

**Buckinghamshire County Council**  
**Education Department**

Summary of aims, objectives and plans for the Fresh Start of **Highcrest Community School**, which will replace the existing **Hatters Lane School**, from September 2001.

**Submission.**

Buckinghamshire LEA wishes to submit the following summary and the supporting outline information and appendices as a bid for the Secretary of State for Education and Employment's approval, as part of the H. M. Government's Fresh Start programme. Further, Buckinghamshire LEA seeks financial support, both in terms of capital and revenue funding (as set out in the following documents), from the Department for Education and Employment, for the New School.

**Aim.**

To replace the existing Hatters Lane School, which is in Special Measures, and establish a successful and popular secondary school in its place, from September 1<sup>st</sup> 2001.

**Objectives.**

- To promote high, and improving, levels of achievement for all pupils, through high-quality educational provision.
- To promote increasing community commitment to the school.
- To promote the wider use of the school as a resource for the Youth Service and adult and continuing education.

**Background issues for the existing school.**

- Low educational standards.
- Falling roll.
- Increasing budget deficit.
- Poor provision.
- Inadequate facilities.
- LEA formal warning.
- Special Measures.

**Plan.**

- To bring about the legal closure of the existing Hatters Lane School, on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2001, and open a "new" school on the same site, on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2001.
- To introduce appropriate curriculum provision for all pupils, which builds on the improvements already brought about in the existing school, since going into Special Measures.
- To establish an effective new governing body.
- To establish a management and staffing structure which is capable of achieving the stated aim.
- To appoint an appropriate high-quality headteacher and staff.
- To improve the facilities of the school, so that it provides a safe working environment for pupils and staff.
- To improve the facilities of the school, so that it can meet the educational demands of the both the National Curriculum and its pupils, especially in the specialist areas of science, technology, art, music, drama, P. E. and games.
- To improve the general school environment, so that it provides a pleasant, attractive setting for both school and community-based educational uses.

**Resources required.**

**Capital:**

- The school's own delegated capital funding.
- Any other available funds from the Standards Fund.
- Any other available funds from the LEA's own resources.
- **Fresh Start funding - £3,175,000<sup>1</sup>.**

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<sup>1</sup> See appendix 1 (P 9)

**Revenue:**

- The school's own delegated budget.
- Any other available funds from the Standards Fund.
- Any other available funds from the LEA's own resources.
- **Fresh Start funding - £320,000** in the first full year<sup>2</sup>.

**Actions taken.**

- New acting headteacher, for the existing school, appointed (Easter 2000-August 2001) with a specific school improvement brief.
- Considerable focused support of the school by the LEA since the decision to fresh start, in order to lay the groundwork for the new school to succeed.
- Detailed consultations with parents and the community about the future of Hatters Lane School and possible re-organisation of all education in the area<sup>3</sup>.
- Appointment of Project Manager to co-ordinate work on the new school (January 2001).
- Development of curriculum, management and staffing plans to support the intended success of the new school in the raising of standards.
- Appointment process for headteacher for the new school, at enhanced salary level, undertaken in January 2001, in order to allow involvement in as much development work and as many staff appointments as possible.
- Building suitability survey and planning work undertaken, in order to expedite focused developments in areas where they will directly contribute towards improvements in pupil performance.

**Success criteria.**

- The project will be judged a success when the new school's GCSE results initially achieve and subsequently exceed the Secretary of State's published minimum requirements for secondary schools. \*
- Further, the project will be judged a success when the new school is chosen as first preference by at least 120 of its eligible 'catchment area' children, giving it a sustainable roll of 4 forms of entry, year-on-year. \*\*

\*The existing school achieved 15% 5 or more A\*-C grade GCSE passes in 2000, which was an improvement from 11% in 1999. The current targets for the school are 21% in 2001 and 28% in 2002. Since Hatters Lane is a non-selective secondary school, in a selective system, our targets may seem to be low but we feel that they are realistic and challenging in the difficult circumstances in which the school is working.

\*\*The existing school was the first preference for 78, out of a possible 367 children, in September 2000. Therefore, less than half the eligible children would ensure that the school was viable. Because of the selective system, no non-selective school admits all of its eligible in-area children.

**HMI view.**

"Although formal confirmation of closure has not as yet been received from the DfEE, it is reported that there has been an informal agreement. The shadow governing body has been formed and will hold its first meeting in January."

"Indications are that the refurbishment of the present buildings will not start until August 2001 and will continue into September, when the new school will already be open. It is reported that the refurbishment of the science laboratories has been delayed; delays of a similar kind throughout the main school would be major concern."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> See section 4 (P 7) Outline revenue budget proposals & appendix 3

<sup>3</sup> See appendix 5 (P 18)

<sup>4</sup> From a monitoring report (dated 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2001) on a visit by K Gilbert HMI, on December 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> 2000.

**Outline information in support of the bid for the  
Fresh Start of Highcrest Community School  
Which will replace the existing  
Hatters Lane School, from September 2001**

**1) The problems.**

- Reducing pupil numbers

INTAKE (MOE Capacity 710)	NO. ON ROLL (JANUARY FOLLOWING)	PUPIL NUMBERS ADMITTED
September 1995	515	118
September 1996	491	105
September 1997	436	77
September 1998* Year 7	496*	108*
September 1998* Year 8	496*	78*
September 1999	459	71
September 2000	448	93

\*NB Extra year-group admitted – change of Age of Transfer

- Reducing budget share

FINANCIAL YEAR	NO. ON ROLL	BUDGET SHARE
1995/6	515	£1,039,000
1996/7	491	£1,062,697
1997/8	436	£1,104,372
1998/9	496*	£982,177
1999/0	459	£1,195,013
2000/1	448	£ 1,238,534

\*NB Extra year-group admitted – change of Age of Transfer

- Increasing budget deficit

FINANCIAL YEAR	AMOUNT	SURPLUS/DEFICIT
1995/6	£50,757	Surplus
1996/7	£15,531	Surplus
1997/8	£13,690	Surplus
1998/9	-£105,875	Deficit
1999/0	-£134,591	Deficit

- Expenditure as a % age of income-1998/9 - 111.1%

- 1999/0 – 110.8%

- Low standards of attainment

Progress over time has varied, but the recent trend has been downward, until the improvement in 2000:

GCSE	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
5+ A*-C	18%	10%	28%	14%	11%	15%
5+ A*-G	88%	82%	94%	87%	68%	84%

- Difficulty with recruitment and retention of staff
- Poor reputation amongst parents
- The recent Ofsted inspection (January 2000) drew attention to major problems and placed the school in the category of “Special measures”. This means that the DfEE assumes that the school will be closed, unless the LEA can turn it round within two years.
- Poor specialist facilities which, in some cases, prevent the efficient delivery of the National Curriculum.

