

**TRANSFORMING SCHOOLS FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE:  
POSSIBLE POSITION STATEMENT**

The proposed move away from a single date for reorganisation allows greater time for planning, and for discussion with each individual school regarding its future. The reverse side of this is that it can also prolong uncertainty and may, if not carefully managed, lead to some schools suffering a slow decline over a number of years. In addition, proposals for any one individual school invariably have a knock on effect on others.

Listed below are the proposed arrangements for each school over the coming years. These proposals will be used as the basis for the final funding bid. Any significant change to these proposals in the future may therefore mean renegotiating the funding package. Reports on individual schools will be brought forward at the appropriate time.

1. **Berry Hill High School:** The school roll in September 2007 was as follows.

***Pupil Numbers***

Yr7	Yr8	Yr9	Yr10	Yr11	Total
81	113	119	143	159	<b>615</b>

**The roll is expected to fall to 452 by 2014.** The underground fires make the site unsuitable for use and makes new investment impossible. The Governors have a strong wish to federate, and eventually merge, with Mitchell High School. Given that a proposed new Academy, which will exist directly to the south, will be physically closer for many families on the Bentilee, it is unlikely that a new merged school would attract 100% of its potential students. The school would therefore be potentially very vulnerable. Additionally, such a proposal would risk undermining the newly refurbished Birches Head school to the north. It is therefore proposed that the school work with St. Peter's High School and that, at the time of St. Peter's move to its new site, Berry Hill School be closed. Statutory notices ceasing to maintain the school would be published at the appropriate time. Arrangements would be made for continuity of the children's education to be protected. St Peter's have agreed to expand the number of community places available, to accommodate children living in the area.

2. **Birches Head High School:** The school roll in September 2007 was as follows.

**Pupil Numbers**

Yr7	Yr8	Yr9	Yr10	Yr11	Total
144	151	136	147	167	745

**Without reorganisation in the City, the roll is expected to fall to 621 by 2014.** This school has already benefited from significant investment, and applications for September 2008 suggest that the school is gaining in popularity with parents. Reorganisation would mean that the school would need to expand, but that this should not occur until the final phase of BSF, probably in 2013. The school is anxious to expand from 750 to 900 places (potentially, the school could expand beyond this size) and is keen to work with Mitchell High School should that school close. This would provide greater continuity for all staff and parents. Statutory notices may be required to expand the school.

3. **Blurton High School:** The school roll in September 2007 was as follows.

**Pupil Numbers**

Yr7	Yr8	Yr9	Yr10	Yr11	Total
138	159	157	161	195	810

**Without reorganisation, the roll is expected to fall to 664 by 2014.** It is proposed that that the Local Authority seeks agreement from the Secretary of State and an academy sponsor to issue public notices to close Blurton High School and establish a new 11-16 Academy with space for post-16 provision on this site, or a local one to open in September 2011. This school would offer 240 places in each year group. A request will be made to the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust to allow the new Academy to be designated a successor school to Blurton High School with a specialism in Business and Enterprise, and a sponsor sought who would support this. Should the existing site be preferred, officers would be seeking to secure additional land, fronting on to Stanley Matthews Way, as the location of the new school building.

Although proposals for Special Schools are to be dealt with separately from the main school proposals, it is proposed that the new Academy be designed and built with the potential for a separate, but integrated, special school on site. This proposal is supported by the Special School headteachers.

4. **Brownhills High School:** The school roll in September 2007 was as follows.

**Pupil Numbers**

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Yr7	Yr8	Yr9	Yr10	Yr11	Total
128	140	150	148	137	703

Without reorganisation, the roll at the school is projected to fall to 628, but new housing developments are likely to mean that there will be a demand for increased places within a few years of the new Academy opening. The proposal to rebuild the school either on the current or an adjacent site is broadly supported. Some concerns remain on the part of the Governors and staff about the proposed size of the new school (1200) and on the proposal to close the school and reopen it as an Academy. It is believed that these concerns can be addressed and therefore it is proposed that the Local Authority seeks agreement from the Secretary of State and a sponsor to issue public notices to close Brownhills High School and establish a new 11-16 Academy with space for post-16 provision on the current Brownhills site to open in September 2012.

5. **Edensor High School:** The school roll in September 2007 was as follows.

