

COMMUNITY WELCOMES SHEFFIELD ACADEMIES

What do you think about the two new Sheffield Academies, set to replace the existing Myrtle Springs and Waltheof schools? Independent education specialist Dame Jocelyn Barrow has been finding out.

Before an Academy gets the go ahead from Government, an independent consultation is carried out to examine what is needed and how it can best serve its community. In conducting the consultations for the two Sheffield Academies, Dame Jocelyn has spoken to parents, pupils and staff from Myrtle Springs and Waltheof Schools, whilst also gauging the views of community representatives, primary school staff and local people in general from the Manor, Park and Castle areas of South East Sheffield, which the Academies will serve.

Key findings of Dame Jocelyn's consultation include:

Sheffield Springs Academy (replacing Myrtle Springs)

- 75% of local parents are interested in sending their children to the Academy
- 76% of local parents agree that the Academy will have a beneficial impact upon the area and welcome the new facilities and opportunities the Academy will bring

Sheffield Park Academy (replacing Waltheof)

- 85% of local parents are interested in sending their children to the Academy
- 83% of local parents say the Academy will have a beneficial impact upon the area

Dame Jocelyn said: "I am very grateful to those people who took the time and effort to take part in the consultation process, which overall has been very positive and will help to shape the development of both Sheffield Academies. As such, I am able to recommend that the proposals for both Academies proceed."



Dame Jocelyn Barrow

A summary of Dame Jocelyn's report is available on the ULT website www.ult.org.uk.

WORKS START ON THE SHEFFIELD SPRINGS ACADEMY

Enabling works have now started at the Sheffield Springs Academy, with the work being carried out by Bowmer and Kirkland.

Awarded Considerate Contractor of the Year for work on previous projects, Bowmer and Kirkland have started enabling works on the site of the predecessor school, Myrtle Springs, with works including:

- The erection of perimeter security fencing to the existing school playing fields.
- Formation of a new site access on Hurlfield Road.
- The setting up of temporary site accommodation
- Removal of topsoil/vegetation and ground levelling works to prepare the area for construction.

The main works on the new Academy building are then scheduled to start in April of this year and will take approximately 18 months. Throughout this period there will be 24 hour security at the site and access will be strictly controlled.

The normal site working hours will be between 07.30 - 17.30 Monday to Friday and 07.30 - 14.00 on Saturday. Every effort will be made to minimise disruption to local residents during the works, with the site professionally managed and kept tidy. In addition, when required a road sweeper will be utilised to ensure that local roads are kept clear of mud and dust.

During the construction of the Academy, queries or concerns regarding the works should be raised with site manager Scott Millington who can be contacted on 07990 653476.

NEXT EDITION

In the next newsletter, we will take a closer look at the Academy's facilities, its commitment to community partnership and feature an interview with David Lewis, Executive Director with overall responsibility for both Sheffield Academies.

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Spring 2006

The newsletter for Sheffield Springs Academy - Issue 1

Welcome to your Academy...



How the new Sheffield Springs Academy will look

Academy Principal Gordon Inglis

Welcome to the newsletter for Sheffield Springs Academy.

The Academy will open in the Myrtle Springs school buildings in September 2006, before transferring to new purpose built accommodation.

Inside this issue...

- Meet the Senior Team
- Your questions answered
- What you think about the new Sheffield Academies

INTRODUCING DAVID LEWIS AND GORDON INGLIS

The senior leadership team for the two Sheffield Academies, which will replace Myrtle Springs and Walthoof Schools respectively, is taking shape.

Overseeing both Academies will be David Lewis, who has been appointed Executive Director. He will have overall responsibility for both Academies, for the relationships between the Academies and the City and for building important relationships with major local employers and community organisations. In the 2004 Teaching Awards for the North of England, David was a runner-up in the Headteacher of the Year category.

Currently Headteacher of St Wilfrids in Castleford, David will take up his post in late Spring 2006 and is looking forward to getting started.

"I am determined that our two Academies in Sheffield will provide a step change in education in the areas they serve. We have a real opportunity here to create and develop new schools which are ideally placed to answer the needs of their communities and develop young adults with the skills, qualifications and enthusiasm for the regeneration of this area. In the coming months I will be focusing on creating the environment in which both Academies can flourish.

"In particular at Myrtle Springs, I will be listening to and learning from Ed Wydenbach. All of us associated with the Academy are extremely grateful to Ed for his leadership at Myrtle Springs. His efforts and commitment over the last four years will bring great benefits for the whole of the Academy community and provide an excellent starting point on which to build. His continued enthusiasm for and commitment to the Academy, particularly during what has been a challenging term for the school, has been fantastic."

The Principal of Sheffield Springs Academy, which will replace Myrtle Springs School, will be Gordon Inglis, currently Acting Principal at Northampton Academy. Having already been through the process of creating and developing an Academy, Gordon knows exactly what's involved. Northampton Academy opened in 2004 and is sponsored by the United Learning Trust (ULT) which is also sponsoring both Sheffield Academies.



Executive Director David Lewis

Coming to Sheffield - A new Academy like this one at Manchester, designed by architects AEDAS, who are also designing both Sheffield Academies.

Gordon will take up his post after Easter 2006, preparing for the start of the Academy. He is looking forward to regular visits to Myrtle Springs, where Ed Wydenbach will continue to be the Headteacher through to the end of the Summer term in 2006. He will work very closely with Ed Wydenbach and the senior management team at Myrtle Springs in the months leading up to the opening of the Academy in September 2006, in the existing Myrtle Springs school building. The Academy will later transfer to a new multi million pound purpose-built facility on the same site during Winter 2007/08.

