



Primary Strategy for Change

Children and Young People's Services
School Places
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Forward

The Government is committed to a programme of long term strategic capital investment in primary schools beginning in 2009 and continuing for up to 15 years. Full details of the scope and purpose of the Primary Capital Programme are available on http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/resourcesfinanceandbuildings/Primary_Capital_Programme/.

The Government aims to do more than simply provide modern primary school buildings through this programme. The wider purpose is to support the national policy aims of fair access to quality school places, tackling deprivation and raising standards. National research has demonstrated the strong link between attainment at Key Stage 2 and the likelihood of attaining 5 A* - C grades at GCSE and, subsequently, economic well-being in later life. The stark message is that if children fail to reach their full potential whilst they are in primary school, the loss of opportunity is likely to affect them well into their adult lives with all the attendant problems of poverty, ill-health and social disadvantage that this brings. It is the responsibility of the Local Authority, schools, parents and associated agencies to ensure that children get off to the best possible start in life.

Wigan Local Authority, as commissioner of local services, is responsible for preparing and maintaining the Primary Strategy for Change, which is the document that sets out our plans for the Primary Capital Programme. The Strategy provides contextual information on current primary school provision, what we want it to look like in future and how we will make this happen.

The Strategy aims to reflect local needs and aspirations and provide a plan that details how the capital investment will improve outcomes for all primary age children attending Wigan schools. In the tradition of excellent working partnerships built up over a number of years, schools, diocesan authorities, local organisations and all those with an interest in the well being of children will continue to be fully consulted and involved throughout the life time of the programme. By working together, we can make a real difference to the futures of our children.

We are confident that this much needed capital investment will provide the catalyst for a step-change improvement in outcomes for primary age children, that will better equip them for a more successful and satisfying adult life, and will ultimately lead to better quality lives for all Wigan residents.

Councillor Susan Loudon
Cabinet Member for
Lifelong Learning

Nick Hudson
Director of Children and
Young People's Service

Section 1: Local Perspective

1. Local context

- 1.1 Wigan is the largest of ten boroughs in Greater Manchester in terms of area and has the second highest population, at around 305,000 residents. In common with many neighbouring authorities, Wigan has an ageing population and, until recently, the birth rate has been falling rapidly. Over the past four years there has been a slight upturn in the birth rate but it is still much lower than it was in the early to mid 1990's.
- 1.2 There are concentrations of significant deprivation in some parts of the borough, but the general picture is one of small pockets located in each of its twelve principal towns and communities. Wigan is ranked the 54th most deprived local authority on the 2004 Index of Multiple Deprivation. Some 50% of super output areas in Wigan fall within the 30% most deprived in England.
- 1.3 In recent years, the borough has responded energetically to the challenges posed by the decline of its traditional industries. Children and young people in Wigan perform well against the five key outcomes of the Every Child Matters agenda, but when viewed against deprivation levels it is to the credit of all service providers that this is so. Nevertheless, much remains to be done to ensure that deprivation is eliminated and the well-being of all the borough's communities secured.
- 1.4 Wigan maintains 134 schools as follows: 2 nurseries, 104 primary phase, 20 secondary schools (2 of which have sixth forms) and 8 special schools. There are 3 pupil referral units and 9 Children's Centres are currently in operation with a further 13 planned by 2010. All education provision within Wigan is within the local authority (LA) maintained sector and a high proportion of schools are voluntary aided. Around 2% of the pupil population is of minority ethnic heritage, which is well below the national average of 11.7%.
- 1.5 There are around 24,000 children currently attending Wigan primary schools and a further 930 are enrolled in LA maintained nursery units or nursery schools. 33 are community schools, 8 are voluntary controlled, and 63 (60%) are voluntary aided (35 Church of England and 28 Catholic). The LA liaises with five different Diocesan Authorities in addition to the Methodist and Unitarian Churches. Most parts of the borough are served by at least one community, CE and Catholic school and access to schools is relatively easy, with the vast majority of children making journeys of less than two miles.

1.6 Aims and objectives for primary education

- 1.6.1 One of the main elements in the Council's vision, which is endorsed by its partners, is to help people reach their full potential by providing a good start in life for every child and young person. This will be done by aiming for high achievement through education and training and providing people with the skills they need to meet their potential and gain jobs.

1.6.2 The aims of the Strategy, which reflect those of the Children and Young People's Plan, are to ensure that all children and young people:

- attend educational settings that are viable, inclusive and cost effective;
- are not disadvantaged in their education by the educational setting they attend or the area in which they live; and
- reach levels of attainment at least in line with their potential ability.

Section 2: Baseline analysis

2.1 Demography and school place provision

2.1.1 To deal with the fall in the birth rate and consequent reduction in primary school pupil numbers, there has been a rolling programme of primary school reviews in Wigan. Over the past 8 years, 5 schools have closed, 6 schools have 'amalgamated' to form 3 new ones and 9 schools have had a significant reduction in their accommodation and admission number.

2.1.2 Despite this action, Wigan still has an unusually large number of schools that are below one form of entry when compared with national, regional and 'statistical neighbour' LAs' school sizes. 59% of schools have less than 210 pupils on roll and 7% have less than 120 pupils. Primary school sizes at January 2008, including Infant and Junior schools, were as follows:

2 form of entry (fe) and above (420 + pupils)	4.81%
Between 1 fe and 2 fe (210 – 419 pupils)	36.54%
Between 180 – 209 pupils	31.73%
Between 150 – 179 pupils	15.38%
Between 120 – 149 pupils	4.81%
Less than 120 pupils	6.73%

2.1.3 The number of small schools in Wigan means that the delegated schools budget has to be spread thinly in order to maintain financial and educational viability across all schools. Small schools face particular challenges, such as the ability to attract and retain high quality staff; increased staff workloads; the ability of staff to maintain morale, motivation and inspirational delivery; and the ability to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum. The national shortage of Headteachers will make it particularly difficult for small schools to attract and retain the right calibre of individual to lead a school in these challenging circumstances, particularly if it faces additional complexities such as high levels of deprivation, high rates of pupil transience or a disproportionate number of children with English as an additional language. School federations can be a solution to these issues in some circumstances.