## 2) Support of the school to date.

The LEA has provided many different forms of support to the school in the recent past. These include:

- The employment of a consultant to analyse aspects of the school and advise on improvements
- The production of an action plan for improvement
- A pre-inspection review of teaching which led to the LEA providing extra money and support
- Staffing and setting-up costs of the “Connect” behaviour unit
- The provision of an extra £200,000 in 1999/2000 towards staff and building works (over and above the school’s budget share)
- An extra £20,000 in 1998/9 for computers
- Continuing involvement of LEA officers and advisers at a very high level

### **3) The following options for the future have been considered.**

- Keeping the school open with significant extra funding and a plan for improvement (only possible in the short-term)
- The closure of Hatters Lane and:
  1. Move all the children to another upper school
  2. Disperse the children to surrounding upper schools
  3. Operate Hatters Lane as an annexe of another upper school
- Giving the school a “Fresh Start”
- From this list of possibilities the PPF Panel of the Education Committee proposed to close the school and considered options 1 – 3 above.
- Parents and the wider community have been informally and formally consulted on these issues with a view to closure at the end of August 2001<sup>5</sup>.
- The recommendations on closure and the planned developments following it have been to the full Education Committee. The Committee has endorsed these proposals.
- Statutory notices have been published.
- Arrangements for the appointment of a new headteacher to lead the School from September 2001 are well advanced, with the DfEE invited to take part in the interview process.
- Detailed discussions of the process and options have taken place with the Fresh Start Team at the DfEE at all stages, which has confirmed its support for the approach Buckinghamshire has taken.

### **4) Outline capital budget proposals**

- The core buildings of the school are relatively old (1939) and are built with mirror image boys and girls halves. The building feels relatively cold and unsympathetic but much of it continues to be sound and is well built.
- The school is on a sloping site with relatively difficult access but the potential for developing the site its overall position and views could be considerable.
- There is no focus or evident front entrance to the school as it is approached because the school is at 90° to the road.

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<sup>5</sup> See appendix 5 (P 18)

- The cold and unsympathetic feel to the buildings is compounded by the long, dark corridors, with concrete floors and hard wall surfacing.
- There are poor specialist facilities, which are either worn out or insufficient or inappropriate.
- There are poor hard play areas and recreation/congregation areas.
- There are poor and insufficient administrative and staff facilities.
- There are increasing issues relating to the maintenance and repair of the buildings and energy management generally.

Through investing Fresh Start funds, the governors and the LEA would wish:

- To contribute to the raising of standards by the provision of a high quality learning environment and, in particular, through the provision of modern and specialist accommodation.
- To raise the morale and contribute to the improvement in the behaviour and conduct of pupils.
- To raise morale and improve recruitment and retention of staff.
- To improve the security, health and safety and overall integrity of the site.
- To improve energy efficiency and reduce the need for repair and maintenance thus contributing towards the Council's sustainability agenda.
- To improve the visual impact and the amenity of the school and its site.
- To encourage increased community and three-session use.

Immediate Initiatives ("quick hits" for September 2001, at the point that Fresh Start begins)

- Refurbishment of science block (Starting January 2001 using £200,000 worth of vired NDS4 funding)
- Refurbish art block and transfer technology to the ground floor of the block.
- Refurbishment of pupil toilet facilities
- Implement "Front of School" initiative: reception/drive/feeder roads/car parking
- Upgrading of decorative condition of corridors including "softening" through the provision of carpeting

- Completion of redecoration, replacement of worn doors, worn door furniture etc

#### Medium to longer term Initiatives under Fresh Start

- Provide a school assembly hall
- Upgrade sport/PE by the provision of a new sports hall and associated facilities
- Upgrade music/drama/performing arts through the provision of remodelled accommodation and the use of one of the existing halls
- Provide a larger and upgraded library/resources area
- Provide specialist SEN and IT areas
- Remodel/open up existing school entrance and provide a southern pedestrian entrance
- Landscape courtyard
- Provision of community facilities
- Provision of "team bases" for example for Education Support Teams but also Social Services, Police, District Council &c.

(Much of this work could require demolition for example of the Youth Club, existing music and drama block, existing library, IT/SEN area and one gymnasium.)<sup>6</sup>.

#### **4) Outline revenue budget proposals**

Following an analysis of the curriculum requirements (based on 4 forms of entry in the first instance) the present headteacher and the County's Senior Adviser for secondary education have produced a staffing and management plan for the new school<sup>7</sup>. This plan would enable it to meet its commitments to teach the National Curriculum and provide sufficient non-contact time to allow for a high level of staff development and support (teachers would have a 0.76 contact commitment). These proposals, along with detailed estimates for other costs for premises &c., have been costed, assuming a higher than average teacher cost (to allow for recruitment packages) and the costs have been compared with the school's projected formula budget share, based on our best estimates of pupil numbers<sup>8</sup>. A further £15,000 would be added in the first year for non-repeated start-up costs (e.g. appointment costs of head and all staff, new uniform, publicity and official opening).

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<sup>6</sup> See appendix 1 (P 9)

<sup>7</sup> See appendix 2 (P 10)

<sup>8</sup> See appendix 3 (P 14)

This work shows us that the new school would have a revenue budget shortfall, in the first year, of approximately £254,905, which we would seek to make up from Fresh Start resources.

