

# Building Schools for the <sup>ir</sup> Future

## **The Educational Vision**

**extract**

**from the**

**May 2005**

**Strategic Business Case**

## 1.3 EDUCATIONAL VISION

### **School Organisation**

#### *The Current Position*

- 1.3.1 Stoke-on-Trent currently has 17 secondary schools and the secondary system is very largely 11-16. Only the three Catholic schools have 6<sup>th</sup> Forms, one of which (St Joseph's College) is selective. There is a fourth voluntary aided high school, St Peter's, which is an Anglican comprehensive catering for the 11-16 age-range. All our schools are co-educational. The details of the gender mix are given at Appendix 2.2.
- 1.3.2 Deprivation within the LEA is severe and unusually uniform; 16 out of 20 wards are in the bottom 20% nationally. The City as a whole has fallen further in 2004 to a rank of 17/18<sup>th</sup> from bottom in the economic Indices of Multiple Deprivation; the education and skills rank is lower still. Despite this uniformity, significant polarisation between the higher-attaining voluntary aided sector and other schools has been a noticeable feature of the Stoke-on-Trent secondary system, although some progress was made in 2002-4 towards bridging this gap in terms of higher-grade GCSE results. This feature continues to assert itself and the City Council regards it as an essential outcome of Building Schools for the Future and other key educational policy initiatives that this polarisation between schools should be considerably reduced. This means that the transformation in performance already in train in several of our high schools at Key Stage 4 needs to be extended to all of them and extended more generally to Key Stage 3.
- 1.3.3 The demographic challenge facing the secondary system in Stoke-on-Trent over the next ten years has been documented at paragraph 1.2.11. The detailed projections and methodology can be found at Appendix 2.1. It should be stressed that our projections are deliberately cautious. Whilst they do take account of increased numbers of pupils who might previously have attended a special school, they do not include the potential for the movement of new families into the city as a result of Housing Market Renewal; nor do they allow for the possible retention of more pupils within City schools who might previously have attended Staffordshire schools, because we do not expect these effects to be particularly great. The building of new homes under Housing Market Renewal will gather pace only after 2007. Whilst it will ultimately lead to quite significant movements of residential population, the major effects will take time to come through and may tend to arrest population decline rather than add new population. It is perhaps more likely that our retention of pupils will improve, as the attainment of City schools and their associated reputations improve. However, this process is already under way and it is important to be realistic about the margin of impact as well as ambitious to extend it. 95% of pupils from City primary schools transfer to secondary schools in the city and there is already some transfer in to City schools from Staffordshire LEA. The net impact (inflow/outflow) is that approximately 160 pupils per year are lost at transfer from Y6 to Y7. Perhaps more significant is the fact that over 1000 pupils resident in Stoke-on-Trent actually attend Staffordshire primary schools and BSF may be able to make an indirect impact on this phenomenon. Although we have not made any assumptions in this regard, we may see some of these pupils attracted back into Stoke-on-Trent at the age of secondary transfer, if our secondary schools are seen to have strong advantages and comparable performance.
- 1.3.4 We consult very closely with Staffordshire LEA (which completely surrounds Stoke-on-Trent) about cross-border movements. We also consult on our respective School Organisation Plans. As Stoke-on-Trent has done over the past few years, Staffordshire is currently focusing on primary school reorganisation. We are not aware of any plans for secondary reorganisation on the borders of Stoke-on-Trent. We believe that Staffordshire had hoped to be included in wave two or three of BSF and that this would involve the adjacent Newcastle-under-Lyme area. However, the main focus for any reorganisation is expected to be in Chesterton, which is unlikely to affect Stoke-on-Trent. There is currently no interaction at all with this part of Newcastle.

#### *Future Position and Implementation*

- 1.3.5 As already explained in section 1.2, we have decided provisionally to retain all our current secondary schools. We are confident of their sustainability from our roll projections (and our good track record of precision and accuracy in forecasting rolls). The reasons for retaining the present shape of the system are as follows.
- ◆ The interface with Housing Market Renewal suggests that for the present it is sensible to retain the current number of schools, so that we have the greatest flexibility to respond to the future pattern of housing in the City. Although some decisions have been taken and others are emerging, some remain to be taken.
  - ◆ Transport limitations in this essentially linear City require us to discourage pupil movement across the City. It will be extremely desirable on environmental grounds to persuade more pupils to attend

their neighbourhood secondary school than currently do. Clearly, this requires improvements in the lower-attaining schools, but our track record demonstrates that this is being achieved. (Unusually we already have no schools below the 2008 floor target of 30% 5+A\*-C grades.)

- ◆ Smaller schools are more likely to create a more personalised environment that we believe is essential to improving behaviour. This is a considerable challenge in Stoke-on-Trent and it is likely to be rather more difficult to create emotionally intelligent schools through larger rather than smaller institutions. The evidence suggests that this factor may be more important in Stoke-on-Trent than almost anywhere else. Consider, for example, our stubbornly poor record on school exclusions (Ofsted LEA Statistical Profile).
- ◆ Environments that produce less challenging behaviour will be more conducive to imaginative and innovative teaching. Currently, too many of our teachers focus on control at the expense of more independent learning (Ofsted LEA Statistical Profile). However, the experience of our smallest high school (Mitchell) is instructive: this school has not only survived at four forms of entry over a good many years, but has begun to thrive. The percentage of pupils gaining 5+ A\*-C grades at GCSE has risen from 7% in 2000 to 43% in 2004. The school already featured in 2003 in the 100 most improved schools at GCSE between 2001 and 2003 and has an even higher rank in 2004. Its small size has been an important factor in gaining control of the behaviour agenda; yet it has not been prevented from the greatest extent of curriculum innovation at KS4 of any high school in the LEA.
- ◆ Less challenging behaviour will improve teacher recruitment and retention, which is a very important component of BSF for Stoke-on-Trent.
- ◆ Our schools, which do not have sixth forms, do not need to generate large pupil numbers for that purpose. Moreover, we are already developing a rich and diverse 14+ curriculum relying on collaboration between schools and colleges. This has grown out of considerable experience of college link courses (over 1,000 pupils per year) and is being actively extended on a whole-LEA basis from 2005 by our 14-19 Collegiate, as planned in our post-area-inspection action plan.
- ◆ Our proposals for clusters/federations will make it easier for schools to respond flexibly to unanticipated contractions or expansions in numbers, as well as strengthening leadership, joint strategic planning and the management of a more diverse and flexible curriculum.

1.3.6 It should be emphasised that diversity is already a prominent feature of the Stoke-on-Trent secondary school system. We have the following:

- ◆ a selective school;
- ◆ 4 (out of 17) voluntary aided schools;
- ◆ a full-service extended school;
- ◆ 13 specialist schools (including 1 special school) with the expectation that all secondary schools will achieve specialist status within the next 2 years.

Stoke-on-Trent parents and pupils already have considerable choice (two of the Catholic schools take almost 50% non-Catholics) and our prime objective must be to ensure that all parts of the system offer the same quality, expectations and standards that can now be found in much of it.

## **Academies**

### *Current Position and Vision*

1.3.7 The City Council is actively considering the position with regard to academies. We are exploring the options with due diligence and these include the possibility in due course of a formal expression of interest. In the course of the current academic year we have undertaken fact-finding visits to a sample of academies and are consulting more widely with local stakeholders, especially secondary heads, staff and governors.

1.3.8 Further debate will need to take place, in that an academy is perceived as bringing the risk, despite the guidelines, of proving to some extent to be selective of its intake. It is likely that a majority of the City Council would regard this as unacceptable. Furthermore, a notable feature of the success of the secondary sector in Stoke-on-Trent has been the development of a strong partnership between schools and between schools and the LEA under Excellence in Cities. An academy could destabilise this partnership, thereby undermining the benefits of professional collaboration that have been built up in recent years through trust. There is also the risk that the polarisation between higher-attaining and lower-attaining schools described in

paragraph 1.3.2 could be made worse by an academy, if it were to cream off more pupils from the existing secondary sector. It would be unacceptable for results to deteriorate, or even to cease to improve, in a number of other high schools, if the results of an academy merely compensated for this. The City needs a solution which adds value in aggregate across all schools.

- 1.3.9 It does not follow that the above scenario would necessarily arise from the creation of an academy. It is quite feasible that the impact of an academy would be to retain pupils who are resident in Stoke-on-Trent but currently lost to schools in our system. It should be remembered that these tend to be the children of more aspirant families and that they number at least as many again as the net loss of 150 pupils that occurs at the point of transfer from primary to secondary school, especially if account is taken of the relatively large number of primary-age pupils who live in Stoke-on-Trent but whose parents choose for them to attend Staffordshire primary schools (at least 150 per year group). This suggests that there might be scope for an academy without detriment to the overall number of pupils within Stoke-on-Trent and without damage to existing Stoke-on-Trent schools.
- 1.3.10 An imperative of City Council education policy from our beginning as an LEA (1997) has been to reverse the trend for pupils to leave the city for their education and to promote a positive preference on the part of Stoke-on-Trent residents for an inner-city education for their children. Considerable progress has been made, in that the negative trend has been arrested, but no further progress has been made in recent years. It is likely that innovation is required to turn a net loss into a net gain. This is of peculiar importance in Stoke-on-Trent in view of Housing Market Renewal. This demands a very positive educational force to attract new residents into the urban core and to retain their children in schools in that core. Similarly, inward investment into the North Staffordshire sub-region will be assisted by the presence of one or more particularly prestigious schools. We already have a prestigious denominational sector, but parents that are not of a religious persuasion are not faced with an equivalent higher-attaining option. This does not encourage the relocation to Stoke-on-Trent of higher-earning families and could prove a blockage to inward investment, such as the relocation of a government department.
- 1.3.11 Whilst the creation of an academy would undoubtedly prove uncomfortable to existing interests, this merits further consideration. One or more academies would create more competition within the system and all secondary schools would need to strive hard to continue with their improvement, which has stalled in 2004 for the first time since 2000. Nevertheless, we believe this to be temporary; on the basis of existing pupil data we expect improvement to be resumed in 2005. And it should be remembered that already in 2004 the LEA has no schools below the 2008 floor target of 30% 5+ A\*-C grades at GCSE. This is a significant achievement, which strongly supports social inclusion in the face of very major deprivation.