*Pupil Numbers*

Yr7	Yr8	Yr9	Yr10	Yr11	Total
197	209	195	209	214	1,024

The roll at the school is projected to fall to 956 by 2014, although it is likely to be higher than this if it admits children from the Longton area. It is proposed that the Local Authority seeks agreement from the Secretary of State and a sponsor to issue public notices to close Edensor High School and establish a new 11-16 Academy with space for post-16 provision on a new site at Park Hall to open in September 2011. The formal closure of Edensor High School, would not occur until the new school is ready for occupation, most likely in 2011. The new Academy would offer 240 places in each year group. A sponsor with an interest in technology is being sought.

During consultation some concern has been expressed about the proposed site of the new Academy. These range from concern about the geology, the existing gasometer (due to be demolished) and about the road junction. Planners have expressed concern about the possible loss of greenbelt. Early work suggests that each of these concerns can be addressed. A full site investigation has been launched to ensure the geology is appropriate for a school. Discussions are ongoing about changes that might be needed to the highway, including a pelican crossing. Finally, it is possible that any greenbelt lost by the building of the Academy can be offset by converting some or all of the Willfield site into greenbelt land.

6. **Haywood High School & Engineering College:** The school roll in September 2007 was as follows.

***Pupil Numbers***

Yr7	Yr8	Yr9	Yr10	Yr11	Total
211	210	223	206	212	<b>1,062</b>

**The roll is expected to fall to 965 by 2014.** Despite the offer of a new build on the Bank Top Acreswood site, public consultation showed strong support for the school, and a resistance to agree to any changes. 504 individual responses were received, and a petition of 5,829 names was submitted. The responses argued strongly that the school should be left unchanged. Although the school is popular in the local area, the most recent exam results suggest that the school is just above Government baseline expectations in terms of GCSE attainment, including English and Maths. Additionally the school site does not meet BB98 requirements for more than 750 students, and cannot be expanded. In view of this, it is not proposed to make any major investment at the school, but to refurbish it towards the end of the BSF programme in 2012 or 2013.

7. **Holden Lane High School:** The school roll in September 2007 was as follows.

***Pupil Numbers***

Yr7	Yr8	Yr9	Yr10	Yr11	Total
210	204	210	218	215	<b>1,057</b>

**The roll is expected to fall to 1,004 by 2014.** Holden Lane High School is already designated as a specialist sports college and, although the site size is not extensive, it can continue to meet the needs of the community with refurbishment. It is proposed that support be given to this school for a change of status, but that no changes requiring statutory notices be carried out. The School governors have expressed some concerns about the process of seeking Foundation status and further discussions will continue.

8. **James Brindley High School:** The school roll in September 2007 was as follows.

***Pupil Numbers***

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Yr7	Yr8	Yr9	Yr10	Yr11	Total
120	130	134	128	175	<b>687</b>

**The roll is projected to fall to 617 in the period up to 2014**, but the site remains one of the strategically most important in the City, and offers an exceptional opportunity to establish a vibrant school with extended facilities. The proposal to merge the school with St. Margaret Ward VA School was not supported locally, and it is therefore proposed that further consultation be carried out on a proposal to seek agreement from the Secretary of State and an appropriate sponsor to close James Brindley High School and open a new 11-16 Academy, with 240 places in each year group, with space for post-16 provision and extended community provision on site. In view of the state of the current buildings, it is proposed that the rebuilding of this school be given priority. If approval is given, it is proposed that statutory notices be issued to cease to maintain James Brindley School in August 2011, and establish the new 11-16 Academy with effect from September 2011.

9. **Longton High School:** The school roll in September 2007 was as follows.

***Pupil Numbers***

Yr7	Yr8	Yr9	Yr10	Yr11	Total
55	66	84	119	130	<b>454</b>

**It is likely that fewer than 50 children will be admitted in September 2008**, which means that the roll will drop below 400 with a further decline very probable.

Over the past two years, the school's performance at GCSE, set alongside the average for the City, were as follows.

***Performance***

Year		5 A*-C GCSE	5 A*-C GCSE (inc English & Maths)	Value Added
2006	School	43%	16%	
	City	49.3%	33.3%	
2007	School	39%	24%	970.3
	City	53.9%	34.8%	

The school's results over the last two years have been below the City average. The value added score is arrived at by predicting what pupils should achieve when they arrive at the school at the age of 11. If, on average, pupils improve on their predicted performance and do better than fellow pupils in similar

circumstances, the school is awarded a score of more than 1,000; if they do worse, the school will score less than 1,000. On this rating, Longton scored below average.