- 2.1.4 Whilst the birth rate has increased in recent years, it is not consistent across the borough. Parts of the borough have experienced dramatic fluctuations in the birth rate and others appear to be on an upward trend. Some parts of the borough need additional temporary or permanent school places in the future, whilst other areas still require some form of rationalisation in order to stabilise provision. Capital funding is in place to support premises alterations.
- 2.1.5 One quarter of primary schools in Wigan are oversubscribed for the 2008 reception intake. The oversubscribed schools are generally, though not exclusively, in the more affluent areas of the borough and generally have higher standards of attainment when compared to other local schools.
- 2.1.6 New housing in Wigan is currently being built at the rate of around 1,000 units per year but developments are not spread evenly throughout the borough. It is estimated that a maximum of 30 children per school year group will be generated from new housing across the borough.
- 2.1.7 In recent years, Wigan has experienced an increase in mainly Eastern European migrants and the proportion of children with English as an additional language is increasing. Again, this tends to be concentrated in certain communities of the borough, such as Leigh and the south and west of Wigan town centre, and in certain types of school according to the faith practiced by those coming to live in the borough.

2.2 Educational standards

- 2.2.1 In 2006, results at Key Stage 1 were at or above national and regional averages.
- 2.2.2 At Key Stage 2, pupil performance in English, mathematics and science has generally improved so that it is either in line with or above the national average. In English, the percentage of pupils achieving level 4 or above has increased from 67.2% in 1998 to 79.2% in 2006. In mathematics the increase has been even greater with the percentage of pupils achieving level 4 or above increasing from 62.2% in 1998 to 78.5% in 2006. Science results have stayed consistently good with 88% of pupils achieving level 4 or above, which is above the national average. The DCSF (Department for Children, Schools and Families) table that records aggregate performance across the three core subjects show that Wigan has above national average levels of pupil performance from 2003 to 2006.
- 2.2.3 Three schools performed below floor target levels (less than 65% of pupils achieving Level 4+ at Key Stage 2) in both English and mathematics in 2007 and nine schools performed below floor target levels in either English or mathematics in the same year. Whilst some of these schools are in deprived areas, many schools serving deprived areas consistently perform well above floor targets. Just one school is in special measures and one school has a notice to improve.

2.3 School premises and ICT

2.3.1 Due to action by the LA and its Diocesan partners, and schools' use of accommodation for community activities, surplus places in Wigan are under control. In January 2008, gross surplus places stood at 8% and six schools had over 25% surplus places (6%). The plans for these six schools are as follows:

- Beech Hill Primary is the subject of surplus place removal and a complete rebuild under year 1 of the Primary Strategy for Change;
- Accommodation at one school with viable pupil numbers is in the process of being rationalised;
- One school is working collaboratively with a neighbouring school and will be moving toward permanent rationalisation in the near future;
- One school has viable pupil numbers and alternative use of its quality accommodation is being investigated; and
- Two further schools need to retain their accommodation for the moment in order to cater for a projected increase in pupil numbers in their areas.

The LA takes a proactive approach to school place planning and each year applies school data to the Primary Decision Making model to alert schools and Elected Members to schools that may be vulnerable, across a range of factors, including surplus places and educational standards. These schools are investigated in detail before decisions are made about their futures.

Overall, the birth rate is rising, so it is anticipated that surplus places will not be a major issue for the LA in the medium term.

2.3.2 A number of schools are overcrowded and six are more than 10% overcrowded. In these schools the overcrowding combines with poor suitability of internal spaces and makes the teaching and learning environment very challenging.

2.3.3 Whilst there has been significant investment in the school building stock over recent years, there remains a £23 million backlog of condition items in primary schools, with £7.5 million being in the more urgent and severe categories. The vast majority of schools have suitability issues of varying degrees and some buildings and sites seriously hinder curriculum delivery and management.

2.3.4 Eleven schools have been completely rebuilt over the past decade with a further two scheduled for completion by September 2009. Nine schools have had more than half of their premises remodelled or refurbished and a further three are either scheduled or are in the process of building work. Two of three

planned resourced schools have been opened using the three area inclusion model that is used by the Council and other partners. The recent opening of two primary schools that are co-located with other community services in deprived areas of the borough demonstrates Wigan's commitment to tackling social and economic disadvantage.

2.3.5 Whilst there is a range of IT equipment available in schools, there are constant challenges to keep pace with technology and enable schools to take full advantage of products such as video conferencing and remote learning. More and updated equipment is needed to match the opportunities offered by the Learning Platform.

2.3.6 By utilising the BECTA procurement framework, the LA has identified a supplier for a Learning Platform to be installed in all schools to support collaborative and partnership working within and across schools and sectors. The facilities have been provided and the implementation programme has begun.

2.4 Every Child Matters

2.4.1 Deprivation

Some 40 schools have pupil populations that reflect the 20% most deprived super output areas in England. These schools and areas tend to be located in the more central areas of Wigan, with the outer edges of the borough generally being more affluent. The proportion of children in Wigan schools eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average.

