

# CONSULTATION DRAFT

## ACADEMIES IN LEEDS

...making a real difference to young people ...  
...whatever it takes!

### INTRODUCTION

Academies are rapidly becoming part of the learning landscape across the country and with the Government's commitment to establishing 400 Academies by 2010 Local Authorities are being encouraged to include Academies with their Building Schools for the Future proposals particularly to address issues of underachievement and where other more traditional approaches to school improvement have not had the impact or made sufficient progress.

### WHAT ARE ACADEMIES?

"Academies are all-ability independent state schools with a mission to transform education where the status-quo is simply not good enough".

DCSF Prospectus for Sponsors and Local Authorities.

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 ingredients of any successful school.

### ACADEMY SPONSORS

Increasingly Academy sponsors come from a wide range of backgrounds, including universities, philanthropists, businesses, the charitable sector, private schools, educational foundations, faith communities and trusts. Some are established educational providers and all of them bring a record of success in other enterprises which they are able to apply to their Academies in partnership with experienced school leaders and managers.

The idea is that sponsor will challenge the traditional thinking about how schools are run and what they should be like for their students. They aim to break with cultures of low aspiration and low expectations which condemn too many young people in too many communities to underachievement.

### ACADEMY FEDERATIONS

We have significant experience here in Leeds of successful schools working with schools facing the greatest challenges. These include formal federations and the Government is encouraging the most successful schools and Academies to work with other schools to change their culture, expectations and outcomes. Strong schools linking with schools facing additional challenges, sharing their best practice to help raise standards and secure improvement.

## **LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND ACADEMIES**

Increasingly the role of the Local Authority is changing from 'provider' of services and schools to the 'commissioner' of provision to serve the communities it serves. Academies are independent schools whose success the Government believes critically depends on the absolute responsibility given to their sponsors, their governing bodies and their principals. However, most Academies are jointly commissioned by the DCFS and the Local Authority on a partnership basis. The Academies are established through an agreement between the DCFS, the Local Authority and the sponsor on the size, specialism and age range of the Academy and agreements around essential elements such as admissions and special educational needs provision.

### **THE "MANCHESTER MODEL"**

*"The Academies will be at the heart of regenerating secondary education in the City"*  
Sir Richard Leese, Leader Manchester City Council

Local Authorities are increasingly becoming engaged in the strategic planning of Academies. The "Manchester Model" is based on an ambitious multi-Academy programme between Manchester City Council and the DCSF. This agreement will lead to the development of eight Academies, six geared to skill sectors which are priorities for the city. Manchester City Council has secured sponsors from these skill sectors and the Academies are intended to become "hubs" for its specialist centre of excellence. Manchester City Council is underwriting the sponsorship for the Academies and is establishing a city-wide 'Transforming Educational Outcomes Trust'.

The Government is keen to work with other local authorities who have similarly ambitious plans for transforming educational standards, improving progression rates to further and higher education and regenerating communities.

### **ACADEMY GOVERNANCE**

Local Authorities can act as co-sponsors of Academies but it is the responsibility of the lead sponsor, be they from the private sector, the charitable sponsor or the education sector, to appoint the majority of the governors. This is intended to provide clear responsibility and accountability for the ethos and leadership of the Academies.

Academy Governing Bodies are accountable to the Academy Trust set up by the sponsor which is accountable to the Secretary of State with whom it is bound by the terms of the formal funding agreement.

It is expected that they are relatively small 'professional' bodies with responsibility for:

- ◆ the appointment of the Principal;
- ◆ the employment of the Academy Staff;
- ◆ the employment and terms and conditions of the Academy staff.

- ◆ the administration of the Academy's finances;
- ◆ the approval of the curriculum and personnel policies and procedures;
- ◆ an admissions policy in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Practice on Admissions

## **ACADEMY BUILDINGS**

The Academy building programme is now an integral part of the Building Schools for the Future programme and involves a combination of new build projects and refurbishments.

A core element of the Government's vision for extended services is providing access for the community. Academies are expected to provide their facilities for the use of their communities and develop as extended services providers.

## **THE DAVID YOUNG COMMUNITY ACADEMY**

Education Leeds, on behalf of Leeds City Council, worked with the DCSF to commission the David Young Community Academy which opened in East Leeds in September 2006. The Academy is sponsored by the Church of England.

The David Young Community Academy is oversubscribed and its first year results show real progress working in one of the most challenging communities in Leeds. Education Leeds is working to develop a stronger relationship with the Academy and to use the developing leadership, curriculum and behavioural expertise within the Academy more widely in Leeds.

## **A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO ACADEMIES IN LEEDS**

We are exploring a cluster model for the development of further Academies here in Leeds. We aim to develop, with partners and stakeholders and our children and young people, the potential of establishing Academies in South Leeds, West Leeds and the Centre of Leeds to complement the existing David Young Community Academy in East Leeds. These Academies would work within area clusters and establish strong, dynamic partnerships with other local schools. The twelve central area schools will be encouraged to work together and be supported by the development of the Central Leeds School Improvement and Learning Alliance.

## **POLICIES AND PROTOCOLS**

We have been working with colleagues at the DCSF to develop and agree a framework within which any Academies could be developed. This includes collaborative approaches to:

- admissions;
- exclusions;
- 11- 16 provision;
- post-16 provision;

- locality working;
- partnership;
- school improvement.

We have agreed with the DCSF that any further Academy in Leeds will sign up to an agreed set of policies and protocols for these aspects of provision providing that their 'independent state school status' is not compromised. These policies and protocols will be included within Expressions of Interest and Memorandums of Understanding for any Academies which are establish here in Leeds.

### **THE CENTRAL LEEDS SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND LEARNING ALLIANCE**

These arrangements will be further strengthened for inner Leeds schools through the creation of a Central Leeds School Improvement and Learning Alliance that will complement existing arrangements and galvanise the support of key strategic partners for schools facing the greatest challenge. This is a hugely ambitious and challenging agenda and we are looking for partners who are equally ambitious for Leeds, driven and committed to make Leeds a Learning City and passionate, enthusiastic and determined to see our young people achieve the skills, the knowledge and understanding they need to bring economic and social success to our great city.

Education Leeds has secured the interest of several existing and potential partners for this agenda. We aim to develop partnership arrangement which will capture, nurture, engage and strategically direct programmes to transform attainment across the city of Leeds. We will pursue interest from the following partners.

- Leeds FE colleges;
- Leeds Metropolitan University;
- University of Leeds;
- Leeds Trinity and All Saints College;
- Leeds Primary Care Trust;
- BBC;
- RM;
- liC;
- E4L;
- Leeds Chamber of Commerce;
- business organisations;
- Yorkshire Forward.

It is envisaged that the 'Central Leeds School Improvement and Learning Alliance' would:

- sponsor and support educational programmes and initiatives;
- have a role in the governance of the proposed Post 14 Centres;
- play a major role in developing the Leeds post 14 Learning Strategy;
- create a framework to maximise funding streams to support learning;
- harness the talents of everyone who shares the vision for learning in Leeds;
- be a strong partner for schools and other providers across the whole of Leeds