


The meeting

- Short presentation about:
 - The Review process
 - The Options which affect this school
- Your comments



The Primary Places Review:


September 2004
Audit Commission report on Surplus Places

October 2004
Council begins Primary Places Review

December 2005
Children's Services inspection says

- there are too many surplus places in the primary sector
- progress in reducing surplus places has been slow, but a clear strategy is now being implemented which is likely to involve some school closures


This has resulted in a number of closures and amalgamations



The Primary Places Review


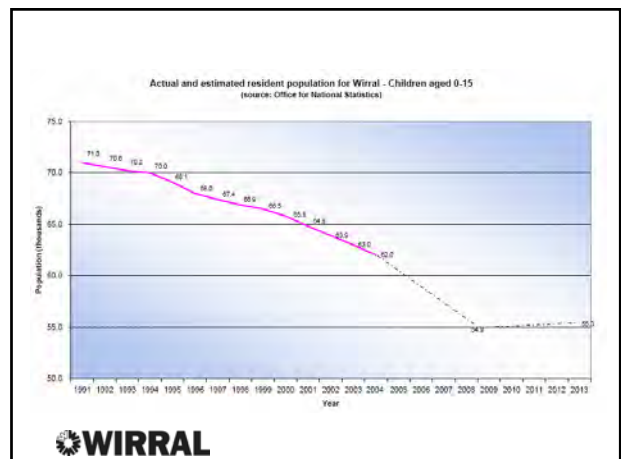
October 2008
Council begins reviewing North Birkenhead, Beechwood, South Birkenhead, Central Birkenhead, Noctorum and Prenton

June 2009
Consultation begins on options for North Birkenhead

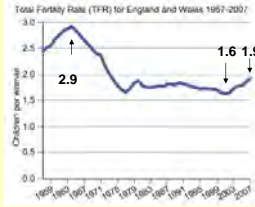


Important to:

- Focus on the needs of current and future children not schools
- Use the opportunity to further improve learning environments, teaching and therefore standards
- Base decisions on clear evidence that is openly shared
- Trust that we all have the best interest of students at the heart
- Determine what will work, what is or isn't sustainable and what will not work

Birth rate - Nationwide



The average family should settle at 1.8 children

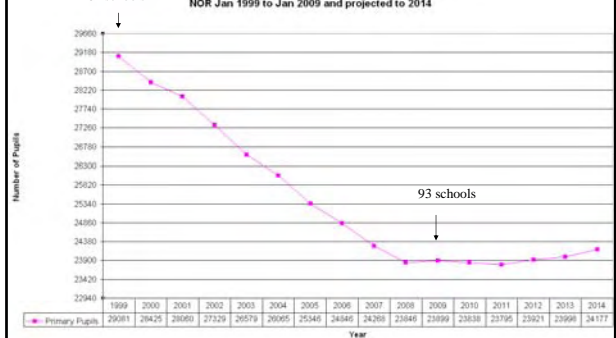
Right now, a third of 30-35 yr olds have no children

1981	2008
Average age to have first child	
24	30
Women who never have children	
10%	19%



Source: Office for National Statistics

Wirral Primary Schools



Surplus places in Wirral

In 2009

13% empty places

- By 2014 if we do nothing
 - 11% surplus places
 - 1 in 4 schools will have more than 25% surplus places



Surplus places – why do we need to act?

- Audit Commission says surplus space in schools should be between 5% and 10%
- Above 10%, wasting money supporting empty classrooms
- 4%-5% allows degree of parental choice
- No school should have more than 25% surplus – annual return to Government



Creative removal of surplus

LA and Schools have created:

- ICT suites
- Libraries
- Parents rooms
- Pre-school playgroups
- Afterschool/Breakfast clubs
- Adult Learning facilities
- Bases for other services
- Children's Centres

And removed:

- Temporary mobiles



Many complicated factors

- Surplus places
- Small schools
- Standards
- Location
- Where parents choose to send their children
- Value for money
- Catchment zones
- Housing changes
- Traffic and transport
- Denominational issues



How small is small?

