



**Wirral's Children  
Phase 3**

Consultation in Pensby and  
Thingwall  
January-March 2007



## 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 reviewing North, South, Central Birkenhead and Beechwood

**October 2005**  
Proposals published for North Birkenhead, Beechwood and South Birkenhead




## The Primary Places Review:

**October 2005**  
Council begins reviewing Bebington, Spital, Thornton Hough, Bromborough and Eastham

**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


**April 2006**  
Proposals published for Bromborough Pool Primary  
Proposal for St Mary's CE (Eastham) published January 2007



## The Primary Places Review


**October 2006**  
Council begins reviewing Heswall, Pensby and Thingwall, Leasowe, South Wallasey, North Wallasey, Greasby and Upton

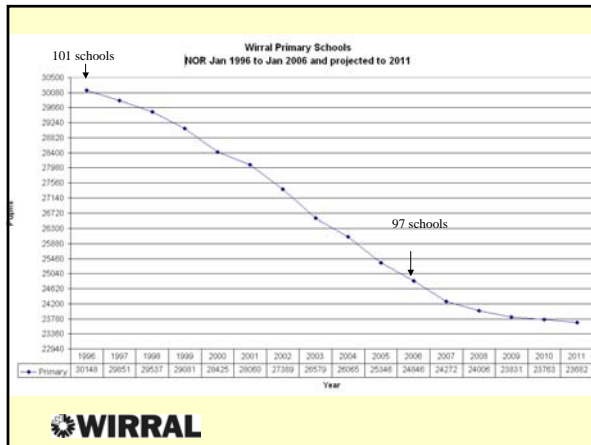
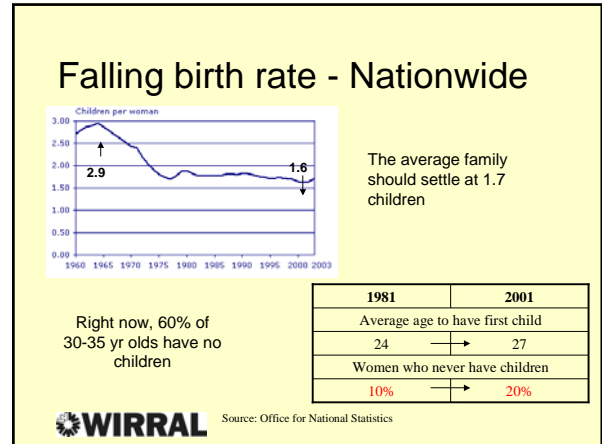
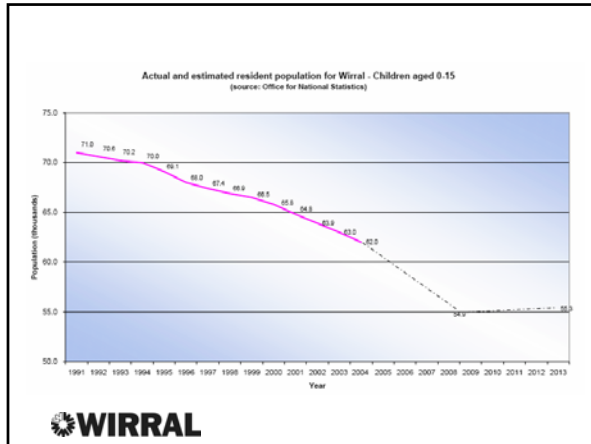
**January 2007**  
Consultation begins on options for Pensby and Thingwall, Leasowe and South Wallasey



## Important to:

- Focus on the needs of children not schools
- Think about the next generation
- Share information
- Trust one another
- What will work, and what will not work?





### Surplus places in Wirral

In 2006  
**12% empty places**

Spending £4.2 million pounds or £165 per primary pupil on empty spaces

By 2011  
**16% surplus places**

**1 in 4 schools will have more than 25% surplus places**

**WIRRAL**

### 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

**WIRRAL**

### 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

And removed:

- Temporary mobiles

**WIRRAL**

## 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
- DfES (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



## Infant and Junior schools

Benefits to all-through primary schools include:

- Parents go through admissions process just once in primary phase
- Fewer journeys for parents with younger and older children
- Children do not change schools at age 7, avoiding transitional dip in progress
- Staff get to know children from start of education
- Assessment of children's attainment and tracking of individual progress from age 4 to 11 is uniform and consistent



