

School Organisation Plan



September 2003 – August 2008

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1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Legal Position

1.1 The 1998 School Standards and Framework Act introduced a number of changes to the arrangements for school organisation. The overriding principles behind them were the localisation of decision-making and the raising of educational standards. The main elements involved were:-

- **The Requirement that LEAs Prepare A School Organisation Plan**

LEAs have been required to publish a Draft School Organisation Plan (SOP) on 1 June each year, following which there has been a two month period for objections. To date, the requirement has been for SOPs to cover a five year period, although they have had to be produced on an annual basis. They are contextual documents relating to the supply of school places and the network of school provision, against which individual school organisation proposals can be considered and judged. Such proposals could, for example, be school amalgamations, closures or age range changes.

- **The Requirement that LEAs Establish a School Organisation Committee**

These committees are not LEA bodies but separate statutory entities. They are comprised of representatives of the LEA, the church dioceses, the Learning and Skills Council and governing bodies of schools. They are responsible for annually approving the SOP for their area. They are also responsible for considering, and usually determining the outcome of, formal school organisation proposals of the type referred to above.

- **The Appointment by the Secretary of State of Schools Adjudicators**

These adjudicators take decisions on SOPs and school organisation proposals when they cannot be resolved at a local level, i.e. via the School Organisation Committee.

1.2 Since the implementation of the changes brought about by the 1998 School Standards and Framework Act, the situation has been that:-

- LEAs have had sole responsibility for overall school organisation planning.
- LEAs and governors of voluntary and foundation schools have had responsibility for making proposals for changes to school organisation.

- School Organisation Committees or Adjudicators, and not the Secretary of State, are the final arbitrators on formal school organisation proposals.

What has Happened in Cumbria?

- 1.3 Cumbria's School Organisation Committee has been in place since 1 April 1999. The four previous SOPs have gone through the formal publication process and have been approved by the School Organisation Committee.
- 1.4 The School Organisation Committee has also considered (leaving standard number reductions aside) a total of 31 formal school organisation proposals. It has approved 28 of these and rejected none. Three have been passed to the Schools Adjudicator because the Committee was unable to reach a decision. The Adjudicator rejected two of them and approved the other. In addition to those considered by the Committee, the LEA has exercised its powers to implement a further 13 proposals of its own to which there were no objections.

The Education Act 2002

- 1.5 The 2002 Education Act has introduced further changes in relation to school organisation. The regulations governing the production and approval of SOPs have also been revised. The main changes are that:-
- SOPs need now only be produced every three years, unless there is a major change in local circumstances, although they will continue to cover a five year period. LEAs are, however, advised to publish revised demographic information every interim year when a full Plan is not required.
 - All representations on the Draft Plan should be taken into consideration, i.e. this includes supporting and general comments and not just objections which has been the case to date.
 - In terms of content, there should be a greater concentration on the raising of standards and a more concerted focus on the Government's transformation agenda.

- 1.6 In consulting on these changes, the Government's intention initially was to change the date on which the Draft Plan must be published and to extend the publication period. These changes have not, however, occurred and the date by which the Draft Plan must be published remains 1 June, with a two month period for the submission of objections and comments. However, because of the delay in finalising the regulations, the 2003/2008 Draft Plans had to be published in August 2003, with an eleven week period for comments and objections.
- 1.7 In addition, the Act enables the governing bodies of community schools to publish proposals to expand or add a sixth form.

The Effect on Cumbria's School Organisation Plan

- 1.8 Obviously the new guidance has meant that this fifth SOP differs in content to some extent from the previous ones. The opportunity has also been taken to change the format somewhat with the aims of making the various sections of the Plan simpler to access and the document as a whole more coherent.
- 1.9 From the outset it has been the intention that Cumbria's SOPs should be useful working documents for the School Organisation Committee, County Council officers and other involved parties. For this reason, successive plans have contained a series of appendices providing explanations of a range of aspects of the educational scene which impinge on school organisation matters. Because much of the detail on these kind of matters could change over a three year period, it would appear to be appropriate to provide this information in a supplement to the main Plan, so that it can be updated where and when necessary.
- 1.10 The supplement providing supporting information is available in hard copy form only on request. This should help to reduce the volume of paper involved. Details of what is contained in this supplement together with how it and the Plan may be accessed are, however, provided on page 161.

Consultation on the Plan

- 1.11 This fifth School Organisation Plan covers the period 1 September 2003 to 31 August 2008. It was the subject of informal consultation during the period 21 March to 2 May on the basis of a letter from the Director of Education. This explained the LEA's thinking on how the content of the Plan would change.
- 1.12 Comments were requested on the likely areas of variation. Only 5 responses were received, the content of which was taken into consideration in preparing the Draft Plan.

