

**LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT**

**EXECUTIVE MEETING**  
**21.07.03**

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, ARTS & LIBRARIES

NAME OF WARD(S)  
ALL

**REPORT TITLE: DRAFT SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLAN 2003 - 2008**

**1.0 SUMMARY**

1.1 This report presents the draft of the fifth School Organisation Plan (SOP) for the Brent area. This Plan covers the provision of school places over a five year planning period for the academic years 2003/2004 to 2007/2008, and is subject to a regular review by the School Organisation Committee.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 It is recommended that:

2.1.1 the draft School Organisation Plan be agreed so that it may be taken forward to the School Organisation Committee to be finalised.

2.1.2 that officers amend the Plan to incorporate the data still awaited as set out in paragraph 6.3 when that data becomes available.

**3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 The School Standards and Framework Act (1998) requires each LEA to establish a School Organisation Committee. This Committee's remit includes the annual review and approval of the School Organisation Plan. There is budget provision of £8000 for administering the Committee.

**4.0 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 There are no specific staffing implications.

## **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The decision making on most school organisation matters that was formerly the responsibility of the Secretary of State has now passed to the local School Organisation Committee. This includes decisions relating to:

- opening a new school
- closing a school
- expanding or reducing provision at an existing school, including SEN provision

## **6.0 DETAIL**

6.1 The School Standards and Framework Act (1998) introduced new arrangements for local decision making on school organisation issues. Each Local Education Authority (LEA) has set up a local School Organisation Committee which takes the place of the Secretary of State in the decision making process on school organisation proposals. As a result of the Education Act 2002 the DfES has updated its guidelines for producing the School Organisation Plan.

6.2 To assist the School Organisation Committee each LEA is required to prepare a School Organisation Plan (SOP). Regulations now require the Authority to publish a draft plan for consultation by 1<sup>st</sup> August in 2003 but 1<sup>st</sup> June every 3 years from 2003 and additionally a plan on 1st June of any other year where there is a change of policy, strategy or local circumstances relating to organisation of schools in the LEA's area. LEAs are also strongly advised to review, revise and publish the part of the plan containing the demographic information for September each year where a full plan is not published. This plan is essentially a contextual document and provides the information:

- A clear analysis of demography, the organisation of school places, and the need to add, remove, relocate or otherwise re-organise school places;
- A statement of the Local Education Authority's policies and principles for ensuring enough suitable places offering a good and improving standard of education;
- Conclusion drawn from the above about the need to add, remove, relocate or otherwise re-organise provision in particular areas of the authority.

6.3 In one area of the SOP data is awaited and was not available at the time of writing the report. It relates to pupil level projections estimated by neighbouring authorities. These details will be available when neighbouring authorities release their draft school organisation plans for 2003-2008. With this Executive's approval, this information and any implications for Brent LEA will be included in the final School Organisation Plan.

6.4 The main conclusions of the draft School Organisation Plan (2003– 2008) are summarised below

### **Nursery Sector**

6.4.1 There is sufficient capacity for the parents of all 3 and 4 year old children who wish to secure a nursery place in Brent. The number of 3 year old pupils is projected to decline over the lifetime of this plan. A Best Value review of Early Years provision will be undertaken in 2003/04. It will explore reviewing the nature of a part-time and full-time led provision against community demand, also analyse the distribution of nursery education places and linked services across the borough.

### **Primary Sector**

6.4.2 In 2003/4 academic year the Council plans to:

- Continue to review proposals to reduce surplus capacity with a view to securing improved standards of achievement across the borough e.g. placing special units in schools with excess capacity;
- Identify opportunities to expand provision, if appropriate, to ensure a closer match between anticipated demand for and the supply of school places, in particular to accommodate children who may live in houses planned at the current Hirst Research site in East Lane, Wembley;
- Continue to work with denominational groups to assess the demand for and supply of denominational places;

### **Secondary Sector**

6.4.3 Due mainly to JFS relocating to Brent secondary pupil numbers (Years 7 – 11) in Brent have increased from 12,064 to 13,232 (January 2003) and are expected to continue increasing as JFS will be expanding from an 8FE schools to 10FE (in Year 7) from September 2003. JFS mainly attracts pupils from neighbouring boroughs.

In order to meet the anticipated demand in addition to JFS pupils:

- Wembley High School will increase its Year 7 by 50 pupils for next 5 years from September 2003.
- The new City Academy which opens in September 2003 will be one form of entry larger than Willesden High (the school it is replacing) giving 150 extra places.
- Pupil projections will be kept under constant review and discussions with secondary headteachers will continue.

- If appropriate the LEA will make a further Basic Need application for additional expansion in secondary provision in Brent.

### **Special Educational Needs**

6.4.4 A SEN Best Value review is currently taking place.

The review will focus on the implementation of the SEN Strategy, particularly with respect to the following key objectives:

- Ensuring earlier availability of support and thereby progressively reducing the level of statements;
- Increasing ability to meet special educational needs within Brent's own provision, to reduce the necessity for out-borough placements;
- Assisting all schools and nurseries to develop local inclusive provision for children with special needs;
- Developing a wider role of special schools and additionally resourced provisions in the provision of advice and support to mainstream schools.

The review will need to consider whether revision is required to the current organisation, designation, admissions criteria and funding arrangements for special schools and additionally resourced provisions in order that the above objectives can be met most effectively.

It is expected that the review will be completed towards the end of 2003.

## **7.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- i) DfES revised Guidance on School Organisation Plans and Committees – issued June 2003.
- ii) School Organisation Plan for Brent 1999-2004, 2000-2005, 2001-2006 and 2002-7.

Any person wishing to inspect the above papers should contact Judith Joseph, Principal School Organisation Officer, Strategic Planning, Chesterfield House, 9 Park Lane, Wembley, Middx, HA9 7RW. Tel: 020 8937 3187 or Fax: 0020 8937 3116.

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