



Building Schools for the Future

BSF UPDATE FOR PARENTS & THE PUBLIC // Autumn 2008 / Winter 2009



Look inside for details on...

- // BSF bidding process
- // Learning platforms
- // New PFI schools
- // Roman Catholic school consultations



Salford's GCSE results shine yet again

Salford celebrated another bumper year for GCSEs with provisional results showing that almost 67% of pupils in the city have achieved five A*-C grades, an increase of eight percentage points on the previous year.

In 2007 Salford was the fourth most improved authority in the country for its GCSE results and 2008's results will also see the city shine in the performance tables.

For the first time, all Salford schools have at least 50 percent of pupils achieving at least five A*-C grades.

2008 results also show a notable improvement in the proportion of pupils achieving five A*-Cs including English and Maths. Over 40% achieved five top grades including the two key

subjects, more than three percent up on 2007 figures.

High achievers include St Patrick's Roman Catholic High School, with 100% of pupils getting at least five A*-C grades - a rare achievement for any school and more notably for one that is non-selective in its admissions.

Schools with the most improved results include Hope High School, which reopened as an academy in September, with 55% of pupils getting the top grades - an increase of 23 percentage points. Wentworth High School in Eccles saw an increase of 22 percentage points in the number of pupils getting five A*-Cs, with 65% getting five passes at the top grades.

CONTINUED OVERLEAF...

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE...

Four Salford schools that were given targets for improvement by the government showed they were well on the way, with All Hallows Roman Catholic, Harrop Fold, Hope and Wentworth high schools exceeding the target of at least 30% of pupils achieving five A*-Cs including English and Maths. Though these schools had three years to achieve their improvement targets, all four succeeded in just one year.

Said Councillor John Warmisham, Salford City Council's lead member for children's services: "Yet again Salford pupils have made us proud. Year on year their results are showing immense improvement and that is down to their hard work and that of their teachers, support staff and governors and the strong backing of their parents and carers.

A key priority for us is to help raise aspirations in the city and these results show that our young people are raising the bar in both achievement and ambition."



In 2007 Salford was the fourth most improved authority in the country for its GCSE results

Salford is working alongside other Greater Manchester authorities as part of the Greater Manchester Challenge - an initiative led by the Department for Children Schools and Families to raise pupils' achievement levels and aspirations even further.

The **BSF** bidding process

We are close to selecting the company to deliver the BSF programme in Salford.

The successful bidder will not just build the schools, but will run and maintain them for the next 25 years including maintenance, cleaning, catering and caretaking. In addition, they will also provide the ICT managed service (including the learning

Two new schools ready for September 2011

platform - see article on page 3). Overall this is worth more than £150 million and there is also the prospect that the successful bidder could deliver Wigan's BSF programme as well.

We are nearing the end of the competition process. The bidders will submit their final bids and we hope to announce the 'Preferred Bidder' early in

March 2009. There will still be more details to agree before the deal is finalised, hopefully early in the summer. However, the bidding process has been so detailed that the successful bidder will be able to apply for planning permission in spring 2009 and start building the first two schools in the summer. Schools will be open ready for September 2011.



Learning platforms: The future of learning

As well as new buildings, a key part of the Building Schools for the Future programme will be £17 million investment in Information Computer Technology (ICT).

This will provide a digital student-centred, learning environment. New developments in ICT and the internet have brought huge changes to the world and the way we work and learn and our BSF schools and students will fully benefit from these developments as well. The new schools will be fully equipped with the latest technology and web based systems, called 'learning platforms'.

The skills and experience employers look for have changed greatly in the last decade. Skills valued in the workplace include computer literacy, the ability to



New schools will be fully equipped with the latest technology

research and analyse data and to solve problems rather than the ability to accumulate knowledge, which is now easily accessible in the digital world. By using the learning platform, students will be automatically developing good computer skills but there are many benefits beyond this. Students will have access to the latest available curriculum resources and tools and will be able to access these, and all their work, at home, school, or anywhere else via the internet. Mobile technology is already allowing some of our students to work on the move, to make their own videos and animations and to make podcasts.