**Table 6: Rates of Improvement**

Performance Indicator	Rank of improvement among 150 English LEAs
5+ A-C 2000-2002	21
5+ A-C 2001-2003	3
5+ A-C 2002-2003	5
5+ A-G 2000-2002	29
5+ A-G 2001-2003	14
Capped APS 2002-2003	5
KS3 APS 2002-2003	26

- 1.3.12 Evidence in Table 6 shows improvement at higher levels of attainment at 16+ which was in the front rank nationally, albeit attenuated in 2004. The Government has a strong commitment to both excellence and inclusion. In Stoke-on-Trent we want to strive for the former without impairing the latter. We would therefore wish to give all schools the opportunity to improve further, as there is no school at present which would obviously provide the site for an academy. Nor would we wish to blight any school (and the outcomes for its young people) by announcing too far in advance possible intentions with regard to an academy.
- 1.3.13 In the same way that St Joseph's College, a selective school that was previously independent, was welcomed into the new LEA of Stoke-on-Trent, we would hope that any academy would agree to participate fully in the partnership of schools and abide voluntarily by admission arrangements agreed with the Admissions Forum. The City Council would wish to negotiate this position with any sponsor and Board of Trustees. We would expect to agree with them a set of principles that would support non-selectivity, social inclusion and fairness in respect to exclusions and special educational needs. We would need to have robust confidence in our agreement on these matters. We would also want any academy to fit in with our vision for 14-19 (i.e. no sixth

form), and for relatively smaller schools - in accordance with our particular challenge in Stoke-on-Trent with regard to behaviour and social inclusion.

*Federation (Sandon/Longton)*

- 1.3.14 We did have a high school which had been in special measures for more than three years. However, Longton High School is now making much improved progress and it was removed from special measures on 10 February 2005. It is urgently in need of rebuilding and we propose a major rebuild, albeit at a significantly smaller size. This is in line with roll projections for the school. The aim is to create a much warmer environment, where behaviour and ethos can continue to be improved.
- 1.3.15 We have considered the option of an academy on the Longton site. The school had already been in special measures for over three years by November 2004. We cannot afford to wait any longer for the improvements that are needed, as the current generation of pupils in Years 9 to 11 have only one chance. Prior to the opening of an academy it is likely that the school would be blighted, thereby harming the chances of improvement. This is unacceptable. Similarly, the possibility of an academy as a neighbour could blight nearby Sandon, which is our most successful community high school, especially with the need to recruit a new Headteacher. This risk is also unacceptable. We prefer the innovative route of a federation, which we believe will:
- ◆ attract a stronger field for the Headteacher at Sandon;
  - ◆ be a substantially quicker route to the strengthening of Longton (two or three years quicker than an academy);
  - ◆ increase diversity of provision within the city and lend prestige to an area of the city that will benefit from that as a major intervention area under Housing Market Renewal;
  - ◆ serve as a pilot for further examples of federation, growing out of our clusters.
- 1.3.16 Longton High School has been fully staffed with well qualified teachers from September 2004. Significant changes have also occurred in the school's senior leadership team. We would like to underpin the transformation by the agreement of both governing bodies to federating the school with the neighbouring Sandon High School. Both sets of Governors have met frequently in a joint sub-committee, which has now agreed the form of the federation. Sandon is our only Beacon secondary school and has specialist status for business and enterprise. It has a track record of successful attainment, especially at Key Stage 4. The Headteacher of Sandon High School is due to retire in 2005 and the proposal is to federate the two schools under a new joint committee of the two Governing Bodies, which will have strategic oversight of the links between the two schools. The joint committee will be advised by the two Headteachers and a new appointment at the level of a Senior Deputy Head, who will take specific executive responsibility for matters relating to the federation. Apart from this feature, each individual school will retain separate leadership teams and, unless the two governing bodies subsequently decide otherwise, two separate governing bodies. Pupils would remain on one site within their current school, but the schools would plan their curriculum jointly, with a particular emphasis on the development of diversity at 14+ and stronger support for core subjects and minority subjects.
- 1.3.17 We would like to strengthen this federation by creating a closer association between these two schools and their feeder primary schools, which are few in number and physically close, so making this entirely practical. The primary schools are of good quality and would be able to make a very positive contribution to the quality of education within the wider federation. This would also include a nearby special school for pupils with moderate learning difficulties, which is keen to pursue outreach work and has a good range of skills to match its commitment.
- 1.3.18 Unfortunately, it is not possible to re-locate the special school, as it has recently been the subject of a major building programme at a cost of almost £1m. This investment cannot be wasted, but it is part of a picture of renewal across the proposed wider federation of schools in this area. This group of schools would contain not only the largely rebuilt special school, but also a brand-new primary school completed in 2003, a brand-new Children's Centre to be completed in 2006 and an infants school, which is also a Beacon school. The latter and another of the primary schools have strong aspirations to become extended schools and will be supported in this by the LEA. The rebuilding of both Sandon and Longton High Schools will complete a wide picture of renewal, collaboration and excellence. This is particularly appropriate, given that this area includes one of the first major intervention areas for Housing Market Renewal.

*Other options*

- 1.3.19 Birches Head High School has recently been placed in special measures. However, this is not a candidate for an academy, as it now has a newly appointed Headteacher and is half-way through the process of rebuilding at the expense largely of the LEA. We are confident that under the present Headteacher the school will progress rapidly.
- 1.3.20 Planning is now proceeding very actively for a major project within the city known as the University Quarter. The aim of this is to enable Staffordshire University to remodel its facilities and to achieve much greater integration with the immediately adjacent FE and Sixth Form Colleges. Shared facilities would include a major library, to which the City Council's Library Service would also contribute, and a performance space. The whole area constitutes an important gateway to the city, as the railway station is on its threshold, and it therefore presents an exciting opportunity to give a new and more prestigious appearance to the City of Stoke-on-Trent as visitors arrive. This project has the strong support of the Regional Development Agency and other partners and would help to address the key issue for the city of educational progression both at 17+, when the drop-out rate is still much too high, and at 18+ to higher education, in which participation is still amongst the lowest of any English LEA. As part of this scheme, the possibility is being considered of identifying land in the ownership of the Local Authority that could be used to build a school or an academy, which would link especially closely with the two colleges and the University, thereby reinforcing the strategy with regard to progression. In such close relationship with the two colleges, it is the expectation both of the Council and the partners in the University Quarter that any academy would be an 11-16 institution, in line with the strong and successful planning and ethos of education in the City.

### **Specialist Schools**

#### *Current Position and Vision*

- 1.3.21 At the beginning of our EiC Partnership, we established a clear objective that all secondary schools should achieve specialist status. Twelve out of seventeen have now done so, with bids from the remaining five schools in various stages of preparation. This places us in the top quartile of LEAs for the percentage of specialist schools. (Local Authority grid profile and data matrix – DfES Local Implementation Division).

Thus, currently:

- ◆ three schools (including one special school) have performing arts status – links to the Cultural Quarter and the Cultural Strategy;
- ◆ one school has technology status – strong links to adult learning for ICT i.e. the ceramics industry through the University of the Shop Floor;
- ◆ one school has science status – strong links to Regeneration Zone and Regeneration Strategy through emphasis on science for employment in the new North Staffordshire Hospital and Medical School and in Keele University Science Park. Further links will be developed with the new regional centre for advanced CPD in science to be located in North Staffordshire and awarded to a consortium of Keele University, Staffordshire LEA, and Stoke-on-Trent LEA;
- ◆ one school has engineering status – links to high-technology ceramics as part of the Regeneration Zone economic strategy;
- ◆ two schools have mathematics and ICT status – links to Regeneration Zone economic strategy for encouraging ICT-based logistics industry;
- ◆ one school has language status – links to priority of Regional Development Agency (Advantage West Midlands);
- ◆ two schools have business and enterprise status – links to LEA strategy supported by Regeneration Zone for developing enterprise curriculum both in secondary and primary sectors;
- ◆ two schools have sports status – links to the two School Sport Partnerships, to our Sport and Active Recreation Strategy and to our Sports Action Zone programme (Closing the Gap), with the objective of supporting physical and mental health among young people; also links to Pacific Institute programmes for raising self-esteem.

#### *Future Implementation*

- 1.3.22 In the next two years:
- ◆ one further school each to obtain science and technology status;
  - ◆ one school to obtain visual arts status;
  - ◆ one school to obtain humanities status;
  - ◆ one school to review its position.

We aim to give priority in time within the rebuilding and refurbishment programmes to schools that are waiting to expend their specialist school capital (Sandon, Blurton, Edensor).

- 1.3.23 Specialist facilities are part of the community and extended dimension of the school. Thus, we are designing them wherever possible at the front of the school with separable (and secure) community access both during and out of school hours. This is straightforward in the case of sports facilities, but also applies to technology (Edensor – Ceramics University of the Shop Floor) and business and enterprise (Sandon – public business education and conference centre sponsored by Wedgwood and HSBC).
- 1.3.24 Specialist facilities should support whole-school improvement across the curriculum. We will do this by locating such facilities wherever possible in a prominent place, close to the main entrance of the school. This device will create a “signature” to the school and its curriculum. We aim to make these facilities outstanding even by the standards of rebuilt schools, so that:
- ◆ other subject specialisms will want to use them, where appropriate;
  - ◆ they prompt cross-curricular innovation;
  - ◆ they prompt use by feeder primary schools (also to be encouraged by specially designed primary facilities within new secondary schools, located as part of or close to the specialist facility);
  - ◆ they support highly specialist work for small groups from other schools at 14+ as part of the 14-19 Collegiate, which other schools cannot provide economically or at the right level.

Appendix 2.3.1 provides a table of all schools’ status.

