

# Oakwood Co-operative Learning Trust



## Including Oakwood High School Public Consultation Booklet One

### Changing to Foundation School Category and Acquiring a Charitable Trust – A Rationale

#### What to do next

Read this document entitled **Booklet One** *Changing to Foundation School Category and Acquiring a Charitable Trust – A Rationale* which provides an overview of the issues faced by the school, the proposal being put forward, the implications of these proposals, and details of the timeline for consultation and what happens next.

You may also want to read **Booklet Two** *Questions and Answers* which provides a series of commonly asked questions together with answers which have been collated from the Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) sources.

You may wish to attend one of the consultation meetings and/or return the **Response Form** to comment on this consultation.

Copies of the booklets and the response form can be obtained from the school or downloaded from the website [www.oakwoodhighschool.co.uk](http://www.oakwoodhighschool.co.uk).

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## 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Governing Body of Oakwood High School is proposing a change of school category from a community school to a foundation school and simultaneously to acquire a charitable trust to be called The Oakwood Co-operative Learning Trust. The proposed date of implementation is 1<sup>st</sup> June 2010. The Trust will be a mutual Co-operative Membership Trust.
- 1.2 The school, supported by the Trust, will work to improve the existing high standards of attainment and services for pupils and their families in the local community.
- 1.3 This is a new type of school that, while still being part of the local authority family of schools, has the opportunity to be supported by a Charitable Trust set up to help the drive for improved standards in school in particular through engaging with the wider community. The Governing Body of the school is proposing to establish, through a Trust, a long term partnership that aims to bring together Salford College, The Co-operative Movement, Salford Local Authority, Oakwood Youth Club, Salford PCT.
- 1.4 The Governing Body of the school will gain new powers and responsibilities. It will become the employer of all staff, although existing pay and condition arrangements will be unchanged as the school will remain in the maintained sector and be subject to national pay and condition agreements. The Governing Body will also become responsible for pupil admissions, but will work jointly with the Local Authority to administer the provision of pupil places within the requirements of the National Schools Admissions Code. The Trust will hold the land and capital assets in Trust for the school and the Governing Body will retain day to day responsibility for managing these assets.
- 1.5 The full consultation document is contained in two booklets:  
**Booklet One** *Changing to Foundation School Category and Acquiring a Charitable Trust – A Rationale* is the document you are now reading and provides an overview of the issues faced by the school, the proposal being put forward, the implications of these proposals, and details of the timeline for consultation and what happens next.  
**Booklet Two** *Questions and Answers* provides a series of commonly asked questions together with answers and can be obtained from the school or from the school website shown on the front cover.
- 1.6 Stakeholders have the opportunity to comment on these proposals during the consultation period which runs from noon Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2010 to noon Monday 1st March 2010.
- 1.7 The Governing Body will consider the outcome of the consultation and then decide on whether to publish Statutory Proposals on changing category and acquiring a charitable trust or to remain a community school.



- 1.8 We have tried to put forward the proposals in a clear manner and there are opportunities to attend meetings and ask questions about the proposals. We are open to alternative suggestions and nothing in this consultation document or process pre-determines the outcome of the consultation.
- 1.9 In order to make the change the Governing Body is legally proposing to change category from a Community School to become a Foundation School, and at the same time, formally acquiring a Trust – The Oakwood Co-operative Learning Trust.

## 2. Vision and Values

- 2.1 As a school for pupils with complex needs, it is important pupils think about the consequences of their actions, their responsibilities to themselves and those in the wider community. The majority of our intake is traditional white working class and one of our biggest challenges is the raising of expectations and aspirations within this group of pupils and their families. At the core of our school will be a Trust promoting choice, diversity and creative enterprise for its pupils, parents and community members.

Since achieving designated specialist school status we have demonstrated that college status has helped raise achievement and standards in this school and our partner communities. Trust status is seen as a natural development, building on this process of widening choice and the school's active culture of creative enterprise. The school recognises education is a natural progressive event for all individuals and the wider members within Salford.

The school is an established fully-extended school and Trust Status will provide a powerful mechanism promoting direct engagement to sections of the community, progressing the development of our extended school programme into the communities we serve.

It is envisaged that the charitable nature of the Trust will allow the school to access funds currently unavailable to it, thus enabling the school to enhance and widen facilities available to its pupils, parents and community partners. The Co-operative Trust is a global model which will underpin our vision for global partnerships and promote an understanding of the world at large.