2.4.2 Healthy schools

There have been significant changes to the food that is served to pupils in Wigan in line with the revised standards for school lunches. In the primary sector, fresh food production has increased from 45% to 84% over the past two years. However, there are still some dining centres where food is transported in from other kitchens and meal uptakes at these schools is significantly lower than in those that have full cooking kitchens.

The majority of school kitchens are not fit for purpose in that kitchen equipment is dated or obsolete leading to difficulties in utilising different cooking methods and production techniques to support the revised menus. Dining room environments are often not conducive to promoting the whole meal experience and service counters are often not appropriate for the numbers of pupils or the types of food on offer.

Some 30% of primary schools have halls that are below the minimum required size for delivery of the PE curriculum. Others are above the minimum size but a shortage of storage means that equipment needs to be stored along the edges of the hall, again restricting PE delivery.

Whilst the majority, but not all, schools have playing fields and marked out pitches on site, significant numbers of fields have poor drainage and cannot be used during the winter months. In addition, some schools are on confined sites and lack sufficient hard surfaced play space.

2.4.3 Extended services

43% of all primary schools now deliver the extended schools full core offer to parents and children and the LA is on track to achieve its target of 50% by the end of 2008. 40% of schools offer full access to childcare provision either on site or at a neighbouring location and a further 26% offer partial access. Consultation on the final phase of Children's Centres is currently being conducted and, at the end of the process, Wigan will have 22 Children's Centres.

The vast majority of schools offer a range of extended school activities, including community use of facilities and parenting support, and almost all schools offer families swift and easy referral to support services and other agencies.

2.4.4 SEN provision

There are 647 pupils on roll in special schools maintained by the local authority, which is around 1.45% of the total school population. Within this total, 208 are primary age pupils (0.87% of the primary school population). A further 32 pupils are on roll at specially resourced provision within mainstream primary schools.

There has been a significant amount of capital funding injected into the special school sector over recent years and by the time that the process is complete all buildings for special provision will be of good or excellent quality and be appropriate for the needs of the pupils. In addition, all new build mainstream schools and those that have had significant remodelling are all DDA compliant. Strategic use of access funding means that there is a geographical spread of mainstream schools that are able to cater for children with a wide range of special needs.

Section 3: Long term aims

3.1 Overview

3.1.1 Children and young people are the future of Wigan. The Primary Strategy for Change is the vehicle through which children's futures can be substantially improved. It represents an opportunity to be innovative, tackle under performance, and provide a robust and responsive primary phase that places the well-being of children at its heart. It provides the chance to create safe environments where children have genuine ambition, aspirations and achievement, so that they have every chance of inclusion and success in life.

- 3.1.2 In prioritising schools for investment, the emphasis will be on those schools and areas with highest need as determined by educational standards; demographic change; the state of school premises; and levels of deprivation. **Appendix 1** provides more detailed information on the criteria used. In addition, initiatives that benefit all schools will be progressed, such as improving dining, kitchen, sports and ICT facilities.
- 3.1.3 The Primary Strategy for Change will form part of a whole service change programme across the borough. In making proposals for change, the LA will take a long term system-wide view as to how they will complement current and future Children's Centres and early years provision; current and future changes to secondary schools as a result of the secondary school review and Building Schools for the Future; and the on-going Inclusion Strategy. The aim is to maintain and enhance the transition between different education phases and ensure that community identities and cohesion survive intact at the end of the process.
- 3.1.4 Each year, Children and Young People's Services produces a document 'Wigan's Strategy for School Places and Buildings' after consultation with schools and partners. The document contains relevant statistical information to inform school organisation and asset management and incorporates agreed policies and procedures for both areas of work. Within the document there is a protocol for consultation and communication with primary schools during school reviews and a decision making model that is a transparent and objective process for selecting schools for review. Wigan's Strategy for School Places and Buildings is available on the Wigan Council web site at <http://www.wigan.gov.uk/Services/EducationLearning/EdPolicyPlans/SchoolPlacesBuildings0708.htm> and all schools have copies of the document. The Primary Strategy for Change builds upon this document and it is envisaged that both documents will continue to develop and complement each other as the Strategy moves forward.

3.2 Aspirations

- 3.2.1 Wigan's vision is that all primary schools will be transformed to:
- be effective, inclusive and offer extended services that meet the needs of the community;
 - meet the needs of all learners by facilitating personalised learning and teaching;
 - be self evaluating, self managing and self determining, whilst acting in the best interests of the wider community and borough as a whole;
 - provide pupils with enhanced life chances, including the adoption of healthy life styles;
 - promote citizenship, life skills, self worth and self discipline;

- form part of a collaborative working partnership with other schools and partner agencies;
- become centres for the provision of other services for young people and their families;
- reflect population diversity in the local area and provide equal opportunities for all;
- have a distinctive ethos that embraces the local community;
- effectively respond to changes in the curriculum and changes in society; and
- be educationally and financially viable.

3.2.2 Within the parameters listed above, the LA recognises that voluntary aided schools also have a responsibility to act in the best interests of their Diocese.

3.3 Location, size, diversity and age ranges of schools

3.3.1 Primary schools should wherever possible be sited in the community they serve, within walking distance of home and giving maximum opportunity for strong home school relationships. It is recognised that some parents have a strong preference for schools of a particular denomination or, alternatively, for schools not associated with any particular denomination. In such cases, children living in geographically isolated areas may have to travel further, though not unreasonable distances, to school.

3.3.2 Primary schools will be designed and maintained to be at the heart of their communities and to support economic and community regeneration. Community needs will determine which services will be co-located with schools.

