

Primary School Places Review
Options for Woodchurch

WIRRAL January - March 2008

The meeting

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

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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

- Amalgamation of Prenton Infant and Junior
- Closure of The Dell Primary School
- Amalgamation of Vyner Primary and St Oswald's CE Primary

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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/January 2007
Proposals published for Bromborough and Eastham:

- Closure of Bromborough Pool Primary
- Closure of St Mary's CE Primary

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The Primary Places Review

October 2006
Council reviews Heswall, Pensby and Thingwall, Leasowe, South Wallasey, North Wallasey, Greasby and Upton

October 2007
Proposals published for Pensby and Thingwall and South Wallasey

- Closure of Pensby Park Primary School – From Sept 08
- Closure of Poulton Primary School – From Sept 08 and a new F1 class at Park Primary School
- Amalgamation of Pensby Infant and Junior – PENDING

Possible shared faith school in Leasowe – PENDING

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The Primary Places Review

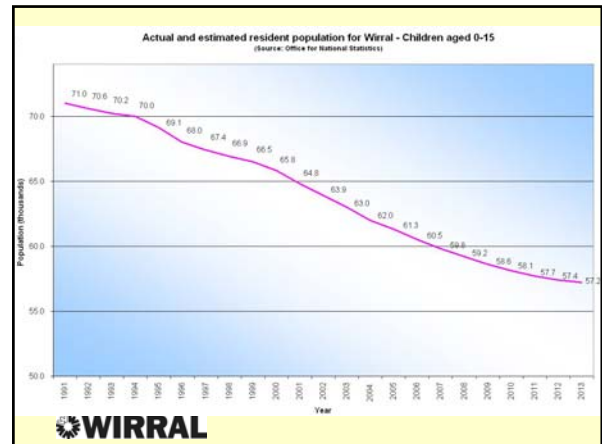
October 2007
Council begins reviewing West Kirby, Hoylake and Meols, Woodchurch, Noctorum and Moreton

January 2008
Consultation begins on options for Woodchurch

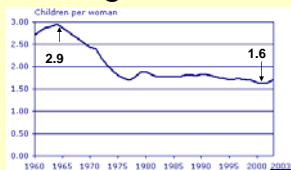
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Important to:

- 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?



Falling birth rate - Nationwide



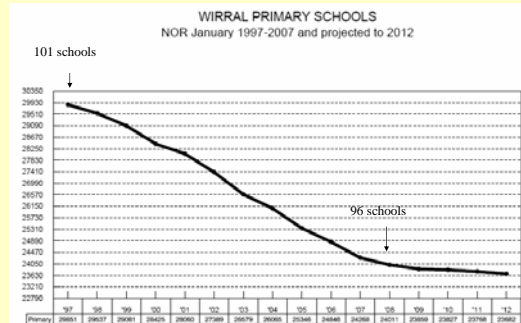
The average family should settle at 1.7 children

Right now, 60% of 30-35 yr olds have no children

1981	2001
Average age to have first child	
24	27
Women who never have children	
10%	20%



Source: Office for National Statistics



Surplus places in Wirral

In 2007

13% empty places

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

By 2012

15% 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: | And removed: |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICT suites • Libraries • Parents rooms • Pre-school playgroups • Afterschool/Breakfast clubs • Adult Learning facilities • Bases for other services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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



