

## MATTERS TO BE SPECIFIED IN SECTION 15 PROPOSALS TO DISCONTINUE A SCHOOL

*Insert the information asked for in the expandable box below each section.*

### Contact details

1. The name of the local education authority or governing body publishing the proposals, and a contact address, and the name of the school it is proposed that should be discontinued.

Wirral Council, Town Hall, Brighton Street, Wallasey, Wirral, CH44 8ED  
Arrowe Hill Primary School

### Implementation

2. The date when it is planned that the proposals will be implemented, or where the proposals are to be implemented in stages, information about each stage and the date on which each stage is planned to be implemented.

It is planned to implement this proposal from 31<sup>st</sup> August 2009.

### Consultation

3. A statement to the effect that all applicable statutory requirements to consult in relation to the proposals were complied with.

All statutory consultation requirements relating to this proposal have been complied with. Public consultations were held during January to March 2008, including a consultation meeting at Arrowe Hill Primary School on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2008 and at the neighbouring Fender Primary school on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2008. All statutory consultees were consulted in accordance with the relevant DCSF guidance and statutory requirements.

4. Evidence of the consultation before the proposals were published including—
- (a) a list of persons and/or parties who were consulted;
  - (b) minutes of all public consultation meetings;
  - (c) the views of the persons consulted; and
  - (d) copies of all consultation documents and a statement of how these were made available.

See Appendices A and B.

### Objectives

5. The objectives of the proposal.

To discontinue Arrowe Hill Primary School.

## Standards and Diversity

6. A statement and supporting evidence indicating how the proposals will impact on the standards, diversity and quality of education in the area.

Arrowe Hill Primary had 115 pupils on roll in January 2008, about a third of the number on roll 12 years ago (343). This is largely the result of the falling population, although 73% of potential community school parents living in the catchment zone choose to send their children elsewhere, principally to Woodchurch CE Primary School (37%, 101 pupils), Overchurch Infant and Junior (13%, 34 pupils) and Fender Primary School (11%, 30 pupils). There are a large number of surplus places (45%, 95 places), and this situation is not predicted to improve over the next five years.

A three year average of the overall value added score (2005 to 2007) shows that Arrowe Hill, Fender, Woodchurch CE and Overchurch Junior are making the expected rate of progress (100.8, 99.7, 100.0 and 100.3 respectively) with no significant difference in performance.

Ofsted reports of these schools are attached as Appendix D. The Woodchurch area will retain parental choice of a Community, Church of England and Catholic primary school following closure of Arrowe Hill Primary School.

Small schools inevitably cost more to maintain than larger schools. Wirral policy says that schools become increasingly more difficult to maintain as they fall below 180 pupils on roll. DCSF guidance says that "Schools with fewer than 150 pupils may be educationally and financially sustainable only through substantial subsidies via their local authorities funding formula".

Financially, the total sum available for spending on all our children does not increase if we choose as an Authority to organise our children in more schools than is necessary for the efficient and effective delivery of education. It follows that the maintenance of small schools, where this is not necessary, comes at the expense of all other children. In 2006-2007, expenditure per pupil at Arrowe Hill was £5,171 compared with the Wirral average of £3,249.

Closure of Arrowe Hill Primary School saves money for the overall schools budget. The saving is ring-fenced to the Wirral schools budget, which allows more funding to be spent on all Wirral's children and young people in order to raise standards across the borough.

## Provision for 16 -19 year olds

7. Where the school proposed to be discontinued provides sixth form education, how the proposals will impact on—

- (a) the educational or training achievements;
- (b) participation in education or training; and
- (c) the range of educational or training opportunities,

for 16-19 year olds in the area.

Not applicable.

## Need for places

8. A statement and supporting evidence about the need for places in the area including whether there is sufficient capacity to accommodate displaced pupils.

There are 21 alternative primary schools (counting Infant and Junior schools as a single school) within a 2 mile radius, at which in January 2008 there were 590 surplus places, compared to the number on roll of 115 pupils.

The number on roll at January 2008 at Arrowe Hill Primary was 115 pupils, and in September 2008 had fallen to 63 pupils. Excluding those pupils in Year 6 who will have moved onto secondary school in September 2009, there are expected to be 50 pupils to transfer to an alternative local primary school

At alternative primary schools in the Woodchurch planning area alone, there were 86 surplus places in January 2008. Dependant on parental preferences, additional accommodation may be required locally at Fender Primary School.