The revenue implications for the LEA, in support of the bid, include the cost of the appointment of the Project Manager, as required by the DfEE, clerical support and incidental expenses, such as travelling. The best estimate for these costs, for the eight months from January 1<sup>st</sup> 2001 to August 31<sup>st</sup> 2001, is £50,000 – assuming a 3% increase for inflation, from 1<sup>st</sup> April.

This would lead to a total revenue budget requirement of £320,000 in the first year, which would include the project management costs. This cost would, therefore, reduce to approximately £262,000 in the second year and then rise to £270,000 in the third – assuming 3% inflation and no other changes.

## **5) Time scale**

A time line is attached as appendix 4.

**Appendix 1** - Costing estimates for capital works for the Fresh Start at the Hatters Lane school.

Capital works	Costing estimates in £000s
Front of school image enhancement	385
Refurbish toilet blocks	150
Remodel rooms as per plan	150
Remodel spaces as specialist areas – ICT, Art, SEN	365
Remodel spaces as extra classrooms	125
Upgrade corridors	100
Landscape central courtyard	50
Remodel halls to form hall & gym and Build new sports hall	1800
Form retaining banking into hillside	50
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>*3175</b>

\*All figures include an allowance for preliminaries and contingencies.

Source: Babtie.

## **Appendix 2 - Staffing and management plan.**

### STAFFING – teaching and management

1. I have suggested my estimate for teacher periods/FTEs required for September 2001 based on a revised curriculum put together with SMT/HODs and agreed with the existing Governing Body on 13 December 2000. This is a conventional curriculum, which meets NC requirements.
2. I have staffed it on the basis of anticipated numbers for next year and with a measure of generosity, so that classes sizes are kept well below 30 in most years. Given the low level of attainment of our current pupils and the prospect of extra funding, I think this can be justified. If next year's Yr. 7 does reach 120 or more, then additional staffing should be considered for this year too.
3. I think there needs to be a structure in place, which supports the "one-man band" departments, which will inevitably exist as long as the school remains small. For example, Technology might take Art under its wing; PE, Music, Dance and Drama could come under the umbrella of Performing Arts; RS might be better linked with PHSE than with Geography and History. Strong "faculty" heads would need to be appointed to manage these wider areas.
4. The school needs to appoint a strong Head of ICT who will co-ordinate the cross-curricular IT and manage the various networks in the school. This manager should have only a small teaching commitment.
5. The Year teams need single managers. Currently one Year Head manages both Year 7 and 8. This arrangement needs uncoupling.
6. The pastoral oversight of lower/upper school is currently the responsibility of the two deputy heads. This could be done by two assistant heads who would together manage behaviour in the school.
7. If the Headteacher is going to be able to work externally to market the school, secure extra funding and get involved in the PFI bid, the school needs a strong deputy headteacher, who can work internally as a curriculum/teaching and learning manager.
8. I would therefore favour an SMT of 5 – headteacher, deputy headteacher, two assistant headteachers and a business manager (see below).

### STAFFING – support department

1. This needs a drastic rethink. It is a resource, which is costing the school a great deal and is not, in my opinion, giving good value for money. At present there are 5 support teachers, including the Head of Connect, the SENCo, the teacher in charge of MLD and the teacher in charge of EAL who mostly do small group work or classroom support. Good support assistants could do their classroom support work more appropriately and more cheaply.

2. The roles of the SENCo, the teacher in charge of MLD and the teacher in charge of EAL need to be rationalised.
3. If the school is to continue to have a “learning support centre” its function in the school needs to be rethought.

#### STAFFING – other staff

1. The administrative set up in the school needs a complete overhaul – possibly along the lines below.

Business/Administration Manager			
P/T Finance Assistant	FT PA to Headteacher	FT Caretaker (with house)	Resource Manager/ Librarian
	PT Clerical Assistants (2)	PT Assistant Caretaker	

2. The present matron has a much wider brief than that of nurse and first-aider. She helps to monitor attendance, provides on-to-one counselling, delivers sex-education lessons in PHSE, helps with free school meals and runs lunchtime clubs. I believe that she provides good value for money and delivers a service, which will remain important in the school.
3. The school is overstaffed in terms of technicians, for good reasons at the present moment. The school should seek to reduce this level of technician staffing to a more appropriate level next year.

#### ACCOMMODATION

1. To deliver the proposed curriculum model next year, the school needs one more computer room with 20 stations. If Home Economics is relocated; the current Home Economics room would make one possible appropriate location.
2. To deliver the Science curriculum comfortably, a 4<sup>th</sup> laboratory needs to be refurbished – I would suggest S3 on the lower floor. S2 would become a prep room and S1 (currently a prep room) would make an ideal CDT room.
3. Food Technology could be relocated to the lower floor of the Art Block with Art/Graphics/Textiles above.
4. The back corridor and associated spaces (gyms and halls) need a complete rethink. The school needs a central “hub” with an assembly hall, drama studio, music rooms and library/resource centre.
5. The boys and girls toilets (inside and outside) need a complete overhaul.

#### Curriculum Analysis

1. The curriculum is based on a 30 period week with each period being 50 minutes.
2. The curriculum has been drawn up with HOD’s/SMT as follows:

	Yr 7	Yr 8	Yr 9	Yr 10	Yr 11 (2001)	Yr 12 (2002)
En	5	4	4	4	4	4
Ma	5	4	4	4	4	4
Sci	3	4	4	5	5	5
PE	2	2	2	2	2	2
RS	1	1	1	1	1	1
PHSE	1	1	1	1	1	1
Geo	2	2	2			
Hi	2	2	2			
ML	2	2	3	2		3
TC	2	3	3	3		2
IT	1	1	1	1	1	
Art	1	2	1			
Mu	2	1	1			
Dr	1	1	1			
Op A				2	3	3
Op B				3	3	2
Op C				2	3	3
Op D					3	
Total	30	30	30	30	30	30

