



Directorate of Children's Services

Consultation on proposals to close Pensnett High School and The Crestwood School in order to establish a new Academy

'Putting children and young people first in Dudley'

November 2008

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2004-2005
Transforming the School Workforce

Consultation Document

Consultation on: Consultation on proposals to close Pensnett High School and The Crestwood School in order to establish a new Academy

Summary: This document is intended to support consultation on proposals to close Pensnett High School and The Crestwood School in order to establish a new Academy

Deadline: All responses must be received by **23 January 2009**

Consultees:

- Pensnett High School pupils
- The Crestwood School pupils
- Pensnett High School staff
- The Crestwood School staff
- Parents / carers of Pensnett High School
- Parents / carers of The Crestwood School
- Governors of Pensnett High School
- Governors of The Crestwood School
- Black Country Chamber of Commerce
- Black Country Connexions
- Black Country Learning and Skills Council
- Centre for Equality & Diversity
- Chairs of Governors
- Children's Centres
- Children's Trust Executive Board
- Community Centres
- Community Forums / Groups
- Councillors
- Directorate Staff
- DOSTI
- Dudley Association of Governing Bodies
- Dudley Borough Churches Forum
- Dudley Children's Fund NCH
- Dudley Community Partnership
- Dudley Council Directorates – Corporate Board
- Dudley Council for Voluntary Services
- Dudley Group of Hospitals
- Dudley Muslim Association
- Dudley Parent Partnership
- Dudley Primary Care Trust
- Dudley Safeguarding Children's Board
- Education Business Partnership
- Further Education Colleges
- Headteachers
- Kashmiri Pakistani Professionals Forum

Libraries
Local Admissions Forum
Members of Parliament
Neighbouring Local Authorities Directors of Children's Services
Roman Catholic Diocesan Schools Commission
Select Committee for Children's Services
Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education
Unions and Professional Associations
West Midlands Children's Education Services for Travelling
Children (WMCESTC)
West Midlands Police
Worcester Diocesan Board of Education

Public Access Consultations, plans and policies will be published as follows:

Public Libraries
Dudley MBC website www.dudley.gov.uk
Westox House

Responses to: Laura Ferrington
Executive Support Team Manager
Directorate of Children's Services
Westox House
1 Trinity Road
Dudley
DY1 1JQ
director.children@dudley.gov.uk

All responses may be published. A **large print version**, and translation into other languages is available on request to the above address.



John Freeman
Director of Children's Services

Consultation on proposals to close Pensnett High School and The Crestwood School in order to establish a new Academy.

1. Introduction

This consultation is to seek views on the proposal to close Pensnett High School and The Crestwood School on 31 August 2009 in order to establish a new Academy on 1 September 2009.

2. The Proposal

The proposal is for the closure of Pensnett High School and The Crestwood School so that an Academy, initially based on two sites, but eventually reverting to one, can open in September 2009 for students aged 11-19 years old. This publication provides you with the latest available information on the proposal that will shape the future of education in your local community.

The proposed Academy would be a new school and would initially be based on two sites. It will build on the strengths of the two predecessor schools to offer the highest quality educational provision to local students, their families and the community. By 2012/13 the Academy will be on one site and will be in a mixture of new and refurbished buildings. The Academy will be part of and work closely with local Dudley schools. The number on roll that is proposed for the Academy is 1150 11 - 19 year old students with 900 11-16 places and 250 post-16 places. There will be 6 forms of entry with a planned admission number of 180. This reduction of places would begin to address the projected long term downward trend of pupil numbers in Dudley.

3. What are Academies?

Academies are a new type of state school that use the added expertise of sponsors, from business, the education and faith sectors, or charities to help improve secondary education.

In Dudley we are delighted to have secured sponsorship from Oasis Community Learning, a charity with education at the heart of its vision.

The proposed new academy would feature cutting edge design and the latest facilities. These facilities would also be available for other schools to use and for the wider community.

Academies are different to other schools in some ways. For example:

- Staff are employed directly by the Academy Sponsor instead of being employed by the Council;
- They receive their money directly from the Government, not via the Council.

However, in Dudley our proposed academies would operate in much the same way as our other schools and would adhere to most of the key principles that apply to all Dudley's schools.

