

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

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 Borough Council, Town Hall, Brighton Street, Wallasey, Wirral, CH44 8ED
Pensby Infant School and Pensby Junior 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.

To be discontinued from 31st August 2008.

Consultation

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

All applicable statutory requirements to consult in relation to the proposals were complied with. Public consultations were held during January to March 2007, including formal statutory consultation meetings at both schools on 1st February 2007 (Infant) and 22nd March 2007 (Junior). 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.

Please see Appendices A and B.

Objectives

5. The objectives of the proposal.

To discontinue Pensby Infant School, Kentmere Drive, Pensby, Wirral, CH61 5XW and Pensby Junior School, Greenbank Drive, Pensby, Wirral, CH61 5UE.

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.

As an all-through primary school rather than separate infant and junior schools, children will no longer have to change schools at age 7, avoiding a transitional dip in progress. Staff can get to know children from the very beginning of their education, and assessment of children's attainment and tracking of individual progress from age 4 to age 11 will be uniform and consistent.

The headteacher and governing body of the new primary school can design and plan a whole school curriculum covering the full primary age range, and Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 staff will be able to pool their skills and knowledge to the benefit of the whole age range.

In an all-through primary, younger and older children can act as mentors and buddies, which supports their personal and social development.

In a Wirral context, maintaining one primary school rather than two separate institutions saves money for the overall schools budget – one lump sum, single headteacher and so on. 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.

These proposals are linked to a proposal to establish a new community Primary school on the Infant/Junior site. The new Primary school will have sufficient places to accommodate all former Infant and Junior pupils.

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.

Pensby Infant and Pensby Junior School are mixed sex community schools which provide 120 places (Infant) and 176 places (Junior) for day pupils aged 4 to 11.

Actual and projected numbers on roll are as follows:

| | Jan 07 | Jan 08* | Jan 09 | Jan 10 | Jan 11 | Jan 12 |
|--------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Infant | 77 | 92 | 72 | 76 | 76 | 75 |
| Junior | 112 | 102 | 112 | 95 | 103 | 106 |
| Total | 189 | 194 | 184 | 171 | 179 | 181 |

There is an LA designated 52 place F1 (nursery) class which would continue if the proposed amalgamation went ahead. In January 2007, the F1 class had 32 part-time pupils). There are no LA designated SEN classes.

* September 2007 numbers given as proxy for Jan 08. Projections remain based on Jan 07.

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.

Pupils on roll at Pensby Infant School and Pensby Junior School at 31st August 2008 would be expected to transfer to the new Primary school. Parents may also seek to transfer to any local primary school, subject to availability of places and the admission arrangements published in the Authority's information booklets for parents.

Parents of pupils who are due to be admitted to Foundation 2 in 2008, and who have already completed a parental preference form for Pensby Infant School will automatically be considered as a preference for the new Primary school at the former Infant/Junior site, as will parents of pupils due to transfer from the Infant to the Junior school. Parents will also be given an opportunity to complete a new parental preference form.

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.

Not applicable

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.

Closure of the school is linked to the establishment of a new primary school on the same site. There would be no impact on the current community use of the schools.

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

All extended and community services, including before and after school provision, currently provided will continue, and it is expected that the new Governing body for the proposed primary school would continue to develop extended services.

Travel

15. Details of length and journeys to alternative provision.

Current pupils are expected to continue to attend the same site following amalgamation. Parents could also seek places at other schools within 2 miles; there are 9 other primary schools within a 2 mile radius, of which two are Church of England and one Catholic in ethos.

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

There will be no increase in car transport as a result of this proposal as the new school will occupy the same site as the former Infant and Junior schools.

There are no special arrangements for transport to the new Primary school, which would be located on the existing site. Applications for school transport to alternative schools will be considered on the basis of the Authority's published school transport policy.

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.

These proposals are linked to the proposal to establish a new community primary school on the site of the existing schools. There are no other linked proposals.

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 body'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.