9. Where the school has a religious character, a statement about the impact of the proposed closure on the balance of denominational provision in the area and the impact on parental choice.

Not applicable.

## Current School Information

10. Information as to the numbers, age range, sex and special educational needs of pupils (distinguishing between boarding and day pupils) for whom provision is made at the school.

Arrowe Hill is a mixed sex community primary school providing 210 places for day pupils aged 4 to 11. In January 2008 there were 115 pupils on roll, falling to 63 pupils in September 2008.

## Displaced Pupils

11. Details of the schools or further education colleges which pupils at the school for whom provision is to be discontinued will be offered places, including—

- (a) any interim arrangements;
- (b) where the school included provision that is recognised by the local education authority as reserved for children with special educational needs, the alternative provision to be made for pupils in the school's reserved provision; and
- (c) in the case of special schools, alternative provision made by local education authorities other than the authority which maintains the school.

All current and projected pupils from Arrowe Hill Primary could be accommodated at primary schools within a reasonable distance without requiring any new classroom provision. See S.8 above.

The catchment area of the school is to be divided between Fender Primary School and Overchurch Infant and Junior School. Proposed changes to the catchment areas are attached as Appendix C.

**12.** Details of any other measures proposed to be taken to increase the number of school or further education college places available in consequence of the proposed discontinuance.

Dependant on parental preferences, additional places may be required at Fender Primary School. The current capacity of the Fender building is 210 pupils. If all former Arrowe Hill pupils on roll at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2009 opted to transfer to Fender Primary School, it is estimated that two additional classrooms would be required, bringing the capacity to 270 pupils.

### **Impact on the Community**

**13.** A statement and supporting evidence about the impact on the community and any measures proposed to mitigate any adverse impact.

Large numbers of parents living within Arrowe Hill's zone already choose either Fender Primary or Overchurch Infant and Junior Schools, and there are 21 alternative primary schools within a 2 mile radius of the school. The catchment zone of Arrowe Hill Primary School following closure would, in the main, be allocated to Fender Primary, with the exception of a small area at the "top" of the zone which could be allocated to Overchurch Infant and Junior School. The intention of this division was to better match where parents live and choose to send their children to school. Parents currently in-zone for Overchurch Infant and Junior schools would continue to be in-zone and would be unaffected by this change. The proposed catchments are attached as Appendix C.

**14.** Details of extended services the school offered and what it is proposed for these services once the school has discontinued.

The school offers various out of school clubs including football, badminton and cricket, art, choir, ICT and French. A breakfast club operates from Arrowe Hill Primary School, with a joint afterschool club being held in collaboration with Woodchurch CE Primary School at the Woodchurch CE site. The school has also operated Family Learning courses in literacy, numeracy, ICT and parenting skills.

The afterschool club based at Woodchurch CE Primary School would not be affected by the closure of Arrowe Hill. Similar out of school activities are held at other primary schools in the area, and would be expected to continue.

For example, Fender Primary offers out of school clubs for football, baseball, netball, rugby, golf, athletics, yoga, dance, boxercise, choir, ICT, recorders, reading and study, art, sewing and cooking. The school participates in the Children's University. Various Family Learning courses are also operated, including parenting skills. A breakfast or afterschool club is not offered at present, with parents being directed to the facility at St Michael and All Angels Catholic Primary School, however, the school is currently undertaking a survey of parents to establish whether there is sufficient demand for before/afterschool care at the school itself. If Arrowe Hill were to close, funding for the breakfast club could be transferred to Fender Primary School.

### **Travel**

**15.** Details of length and journeys to alternative provision.

All former Arrowe Hill Primary pupils on roll at this date who opt to transfer to Fender Primary School, regardless of home address, will be guaranteed a place at Fender Primary School. Arrowe Hill Primary School is 0.6 miles from Fender Primary School.

Of the 50 pupils expected to be on roll at September 2009, four would travel more than 2 miles to both Fender or Overchurch Infant/Junior, but all four already travel more than 2 miles to Arrowe Hill Primary, so can be expected to use whichever means of transport they are already utilising. Three pupils would be potentially be entitled to an in-zone place at Overchurch Infant or Junior School, should parents decide to apply. For just one pupil, the distance to Fender Primary is significantly further than the distance to Arrowe Hill Primary School.

An aerial photo showing the relative positions of these three schools is included as Appendix E.