### **Secondary Under-Performance and Transformation**

#### *Current Position*

- 1.3.25 Until 2002 performance at GCSE in most Stoke secondary schools was traditionally low. For example, we have had six schools facing challenging circumstances in terms of the floor targets and six secondary schools have been or are in an Ofsted category. Nevertheless, since 2003 we have no school below the 2006 floor target of 25% 5 or more higher grades at GCSE, and from 2004 no school below the 2008 floor target of 30%. As part of the leap forward in GCSE performance that took place in 2003, 12 out of 17 secondary schools achieved their best ever performance, with 9 of them improving their score for 5 plus A\*-C grades by ten percentage points or more. Despite a modest fall-back overall in 2004, four schools still achieved their best ever figures. This is a substantial record of improvement in a context in which Stoke-on-Trent has slipped from 34<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> in the Indices of Multiple Deprivation. See Table 6 in paragraph 1.3.11 and Appendix 2.3 which provides Key Stage and GCSE 2004 analysis.
- 1.3.26 There is evidence of genuine solidity of improvement at the lower end of the attainment scale. In the 2003 and 2004 CPAs Stoke-on-Trent was in the top 10% of LEAs for the improvement in the percentage of 5+ A\*-C grades between 2000 and 2003 in schools that had scored less than 20% in 1999. Similarly, between 2000 and 2003 the CPA shows that the trend of improvement in the percentage of pupils gaining no GCSEs placed us in the top 10% of LEAs in 2004. We have achieved this position through a strong focus in the EDP on raising attainment at Key Stage 4 (priority 3), closing attainment gaps (priority 4) and targeting schools causing concern (priority 5). In addition, there has been a strong focus on the development of the vocational curriculum, both through college link courses 14-16 (involving up to 1000 pupils at any one time in Years 10 and 11) and through the take-up of GNVQs and vocational GCSEs. This has proved highly effective and motivating for young people, especially boys. Staying-on rates in 2003 saw a substantial rise for the first time in the percentage of boys continuing in structured learning as part of a work-based training option post 16, which was maintained in 2004.
- 1.3.27 We have a strong system for monitoring and targeting schools which are causing concern. Schools in this group are divided into Ofsted categories and a range of LEA categories under our policy for School Review, Support and Improvement, which is well understood by schools. All such schools are subject to an action plan, against which progress is reported on a termly basis to the Education Scrutiny Commission and more frequently to the School Review, Support and Improvement management group.
- 1.3.28 Of schools in Ofsted categories, 2 schools have emerged very successfully. A school which was removed from serious weakness in 2000 transformed its higher-grade attainment by 10% in 2003 and at the same time successfully achieved specialist status. Brownhills High School, which was in special measures, was removed successfully in 2003 and improved its percentage of higher-grade attainment from 25% to 46% between 2002 and 2003, thus becoming the sixth most improved secondary school in England between 2001 and 2003.

- 1.3.29 Despite recent improvements at GCSE, we are very conscious of our relatively poor scores for value added in the secondary sector and our indifferent performance at KS3. We are now concentrating heavily on improving these. This includes a strong focus on improving minority ethnic attainment, which has made a major contribution to the transformation in performance at GCSE of both Brownhills and Longton High Schools. Our LPSA target was to halve the gap in the attainment of five or more higher-grade GCSEs between white pupils and pupils of Pakistani heritage from 2000 to 2005. In fact, by 2003 this gap had been almost completely eliminated. Despite this statistic, there remain two schools with significant Pakistani populations, which have not yet managed this transformation.
- 1.3.30 An additional focus has been on the attainment gap between girls and boys, albeit with a paradoxical twist. Analysis revealed that in the lowest-attaining schools the gap between girls' and boys' attainment tended to be less than the local and national averages. In practice, this meant that pupils were not being stretched and, once this was addressed, the girls responded well, so that the gap came into line.
- 1.3.31 Other factors which have contributed to our transforming performance are:
- ◆ strong and well targeted data analysis;
  - ◆ well embedded and rigorous school self-review and evaluation, moderated by the LEA;
  - ◆ effective LIG collaboratives;
  - ◆ a genuinely collaborative and well focused EiC Partnership;
  - ◆ our extensive use of motivational programmes, targeted at Key Stage 4.
- 1.3.32 Our motivational programme from the Pacific Institute involves staff, pupils and parents. It involves all sectors, although we have concentrated most heavily on Key Stage 4. Of the 13,000 people who have taken Pacific Institute courses over the past five years, three quarters are pupils, the majority being in the secondary sector. We use the full range of motivational programmes offered by the Pacific Institute in the largest programme operated by a local authority anywhere in the world. Participants have included almost 1500 parents and the intention is to integrate this programme at a community level into Housing Market Renewal and our Sports Action Zone (Closing the Gap). A longitudinal study of the impact is under way by Staffordshire University, but short-term studies by Keele University repeatedly suggest that the programmes are effective and provide evidence that the self-esteem and ambition of pupils, parents and teachers have improved substantially in Stoke-on-Trent.
- 1.3.33 With limited exceptions (three schools in the voluntary aided sector and three in the community sector) our school buildings do not support high aspirations; rather, they depress them. Most were designed and built in an era when education was nothing more than an obligation to be tolerated and they continue to convey this impression, compounded by decades of neglect and non-investment. Whilst our current PFI scheme is designed to repair and maintain the schools, it does not contribute to their suitability or improvement. The first priority had to be to ensure that our schools were safe, warm and dry, but BSF must achieve much more. Our schools still look cheap, impersonal and brutal; almost all lack decent technology facilities; most do not have a full set of modern science facilities and the great majority lack sports halls. External space can be very cramped and security poor. These environments are not conducive to good behaviour, with the result that teachers' understandable concern about control tends to restrict innovation. Our curricular priorities of science, technology and sport are enshrined in the Asset Management Plan, but we are still a long way from creating facilities consistently across all schools that would enable these areas of the curriculum to add real value.

#### *Vision and Implementation*

- 1.3.34 Our vision takes an important cue from the City Council's extensive programme for raising the self-esteem and motivation of staff, pupils and parents. BSF must replicate physically in our school buildings the changed mental and cultural attitudes that we are seeking to engender, so that schools become the embodiment of the new educational aspirations and outcomes for communities in Stoke-on-Trent. Our heavy investment in sport is linked to this. Physical well-being and the opportunity to taste success in sport are an important counterpart to mental well-being. This is why a modern sports hall is part of the core offer to all our secondary schools under BSF, irrespective of whether or not they are subject to a full rebuild of the whole school. Also part of the core offer are fully modernised science and technology facilities fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. These will support our local strategy for economic regeneration. And the quality of learning in science (as a double subject) has an important contribution to make to improved attainment at 16+. The final parts of the core offer for all schools are ICT and facilities to support social inclusion/the remodelling agenda, which are dealt with in the next two sections.
- 1.3.35 The vocational curriculum at 14+ is of special importance in Stoke-on-Trent. The evidence is that it successfully engages more young people and it underlies both the improvements in higher levels of attainment

and the staying-on rate since 2002. Vocational courses also appear to motivate boys in particular. It is noteworthy that in 2004, despite a small fall overall in the percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more higher-grade GCSEs, the performance of boys improved by 5 percentage points. Under BSF we will take the opportunity to develop vocational facilities in schools through the oversight of the 14-19 Collegiate. In particular, we will take note of the recent HMI evaluation of early work in vocational GCSEs, which emphasised the benefits of designing specific facilities to support these courses. Where possible, we will do so as part of specialist facilities, or as part of the core offer of science, technology and sports facilities. In other cases we will design them on a more stand-alone basis, but we will use BSF as a means of giving these new subjects even more priority and status.

- 1.3.36 In most years Stoke-on-Trent is unusually dependent on good performance by girls both at KS3 and KS4. The attainment gap is normally higher than the national average. It is of vital importance that we continue to improve the performance of girls, which we believe can be supported by creating a gentler environment in our secondary schools. However, if we are to achieve genuine transformation and outcomes, we must continue to improve the performance of boys at an even faster rate. This is another reason for the importance of the core offer of science, technology, ICT and sport - areas to which boys tend to respond better than girls in the context of Stoke-on-Trent. The other attainment gap on which we are focussing is that between pupils of Pakistani and white heritage. It is for this reason that we have selected for major rebuild three out of the five schools with large Pakistani populations.
- 1.3.37 Fundamentally, whatever the needs of particular groups, it is essential to start from the needs of individual pupils, if attainment is to be consistently raised. For this reason we have developed and are currently piloting in several high schools our START system. This work has been commissioned by the DfES through Lancaster University and it is of potentially national importance. It enables each individual teacher to set targets for their pupils and to track the attainment of pupils against these targets in real time. This requires access to the system, which is web-based, in almost every classroom and we plan to use BSF to install this.
- 1.3.38 Collaboration between our schools is strong both through LIG and Excellence in Cities. In addition, we have created our RAP Club (Raising Attainment Plan) in schools facing challenging circumstances. Five out of six of these schools have substantially improved their higher levels of attainment. The aim is that BSF should continue to drive this transformation and we have therefore selected five out of the six schools for major rebuilding. In four of these five cases they are early or at least in the first half of the overall programme. (Also see 1.3.46 for 'flexibility of spaces' in design).

### **School Workforce Issues**

#### *Current Position*

- 1.3.39 Our Workforce Remodelling Strategy underpins this section. It has been developed in close association with our strategies for recruitment and retention and social inclusion. It has also been subject to careful consultation at every stage with the teaching and non-teaching unions and has the full support of all (except for the formal position of the NUT).
- 1.3.40 The quality of staff work and relaxation space must be high, in order to reflect the value that we ascribe both to teaching and support staff. The LEA has followed a policy of encouraging schools to invest in staff rooms, which can still be very basic, not least where staff have taken the view that scarce resources should be invested in pupil facilities as a priority. When resources were very short, this was understandable, but is no longer appropriate as schools have become better off. Teachers must learn to value themselves as well as to be valued and good staff facilities are a tangible expression of this. As such they are a valuable aid to recruitment and retention.

#### *Vision and Implementation*

- 1.3.41 It is important that staff are given sufficient space in which to relax during breaks. This environment should be pleasant and well furnished, including facilities for preparation of snacks. Staff well-being will be enhanced if staff rooms are adjacent to pleasant outdoor spaces for use in better weather, incorporating perhaps garden and water features. We also intend to give consideration to the menus that are offered in terms of healthy eating both for pupils and staff. Consideration is being given to the possibility of a range of eating areas, perhaps linked to sporting and community facilities as well as the traditional dining area. We are also considering the possibility of making food available outside of the normal lunchtime.
- 1.3.42 Staff will also need dedicated work areas for preparation and planning. These should be quiet and separated from relaxation space. They should also be equipped with IT points, including internet access and the opportunity to test material using an interactive whiteboard. Good facilities for CPD should be provided within the school separately from the staff room. This may involve space that can be used in a variety of ways. For Sandon High School we are considering a lecture theatre, which could incorporate high-quality

facilities for whole-staff CPD and discussion, but could also be used for lecture-style teaching, where appropriate, and for functions such as the School Council. Similarly, a board room should be provided, which could be used not only by the Governing Body, but also by the leadership team and by other pastoral and curricular teams. Again, it should be equipped with good ICT and audio-visual facilities. The room could also be used for small-group work with pupils, small-group CPD and adult education.