3.3.3 In its role as commissioner of school places, the LA will seek to make capital investment decisions that increase parental access to popular and successful schools.

3.3.4 To absorb the continuing decline in the birth rate in some areas of the borough and to continue to be able to offer the current diversity of provision the LA will seek to establish schools of at least one form of entry (30 children per year group, 210 children on roll) wherever possible and appropriate. However, to minimise future risks from fluctuating populations, the LA will seek to establish larger schools of up to two forms of entry wherever local circumstances permit. This policy will ensure future stability in school structures as larger schools can be reduced in size, if necessary, and still have a long term future. Such an approach will also provide parents with an element of choice between larger and smaller schools. Federations of schools in the same locality will also be considered as a flexible approach to situations where it is not possible or desirable to reorganise provision.

Because there is a need to consolidate provision in fewer schools in some areas, this will provide opportunities for increased diversity of provision. The LA will also assist schools who wish to consult on foundation or Trust status.

- 3.3.5 The Council, through its Strategy Document for School Places and Buildings, has committed to maintaining an appropriate mix of denominational and non-denominational places across the Authority which includes the provision of a Catholic school place for all Catholic children living in the feeder parishes. In order to maintain viable provision in some areas of the borough, the LA, together with its Diocesan partners, will consider the creation of inter denominational schools by bringing together Church of England and Catholic schools. Other options to maintain diversity, denominational balance and parental preference, whilst securing stability in provision will be considered, including those suggested through consultation with stakeholders.
- 3.3.6 The vast majority of schools in Wigan cater for the full primary phase of education, with just five schools in Leigh being Infant or Junior schools. Over the lifetime of the project, and subject to local consultation, the aim will be to combine these schools to become primary schools.

3.4 Educational standards and the curriculum

- 3.4.1 After consultation with schools and partners, the LA has produced a draft Strategy for Achievement and Learning which links to the requirements contained in The Children's Plan. The expectations that underpin the work of the LA on educational standards are that schools will:
- have a moral imperative that all children will succeed;
 - have a shared vision of their collective purpose and ethos;
 - have a precise knowledge of how each child is doing and what each child needs;
 - have a learning environment that is free from distractions; and
 - ensure all learning is openly admired and celebrated.
- 3.4.2 Improving education outcomes in deprived areas has been targeted by the provision of Children's Centres on school sites and extended schools delivering the full core offer. Schools in hard to reach communities will have link workers to act as parent support advisers, to help parents engage with their children's learning and enhance their achievement in the long term. Early indications of parental engagement and pupil achievement in the two fully resourced schools are positive and further evaluation will determine if similar models should be used elsewhere.
- 3.4.3 Universal professional development work assists all schools with maintaining and improving standards. New projects will enable schools to upgrade the skills of teachers and practitioners in assessing children's progress and providing them with an appropriate set of learning experiences. A Learner's Entitlement will support children in understanding their learning experience.

- 3.4.4 Targeted work is undertaken with schools where standards are only satisfactory or less than satisfactory. Key new posts have been created to work on this agenda and to improve pupil tracking and intervention. A range of solutions will be considered to support those schools that consistently perform below floor targets. This could include collaborative arrangements or federations with higher achieving schools, intensive LA support or intervention and options around re-organisation of school provision.
- 3.4.5 Schools will retain their commitment to collaborative working, for example, through cluster groups and networking in order to share good practice. Federations of schools will be considered, in appropriate circumstances, to increase collaborative working. There is still a need to enable more schools to work more closely together to gain a better understanding of the communities they serve so that needs can be met in relation to supporting children's achievement. Projects are being developed to help schools in the most deprived areas of the borough where attainment is low to work together to unpick the barriers that prevent effective learning taking place and find ways forward where radical approaches, joint working and sharing of resources can be used to best effect. This work aims to reduce the attainment gap between communities and offer every child the best start in life, regardless of where they live in the borough.
- 3.4.6 Wigan's primary schools already practice personalised learning. There will be greater emphasis on personalisation and the tailoring of the curriculum to meet specific needs. Schools will use every opportunity to inspire creativity in children through an exciting curriculum, thus increasing engagement, confidence and ambition. Rebuilt and redesigned schools will have flexible spaces that support personalisation and the range of teaching and learning approaches to diverse groups of pupils.
- 3.4.7 Wigan LA holds detailed information on schools across a range of measures that enables the identification of possible issues for development and facilitates the provision of appropriate and targeted support in the early stages. Wigan has a strong track record of taking appropriate action in cases where schools underperform. This has, and will continue to include, closure; federation with stronger schools; supporting schools to take difficult management decisions; and provision of additional/extended services to tackle deprivation-linked under performance.
- 3.4.8 Of the schools identified in 2.2.3, six of them have current reorganisation and / or major capital redevelopment work planned or being undertaken, linked to standards improvements. Where schools are sustainable, they will be prioritised under the Primary Strategy for Change in line with our criteria around improving standards.

3.5 School Premises and ICT

- 3.5.1 The LA believes that the quality of school buildings plays a key part in raising educational achievement. Its vision is that all primary school buildings and

sites will be in good physical condition and be of appropriate design to promote a transformation of learning with a modern and inclusive curriculum. Buildings will have sufficient flexibility to accommodate future developments and innovations.

