7.3** Parents and carers at the closing school who do not wish to transfer to the Academy will be able to apply for a place at any other school where there are places available. Parental preference will be met as far as possible by application of the published admission criteria for Leeds.

### **7.4 How would the transition arrangements be managed?**

**7.5** A temporary governing body would be established for the new school, drawing from existing governors of South Leeds, as well as new members. The temporary governing body would be responsible, with advice from Education Leeds, for appointing the leadership and

management team of the new school. Once this has been achieved, the temporary governing body and the head would establish a staffing structure for the new school.

**7.6 What about the staff?**

**7.7** Throughout the transition a planned process would encourage and support all staff to continue the development of their career within the existing school and to support the process of change.

**7.8** It is intended that posts in the new academy would be ring-fenced to staff in the closing school in the first instance. The Education Leeds Personnel Team would work with any members of staff unable to obtain employment in the new academy to seek redeployment elsewhere.

**7.9 When is the proposed date for the opening of new academy?**

**7.10** The proposed date for the academy to open is September 2009, with South Leeds High School closing at the end of August and the new academy opening on 1st September. This recognises the need for time to complete the statutory processes required.

**7.11 What happens next in the decision making process?**

**7.12** We are consulting parents, governors, staff and the community during September and October 2008. At the end of this period the Executive Board of the City Council will receive a report summarising the views expressed during the consultation (December 2008). The Board will be asked to consider whether, in the light of these views it still wishes to proceed with these or amended proposals. If the Board does wish to proceed then statutory notices will be published for a period of 6 weeks in December 2008 / January 2009. Anyone who disagrees with the proposal can formally object during this representation period. If any objections are raised during this period a further report summarising the representations received and all relevant documentation will be submitted to the School Organisation Advisory Board, an independent body, for its consideration, and they will make a recommendation to the Executive Board on whether or not to approve the proposal. In the event there are no objections, the report and documentation will be submitted directly to the Executive Board for a final decision.

**7.13 When would these proposals take effect?**

Set out below is the timetable of key dates currently envisaged, although this may be subject to change:

08 Sept 2008 – 19 Oct 2008	Public consultation period
3 Dec 2008	Executive Board receive report summarising consultation and seeking permission to publish statutory notices
5 Dec 2008 – 16 Jan 2009	Publish statutory notices giving 6 weeks for representations to be made
19 – 30 Jan 2009	If objections are made, SOAB meet to make recommendation to Executive Board (if there are no objections this stage can be bypassed)
04 March 2009	Executive Board meeting to approve decision
16 March 2009	Deadline for decision
Sept 2009	New Academy opens on site of current school

**8.0 What are your views?**

- 8.1 Whether you agree or disagree with the proposals or aspects of them, whether you have concerns that you feel have not been addressed or factors that you think we have not taken into account, please let us know. We would like to hear your views.
- 8.2 You are invited to a public meeting on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> September at 7.00pm at South Leeds High School, where your views will be noted. You may also wish to put your views in writing – either by letter or by completing the attached form – to arrive no later than Friday 17 October
- 8.3 Send all correspondence to:

The Chief Executive  
 Education Leeds  
 FAO School Organisation Team  
 9th Floor West,  
 Merrion House  
 110 Merrion Centre  
 LEEDS LS2 8DT

You can also reply by email to: [educ.school.organisation@educationleeds.co.uk](mailto:educ.school.organisation@educationleeds.co.uk)

**Timetable of Consultation Meetings**

Date & Time	
Thursday 18 September 6.30pm	Meeting of Inner South Area Committee
Thursday 25 September 2.00pm	Meeting with South Leeds School Council
Thursday 25 September 3.30pm	Meeting with staff of South Leeds High School
Thursday 25 September 5.00pm	Meeting with Governing Body of South Leeds High School
Thursday 2 October 7.00pm	Public meeting at South Leeds High School

## Appendix

**Table 1: Current position**

	Admission Limit 2008/9	11-16 Number on Roll Jan 2008	Post 16 Number on Roll Jan 2008	11-18 Number on Roll Jan 2008	Net Capacity	Surplus Places	% Surplus
South Leeds High School	210	1138	52	1190	1190	35	3%
South Wedge	1672	8607	959	9566	9644	78	1%