1.13 Those consulted included:-

- All of Cumbria's Schools
- The Diocesan Authorities
- The Learning and Skills Council
- Neighbouring LEAs
- The North West Development Agency
- Connexions Cumbria
- Professional Teaching Associations
- Cumbria Association of Secondary Heads
- Cumbria Primary Heads Association
- Further and Higher Education Colleges
- Cumbria Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership

1.14 The Draft Plan was formally published on 29 August 2003. The process of publishing it involved:-

- A notice appearing in the local press which contained a very brief summary of the Draft Plan.
- The full Draft Plan being sent to those listed above who were consultees in the informal consultation exercise and also the newly formed Admissions Forum.
- It being made available to the general public via public libraries, council centres, education offices, the Internet and so on.

1.15 Any person or organisation was able to object in writing to any aspect of the Draft Plan within eleven weeks of its publication. General comments of a negative or supportive nature were also invited.

1.16 No objections were received. There were, however, 4 written responses received.

1.17 The Draft Plan, together with the responses received, was submitted to the School Organisation Committee on 14 December 2003. The Committee approved the Plan for publication at its meeting on 28 January 2004.

2 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

2.1 THE CUMBRIA CONTEXT

- 2.1.1 At well over 100 miles across, Cumbria, is the second largest shire county in England. It accounts for almost half of the land area of the North West Region (48%). Just under half a million people live in the County. The population density is very low – fewer than one person per hectare.
- 2.1.2 The County boundary is naturally defined by the Irish Sea to the West (i.e. from the Solway Firth to Morecambe Bay) with the Scottish border to the north and the Pennine hills to the east.
- 2.1.3 The distribution of population and its age structure is not uniform. The settlement pattern is distinct and has been dictated principally by the County's unique topography. A substantial part of Cumbria lies 300 metres above sea level. Most of this is in the centre of the County where the fells and mountains act as a natural barrier to cross-county communication.
- 2.1.4 The majority of Cumbria's settlements are located around the periphery of the County on lower lying land. Wide, flat, fertile valleys such as the Eden and Kent and the coastal fringe have historically provided a focus for settlement.
- 2.1.5 The settlement pattern has also been heavily influenced by the major lines of communication across the County, particularly the road network which in many areas still reflects its Roman origins. There is a marked distribution of settlements through Eden district running alongside the A6 (the major north-south route before the M6 was established) and there is also an obvious linear pattern from the north to the west of the County along the A596 and A595 roads. In the south of the County, settlements also follow the route of the A590 down to Barrow.
- 2.1.6 As the population of Cumbria is very dispersed, the majority of settlements (more than 70%) contain less than 200 people. Indeed, only about 20 settlements have a population greater than 2,500 and the County's largest settlement, Carlisle, accounts for only 15% of the total population.
- 2.1.7 When measured by population, two settlements come out top, Carlisle and Barrow. Kendal, Workington and Whitehaven come next, which are in turn followed by Maryport, Penrith and Ulverston.

- 2.1.8 The settlement pattern in Cumbria has a number of implications for educational policy and organisation, not least the level of rurality. A further key factor is the population trends which will see, over the next 15 years at least, a decrease in the numbers of school and (very likely) pre-school children despite an overall increase in population in the County. The difficulties, cost and duration of travel also has an influence.
- 2.1.9 All of this has determined, and will continue to determine to a significant extent, the network of school provision. This is characterised in the urban areas by schools being generally close together and usually, though not always, relatively large by Cumbrian standards. Overall, provision in the primary phase is mixed with separate infant and junior schools and all-through 3/4 - 11 schools. In rural parts of the County, distances between schools can be considerable with road links often poor. In these areas, schools are invariably all-through primaries.
- 2.1.10 Unsurprisingly given the context, the sizes of schools in Cumbria differ tremendously. In the primary phase pupil rolls range from 12 to 427. The smallest secondary school has 165 pupils whereas the largest has 1803.
- 2.1.11 A very large proportion of Cumbria's schools are small in national terms. Of the County's 287 primary schools, 110 have less than 90 pupils, of which 47 have rolls under 50. In the secondary phase, there are 13 schools with fewer than 600 pupils, with 6 having less than 250.

2.2 GENERAL COMMENTS CONCERNING DATA

2.2.1 This section of the Plan provides demographic data and other elements of information which are relevant to the supply of school places and school organisation more generally.