- 3.5.2 Decision making on new build, remodelling or refurbishment options will concentrate on reducing the backlog of condition items, improving the suitability of premises and keeping surplus places under control. All projects will ensure that children and adults with disabilities are able to access provision.
- 3.5.3 The LA will aspire for all schools to be fully equipped for 21st Century learning, with indoor and outdoor recreational spaces for pupils; wide circulation spaces; room in teaching areas for more than one adult to work to facilitate personalised learning; modern ICT infrastructures; and flexibility to allow community and out of school hours use of the building.
- 3.5.4 ICT rich environments will be used to transform curriculum delivery; encourage imaginative and innovative learning; impact on standards of attainment; and encourage diverse learning and teaching styles, and to support access to the curriculum for children with learning or physical difficulties.
- 3.5.5 ICT provision will meet the needs of the Every Child Matters agenda; support personalisation of the curriculum; and will be planned at an authority wide level to support value for money, single log on to all services, sharing of information and the integration of services into the wider community.
- 3.5.6 As new technologies are introduced, the local authority will assess their contribution to the curriculum and management and incorporate them as appropriate in new build and refurbishment projects. The LA will play a lead role in enabling schools to make wise investment decisions in appropriate ICT equipment and in training staff to optimise its usage.
- 3.5.7 Premises will inspire learning; promote good behaviour; and be flexible to encourage learning at times which suit users and their families.
- 3.5.8 The aim will be for all buildings to be physically accessible for pupils and adults. Sites will, wherever possible, be designed to allow pupils, staff and visitors with mobility restrictions access to the school entrance. All new builds and major remodelling projects will ensure full DDA compliance and will be able to cater for children with a range of special needs.
- 3.5.9 Any re-organisations will take into careful consideration the distances to be travelled by pupils accessing the schools, together with safe travel routes along footpaths and cycle routes.
- 3.5.10 New buildings and refurbishments will be designed to require low maintenance, be energy efficient and use renewable energy systems, and have a minimal impact on the surrounding environment.

3.6 Every Child Matters

3.6.1 Deprivation

One of the key priorities will be to investigate options for schools in deprived areas to make a dramatic improvement to the life chances of children and young people living in these areas. This will include strategies for engaging parents and the wider community in the welfare and education of children and adults alike. Co-location with other services and collaboration with other schools, including secondary schools, will be promoted as appropriate to each set of circumstances.

3.6.2 Healthy schools

Kitchen and dining facilities will be upgraded to increase the uptake of healthy school meals and we will aim for all schools to have on-site kitchen facilities. Good quality indoor and outdoor sports facilities will be provided on school sites to the maximum level of opportunity afforded by site and building restrictions.

The Strategy aims for all primary schools to achieve National Healthy School Status. By achieving the status, schools will ensure that:

- the school's climate for learning is inclusive;
- pupils have the opportunity to explore healthy lifestyles and develop knowledge, skills and attitudes to make informed choices;
- provision is consistent with curriculum delivery, for example, the promotion of good health messages, access to nutritious meals, healthier food and drink options in breakfast clubs;
- pupils have access to a range of physical activity opportunities and are encouraged to take part in physical activity and school sport;
- there are mechanisms in place for pupils to have a voice in school, for example, through the School Council;
- policies are developed in wide consultation with the school community and reflect their circumstances and needs; and
- the emotional health and well-being of pupils is supported and strategies are in place to support vulnerable individuals and groups.

3.6.3 Extended services

The Strategy recognises that there is no one model for an extended school. What children, young people and their families need in one community will not necessarily be the same in another. Extended schools will remove barriers to

learning by providing appropriate services and access to opportunities therefore raising the aspirations and achievement of everyone concerned. Through promoting equality and diversity across all activities, extended schools have a fundamental role to play in encouraging respect between community members.

Many of Wigan's primary schools are providing high quality services for families, children, young people and the local community. To support and sustain these developments schools will continue to be encouraged to work collaboratively, in clusters and in conjunction with Children's Centres, whilst maintaining the distinctive ethos of each school and the needs of the local area.

The local vision for an 'Extended School' is based on a partnership approach which involves consulting with children, young people, their families and the community in which they live. By working collaboratively and sharing facilities, the use of high quality multi purpose learning environments and specialist provision will be maximised and individuals can be more effectively sign posted to other facilities and services. At the same time the learning environments will promote learning as exciting, stimulating and inspirational and help to promote community development.

Current mechanisms to ensure that opportunities for co-location of services are taken when schools are being rebuilt or remodelled will continue to be used. This includes both external agencies such as Health and Police, as well as other Council services such as Leisure and Adult Services and Children's Centres. It is expected that these services will fund their elements of the premises in terms of both capital build and on-going revenue costs.

3.6.4 SEN provision

The LA is in the process of reviewing special school provision and improvements to provision have already been made, with more planned for the near future. There is a commitment to providing mainstream school places for children with special needs and there are resourced primary schools in the borough that are able to cater for children with a wide range of needs. Further resourced provision within an existing primary school is planned for the East of the borough in the near future. The number of children placed in special schools will continue to decline as more children are included within mainstream settings in the future.

3.7 Outcomes

3.7.1 By the end of the 14 year programme, Wigan hopes to have achieved the following:

- an improvement in educational standards across all schools and no schools consistently performing below floor target levels;

- all single phase (junior and infant) schools to be reorganised to form primary schools;
- a decrease in the proportion of primary schools significantly below one form of entry to below 40%; and no primary schools with less than 120 pupils on roll unless local circumstances mitigate against this;
- no school with over 25% surplus places, unless the places are anticipated to be needed in the near future;
- borough wide surplus places at between 5% and 8%;
- no school with more than 10% overcrowding;
- a reduction in condition backlog to below £15 million; and
- no school with a suitability impact score of above 1.25 per pupil and a reduction in schools with suitability impact scores of 1.0 and above to below 10%.

