

## **The Development of the Durham City Academy and the Sixth Form Centre**

You may be aware that Durham County Council has received approval from the Government to open three Academies in County Durham – one in Consett, one in Stanley and one in the City of Durham. The Academy in the City of Durham will bring together the existing Belmont Community School and Arts College and Durham Gilesgate Sports College and Sixth Form Centre. The Sixth Form Centre as part of the current Durham Gilesgate Sports College and Sixth Form Centre, will, therefore, become part of the City of Durham Academy.

The Academy is due to replace the two schools from the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2012. The Academy is being sponsored by the Durham Excellence in Education Partnership (DEEP) with Durham University as the lead sponsor.

I wish to stress that the Governors of Durham Gilesgate Sports College and Sixth Form Centre who currently have responsibility for the Sixth Form Centre have embraced the Academy and see the involvement of a World Class University as a logical step to take the already very good education provided forward. Durham University's commitment and expertise will be invaluable in developing the very best provision possible in the years ahead.

My purpose in providing the update is to draw attention to the implications for prospective students and parents of the development of Academy.

The plan that has been approved by the Government will release funding that will see a major building programme at the Sixth Form Centre. Early indications suggest that building will begin in 2014 and be completed in 2015. This is a long way off and won't have any impact on current or students who join the Centre up until 2013. Once completed the Sixth Form Centre will have just about the best Sixth Form provision in the Country.

In the lead up to the Academy opening in September 2012 and the period that follows until the new buildings open, students and parents will not notice much change in the way the Sixth Form Centre is run and led. The curriculum and courses offered will continue to expand in line with demand and the Centre will remain committed to the highest standards possible.

There are a number of formal procedures that have to be completed by 2012 that will enable the Academy to come into existence. Most of these have been completed and include an Education Plan that will be made available to any interested parents – probably by the Autumn of this year. The Local Authority also need to serve closure notices on the two existing schools Belmont and Gilesgate and consult in order to open the Academy in 2012. These notices will be issued on May 13<sup>th</sup> 2010. The notices clearly state that the existing schools will be replaced by the Academy. Once this process is completed detailed planning will begin to bring the Academy into existence.

If any prospective parent or student wishes to know more about the development or has a query please do not hesitate to contact the Headteacher – Mr M Brett.

Yours sincerely

Mr M Brett  
Headteacher

**Note: Alternative copies with enhanced presentation are available upon request.**