

CABINET
24 NOVEMBER 2009

NEW SCHOOL UPDATES**Purpose of Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on progress with:
 - The Wellington Academy
 - The two Salisbury Academies: Salisbury High School and Laverstock (Wyvern, St Edmund's and St Joseph's)
 - Melksham Oak (the current George Ward School)

The Wellington Academy (TWA)

2. The former Castledown Foundation School opened as The Wellington Academy in September 2009 within the existing building. Developments are progressing very well. The academy opened with 636 students on roll, which includes 35 in the sixth form. This is a newly formed sixth form as Castledown had no provision for post 16 students. The numbers below show the confidence that parents and the community already have in the Academy. The maximum size Year 7 could have been was 180 pupils.

Current Numbers on Roll

Year 7	161
Year 8	118
Year 9	121
Year 10	105
Year 11	96
Year 12	35
Total	636

3. Quite a number of the former staff, including non-teaching members were assimilated into The Academy through the TUPE process. A number of new appointments have also been made to the structure of the academy. There are 25 new teaching posts that joined the 28 teachers who transferred and 26 new support staff who joined the 30 from the former Castledown. Therefore, 50% of the staff is new and the staff size has almost doubled.
4. Students enjoyed receiving the new uniform and wear it with pride. The newly created branding and image of the Academy have done a great deal to raise the aspirations for students within this community. The logo echoes the 8

aptitudes that lie within each child and upon which the Academy is based and indeed built:

Linguistic and Logical
Social and Personal
Cultural and Physical
Moral and Spiritual

5. The Local Authority handed over the former Castledown building to the care of the Academy Trust in good working order having spent £234K over the summer break making minor repairs and refurbishments (£90K of this came from Castledown's budget). This consisted of remedial work to the fire alarms, electrical distribution system and short term fabric repairs such as roof patches and window frames. This was all completed with a pragmatic view on the short term existence of most of the current buildings. In addition, an environmental grant from the DCSF for starting an academy added another £134k to decorate, make improvements to the reception area and erect new signage. These refurbishments were completed very quickly before the Academy opened in September and have had a huge impact on the feeling that things have and are changing for the better.
6. A turf cutting ceremony is planned for 5 November 2009 when Kier will start work on the new academy building.
7. The Leader of the Council, Chief Executive, Corporate Director for Children's Services and Service Director for Schools and Learning have all been invited to join the Academy for a tour in the autumn.
8. Following the opening of the Academy a number of colleagues met to discuss the lessons learned from the Local Authority's viewpoint. This has led to a number of recommendations for the future including, retaining the experience of the Wellington internal project team and securing continuity of finance and legal support. However, it should be remembered that this was the first national academy to be built within the new Partnership for Schools (PfS) Framework. All advisers from the DCSF and PfS were new to their roles and the Framework.
9. The Academy has been entered into the Partnership for Schools (PfS) competition to find the best academy project. The Wellington Academy has been shortlisted into the final four. Submissions will be judged on educational vision, transformational design, sustainability, extended services provision and stakeholder engagement. We await the results announced on 12 November 2009.
10. The academy will become one of our 4 hubs for Local Collaborative Partnerships. The local Extended Schools Co-ordinator is now based at the Academy. As the Academy has a languages specialism we included them in the recent exchange delegation that went to Nanhai in China where we have now linked more than 30 of our schools directly with schools in China. The next exchange of Chinese principals/officials arrives in Wiltshire on 23

November 2009. This is proving to be a very active and exciting link for our schools.

Salisbury High School

11. All signatures have now been received on the Expression of Interest (EOI) for Salisbury High School to proceed to become an Academy in existing building by September 2010. The lead sponsor is the Church of England Diocese of Salisbury with co sponsors of Bryanston Independent School from Blandford Forum, Dorset and Wiltshire Council. The EOI has been revised and strengthened and all sponsors have been working together on the vision statement to ensure it captures the transformational changes. This project will now enter the Feasibility Stage. An early task will be the consultation for the closure of Salisbury High School as this needs to be completed for the signing of the Funding Agreement. This will be swiftly followed by advertising for a Principal for the Academy.