2.2.2 In putting the information together, account has been taken of DfES guidance. This has of course been interpreted with the Cumbria context in mind.

2.2.3 It is intended that this data will, amongst other things:-

- Enable an understanding to be gleaned of the range of education provision made currently in the County by the LEA and its partners.
- Indicate changes to school organisation that are in the pipeline at present.

2.2.4 The bulk of this section is comprised of individual data sheets. The first 6 are countywide summaries. The other 51 provide information by geographical area showing primary and secondary schools separately. An index of the summary and area data sheets can be found on page 15. Alphabetical lists of schools can be found on pages 16 - 19.

2.2.5 An important piece of information in respect of the supply of school places is the capacity of each school. A new methodology for calculating capacities has been introduced nationally and is in the final stages of being applied in Cumbria. This produces a range for each school within which the net capacity is set. It also gives a basic need capacity which is based on the top of the capacity range as well as an indicated admission number (IAN). The data sheets for each geographical area indicate the actual/anticipated figure for each of these for all schools. The Authority has a responsibility for keeping the capacity information up-to-date. Given the level of resources currently made available to LEAs and schools for investment in buildings together with frequent changes in the use of school accommodation, this data is likely to vary to a noticeable degree each year. A full explanation of the net capacity methodology will be provided in the supplement to the Plan referred to in para 1.9.

2.2.6 A key explaining the terms and abbreviations used in the data sheets is provided on pages 12 - 14.

2.3 KEY TO DATA SHEETS

Abbreviations

A	Aided	JNR	Junior
C	Community	MLD	Moderate Learning Difficulty
CATH	Catholic	ND	Non-denominational
CE	Church of England	PAL	Published Admission Level
DfES	Department for Education and Skills	PRI	Primary
EBD	Emotional, Behavioural Difficulty	PT	Part-time
F	Foundation	PVI	Private, Voluntary and Independent
FE	Further Education	RC	Roman Catholic
FT	Full-time	SE	South-East
FTE	Full-time Equivalent	SEN	Special Educational Needs
IAN	Indicated Admission Number	SLD	Severe Learning Difficulty
INF	Infant	VC	Voluntary Controlled.

Explanatory Notes And Definitions

Area	A geographical grouping of one or more schools to assist planning.
Basic Need Capacity	The capacity of a school used by the DfES as a starting position when assessing whether there is a need for additional places. It is set using the maximum of the range determined by the application of the formula for assessing the net capacity.
Building Projects	Only building projects which have started and/or are included in the 2003/2004 capital programme and which are likely to have a significant impact on the pupil capacity when completed are referred to here.
Community School	A category of school where the LEA is the admission authority.
Foundation	A category of school where the Governing Body is the admission authority.

Maintained Nursery Class (formerly known as Designated Nursery Class)	A nursery education class or group catering for pupils from the start of the term after their third birthday (or later) (aged 3 to 4) based in and run as an integral part of an infant/first/all-through LEA maintained primary school where the age range is 3-7, 3-8 or 3-11. In some situations, these children are taught together with reception-aged pupils in a foundation class/unit following the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum.
Net Capacity	A new method of assessing the pupil capacity of a school derived by applying a DfES formula based primarily on floor areas of rooms used for teaching (See supplement referred to in para 1.9 for more details.)
Nursery Provision	Only registered nursery providers and LEA provision are included under this heading.
Planning Applications	These only include developments within the County of Cumbria of 5 units or more as at 31.3.02 using information provided by the six district councils.
Published Admission Number	The number of children to be admitted to a school's admissions intake group during the 2003/2004 academic year. Note this was set using the old method of assessing the pupil capacity of a school and the Standard Number for admissions.
Pupils with Statements	These refer to pupils who, on 16 January 2003, had a completed 'statement of special educational needs'.
Pupils without Statements	These refer to pupils who on, 16 January 2003, were being assessed to determine whether a 'statement of special educational needs' was required.
Roman Catholic	All Roman Catholic schools are now known as Catholic schools with the exception of St Bede's RC Primary School, Carlisle.
Strategic SEN and Other Facilities	Only those special educational needs facilities maintained by the LEA are included.
Unfilled (Surplus) Places	The difference between the number on roll and the capacity calculation. The DfES uses the net capacity when assessing the number of unfilled places. For the Cumbria-wide statistics on surplus places, the DfES simply aggregates the unfilled places at all schools with rolls below the net capacity. (See supplement described in para 1.9 for further details.)

Voluntary Aided	A category of school where the Governing Body is the admission authority.
Voluntary Controlled	A category of school where the LEA is the admission authority.