Trust schools are seen as one of the ways of positively engaging with parents and local communities, building long term-relationships with sustainable partner organisations, whilst creating realistic opportunities for young people. In raising the aspirations and opportunities of the local community by participation in the school and its culture, this will give the community as a whole a greater sense of investment in the school via inclusive democratic structures that are more responsive to local needs

By acquiring a Trust, supported by a range of partners and stakeholders who are united behind these vision statements, Oakwood High School hopes to not



only transform the life chances of every student that passes through the school, but to have lasting positive impact on the wider community as well. We aim to provide the best education for all students in our area by working together to provide a personalised education for all, as well as promoting community cohesion.

- 2.2. As a Co-operative Trust, the Trust will adopt the values and principles of the Co-operative Movement (see Appendix A).
- 2.3. Co-operatives are based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. In the tradition of their founders, co-operative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility, and caring for others.
- 2.4 Co-operatives principles are: Voluntary and open membership; Democratic member control; Member economic participation; Autonomy and independence; Education, training and information; Co-operation among co-operatives; Concern for community:
- 2.5 These values and principles will underpin the work of the Trust and we believe will contribute to strengthening the school and its links with the local community.

### **3. What will the Trust do?**

#### **3.1 What will be the Trust's particular focus?**

- The focus of the Trust is the congruence with the wider community to provide a 'joined-up' solution to local and national issues.
- Drawing together educational, business and health-care services we intend to offer and supply a cohesive and comprehensive provision that will assist us in delivering on the Every Child Matters Agenda and will also seek to support our community programme in a life-long partnership.
- We will endeavour to specifically raise standards by:
- As a Private Finance Initiative (PFI) school, with restricted use of the building and on a land-locked site, our focus will be in developing off-site facilities, improving pupil and community choice.
- Developing a model of social enterprise placing emphasis on an ethical value of social responsibility.
- Global perspective, developing global citizens. Creating an understanding of the citizens of the world.
- Developing partnerships from intra school (staff teaching learning communities) to global links, offering diversity and long term sustainability.



### 3.2 What will each Partner bring to the Trust?

- **The Co-operative Group** ( which sits within the wider Co-operative Movement),– Has extensive experience (sponsoring Business and Enterprise Specialist Schools) in supporting educational establishments to develop and embed a co-operative “values driven ethos” across the school and across the curriculum. It will also help bring a global dimension to school and community perceptions, through national and international links with other co-operative educational institutions and organisations.
- **Salford Local Authority:** Oakwood High School is a maintained Special School within the authority. It is envisaged that the Authority will continue to support the school as at present.
- **Salford College:** is the most popular destination for Oakwood students post 16. It has established close links over a number of years and will be a valued member.
- **Primary Care Trust:** as a special needs school, partnership with the PCT is a natural choice.
- **Oakwood Youth Club:** this is a registered charity associated with the school, delivering extensive quality recreational and social activities to young people with learning difficulties within Salford.