- 1.3.43 Blurton High School is a training school, a significant proportion of which we intend to rebuild. The school has long had ambitions to create a dedicated training centre, which will also support other schools, including the primary sector. BSF presents an opportunity to realise this ambition. It has been suggested that we should build in observational facilities, so that practice with pupils can be observed without pupils knowing. Such a facility would be valuable in many schools, particularly where behaviour is concerned. A one-way window into the Learning Support Unit, for example, would enable the observation and discussion of difficult behaviour without introducing another adult or recording equipment into the room, which tends to falsify the situation.
- 1.3.44 Schools are already employing additional support staff, a trend which has been in evidence for at least a decade. In addition, in Excellence in Cities areas such as Stoke-on-Trent new categories of staff such as learning mentors have already been employed. Under the remodelling agenda this process will continue. It is therefore essential to allow for this in terms of car parking, staff room facilities and work preparation areas. At present most of our schools do not have offices for pastoral heads and it is our intention to create sufficient office space, so that pastoral heads can share their accommodation with the social inclusion team. This would include learning mentors, Connexions personal advisors and widening participation (post-16) co-ordinators. Such staff do not necessarily require individual offices, but they do require team offices and each school should be provided with two or three small rooms, which should be used for personal interviews with pupils and/or parents, where privacy is required. This is required for dignity, which is a prerequisite for social inclusion. Similarly, in some schools there will be a need for small-group and individual provision for EAL to meet the needs of, for example, asylum-seekers who arrive with no English at all. It is also beneficial to have a team area for the SENCO and associated staff, who have a need to make personalised provision at certain times for some children and young people. This provision should be of reasonable size, as the need (and the team) are likely to grow with the increasing implementation of the inclusion agenda in mainstream. Finally, the remodelling agenda will impact on administrative areas, as there will be an increase in support staff undertaking administrative support tasks for teachers. This may not mean a greatly increased space requirement, since teachers or others already do these tasks, but they may be transferred to a different space – and administrative space is in many cases under-provided at present.
- 1.3.45 We should aim to provide a pupil support point, where students are able to access a member of support staff to ask advice, where money is collected, where message-taking facilities are available and data collection is undertaken. This should be available in a suitably secure, but accessible, location within the school and may be associated with the administrative staff centre, learning mentors' accommodation or both. We are also looking at the provision for larger departments (English, Maths and Science) of team and resource areas where staff can have work spaces, meetings can take place and departmental support staff can work. In addition, schools will be required to address the Children's Services agenda, which may mean providing accommodation for different agencies in school, probably on a shared drop-in basis. For example, we have discussed with partner agencies the possibility of social care staff and community-based police officers being able to drop in to a shared space, which might also be used by the Youth Service. The Health Service is already providing MAC's Places (Multi-Agency Centres) in certain high schools and intends to provide more. These are likely to require at least one dedicated consulting room, but could have joint use of a medium-sized room for group work, which could be shared by the school, Connexions and the Youth Service. Connexions also require a dedicated space, but we believe that facilities for external agencies should be at the front of the school, effectively in an extended multi-service reception area or "covered street", which leads into the school, but is separated from the main school proper by a further security system. This concept is discussed further in the section on extended schools.
- 1.3.46 Our designs will incorporate flexible spaces to reflect the fact that new combinations of teachers and support staff will allow different grouping arrangements. For example, a space of 180m<sup>2</sup> may be configured as three standard classrooms in a row, but also be capable of division into two spaces of 90m<sup>2</sup> or even of being used as a single space without dividers, if the latter are designed and installed to this specification. It should be noted that we do not intend to design all or most spaces with this degree of flexibility, as we do not expect it to be used in large measure and it will be very expensive to provide in accordance with the required acoustic standards, especially for only occasional use. Nevertheless, one or two areas with this degree of flexibility may be useful and we do intend to provide a mixture of standard classroom spaces with linked small spaces for individualised or group work. Such spaces may be provided in corridor areas adjacent to the classroom, provided that they can be supervised with good lines of sight.

## ICT

### *Current Position*

- 1.3.47 The ICT provision across the city is generally good, reflecting the priority that the City Council has placed on the use of ICT to support learning and teaching and the funding that has been allocated. Secondary schools have achieved the 5:1 computer to pupil ratio and all secondary schools have been connected to the LEA broadband Wide Area Network (WAN) since September 2002. This is known as SCORE.
- 1.3.48 The City has a number of ICT-rich facilities, including:
- centres at Port Vale and Stoke City football club;
  - we have two EiC-funded City Learning Centres, one in the north and one in the south of the City, that have developed a wide range of innovative activities aimed at promoting ICT as a tool to support learning. These CLCs also act as training venues and technical support hubs as well as specialist centres focusing on multi-media resources, broadcast-standard video and engineering and technology;
  - we have two Microsoft IT Regional Academies and three other Microsoft Academies, with an aim to establish a Microsoft Academy in each secondary school;
  - in addition, we have a CISCO Networking Academy, based at Haywood CLC.

We also have:

- a wide range of services, links and content on our successful SCORE system;
- an innovative scheme for parental involvement known as SPAN;
- a state-of-the-art pupil tracking, target-setting and analytical attainment database known as START;
- considerable experience in the use of interactive whiteboards.

All of this is amplified below.

- 1.3.49 The LEA has been active in supporting and developing the use of interactive whiteboards within all schools across the City, through the work of the local Rainbow EAZ, a Neighbourhood Renewal funded project, work by the two City Learning Centres and now through the DfES Interactive Whiteboard Initiative. Every secondary school has some interactive whiteboard provision and we have local centres of best practice in the use of interactive whiteboards to support subject teaching. The City has also hosted a national conference on the use of interactive whiteboards, that attracted delegates from around Britain.
- 1.3.50 In addition to priorities, our Education Development Plan has 5 themes, which are embedded across all priorities. ICT is one of these and we have a well developed ICT Strategy and Action Plan, which we believe to incorporate best practice. The use of ICT for promoting more effective teaching and learning across the curriculum is our main focus and is an important element of our recently published Teaching and Learning Framework.
- 1.3.51 In order to facilitate our plan to integrate ICT effectively into the teaching and learning of all subjects, since September 2004 all schools within the City, including primary, special schools and PRUs, have had a broadband connection to the LEA WAN. This is made up of a combination of wireless and cable-based systems with a minimum capacity of 2Mb/s but with most schools being provided with at least 4Mb/s and with the capacity to increase bandwidth to 100Mb/s and beyond. The infrastructure works well supported by a very large server at one of the City Learning Centres. This broadband system, known as SCORE (Stoke Community On-line Resources for Education), already has the capacity for a personal folder and e-mail address for every pupil and member of staff in the City's education service. The system also provides discussion fora, individual and education service diaries, simple web-site building tools and curricular resources, together with hyper-links to local school sites and other resources on the internet. It also carries LEA news, key documents and the essential course-booking system. It is web-based and is therefore accessible, subject to the possession of a password, from any internet access point. This system has proved both flexible and robust. It is very effective in making available media-rich curricular resources, such as Espresso, but also provides access to the pupil achievement database and tracking system. Importantly, SCORE allows us to integrate a full range of e-learning tools within a single sign-on framework allowing students, teachers and other members of the community, including parents, to gain access to resources conveniently with a single username and password.
- 1.3.52 Our START system runs on SCORE. This system records the history of pupil attainment on an individual basis with a wide range of group, whole-school and whole-LEA analyses for comparative purposes. Working with Professor Don Passey from Lancaster University, Manchester and Sandwell LEAs, we have developed START as an on-line assessment, reporting and target-setting tool that provides staff within schools with excellent data about student progress and a range of benchmarked information for effective target-setting. The

project has been financed by the DfES as a pilot for national purposes, which we are now extending to the primary sector.

- 1.3.53 A vital use of SCORE is to engage parents. The system already has the capacity to hold a large number of pieces of work for each individual pupil. Under our SPAN (School and Parents Achievement Network) project, pupils place exemplary pieces of work into their folder, which can then be accessed by parents with a suitable password. The aim of this pilot project is to involve parents in their child's work, so that they know the level of work being produced and the reasons why it is accorded a particular level. The system allows pupils, parents, teachers, colleges and potentially employers to view student work, review progress and comment on it. The pilot project has gone well and it is planned to make it available to all schools from September 2005. This will undoubtedly be a useful facility for teachers taking on new pupils, especially at the transition from primary to secondary school, as it offers a means of bench-marking the work of each pupil. This is personalised learning in operation.
- 1.3.54 We have also been exploring the use of Managed Learning Environments to support different models of curriculum delivery. This has included pilots of a number of MLEs and a CLC/KS3 Strategy project delivering SAM learning to all secondary students across the City. We have also used the MLE installed within Stoke College to deliver a 14-19 activity, where students from local schools have taken an Electronics GCSE through a mixture of college-based activities, a home electronics kit and on-line course materials.
- 1.3.55 In terms of inclusion, all special schools have been linked to SCORE, as have the Pupil Referral Units. The latter are well equipped with ICT, although we need to give further thought to appropriate ICT specifications for Learning Support Units and SEN resource bases within mainstream schools. Secondary schools are already important points of access to ICT for the wider community. The 2 City Learning Centres at Haywood and Longton High Schools host a significant amount of adult learning, including Learn Direct. In addition, as part of Excellence in Cities, 8 mini-CLCs were created in a further 8 high schools, whilst other schools have created their own similar facilities. College in the Community, which is our joint venture with Stoke-on-Trent College for adult education in the community, uses all these facilities extensively for ICT classes for adults both during the school day and out of school hours. At Haywood City Learning Centre this is in combination with a branch library, a model from which we can learn and adapt more effectively for use in other schools (Blurton, Holden Lane and James Brindley).
- 1.3.56 We have some experience of video-conferencing. The local Rainbow EAZ, in partnership with the two CLCs, has explored the use of this tool for learning. The pilot has recently been expanded, bringing in other schools in the city that have invested, or plan to do so, in the use of this technology.

#### *Vision for ICT*

- 1.3.57 E-learning is an important element of the City's vision as expressed by the Community Strategy. BSF will contribute to this, since we intend to ensure that nursery and primary schools, adult education (College in the Community), our partners in the FE sector, Connexions and the Youth Service, and parents and young people at home continue to have access to SCORE, but in an enhanced state as it develops. This will also be linked to the separate City Council broadband network, West Midlands "broadband cloud" and the National Education Network. Improved use of digital technologies within a whole-city learning environment will bring a number of significant benefits to the city and the learning communities that it supports. The further development of a technology-rich learning infrastructure will support regeneration activity. The aim is to improve achievement by enabling and empowering learners of all ages, backgrounds and cultures through the use of digital tools. This new learning environment should attract and support businesses looking for a workforce that has the capability to embrace the challenges of a rapidly changing work environment ever more dependent on competent use of ICT.
- 1.3.58 Both in schools and other institutions digital technologies can enhance learning outcomes across the whole curriculum. The following are key principles.
- Teachers and learners can develop activities that explore complex systems more effectively. Students can build their own understanding of systems, processes and concepts by exploring them from their own perspective, using their own data and at times that best support their learning.
  - Teachers, learners and parents can be provided with more effective feedback about learning progress. Our SPAN project has demonstrated the increased motivation and achievement that comes when students, parents and teachers can work together to improve the quality of assessment, feedback and mutual understanding. Similarly, the START system has proved a highly effective tool for teachers (and other staff) to track learning progress and set challenging, but realistic, targets for individual and group improvement. The system is also being developed to track behaviour. And it is being adapted for use at times of transition; a pilot is currently under way for transfer of data to colleges at 16+ and the same principle will shortly be extended to primary/secondary transfer.