2.4 INDEX OF SUMMARY AND AREA DATA SHEETS

Summary Data Sheets

	Data Sheet
Numbers of Pupils and Schools in Cumbria	1
Forecasts of Pupil Numbers for all Maintained Schools	2
Summary of School Provision by Phase and Status	3
Special Educational Needs Provision	4
Special School Provision	5
Nursery Provision	6

Primary Data Sheets By Area

Area	Data Sheet	Area	Data Sheet
Alston	21	Kendal	14
Appleby	19	Keswick	35
Aspatria	32	Kirkby Stephen	18
Barrow-East	8	Longtown	22
Barrow-West	9	Maryport	31
Brampton	23	Millom	39
Carlisle-Central	27	Penrith	20
Carlisle-North	24	Sedbergh	17
Carlisle-South	26	Silloth	30
Carlisle-West	25	South East Cumbria	16
Cleator	37	Ulverston	11
Cockermouth	34	Walney/Barrow Island	7
Coniston	12	Whitehaven	36
Dalston	28	Wigton	29
Dalton	10	Windermere	13
Egremont	38	Workington	33
Grange	15		

Secondary Data Sheets By Area

Area	Data Sheet	Area	Data Sheet
Alston	49	Keswick	55
Barrow	40	Millom	57
Carlisle	51	North Cumbria	50
Central Lakes	43	Penrith	48
Cockermouth	54	Solway Plain	52
Dalton	41	South East Cumbria	46
Eden Valley	47	Ulverston	42
Grange	45	Whitehaven	56
Kendal	44	Workington	53

Index Of Data Sheets By School

PRIMARY SCHOOLS

<u>School</u>	<u>Data Sheet</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Data Sheet</u>
All Saints CE Pri	34	Broughton CE Pri	12
Allithwaite CE Pri	15	Broughton Moor Pri	31
Allonby Pri	30	Broughton Pri	35
Alston Pri	21	Brunswick Inf	20
Ambleside Pri	13	Burgh by Sands Pri	27
Appleby Pri	19	Burlington Pri	11
Arlecdon Pri	37	Burton Morewood Pri	16
Armathwaite	28	Caldewlea Pri	25
Arnside National Pri	16	Calthwaite CE Pri	20
Asby Endowed Pri	19	Cambridge Pri	8
Ashfield Inf	33	Captain Shaw's Pri	39
Ashfield Jnr	33	Cartmel CE Pri	15
Askam Pri	10	Castle Carrock Pri	23
Bampton Endowed Pri	20	Castle Park Pri	14
Barrow Island Pri	7	Chapel Street Inf	10
Bassenthwaite Pri	35	Clifton Pri	20
Beaconside CE Inf	20	Coniston CE Pri	12
Beaconside CE Jnr	20	Croftlands Inf	11
Beckermet CE Pri	38	Croftlands Jnr	11
Beetham CE Pri	16	Crosby on Eden CE Pri	23
Belah Pri	24	Crosby Ravensworth CE Pri	19
Belle Vue Inf	25	Crosscanonby St John's CE Pri	31
Belle Vue Jnr	25	Crosscrake CE Pri	16
Bewcastle Pri	23	Crosthwaite Pri	14
Bishop Harvey Goodwin Pri	27	Culgaith CE	20
Black Combe Jnr	39	Cummersdale Pri	28
Blackford Pri	24	Cumwhinton Pri	28
Blennerhasset Pri	32	Dale Street Inf	11
Bolton Pri	19	Dalton St Mary's CE Pri	10
Boltons CE Pri	29	Dane Ghyll Pri	9
Bookwell Pri	38	Dean Barwick Pri	16
Borrowdale CE Pri	35	Dean CE Pri	34
Bowness Pri	29	Dean Gibson Cath Pri	14
Braithwaite Pri	35	Dearham Pri	31
Brampton Inf	23	Dent CE Pri	17
Brampton Jnr	23	Derwent Vale Pri	33
Bransty Pri	36	Distington Pri	33
Bridekirk Dovenby Pri	34	Eaglesfield Paddle Pri	34
Brisbane Park Inf	9	Ellenborough and Ewanrigg Inf	31
Brook Street Pri	27	Ennerdale and Kinniside Pri	37
Brough Pri	18	Ewanrigg Jnr	31