3. Staffing for next year's Yr 7 is based on 4 forms of entry and an assumption that numbers are unlikely to reach 120 (i.e. 4 groups of 30) which would in my view necessitate extra staffing.
4. Staffing for next year's Yr 8 is based on current numbers i.e. 93, thus retaining the extra 4<sup>th</sup> group which was created in November for all subjects except PHSE.
5. I have based my estimates of FTE on .8 and .76 contact ratios (i.e. an average of 24/30 and 23/30 periods per week for each member of staff)
6. The Technology curriculum in the lower school has been arbitrarily allocated across the 4 areas of RM, GP, FT, TN. You will note that this curriculum assumes that all Year 10 pupils will take at least one Technology subject.
7. I have not included a second modern language at this stage. My own inclination would be to go for Spanish and offer to the more able Year 8 pupils in September 2002. Time would probably need to come out of Technology to accommodate this.
8. The upper school options include a number of GNVQs. I have not made a GNVQ compulsory, as this would limit the number of "free choices" considerably.

	Yr 7		Yr 8		Yr 9		Yr 10		Yr 11		All Yrs	FTE .8	FTE .76
SUB	Pds	TPds	Pds	TPds	Pds	TPds	Pds	TPds	Pds	TPds	TOT ALS	contact	contact
No Pupils		120		93		70		110		76	469		
FE		4		3		3		4		3	17		
MA	5	20	4	16	4	12	4	16	4	12	76	3.17	3.30
EN	5	20	4	16	4	12	4	16	4	12	76	3.17	3.30
DR	1	4	1	4	1	3		2		3	16	0.67	0.70
SI	3	12	4	16	4	12	5	20	5	15	75	3.13	3.26
PS/CA	1	4	1	3	1	3	1	4	1	3	17	0.71	0.74
FR	2	8	2	8	0	0		4		0	20	0.83	0.87
GM	0	0	0	0	3	9		4		0	13	0.54	0.57
UR	0	0	0	0	0	0		2		0	2	0.08	0.09
HI	2	8	2	8	2	6		3		3	28	1.17	1.22
GE	2	8	2	8	2	6		4		6	32	1.33	1.39
GLt	0	0	0	0	0	0		5		6	11	0.46	0.48
RS	1	4	1	4	1	3	1	4	1	3	18	0.75	0.78
GA	2	8	2	8	2	6	2	8	2	6	36	1.50	1.57
PE	0	0	0	0	0	0		2		3	5	0.21	0.22
MU	2	8	1	4	1	3				0	15	0.63	0.65
AR	1	4	2	8	1	3		3		9	27	1.13	1.17
RM	0.5	3	1	4	0.5	1.5		2		3	13.5	0.56	0.59
GP	0.5	3	0.5	2	1	3		3		0	11	0.46	0.48
FT	0.5	3	1	4	0.5	1.5		5		3	16.5	0.69	0.72
TN	0.5	3	0.5	2	1	3		2		0	10	0.42	0.43
GHs	0	0	0	0	0	0		5		6	11	0.46	0.48
G Bu	0	0	0	0	0	0		5		6	11	0.46	0.48
GlT	0	0	0	0	0	0		5		6	11	0.46	0.48
IT	1	6	1	4	1	3	1	4	1	3	20	0.83	0.87
IS	0	0	0	0	0	0	18	3		6	9	0.38	0.39
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>580</b>	<b>24.20</b>	<b>25.23</b>
OPML	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	10	0	0			
OPA	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	15	3	15			
OPB	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	10	3	15			
OPC	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	15	3	15			
OPD	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	10	3	15			

Source: A curriculum analysis and proposals by the current headteacher, Mrs T Barnes.

**Appendix 3** - Estimated revenue budget for the first year.

“New” school at Hatters Lane Estimated provisional budget plan 2001/2002 in £		
Monthly Paid - Teachers	1,052,643	
Supply Teachers	0	
Supply Teachers (sickness)	5,600	
Administrative & Clerical	93,658	
Technicians	27,633	
Support Staff	40,806	
Caretakers Pay	21,752	
Cleaners	2,593	
Mid-day Supervisors	3,397	
Recruitment Expenses	5,000	
<b>EMPLOYEES</b>	<b>1,253,081</b>	
Repair Alterations & Maintenance	31,255	
Maintenance of Grounds	6,383	
Energy	29,000	
Cleaning	53,370	
Water Services and Sewerage	5,165	
Rates	42,900	
<b>PREMISES</b>	<b>168,072</b>	
Hire of Transport	593	
Travelling Expenses	0	
Car Allowances	292	
<b>TRANSPORT</b>	<b>885</b>	
Equipment, Furniture Tools	68,972	
Catering Facilities	28,000	
Clothing, Uniforms and Laundry	332	
Printing, Stationery & General Office Expenses	10,000	
Postage and Carriage	1,500	
Telephones	6,753	
Services	17,250	
Other Supplies and Services	18,000	
Inter School Transfers	0	
Transfers re Excluded Pupils	1,092	
<b>SUPPLIES &amp; SERVICES</b>	<b>151,899</b>	
<b>TECHNICAL SUPPORT SERVICES</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>1,573,938</b>	
Casual Lettings	(1,333)	
Other Income	(3,252)	
<b>FEES &amp; CHARGES</b>	<b>(4,585)</b>	
Interest on Revenue Balances		
<b>INTEREST</b>	<b>0</b>	
Wider Use	(10,200)	
Additional Education Resources	(4,284)	
<b>INCOME</b>	<b>(14,484)</b>	
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>(19,069)</b>	

	TOTAL FOR SCHOOL	1,554,869	
	Provisional budget share, including rates and SEN funding.	1,299,964	
	DIFFERENCE	254,905	
Notes:	Standards Fund income and expenditure are not specifically included There is no allowance for inflation A detailed break down of the staffing/management structure and assumptions upon which this budget is based is available.		

Source: BCC Education Department, Resources Section. January 2001.