Students will be able to take much more responsibility for their own learning which has positive effects on motivation and achievement. Students will be able to work more at a pace that suits their individual learning needs and help schools to

move away from a 'one size fits all' approach, which is already declining. The improved ICT will also mean that the materials to support lessons will be more stimulating and relevant and could include videos and multi-media resources. For many children and young people this is about schools 'catching up' with the digital world of instant communication and knowledge sharing which they already inhabit.

For parents and carers the new systems mean better information and updates about a child's progress and development at any time, including better communication with teachers and support staff. Also, any problems such as non-attendance will be addressed quickly as the new systems mean all information will be accessible, including what your child ate for lunch!

Both Buile Hill High School and Harrop Fold High School took possession of their new buildings this September.

After spending many years in buildings which were long past their sell-by date the new facilities have been very positively received by staff and students. The new schools, which cost in the region of £40 million between them, have been built under a private finance initiative (PFI) contract and will be maintained for the next 12 years by Salford School Solutions.

Have a look at our brand new PFI schools

The pictures on these pages show the new facilities at Harrop Fold High School, which were designed in consultation with staff, students and governors. The school includes flexible dining spaces, drama and dance studios, full size gymnasiums and recording studios, all befitting of Harrop Fold's status as a specialist arts college.

Antony Edkins - Head Teacher of Harrop Fold High School said:

"Every person who has visited the school has been amazed by the quality of the building and the positive ethos that the single site offers the children of Little Hulton. Students of the school told the Mayor of Salford when she visited the new school that they felt safe, cared for and were learning."





**Wyn O'Neill, Head Teacher,
Buile Hill High School**

"The new school has inspired our students in a whole variety of ways. From day one they have really valued the fact that Salford has invested this money in them and provided such wonderful facilities.

The new learning spaces are allowing us to use a greater variety of approaches to teaching and learning. Students have much more room to express themselves in class and we have space for them to work in small and large groups. The new ICT is enabling students and staff to work together in new ways and pupils are now producing the school newsletter and making their own radio broadcasts.

Students are enjoying their learning more than ever and effort, achievement and enthusiasm have all risen dramatically. In particular, the sports facilities are inspiring students to new heights and that is even before the external pitches are completed. Even the seemingly small things can make a big difference in how students feel about their school and their education - and that includes the new clean toilets!"

Young people help design the schools of the future

As part of the BSF programme, students from BSF schools are helping to plan the future.

This is very important because students can often feel that schools are places to spend as little time in as possible. There are few social spaces for them to meet their friends, dining spaces are small, meals have to be rushed to get everyone through in time, and they often have to leave the building during break times. Sometimes this includes days when it is both cold and wet. This has a knock-on effect for teachers as they cope with frustrated young people who are wet, cold and wound up - hardly the frame of mind which encourages learning and concentration.

With their knowledge of what helps and hinders their learning, groups of students at Walkden High School and Irlam and Cadishead Community High School worked with an organisation called School Works to feed back on the designs of the new schools. As we move on to designing the next phase of schools, pupils will have the opportunity to take part in 'design festivals', sharing their ideas and vision for the future. These ideas will be included in the design briefs which the architects will

work to, and the young people will be able to tell them how well they are doing.

So what are the 'top issues' students want to see addressed in the new schools?

- Good social spaces to meet their friends, spaces which they feel belong to them.
- Places to sit, inside and outside, somewhere to shelter when it rains.
- Toilets that are kept clean, are well maintained and that do not become places where bullying takes place.
- New types of furniture that are both comfortable and flexible, so that classroom

lay-outs can be altered easily to cater for different learning styles.

- Clean, spacious dining areas where eating can be a social experience. Perhaps an internet café space to do some research on the web with a cup of coffee and a croissant (low fat of course).
- Some space to store their belongings.