- School Organisation Plan (2003) says under 210
- Wirral Policy (2005) says under 180
- DCSF (2005) says under 150



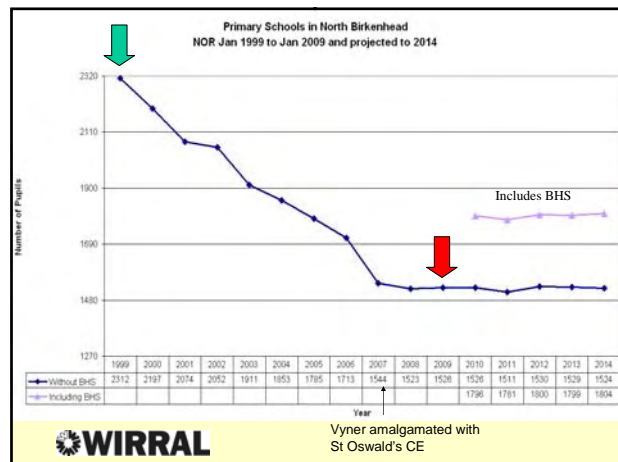
Small Schools

- Financial – maintaining small school is at the expense of all children
- Organisational issues – mixed age classes
- Additional burden on staff
- Curriculum issues



North Birkenhead

Bidston Avenue Primary
 Cathcart Street Primary
 Cole Street Primary
 Portland Primary
 The Priory CE (Aided) Primary
 Holy Cross Catholic (Aided) Primary
 Our Lady and St Edward's Catholic (Aided) Primary
 St Laurence's Catholic



Surplus places in North Birkenhead Area

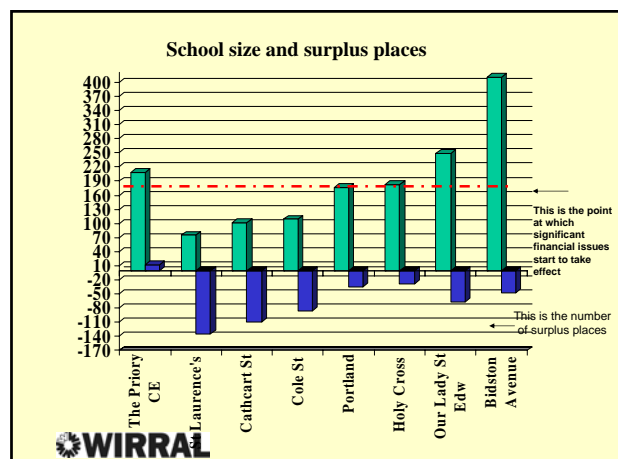
In 2009

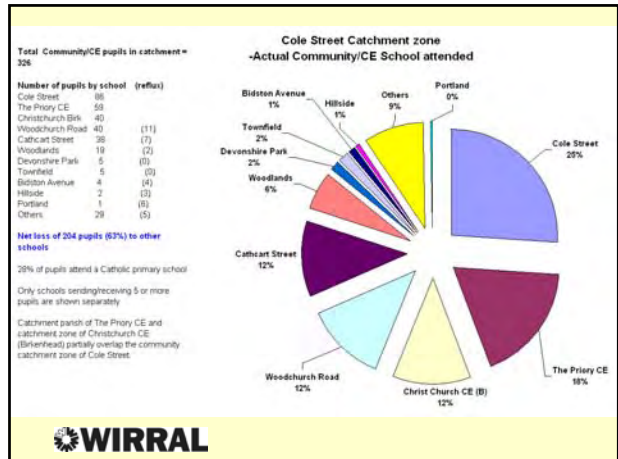
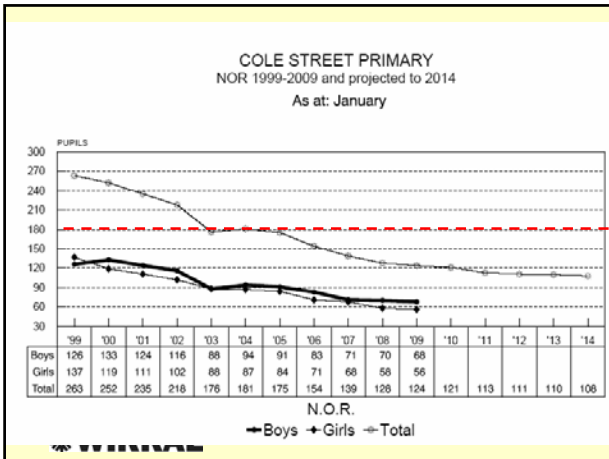
20% surplus places