### 3.3 How will the Trust make a difference?

The Learning Partnership will make a difference by

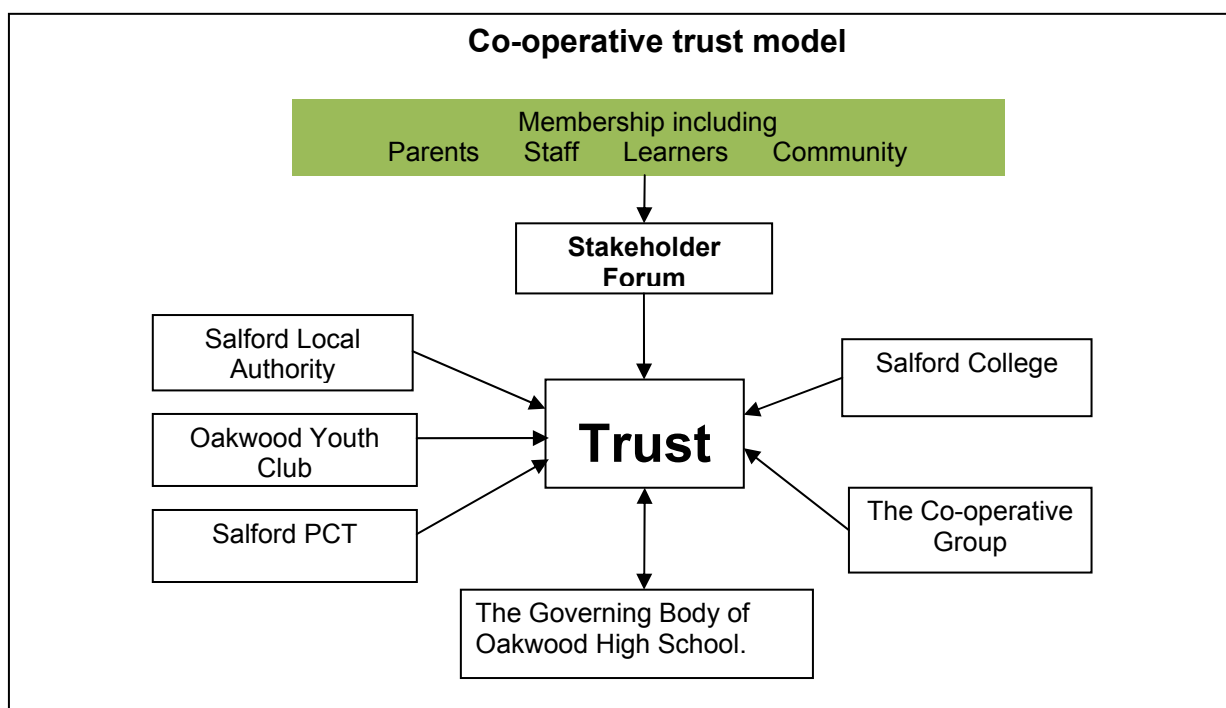
- The Trust will seek to develop relationships with all those involved in the educational and physical well-being of young people, creating a common sense of ownership.
- Through the strength of these relationships, both philosophical and operational, we will strive to ensure positive outcomes in terms of academic progress, social development and in the health and fitness of young people within our community.
- We will also, through our partners, seek to offer enhanced vocational (Salford College) opportunities to our students enabling them to have a wider choice of career paths.
- The long term relationship with the organisational partners and the active engagement of the stakeholders through membership of the trust will contribute to the above aims. It will be part of a wider network of trusts working together within a shared value set to raise achievement and expectations.
- The trust will be a vehicle for accessing charitable funding and subsidiary trading activities to support its aims.

## 4. How Will the Trust Work?

- 4.1 The Trust will be a charitable, not for profit trust, meeting the legal and other requirements as set out by the DCSF. It will carry out its duties in relation to the school as set out by the DCSF, specifically by appointing a minority of the members to the Governing Body of any supported school (see Appendix C) and by holding the land and assets on trust.



- 4.2 The Trust will be legally established and regulated (as with all charities) by the Charities Commission and registered as a company limited by guarantee with Companies House.
- 4.3 Trustees will not be able to derive an income from the Trust, but the Trust may become an employer as it develops its objectives in providing services and/or commissioning services. Any income generated by the Trust must only be used to support its charitable aims. The Trust will not seek to alter the individual characteristics of the school and it will not seek to change the character (religious or otherwise) of the school.
- 4.4 The Trust will meet a minimum of three times per year (co-ordinated with school governance as required).
- 4.5 The Trust will work with other people and organisations, as appropriate, in order to carry out its work. As the Trust develops its work in the future, it may be appropriate to consider additional partners. There will be a process involving existing Trustees to ensure that any future partner will comply fully with the vision, values and aims of the Trust.
- 4.6 The Trust will be made up of the school, partners, and members as shown in the diagram below. For details of the proposed structure of the trust and the contributions partners will make see Appendix B.



- 4.7 The Trust will appoint a minority of governors at the school (see Appendix C).
- 4.8 The Trust will have an ethos of co-operation and democracy consistent with co-operative values. It will seek to empower learners and their community as well as helping our young people prepare for these challenges and their future as global citizens.



## **5. Foundation Category**

- 5.1 To set up the Trust, the school is required to change its current category and become a Foundation School. In acquiring Foundation Category, the Governing Body and not the Trust, will assume new responsibilities, including responsibility for the employment of staff and the admission of students to the school. In addition, the Trust will hold the land and assets in trust for the school. The Governing Body will retain day to day responsibility for managing the assets, as is the case in the present situation.
- 5.2 The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 provide for all the rights, powers, duties and liabilities to transfer existing staff from the Local Authority to the Governing Body.
- 5.3 Existing and new teaching staff will continue to work under the terms of the 'School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document' (STPCD). The School's Governing Body will set out the terms and conditions for new support staff which will be no less favourable than those applying to existing staff. All staff will, therefore, always enjoy as a minimum the same terms and conditions of employment as in any maintained state school.
- 5.4 The school will continue to teach the National Curriculum and will be inspected by Ofsted at appropriate times.
- 5.5 The Governing Body will continue to have day to day control of the school's land and assets (which the Trust will hold 'on trust' for the school) as is the case at present.
- 5.6 We will work in collaboration with the Local Authority in ensuring strict adherence to the Schools' Admissions Code whilst reserving the legal right to review admission arrangements if deemed appropriate.