<u>School</u>	<u>Data Sheet</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Data Sheet</u>
Fairfield Inf	34	Kirkoswald CE Pri	20
Fairfield Jnr	34	Lamplugh Pri	37
Fellview Pri	28	Lanercost CE Pri	23
Fir Ends Pri	23	Langdale CE Pri	13
Flimby Pri	31	Langwathby CE Pri	20
Flookburgh CE Pri	15	Lazonby CE Pri	20
Frizington Pri	37	Lees Hill CE Pri	23
Garth Inf	33	Leven Valley CE Pri	15
George Romney Jnr	10	Levens CE Pri	16
Ghyllside Pri	14	Lindal and Marton Pri	10
Gilsland Pri	23	Lindale CE Pri	15
Goodly Dale Pri	13	Long Marton Pri	19
Gosforth CE Pri	38	Longtown Pri	22
Grange CE Pri	15	Lorton Pri	34
Grasmere CE Pri	13	Low Furness Pri	11
Grasslot Inf	31	Lowca Pri	36
Grayrigg CE Pri	14	Lowick CE Pri	11
Great Corby Pri	23	Lowther Endowed Pri	20
Great Orton Pri	28	Maryport CE Jnr	31
Greengate Inf	8	Maryport Inf	31
Greengate Jnr	8	Milburn Pri	19
Greystoke Pri	20	Millom Inf	39
Hallbankgate Pri	23	Milnthorpe Pri	16
Harrington Inf	33	Monkwearay Jnr	36
Harrington Jnr	33	Montreal CE Pri	37
Haverigg Pri	39	Moor Row Pri	38
Hawkshead Esthwaite Pri	12	Moresby Pri	36
Hayton CE Pri	23	Morland Area CE Pri	19
Hensingham Pri	36	Morton Park Pri	25
Heron Hill Pri	14	Nenthead Pri	21
Heversham St Peters CE Pri	16	Netherton Inf	31
High Hesket CE Pri	28	Newbarns Pri	8
Holme Cultram Abbey CE Pri	30	Newlaithes Inf	25
Holme Pri	16	Newlaithes Jnr	25
Holme St Cuthbert's Pri	30	Newton Pri	10
Holy Family Cath Pri	8	Newtown Pri	25
Houghton CE Pri	24	Norman Street Pri	27
Inglewood Inf	26	North Lakes Jnr	20
Inglewood Jnr	26	North Walney Pri	7
Ireby CE Pri	29	Northside Pri	33
Irthington Pri	23	Old Hutton CE Pri	14
Ivegill CE Pri	28	Orgill Pri	38
Jericho Pri	36	Ormsgill Pri	9
Kells Inf	36	Orton CE Pri	18
Kingmoor Inf	24	Oughterside Pri	32
Kingmoor Jnr	24	Our Lady's Cath Pri	10
Kirkbampton CE Pri	28	Patterdale CE Pri	20
Kirkbride Pri	29	Pennine Way Pri	26
Kirkby Stephen Pri	18	Pennington CE Pri	11
Kirkby Thore Pri	19	Penny Bridge CE Pri	11