- Once they are up and running they will not get any more money per pupil from the Government than any other Dudley school;
- They are committed to the core of the National Curriculum; English, Maths, Science and Information Communication Technology (ICT);
- They will accept children of all abilities, including those with special educational needs;
- There will be no faith basis for admissions to the Academy;
- Staff at academies in Dudley will continue to be paid under national conditions of service;
- All staff will be recruited openly and according to the same criteria and equal opportunities policies as Dudley Council;
- Proposed admissions arrangements will be in line with admissions arrangements for all other Dudley community schools.

4. Why has Dudley Council selected Oasis Community Learning to sponsor this Academy?

Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council is pleased to have selected Oasis Community Learning as the sponsor for the proposed Academy and a second Academy being proposed in the Borough.

The sponsor plays a vital role in developing the educational environment for students and Oasis has been chosen because of their commitment to local communities, their

considerable experience of establishing Academies across the country, and the unique opportunity to be part of a global movement.

Oasis Community Learning opened its first three Academies in September 2007 in Enfield, Immingham and Grimsby. Six more opened in September 2008; two in Bristol, two in Southampton, one in Coulsdon and one in Salford. Further projects are planned for Enfield and Oldham.

Oasis will bring the wider cost and resource benefits of its growing group of Academies to this proposed Dudley Academy, thus enhancing the breadth of support to both its teaching and non-teaching staff.

5. Continuity with the predecessor school

Oasis will work closely with the Headteachers, and Chairs of Governors in the implementation of the Academy as it seeks to build on the predecessor school's current strengths and areas of expertise.

Oasis propose to deliver an Academy which will work in conjunction with the local family of schools and which has strong working links with other educational institutions, statutory and voluntary bodies.

6. Education for Life

Oasis's aim is to deliver world-class, 21st century secondary education for the young people of Dudley as well as to provide lifelong learning opportunities, so creating a centre of excellence of which the entire community will be proud. In order to achieve these goals Oasis commits to:

- Working with the current staff, students and governing bodies of Pensnett High School and The Crestwood School in order to benefit from their accumulated wisdom, professional expertise and shared historical knowledge;
- Using appropriate assessment strategies and methods to identify and foster individual creativity, qualities and skills
- Placing an emphasis on 'education for life'. Oasis's goal is for all students to leave the Dudley Academy emotionally mature, articulate and confident in their own unique abilities and skills;
- Placing a strong emphasis on the use of technology to support and enhance learning. For instance, the Academy intranet will ensure that the curriculum,

support materials, individual student's work and assessments will be available anywhere, anytime to both the students and their parents/carers. This system will also be able to track progress and set individual targets for students. Video conferencing facilities will be employed for the purpose of developing working relationships with other Academies, other local schools, colleges and workplace environments.

7. Academy Governance

The Academy in Dudley will be part of the Oasis family of Academies where an overall governing body; The Oasis Community Learning Executive, reporting to the Board, has overall responsibility for the Oasis Academies. Each Academy has its own Academy Council responsible for supporting the Principal and Academy Leadership Team. The Academy Council will be made up of representatives from the Local Authority, Oasis Community Learning, parents / carers and staff, alongside other representatives from the local community or local businesses appointed for their skills, abilities and local knowledge. In the first year of opening, two transition governors from each of the predecessor schools will be appointed to ensure continuity of knowledge.

8. The Academy Specialism

In 2008, 38% of the Crestwood students achieved 5 A*-C GCSE passes with English and Mathematics included. At Pensnett School, 10% of the students achieved 5 A*-C GCSE passes with English and Mathematics included.

The specialisms proposed for the Academy are English and Global Communication. These specialisms will have a general impact on raising standards, since English supports teaching and learning across the whole curriculum and an emphasis on English will provide a foundation for enabling students to achieve 5 A*-Cs at GCSE including the core subjects. This focus will also provide a strong basis for high level of attainment in the new 14 – 19 Diploma lines which have English as a generic learning element assisting students' progress from school into worthwhile employment and / or higher education. Learning is supported by excellent ICT helping to support individual learning through the development of a virtual learning environment (VLE). Best practice and best resources would be shared across our Oasis Academies and where possible with other local schools.