- The managed learning environment can increase motivation. Our experience with SCORE has indicated an improvement in the engagement of learners, especially those who may have become disaffected with the more traditional learning process.
- Teachers can develop and learners can access learning activities at times and at places that are most effective for the individual. The usage log of SCORE amply shows this. In effect, SCORE is a whole-city learning campus. This city-wide managed learning environment will be at the heart of all educational activities, providing learners with personalised learning, a personalised record of progression and an individual digital portfolio of their best work.
- In addition, digital media provides flexibility to suite different learning styles through the presentation of information, ideas and concepts in ways that offer more control for both student and teacher.

1.3.59 Once the above principles are placed at the heart of our educational activities, the choice of technologies becomes much clearer, as their effectiveness can be measured against educational gains rather than technological marketing. They also provide schools with a set of criteria to help them assess their own use of technology within their teaching and learning, leading to better informed and more effective professional practice.

1.3.60 An effective managed service will be provided to all secondary schools, special schools and PRUs, aspects of which will be extended to the primary and pre-school sectors in due course, as (LEA, not BSF) resources allow. It will ensure value for money through the aggregated purchase of core technology tools across the BSF estate (and beyond) and a robust and reliable technology platform on which to build innovative teaching resources and new and exciting ways of learning. This will need to build on the core services already being delivered through the LEA broadband wide area network (WAN) and the software tools within the Stoke e-learning framework, SCORE (Stoke Community On-line Resources for Education), including START and SPAN.

1.3.61 The service will deliver a seamless experience for the end-user, whether student, teacher, parent or adult learner. It will exploit the cost and efficiency gains that can be leveraged through aggregated purchasing and central service provision, whilst allowing schools the necessary flexibility to deliver learning in ways that support their own unique environments. The service will include:

- single sign-on to any computer within the broadband network using the individual's SCORE name and password;
- Voice on Internet Protocol (VOIP) services across the WAN;
- disaster recovery and intrusion protection at the WAN, school and client hardware levels;
- structured content delivery, including streaming media services, optimised to ensure an effective user experience at the client level;
- software update services delivered across the WAN at systemic level, but with flexibility to address software updates purchased on a more localised basis by individual schools.

1.3.62 The managed service will provide stability, reliability and security through clear policies, practices and procedures that support both individual needs and the institutional requirements of a whole-city learning environment. The whole-city approach will extend to other agencies, including the FE colleges, College in the Community for adult and family learning, libraries, children's centres and certain other community-based venues. Our single sign-on solution will give users in these places access to our extended connectivity; they will be able to gain access, where appropriate, to system and school resources, whilst schools will be able to access appropriate resources held by these other agencies and institutions.

1.3.63 We will build on our already strong experience of delivering innovative and effective technology initiatives that focus on improving learning outcomes for all. Bringing the strengths of the private sector together with the in-depth knowledge of our existing ICT teams working within the city, we should be able to create a world-class e-learning infrastructure.

#### *Implementation*

1.3.64 Our intention is that:

- all specialist and general classroom spaces in all our new and refurbished BSF schools should be equipped with broadband capability, so that all teachers and learners have ready and daily access in all subjects to media-rich resources, personalised learning and individual progress-tracking and analysis. This should develop and enhance our existing SCORE framework, including START and SPAN;

- an effective learning content management system (LCMS) and Learning Object Repository (LOR) will be implemented, in order to provide a core mechanism for managing learning both in and out of the school, as well as a tool for sharing resources and digital best practice. The LCMS will also use the principles of SPAN to enable more effective feedback on learning to teachers, learners and family members and to develop more effective support for different learning styles, both within and outside the classroom;
- pupils should have ready access to laptops, all staff should be equipped with a laptop and most rooms should feature an interactive whiteboard;
- there will be a facility to enable staff to experiment, known as ELLE (Experimental Learning Laboratory Environment);
- we will invest heavily through BSF in a change management process for teaching and learning with ICT;
- an infrastructure of public messaging through ICT in each school.

1.3.65 We intend to use both fixed-wire and wireless networking. We consider that wireless networking should be the main vehicle, because it will be less intrusive for refurbishments. We also consider that it will be more flexible in terms of our intended usage. We want students to have widespread access to laptops, although we are concerned at potential differences in usage and level of care. We will ask potential MSPs for their views on solutions, but our initial view is that subject laptops, on laptop trolleys, stored centrally and supported by technicians or other support staff, will facilitate care and preparation to best advantage. Such laptops with wireless networking will enable staff and students to use digital resources flexibly and consistently within subject areas rather than having to take the subject teaching to ICT suites. Although we will provide ICT suites, there will be only between one and three, depending on the size of the school, as they will no longer be the main delivery vehicle. However, most rooms will also have interactive whiteboards connected to fixed workstations that are linked into a fast cable-based network. This will give the teacher the most convenient access to a variety of audio, video and graphical resources to enable more creative and interactive whole-group teaching. Our experience with interactive whiteboards tells us that even without other computers in the room an interactive whiteboard can be an enormously powerful resource for the teacher.

1.3.66 We will also provide every teacher with a toolkit that consists of a laptop (or Tablet PC), a set of core software tools, access to a number of web-based resources and the use of an interactive whiteboard as standard. As well as giving the teacher flexibility, the laptop is essential for networked access to the tools of SCORE and START in particular. Over half of teachers in our secondary schools already enjoy the use of a laptop and the combination of a system with media-rich capability and pupil performance-tracking is engaging a high number of our secondary staff, to whom this existing system has been well publicised. The laptop should also give controlled access to any local information-sharing and assessment (ISA) index established under the children's services agenda. We are currently developing the team supporting SCORE, so that the managed learning environment can continue to be expanded rapidly. The same team has been given the capacity to support ISA. For example, they have supported the technical aspects of the newly created Directory of Children's and Young People's Services and continue to work on our local ISA index, although we realise that this work is likely to be superseded by national developments in due course.

1.3.67 If these new tools and new environments are to be used effectively, there is a need for effective change management within schools. School leaders will need to be supported in developing their strategic vision for learning and teaching within their new, technology-rich environments. This will apply with particular force to subject leaders. Teachers will need to be supported in the process of developing skills in the use of software within their own teaching. It is not reasonable to expect staff simply to move into and take advantage of the new facilities; time will need to be spent in inducting them into their use. We will therefore implement a change management programme that supports a school for three years around the commissioning of the new building and/or ICT facilities: in the year prior to their introduction both teachers and support staff will receive training, followed by concerted support in the first year of operation, declining in the second year of operation as new practice becomes embedded within the school. A team of three senior change managers will deliver this programme to all of the BSF schools in turn.

1.3.68 We want to give staff the opportunity to experiment in the possibilities of the new technology. We are therefore in the process of commissioning as part of our ICT training suite at Willfield Community College an Experimental Learning Laboratory Environment (ELLE), which is flexible classroom space where the impact and interaction of different layouts, technologies and pedagogies can be explored on an experimental basis before they are implemented in the school itself. This work can take place both with and without pupils.

1.3.69 The change management team will consist of a Principal Adviser, who will lead the overall process and work with two further change managers, who will be recruited at the level of senior deputy headteachers. We will expect them to have experience of whole-school leadership issues and a good level of expertise in the use of ICT within the classroom. This core team of change managers will be supported by change management

project teams consisting of LEA and MSP staff who can offer the right mix of support for the needs of individual schools. Each team will meet with senior staff from the relevant school on a regular basis, but the change manager for that school will spend a significant proportion of their week working inside the school alongside curriculum leaders.

- 1.3.70 In addition to the three change managers the team structure is planned to be as follows, subject to detailed discussions with the MSP, when chosen.
- ELLE Support Officer to develop and manage the programme of activities within the ELLE, liaise with schools and suppliers and set-up the ELLE for particular activities.
  - E-learning curriculum consultants to work with school subject teams to develop effective e-learning activities (team of six, two already funded in CLCs and four to be funded from BSF).
  - E-learning developers to support the technical development of effective e-learning resources, working with subject teams within schools and likely to be employed by the MSP (team of six).
  - ICT administrative officer to support the work of the change management teams.
  - We would expect each secondary school to provide the equivalent of at least one full-time teacher, the purpose of which would be to make time available within each subject department. Individual teachers would be designated as champions of the new technology for this purpose and would work with the change management team and their own subject team to promote the effective realisation of its potential. Specialist schools will be expected to offer some time in their specialism for work outside their own school.

Whilst each school would be expected to fund the cost of timetabled release for the subject champions, we want to fund the cost of change management from within the ICT funding available to BSF. The cost of the e-learning developers will form part of the contract with the MSP, but we anticipate that the other staff will be employed by the LEA over a seven-year period of change management up to 2011-12. We estimate that the annual average cost (including for an average of 3% inflation over the period) will be in the order of £510k, giving a total of £3.57m, which we seek from the BSF ICT grant. This cost cannot be met in any other way, but we believe strongly that without this investment in staff development the overall investment in ICT within BSF is seriously at risk of being ineffective.

- 1.3.71 Subject to affordability, we also want to install ICT in public spaces. For example, there should be a display screen in the main entrance hall to convey messages to visitors, including the display of pupils' work, but we would also aim to install screens throughout the school to give messages to pupils about the management of the school day. This would include lesson changes, extra-curricular activities and meal menus. In the dining area(s) our emphasis on healthy eating would include screens giving information about the calorific value of the foods on offer, together with the fat, carbohydrate and vitamin content etc. This would be presented in a fun way, with the aim of ultimately engaging the pupils in a sensible commitment to a balanced diet.
- 1.3.72 In submitting this SBC we are confirming that we can deliver the ICT vision within the budgets allocated via SBC funding for ICT. We are in discussion with our school partners about the development of a replenishment package which would involve annual contributions from the partners to a holding account (per school). This could be drawn on as replenishment of hardware etc is required. Such a replenishment fund is essential, we believe, if the initial investment of ICT is to be sustainable into the future and not just a 5 year venture.