3.7.2 By combining all funds available to the LA via the DCSF and leveraging in external funding opportunities, it is considered that the LA can meet DCSF targets on addressing schools in the top 5% of condition need and significantly improving 45% of remaining schools.

Section 4: Approach to change

4.1 Overview

4.1.1 Wigan LA, as commissioner of local services, is responsible for preparing, maintaining and implementing the Primary Strategy for Change. As the delivery agent for the Children's Plan, the LA will ensure that the Primary Strategy Change is one of the vehicles through which the outcomes for the Children's Plan will be achieved.

4.1.2 The Council is fully committed to the aims and objectives contained within the Primary Strategy for Change. Wigan LA enjoys an excellent working relationship with all its Diocesan Authorities, all of whom have been consulted on the vision and outcomes for primary education and support the Primary Strategy for Change.

4.1.3 The Corporate Plan is clear that the role of the Council is to 'listen, lead and perform'. The delivery of the Primary Strategy for Change will be conducted by using the guidelines contained within the Corporate Plan. Children and Young People's Services will:

- 'Listen to local people, understand what affects the Borough and use the information to prioritise what to do';

- 'Lead the community by helping people and organisations to work in partnership for the good of the whole Borough'; and
- 'Perform to the high standards people expect of us and make sure that excellent services are available to meet local needs'.

4.2 Capacity building and change management

4.2.1 Like any change management programme, the Primary Strategy for Change will rely heavily on a sharing of aims and objectives by all stakeholders. Furthermore, the commitment to change will need to be robust enough to carry school staff, governors and parents through processes that can be painful and disruptive in the short term. Put simply, the individual 'best' or preferred option of each school may not be the optimum solution for all schools in the area.

4.2.2 In conducting reviews of provision and undertaking major building projects, all those involved will need to keep the focus on change and innovation. Compromised solutions leading to 'satisfactory' projects will not be good enough if Wigan is to maximise the opportunities afforded by the programme.

4.2.3 In order to achieve the vision and maintain staff morale and parental confidence, the local authority recognises that it needs to generate trust and credibility with its stakeholders. It proposes to do this by:

- Raising awareness of , and securing commitment to, the strategic vision with all stakeholders and decision makers by holding training and development sessions for school staff, governors, Elected Members and LA officers;
- Endeavouring to have clear lines of communication at all times by allocating a named lead officer for the review and / or project;
- Sharing school level information with the schools concerned prior to forming options and proposals for consultation so that progress is made on the basis of robust and agreed information;
- Providing a clear timeline for processes and aiming to complete transitional phases as quickly as possible;
- Being forthright, honest and open in communications with all stakeholders so that they are made aware of realistic probable outcomes as early as possible;
- Resourcing communication at LA level to ensure the timely release of appropriate information; management of the media and support for schools in keeping parents and the local community informed;
- Ensuring that prioritisation of projects is based on transparent criteria as published in this document and reviewed on an annual basis; and

- Sharing positive experiences from earlier reviews and projects and building up expertise across the LA and its partners in order to successfully transform education.
- 4.2.4 Comprehensive consultation on options and proposals will be achieved in a variety of different ways including face to face, written documentation and web based applications. A two way dialogue will be maintained throughout the consultation period with all stakeholders and local communities will be fully involved in the decision making process through township forums and other communication channels. The protocol that already exists on primary school reviews will be developed and updated after consultation with schools and partners. The protocol includes a list of consultees and stages in the consultation process.
- 4.2.5 Wigan has experience of co-operative working across agencies to deliver imaginative projects to meet the needs of the community and will build on this experience to deliver future projects. Two new primary schools have recently been built in collaboration with partners using joint capital and revenue resources of Children and Young People’s Services and the Leisure and Health Trusts. Services for children and young people are provided in venues that are accessible to them and their families.
- 4.2.6 An effective system for succession planning for Headteachers is being developed in order to minimise the risks to standards that the national shortage threatens. Headteachers in the future will require different preparation in order to deliver the 2020 vision and a working group will be established to consider leadership issues and make recommendations to Cabinet. The School Workforce Development Team and School Advisers have started to develop a leadership strategy and high quality professional development for school leaders at all levels is being delivered
- 4.2.7 It is essential that high quality teaching and learning is maintained throughout transition phases. To assist this, the Schools Forum will be asked on an annual basis for funds to be top sliced from the delegated schools budget in order to build capacity to deliver at school level. This could be done by:
- bringing in expertise to schools to manage the change process and act as liaison officer on building projects, thereby allowing Headteachers to continue in their day to day management roles; or
 - freeing Headteachers to perform the above roles and bringing in leadership support for day to day issues.

The latter approach would provide opportunities for succession planning for Headteachers as outlined in 4.2.6 above.

4.3 Achieving education transformation

- 4.3.1 On new build projects and major remodelling and refurbishment schemes, measures are already in place to ensure that the end users, including the

staff, pupils and the wider community, are fully consulted and engaged in design. This is done through a variety of methods such as workshops, focus groups, regular newsletters to parents, utilising school councils, as well as the pre-planning meetings that involve parents and local communities. This process will continue to be developed and refined throughout the lifetime of the programme.

4.3.2 Attainment and achievement at schools that receive major capital investment is benchmarked against previous data and premises impact is evaluated against the improvements. In this way, the success of earlier projects will be built upon to meet the transformation agenda.