<u>School</u>	<u>Data Sheet</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Data Sheet</u>
Penruddock Pri	20	St Mary's Cath Pri, Kells	36
Petteril Bank Pri	26	St Mary's CE Inf, Windermere	13
Plumbland CE Pri	32	St Mary's CE Pri, Kirkby Lonsdale	16
Plumpton Pri	20	St Mary's Cath Pri Workington	33
Ramsden Inf	8	St Matthew's CE Pri	32
Raughtonhead Pri	28	St Michael's CE Pri, Bothel	32
Ravenstonedale Pri	18	St Michael's CE Pri, Dalston	28
Richmond Hill Pri	32	St Michael's Inf	33
Robert Ferguson Pri	25	St Oswald's CE Pri, Burneside	14
Rockcliffe Pri	24	St Patrick's Cath Pri, Maryport	31
Roose Pri	8	St Patrick's Cath Pri, C.Moor	37
Rosley CE Pri	28	St Patrick's CE Pri, Endmoor	16
Sacred Heart Cath Pri	8	St Patrick's RC Pri, Workington	33
Satterthwaite & Rusland CE Pri	11	St Paul's CE Jnr	9
Scotby CE Pri	27	St Peter's CE Pri	10
Seascale Pri	38	St Pius X Cath Pri	9
Seaton CE Jnr	33	St Thomas' CE Pri	14
Seaton Inf	33	Stainton CE Pri	20
Sedbergh Pri	17	Stanwix Pri	24
Selside Endowed Pri	14	Staveley CE Pri	13
Shankill Pri	23	Stoneraise Pri	28
Shap Endowed CE Pri	20	Storth CE Pri	16
Silloth Pri	30	Stramongate Pri	14
Sir John Barrow Jnr	11	Tebay Pri	18
Skelton Pri	20	Temple Sowerby Pri	19
South Walney Inf	7	Thomlinson Jnr	29
South Walney Jnr	7	Thornhill Pri	38
St Bede's RC Pri	25	Threlkeld CE Pri	35
St Bees Village Pri	38	Thursby Pri	28
St Bega's CE Pri	38	Thwaites Pri	39
St Begh's Cath Jnr	36	Trinity CE Jnr	35
St Bridget's Cath Pri, Egremont	38	Ulverston CE Inf	11
St Bridget's Pri, Brigham	34	Upperby Pri	27
St Bridget's Pri, Parton	36	Valley Inf	36
St Catherine's Cath Pri	20	Valley Jnr	36
St Columba's Cath Pri	7	Vicarage Park Pri	14
St Cuthberts Cath Pri	26	Vickerstown Pri	7
St Cuthberts Cath Pri, Wigton	29	Victoria Inf, Barrow	8
St Cuthberts Cath Pri, W'mere	13	Victoria Inf, Workington	33
St Cuthbert's Pri, Gt Salkeld	20	Victoria Jnr, Barrow	9
St George's CE Pri	8	Victoria Jnr, Workington	33
St Gregory's Cath Pri	33	Waberthwaite CE Pri	39
St Greg's and St Pat's Cath Inf	36	Warcop CE Pri	18
St James Cath Pri, Millom	39	Warwick Bridge Pri	23
St James Inf, Whitehaven	36	Welton Pri	28
St James Jnr, Barrow	9	Westfield Pri	33
St James Jnr, Whitehaven	36	Wiggonby CE Pri	29
St Joseph's Cath Pri	34	Wigton Inf	29
St Joseph's Cath Pri, Frizington	37	Windermere CE Jnr	13
St Kentigerns CE Inf	35	Wrey CE Pri	28
St Margaret Mary Cath Pri	27	Yanwath Pri	20
St Mark's CE Pri	14	Yarlside	8
St Mary's Cath Pri, Ulverston	11	Yewdale Pri	25

SECONDARY SCHOOLS

<u>School</u>	<u>Data Sheet</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Data Sheet</u>
Alfred Barrow	40	Parkview	40
Appleby Grammar	47	Queen Elizabeth, KL.	46
Beacon Hill	52	Queen Elizabeth Grammar	48
Caldew	51	Queen Katherine	44
Cartmel Priory	45	Samuel Kings	49
Cockermouth	54	Settlebeck High	46
Dallam	46	Solway Community	52
Dowdales	41	Southfield	53
Ehenside	56	St Aidan's	51
John Ruskin	43	St Benedict's Cath	56
Keswick	55	St Bernard's Cath	40
Kirkbie Kendal	44	St Joseph's Cath	53
Kirkby Stephen Grammar	47	Stainburn	53
Lakes	43	Thorncliffe	40
Lochinvar	50	Trinity	51
Millom	57	Ullswater Community College	48
Morton	51	Victoria High	42
Nelson Thomlinson	52	Walney	40
Netherhall	52	Whitehaven	56
Newman Cath	51	William Howard	50
North Cumbria Tech.Coll.	51	Wyndham	56

SPECIAL SCHOOLS

<u>School</u>	<u>Data Sheet</u>
George Hastwell	5, 7 & 40
James Rennie	5, 24 & 51
Mayfield	5, 36 & 56
Sandgate	5, 14 & 44
Sandside Lodge	5, 11 & 42

NURSERY SCHOOLS

<u>School</u>	<u>Data Sheet</u>
Bram Longstaffe	7
Cleator Moor	37
Frizington	37
Hindpool	9
Kendal	14
Park View	39

2.5 AREA DATA SHEETS

This section contains the 6 summary and 51 area data sheets.