#### Appendix 4 - Time line for Fresh Start.

<b>TIME</b>	<b>PROCESS</b>	<b>DECISION</b>	<b>PREMISES</b>
11 December 2000	New governing body holds preliminary meeting to set up structure for procedures	All decisions will need to be ratified by full new GB after publication of notices	
14 December	County redundancy procedure set in motion for all staff	Old governing body meets to declare a redundancy situation with the closure of Hatters Lane – 31/08/01	
15 December	Preparation of Statutory Notices for publication in January	Informal consultation ends	
18 December	Project steering group meets 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor meeting room, County Hall, 9.00 am. Outline staffing structure to be presented. HR report on progress. Project officer to report on general progress and to receive information for outline bid.		Outline proposals for re-modelling/re-building to be presented.
21 December	Formal notice of redundancy issued to Unions/Associations (Section 188)	Redundancy notice period begins	
21 December		Headship closing date for applications	
8 January 2001	Shortlisting at Wycombe Area Office, 9.00 am. Selection of candidates for interview. New GB	Candidates for Headship	
9 January	Project steering group to meet at Area Office at 3.00 pm for discussions with Alex Kirwan and Tony Bryant - DfEE		2.00 pm Site visit with Alex Kirwan and Tony Bryant to look at possible re-modelling.
15 January	Statutory Notices for closure/re-opening to be published. Formal consultation period begins (1 month – reduced because of Special Measures)	To proceed with closure/re-opening	
17 January	Project steering group meets 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor meeting room, County Hall, 9.00 am. Project officer to report on HT shortlisting, general progress and to review first full draft of outline bid.		Initial outline plans/costings for (??) possible development plans to be presented to the group for inclusion in the bid.
18 January	Extra-ordinary (first) meeting of full new GB at 8.30 am. At the school.	Ratification of decisions taken on 11.12.00.	
18 & 19 January	Appointment process. DfEE representative to be involved on Day 2	Appointment of Headteacher	
22 January	New GB meets at 7.00 pm to ratify headship appointment and set dates &c. for future business.		
22 January	Pensions advice day for staff at the school. Sue Oswell.		
23 January	Individual re-deployment advice for non-teaching staff, at the school. Sue Oswell		

23 January	First formal Section 188 consultation meeting with staff and Associations/Unions. 3.30 pm at the school.		
24 January	Plan timetable for appointments with TB, TD & HR	Structure process and procedures – agree salary levels &c	
24 January	Career advice day for teaching staff at the school. David Hood		
<b>26 January</b>		<b>Ministerial approval of bid</b>	<b>Prepare for detailed discussions with DfEE</b>
<b>29 January</b>	<b>Telephoned by DfEE with notification of Ministerial approval</b>		
2 February	Project Officer to meet Alan Noble – Re: partnership with CALL &c		
2 February	Adverts in TES for DHT, AHTs, Yr Managers & 8 HODs		
6 February	Advert in the Daily Telegraph for Business Manager		
7 February	Project steering group to meet at CH – 11 <sup>th</sup> floor (11a)		
15 February	Formal consultation ends. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If no objections, Cabinet decision (Mid March: Mike Appleyard ?)</li> <li>• If objections SOC meeting needed (Mid March?) to give approval.</li> <li>• If no approval-Adjudicator?</li> </ul>		Prepare detailed plans with new HT/GB and put into action.
16 February	Closing date for TES adverts (2 <sup>nd</sup> Feb)		
19 February	Shortlisting at the school	Selection of candidates for DHT, AHTs, Yr Managers & HOD posts	
27/28 February	Interviews for DHT & AHTs at the school/Area Office (?)	Appointment of DHT & AHTs	
1 March	Interviews for Yr Managers (5 posts)	Appointment of Yr Managers	
2 March	Interviews for HODs (4 posts)	Appointment of HODs (4 posts)	
5 March	Interviews for HODs (4 posts)	Appointment of HODs (4 posts)	
9 March	Adverts in TES (2 <sup>nd</sup> phase)	Appointments of other teaching staff	
23 March	Closing date for TES advert (9 <sup>th</sup> March)		
26 March	Shortlisting at the school	Selection of candidates for teaching staff vacancies	
W/C 2 April	Teaching staff interviews	Selection of teaching staff	
<b>By 23 April</b>	Redundancy (Staff Dismissal) Committee (old GB) meets to receive any representations. Staff given opportunity to indicate if they wish to proceed to appeal.		
End of April /beginning of May	Advertise for support staff/interview /appoint		

<b>By 16 May</b>	Redundancy (Staff Dismissal) Appeal Committee (old GB) hearing(s) to take place and decision(s) to be announced – <b>if required</b>	Appeals – <b>if required</b>	
<b>By 31 May</b>	LEA issues dismissal notices		
31 August	Redundancy takes effect		
31 August	Legal closure of school	Closure of Hatters Lane School	Re-building/re-modelling work underway.
1 September	Opening of new school	Opening of new school	Re-building/re-modelling work continuing.

Last updated: 30/01/01

Bob Gibbard.

Source: BCC Education Department Fresh Start Project Support Group.

## Appendix 5 - Report of the Wycombe Commission.

### Introduction and background

The Wycombe Commission was set up by Buckinghamshire County Council Education Committee to consider educational provision in the eastern side of Wycombe town. The area includes Hatters Lane School, a nursery and six primary schools, listed below.

- Ash Hill Combined School
- Kings Wood Infants School
- Kings Wood Junior School
- Hannah Ball Infants School
- Bowerdean Nursery
- Beechview Junior School
- Marsh Infants School
- Hatters Lane Upper School

In terms of the Buckinghamshire LEA School Organisation Plan, the area covered by the Commission falls within Area 13 – High Wycombe and East Wycombe District, for primary schools, and Area 6 – High Wycombe and West Wycombe, for secondary schools.

### Other primary provision within the Hatters Lane area

The Commission consulted with the Headteachers and Governors of the three primary schools which are the immediate neighbours of those involved in the area concerned, since they would be affected by any changes which might be made. These schools<sup>9</sup> are not subject to the same problems faced by schools within the area covered by the Commission.