## **Special Educational Needs and Inclusion**

### *Current Position and Vision*

- 1.3.73 The LEA has a recently developed Inclusion Strategy for special educational needs, which is fully in line with "Removing Barriers to Inclusion". It is given effect as priority 7 of our Education Development Plan and contains an appendix which both audits need and sets clear numerical targets for a wide range of performance indicators in the area of special educational needs. This includes the disability access strategy of the LEA. The Inclusion Strategy was the subject of widespread consultation in 2003, including a multi-agency conference attended by 300 representatives (November 2003). This process has also included consultation with focus groups of parents and pupils both in mainstream and in special schools. Specific consultation has taken place with the parents of an MLD school which is extending its range to include BESD provision for young people in the secondary age range (who also have MLD); and with the parents and young people of our

2 SLD schools, concerning proposals to remove post-16 provision and consolidate it on the post-16 site of a Staffordshire special school, this site of which happens to be centrally located within Stoke-on-Trent. Both the latter are statutory proposals, with the first provision having opened in September 2004 and the second expected to open on a phased basis in the academic years 2005-2007. These consultations also involve staff. In addition, we have held two initial consultation meetings with Governors and staff from another of our MLD schools (there are 3 in total) to discuss co-location on the site of James Brindley High School. Headteachers, SENCOs and SEN Governors are consulted regularly at their respective fora twice each term (once in the case of governors).

- 1.3.74 There are no non-maintained special schools within or close to Stoke-on-Trent. However, we have 5 maintained special schools, all of which have been included in discussions. Our special schools are, perhaps unusually, strong advocates for inclusion. As envisaged by our strategy, staff within all these schools received training in outreach in the course of the Summer Term 2004 and each school began to operate formally in this capacity from September 2004. A funding allowance has been made to each school to enable this. In the first instance each school will operate in a generic capacity on a cluster basis to provide support for mainstream school staff for whole-school CPD on inclusion and in support of individual children. This will include a reintegration programme for certain pupils from the MLD schools in particular. However, it will also focus on preventive support for pupils who might previously have been identified as candidates for special schools, but can be maintained in mainstream with specific support programmes. From September 2005 the generic support role will be extended on a phased basis to include specialist support roles for each special school in mainstream schools City-wide (with the process completed for September 2007 at the latest). It is anticipated that Abbey Hill Special School will provide mainstream support for autistic spectrum disorders, Aynsley Special School will provide support for behavioural, emotional and social difficulties in the primary sector (with the new BESD special school providing support in the secondary sector), Heathfield Special School will support communication and physical disabilities issues, Kemball Special School will support severe levels of need in pre-school children, and Middlehurst Special School will support literacy difficulties.

#### *Implementation*

- 1.3.75 It is in this context that consideration is being actively given to co-location of certain special schools. Abbey Hill is a large special school (MLD and autism - over 200 pupils) on a site that has recently been the subject of considerable investment. It is not planned that this school will be moved. Aynsley Special School (MLD) has recently been the subject of a major investment programme costing £1m, which was finished only in August 2004. We cannot afford to waste this investment by proposing immediate co-location on the site of Sandon or Longton High Schools, both of which are due to be rebuilt within the first half of the BSF programme. In any event, we expect Aynsley to form an important part of the loose federation of schools (primary, secondary and special) that we propose to form around the more formal federation of Sandon and Longton High Schools.
- 1.3.76 Middlehurst Special School (MLD) is currently situated around the corner from James Brindley High School, which is scheduled to be rebuilt early in the programme. Active and informal consultation has begun on the issue of co-location. Whilst there is strong support among the staff, there is virtually unanimous opposition among parents and Governors. We would not wish to over-ride the strong wishes of parents and we recognise the problems of mixing pupils of primary age with secondary pupils. Nevertheless, we do believe that it is reasonable to plan for a secondary teaching base for Middlehurst within James Brindley. This will support an evolution of the current arrangements made by Middlehurst for use by its pupils of the superior facilities of the High School and also for their supported integration into certain classes. The assumption is that the two schools will remain as separate entities with separate governing bodies, but will share their facilities on a mutually inclusive basis. In the case of Middlehurst the school is planning to make a submission for specialist sports status. This will be strongly supported by its growing relationship with James Brindley, where a new sports hall has just been completed. If specialist status for the special school can successfully be achieved, the intention would be to create an all-weather play surface and changing facilities, that could be used both by the high school students and the local community. This relationship between the two schools and the community would help to promote inclusion.
- 1.3.77 Finally, there is a likelihood that in due course our 2 SLD schools could come together for co-location on one of the mainstream sites. The main candidate would be a new Brownhills site, which would be more central to serve a new area of housing that is being considered under Housing Market Renewal. The advantage of this proposal is that it would replace a very cramped site at one of the special schools and an unsuitable building at the other. However, it has as yet been given little active consideration; nor has it been the subject of consultation. It is dependent upon ultimate proposals for Brownhills, which will take up to three more years to emerge with clarity.
- 1.3.78 We also propose to create a new special school for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties on the adapted site of a primary school scheduled for closure. This would start to take pupils from September 2006 and would be for the secondary age range (11-16). Consultation has taken place with parents of BESD

pupils, who are currently provided for in non-maintained day and residential special schools at a considerable distance from Stoke-on-Trent. The Council has approved the issuing of a public notice and the School Organisation Committee has endorsed the proposal. Consultation in the local area of the school has been well received. The creation of this school now forms part of our BSF proposals. This has been the subject of discussion with Staffordshire LEA, to which places would be offered in return for a similar arrangement at their nearby BESD school for the primary age range. This facility is needed, as the new provision for BESD pupils which opened at Aynsley Special School (MLD) in September 2004 caters only for such pupils who also have moderate learning difficulties.

- 1.3.79 Our Inclusion Strategy envisages that special schools will develop as resource centres providing a range of support services for pupils with special educational needs. As the rolls of the MLD schools diminish, this will create space, which will allow multi-agency teams to be created and accommodated. However, we do not anticipate a reduction in the roll of the SLD schools, which is another reason for considering in due course the creation of a new SLD school that could incorporate the additional space necessary for multi-agency operation. Such teams would involve the Educational Psychology and Special Educational Needs Support Services, but preliminary discussion with the local PCTs has taken place concerning the inclusion of school nurses and appropriate therapist support. We will also enter into discussions with the voluntary sector about possible accommodation on these sites. There is still time to do this, as it is not anticipated that this multi-agency function will be fully developed until 2006/07. This will form part of the children's services agenda in relation to special needs / learning disability.
- 1.3.80 All mainstream schools will be designed with inclusive requirements in mind. These include access requirements in terms of external and internal spaces, which cover both physical and curricular access. Design features must meet the needs of pupils with hearing and visual impairment, autism, communication difficulties and attention deficit disorder as well as physical disabilities. We already have specialist units in secondary schools for hearing and visual impairment. In each case these are located in the heart of the school and we will consider the case for units for other types of need (e.g. mild ASD) according to the same principles. However, the general layout and finishes of new schools should be designed to accommodate as a matter of routine a range of special educational needs.
- 1.3.81 We are already considering the implications of pupil transport in respect of co-location. There are important considerations of health and safety and it is likely that dedicated drop-off points and entry and exit routes to and from the site will need to be created where schools are co-located. Otherwise, most mainstream schools in Stoke-on-Trent have little in the way of home-school transport with the important exception of the voluntary aided sector, and it is therefore less difficult to accommodate the transport needs of pupils with special educational needs. Where such pupils are unable to use public transport, they are conveyed in groups by taxi or mini-bus, for which the demand is increasing as our mainstream schools become more inclusive. This is a process of evolution, which we will continue to manage, as we are conscious that site access to appropriate entrances needs to be prioritised for these pupils. This involves ensuring the safe approach and parking of taxis and mini-buses at appropriate points on the site.

### **Children's Services, Extended Schools and Community Links**

#### *Vision and Current Situation*

- 1.3.82 The intention in Stoke-on-Trent is that most secondary schools should become extended schools and all should have this option. As a minimum, this should involve extensive use of community sports facilities linked to our Sport Action Zone/Active England proposal (Closing the Gap), adult education use through our existing vehicle of College in the Community (and other provision) and multi-agency use through a different mixture of agencies, as appropriate. We have now completed our local Framework of Guidance for Extended Schools, which we have promoted from November 2004.
- 1.3.83 Given the absence of sports halls in the great majority of our secondary schools and the very basic nature of showering and changing facilities, the intention is to provide new sports halls with appropriate showering and changing facilities at all our schools, which includes those that will be refurbished rather than rebuilt. The location of these facilities will take account of the need for easy, but controlled, community access at appropriate times. At all sites we will need to give consideration to issues of access from the road, circulation of traffic and pedestrians and car parking, on the assumption that there is likely to be increasing use of the school site by adults during the school day. Many of our secondary schools already experience this through College in the Community and there is already considerable pressure on car parking facilities, which needs to be resolved. We are also used to the security issues raised by adult use of the main school building for College in the Community. All such use is controlled by the main school reception and security pass system and, where possible, adults are retained within specific areas, normally linked to the school's main ICT facility. In some cases this may have separate entrance and reception facilities, but, where this is not possible,

this facility should be close to reception and preferably sealed off from the rest of the school by doors with a security system. Also see section 4 for fuller implementation.