## Infant and Junior schools

- Schools can design and plan a whole school curriculum covering the full primary age range
- KS1 and KS2 staff can pool skills and knowledge
- Younger and older children can act as mentors and buddies, supporting personal/social development
- Maintaining one institution rather than two saves money for the overall schools budget – one lump sum, single headteacher etc.
- Should look at possibility of amalgamation as opportunities arise



## What has happened so far

120 classroom equivalents removed without closing any schools

**Phase 1** - Birkenhead and Beechwood

Amalgamation of Prenton Infant and Junior

Amalgamation of St Oswald's CE and Vyner Primary

Closure of The Dell Primary

**Phase 2** - Bromborough, Eastham, Bebington, Spital and Thornton Hough

Closure of Bromborough Pool Primary (Summer 2007)

Also, mobile removal, pre-school re-location


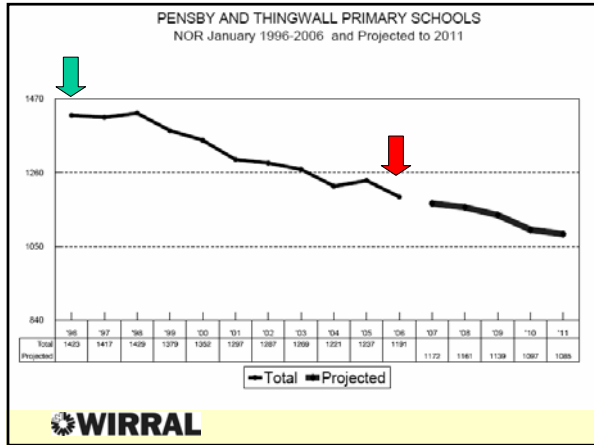
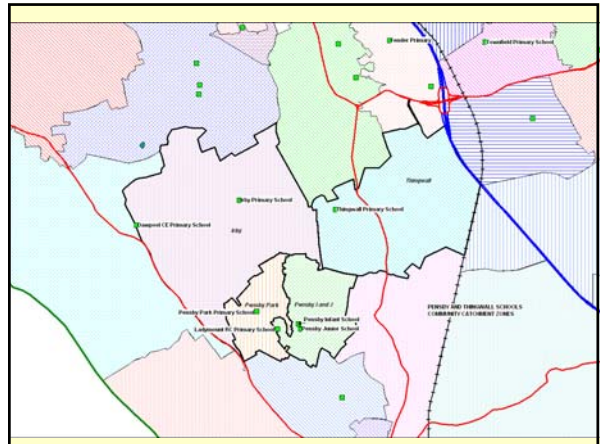
Proposed closure of St Mary's CE (Eastham)



## Pensby and Thingwall

Irby  
Pensby Park  
Pensby Infant  
Pensby Junior  
Thingwall

Dawpool CE  
Ladymount Catholic


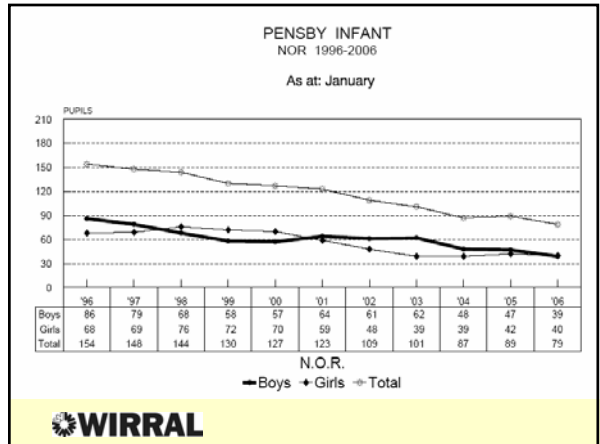
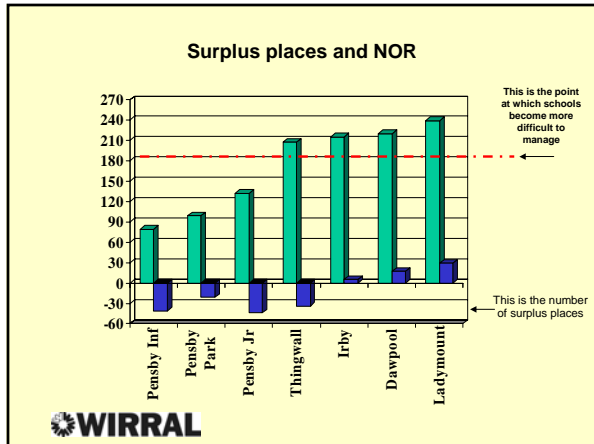