The educational context for the Commission's work was as follows. The Hatters Lane School and Kings Wood Infants School had been judged by Ofsted as requiring *Special Measures*, Ash Hill School (formerly Micklefield) being deemed to have *Serious Weaknesses*. Further, there appeared to be a general view that the problems being faced by the schools were not solely "school" problems and that many outside and community-related issues contributed to the challenges faced by the schools. In addition, with one exception, the schools in the area faced projected falling rolls. (See chart below)

### Secondary school pupil data (Total including sixth form)

Name of school	MOE Capacity	NOR Sept 1999	NOR Sept 2001	NOR Sept 2005	Spare places Sept 2005
Hatters Lane	795	461	477	497	298

<sup>9</sup> Hamilton, Highworth and Loudwater

Primary school pupil data  
(Total including nursery)

Name and type of school	MOE Capacity	NOR April 2000	NOR April 2002	NOR April 2005	Spare places April 2005
Ash Hill C	265	179	178	177	88
Beechview	360	266	296	284	76
Hannah Ball	240	93	93	110	130
Kings Wood Inf	300	162	157	170	130
Kings Wood Jun	240	226	205	182	58
Marsh	120	130	147	167	-47
Bowerdean	80	80	80	80	0

Source: Bucks LEA School Organisation Plan – May 2000  
Total number of places required (on present predictions) by phase  
(Including nursery and sixth form)

	2000	2002	2005	Tot MOE capacity
Primary	1136	1129	1170	1605
Secondary	461	470	497	795

Source: Bucks LEA School Organisation Plan – May 2000

In view of this context, the Director of Education invited the Commission, comprising local people and representatives of interested groups to:

- *Explore how most appropriately to provide an appropriate and improving level of education for primary and secondary aged children in High Wycombe; particularly in the eastern part of the town*
- *Report to the Education Committee on 19<sup>th</sup> October on those issues that would need to be addressed in order to improve educational standards and rationalise school provision, where appropriate.*<sup>10</sup>

The life of the Commission was limited, in order to ensure that it worked quickly within a specified time frame that allowed time for a detailed consultation period. The Commission determined to provide an interim report to the Education Committee meeting of October 19<sup>th</sup>, with the final report and recommendations being ready for the January 2001, after which the Commission would be wound up.

Mike Harrison (Senior Advisory Officer) set out the challenge of the situation, as follows:

- *The juxtaposition of the two issues (Hatters Lane and the need to rationalise primary places) is one challenge. The solution may be a new combined institution, providing schooling from 5-18 or*
- *On the other hand, it may make better sense to provide a secondary school plus – the plus being some form of external community provision, or educational provision post-16 (or even post-18).*
- *There is a real opportunity for creative thinking, for new ideas and for partnerships.*

<sup>10</sup> Letter from David McGahey to members of the Commission - 12<sup>th</sup> May 2000.

- *The Commission, consisting of representatives of the wider community, is invited to reflect on the possibilities afforded by these changes, take evidence from a wide range of sources and make recommendations to the Education Committee in October.*<sup>11</sup>

### Commission Membership

Cllr Margaret Dewar (BCC) [Chairman]	Cllr Mike Appleyard (BCC)
Cllr Trevor Fowler (BCC)	Cllr Chris Oliver (WDC)
Susan Jones (TVE)	Ranjit Dheer (WREC)
Professor Bryan Mogford (BCUC)	
Supported by:	
Mike Harrison (Senior Advisory Officer)	Bob Gibbard (Advisory Officer)
David Ayres (Head of School Organisation)	Alan Mander (Head of Resources)

### Declarations of interest

The Commission discussed the issue of relevant interests and agreed that only those directly to do with schools within the Wycombe Area needed to be declared. Legal advice from the County Solicitor supported this view.

Members of the Commission, therefore, declared the following interests:

- Cllr. Appleyard – Governor, Wye Valley School.
- Prof. Mogford – Governor, Wycombe High School.
- Cllr. Fowler – Governor, Marsh Infants School. Family connections with Hatters Lane School, Kings Wood Junior School and Ash Hill School.
- Cllr. Oliver – Governor, Berryfield Infants School.

No other interests were declared.

### Method

The Commission set out to consult as widely as possible in order to find out as full a range of views as it could of both the present circumstances of the area and the peoples' views of what they would like to see in the future. In order to achieve this it was decided to contact as many interested parties as possible. This was achieved by sending out approximately 60 letters to local organisations. A further 3000 letters were sent to families in the area covered and to those in three neighbouring primary schools. All Headteachers and Chairmen of Governors in the area and all secondary Headteachers in Wycombe were contacted. Views were sought more widely through articles in the Schools' Management Briefing, the Bucks Free Press and on local radio.

In all, the Commission held two full-day sessions, at which eighteen organisations presented their views; four public meetings, which were attended by over one hundred parents and other members of the local community, and received seventeen written

<sup>11</sup> Background paper by Mike Harrison – 13<sup>th</sup> June 2000.

submissions. It also took advice from officers of the Local Education Authority throughout its working life. The two officers from the Wycombe Area Team held several discussions and briefing sessions with individuals and organisations, on behalf of the Commission. They also held discussions with schools' Liaison Groups. All headteachers in the area covered were asked to seek views from the children in their schools but, unfortunately, none were reported to the Commission.

### Summary of the evidence

Broadly, most of those who spoke to the Commission recognised the need to overhaul the educational provision in eastern High Wycombe. Although the view was not unanimous, there was a general acceptance that standards of attainment and provision in some of the primary schools were unsatisfactory, as they were judged to be in Hatters Lane School.

Respondents generally accepted that:

- some accommodation was poor or inadequate;
- rolls were predicted to fall in all but one school, and this needed to be addressed, although some challenged the actual projected numbers published in the School Organisation Plan;
- nursery provision in the area was insufficient;
- community facilities were inadequate.

