

School Sixth Form Options – A discussion paper 8 February 2016

Context

The Birmingham and Solihull Post 16 Local Area Review (LAR) is a once in a generation opportunity for all partners and stakeholders to drive forward the transformation of the education and skills system in our sub region.

Birmingham City Council fully embraces its role as a local strategic leader, to champion the needs of the local economy so all citizens are fully able to improve the quality of life through education and skills development. The Council's duty in ensuring sufficient high quality education provision requires strong partnerships for the benefit of all young people.

These partnerships sit within an autonomous, self-governing education system; a system which holds new responsibilities, not just for performance, but for the ability of a community of schools, academies and colleges, to meet the needs of young people in their area.

This paper recognises everyone's role in the creation of a coherent offer and aims to start discussion and debate, in the movement to secure education and training pathways, across a city wide system.

What are we trying to achieve: -

- Post 16 provision which is of high quality, financially viable and sustainable
- a coherent range of post 16 learning pathways, which meets the needs of all learners, leading to increased opportunities for student recruitment
- enhanced progression routes, including extended advanced level choices,
- quality Careers Advice and guidance, which supports the transition from school into post 16 provision
- promote active links between education and work

Model 1: Continuation of current sixth form provision

The Governing Body's self-evaluation of the school's sixth form provision, against a set of quality indicators (such as the 'Guiding Principles for School Sixth Forms'), is judged as being at least good. The school's performance monitoring, continuously reviews provision to ensure it meets national and local requirements.

The school is an effective partner within their local area, working with other providers to secure a wide range of learning pathways which meets the needs of both the local community and labour market.

Model 2: College sixth form partnership

A College working in partnership with local 11-16 secondary schools to ensure young people in the area have access to a broad range of courses. This could be through an informal or formal arrangement e.g. partnerships, federation or Trust status.

Example- City & Islington College sixth form partnership

This is a formal partnership between 3 schools and an FE college, which has been growing in popularity every year. Students attending one of the secondary schools receive a guaranteed place on an appropriate level course and at one of the college's 5 centres.

All of the 3 schools are well established with strong reputations, great facilities and teaching staff who are driven to deliver the highest level of teaching. Parents have welcomed this partnership, as they know a place has been secured for their child at both a school and college.

Model 3: Sixth form post 16 partnership

A number of 11-18 schools work together in partnership to deliver their post 16 provision.

The partnership creates a single post 16 prospectus and a single application process. All schools maintain their distinct personality but benefit from the close partnership.

As part of this arrangement, Partnership sixth has a timetable aligned across the three schools, ensuring they work together in a co-ordinated way. There is a single prospectus and application process

Example – 'Partnership sixth' consortium, is a collaboration between Erith, Trinity and Welling sixth forms, which enables the 3 schools to offer a broad range of courses and subjects that wouldn't be viable at one school alone. Students have access to a wider choice at level 2 and Level 3. There are also opportunities to access level 1 courses.

Model 4: Multi Academy Trust- post 16 offer

A group of Academies, managed through one Trust, develop a coherent and inclusive post 16 offer which provides learning pathways meeting the needs of all the students' aspirations and ability.

Example- Congleton Multi Academy Trust 'is a family of academies that promotes lifelong learning and inspires everyone to succeed'. The family includes 2 x primaries, 1 x 11-18 High school and a college.

The college was established by the Trust to provide students from the town with vocational courses that would give them the skills, opportunities and experiences to progress into employment or training within their chosen career path.

Model 5: Sixth form College 'hub and spoke' approach

A high performing Sixth Form College acts as the hub for the delivery of A level courses, across a geographical area. The college would be commissioned by a school to provide A level courses on their site.

This approach will maximise the funding available, secure a quality provision and give pupils access to a broader range of subjects. The college would be the registered centre, with pupils being enrolled at the college but educated at the pre 16 school.

This model will enable the school to provide pastoral support and enrichment opportunities. There could be shared professional development of staff and extended teaching opportunities for both school and college staff.

Model 6: Sixth form College Academy

A high performing sixth form college develops a Multi Academy Trust, to create a collaborative partnership with other schools. The Trust's shared vision and aspiration for learners would harness the ability to develop a coherent learning pathway for all learners. Sixth Form Colleges have only recently been allowed to convert to academy status.

Example- Solihull Sixth Form College is pursuing academy status and joining the Ninestiles Multi-Academy Trust, which will offer a more sustainable structure, coherent post 16 pathways, sharing leadership capacity, CPD and good practice as well as generate cost savings.

Model 7: Sixth form specialist provision

A school sixth form re-shapes its post 16 provision into a specialist learning pathway. The school will review its current offer and re-develop a new provision, focusing on subjects that would enable progression into Higher Education, training or employment.

Examples of specialisms – STEM, Sport, Humanities, Technology, Languages and Literature.

Model 8: 14-19 designation

An 11-18 school/academy, re-design their curriculum, to include a diverse 14-19 offer, leading to greater participation and learner outcomes.

The school/academy works collaboratively with local partners, including employers, to provide vocational and work based learning opportunities.

Model 9: Dis-establish provision

Following an analysis of the school's post 16 data the governors make a decision to close the sixth form provision, due to its lack of viability, quality or progression of learners.