The Academy fully intends to forge links with both local and national employers to enhance students' 'education for life'. In partnership with other local schools, as well as other Oasis Academies, the Oasis Academy would offer a unique resource to the local community. The proposed specialisms also complement the emerging pattern of specialisms offered in other Dudley secondary schools.

9. The Academy Name

The name that has been agreed for the proposed Academy is Oasis Academy Bromley Bridge.

10. Stakeholders voice in the Academy

A commitment to gathering and using the views of learners, parents / carers and other stakeholders will be given a high priority during the feasibility stage. In order to further develop the new Academy, Oasis will hold sessions with all staff and students in the feasibility phase, followed by other events for parents/carers and other stakeholders to explore and develop shared views, expectations and plans for the Academy.

11. Buildings

The planned opening date in the existing buildings is September 2009 and the completed remodel / rebuild is planned for 2012/13. Stakeholders from both predecessor schools will be able to contribute to work on the development of the design.

In addition to funding the new buildings, the Government provides additional “start-up” funding for the Academy to ensure that it is prepared from the outset to deliver the curriculum as outlined in the Education Brief.

12. The process of becoming an Academy

To date, the Council and Oasis have completed an Expression of Interest document that provides an overview of the proposals for Pensnett and Crestwood Schools. The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) has agreed for the development of the proposals to enter the next phase which includes wide public consultation with staff, governors, parents/carers, students, the local communities, nearby schools, local councils and other interested parties.

13. Frequently asked questions

Why Pensnett and Crestwood Schools?

The community, students, parents/carers and staff deserve to have an outstanding school with good facilities. Dudley Council, the Governing Bodies and the Sponsor are committed to bringing about a significant improvement for the whole community.

If the Academy option does not go ahead, the schools would continue to be maintained by the Council and, along with other schools, would have to await the release of 'Building Schools for the Future' funds before substantial upgrading of the facilities could take place. Pupil numbers are falling throughout the borough and not becoming an Academy may leave Pensnett High School vulnerable to sustainability problems.

Why should an Academy replace a current school?

Academies bring a distinctive approach to school leadership drawing on the skills of sponsors and other supporters. They are all-ability schools supported by the Local Authority and sponsored by business, faith or voluntary groups working in innovative partnerships with central Government and local education partners. The Department for Children, Schools and Families meets the capital and running costs for an Academy in full, as a part of an overall strategy to raise standards beyond the improvements already made by the predecessor school.

What would the school closure mean for students?

All current students attending Pensnett and Crestwood schools who want to attend the Academy would automatically be given a place, including those Year 6 children who have been offered admission to the school for September 2009. The transition to a new Academy would be carefully planned to ensure that all students continued to receive the highest quality of education and minimise as far as possible any disruption.

What would the school closure mean for staff?

Regulations on the safeguarding of employment rights apply to staff employed at schools facing closure. Staff in place immediately prior to the opening of an Academy would have the right to transfer to the Academy under existing terms and conditions.

How will an Academy improve education for the children it serves?

The proposed Academy will be dedicated to developing the full potential of every child. Teaching will therefore be structured to ensure that all students master the essential knowledge and skills in Literacy and Mathematics so that they can achieve success across the full breadth of the Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 curriculum, and beyond. An Academy will also provide a curriculum designed to suit each young person's needs.

Considerable capital investment is available if the feasibility projects are concluded successfully, in order to improve dramatically the quality of buildings and facilities on the new site. This will improve greatly the opportunities and learning environments available.

What will the Academy do to integrate the children from the two different schools?

Oasis will devise a programme of integration and communication activity for the students to achieve a smooth and effective transition from the closing of the Pensnett and Crestwood Schools to the opening of the proposed Oasis Academy.

Will students have to buy new school uniform?

There will be a new school uniform to suit the new style and ethos of the Academy. Students will have the opportunity to put forward their ideas on the final uniform such as colour. All students currently attending Pensnett and Crestwood Schools will receive new uniforms at no cost to their parents / carers.

Where can I find further information?

Further information about Academies can be obtained from the following websites:

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/academies

www.partnershipsforschools.org.uk

www.oasisuk.org

How do I respond?

The Council would like to hear your comments on the proposal to close Pensnett High School and The Crestwood School on 31 August 2009, in order to establish a new Academy on 1 September 2009.