Laverstock Schools

12. On the 15 July 2009 Cabinet approved the EOI for exploring the three secondary schools at Laverstock becoming one academy and the LA becoming a co-sponsor. Cabinet acknowledged the concerns of St Edmund's Girls School as a high performing school and also the concerns of St Joseph's School and asked officers to look at further creative ways of working with the schools to develop the proposals to include consideration of working on the basis of schools within schools and a federated approach. A further report was presented to Cabinet on 20 October 2009 outlining information on these two issues. This information can be seen in **Appendix 1 Schools within Schools** and **Appendix 2 Federation**.
13. The Local Authority is continuing to work with the DCSF, the Office of the Schools' Commissioner and all sponsors to either bring this project through to feasibility or modify proposals. This project is receiving support from the very highest levels in the Local Authority including the personal involvement of the Leader of the Council, Chief Executive and Councillors.
14. Since July 2009 there have been concerns from both St Edmund's and St Joseph's to the idea of a joint faith academy on the Laverstock site. However, Wyvern College has always been very committed to developing an academy. The Head of the Local Authority's secondary team has continued to meet regularly with the three headteachers to pursue discussions and work on ways the three schools could work together even better in partnership, with or without an academy. However, without the finance of approximately £30 million plus for an academy on this site it is difficult to see any future investment in the immediate future. Within the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme, Wiltshire is due to take part in 2016 at the earliest and using the BSF criteria the Laverstock schools have been prioritised in the final wave of each £80 million packaged programme of rebuild/refurbishment for Wiltshire's secondary schools. This would put the date for BSF at Laverstock at 2020 at the very earliest.

Melksham Oak

15. Work is continuing steadily with the new Melksham Oak building to replace George Ward School, Melksham. The building contract is running slightly behind schedule but the completion date is spring 2010. After this time the ICT equipment will be commissioned and installed and furniture and equipment fitted. The school are hoping to move into the new building in June after the examination period and when several groups are on work experience.
16. The existing George Ward site will become vacant in July 2010. Outline planning consent has already been received for the residential development of this site. Marketing will begin early next year and once a developer is secured possession of the site will be handed over as soon as possible. However, should this not prove possible then consideration is being given to demolishing the existing building to make the site safe and reduce the security costs.
17. Highways improvements are well underway at the new Melksham Oak site and will be completed by the end of December 2009. The scheme involves a reduction in the speed limit on the Devizes road from the current derestricted speed limit of 60mph to 30mph. The existing footpaths are being widened to 3m to act as a combined cycle and footpath. There are 3 new crossings being created to provide for the major direction of travel for students. The final part of the scheme will link the school with a planned residential development to the north of the site at a later stage.
18. Support from the Local Authority continues for George Ward School. The 2009 GCSE results were disappointing at 31% 5A* - C with English and mathematics. The school is now receiving extra financial support from the DCSF through the National Challenge programme.

Proposal

That Cabinet notes the report.

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Date of report November 2009.

Background Papers

- Human Scale Education's four occasional papers:
 - History, values and practice of Human Scale Education
 - Human Scale by Design
 - Human Scale Thinking at the Heart of a Large School
 - Size Matters – Transforming large urban schools into small learning communities
- DCSF Guidance on Federations

Appendix 1 Schools within Schools

Appendix 2 Federation

Appendix 3 The Federations Continuum

Schools within Schools

19. The Human Scale Schools Project (launched in 2006) and it is a partnership between Human Scale Education and the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. It has been exploring the importance of small learning communities and it is tracking 40 schools in the country and will report in 2010. One of Wiltshire's former secondary school head teachers, James Wetz works with Human Scale Education to provide research on the 'schools within schools' concept and he will be exploring this model for the Salisbury academies.
20. Schools within schools is a way of creating smaller learning communities within larger schools to foster positive outcomes of academic achievement and good student well-being. The model however does not necessarily imply separate schools or a federated approach. It is about teachers in larger secondary schools getting to know a smaller group of students really well rather than teaching in subject departments in excess of 300 plus students weekly and by knowing pupils better being able to value them as individuals and personalise the learning experiences for them. It is about planning to teach cross curricular work and not just work in separate department silos.
21. Human Scale learning communities enable the individual to strive for dignity and self-worth and to grow in a framework of caring for each other, their community and environment. The purpose of education for Human Scale Education is the development and growth of the whole person, creatively, emotionally, socially, morally, spiritually as well as intellectually. Human Scale Education has a vision of education that is grounded in a framework of values which informs how children and young people grow and develop as responsible human beings. These values are interconnected and make up the experience of educating on a human scale.
22. Human Scale Education has produced four occasional papers related to this work:
 - History, values and practice of Human Scale Education
 - Human Scale by Design
 - Human Scale Thinking at the Heart of a Large School
 - Size Matters – Transforming large urban schools into small learning communities
23. There are 7 Key practices within a Practical Manifesto for Education on a Human Scale:
 - i) Smaller learning communities

- ii) Small teams of teachers of between 4 and 6, learning mentors, learning support assistants who will see no more than 80-90 learners each week
- iii) A curriculum that is co-constructed and holistic
- iv) A timetable that is flexible with blocks of time which make provision for whole class teaching, small group teaching and individual learning. Teacher planning and evaluation timetabled.
- v) Pedagogy that is inquiry-based, experiential and supported by ICT. Assessment that involves the Assessment for Learning (AfL) approaches of dialogue, negotiation and peer review and develops forms of Authentic Assessment such as portfolio, exhibition and performance.
- vi) Student voice involving students in the learning arrangements and organisation of the school.
- vii) Genuine partnership with parents and the community.

