

## MATTERS TO BE SPECIFIED IN SECTION 15 PROPOSALS TO DISCONTINUE A SCHOOL

### **Extract of Schedule 4 to The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools)(England) Regulations 2007 (as amended):**

#### **Contact details**

1. The name of the LA or governing body publishing the proposals, and a contact address, and the name of the school it is proposed that should be discontinued.

Cheshire East Borough Council  
Westfields  
Middlewich Road  
Sandbach  
CW11 1HZ

The school proposed for closure is Macclesfield High School, Park Lane,  
Macclesfield SK11 8JR

#### **Implementation**

2. The date when it is planned that the proposals will be implemented, or, where the proposals are to be implemented in stages, information about each stage and the date on which each stage is planned to be implemented.

31 August 2011.

#### **Consultation**

3. A statement to the effect that all applicable statutory requirements to consult in relation to the proposals were complied with.

In accordance with section 16 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 Cheshire East Council has consulted interested parties on its proposal to close Macclesfield High School on 31 August 2011. Consultation was implemented in accordance with the guidance issued by the Secretary Of State between 15 November 2010 and 14 January 2011.

4. Evidence of the consultation before the proposals were published including:

- a) a list of persons and/or parties who were consulted;
- b) minutes of all public consultation meetings;
- c) the views of the persons consulted;and

- d) copies of all consultation documents and a statement of how these were made available.

Formal consultation on the proposed closure of Macclesfield High School commenced on 15 November 2010 and concluded on 14 January 2011.

Appendix 1 contains the list of persons and parties who were consulted, together with information about how consultation has been implemented and the outcomes from this process.

In order to facilitate feedback on the proposal, a formal document was produced (Appendix 2) detailing the background to the proposal and the statutory consultation process, with information on how feedback can be provided. A feedback form was included with this document together with a list of 'Frequently Asked Questions' (Appendix 3). An electronic form was also made available online to facilitate feedback and interested parties could provide feedback orally by telephoning the Council.

In addition; and to ensure that all interested parties had the opportunity to feedback their views in person or to raise any concerns that they may have with officers of the Local Authority, two 'drop in' style consultation events were held in Macclesfield in December at the start of the consultation period. Hard copies of the consultation document, FAQs and feedback forms were provided at these events. The events were communicated to all key stakeholders, as listed in Appendix 3 and information about the events was also published on the Council's website.

At the public consultation "drop in" events Local Authority officers met with attendees face to face to facilitate feedback on the proposal. Another officer had the role of scribe to record the comments received. All records were collated and made available to Elected Members. Because of the format adopted there are no formal minutes of these events.

To consult with pupils at the school proposed for closure, arrangements were made with Macclesfield High School to facilitate a presentation to pupils on the proposal and the completion of feedback forms to capture their views.

Feedback logs are attached as Appendices 4 and 5.

Also attached as appendices are the responses of key consultees including the Macclesfield High School Governing Body (Appendix 6); Acting Executive Headteacher, Macclesfield High School (Appendix 7); David Rutley, MP for Macclesfield (Appendix 8), Shrewsbury Diocese (Appendix 9) and the neighbouring school All Hallows Catholic College (Appendix 10).

The consultation documents were published on the Council's website at [www.cheshireeast.gov.uk](http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk) throughout the process and were made available

in hard copy on request. The Council's website has been regularly updated to provide full details about the process and information about this process has been communicated in writing (including e-mail) to all key stakeholders as listed in the document attached as Appendix 1. A press release was issued to inform the wider community, together with a local radio 'phone in' involving Hilda Gaddum, the Council's Cabinet Member for Children and Families Services.

Many of the questions and issues raised during consultation were regarding the proposed Academy. Although not a related proposal in legal terms, the Local Authority consultation has provided an opportunity for consultees to obtain information about the proposal by Macclesfield College to establish an Academy in the event that a final decision is made to close the high school. Feedback received by the Local Authority on the College's proposal to establish an Academy has been collated and forwarded to the College to inform its own consultation process in order that views expressed by interested parties can be taken into account in developing proposals further.

The Academy sponsor (Macclesfield College) held a 'drop in' style event on 12 January to engage with the community and facilitate consultation with stakeholders as to the ethos, character and operation of the potential new Academy. Local Authority officers attended to provide information on the Council's school closure proposal and to provide a final opportunity for interested parties to feedback their views 'face-to-face' before the Local Authority's consultation closing date of 14 January. Feedback received was incorporated into the feedback log attached as an appendix.