#### *Implementation*

- 1.3.83 In new-build schools, taking note of some of the exemplar designs, we have developed the concept of a covered “street”, which would contain a range of community and multi-agency facilities in a separate area preceding entry to the main school. A shared reception would control access at the first point of entry, but access to the main school would need to be gained through a further set of security doors and a further level of security pass. We would seek to approximate as closely as possible to this model in refurbished or remodelled schools. This area might contain the following facilities.
- ◆ General reception would be situated here, probably attached to the main administrative office of the school, to which pupils would gain access on a routine basis from the other side of the security cordon.
  - ◆ This area would be welcoming and should include adult education with sufficient ICT facilities. The experience of our existing full-service extended school and College in the Community shows that it is necessary to coax some adults into learning, which requires a quiet and comfortable space where a relevant worker can spend time with the person discussing their needs on an individual basis before gently introducing them to an appropriate form of learning.
  - ◆ In three schools this facility will be linked to a new branch library (Blurton, Holden Lane and James Brindley.) Although there would need to be a separation of book stock, this could be combined with the main school library and pupils could have access to the adult library resources. We already have experience of such an arrangement at the City Learning Centre at Haywood High School.
  - ◆ The “street” area would also contain a Connexions facility, which might be integrated into the library, where this is part of the development. The Connexions Personal Adviser would need a dedicated facility. However, there would be a range of other agencies, whose requirements could be met on a shared basis.
  - ◆ Childcare facilities or before-and-after school care facilities would also need to be situated in this area, subject to proper security.
- 1.3.85 The multi-agency facility might be configured as follows. The Local Health Promotion Unit has a programme of establishing in secondary schools a multi-agency health-based facility known as MAC’s Place. This already operates in our full-service extended school and in James Brindley High School (an early rebuild). It requires a dedicated confidential consulting space, including washing facilities, which can be used by a variety of health personnel. This needs to be associated with a larger room that can be used for group work by Connexions, the Youth Service and health workers. This facility needs to be flexible. It must be congenial to young people, but capable of a rapid conversion to adult use e.g. through the use of reversible pictures for decoration. Health providers in Stoke-on-Trent already use this technique. Other agencies may require shared office space, which they can use on a drop-in basis. These would include the Youth Service, the Police, the Youth Offending Team and Social Services. There is also a need in this area for at least one non-medical private consultation room, which can be used for confidential discussions with young people and/or parents on an individualised basis. It is deliberate that these areas are in the community part of the school, so that dropping in is easy and use by parents can be encouraged. However, this location also offers a degree of discretion to young people. We have found that they do not always want their peers to see them using MAC’s Place. For similar reasons, we have found through the experience of our BEST schools that mental health and social services are best provided from this area.
- 1.3.86 As part of the welcoming atmosphere of this “street”, we may be able to provide a catering facility to offer light refreshments, that could be used during the school day and out of school hours. We would use the facility to promote healthy eating and there may be a business opportunity for the catering provider to offer frozen meals that pupils or parents could purchase to take home. Where it is possible to provide crèche facilities, these should also be located in a dedicated and secure space in the communal area. However, where it is not possible to create this kind of area of sufficient size, we will give consideration to providing crèche space in association with the sports facilities. The communal area will also need toilets, which should include baby changing facilities. In addition, consideration should be given to the provision of a discreet area where a mother can breast-feed in privacy.
- 1.3.87 It is important to note that we already have experience of MAC’s Place, College in the Community, a branch library, multi-agency work through BESTs and the Youth Offending Team (YOT), and community sports use in schools. This has taught us useful lessons which we have incorporated into our new Framework of Guidance for Extended Schools. The key will be to bring these facilities together, wherever possible, incorporating those lessons. We are in extensive discussions with all the above partners and will secure further investment from

libraries and health promotion and, in relation to sports facilities, have already done so from the New Opportunities Fund.

## **14-19 Agenda**

### *Current Position and Vision*

- 1.3.87 Since 1997, there has been a significant improvement in the staying-on rate at 16+, especially in 2003. Numbers not progressing to education, employment or training dropped by a third (sustained in 2004) and there is a notable improvement in both the attainment and staying-on rate of boys, probably attributable mainly to increased use of vocational courses. These have been developed strongly in recent years at KS4. However, the staying-on rate at 17+ remains very low, around the tenth percentile from the bottom among all English LEAs. This is now a major challenge for the City.
- 1.3.89 Apart from the three schools in the Catholic sector, high schools in Stoke-on-Trent do not have sixth forms. Catholic sixth forms are expanding. Current numbers and projections are given in Appendix 2.1. The City was inspected in 2002/03 jointly by OfSTED and the Adult Learning Inspectorate through an area 16-19 inspection process. In practice, on the threshold of a new framework, the inspectors extended their remit and the action plan, which was produced and approved in the early Autumn of 2003, covered the 14-19 age range. The outcome of the inspection was positive and recognised that collaboration was already close between the LSC and the LEA. As a result we have already established since the Autumn of 2003 a local 14-19 Collegiate Board for Stoke-on-Trent, with a Collegiate Director. The Board is chaired by the LSC and includes representatives from the LEA, Connexions, the colleges and schools, both secondary and special. It is focusing on the development of a more flexible approach to 14-19 education and training.
- 1.3.90 Progress to date includes much closer collaboration in the north of the city between St Margaret Ward Catholic High School, which has a sixth form, and the nearby Sixth Form Centre, which is a well established collaborative venture between Stoke-on-Trent FE College and the Sixth Form College. This is not merely a post-16 collaboration, but is beginning to involve 14-16 collaboration with neighbouring high schools. In due course, this will have space requirements which will need to be met through BSF, but these are not expected to involve major additions, as the aim is to use surplus space at the existing Sixth Form Centre. A similar development is anticipated at St Thomas More Catholic College in the south of the city, where planning is less advanced.
- 1.3.91 Discussions in the Collegiate are well advanced with regard to creating an element of common timetabling for the City from 14+ with effect from September 2005. On the 6<sup>th</sup> July 2004 a conference was held to identify significant practical common needs between schools, so that clusters of schools can be formed for provision at Key Stage 4. These clusters will be geographical in nature, but not exclusively so. The driver is common needs and interests. The local FE College and Sixth Form College are closely involved and it is planned that clusters will select one common day per week or two half-days, in order to facilitate joint provision with the colleges for vocational courses. This principle is already well established with Stoke-on-Trent College, where up to a 1,000 pupils per year over the past 3 years have attended vocational link courses in Years 10 and 11. The aim is to strengthen this provision with each of the colleges, so that vocational courses are a much more mainstream option. There is already clear evidence from improved attainment and staying-on rates that this appeals particularly to boys in Stoke-on-Trent. This planning is being overseen by the Collegiate Board.

### *Implementation*

- 1.3.92 The aim is to ensure a good balance between specialist schools in each cluster. Work-based trainers are also represented on the Collegiate Board and are involved in cluster planning. Specialist schools are being encouraged to link to trainers particularly, though not exclusively, in relation to their specialism. In many cases pupils will travel to other providers, but in some cases college staff will work within schools, which will be encouraged to develop vocational courses in relation to their specialism as well as a range of other options.
- 1.3.93 Such developments will involve both NVQs and vocational GCSEs, building on considerable existing experience of GNVQs. The latter have been developed strongly by the majority of our schools in response to an area review piloted in Stoke-on-Trent LEA by the LSC when it was first established. The following accommodation implications are expected to arise:
- ◆ schools will develop more ambitious 14-16 vocational provision in relation to their specialism, which is likely to involve dedicated rooms;
  - ◆ where possible, especially at NVQ level, schools will use college facilities, but planning will need to allow for provision in schools where colleges cannot meet all the demand;
  - ◆ all schools will need to develop facilities for a range of vocational GCSEs, the scope of which will differ from school to school and need to be planned on an individual basis. The recent report from

Ofsted evaluating early experience of these courses stresses the benefits of planning specific facilities for such courses, which are likely to go beyond BB98;

- ◆ some schools may provide courses beyond the age of 16 for one year in line with the model already adopted by Blurton High School. Numbers will be modest, although they may require some extension of dedicated vocational facilities.

- 1.3.93 It is clear that from September 2005 there will be significant transport implications as a result of the work of the Collegiate. We do not expect to provide transport directly, but it is likely that we may need to commission additional services from transport providers, which will require a subsidy. Provision has been made for this purpose in planning the transport budget of the LEA for 2005/06.
- 1.3.95 In the context of deepening collaboration between schools, we are also considering the option of clusters/federations for purposes wider than 14-19, which would be a development for 2006 and beyond. Current planning indicates four or five clusters, would include the two local colleges. In the first instance these clusters would operate as “soft” federations, with an overall liaison committee composed of heads and governors representing each of the schools within the cluster. The individual governing bodies would remain. However, it is envisaged that each cluster would appoint a “floating” headteacher or deputy to create greater leadership and developmental capacity, and this arrangement could easily develop into a more “hard” federation in due course with governing bodies surrendering some autonomy.
- 1.3.96 In respect of the 14-19 curriculum and organisation, the aim would be to create complementary specialisms in different schools within the cluster to provide a more diverse vocational (and academic) range of options at Key Stage 4 in particular. The intention of the Collegiate is to badge this vocational strand as the Vocational Academy, in each of its locations. However, if possible, we would like to develop this idea further through a dedicated vocational training facility for students at Key Stage 4. We would expect this to be on the Caudon site of Stoke-on-Trent College offering state-of-the-art vocational facilities. We do not expect this to be affordable (or even permissible) under the rules of funding for BSF; nor would it be fundable under the academies programme (as already discussed with Sir Bruce Liddington). Nevertheless, we are in discussion with other potential funders (most notably the LSC and Advantage West Midlands) and would hope that a funding package can be constructed for this joint capital investment as part of the University Quarter project. It would address a major issue for Stoke-on-Trent, which is that progression at 16+ is now relatively positive, but falls away badly at 17+. The major objective of the Vocational Academy would be to pave the way for much improved progression rates at 17+.

## **Curriculum**

### *Vision and Implementation*

- 1.3.97 We want to create an “approach to learning” in our new-build schools and even in refurbishments where costs and circumstances permit. This will be a physical arrangement of spaces upon entering the building that conveys a message to pupils about learning. This feature has already been designed into Birches Head High School. We propose to create a major pupil entrance separate from the main public entrance to the school. This will lead immediately into a social area for pupils, which in turn will lead to the offices of pastoral and support staff, such as learning mentors. Symbolically, the students will move from a welcoming and relaxing social environment, to a supportive environment preparing them for learning – and from there they will progress into the core of the school, which will be clearly designated as the space for learning itself. The intention is that the very configuration of the building should prepare students mentally for the right “approach to learning”.
- 1.3.98 In new-build schools our intention is to create a range of spaces. There will be a limited number of spaces of 180m<sup>2</sup> capable of sub-division into 2 or 3. There will also be spaces adjacent to classrooms where personalised and independent study can take place, together with spaces for small-group work. We aim to take account of the need to adapt lessons and courses to engage different learning styles. This will be supported by diversity of spaces, furnishing and decoration, together with the capacity for flexible control of heating and lighting. There will be a range of relaxation areas in the circulation and social areas within the school, together with a strong emphasis on exhibition space. Such space needs to be provided both in the reception area of the school and in circulation/social areas. This should include the walls of dining areas.
- 1.3.99 The priority that we accord to sport in schools both for pupils and community use has been detailed elsewhere in this document (1.2.6, 1.3.21, 1.3.23, 1.3.33/34). It is sufficient to note that we will ensure that all schools have access to high-quality sports facilities, including changing facilities both for indoor and outdoor use by pupils and the community. Pupils are entitled to expect such facilities to be of as high a standard as they might find in their own homes. It is also important to note that the same principle applies to toilets and washing facilities.