## **6. What does this mean for parents, carers and pupils?**

- 6.1 The school will remain part of the Local Authority's family of schools. We will continue to have a fair admissions policy and not introduce selection by ability. Parents will apply for places at a Trust school as part of the Local Authority process. The school will continue to work in partnership with the Local Authority to ensure that pupil places are given fairly in line with the published admissions criteria which conform to the School Admissions Code. However a Trust school Governing Body reserves the right to review admissions arrangements as deemed appropriate.
- 6.2 We do not propose changing the number of elected Parent Governors. The current situation of appointing Community, Local Authority and Staff Governors



will be maintained. However the Governing Body will now have a minority of governors appointed by the Trust (see Appendix C).

All parents, carers and pupils currently attending a trust school may become full members of the trust (as may all students, staff and members of a range of defined supporting community organisations). We are planning to establish a Stakeholder Forum with elected members including parents, staff, learners (including students) and community organisations. Its purpose will be to hold the Trust to account, to help shape policies and to elect a minority of trustees.

The school ethos, including objectives relating to behaviour and performance and the school's vision and values will be strengthened by working within the framework of co-operative values. It is envisaged that the new partnership arrangements will contribute significantly to a further improvement in the school's performance and a better educational experience and outcome for every young person and their family.

## **7. What Does this Mean for Employees?**

- 7.1 The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 provide for all rights, powers, duties and liabilities to transfer existing staff from the Local Authority to the Governing Body of the school. Employees will be employed by their school's Governing Body instead of the Local Authority and we will continue to recognise the same unions. The existing rights of teachers will be fully protected if the school acquires a Trust. We will still be bound by the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document.
- 7.2 The Governing Body will set terms and conditions for its own support staff. However, terms and conditions will be safeguarded as per the prescribed regulations for existing staff and they will maintain the same employment rights as Local Authority employees. Employees will still be represented on the Governing Body, as elected by their colleagues, as well as there being representatives from parents, the community and the Local Authority as is the case now, plus the additional foundation governors nominated by the Partnership.



## 8. The Consultation Process

- 8.1 Please let us know what you think about the proposal by one or more of the following:
- Complete and return the Consultation Questionnaire.
  - Send in your comments to the school.
  - If you are a parent, carer, member of staff, or member of the public, come to the appropriate meeting to discuss the proposal.  
Consultation meetings will be held as follows:  
**Oakwood High School**  
Staff: Monday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2010 – 3.30pm  
Parents: Monday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2010 – 5.00pm  
Public: Monday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2010 –6.00pm
  - Pupils at the school will be consulted through a separate meeting of the Student Council. They will also be kept informed about this consultation process – and input views and comments - through assemblies and other internal school mechanisms.
- 8.2 You can comment at any time from noon Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2010 to noon Monday 1st March 2010.
- 8.3 After the consultation is closed all comments will be considered and a report will be prepared for the Governing Body. These reports will be made available on the school website. Individual responses will not be published on the website but will be presented to the Governing Body and will be available for inspection by the public on request. The Governing Body will then hold a meeting to review the report and all the comments before reaching an informed decision.
- 8.4 The Governing Body may decide to:
- Issue Statutory Notices about a change to Foundation Category and the adoption of a Trust.
  - Modify the proposal in the light of suggestions made during consultation and, if the changes are significant, reconsult on the changes.
  - Decide to remain as a community school without any changes.
- 8.5 If the school Governing Body decides to proceed and issues Statutory Notices there will be another chance to comment on any formal proposals which might be made before a final decision is taken by the school Governing Body.
- 8.6 The proposed implementation date is 1<sup>st</sup> June 2010.
- 8.7 Copies of all the consultation documents can be obtained from the school website or from the school. A translation service is available if required. A larger type version is available on request, as is an audio version.
- 8.8 If you have any queries about anything you have read here and would like further clarification, please email [office@oakwoodhighschool.co.uk](mailto:office@oakwoodhighschool.co.uk) or write to



Oakwood High School, Chatsworth Road, Ellesmere Park, Eccles, Manchester, M30 9DY.