## **Objectives**

5. The objectives of the proposal.

It is intended to close Macclesfield High School on 31 August 2011 to enable the establishment of a 600 place Academy (11-16 year olds) to open on 1 September 2011 in the same buildings and on the same site.

The Local Authority in proposing the closure considers that Macclesfield College would be a strong educational sponsor with the appropriate skills and resources to support the school in the longer term and to facilitate transformational change through the development of new approaches to teaching and learning in order to raise standards. Macclesfield College already enjoys close links with the High School thanks to their shared site on the Learning Zone and joint management of the LZ6 Sixth Form College. The proposed Academy would provide young people with clear progression routes from age 11 to GCSEs through to A Levels or vocational qualifications and on to higher education degrees, on one modern 11-18 campus. The successful delivery of statutory education and the existing post 16 offer, including A levels and vocational qualifications, would continue to be delivered on the existing site without any interruption. The proposed timescale for implementation of 1 September 2011 would reduce the period of uncertainty for all of those potentially affected by this proposal.

There are four mainstream secondary schools in Macclesfield, each providing education aged 11 to 18. The current number of mainstream places across the town, including the schools' sixth form provision is 4766. An analysis of the latest data shows that the number of pupils attending these schools has fallen over the past years from 4981 pupils in 2002 to 4571 in October 2010 (taken from the Autumn Term School Census Returns). This reduction is forecast to fall again by September 2017 to 4380 resulting in an 8% surplus forecast for the town. The pattern of parental preference in the Macclesfield area needs to be factored into this analysis in that the majority of surplus places are at Macclesfield High School. Whilst the number of pupils attending Macclesfield High School in October 2010 of 745 produces a surplus for the school of 26%, the number on roll is forecast to fall further to 708 by 2017, which if realised would result in 30% surplus places at the school. Taking into account the pattern of parental preference, further analysis shows that this surplus figure could be much greater if no action is taken with a potential surplus at Macclesfield High School of up to 67% by 2017 if the other three mainstream schools continue to receive admissions in line with their published admission numbers.

Looking at the forecasts for the five year groups Y7-11 (11-16 year olds), the projections show that at October 2010 there were 3717 pupils on roll at the four high schools and by 2017 it is forecast that this will continue to fall to 3589. In order to facilitate an average of between a minimum of 5% and a maximum of 10% surplus across these four mainstream high schools to allow for movement and opportunities for the free exercise of parental choice, the Local Authority would need to provide approximately 3969 places. This is based on an average across the years 2010-2017. In order to achieve this it is necessary to remove approximately 312 places. It is therefore felt that the establishment of a 600 place Academy replacing the 900 places currently available at Macclesfield High School utilising the existing school site would reduce the level of surplus places that currently exists whilst retaining a non-faith provision on the south of the town. This proposal would minimise the disruption for pupils and would allow for expansion in future years if demand for places increases.

The three year trend in the academic standards at Macclesfield High School, following its creation as a new secondary school in September 2007, has been downward. This trend culminated in the school only just achieving above the 30% national baseline in terms of 5+ A\*- C including English and Maths (actual result 31%) in Summer 2009. The resulting decision by the Local Authority and the DFE to include the school within the National Challenge programme was a vital and necessary step to significantly accelerate improvements in pupil attainment. Leadership and Management support from Tytherington High School contributed to the school not being placed in special measures following an OfSTED Inspection in February 2010. The school achieved its National Challenge Target in summer 2010 examinations and the HMI monitoring visit in September 2010 judged the school to be making good progress.

The level and range of interventions have been significant and all have contributed to the improvements in attainment as seen in the Summer 2010. There has been a positive rise in the 5+A\*-C including English & Maths rate up to 42% (11% rise) which has brought improved confidence in the school and the local community to deliver high quality learning. Whilst these improvements need to be celebrated, there is still a considerable amount of further work to be undertaken throughout the school to fully embed the progress seen and create a consistent and sustainable rate of school improvement in terms of the costs of external interventions into the school during 2009-10 and 2010-11.

Although the school has made progress in improving the education offered to its students, the Council believes that a radical change in structure is needed to sustain this improvement and to reverse the trend of declining student numbers. The view of the Local Authority is that further sustainable improvement would be best delivered with external support and an appropriate sponsor.