4.3.3 Well established and on-going work on the use of technology in the classroom will facilitate active learning and enhance the motivation of reluctant learners and link with learning at home. The concept of 'anytime anywhere learning' will be made possible by the fully managed learning platform that will be an integral part in the way in which schools conduct their daily business. It is envisaged that ICT will address social exclusion by reaching out to the hard to teach in new and imaginative ways. Video conferencing will open up greater opportunities for learners to collaborate with other schools and the wider world. Video conferencing will pave the way for subject specialism and the concept of sharing practice from school to school. There are design considerations for future build programmes that may look at desirable light levels and the positioning of the codec so that they can be used to optimum effect in each learning space.

4.3.4 The transition between early years, primary phase and secondary education will be key to ensuring that ensuring that the momentum on achievement and attainment for each pupil is maintained. Enhancing continuity and progression between the key stages is a key theme in the LA's priorities for achievement. Through the primary capital strategy opportunities for co-location with early years and secondary provision will always be considered as part of the project brief to support this priority.

4.4 School design

4.4.1 Wigan has model designs for new build primary schools of various sizes. The models were developed by a working party consisting of primary school advisers, headteachers, architects, quantity surveyors, capital project and asset management officers. These models have proved to be an excellent framework for the significant numbers of new schools that have since been built and they also provide a good benchmark against which option appraisals of existing premises can be conducted.

4.4.2 These models will continue to be refined and updated to take account of ICT; curriculum developments including personalisation; new premises guidance from the DCSF; new guidance on sustainability, environmental and health and safety issues; and evaluation of the performance and suitability of recent new

build schools, both locally and nationally. All projects have built in measures to ensure compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act.

- 4.4.3 The LA will ensure that all new and remodelled buildings are energy efficient by utilizing a range of measures specified by the Council's energy efficiency team. The potential for installing renewable and sustainable technologies is considered at the first stages of the design process so that they are fully integrated into the building. The strategic brief covers energy and CO² emissions; water use; flood risk; drainage systems; ecology and biodiversity; pollution; transport; waste; and lifecycle impacts of materials. We will ensure that all major developments are designed to a BREEAM standard of 'very good'.
- 4.4.4 On voluntary aided school projects, the LA's Diocesan partners will have a strong role in developing briefs by reference to their own model designs and by utilising their appointed design teams. The LA will play a supporting role in such projects.
- 4.4.5 All major projects will have an independent design champion and principles around this role will be drawn up prior to the start of the programme. The Partnership for Schools framework will be utilised to fulfil the client design advisor role. These measures are part of a package to ensure that new and remodelled premises are innovative as well as practical and robust.
- 4.4.6 At the early part of any new project, the opportunities for a wide variety of community services to be linked to the project will be considered. The optimum solution will be different for each project and this will be researched through consultation with partners and the wider community and by reference to the community plan.
- 4.4.7 Headteachers of schools that are identified for new build or substantial remodelling will be encouraged to take part in the programme being developed by the National College of School Leadership to aid more effective communication between headteachers, building professionals and architects on school design. School advisers will also be involved in developing individual school designs in line with the model design.
- 4.4.8 The current system of monitoring projects initiated by schools will continue in order to ensure that buildings are properly maintained. This includes community and voluntary controlled schools requesting permission from the LA before starting projects and voluntary aided schools following a similar system with their Diocesan Boards. In addition, the LA will continue to hold Devolved Formula Capital (DFC) for community and voluntary controlled schools and voluntary aided schools will require permission from their Diocesan Boards before utilising DFC. The strong working relationship between the LA and Dioceses ensures that other funding streams, such as LCVAP, are spent appropriately according to priorities detailed in 'Wigan's Strategy for School Places and Buildings'.

4.5 Funding

- 4.5.1 Capital funds from all available resources will be joined together to maximise results from the programme. In addition to various funding streams from DCSF and capital receipts, the LA will utilise funds from partner agencies wherever appropriate to provide community facilities on school sites. The funding used to support projects under the Primary Strategy for Change includes DCSF formulaic funding to the LA; targeted capital fund; schools' devolved formula capital; capital receipts from redundant school sites; and other sources of external funding such as capital funds from local developers and various national funding streams that may be levered in on certain projects.
- 4.5.2 It is intended to prioritise major rebuilds in the Primary Strategy for Change in those schools and areas that meet the criteria outlined in **Appendix 1**. Whilst a proportion of modernisation and LCVAP funding will inevitably need to be utilised to support the programme, it is intended to keep these funding streams separate so that all schools have the potential to benefit from capital investment. All projects, whatever their funding source, will contribute toward meeting the targets outlined in 3.7 above.
- 4.5.3 The LA is committed to the principle that all schools need to benefit from the programme and will work with its Diocesan partners and schools to seek solutions to funding the 10% statutory contribution toward voluntary aided projects.
- 4.5.4 As the programme moves forward, it should become easier for schools to purchase equipment and fund activities to help to transform learning. This is due to the delegated schools budget being shared amongst fewer schools and a reduced need to spend budgets on condition and suitability items.

4.6 Procurement

- 4.6.1 Wigan has a strategic partner, NPS (North West) Ltd, that provides full design and quantity surveying services. A mix of traditional procurement methods for construction is currently utilised, including tendering and partnering arrangements through OJEU, which have proved to be very successful. As the programme is phased over 15 years, one of the options for procurement is to continue with this process.
- 4.6.2 Wigan is joining with Salford City Council in contracting for a Local Education Partnership to deliver Building Schools for the Future (BSF) in the secondary sector. This presents a further option for the procurement of the Primary Strategy for Change.
- 4.6.3 A decision as to which of these procurement routes will be used will be taken over the next few months. The decision will be based on securing the most efficient procurement method for Wigan that demonstrates best value for money across the lifetime of the Strategy. The BECTA framework has been and will continue to be utilised to procure ICT managed services.