3 THE POLICY CONTEXT, PLANNING PRINCIPLES AND CONCLUSIONS

3.1 THE WIDER COUNTY COUNCIL POLICY CONTEXT

The Corporate Strategy

- 3.1.1 The Council's Corporate Strategy is its overarching planning document. It sets out the Authority's plans for the next three years (i.e. 2003/04 - 2005/06). It highlights the priorities that the Council intends to work towards together with local communities and its partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors.
- 3.1.2 The School Organisation Plan must reflect the policies and priorities contained in the Corporate Strategy.
- 3.1.3 One of the Authority's seven corporate policy themes is increased educational standards and skill levels. The top priority under that theme is to continue to invest to raise educational standards whilst promoting curriculum breadth and balance.
- 3.1.4 That part of the Strategy which deals specifically with the educational theme contains a number of statements which relate to school organisation and therefore to this Plan. These include those which indicate:-
- The importance of extending early years education and childcare services for the under 5's.
 - The intention to promote the development of schools as providers of a range of services for their local communities.
 - The need to actively manage the availability of school places and, in particular, to reduce the numbers of surplus places.
 - The desire to continue to develop and implement the strategic and policy objectives set out in 'Inclusive Cumbria'.
 - The wish to have a pattern of rural schools that is appropriate to the needs of communities.
 - The aim of encouraging the development of partnership arrangements between schools.
- 3.1.5 There are also policy statements which relate to some of the other six themes of which account needs to be taken in this Plan including:-

- The intention to formulate and implement a strategy for community engagement.
- The wish to develop more integrated, responsive and appropriate services for the communities of rural Cumbria.
- The aim of working closely with health organisations to provide joint services.
- The desire to improve the sustainability of Cumbria's communities.
- The intention of improving safety associated with travel to school.

The Council's Rural Agenda

3.1.6 The Authority is establishing a co-ordinated approach which seeks to maximise support to rural communities, complement the benefits of the Rural Action Zone and assist the Rural Regeneration Company.

3.1.7 Again, there are statements made in the raft of policies associated with the rural agenda which need to influence Plan content. Amongst these are:-

- The intention to ensure that the Council properly considers the impact of all its decisions on rural communities.
- The wish to encourage joint community use of the Council's property (including schools).
- The aim of locating County Council service delivery outlets on school sites.

Other County Council Plans

3.1.8 The Education Development Plan (EDP) has as its prime aim the continuation of the raising of standards of attainment, teaching and learning. Levels of attainment in Cumbria's schools have risen on all measures and across all key stages over the last 5 years. The performance of the County's schools is noticeably above the national average. Clearly, the EDP has a number of potential links with the SOP. One is related to schools causing concern where the LEA is proactive in providing support. Though this has yet to occur in Cumbria, should a school turn out to be unable to improve sufficiently over a protracted period, this may become a school organisation issue.

3.1.9 The Education Service Plan reflects the content of the Corporate Strategy and outlines clear targets. One example of relevance to

the SOP is the aim, in the context of the inclusion agenda, to see no increase in the number of pupils attending the Authority's special schools.

- 3.1.10 Whilst the SOP provides the overall framework for decisions on the planning of school places, the Authority's Asset Management Plan sets out the information needed and the criteria used to prioritise capital expenditure on school premises. The quality of a local authority's Asset Management Plan will have a direct impact on the DfES' determination of the levels of capital expenditure. Through the Asset Management Planning process, the local authority can objectively assess the needs of all schools in terms of condition, suitability and sufficiency and use this information to prioritise expenditure in a transparent and consistent manner.

3.2 THE PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

- 3.2.1 The Government sees the key purpose of SOPs as being to set out clearly how LEAs plan to meet their statutory responsibilities to secure sufficient education provision within their areas in order to promote higher standards of attainment. As will be clear from the content of this fifth SOP for Cumbria, the focus over the Plan period will be on the enhancement of educational quality in the context of a network of provision which, in terms of physical capacity, more than meets current needs.
- 3.2.2 SOPs are intended to help key education stakeholders – LEA, school staff, governors, promoters, parents and local communities – to understand how many school places are needed in an area both at present and in the future.
- 3.2.3 The intention is that SOPs include enough information to explain the LEA’s strategies and approaches affecting school organisation for the benefit of schools and local people. The process of local planning and decision-making must be transparent and SOPs need to contribute to the creation and maintenance of that reality.
- 3.2.4 SOPs should set out the principles and factors which the LEA will rely on and take account of in relation to school organisation change. In addition, they should show how the LEA’s policies and strategies support the Government’s policy agenda.
- 3.2.5 The Plan provides the general context for school place planning and for the consideration by the School Organisation Committee of individual school organisation issues and potential changes during the Plan period. However, it is not the function of the SOP to set out detailed suggestions and possibilities for change involving individual schools. The bringing forward of statutory proposals for such changes is the responsibility of the LEA and the governing bodies of schools.

3.3 SCHOOL ORGANISATION CHANGE IN CUMBRIA – THE UNDERPINNING PRINCIPLES

3.3.1 Cumbria LEA has in recent years facilitated a good deal of change to the school network. The end products have generally been very successful. This has been achieved, in the main, through partnership working involving governing bodies, headteachers and the Authority's officers. The Council believes that this process should continue.