The Expression of Interest submitted by Macclesfield College, Academy sponsor to the Secretary of State received ministerial approval on 7 February (Attached as Appendix 11)

The Sponsor's vision for the Academy is to become an outstanding school in which every student is happy and strives to achieve his/her full potential. A prime responsibility of the Headteacher will be to establish a new culture and ethos for the Academy with a focus on high expectations of staff and students to raise aspirations, promote achievement and enhance self-esteem. A Statement of Vision, Values and Ethos has already been developed and sets out the following values:

- promoting and achieving excellence
- learning is our first priority: students' interests always come first
- actively promoting equality and diversity
- maintaining high standards of ethics and behaviour
- encouraging innovation and development in staff and students
- acknowledging and using the power of positive thought
- working in partnership: promoting effective teamwork and collaborating with partner primary schools.

### **Standards and Diversity**

6. A statement and supporting evidence indicating how the proposals will impact on the standards, diversity and quality of education in the area.

Macclesfield College, sponsor of the proposed Academy has identified key priorities for addressing standards at the school, with the first priority being to appoint a high quality, inspirational Headteacher to lead the Academy. A new Academy staffing structure will be agreed to ensure an effective senior leadership team is established as early as possible.

As sponsor, Macclesfield College will ensure a lean and efficient staffing structure is established, in which all staff are fully deployed and contracts fully utilised. The College has significant successful experience of running an effective and efficient educational business.

**Raise standards across all subjects so that attainment rises and students make more rapid progress**

Following the improved rates of attainment achieved by the school last summer, there is strong evidence from performance tracking that the current Year 11 and Year 10 cohorts are showing positive projections in terms of 5+A\*-C including English and maths. The latest evidence, as of January 2010, is that 48% of the current Year 11 are projected to achieve the 5 +A\*- C criteria, which is in line with Fischer Family Trust (FFT) 'D' predictions. In addition, there are positive projections at Key Stage 3 in terms of pupils who started Year 7 below level 4 in terms of their accelerated progress.

The curriculum, as from September, will be revised to create a better match with the needs of learners and to reflect national educational priorities. From Year 7 the Academy will focus upon developing literacy, numeracy and personal learning and thinking skills which underpin all learning. Where reading ages are low on entry the RML scheme will be used to ensure rapid progress. In response to the changing national requirements, a modern language will be available throughout the school. Every student will have an individual learning plan with clear short term and long term targets which will be shared with parents. Regular individual progress reviews will be used to ensure students are on track to achieve their targets. This will enable early intervention where necessary. Setting will be adopted as the norm.

Data analysis shows there is serious scope for improvement in all subjects. To ensure good results are achieved by the end of the first year, challenging targets will be set to raise performance at KS4 and improve progress at KS3. In particular:

- raising percentage of students gaining 5 GCSEs at A\* to C, including English and Maths
- raising performance in English, Maths and Science, including the percentage of students making three levels of progress in English and Maths
- improving value added indicators especially in terms of national benchmarking requirements and expected rates of student progress

**Improve the quality of teaching and learning to improve engagement, interest and behaviour for learning**

A programme of professional development prior to the opening of the Academy will expose staff to outstanding practice and develop a shared understanding of what is required. The programme will continue during the first year to ensure consistent high quality lessons designed to engage,

stretch and challenge students, raise achievement and improve behaviour. Trained subject learning coaches and Advanced Skills Teachers will provide peer support. A rigorous quality assurance framework will be implemented including:

- regular classroom observations by trained observers with detailed individual feedback and targeted professional development for teachers to bring about rapid improvement
- provision of an on-line good practice marketplace for teaching and learning
- rigorous performance management of Department Heads and teachers with challenging goals and targets.

### **Improve student attendance and reduce persistent absence**

Attendance will be improved through an absence monitoring strategy whereby a small team of support staff immediately follow up registered absences by text or phone to students' homes. Strategies introduced in the predecessor school to address behavioural problems in lower teaching sets and to tackle persistent absence in a small minority of students will be evaluated and taken forward or re-vamped as appropriate in advance of opening. The steps set out above to improve teaching and learning and to raise standards will encourage attendance. In addition an After School Club will be introduced to help all students develop life skills and to raise aspirations. This will provide a choice of workshops designed to make learning fun, while highlighting the relevance of core subjects and developing skills that might not be given full attention during school hours. For disengaged students the Club will form part of the strategy for re-engagement and will encourage them to stay in a safe environment after lessons. The Library will be open for extended hours. A holiday club will continue this work outside of school terms.

### **Ensure greater consistency and expectation across the school community to improve learning environment**

The steps taken by the leadership team to embed the new culture and ethos will achieve higher professional standards and ensure a clear and consistent approach. Following consultation, decisions will be taken on the Academy's uniform and dress code, and then regularly reinforced by all staff. Classrooms will be de-cluttered and requirements for the learning environment agreed and implemented. This approach will promote pride in the school and help raise student self-esteem.