Given this position, this school is no longer viable. The Governors' preferred option is a merger with Edensor High School, and a new school built in the grounds of the current school. However, if a new school were built, it would create too many places in this area of the city. In the circumstances, it is proposed, subject to agreement with the Governing Body of Sandon High School, to publish statutory public notices, ceasing to maintain Longton High School with effect from 31 August 2010 with arrangements to be made for the children who would be on roll at that date to become the responsibility of Sandon High School. Children will be admitted to Longton High School in September 2008, but there will be no further admissions after September 2009. Upon Longton School's closure, the site could be used to provide increased post-16 and adult learning provision in the area, on a similar model to that in the north of the City at the Burslem Centre. Strategically, this Centre could support post-16 students from the south of the City.

10. **Mitchell High School:** The school roll in September 2007 was as follows.

***Pupil Numbers***

Yr7	Yr8	Yr9	Yr10	Yr11	Total
109	137	88	132	110	<b>576</b>

**The roll is projected to fall further to 485 by 2014**, a trend which indicates that the school would not be viable and that it should close. The Governors of both Mitchell High School and Berry Hill High School have argued for the creation of one new school on the site but, for the reasons given with respect to Berry Hill High School, this proposal is unlikely to be successful. Discussions are on-going with the School Governors regarding options to work closely with both Birches Head and with Edensor, ahead of that school's closure to become an Academy. There are arguments for and against both of these options in that it is likely that families living toward the southern end of the Bentilee will opt for the new Academy, whilst those at the northern end will in future see Birches Head as their natural school. Officers will continue to work with and support the school until its closure.

11. **Sandon High School:** The school roll in September 2007 was as follows.

***Pupil Numbers***

Yr7	Yr8	Yr9	Yr10	Yr11	Total
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164	145	137	145	154	<b>745</b>
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The school's roll was projected to fall to 717 but with the admission of children from the Longton area, the school's capacity would need to increase to 900. This school has already benefited from rebuilding, and early indications are that applications have increased for September 2008. The school management has expressed a willingness to work with Longton High School during the closure period, and to increase the number on roll to 900 over the next few years. A statutory notice would have to be published to achieve this.

12. **St. Joseph's Catholic College:** The school roll in September 2007 was as follows.

***Pupil Numbers***

<b>Yr7</b>	<b>Yr8</b>	<b>Yr9</b>	<b>Yr10</b>	<b>Yr11</b>	<b>Total</b>
124	124	122	121	130	<b>621</b>

(+ 300 Sixth Form pupils)

Only about 40% of students come from Stoke-on-Trent. It is anticipated that the 11-16 roll will be stable over the next seven years and that the sixth form numbers may rise. The parents, staff and Governors of the College have argued that this is a successful school, and should not be included in any reconfiguration of secondary provision. Approximately 1,500 people attended the open meeting. 352 individual responses have been received in support of the school, and a petition of around 34,000 names. Whilst this clearly demonstrates support for the school, critical comments were made by parents at other schools regarding the impact of a selective school on education in the City. The Authority's proposals made it clear that a Catholic school should be retained on the current site, but had the school closed, the Archdiocese of Birmingham indicated clearly that they would oppose any proposals to open a selective school to replace it.

The site size means that no expansion is recommended. The school is already high achieving and investment is unlikely to bring about significant improvement in student outcomes, either at the school or across the City. It is therefore proposed that the school remains outside any closure proposals and that refurbishment of the school takes place in 2013 or 2014.

13. **St Margaret Ward Catholic School and Arts College:** The school roll in September 2007 was as follows.

***Pupil Numbers***

**CONFIDENTIAL DRAFT**

Yr7	Yr8	Yr9	Yr10	Yr11	Total
169	165	162	162	157	<b>815</b>

*(+ 83 Sixth Form pupils)*

**The school's 11-16 roll is projected to rise to 880 in the period up to 2014.** This school occupies a site which does not meet BB98 requirements, although technical solutions could be available to address existing deficiencies (e.g., extending the school site, building redesign, etc.). The proposal to move the school to the James Brindley site was not supported locally by the parents and governors of either school. In the circumstances, it is proposed that the school be rebuilt, either on its current site or on another site, as appropriate, toward the end of the BSF programme. No statutory notices will be required.

14. **St Peter's CE (A) High School:** The school roll in September 2007 was as follows.