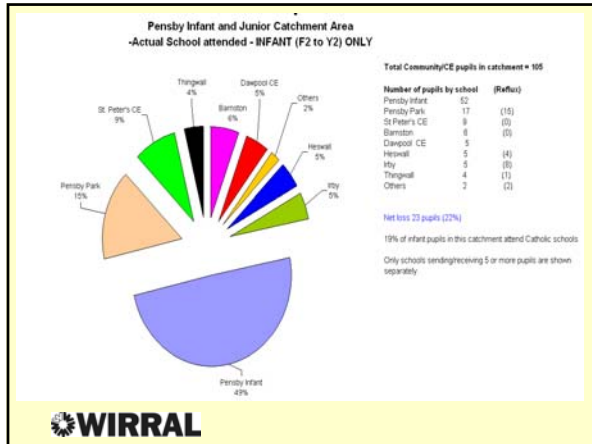
## Surplus places in Pensby and Thingwall Area

In 2006  
**7% surplus places**

By 2011  
**15% surplus places**

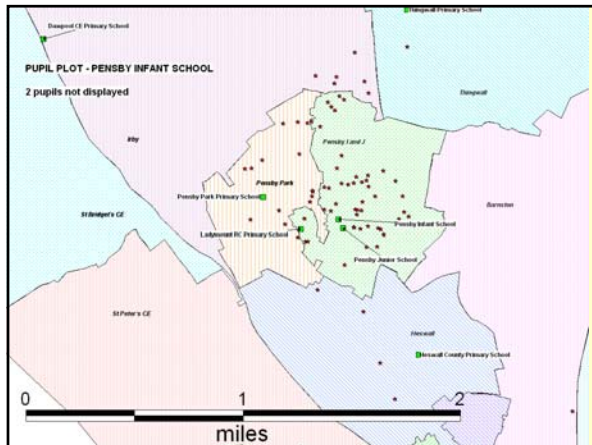
We must act to reduce surplus places



### What Ofsted said (2006)

- This is a good school with some outstanding features and offers good value for money.
- Children's personal development is exceptionally good and the care and support provided by the school is of outstanding quality.
- Standards are good and children achieve well overall, acquiring effective basic skills in reading, writing, number and in using ICT. However, more-able boys do not do as well as they should in reading.
- Quality and standards are good in Foundation. The children achieve well because of the effective curriculum. However, despite having access to good quality resources, there are some limitations in the outdoor provision for Foundation children.
- Children behave extremely well and relate well to each other. They are confident, independent and responsible. Most are very aware of healthy eating, take regular exercise and contribute in many ways to the life of the school.
- Quality of teaching and learning is consistently good and specialist teaching in drama, music and sport adds extra value to children's achievements.
- Parents views are overwhelmingly positive and comment in glowing terms how confident they are that their children are extremely well looked after.
- The headteacher is very effective. She sets high standards for children and staff, and promotes an openness to change with a clear agenda for improvement.
- The school has demonstrated its capacity to improve by the good record of improvement since the last inspection.
- The school should raise the attainment and achievement of more-able boys in reading.
- The school should make the outside area for Foundation children larger, more attractive and stimulating.



### Options for Pensby and Thingwall

**Option A:** Closure of Pensby Park Primary School

**Option B:** Amalgamate Pensby Infant and Pensby Junior to form an all-through Primary School

**Option C:** Closure of Pensby Park Primary School AND amalgamate Pensby Infant and Junior to form an all-through Primary School

**Option D:** Amalgamate Pensby Park Primary School, Pensby Infant and Pensby Junior to form an all-through Primary school on one site