By 2014

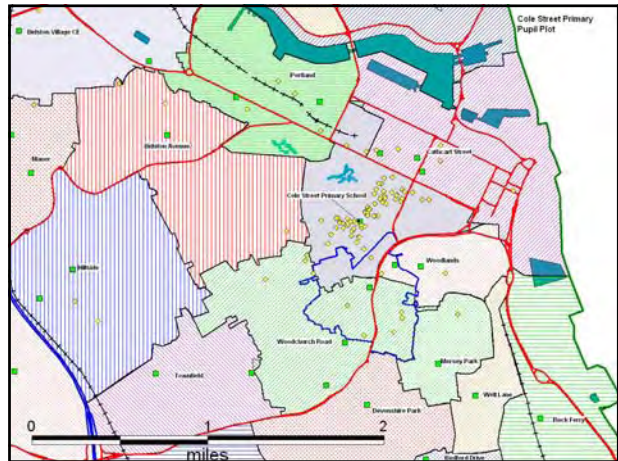
20% surplus places

We must act to reduce surplus places





- ### What Ofsted Said (2009)
- We are not making these proposals because the school is failing; we are very aware of the many strengths of the school
 - For example the last inspection report included statements like:
 - School provides a satisfactory education and pupils achieve satisfactorily overall
 - Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and overall personal development are satisfactory
 - Pupils are well mannered and friendly and their behaviour is generally good.
 - They are attentive in lessons and keen to learn, especially in practical activities.
 - Attendance is broadly average.
 - Pupils feel safe in school and know that adult help is there, when needed.
 - Children make satisfactory progress as they move through the school.
 - Standards at KS1 are well below average. Teaching in KS1 has been strengthened and is bringing about better progress.
 - Standards in Y6 are broadly average overall but are inconsistent. The school recognises that mathematics standards throughout the school are too low.
 - The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.
 - The curriculum enables pupils to achieve adequately in most subjects.
 - Leadership and management are satisfactory.
 - Every child receives the pastoral care and support they require.
 - This is a very inclusive school. The school promotes community cohesion well.
 - Governors know the school well.
- WIRRAL**



- ### Possible options for North Birkenhead
- A1: Closure of Cathcart Street Primary
 - A2: Closure of Cole Street Primary
 - A3: Amalgamation of Cathcart Street and Cole Street Primary on a single existing site, or on a new site
 - B: Closure of St Laurence's Catholic Primary School
- WIRRAL**

- ### A1 – Closure of Cathcart Street Primary
- Small school
 - High surplus places
 - 59% of children in the catchment already attend other schools, mainly The Priory CE
 - Cathcart and Cole Street 0.5 miles apart
 - 28 other primary schools within 2 miles
 - Building improvements would be made to receiving schools
 - Catchments rezoned
-
- WIRRAL**

If any option for change is approved:

- Places for all the children in local schools
- Parents say which school they would prefer their child to attend
- Admissions criteria place the children
- Children move together so will have friends in their new school
- Enhancements to receiving schools
- Community/controlled catchment areas revised
- Staff redeployed
- Council decide future of any closed community site

Earliest date for any option is September 2010



Remember:

- The Council must address these issues
- A decision has not yet been made
- This is not about saving money for taxpayers
- We must ensure schools are sustainable in order to secure the best in teaching, learning, curriculum and standards
- It is about spending money more wisely
- We must find sensible and effective solutions based on all the factors involved.