Respondents made a number of specific suggestions for the organisation of premises and facilities, including:

1. Re-build Hatters Lane as a mixed upper school with major community facilities (local Police Office, sports hall, Adult Education Centre &c.) on the same site.
2. Re-build Hatters Lane as a mixed upper school with major community facilities (as above) and with a primary school and nursery on the same site.
3. Re-build Hatters Lane as a pair of single-sex upper schools with major community facilities (as above) on the same site.
4. Re-build Hatters Lane as a single-sex upper school with major community facilities (as above) on the same site.
5. Re-build Hatters Lane as a mixed comprehensive school with major community facilities (as above) on the same site.
6. Amalgamate Kings Wood Infant and Junior schools on the junior school site, with the addition of nursery and community facilities.
7. Close Kings Wood Infant School, Kings Wood Junior School, Bowerdean Nursery and Hannah Ball Infant School and re-open one combined school and nursery with community facilities on the Kings Wood Junior site.
8. Re-furbish Ash Hill School and develop nursery and community use.
9. Close Ash Hill School and re-locate it as a new school, with a nursery and enhanced community provision, elsewhere in the area.
10. Close Beechview Junior School and expand Marsh Infants, to form a combined school and nursery, with enhanced community facilities, in a new building (on the Thames Water site?).

11. Close Marsh Infants School and expand Beechview, to form a combined school and nursery, with enhanced community facilities, on its present site.
12. Develop both Marsh and Beechview Schools as combined schools with nursery provision and enhanced community provision.
13. Combine Bowerdean Nursery and Hannah Ball Infants on the Hannah Ball site.
14. Create a new combined school on the Hannah Ball site, with a nursery and enhanced community provision.

Respondents believed that capital receipts from the sale of some school sites could be used to help pay for some of the proposed rebuilding/refurbishing programmes. However, capital receipts would be unlikely to generate enough income to pay for the building of whole new schools.

### Rationale

In considering the evidence and the formulation of its recommendations, the Commission was careful to keep the first point from the Director of Education's letter of 12<sup>th</sup> May<sup>12</sup> in mind at all times and to refer to the challenges set out by Mike Harrison<sup>13</sup>. Further, members took as an overarching principle, the necessity to include measures which were likely to result in the raising of educational standards, particularly in those schools which had already been judged to be causing concern<sup>14</sup>. The Commission was also guided by the principle of best value.

Consideration was given to the popularity of each school, its geographical location, proximity, character, size and potential financial viability in the future. The need for Early Years and Adult/Continuing Education provision was recognised, as was that for before and after-school care, very early in the proceedings. Due notice was also taken of relevant County policies, such as the commitment to combined primary schools (5-11), rather than separate infant and junior schools, with a principle that, where possible, nursery provision would be attached to each primary school.

The needs of the community were discussed at length. As a principle, the Commission tried to reflect those needs in its recommendations, both in terms of education and in the need for joint working with other services and agencies, to be developed in the planned development of these schools.

### Recommendations

1. Build a new mixed upper school on the existing Hatters Lane site with enhanced community facilities, which might include a sports hall, shared computer facility, Police office, District Council office or youth club. Further, to include the SEN Centre and to reinstate the Multi-Cultural Resource Centre in the new school. To investigate the establishment of a combined Education Department resource and training centre on the site. These and other possibilities should be pursued with determination. The Commission feels that a complete re-build is essential for the

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<sup>12</sup> See pages 3 & 4

<sup>13</sup> See page 4

<sup>14</sup> See page 3

school's long-term success. The Commission would also recommend that suppliers of Further, Higher and Adult Education should be invited to consider what contributions they might make to the project.

2. The governors and headteacher of the new school, in consultation with the LEA and interested parties, should take into account the specialist status of neighbouring secondary schools and seek to develop the new school's own distinctive strengths or specialism to become a model of future educational provision in the county.
3. Amalgamate Kings Wood Infant and Junior schools to create a two-form entry combined school with nursery provision and community facilities on the junior school site.
4. Amalgamate Hannah Ball Infant and Beechview Junior schools to create a two-form entry combined school with nursery provision and community facilities on the Beechview site.
5. Extend Marsh Infant school to create a one-form entry combined school with nursery provision and community facilities on the present site, if possible, or on a new site, if not.
6. Refurbish Ash Hill as a one-form entry school and add nursery and community facilities on its present site.
7. Close Bowerdean nursery and re-distribute its places across all the primary schools in the area, as set out above.
8. The LEA should create a steering group, comprising representatives from different professional and community groups, to oversee the different activities recommended in this report. This group should maintain an overview of provision to ensure that the different agencies, organisations and institutions continue to meet the wide range of needs referred to by the Commission in its rationale (see P6).
9. The LEA should undertake a review of all reserved areas of the primary schools in east Wycombe and revise them to reflect the new circumstances which arise as a result of these recommendations.
10. The County Council should evaluate the reallocation of the sites that become available for other educational purposes, such as the relocation of specialist provision and support services to High Wycombe town. Consideration should then be given to the disposal of any sites which are surplus to requirements, in order to allow the capital receipts to help fund the project as a whole.
11. The LEA should explore with the District Council and local housing associations the possibility of building suitable, subsidised accommodation for teachers to enhance their recruitment and retention.
12. To include all of the above in a PFI bid, which is our preferred funding route.
13. To explore the financial implications of the above recommendations, look at the possible capital receipts that might be generated and set those against possible building costs. Explore the financial feasibility of a PFI bid and put in hand any other work which is necessary to ensure a thorough investigation of financial issues, and the long term viability of these schools, before the recommendations are taken forward.

## Fresh Start

*Fresh Start* is a Government scheme designed to provide LEAs with powers to close under-performing schools and open 'new' ones. The scheme has not been very successful to date. In the few cases where Fresh Start has happened, the tendency has been for the same school population and buildings to become the new school, with a new name, new staff, new Governing Body and new uniform but with the same problems.

However, we have good reasons to believe that, in the case of Hatters Lane, Fresh Start will succeed. This is because the nature of the process itself has developed considerably over the last year. The Government has accepted that such schools require a significant additional resource to redevelop and improve, both in terms of capital and revenue budgets and is now providing these funds. Further, Hatters Lane has shown considerable improvements in almost every area of its work. This enables the new school to start from an improving old school, rather than one which is deteriorating.