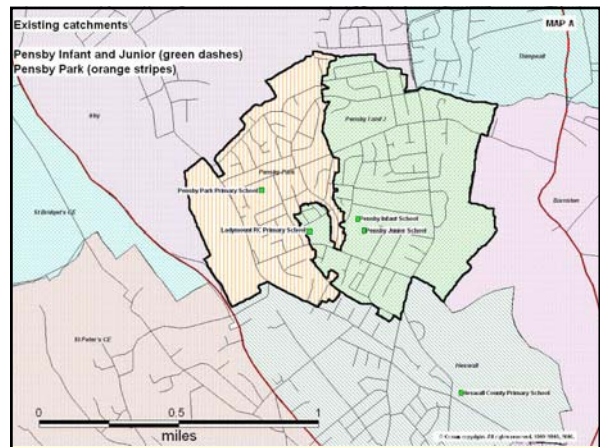
*D1: the current Infant/Junior site*

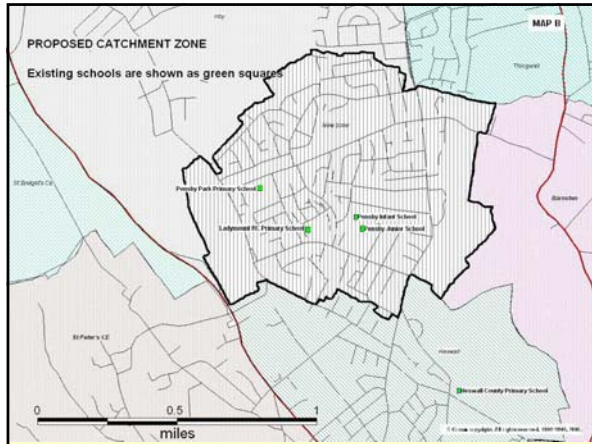
*D2: the current Pensby Park site*

**Option E:** To include in any of the above options the establishment of a Church of England Primary School in Pensby

### A – Closure of Pensby Park

- Small school
- 62% of children in the catchment already attend other schools, mainly Pensby Infant, Pensby Junior and Dawpool CE
- Places at other primary schools
- Building improvements would be made to receiving schools
- Catchment rezoned to Pensby Infant/Junior





## B – Amalgamation of Pensby Infant and Junior

- All-through primary school at Inf/Jr site – 210 places
- On average 88% of Infant pupils transfer to Junior
- Schools adjacent
- Existing buildings or new building?
- Remove or replace mobiles/HORSA
- Pensby Park remains open
- No change to catchment zones



## C – Close Pensby Park AND amalgamate Pensby Infant and Junior

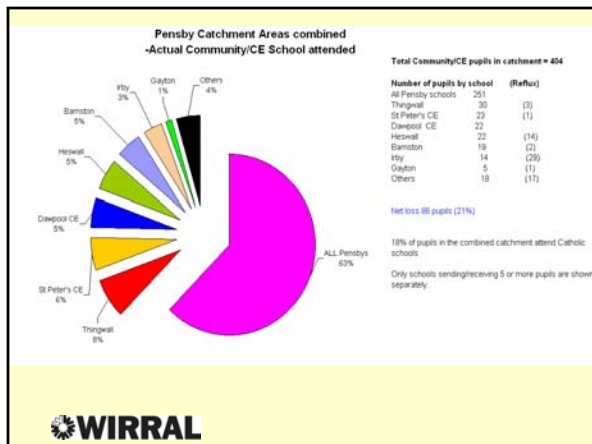
- All-through primary at Inf/Jr site – 240/270 places
- Pensby Park closes
- Remove/replace mobiles/HORSA
- Catchments rezoned to new primary school



## D – Amalgamate all three schools

D1 – at Infant/Junior site, D2 at Pensby Park site

- 63% in combined catchment attend Pensby schools
- Pupil populations overlap
- ~7 new classrooms at Infant or Park, 4 at Junior, or new building?
- 270/300 places
- Remove/replace mobiles/HORSA
- Catchments rezoned to new primary school



## E – Establish a CE school in Pensby

- Existing links between schools and church
- 11% currently attend CE schools “out of zone”
- Existing catchments or use Parish?
- May mean no community school in Pensby (A, C and D)



## What happens next?

### March 2007

Consultation ends

### April/May 2007

Recommended options report goes to Cabinet

### June/July 2007

Statutory notices published, representation period begins

### August/September 2007

Proposals to SOC (current regs) and/or to Adjudicator



## What will happen after the review

- 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 2008



## Remember:

- The Council must address these issues
- A decision has not yet been made
- This is not about saving money for taxpayers
- It is about spending money more wisely
- We must find sensible and effective solutions based on all the factors involved.