A day was arranged in June 2009 for the staff from all four Salisbury schools exploring becoming an academy to work with James Wetz to explore the concept of schools within schools. The Laverstock schools would like to work further with James on these developments.

Federation

24. The term federation has a wide educational currency and is often used loosely to describe many different types of collaborative groups, partnerships and clusters from mergers to new schools. Many schools work closely together and develop joint working arrangements but there are only two forms of statutory arrangements, hard federation and soft federation (or collaboration). The main rationale for a federated school is to raise standards. **(See Appendix 3 for The Federations Continuum)**

Hard Federation

25. A hard federation is an arrangement under sections 24/25 of the Education Act 2002 where between two and five schools share a single governing body. Federations can involve a mix of primary and secondary schools. Within the federation each school retains its separate legal identity in respect of its budget, admissions and performance tables, and each is subject to a separate inspection by Ofsted.

Soft Federation or Collaboration

26. A soft federation, or collaboration, is a formal arrangement under section 26 of the Education Act 2002 where two or more governing bodies share elements of governance or establish a joint strategic committee with delegated powers. Under these arrangements each school retains its individual governing body. Soft federation can also involve a mix of primary and secondary schools and is based on the principle of allowing governing bodies and joint committees' freedom to determine their own arrangements within an agreed framework. It can cover a range of operational models from an over-arching committee delegated to take strategic decisions on behalf of two or more governing bodies, to setting up single-issue committees such as premises or curriculum committees.

Reasons for federating

27. A school may want to become part of a new or existing federation, for instance:
- if a foundation or trust runs other schools, another school may wish to federate with them;
 - if a school wishes to federate with an established and high performing school nearby whose experience they would benefit from;
 - if a school is to be a specialist school it may want to federate with another school with the same or a complementary specialism to share facilities/resources.


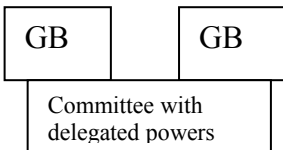
28. Working together through formal shared governance structures enables schools to raise standards, enhance provision by sharing resources, staff, expertise, and facilities and in the case of small rural schools ensures they remain at the heart of their communities. The variety of models offered by federation make it adaptable to suit individual contexts, and local needs and objectives.

Informal Arrangements between Schools

29. There are many less formal ways than federation in which schools can work together for the general good of their students. These might involve, for example:
- committees/groups of governors from one or more schools but without formal decision-making authority;
 - schools with joint management groups of head teachers;
 - the joint employment of finance and other support staff or specialist teachers such as for music or sport or Advanced Skills Teachers;
 - the sharing of facilities such as ICT suites or sports facilities;
 - joint working on curriculum issues or cooperation between primary and secondary schools.

A school's governing body may consider these arrangements rather than formal federation, providing it does not involve governing bodies carrying out their functions jointly or setting up formal joint committees. Discussions with the group of Laverstock schools are focusing on these federated approaches. The three schools have already agreed to students working together from across their schools each Friday. Further explorations will continue to be pursued.

The Federations Continuum

	<u>Federation</u> <u>(sometimes referred to as</u> <u>hard federation)</u>	<u>Collaborative Governance</u> <u>(sometimes referred to as</u> <u>soft federation)</u>
	All schools retain their separate identity and continue to receive individual schools budgets	
Diagram		
Governing Body	Single governing body shared by all schools.	Each school has its own governing body, but the federation has joint governance / strategic committee <u>with</u> delegated powers
Statutory	Yes. Hard governance federations are established using Federations Regulations made under Section 24 Education Act 2002	Yes. Soft governance federations established using Collaboration Regulations made under Section 26 Education Act 2002
Common goals	All schools share common goals through a Service Level Agreement (SLA) and protocol; having single governing body allows for efficient, streamlined decision making in all areas.	All schools share common goals through SLA and protocol; joint committee can make joint decisions in some areas, but not all.
Common Budget	No, but having a single governing body allows for prompt budgetary decisions on behalf of the group of schools.	No, but if the joint strategic committee has budgetary powers delegated to it, they can make prompt budgetary decisions for the group of schools.
Shared staff	Potential for common management and appointments which would be agreed in a simple, effective manner. Could choose to have single head teacher across group of schools.	Potential for common management positions and appointments, but need to have protocol / contract to underpin commitment to shared posts.