4.6.4 As the majority of Wigan's schools are voluntary aided, the procurement of these projects will be negotiated with the relevant Diocesan Board and school governors.

4.7 Evaluation

4.7.1 Evaluation of key outcomes at 3.7 above will be undertaken by measuring progress at annual intervals across all schools in Wigan, and focusing particularly on those that have been either directly or indirectly affected by the Primary Capital Programme

4.8 Risk Register

4.8.1 As with all major capital programmes, the LA maintains a risk register for the Primary Strategy for Change that identifies the major risks and mitigating actions to be taken to ensure that there is no danger to the overall delivery of the Programme. Examples from the risk register include: delays in gaining political support / community engagement for proposals; planning difficulties due to fluctuating birth rates; cost of schemes, including the VA sector contribution; availability of land / new sites; and capacity of the LA and schools to manage and deliver the programme, including any transitional arrangements.

Section 5: Initial investment priorities

5.1 In order to make progress towards the targets outlined in 3.7 above the projects planned for the following five years are listed below. The details for each project are attached at **Appendix 2**.

5.1.1 Year 0 (2008)

In the pilot project, the LA in collaboration with the Liverpool Catholic Archdiocese will rebuild Leigh Community Primary School and Leigh Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School. Both schools serve a deprived community and provide for pupils from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds. The schools will be built with shared facilities by utilising the two adjoining and confined sites, thus maximising the amount of outdoor space. The project will address the poor condition and suitability of both schools and thus will assist with raising standards. Both schools are committed to community cohesion and the shared facilities will provide a platform from which this can be developed.

5.1.2 Year 1 (2009)

In year 1, the LA will aim to begin two projects:

- To demolish and rebuild Beech Hill Community Primary School in order to address life expiry of the building and remove excessive surplus places. The scheme, which is in a deprived area, will have a Children's Centre and Pupil

Referral Unit attached. The costs of this work will be supplemented from funds already earmarked for the special school review.

- To provide cooking kitchens in those schools that currently have none and to upgrade kitchens, equipment and serveries at those schools that require improvements in order to fully meet healthy eating requirements by 2011. This work will be joined with other initiatives, such as grow your own gardens, wherever possible and incorporated into the curriculum. This work will include special schools that cater for primary age pupils. The costs of this work will be supplemented by the standards grant, if still available, and the Targeted Capital Fund for school kitchens if the LA is successful in its application.

5.1.3 Year 2 (2010)

Two projects will be aimed for in the second year:

- To contribute toward the rebuild costs of Leigh Christ Church Pennington CE. This school serves a deprived community and is located in premises that require modernisation on a confined site that is located at the entrance to an industrial estate. The project aims to rebuild the school on the Leigh Sports Village site, providing the schools with immediate access to sporting facilities, and the modern premises will assist with raising standards of attainment. The majority of the costs of this project will be funded by the developer for the current school site, with LCVAP and Primary Strategy for Change funds making up the remainder.
- To form one new primary school with a nursery to serve the Ince and Spring View area. The new school will result from the closure of two relatively small schools, Britannia Bridge Community Primary and Ince St Mary's (VC) Primary and will address serious condition and suitability issues. Both schools serve deprived communities and a fresh start in a new building would enable the leadership team to take strengths from both existing schools and build upon them to improve standards. The costs of the project can be partially offset by capital receipts from the sale of school sites, pending Sport England and Section 77 consent. The status of the new school will be subject to consultation and competition, which is scheduled to begin in the autumn term 2008.

5.1.4 Year 3 (2011)

To amalgamate Leigh St Peter's CE Infant and Junior Schools, two schools that serve a deprived community, to form a two form entry primary school. There have already been informal discussions with governors about the proposed course of action and it is intended to consult the public in the summer term 2008. The schools are located around 500 metres from each other and the infant school site and premises are unsuitable. The project will help to raise standards through improved continuity across key stages and more appropriate facilities. At this stage, it is anticipated that the junior school could be extended as it is in good condition with few suitability issues. The costs of the scheme can be partly offset by LCVAP funding.

5.1.5 Year 4 (2012)

It is essential that primary schools keep pace with ICT developments in the secondary sector through BSF. In this year, it is intended to utilise the primary capital programme to improve ICT in primary schools so that there is fully integrated learning and management across all schools in the LA. This work will include special schools that cater for primary age pupils.

Primary Capital Strategy: Prioritisation of primary schools for capital investment

Information on all schools has been collected and schools that fall into the following criteria have been highlighted for prioritisation in the Primary Strategy for Change:

Demographic change

Schools with 25% or more surplus places now or in the future

Number on roll less than or equal to 180, now or in the future

Revenue costs per pupil in the upper quartile (disregarded if there is special unit provision on site)

Deprivation

Index of Multiple Deprivation pupil score in top 20% most deprived nationally

Premises

Schools with 10% or more overcrowding, now or in the future

Suitability score per pupil in the upper quartile (using DCSF scoring mechanisms: A impact = 32, B impact = 16 etc)

C2 and worse condition costs per m² in the upper quartile

Standards

3 year average KS2 contextual value added score less than -1.5

English or maths level 4 score below floor targets (65%)

The priorities have not been weighted. It is intended to use Primary Capital Strategy funds, in the main, to address school reorganisation and other major projects. The priorities are identified by reference to:

- The number and combination of criteria highlighted. (For instance, if a school has standards issues but there are no premises or demographics issues it will not be targeted under Primary Capital Strategy, as the solution does not rely on capital investment).
- Whether there is a reorganisation solution (For instance two or more schools with issues could be reconfigured to one larger school with additional services on site).