**Table 2: Projections for South Leeds High School (assuming status quo)**

	YR7	AD LT	11-16 TOTAL	16+ TOTAL	11-18 TOTAL	NET CAPACITY	SURPLUS	% SURPLUS
2008\09	202	210	1063	50	1113	1225	112	9%
2009\10	202	210	1011	57	1067	1225	158	13%
2010\11	196	210	971	42	1013	1225	212	17%
2011\12	196	210	969	38	1007	1225	218	18%
2012\13	188	210	944	41	984	1225	241	20%
2013\14	210	210	953	37	990	1225	235	19%
2014\15	210	210	964	37	1002	1225	223	18%

Note: Projections for the south wedge show declining year 7 intakes until 2012/13, when they reach a low of just over 1500 pupils. They then increase again to just over 1600 by 2014/15. Overall levels of provision in the wedge, and at South Leeds High School, therefore both seem appropriate.

**Table 3: Local population size compared to school size**

Total year seven places in the south wedge	1,672
Total year seven places at SLHS / proposed academy by 2010	210
Percentage of places in wedge provided by SLHS / proposed academy	13%
No. of secondary age children having South Leeds as nearest high school:	2214
No. of these children that actually attend South Leeds High School:	901
Percentage of local children attending South Leeds High School:	41%

**Table 4: GCSE Achievement (5 A\*-C GCSE grades) 2007**

	5 A* -C	5 A* - C Incl Eng & Maths
South Leeds High School	34%	7%
West Wedge high schools	52%	33%
City Average	56%	42%
National Average	62%	47%

**Table 5 History Of Leeds City Council decisions**

**October 2007:** Leeds City Council Executive Board considered a paper on the future of academies in Leeds, and authorised exploratory discussions with the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and a sponsor to develop an academy to replace South Leeds High School and serve the Beeston and Holbeck, City and Hunslet, and Middleton Park wards of inner south Leeds.

**July 2008:** Leeds City Council executive board considered a formal Expression of Interest for an academy to replace South Leeds High School, with Schools Partnership Trust as the lead sponsor, with support from both of the universities in Leeds. They agreed there was sufficient merit in the proposal to undertake a more detailed feasibility and consultation process. This public consultation forms part of that process.

Minutes of these meetings can be found on the Leeds City Council website at

<http://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.asp?ID=102&J=2&iccnavid=100004|200033|10058>



## **FUTURE SECONDARY SCHOOL PROVISION PROPOSAL FOR SOUTH LEEDS HIGH SCHOOL**

### **PUBLIC CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM**

*Please read the consultation document on the proposal to establish a new academy on the South Leeds High School site to replace South Leeds High School and tell us what your views are. The questions on this form are provided to help you do so, but you do not have to respond to all of them. If you prefer not to use this form, you can also put your views in a letter. Letters and forms should be sent to the address at the bottom of this form. Extra copies of this booklet and response form are available from [www.educationleeds.co.uk/schoolorganisation](http://www.educationleeds.co.uk/schoolorganisation) You may also respond by e-mail to [educ.school.organisation@educationleeds.co.uk](mailto:educ.school.organisation@educationleeds.co.uk)*

All responses will be reported to a meeting of the Executive Board of Leeds City Council in December 2008. The last date for responses to be received is Friday 17 October 2008.

#### **QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE PROPOSALS**

**1. What are your views on the proposed closure of South Leeds High School?**

**2. What are your views on the proposed new academy? e.g. Do you have any views on the size? Do you have any views on the sponsor, or the details of their proposal?**

Please Turn Over

South Leeds High School

<b>3. What facilities and features do you think there should be in the new academy and how should the community be able to make use of these?</b>																				
<b>4a) Have you found this document useful?</b>																				
<b>4b) Have you found the consultation process useful?</b>																				
<b>5. Do you have any other comments or views?</b>																				
Your personal details (so that your response can be formally acknowledged):																				
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Address:																				
e-mail address:																				
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<b>Data Protection Act 1998</b> Under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998 we must inform you of the following. Education Leeds and The School Partnership Trust seek your views to help inform the decision on this proposal. Your personal information will be used only for this purpose, and may be shared with other agencies who are involved in the consultation, but only to address any issues you raise. If you do not wish to provide personal details your views will still be considered, but we will not be able to acknowledge your response personally.																				
Please send to: The Chief Executive, Education Leeds, FAO School Organisation Team, 9 <sup>th</sup> Floor West, Merrion House, 110 Merrion Centre, Leeds LS2 8DT																				