

**Range High School  
Proposal to sponsor Maghull High School  
Consultation responses – Parents/Carers**

**A: Parental consultation meeting**

**10<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

**Present :** Graham Aldridge, Davina Aspinall, Geoff Howe, Matt Kaye, Mervyn Thomas, Jim Rimmer, Ian Burton.  
8 parents attended

**GAA gave a presentation on the background to the proposal and information about some areas which had already been queried. He then gave parents/carers the opportunity to ask questions or make observations.**

**Areas discussed:**

1. What happens if the financial needs of one school were found to be greater than those of the other?

*The funding for each school is separate and generated by pupil numbers. Initially the extra capacity for the support will be funded by a saving already generated by a reduction in the number of Senior Leaders at Maghull High School (MHS). Over time it may be that each school in the Trust pays a percentage amount to a central fund for central services across the Trust, but this will not happen in the short term. It will not be possible to vire money from one school's budget to the other. Each school must currently balance its budget in year and this will continue to be the case.*

2. How easily could the arrangements be undone?

*This is a legal arrangement but ultimately can be undone if the Regional Schools Commissioner (a branch of the Department for Education) decides the Trust is not delivering the results for which it was formed.*

3. How would a dramatic increase in Maghull's results be obtained without significant extra resources?

*MHS's OFSTED report shows it is good in some areas but that the improvement in pupil results is not consistent or rapid enough. We believe this is due to inconsistent quality of teaching. The method to improve this is using Professional Development sessions, coaching and classroom observation. This does not require significant extra resources but rather the time of a set of skilled and trained coaches with some strategic direction. We already have this capacity at our school as a Teaching School. Funding from a rationalisation of the SLT at MHS will enable us to structure this so that our team of Specialist Leaders of Education (SLEs) and Mr Dolly can work with the staff at MHS.*

4. Will Range High School Teachers be sent to teach at Maghull High School?

No.

5. Will my child have more supply teachers because of this arrangement?

*No. The SLEs and Mr Dolly already have this time built into their current timetables. We use supply staff at our school when teachers are absent through illness, when they are accessing training, or when they are taking other RHS pupils out on extra- curricular activities. This arrangement will not lead to an increase in the use of supply staff.*

6. Would there be any financial liability (penalties) incurred by the Trust if pupil achievement, or financial targets were not met?

*There will be no financial penalties. As described above, ultimately the RSC has the power to dissolve a Trust if it is not delivering the expected results.*

7. What happens if Government Policy changes?

*It is difficult to predict. Ultimately we will have to follow new policy directives. However, we can only make decisions currently based on what we know to be the case and believe to be the case in the future, and for that reason the Governing Body and I are supporting this proposal.*

8. Will the Government dictate changes to the workings of this new Trust to save money at central Government level?

*No. As described above, funding is generated for each school individually on a formula basis. The Trust and the Headteachers then decide how this funding is spent. The Government cannot dictate those decisions at individual Trust level.*

9. Pupils should be given the facts about the proposals in an appropriate format to reduce speculation.

*I will do assemblies for the pupils and have a meeting with the School Council to respond to their questions and address any queries.*

10. What is the meaning of "secondment"? Did this mean that staff would have opportunities to work at a higher level within their existing school, or that they would be seconded between schools?

*It means they may have an opportunity to take on an enhanced role in their own school. Only SLEs or equivalent will work at MHS in a coaching capacity, not with any substantive role.*

**B: Parental comments made via email and responses provided by the Headteacher of Range High School.**

Parent/Carer A:

Thank you for the information provided in relation to the proposal. I would like to offer the following comments / questions in relation to this please.

1) What assurance is Range High School providing so that the level of Senior Leadership input would not have a detrimental effect if it is going to be spread over two sites?

*The SLT at Range High will remain unchanged apart from 2 elements. My role will be to mentor the Acting Head at Maghull and Mr Dolly's role will be to provide some capacity to develop the quality of teaching at the school. However I can state firmly that I will remain and work as Headteacher of this school. A restructure of the SLT at Maghull is part of this arrangement which will in turn provide some financing to create more capacity at our school. This will allow some of our middle leaders to take some of Mr Dolly's day to day responsibilities for the development of teaching and other roles at this school. This also has the benefit of helping us retain some of our middle leadership by providing them with more opportunities within our school to develop teaching.*

2) Will there be staff redundancies?