"I am delighted to have been appointed Principal Designate of the Academy. Having been part of the team that took an existing school and turned it into an Academy at Northampton, I know the challenges and the excitement we have ahead of us – being part of an Academy when it opens is an opportunity not to be missed. I am relishing the chance to work with the students, staff and parents at Myrtle Springs to develop an Academy that will encourage each student to develop their own skills and follow their chosen interests to the best of their abilities," said Gordon.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

What is an Academy? Why do we need one? How will it improve educational opportunities for local children? All these questions and more regarding the new Sheffield Springs Academy are answered below.



What is an Academy?

An Academy is a school independent of the Local Authority but non fee paying and open to all. Students benefit from state-of-the-art facilities which, coupled with high educational standards, enable them to achieve their full potential.

Why does Sheffield need a new Academy at Myrtle Springs?

The request for the new Academy at Myrtle Springs came from the Local Authority, with a view to providing improved standards of education and facilities, as well as helping to regenerate the wards of Manor, Park and Castle.

How will the Academy differ from the predecessor school?

The Academy will be an entirely new school, with purpose built accommodation and an extended curriculum. The Academy will also work closely with other education providers, local businesses and the community to offer students a fantastic opportunity to develop their skills in a supportive environment. It will also help to raise educational standards in the area and will provide students with the opportunity to continue their education up to age 19, through the provision of a new sixth form.

Who will manage the new Sheffield Springs Academy?

The Sheffield Springs Academy and also the new Sheffield Park Academy, replacing Walthoof School, are sponsored by the United Learning Trust (ULT) which is a registered charity. ULT was established specifically to introduce a family of Academies in the UK, including Lambeth, Northampton, Salford and Manchester. The Academy will aim to bring out the best in everyone - staff, students and parents. It will be founded on a Christian ethos of care, tolerance, discipline and hard work. It will, however, welcome children of all faiths or none.

How will the Academy be funded?

The United Learning Trust will make an initial contribution, with the majority of funding for the new buildings and facilities coming directly from the Government, which will also fund the annual running costs of the Academy. Funding approval has now been granted for both Sheffield Academies.

What will the Academy be called?

After discussions between ULT, Sheffield City Council and other partner organisations, the name for the new Academy replacing

Myrtle Springs School will be the Sheffield Springs Academy.

Where and when will the new Academy be built?

The Sheffield Springs Academy will be built on the existing site at East Bank Road. Physical work is scheduled to start on site in Spring 2006, with completion of the new buildings scheduled for Winter 2007/08.

What will happen to Myrtle Springs School and its pupils and staff?

All pupils will automatically transfer to the new Academy. The existing Myrtle Springs buildings will house the Academy when it opens in September 2006, before transferring over to the new buildings in Winter 2007/2008. All staff at the school who are on permanent contracts have rights through their existing terms and conditions of employment. We would expect the majority of the staff to transfer to the new Academy.

What might the curriculum look like given an Academy does not have to follow the national curriculum?

Students at the Academy will receive an all-round education that stimulates and inspires them. The curriculum will be broad and balanced and encompass a wide range of subjects, including the core areas of maths, English, science and ICT. There will be more flexibility in the 14 – 16 curriculum, with a range of choices including academic, vocational and work related options to suit the abilities of pupils.

What is the reasoning behind the choice of specialism at the school?

The senior management team at Myrtle Springs has proposed the specialism of Performing Arts supported by a theme of Business and Enterprise. The school believes strongly that its chosen specialism has a great deal to offer students in developing self confidence, self esteem and self discipline. Whilst the specialism will be a key component of the curriculum, this will not be at the expense of other subject areas. The 14 – 19 curriculum will include traditional subjects as well as vocational ones such as engineering, catering, construction skills, childcare, hairdressing and beauty. More details will be provided in the next edition of this newsletter, in Spring 2006.

What new facilities will be there be at the new Sheffield Springs Academy and will they be available to the community?

There will be state-of-the-art ICT and

learning resource centres, multi-purpose halls and dance and drama studios, facilities for digital arts and textiles, a specialist sixth form centre and extensive indoor and outdoor sports facilities. There will also be close co-operation between the two new Sheffield Academies and some shared provision of resources.

How will the Academy interact with the local community?

The Academy will seek to develop constructive relationships with local partnerships and other community groups. It will form good relationships with local people and the different groups and organisations who support people in the neighbourhood. Sheffield City Council is looking at how a broad range of services, all geared to the well being of young people, will be organised and delivered in areas of the City. These will be called Service Districts and the Academy will play a very important part in this new structure. The Academy will provide additional support for the local community, for example through the provision of adult education and access to its spectacular facilities.

Students at the Academy will develop the life skills to enable them to become active and responsible citizens, able to make a contribution to the local and wider community.

Uniform at the Sheffield Springs Academy

The new uniform at the Sheffield Springs Academy will be a basic shirt, blazer and trousers/skirt. The uniform itself will be straightforward, with replacement items easily available from major retailers.

Explained Gordon Inglis, Principal at Sheffield Springs Academy: "Students at all of ULT's Academies wear a uniform, though our policy is for a standard uniform that can be obtained from any major store and not something that has to be specially produced. We want our students to look smart without it costing the earth."

Additional help with school uniforms is also available if required. Further details regarding the Academy uniform will be issued in a future edition of this newsletter.