Views can be submitted in a variety of forms. Views expressed at meetings, by letter and e-mail will be recorded. All responses will be retained and be available as a public record.

All responses need to reach the Council by **17:00 on Friday 23rd January 2009**

Please send responses to:

CONSULTATION RESPONSES
Executive Support Team
Directorate of Children's Services
Westox House
1 Trinity Road
Dudley
DY1 1JQ
director.children@dudley.gov.uk

What happens next?

After the consultation all feedback received will be presented to the Council's Cabinet who will decide if it is appropriate to issue School Closure notices. If this happens, a statutory notice will be published for a further six week period where written comments can be made directly to Dudley Council.

At the end of this second statutory consultation period a decision will be made whether to confirm the closure notice and a formal letter issued. A funding agreement is also signed by the Sponsors with the Department for Children, Schools and Families which confirms the opening of the new Academy. The Funding Agreement is the document which legally establishes the Academy and sets out the governance arrangements and key policies such as admissions and exclusions.

Comments on the Consultation on proposals to close Pensnett High School and The Crestwood School in order to establish a new Academy

Please return this form to:

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

**Executive Support Team
Westox House
1 Trinity Road
Dudley
West Midlands DY1 1JQ**

Email: director.children@dudley.gov.uk

Fax: 01384 814202

Name: **Organisation:**

Contact email address

Are you in favour of closing Pensnett High School and The Crestwood School to establish an Academy?

Yes

No

Comments

Comments on the Consultation on proposals to close Pensnett High School and The Crestwood School in order to establish a new Academy

Do you have any further comments regarding this proposal?

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Equality monitoring of DMBC consultations

The information you give on this form will be used to enable Dudley Council to assess the impact of its policies on all sections of the community.

The details you provide will be treated confidentially and will be used to ensure that the views of a wide range of groups and individuals are included in the consultation process and given the opportunity to shape Council policies.

If you are completing this form on behalf of an organisation please try to answer the questions in general terms about the people your organisation represents.

1. Please indicate whether you are responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation:

2. I would describe my ethnic group, or the ethnic group/s represented by my organisation as:

ASIAN OR ASIAN BRITISH

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi | <input type="checkbox"/> Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Any Other Asian background | | |

BLACK OR BLACK BRITISH

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> African | <input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> Any Other Black Background |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|

CHINESE OR OTHER

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|

MIXED

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian & White | <input type="checkbox"/> Black African & White | <input type="checkbox"/> Black Caribbean & White |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Any Other Mixed background | | |

WHITE

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> British | <input type="checkbox"/> Irish | <input type="checkbox"/> Any Other White Background |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|

RANGE OF ETHNICITIES

<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
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3. I would describe my religion/belief or the religion/beliefs of the people represented by my organisation as:

<input type="checkbox"/> Buddhist	<input type="checkbox"/> No Religion
<input type="checkbox"/> Christian	<input type="checkbox"/> Sikh
<input type="checkbox"/> Hindu	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
<input type="checkbox"/> Jewish	<input type="checkbox"/> A range of religions/beliefs
<input type="checkbox"/> Muslim	<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown

4. My gender or the gender of the people my organisation represents is:

<input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> Male
<input type="checkbox"/> Mixed	

5. My age or the age range of the people my organisation represents is:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Under 5 years old	<input type="checkbox"/>	26 – 35 years old
<input type="checkbox"/>	5 – 10 years old	<input type="checkbox"/>	36 – 45 years old
<input type="checkbox"/>	11 – 16 years old	<input type="checkbox"/>	46 – 55 years old
<input type="checkbox"/>	17 – 19 years old	<input type="checkbox"/>	Over 56 years old
<input type="checkbox"/>	20 – 25 years old	<input type="checkbox"/>	A range of ages

6. I consider myself or many of the people my organisation represents to be:

<input type="checkbox"/> Disabled	<input type="checkbox"/> Not disabled
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Note:

The Disability Discrimination Act, 1995 defines a “disabled person” as having “a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities”.

Thank you for completing this form.

Please return this form with any consultation response to:

CONSULTATION RESPONSES - Executive Support Team
Directorate of Children’s Services, Westox House, 1 Trinity Road, Dudley, DY1 1JQ
director.children@dudley.gov.uk