*There will be no redundancies as a result of the proposal. All English schools face budget pressures at the moment and each school will have to balance its own budget each year, but this sponsorship arrangement would not lead in itself to any redundancies.*

3) Will the teaching staff at one site be expected to operate over both sites? How will this be managed so the continuity of teaching is not impacted?

*Teaching staff at one site will not be expected to operate over both sites. Range High Staff will continue to teach here as will Maghull High staff at their own school. If the enlarged Trust is established, any new staff appointed would technically be employed by the Trust rather than by an individual school, and I cannot rule out occasional circumstances where that might lead to staff requesting to work across both schools (if Range had a vacancy for a part time Maths teacher and so did Maghull High it might be an arrangement the member of staff would want) in which case the timetablers would ensure it was done to ensure full or half days at the same site as we do currently with our own part time staff.*

4) I am unclear what the teaching structure will be - one SLT for both, one each, one Department over both schools, one each?

*The Teaching Faculties at each schools will remain with their own schools, as will the Senior Leadership Teams. I will remain Headteacher of this school. Mr Dolly will take strategic responsibility for the development of teaching across both schools and mentor his counterpart there, as I will mentor the new Acting Headteacher. Some finance is available to enable this to happen, and it will incentivise retention of one or two of our middle leaders as*

*they will have the opportunity to take on some extensions to their current roles. I will ensure that the quality of the teaching our pupils experience is unaffected.*

5) Has a risk assessment on the merger been done and can it be shared?

*The risk assessment is in progress and will be considered by the Governing Body when it is completed. It looks at financial and legal risk, as well as the "educational" risk. I can say quite honestly that the biggest risk to Range High School is if the proposal were to weaken the quality of education here. However, I have assured Governors, just as we did when we became a teaching school, that the work of those involved would not weaken the quality of our daily delivery of excellent teaching. I believe that has been the case, and that, in fact, the opposite has happened. Good teachers have been able to reflect on their practice and research best practice in order to pass it on to others. That has made them better and enabled them to pass it on to colleagues in our school as well as those in other schools.*

6) What are the estimated Finance savings through centralising?

*We are in the early stages of looking at the savings through centralised catering, grounds maintenance, legal, HR and financial services. On immediate financial effect has been that Maghull High has restructured its leadership team following the retirement of the former Headteacher. That has led to a saving which they are using to purchase teacher education from us, which we in turn can use for staff development here.*

7) How will the benefits of the merger be realised in terms of ..?

- Teaching?

*Staff will continue to teach their classes at Range High. Some staff already have designated time on their timetables for the research and dissemination of good practice in teaching, which will continue. Over time, at the beginning of each school year we create a staffing deployment model which build in those opportunities and continue to ensure that the the staff in the classroom here deliver to the high standards we expect.*

- Learning?

*The research that our staff do in order to coach their colleagues at Maghull makes them better at their job and will also be conveyed to our staff. This in turn spreads that good practice further in our school.*

*We do not yet have a list of which additional extra curricular activities we will be able to offer, but Maghull High do offer different trips and extra curricular learning experiences to us, and if logistics allow we want to offer those to our pupils as well. This is not specifically about sports or clubs during the day but wider experiences such as field trips, incoming speakers and visits to events.*

*With regard to curriculum pathways, there are some courses which Maghull High run post 16 which we don't which may be suitable for some of our pupils, especially in the Btec suite rather than at A-Level. Also, in these times of austerity schools have to make difficult decisions about whether they can run some courses because of small numbers, and it may be that we can run jointly subjects which we may not be able to run individually.*

- Leadership?