The schools of the future should make all these available with a lot more besides. One of the aspirations of the BSF team is to design schools 'where young people want to hang out'. We feel that if young people want to be at school then they are far more likely to be able to learn and take part in all that school has to offer. The fact that young people are having a say in all this can only make that more likely.



Designing schools 'where young people want to hang out'

Roman Catholic schools consultation

You may remember that a little while ago we consulted about proposals for developing the Roman Catholic high schools across the city. Although there are limitations on what is possible within the BSF programme, we have listened to what people said to us and we undertook further consultation on alternative proposals between 10 November and 17 December 2008.

The proposals are:

- To rebuild St Patrick's Roman Catholic High School on its existing site and at its existing size, to open in September 2012. The original proposal was to refurbish the school buildings. Building a new school will enable pupils, staff, governors and the local community to input into the design of an outstanding new school with state-of-the-art facilities for learning, teaching, socialising and sport.
- To enlarge St Ambrose Barlow Roman Catholic High School from 750 to 1050 pupils, by creating a new building on the former Wardley High School site from September 2012. Also to change the school's upper age limit to 18 and add a 250 place sixth-form by September 2011, before the main new building opens. The re-location of the new school addresses the transport concerns of Roman Catholic families on the Little Hulton/Walkden side of the city, resolves space problems to create sixth-form provision for Roman Catholic pupils and, as a new school,

provides many benefits. The new St Ambrose Barlow Roman Catholic High School will be an outstanding school with state-of-the-art facilities for learning, teaching, socialising and sport.

- To rebuild All Hallows Roman Catholic High School on part of the site currently occupied by Oasis Academy (ex Hope High School), at its existing size, to open in September 2012. This is a new location for the school and reflects the preferences of the school and parents.
- To close St George's Roman Catholic High School from September 2012.

Opportunities were provided for staff, pupils, governors, parents and the community to have a say on the new proposals. The feedback will be compiled into a report to Salford City Council Cabinet who will decide whether or not to issue a statutory notice which will then be subject to a further consultation period of six weeks.

Details of the outcome of the consultation will be available soon on the website pages

www.salford.gov.uk/bsf



Swinton high schools consultation

A consultation is underway on proposals to close both The Swinton High School and Moorside High School and open a replacement school for 1350 pupils by September 2012 on the current Moorside High School playing fields. This will provide an outstanding opportunity for a new state-of-the-art building and facilities for the Swinton area.

Consultation events have been organised for parents, governors, staff and the community and full details can be found at

www.salford.gov.uk/moorsideandtheswintonhs

Some of your questions are answered below.

Why close two improving and successful schools?

We want to provide pupils with the best accommodation and facilities and the BSF programme enables us to do this. Both the existing schools occupy very poor buildings which need to be replaced. We do not consider that it would be good value for money to consider refurbishing the existing schools and neither school is located on a suitable site for the future. In particular the existing site of The Swinton High School is too small to consider rebuilding on it. Having looked closely at the number of pupils in the Swinton area, we also believe that by 2015 there will only be enough pupils to justify one school in the area.

Why is the new school smaller than the two existing schools?

Pupil projections for the area indicate that a school of 1350 pupils will be sufficient for the local community. Initially the number of pupils within the current two schools will exceed the capacity of the new building, however, within a four year period this situation will be resolved. Under the BSF proposals there are now plans to rebuild several of the surrounding schools which currently have surplus places (e.g. Wentworth and Oasis Academy MediaCityUK) whilst also increasing the number of places

available at Walkden High School. Overall pupil numbers in the city are falling. As a result we consider that two high schools in the Swinton area will not be required in the long term.

Which primary schools will be associated with the new school?

We are currently undertaking a separate consultation regarding possible changes to associated primary schools across the city. This consultation could result in associated primary schools being removed from admission arrangements or a review and realignment of associated primary schools. For further details either contact the Admissions and Exclusions team or view the details at

www.salford.gov.uk/admission-procedures-consultation

The size of the proposed site is small, will the school need to use Beech Farm playing fields?