- 1.3.100 Science and design and technology facilities will be a high priority to support our agendas for attainment, the staying-on rate and economic regeneration. These links have been documented at 1.2.14, 1.3.21, 1.3.26 and 1.3.33/34, but it is important to note that, whilst approximately half of all science laboratories have been refurbished, hardly any work has been done in the field of design and technology. All schools will need to have access to a range of facilities, including computer-aided design and manufacturing tools. In the context of Stoke-on-Trent, we are starting from a very low base and the latter will represent a considerable investment.
- 1.3.101 The Regeneration Zone has expressed interest in a rolling programme of investment in specialist facilities. This will include equipment in science and technology, but may also support more advanced facilities in relation to certain school specialisms, including vocational facilities. This programme will be required to serve the needs of adult learners, but could add up to £0.3m of investment per year over the life of BSF. This will build on the model of the Ceramics University of the Shop Floor already established at Edensor Technology College.
- 1.3.102 A range of high-quality spaces for art will need to be provided in each school, flexible enough to allow for work in different materials. Ceramic art is the major heritage of Stoke-on-Trent and art work is unusually strong in schools within the City. BSF will need to provide facilities to match this tradition of talent. Given that the LEA will be the basis of a Creative Partnership funded by the Arts Council from 2005, there is a timely opportunity to take advice on the best design and configuration of spaces. We already have an adviser who has previously worked as an art adviser and the Director of the Creative Partnership has now been appointed. We will seek advice from these sources. There will be virtue in attaching particular importance to the display of art, including ceramic art, in the schools of Stoke-on-Trent. The built environment within the school will also be a theme to be explored under the Creative Partnership.
- 1.3.103 Enrichment of the curriculum is a particular priority for our schools. Whilst we want to place a strong emphasis on the core subjects, it is essential that we provide a good balance to the curriculum. Our City Music School, which provides music tuition, is unusually strong and we need to capitalise on this more. We hope to be able to afford to provide a prestigious base for the City Music School in one of our specialist performing arts colleges, so that rehearsal and performance spaces can be shared to good advantage. However, all schools should be equipped with good facilities for music teaching as part of the curriculum and for musical tuition and practice in groups and individually. This will involve appropriate ICT provision and sound-proofing. Links should also be made to adjacent dance and drama facilities and all school halls should offer attractive performance spaces, including theatre facilities. Consideration will also be given to facilities that support media literacy, including TV/radio production facilities and recording facilities where appropriate. It may be necessary to link these to particular specialisms and encourage shared use between schools as part of the specialist school agenda. Our 14-19 context will make such sharing increasingly common in Stoke-on-Trent.
- 1.3.104 We also wish to encourage sharing between the secondary and primary sectors. In particular, we wish to support transition from Y6 to Y7 and we propose to create in secondary schools which are conveniently near to some or all of their primary feeder schools, a facility that can be timetabled for use by primary classes. The aim is to promote more detailed liaison in key subjects between Y6 and Y7 staff.
- 1.3.105 In new schools consideration will be given to the contribution of outdoor space to the curriculum. For example, the grounds can include outdoor fitness facilities beyond the provision of pitches. The design for Sandon High School already incorporates an outdoor performance space that doubles as a sheltered area for spending time quietly during breaks.
- 1.3.106 Consideration must also be given to diversity, which has an implicit curricular message. We will provide in each school an area for multi-faith religious observance. In Stoke-on-Trent the largest religious practice outside the Catholic sector is Muslim and such areas must be large enough to accommodate the extra demand at Ramadan. We also propose to provide (at least in new schools) a dedicated area near the multi-faith room to enable Muslim pupils to undertake ritual washing of the feet in comfort and dignity. (This will not be part of toilet provision.)

### **Behaviour and Attendance, Safety and Security**

#### *Current Position and Vision*

- 1.3.107 Improving behaviour is already an important priority of the LEA (EDP Priority 6) and this will be reflected in our designs for BSF, especially in our commitment to smaller, more personalised and emotionally intelligent schools. We have learnt from our experience of LSUs under Excellence in Cities and also from the BESTs / Behaviour Improvement Programme and the Behaviour and Attendance strand within the Key Stage 3 Strategy.

1.3.108 In respect of attendance, it should be noted that almost all of our secondary schools already have dedicated support from an education welfare officer on a devolved basis. These individuals require space, preferably shared with the Social Inclusion Team (Learning Mentors, Personal Advisers, Widening Participation Co-ordinator and pastoral staff), which should include a computer link to the EMS central management information system of the LEA. This will facilitate the use of the case management module of this system and the transmission of attendance data to the LEA for central analysis. Currently, some Education Welfare Officers (EWOs) do not enjoy these facilities, which tends to restrict their work. In the context of “Every Child Matters” the concept of the Social Inclusion Team is becoming more important and there needs to be the facility for team discussion of young people, whether or not the EWO is the lead worker for the young person in question. Space for confidential discussion is crucial in the context of child practitioner meetings, on which we have consulted with the Chair of the local ACPC.

#### *Implementation*

1.3.109 The overall importance of behaviour in our local community and school culture has been discussed in paragraphs 1.2.13 and 1.2.18/19 of this document. It is important to repeat that the overall impression and ethos created by our buildings needs to be softer and more personalised. Decoration and furnishings will be important in this as well as the configuration of public spaces. Colours of walls and furnishings in particular influence behaviour, as does the type of lighting used. Similarly, questions of comfort affect behaviour and we are taking professional advice on these matters. For example, we may look to install drinking water in most classrooms. In addition, consideration is being given to full-spectrum neon lighting, as the current lower standard is known to have an impact on behaviour for some individuals. The challenge for our architects is to combine a gentler and less institutional feel to our schools with good lines of sight and the avoidance of nooks and crannies, which cannot be easily supervised and enable bullying to take place more easily.

1.3.110 Consideration is being given to the provision of social spaces for pupils at each key stage. This could be on a year-group basis in association with the relevant offices of pastoral heads, which could facilitate supervision. We feel that it is important for pupils to be allowed to remain within the building during break times and there is value in ensuring spaces remain small enough to be manageable and to retain the personalised ethos. Spaces should be created where pupils can cluster in conversation, yet remain easily seen. Social spaces need to be of good quality, so that they encourage mature behaviour and may involve a degree of self-management for older pupils.

1.3.111 This approach to specific social spaces for year groups may be of particular value in Year 7. The transition from the primary to the secondary environment appears to be associated in Stoke-on-Trent with a serious deterioration in behaviour, as certain pupils find themselves unable to cope with rapid changes of teacher and movement around the building. Some schools in the City have already experimented with a more primary-based approach to Year 7, in which whole classes stay together and are taught by fewer teachers. Where possible, they have deliberately created a primary-looking environment and the experience of this year suggests that this is successful. We therefore propose to create more primary-looking spaces as part of BSF to support a targeted approach to pupils who are most likely to find transition difficult. In some schools it could involve the whole of Y7. There is no reason why this cannot be extended to social areas for break and lunchtimes. This proposal ties in well with our existing proposal for dedicated classrooms for use by partner primary schools to give pupils in Y6 an early experience of the secondary environment.

1.3.112 Consideration also needs to be given to circulation and catering spaces. Corridors should be wide enough to permit easy passage in opposite directions to reduce the potential for physical clashes. Corridor width should be sufficient to allow two wheelchairs to pass without any difficulty. Careful consideration also needs to be given to possible pinch points and the very long, anonymous corridors of some of our secondary schools need to be avoided. Catering spaces need to be of better quality and more personalised. This may involve having a range of such spaces associated with sports and community facilities as well as a central dining facility. Schools are being encouraged to consider staggered lunchtimes, in order to avoid the need for spaces that are too large and impersonal. Consideration is also being given to providing an extended service throughout the school day to allow greater flexibility for timetabling and for pupil choice. These measures should contribute to a more civilised feel in our secondary schools.

1.3.113 Behaviour has been the subject of consultation with all the professionals who have an input to behaviour on behalf of the LEA as well as with school representatives. This includes the Police design consultant in terms of external spaces. A particular focus is the LSU. Under Excellence in Cities an LSU was allocated only to 12 schools, but it is felt that this resource should now be available in every school, provided that the school wants it. It is important that the LSU is of high quality and contains a work-orientated environment, but also a chill-out zone, where pupils can cool off and manage their anger. This latter space should be an environment of high-quality home furnishings. Such an approach has been judged to work well in a number of schools. It can be extended to the use of this space as a social space at break and lunchtimes, subject to proper supervision. Disaffected pupils may benefit from having an alternative space, over which they feel some

ownership. Careful thought should also be given to the location of the LSU, which should not be relegated to an extremity of the school. It should be located reasonably centrally, so that the message of inclusion and reintegration is suitably conveyed.

- 1.3.114 We already have experience of a multi-agency approach to improving behaviour. The Youth Offending Team works closely with schools and it is planned to offer them team accommodation at James Brindley. In addition, drop-in office provision for members of the YOT should be available in the multi-agency part of every high school. This is described in further detail in the section on extended schools. We also have a multi-agency anti-vandalism project operating in targeted schools. This entails after-school and weekend use of football facilities with young people who have been specifically identified as disaffected. This project is sponsored by our PFI Contractor, Balfour Beatty, and by the Foundation for Sports and Arts. It is the subject of a bid for extension funding to enable us to involve sports other than football. Each school involved currently has links with community-based football clubs, who support the provision and encourage the young people to participate in their club activities. The project has so far proved highly successful.
- 1.3.115 In terms of overall security, we already have considerable experience, because our PFI contractor accepted vandalism risk out of school hours. As a result, they monitor it very closely and have devised, in collaboration with the LEA, effective means of reducing the risk. At the inception of our PFI contract the cost of vandalism was running at £1m per year across the whole school estate, and 7 out of the 10 most costly sites were secondary schools. Measures taken so far have reduced the cost of vandalism by 20% in the current academic year by comparison with the previous year. Experience suggests that security cameras, both outside and inside the building, are not often cost-effective. Instead, we have adopted an approach to fencing, which creates an inner ring immediately around the school buildings. The fencing used is strong but inoffensive to the eye and we would want to generalise this approach. Public use of schools for community purposes creates its own risks and we are likely to adopt a principle akin to that which we have used in respect of fencing. Community and multi-agency facilities can be located in a cluster at the entrance to the school. First access to the building can be gained here, where all reception facilities will be located. This will control both immediate and further access to the building, which can be done via a two-tier security pass system. Pupils and staff would be protected by a further level of security to all doors leading to the pupil areas of the school.
- 1.3.116 The Police have suggested that they would like to have access to a drop-in facility for their community beat officers. However, there is no suggestion that this should be a direct source of security, but rather an indirect approach. The regular availability of the officer in the community part of the school would help to gain better acceptance for the Police within the community, as well as providing the opportunity for a discreet word with the officer when adults or young people felt this was necessary. The Police feel that this would be a useful element of the Community Safety Strategy.

**N.B. The vision and strategy evaluation grid, completed in 2004, can be found as Appendix 8.**