*There is no proposed changes to the structure of the schools at this point. There may be more changes at Maghull as we gradually look at implementing Range High policies and ways of working there to help them improve. In our school, the new role for Mr Dolly will lead to some opportunities for middle leaders to step up to some day to day responsibilities for the development of teaching across the school. This will give us the opportunity to retain some of our best staff when their ambition may lead them to consider jobs elsewhere.*

*The proposed arrangement will add more focus and capacity to our work as a Teaching School. The staff at Range who do teaching school work at our school already have that time built into their timetable. As we create our staffing model each year we do so to ensure our pupils are taught by excellent teachers, and also that some teachers have time to research and focus on new ways to deliver their subjects and potentially similar subjects. This could be about using technology, or about helping pupils to memorise key facts, or about how to deliver new items of content in the new GCSEs, for example. Having more of this work going on through a commitment to supporting Maghull High teachers will mean our other staff can benefit from this research and this training as well.*

*The quality of what we do here will not be weakened by this arrangement. Instead, over time, an increase in the focus on quality teaching, which we have already begun as a Teaching School, will pay dividends for our teachers and by extension our pupils.*

Parent/Carer B:

We are writing to you in response to the consultation paper that we have been sent regarding the proposed new relationship between Range High School and Maghull High School.

The consultation paper states the following as benefits to pupils learning:

- Pupils will benefit from a wider range of teaching styles
- Pupils will have access to a greater range of extra-curricular activities
- Pupils will have access to a wider range of academic pathways after GCSE

We would like further clarification regarding some of these 'benefits'.

Firstly, in relation to the notion of a 'wider range of teaching styles', are you suggesting that teachers from Maghull High School will be going into Range to teach some of the lessons? If so, this is not something that we would welcome.

*The proposed arrangement will add more focus and capacity to our work as a Teaching School. The staff at Range who do teaching school work at our school already have that time built into their timetable. As we create our staffing model each year we do so to ensure our pupils are taught by excellent teachers, and also that some teachers have time to research and focus on new ways to deliver their subjects and potentially similar subjects. This could be about using technology, or about helping pupils to memorise key facts, or about how to deliver new items of content in the new GCSEs, for example. Having more of this work going on through a commitment to supporting Maghull High teachers will mean our other staff can benefit from this research and this training as well.*

*We are absolutely not suggesting teachers from Maghull High will come to teach at Range High School. In fact, our pupils will see virtually no overt change. They will continue to be taught by our staff and we will not change our ethos or way of doing things. The arrangement will, however, behind the scenes, give us more capacity to focus on the craft of teaching which will, over time, become part of the training of all our staff, thus continuing our improvement cycle.*

Secondly on the notion of 'extra curricular activities'. When we looked around all of the schools that were available to us, we selected Range on the already high level of extra curricular opportunities. There is no need for anything further. What precisely can Maghull High offer that isn't already on offer at Range, that would make a merger of this nature appealing to parents and children?

*I agree that we currently have a wide range of extra curricular activities, but that list is finite. It may be that staff from Maghull organise visits or bring in visitors or run activities which we can extend to pupils in our school, if logistics allow.*

Finally, the paper mentions the access to a 'wider range of academic pathways', again I would like further detail on this point, as a school like Maghull does not offer the range of academic options that Range does at Sixth Form, Maghull having decimated its sixth form offer over the last 10 years.

*With regard to curriculum pathways, there are some courses which Maghull High run post 16 which we don't, which may be suitable for some of our pupils, especially in the Btec suite rather than at A-Level. Also, in these times of austerity schools have to make difficult decisions about whether they can run some courses because of small numbers, and it may be that we can run jointly subjects which we may not be able to run individually.*

We feel that a school of Range's calibre cannot benefit from an association with such a poorly led and managed school as Maghull High. Should this merger go ahead, we would be very concerned that the leadership team at Range would have their time and strategic leadership focus diluted from the job at hand by having to work across two schools, one of which is very weak and would need a great deal of input to get it to where it should be.

*Maghull High School has indeed been judged overall as requiring improvement in its last OFSTED inspection, but please also note that some areas of the school are judged to be good. My role in this proposed arrangement will be to remain as Head of Range High but*

*also to mentor the Acting Head at Maghull and provide some capacity to develop the quality of teaching at the school (using those Range High staff who already have this as part of their duties, as described above). A restructure of the SLT at Maghull is part of this proposal, which will in turn provide some financing to create more capacity at our school. This also has the benefit of helping us retain some of our middle leadership by providing them with more opportunities within our school to develop teaching.*