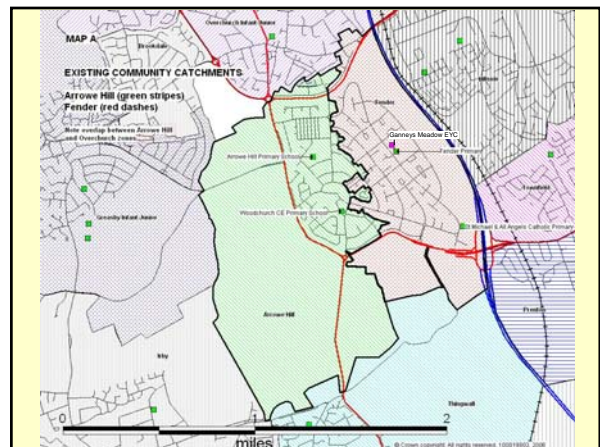
Small Schools

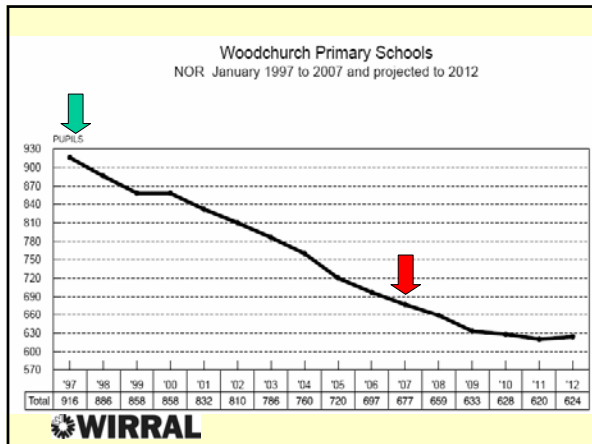
- Financial – maintaining small school is at the expense of all children
- Organisational issues – mixed age classes
- Additional burden on staff
- Curriculum issues



Woodchurch

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Arrowe Hill
Fender | Ganneys Meadow EYC |
| Woodchurch CE | |
| St Michael and All Angels Catholic | |





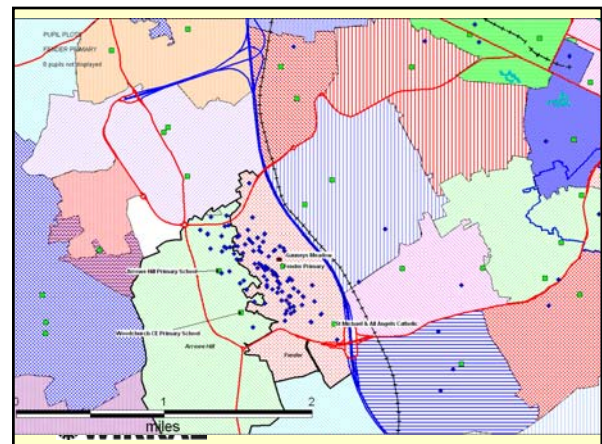
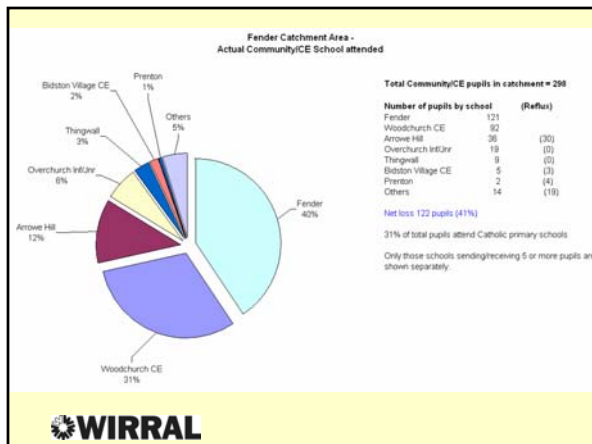
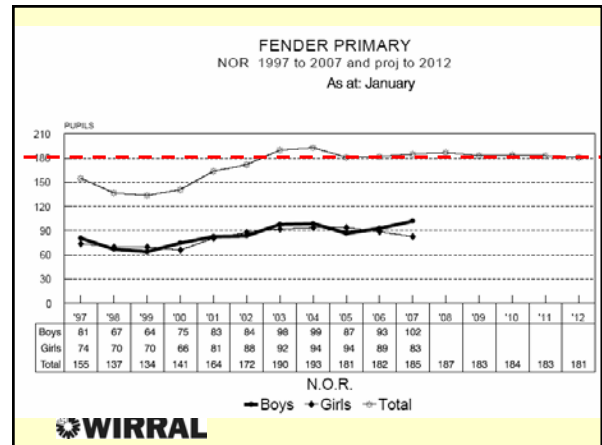
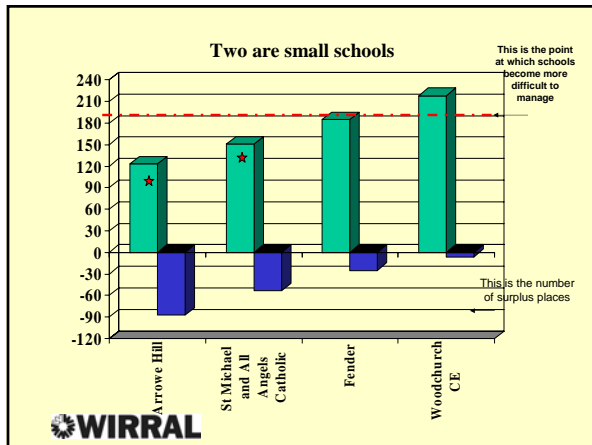
Surplus places in Woodchurch Area