## **Provision for 16-19 year olds**

7. Where the school proposed to be discontinued provides sixth form education, how the proposals will impact on:

- a) the educational or training achievements;
- b) participation in education or training; and
- c) the range of educational or training opportunities,

for 16-19 year olds in the area.

The Academy will be located within an educational campus (the Macclesfield Learning Zone) opened in September 2007 and shared with Macclesfield College (sponsor) and Park Lane Special School. The new campus includes specialist sixth form provision through the Learning Zone Sixth Form College (LZ6) which provides a full range of academic and applied learning courses for 16-19 year olds from Foundation Learning to Advanced level study. At present LZ6 provides the joint sixth form for Macclesfield College, Macclesfield High School and Park Lane Special School. This is a semi-formal arrangement underpinned by legal agreements but LZ6 is not a formal legal entity and the students are funded via Macclesfield High School if they are following an A level course or through Macclesfield College for applied learning courses. Nevertheless LZ6 is marketed separately and so Year 11 students from across East Cheshire and the surrounding areas of south Manchester and Derbyshire apply to study there post-16. This includes Year 11 students at Macclesfield High School.

When the 11-16 Academy opens on 1 September 2011 the Year 13 A level students will transfer to Macclesfield College's roll and all new A level students will similarly be placed on the College roll. This transfer has already been discussed with the Young People's Learning Agency who are making the necessary contractual arrangements for the transfer. Since students and their parents already regard themselves as students of LZ6 and are unaware of the separate funding streams that underpin the current arrangements, they will be unaffected by these legal changes. A levels will continue to be taught by Academy teachers, whose A level teaching hours will be purchased by the College.

The Macclesfield Learning Zone offers an unrivalled choice of opportunities for sixth form study. In addition to LZ6, ECAT (the European Centre for Aerospace Training) provides technical and occupational Engineering training for sixth formers and the main FE College offers occupational training in Professional Cookery, Hospitality, Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy for 16-19 year olds, plus specialised provision in Art and Design. On the Learning Zone campus Macclesfield College also offers Apprenticeships, and Foundation and Honours Degrees validated by Manchester Metropolitan University. Thus the Learning Zone provides young people with clear progression routes from age 11 to GCSEs in the Academy, through to A levels, vocational qualifications or an Apprenticeship, and on to Higher Education.



**Need for places**

8. A statement and supporting evidence about the need for places in the area including whether there is sufficient capacity to accommodate displaced pupils.

A decision to close Macclesfield High School will be conditional on the establishment of an Academy on the same site. The proposed Academy will be a co-educational, four forms of entry, 11-16 school with a planned admission number of 120 and a total population of 600. It is anticipated that, at the time of the proposed closure, the planned capacity of 600 places will be sufficient to accommodate all pupils currently on the roll of Macclesfield High School, together with the new intake for Year 7. In the event that the NOR at the start of the autumn term this year and in future years exceeds the 600 places available, transitional measures will be employed by the proposed Academy to ensure that the needs of all pupils currently attending Macclesfield High School and those offered places for the Year 7 intake are met.

Further evidence on pupil populations can be found in the attached Academy 'Expression of Interest' form (Appendix 11), which shows that currently the number on roll (NOR) for the academic year 2010-2011 is 745. This will roll forward for 2011-2012, i.e. without the current Y11 pupils and current sixth form pupils, and including the new intake for September into year 7 (87 pupils at 1 March), resulting in an anticipated NOR of 605 pupils (745-122-105+87). Assuming 120 pupils were admitted each year into Year 7, for future years the figures rolled forward would be:

| Academic Year  | 2011-12    | 2012-13    | 2013-14    | 2014-15    | 2015-16    | 2016-17    |
|----------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Anticipated Y7 | 87         | 120        | 120        | 120        | 120        | 120        |
| Y8             | 92         | 87         | 120        | 120        | 120        | 120        |
| Y9             | 137        | 92         | 87         | 120        | 120        | 120        |
| Y10            | 161        | 137        | 92         | 87         | 120        | 120        |
| Y11            | 128        | 161        | 137        | 92         | 87         | 120        |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>605</b> | <b>597</b> | <b>556</b> | <b>539</b> | <b>567</b> | <b>600</b> |

9. Where the school has a religious character, a statement about the impact of the proposed closure on the balance of denominational provision in the area and the impact on parental choice.

The school proposed for closure is a foundation school with no faith designation.

**Current School Information**

10. Information as to the numbers, age range, sex and special educational needs of pupils (distinguishing between boarding and day pupils) for whom provision is made at the school.

