



Buckinghamshire County Council

Report School Organisation Committee

Date	11 September 2002
Title	Highcrest Community School: Update on Progress with Fresh Start Initiative
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Electoral Divisions Affected

Summary

The Paper provides an update on progress with the Fresh Start Initiative at Highcrest Community School.

Recommendation

The School Organisation Committee is asked to RECEIVE and NOTE the report.

Supporting Information

In early 2001, the Authority secured the agreement of the DfES to embark upon a Fresh Start programme at the then Hatters Lane Upper School. The first phase of this programme involved funding to support additional staff training and management support along with a programme of works which became known as the "Quick Hits" which were aimed to be implemented in a relatively short time and to make a major impact on the physical environment of the School itself.

The "Quick Hits" programme has provided:

1. refurbishment of the Science Block
2. refurbishment of pupil toilets and upgrading of corridors etc
3. front of school initiative including new entrance, driveway, car parking
4. technology refurbishments
5. soft landscaping to the front of the School

In total, the "Quick Hits" programme cost £1.75M and was largely completed by September 2001. The final element of the "Quick Hits" programme, the refurbishment of the technology areas, was completed in December 2001.

The building works have made a quite dramatic difference to the physical aspect and environment of the School as well as providing much needed upgraded specialist areas in Science and Technology. There is an evident difference in the whole “feel” of the School which now has a positive and purposeful air. Staff recruitment and retention has been good and in the last two years pupil recruitment has been buoyant with even a small degree of over-subscription. Key Stage 3 results have improved and GCSE A-C grades gained by Year 11 pupils improved considerably in 2001 and, to a lesser extent, in 2002.

The Authority has secured the agreement of DfES to continue with the modernisation works at the School and another four phases of improvement works costing a total of £3.75M have been agreed. These works will be phased over the period 2002/03 – 2007/08.

The works are proposed to be completed in the following phases:

Phase 1 Sports Hall

Phase 2 demolitions – refurbishment of existing Youth Club to form sixth form area and alterations to dining block; extending dining block and building humanities, gym and dance areas

Phase 3 majority of alterations to remaining buildings to provide library, staffrooms, lift, ICT, Art rooms, Science etc

Phase 4 demolitions – alterations to Music Block, building new classrooms linking bridge and small external works to courtyard

This means that by the completion of the project, over £6M of Capital Works will have been available to the School.

Members of the Committee are also reminded that the Authority submitted, in December 2001, a bid under the Private Finance Initiative, in the respect of Schools in the SE Wycombe area in order to assist with the regeneration of the area and, of course, to make a major contribution to the Authority’s and its schools’ ability to raise standards for pupils in that area. In the event, the bid was unsuccessful but currently Members and Officers are considering whether to re-submit that bid and, if the re-submission is agreed, the nature of the bid.

For further information please contact David Ayres (01296) 383527