

Best for the West



The newsletter of the Partnership between Gateshead Council and Hookergate and Ryton Schools

£90 million to rebuild four schools in the West

"I am delighted to tell you that following the assessment of the Readiness to Deliver (RTD) submission and the RTD review panel your local authority has been selected to start Building Schools for the Future (BSF) as part of a group of local authorities joining the programme prior to the end of this financial year."

Extract from letter to Roger Kelly, Chief Executive, Gateshead Council from Tim Byles Chief Executive Partnerships for Schools

What does this mean?

Essentially central government has agreed that Gateshead Council can now access funding to rebuild/ refurbish Hookergate/Ryton, Whickham School, St Thomas More and Joseph Swan. In particular it means for Ryton/ Hookergate that the vision of the council's cabinet, **"A single community school that offers the highest quality educational opportunities for 11-19 year olds through an inclusive approach. This vision can be best achieved by retaining Ryton Comprehensive School, but developing its offer to the whole community by incorporating the best features and many strengths of Hookergate School. A new school building is proposed on a new site chosen to maximise opportunities for the whole of the West Area,"** can now go ahead as quickly as possible.

What's next?

The Governors of the two schools and the Council, working together, need to take some important decisions so progress can be made. It will be an essential part of the decision making process that a range of people will be asked for their views on a range of issues.

In particular this will mean:

- Clarifying how the two schools, at all levels, will increasingly work together on a range of issues as we move towards the creation of a new school.
- Bringing the two school communities together to discuss the vision they have for 21st Century Education and the impact this has on the design of the new building.
- Deciding on the best location for the new building based on a rigorous evaluation of potential sites.
- Producing a clear timeline of key actions, events and milestones for the project

This will be an exciting but challenging time for all involved in the two schools as we move towards creating one school that best serves the needs of all the young people and communities in the west for many years to come.

This programme is not just about providing brand new, state of the art education facilities for young people and the community, it is also about providing new opportunities and helping to raise achievement even further - for everyone.