***Pupil Numbers***

Yr7	Yr8	Yr9	Yr10	Yr11	Total
159	160	160	157	149	<b>785</b>

**The school's roll is projected to be stable with 798 pupils expected in 2014.** Discussions are ongoing with the Diocese and the school Governors regarding the proposed move to the current 6th Form College site, when this becomes available after 2010. The move would coincide with an increase in numbers and guaranteed places for local families who do not qualify for admission on faith grounds. Most stakeholders agree that this move is desirable and offers great potential benefit. It is proposed that that the Local Authority works with the Diocese to seek agreement from the Secretary of State and an academy sponsor to issue public notices to close St. Peter's CE (A) High School and establish, on another site, a new 11-16 Academy with space for post-16 provision to open in September 2012.

15. **St Thomas More Catholic College:** The school roll in September 2007 was as follows.

***Pupil Numbers***

Yr7	Yr8	Yr9	Yr10	Yr11	Total
192	189	188	190	179	<b>938</b>

*(+ 135 Sixth Form pupils)*

**The school's roll is expected to remain stable with a projected 11-16 roll of 938 in 2014.** Discussions with the School governors and Archdiocese of Birmingham are on-going regarding the

possibility of expanding St. Thomas More High School to accommodate a greater number of non-Catholic children whose families are supportive of the ethos of the school. Statutory notices may be necessary. Building work would be unlikely to start before 2011.

16. **Thistley Hough High School:** The school roll in September 2007 was as follows.

**Pupil Numbers**

Yr7	Yr8	Yr9	Yr10	Yr11	Total
127	171	179	183	187	847

**Without reorganisation in the City, the roll is projected to fall to 698 in 2014** but the school occupies a strategically important site in the west of the City. The main concerns expressed during the consultation regarding Thistley Hough related to the proposal to close and re-open all schools, which many people felt would destabilise the school unnecessarily. A small number of letters were received expressing concern about the loss of an Art Deco building, and two letters expressed concern about proposals to expand the site. One correspondent queried the impact on the environment of demolition and rebuilding. The Governors have expressed some reservations about becoming a Trust School. However, the current building is uneconomical to maintain, particularly with regard to energy efficiency and repairs. Additionally, the design makes expansion highly problematic, and it is therefore necessary to replace the entire building. It is recommended to provide a new school for up to 240 places in each year group, 11-16 with space for post-16 provision. It may be possible to incorporate some of the original 1930s features into the new school. It is unlikely that any new building work can begin until 2010/11. Statutory notices may be required to expand the school.

17. **Trentham High School:** The consultation process made apparent a high level of support from local parents for Trentham High School to continue. Approximately 500 people attended the open meeting. 72 individual responses were received, and a petition of around 4,000 names. The school has recently emerged from special measures. The school roll has declined in recent years as the following table showing the number of children on roll in September 2007 shows.

**Pupil Numbers**

Yr7	Yr8	Yr9	Yr10	Yr11	Total
103	112	124	133	150	622

**The projected roll for 2014 is 511**, a trend which indicates that the school would not be viable. Many of the respondents stated concerns about the proposed new location and that under no circumstances would they send their child to any school which bring together young people from the Trentham and Blurton communities. This argument is a social rather than educational. Whilst acknowledging the strong feelings in the locality, experience from elsewhere suggests that, despite initial fears, new and successful schools do become popular with parents.\* In light of this, it is recommended that the Local Authority issue statutory public notices to cease to maintain the school with effect from 31 August 2011, and that students be offered places at the new proposed Academy (see the recommendation for Blurton above).

\*(See National Audit Office Report, The Academies Programme, Feb 2007, section 2.23. [http://www.nao.org.uk/publications/nao\\_reports/06-07/0607254.pdf](http://www.nao.org.uk/publications/nao_reports/06-07/0607254.pdf) ).

18. **Special Schools:** There are currently five special schools – Abbey Hill, Aynsley, Heathfield, Kemball and Middlehurst. There was a strong feeling during the consultations that no changes should be made to these schools until a full review of special educational provision had been carried out, although there was support for a new school for children with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD).

It is recommended that proposals should be drawn up for a new special school for pupils with BESD; and that a review should be carried out of special provision for children with learning difficulties and more complex special needs. Provisionally, plans should be drawn up at the design stage at each of the new build secondary schools for mainstream special educational provision to be made on the site in order to provide flexibility for future planning.