

To: The parents of all students at Greenwood Dale school

Dear Parent

In July 2007 the Secretary of State for Education, the Rt Hon Ed Balls, announced that successful and high-performing schools could sponsor their own academy.

Greenwood Dale school, in Sneinton, is one of the first two schools in the country to take advantage of this new opportunity. It is proposed that Greenwood Dale will be the sponsor of a new Academy for Nottingham City.

Experian, a well regarded, highly successful international company and the second largest private employer in Nottingham, will be a 'business supporter', providing £500,000 funding to the project.

The academy will be created to serve the areas presently served by Greenwood Dale school and Elliott Durham school. It will be on a new site in brand new buildings.

The new site for the academy is not yet finalised, but negotiations are underway. The site will be well placed to serve the needs of both the Greenwood Dale and Elliott Durham school communities.

The particular strength of this academy will be the strong links between Greenwood Dale as the lead sponsor, Elliott Durham school and Experian as the business supporter.

Experian is a company which is heavily committed to supporting the development of education in its local communities. In 2006, Experian staff donated 600 hours of their time supporting children's reading in city primary schools and also donated £67,000 to Blue Bell Hill school in St Anns to help create an Environmental Centre.

Further donations from Experian include £150,000 to Djanogly City Academy to develop innovative new qualifications for 14 -19 year olds and £75,000 as a founding partner of 'Cares for Kids Breakfast Clubs' to help provide a healthy breakfast and a stable start to the day for the City's primary school pupils.

Greenwood Dale will draw on Experian's experience of major building projects and IT infrastructure support in the development phase of the project and its business and ICT skills to support students to develop business, work and citizenship skills once the academy is open.

It will offer 1650 11-16 places (330 in each year) and 450 post-16 places. At present Greenwood Dale has 230 students in each year with over 200 in the sixth form. Elliott Durham has between 60 and 80 students in each year and has no sixth form.

The new academy will specialise in mathematics, literacy and digital media. Mathematics is a particular strength of Greenwood Dale school. The standard of literacy of children joining both Greenwood Dale and Elliott Durham schools at age 11 is a significant cause for concern and needs very special focus.

The proposed opening dates for the new academy will be September 2009 (in existing buildings) and 2011 in new buildings on the new site.

The Vision for the development will be of three 'schools' within the academy to ensure a community where 2100 students and 250 staff can work together efficiently and harmoniously. These 'schools' will be divided by age; years 7 and 8, years 9, 10 and 11 and post-16. At present both Greenwood Dale and Elliott Durham run successful year 7 bases.

The academy will be committed to the highest of standards. High expectations will be the norm as will be the quality of support for students. Both existing schools have excellent relationships with local universities and the Djanogly City academy. It will also work closely with other post-16 providers in the city, including the two new northern academies.

At present we are at the 'proposal stage'. The Secretary of State for Education has agreed that we now move to the 'feasibility' stage. This is where we ask for the views of parents, staff, governors and members of the local community about these proposals.

Over the next few months you will receive formal details about the academy proposals and how you can have your say about them. There will also be meetings set up so you can hear more about our ideas and aspirations and to give you the opportunity to ask any questions you may have.

Yours sincerely

B S Day
Headteacher