## 9. List of Consultees

As part of the consultation process, the school is consulting with the following:

- Students currently at the school.
- Parents of students currently at the school.
- Staff currently employed at the school, both teaching and support.
- All schools currently sending children to the school.
- The Local Authority and neighbouring Local Authorities.
- The Learning and Skills Council.
- Local MPs and serving local Councillors.
- The local Teacher Associations and Trade Unions representing our support staff.
- Other neighbouring schools which may be affected by the proposals.
- Local Community Groups including nurseries, child care providers, sports and leisure providers.
- The Specialist Schools and Academies Trust.
- Local and neighbouring Colleges and Higher Education institutes.
- Children and Adolescents Mental Health Service (CAMHS).
- The Primary Care Trust and Local GP surgeries.
- Connexions.
- Local Diocese.

A complete list will be published on the school website. If you feel that there are other stakeholders who should be consulted, please contact us.



## Appendix A: Statement on the Co-operative Identity

### Statement on the Co-operative Identity as approved at the ICA Congress, Manchester, September 1995

#### Definition

A co-operative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically controlled enterprise.

#### Values

Co-operatives are based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. In the tradition of their founders, co-operative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility, and caring for others.

#### Principles

The co-operative principles are guidelines by which co-operatives put their values into practice.

##### 1st Principle: Voluntary and Open Membership

Co-operatives are voluntary organisations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political, or religious discrimination.

##### 2nd Principle: Democratic Member Control

Co-operatives are democratic organisations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. Men and women serving as elected representatives are accountable to the membership. In primary co-operatives members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote), and co-operatives at other levels are also organised in a democratic manner.

##### 3rd Principle: Member Economic Participation

Members contribute equitably to, and -democratically control, the capital of their co-operative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the co-operative. Members usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership. Members allocate surpluses for any of the following purposes: developing their co-operative, possibly by setting up reserves, part of which at least would be indivisible; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the co-operative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

##### 4th Principle: Autonomy and Independence

Co-operatives are autonomous, self-help organisations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organisations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their co-operative autonomy.

##### 5th Principle: Education, Training and Information

Co-operatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their co-operatives. They inform the general public - particularly young people and opinion leaders - about the nature and benefits of co-operation.

##### 6th Principle: Co-operation Among Co-operatives

Co-operatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the Co-operative Movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.

##### 7th Principle: Concern for Community

Co-operatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members.



## Appendix B: Trust Structure

The Proposed Partnership Trust Members are:

| Member                         | Trust Members | Proposed contribution to Trust  |
|--------------------------------|---------------|---|
| <b>The Co-operative Group</b>  | 1             | The Co-operative Group has extensive experience (sponsoring Business and Enterprise Specialist Schools) in supporting educational establishments to develop and embed a co-operative “values driven ethos” across the school and across the curriculum. They will also bring a global dimension to school and community perceptions, through national and international links with other co-operative educational institutions and organisations. Initially the Group may be represented on the Trust Board by a Co-operative College nomination. |
| <b>Salford College</b>         | 1             | Most popular destination for Oakwood students post 16. Established close links over a number of years and will be a valued member.  |
| <b>Oakwood Youth Club</b>      | 1             | A registered charity associated with the school, delivering extensive quality recreational and social activities to young people with learning difficulties within Salford  |
| <b>Salford Local Authority</b> | 1             | Oakwood High School is a maintained Special School within the authority   |
| <b>Salford PCT</b>             | 1             | As a special needs school, partnership with the PCT is a natural choice   |
| <b>Stakeholder Forum</b>       | 3             | Provides a mechanism for active engagement of key stakeholder groups and provides a sounding board for our local communities. It will ensure that our plans and implementation are in line with community aspirations and will seek to engage the community in dialogue with the Trust.   |



## Appendix C: Governing Body Structure

- C.1 We do not propose changing the number of elected Parent Governors. The current situation of appointing Community, Local Authority and Staff Governors will be maintained. However the Governing Body will now have a minority of governors appointed by the Trust.
- C.2 The Governing Body will undergo minimum changes in order to comply with the appropriate legislation. The proposed structures are outlined below alongside the existing structures to allow a comparison.
- C.3 Local Authority nominated governors must number at least one and be no more than four. Parent governors must be at least one third of the Governing Body. Staff governors must be at least two, but not more than one third. If there are three or more staff governors then one must be a non-teacher. Community governors must be at least two. There must be a minimum of two Foundation governors (Trust appointees) and a maximum of 45% of the Governing Body.
- C.4 It is proposed to appoint the minimum number of Trust Governors.