### Walking Distances

NCyearActual	Arrowe Hill	Fender	Overchurch Infant/Junior
0	2.36	2.28	2.43
0	0.22	0.51	1.09
0	0.38	0.53	0.91
0	0.57	0.26	1.41
0	0.64	0.32	1.28
0*	0.66	0.8	0.87
1	0.38	0.53	0.91
1	0.36	0.63	1.04
1	0.24	0.73	1.13
1	1	0.45	1.8
1	0.33	0.63	1.09
1	0.45	0.46	1.41
2	2.36	2.28	2.43
2*	0.53	0.68	0.83
2	0.4	0.74	1
2	0.39	0.42	1.08
2	0.48	0.27	1.32
2	0.57	0.26	1.41
2	2.73	2.89	3.64
2	0.07	0.57	1.2
2	0.34	0.8	0.88
2	0.43	0.88	1.38
3	0.66	0.34	1.3
3	0.4	0.74	1
3	0.71	0.16	1.52
3	0.36	0.63	1.04
3	0.43	0.6	0.99
3	0.06	0.59	1.17
3	0.31	0.83	0.91
3*	0.54	0.95	0.77
3	2.02	1.94	2.1
3	0.34	0.7	1.37
4	0.41	0.71	0.97
4	0.22	0.51	1.09
4	0.38	0.53	0.91
4	0.36	0.63	1.04
4	0.42	0.63	0.97

4	0.09	0.59	1.22
4	0.57	0.2	1.23
4	0.3	0.59	1.17
5	3	2.92	3.07
5	0.25	0.67	1.12
5	0.66	0.34	1.3
5	1.16	1.54	0.89
5	0.42	0.76	0.98
5	0.25	0.62	1.28
5	0.45	0.56	1.47
5	0.42	0.73	0.87
5	0.24	0.73	1.3
5	0.52	0.54	1.1
5	2.16	2.54	1.4
6	2.36	2.28	2.43
6	0.81	0.26	1.61
6	1.16	1.54	0.89
6	0.1	0.64	1.12
6	0.28	0.57	1.08
6	0.31	0.6	1.08
6	1.88	1.8	1.96
6	0.23	0.69	1.26
6	0.64	0.32	1.28
6	0.36	0.68	1.01
6	0.47	0.36	1.16
6	2.16	2.54	1.4

Under 1 mile
Under 1.5 miles
Under 2 miles
Over 2 miles

\* indicates current home address would be within Overchurch Infant/Junior zone under new catchment arrangements

**16.** The proposed arrangements for travel of displaced pupils to other schools including how they will help to work against increased car use.

The distance to Fender Primary is not significantly longer than the current journey distance to Arrowe Hill Primary School and pupils can be expected to continue to travel to school by whichever means they are currently using, with no significant increase in car use.

Pupils may transfer to any local primary school, subject to availability of places and the admission arrangements published in the Authority's information booklet for parents.

There are a total of 21 alternative primary schools (counting Infant and Junior schools as a primary school) within a 2 mile radius.

#### **Related Proposals.**

**17.** A statement as to whether in the opinion of the local education authority or governing body, the proposals are related to any other proposals which may have been, are, or are about to be published.

There are no other proposals which are, or are about to be, published in relation to this

proposal.

### **Rural Primary Schools**

**18.** Where proposals relate to a rural primary school designated as such by an order made for the purposes of section 15 of the EIA 2006, a statement that the local education authority or the governing body (as the case may be) considered—

- (a) the likely effect of discontinuance of the school on the local community;
- (b) the availability, and likely cost to the local education authority, of transport to other schools;
- (c) any increase in the use of motor vehicles which is likely to result from the discontinuance of the school, and the likely effects of any such increase; and
- (d) any alternatives to the discontinuance of the school,

as required by section 15(4) of the EIA 2006.

Not applicable

### **Maintained nursery schools**

**19.** Where proposals relate to the discontinuance of a maintained nursery school, a statement setting out—

- (a) the consideration that has been given to developing the school into a children's centre and the grounds for not doing so;
- (b) the local education authority's assessment of the quality and quantity of the alternative provision compared to the school proposed to be discontinued and the proposed arrangements to ensure the expertise and specialism continues to be available; and
- (c) the accessibility and convenience of replacement provision for local parents.

Not applicable

### **Special educational provision**

**20.** Where existing provision for pupils with special educational needs is being discontinued, a statement as to how the local education authority or the governing body believes the proposal is likely to lead to improvements in the standard, quality and/or range of the educational provision for these children.

Not applicable