The site for the new school is smaller than is ideal for a school of 1350 pupils. However, this is not unusual in built up areas and there is enough room for most of the playing fields to be on site. However, it is likely that the school will require access to the Beech Farm playing fields on occasions. The exact nature of the school use needs further consideration but this would be achieved without reducing the current level of access which is available to the community at present. Indeed this arrangement could have the added advantage for the community of upgrading the current facilities for both school and community use.

Where will those pupils who don't get a place at the new school go to?

All pupils at the current schools will be given a place at the new school. Initially this will mean that the school has more pupils than places. Some pupils may need to be accommodated in the existing Moorside building or in temporary accommodation, depending on the exact numbers when the new school opens. When the school opens it will take 270 pupils in year 7 which will mean that within four years the school will have at most 1350 students. Pupils who are not admitted to year 7 in 2012 will be able to obtain a place at one of the neighbouring schools in the area which has places available. These include Wentworth, Buile Hill, Walkden, Salford City Academy and Oasis MediaCity AcademyUK.

Is there a risk that some children from Clifton and North Pendlebury won't get a place at the new school because they live further away?

There are potentially a number of children from Clifton and North Pendlebury who wouldn't get a place at the new school due to the distance they live from the school, unless some safeguards are put in place. The council, as the admissions authority for the school, is looking at ways to ensure that children in specific parts of the Swinton area are not significantly disadvantaged by the change in location of the high school. One way to address this is to prioritise applications for places from a specific geographical area. The council is planning to put these arrangements in place.

What happens if the school has specialist status, will this cease if the school closes or can it be transferred to the new school?

Both Moorside and The Swinton High schools have different specialisms. The proposal is that the new school adopts the existing specialisms of both schools and becomes a high performing specialist school in the arts, mathematics and computing.

How can you guarantee that the education of pupils at Moorside High School won't be disrupted if the new school is being built on the Moorside High playing fields?

As the new school building is planned to be built on the existing playing fields, on the other side of the A580 from the existing school, we do not believe that this will cause significant disruption to the existing school. The council will work closely with the builders and the school to ensure minimal disruption to the school and the local community.

Why can't each school just receive their share of the BSF funding?

BSF is a city wide programme. The government's intention for BSF is to create transformational change using inspiring buildings to support education for our children and their communities for the future. If we spend money just on upgrading current buildings, this will not achieve transformation and will be unacceptable to central government because it would not achieve the central purpose of the programme.

What will happen to the Deans Youth Centre?

Consideration is being given to a replacement or upgrading of the Deans Youth Centre either as part of the new school or as part of a campus arrangement.

What is the Locality Learning Support Provision?

This is an area of the school which will provide intensive support to pupils who find it difficult to learn in a mainstream classroom environment. There will be a degree of separation from the rest of the school, allowing these pupils the support they need without disrupting other students. There will be four of these additional resources across the city, each based in a different school, with the facilities shared by all of the mainstream secondary schools.

What happens next?

All views given during this consultation will be reported to Salford City Council's Cabinet on 10 March 2009. If Cabinet decides to continue, legal notices will be published setting out the outline specification for the new school and inviting proposals under the new school competition regulations. Proposals can be put forward by any individual, group or organisation with an interest in education. The council may be able to submit its own proposals. The council wants to propose a community school and it will have to seek the Secretary of State's consent to do so. Proposals from any other interested parties must be received by 26 August 2009. Following this a further notice will be published, including all proposals received and the council's own proposal. Then there will be six weeks for comments and/or objections to be made.

The council must arrange for at least one public meeting to be held to inform the public of the proposals received and the arrangements for making objections and comments. All proposals will then be referred to the Independent Schools Adjudicator who will make the final decision. Regardless of who is successful, the council will still oversee arrangements to maintain the school building.

How do I make any views known during the current consultation?

The consultation period runs from **5 January to 13 February 2009**. Details are available on our website.