Macclesfield High School is a co-educational 11-18 foundation school with a published admission number of 180. The sixth form provision is delivered on

the LZ6 site, which facilitates joint sixth form education for Macclesfield College, Macclesfield High School and Park Lane Special School. This is a semi-formal arrangement underpinned by legal agreements but LZ6 is not a formal legal entity. The students are funded via Macclesfield High School if they are following an A level course or through Macclesfield College for applied learning courses. The number of mainstream pupils in the school in 2010 with Statements of Special Educational Needs was 4.6%. This school does not have provision specifically reserved for pupils with special educational needs.

Data referred to here is included in the attached Expression of Interest (Appendix 11)

### **Displaced Pupils**

11. Details of the schools or FE colleges which pupils at the school for whom provision is to be discontinued will be offered places, including:

- a) any interim arrangements;
- b) where the school included provision that is recognised by the LA as reserved for children with special educational needs, the alternative provision to be made for pupils in the school's reserved provision; and
- c) in the case of special schools, alternative provision made by LAs other than the authority which maintains the school.

All children on the roll of Macclesfield High School at the date of closure will automatically transfer to the new Academy, unless they choose to move to another school which has places available:

For pupils in Y7 to Y11, future provision will be continued through the new 11-16 Academy.

A level students will transfer to Macclesfield College's roll and all new A level students will similarly be placed on the College roll.

Macclesfield High School does not have provision specifically reserved for pupils with special educational needs.

12. Details of any other measures proposed to be taken to increase the number of school or FE college places available in consequence of the proposed discontinuance.

There are no other measures planned beyond the proposed 11-16, 600 place Academy. School place supply and demand will continue to be monitored by the Local Authority.

**Impact on the Community**

13. A statement and supporting evidence about the impact on the community and any measures proposed to mitigate any adverse impact.

The proposed closure of Macclesfield High School, conditional upon the establishment of the Academy, is intended to have a positive impact on the community by creating the opportunity for all-through provision on the Macclesfield Learning Zone site with sixth form provision that will go beyond the provision offered in a traditional 11 to 18 school and by retaining a non-denominational mainstream provision on the south side of the town and thereby maintaining diversity in provision and offering greater opportunities for maximising parental choice and satisfactory outcomes.

14. Details of extended services the school offered and what it is proposed for these services once the school has discontinued.

A condition of the Section 106 agreement for the Learning Zone site in relation to Macclesfield High School and Macclesfield College requires that the school site provides for community use. In the event that the Academy is established it is expected that any current provision will continue.

The accommodation leased by the tennis club and nursery provider on the site is to be retained by the Council and therefore provision will not be affected by this proposal.

**Travel**

15. Details of the length and journeys to alternative provision.

As educational provision will continue on the same site at the new Academy, there should be no change to pupils transport arrangements

16. The proposed arrangements for travel of displaced pupils to other schools including how they will help to work against increased car use.

As educational provision will continue on the same site at the new Academy, there should be no change to pupils transport arrangements

**Related Proposals**

17. A statement as to whether in the opinion of the LA or governing body, the proposals are related to any other proposals which may have been, are, or are about to be published.

The proposal to close Macclesfield High School is not related to any other proposal. However, It is proposed that the closure of Macclesfield High School should be approved to take effect only if by the date of closure an agreement has been made under section 482(1) of the Education Act 1996

for the establishment of an Academy to replace Macclesfield High School.

**Rural Primary Schools**

18. Where proposals relate to a rural primary school designated as such by an order made for the purposes of section 15, a statement that the LA or the governing body (as the case may be) considered:

- a) the likely effect of discontinuance of the school on the local community;
- b) the availability, and likely cost to the LA, of transport to other schools;
- c) any increase in the use of motor vehicles which is likely to result from the discontinuance of the school, and the likely effects of any such increase;
- and
- d) any alternatives to the discontinuance of the school,

as required by section 15(4)

Not applicable

**Maintained nursery schools**

19. Where proposals relate to the discontinuance of a maintained nursery school, a statement setting out:

- a) the consideration that has been given to developing the school into a children's centre and the grounds for not doing so;
- b) the LA's assessment of the quality and quantity of alternative provision compared to the school proposed to be discontinued and the proposed arrangements to ensure the expertise and specialism continues to be available; and
- c) the accessibility and convenience of replacement provision for local parents.

Not applicable

**Special educational provision**

20. Where existing provision that is recognised by the LA as reserved for pupils with special educational needs is being discontinued, a statement as to how the LA or the governing body believes the proposal is likely to lead to improvements in the standard, quality and/or range of the educational provision for these children.

Not applicable