In 2007
20% surplus places

By 2012
26% surplus places

We must act to reduce surplus places

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What Ofsted said (2007) Fender

- A good school with several outstanding features.
- Rising trend in pupils' achievement and standards.
- Exceptionally caring school.
- Complex and varied needs of pupils are successfully met.
- High expectations encourage a desire to achieve.
- F2 provision is good quality, and children progress well, especially in their early communication skills.
- Satisfactory progress during KS1.
- Progress tracking has improved so that underachievement can be addressed by additional support for those pupils who need it.
- Although standards at KS2 are below average, pupils make good progress overall.
- High quality support for pupils with learning difficulties/disabilities.
- Personal development and well-being are good. Pupils understand healthy lifestyles.
- Bullying is rare. Pupils are confident that staff will deal with any incidents effectively.
- Behaviour is good.



What Ofsted said (2007) Fender

- Positive attitudes towards learning, emphasis on the development of skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT.
- Pupils well prepared for secondary education and the world of work.
- Pupils are ambitious and highly motivated.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good. A minority of lessons are satisfactory rather than good, as the pace is occasionally too slow and there is too much emphasis on teacher-led activities rather than independent learning.
- Recent move to a theme based curriculum is having a positive impact although not yet fully embedded.
- Pastoral care is outstanding. Very effective partnership with outside agencies.
- All staff show a very high level of commitment to pupils welfare
- Very good leadership and management have helped to bring about the significant improvements.
- Rigorous monitoring and evaluation systems inform good quality action planning, which clearly identifies priorities for future development.
- Good value for money and the capacity for further improvement is also good.
- The school should improve the consistency of teaching and learning so that it is all of at least good quality.
- The school should ensure that recent improvements to the curriculum are fully embedded across the school.



Possible options for Woodchurch

- A: Closure of Arrowe Hill Primary School
- B: Closure of Fender Primary School
- C: Amalgamate Arrowe Hill and Fender on either
 - C1 The Arrowe Hill site
 - C2 The Fender site



A – Closure of Arrowe Hill

- Small school
- 73% of children in the catchment already attend other schools, mainly Woodchurch CE, Overchurch and Fender
- Fender nearby
- 21 other primary schools (inc Inf/Jr as single school) within 2 miles
- Building improvements would be made to receiving schools
- Catchments rezoned



B – Closure of Fender Primary School

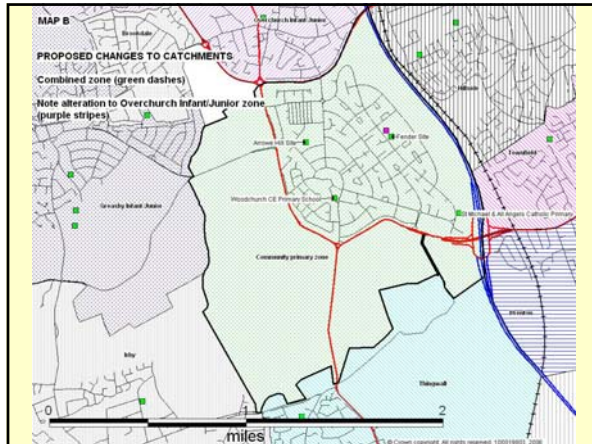
- Small school – around 180 pupils
- 60% of children in the catchment attend other schools, mainly Woodchurch CE and Arrowe Hill
- Arrowe Hill nearby
- 24 other primary schools (incl Inf/Jr as single school) within 2 miles
- Building improvements would be made to receiving schools
- Catchments rezoned
- SEN bases relocated



C – Amalgamation of Arrowe Hill and Fender at either site

- Combined school at either site
 - C1 Arrowe Hill – can reinstate Infant building if required
 - C2 Fender – internal adaptations
- Pupil populations overlap – can transfer to new school together
- New school around 300 pupils on roll
- Two sites just over half a mile apart
- Building improvements would be made
- Catchments rezoned
- SEN bases located at the new school (on either site)





What happens next?

March 2008

Consultation ends

May/June 2008

Recommended options report goes to Cabinet

Autumn 2008

Statutory notices published (if required), representation period begins

December 2008/January 2009

Proposals to Council's Decision making body and/or to School's Adjudicator

Note that if decision is for amalgamation to form a new school – will add approx 6 months to the process as may require a statutory competition



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 catchment areas revised
- Staff redeployed
- Council decide future of any closed community site

Earliest date for any option is September 2009



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.