## Private Finance Initiative (PFI)

As a further line of enquiry, Mike Harrison and Bob Gibbard held exploratory meetings with a PFI consultant, to examine the feasibility of the LEA making a bid to the DfEE for PFI credits to improve Hatters Lane School, and others in the area, if the Commission so recommended and the Education Committee was so minded. This work has involved discussions with the DfEE Fresh Start and PFI teams. Officers also contacted other LEAs and visited other areas, to see how well different types of school improvement schemes had worked.

## Possible results of recommendations at September 2005

### A – Primary and Nursery provision

Name of proposed Primary School	Capacity (main school) Sept 2005	Capacity (Nursery) Sept 2005	Total MOE Capacity Sept 2005
Kings Wood (2FE)	420	39 (FTE) <sup>15</sup>	459 (FTE)
Beechview (2FE)	420	39 (FTE)	459 (FTE)
Marsh (1FE)	210	26 (FTE)	236 (FTE)
Ash Hill (1FE)	210	26 (FTE)	236 (FTE)
Tot places provided	1260	130 (FTE)	1390 (FTE)
Tot places required	1090	80* (FTE)	1170 (FTE)
Difference	170	50* (FTE)	220 (FTE)

\*N.B.

1. Calculations of capacity are based on equal class sizes of thirty in primary classes and multiples of thirteen in nursery classes.

<sup>15</sup> FTE - full time equivalent

- The figure for 'Places Required' in primary schools is based on figures for 2005, as published in the BCC School Organisation Plan<sup>16</sup>, while that for nursery is based on present capacity.
- Full implementation of this plan would result in the removal of 345 surplus places (Yrs R-6) and leave approximately 170 (or 13.5%) places for movement/growth within the area, to cope with the possible increase in population, especially in the Wycombe Marsh area. There would also be an extra 50 (FTE) nursery places.

## B – Secondary provision

	Capacity (Years 7-11)	Capacity (including 6 <sup>th</sup> form)
Hatters Lane School - 4 (or 5) Form Entry	600 (or 720)	650 (or 800)
Places required	483	497
Difference	117 (or 237)	153 (or 303?)

### N.B.

- Figures in brackets show the effects of the school having a capacity of five, rather than four, forms of entry.
- Calculations of capacity are based on equal class sizes of thirty for years 7-11, while 6<sup>th</sup> form capacity is an estimate based on current needs plus an allowance for growth.
- The figure for 'places required' in secondary schools is based on figures for 2005, as published in the BCC School Organisation Plan<sup>17</sup>.

## List of individuals/organisations making representation to the Commission

### A - Wycombe Commission Consultation Meetings

Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> September	Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> October
Mike Ashford – Hamilton School	Barbara Maher & Jeremy Beake - Wycombe DC
Barbara Smith & Sue Horswell – Beechview School	Barbara Maher & Jeremy Beake – Wycombe DC
Kim Hart – Bucks CC - SEN & EYCDP	Katherine Woods – Bucks CC - Continuing Education
Clive Ricks – Gt Marlow School	Bill Richards – Sir William Ramsay School
Sgt Jackie Carter & PC Mike Swan - Police	Maggie Moore & John Preece – Hannah Ball School
Peter Wild – Wycombe Grange PRU	Shirley Louisy & Patricia Lea – Bowerdean Nursery
Maggie Farmer – Woodlands PRU	Linda Melton – Wye Valley School
Anne Smart & Glyn Galbraith – Marsh School	Graeme Kilner & Rafique Raja – Highworth School
Wendy Beaton – Bucks CC – EYCDP	Rick Fletcher – Amersham & Wycombe College
Sue Little – BYPU	Chief Inspector Keith Ringsell – Police
	Kim Hart & Wendy Beaton & Mike Cornfield

### B - Wycombe Commission Public Meetings

<sup>16</sup> May 2000. See tables on page 3.

<sup>17</sup> May 2000. See page 3.

The Commission held four public meetings, as follows:

1. Monday 25<sup>th</sup> September – Beechview Junior School, Guinions Road.
2. Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> September – Hatters Lane School, Hatters Lane.
3. Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> September – Kings Wood Junior School, Hollis Road.
4. Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> September – Ash Hill Combined School, Herbert Road.

In all about one hundred parents, and other interested parties, attended the meetings.

#### C – Written Submissions to the Commission

1. Letter from Mr P Basham
2. Letter from Mr G Moore
3. Paper from Wycombe East Labour Party
4. Letter from Mr & Mrs Sn(illegible)
5. Letter from Bowerdean Nursery
6. Letter from Mrs M Fowler
7. Paper from Kim Hart & Wendy Beaton (EYCDP)
8. Presentation notes from Wycombe DC
9. Presentation notes (+ copies of parents' letters) from Hannah Ball School
10. Presentation notes (+ supplement) from Highworth School
11. Paper from The Rye Liaison Group
12. Letter from Mr P Crook
13. Paper from Marsh School
14. Letter from Beechview School
15. Letter from Danny Sullivan (Oxford Diocese)
16. Paper from Buckinghamshire Sure Start Partnership (Deprivation amongst Affluence)
17. Paper from Parkman Associates

#### D – Other Contacts

The Senior Advisory Officer and Advisory Officer held a series of briefing meetings and discussions on behalf of the Commission. Those people spoken to included elected members of Wycombe District Council and Buckinghamshire County Council, as well as headteachers, governors and schools' medical officers. All information gained in this way was reported back to the Commission. All the above evidence is held at the Southern Area Education Office, Easton Street, High Wycombe.

Chairman's thanks

Councillor Margaret Dewar wishes to thank the members of the Commission for all their hard work, on behalf of the people of east Wycombe. She also wishes to record her particular thanks to the officers of the LEA for their support.

**21<sup>st</sup> November 2000**

Source: Report of the Wycombe Commission.