3.3.2 Each individual potential school organisation change will have different features. Varying weight will be attached to the issues involved depending on the circumstances.

3.3.3 It is important though to give an indication of the range of factors which might be taken into account when considering the possibility of change. These will include:-

- ***Educational standards and school performance.*** Amongst the indicators which could be used are Ofsted reports, Key Stage tests and GCSE/A Level exam results. These are most useful when presented alongside contextual data and indicating 'value-added'. It is important to develop indicators related to school attributes of different kinds.
- ***The Authority's responsibility for ensuring the efficient and effective use of resources.*** Of importance here is the need to ensure appropriate focussing of resources on the education process directly and finding an appropriate balance of resource input throughout the County.
- ***Geography and accessibility.*** Existing policy guidelines state that, wherever possible, maximum journey times on school transport should be 45 minutes for primary-aged pupils and 75 minutes for secondary pupils. This is based on the realities of the current school network. It is only likely to be in situations where there was no viable alternative option that change would be proposed which would create the need for journeys of such durations.
- ***The LEA's commitment to diversity and choice*** where this is consistent with appropriate resource management, the raising of educational standards and other overarching principles.

- The recognition that, whilst the education of children **must** be the paramount consideration, ***school provision is often very important in meeting the various needs of the wider community.***
- Where the implementation of change requires it, ***the justification for capital investment and the likelihood of the resources needed being available.***
- ***The extent of the consensus for change*** which exists or may be created through consultation processes.

3.3.4 Change and the prospect of it has its downsides. For example, it can sap morale and create a period of inertia. It is, however, crucial that, if change would offer the prospect of significant educational benefits over time, the arguments for it are well marshalled and presented and that a proper debate takes place. This should always embrace those involved most closely and those likely to be affected most markedly.

3.4 SCHOOL PLACES IN CUMBRIA – A STATISTICAL SUMMARY

General

- 3.4.1 The trend in pupil numbers in Cumbria reflects the overall trend in England ie the number of primary age pupils will continue to fall in line with the continuing reduction in the birth rate and the secondary age pupil population will peak during the next three years and then decline as the lower annual cohorts feed from the primary sector.
- 3.4.2 The rest of this section summarises the overall position in the County regarding school places and pupil numbers indicated by the demographic information presented earlier.

The Primary Phase

- 3.4.3 Numbers have reduced over the last few years from 41,815 in January 1997 to 39,601 in January 2003. The year group that transferred to the secondary sector in September 2003 is the largest year cohort and the reduction in numbers will start to accelerate in future years.
- 3.4.4 Over the Plan period, pupil numbers are set to fall by **4171 (11%)**. (Incidentally, the downward trend which began many years ago has yet to bottom out.)
- 3.4.5 Presently, there are around **9% - 10%** unfilled places in total. There are likely to be **18% - 19%** at the end of the Plan period if no further remedial action is taken.
- 3.4.6 Whereas the effect of the introduction of the Net Capacity methodology in the secondary sector has been fairly neutral, it has meant that unfilled places in the primary phase have reduced and are currently within the target of 10% contained in all of the previous SOPs. The impact of the further big drop in pupil numbers will, however, increase the number of unfilled places markedly unless concerted action to avoid this is taken.

The Secondary Phase

- 3.4.7 Pupil numbers have been growing i.e. from 32,344 in January 1997 to 34,610 in January 2003. However, numbers will peak in 2005/06 and thereafter decline. Over the Plan period, though, pupil numbers are estimated to fall by just **603 (2%)**.

- 3.4.8 Currently unfilled places are in the region of **11% - 12%** and are set to increase to **13% - 14%** by 2007/08.
- 3.4.9 **However, the number of secondary age pupils will reduce by around a further 22% between 2007-08 and 2015-16.**

3.5 MANAGING THE SUPPLY OF PLACES

General

- 3.5.1 The overall position regarding future pupil numbers and school places in the County was set out in the previous section.
- 3.5.2 The wider local policy context in which the future approach to the management of the supply of school places will sit is outlined in section 3.2.
- 3.5.3 It remains the case that to carry too much provision represents an inefficient use of resources. This can obviously affect negatively the quest for increased educational standards and levels of attainment. At the macro-level, aiming to achieve a situation where there is no more than a **10%** excess in capacity in both the primary and secondary phases at the end of the 5 year Plan period is probably reasonable. This figure is a fairly widely accepted norm and was the target identified in previous Plans. Arguably, this balances appropriately the opportunities for the exercise of parental choice with effective resource use.

The Primary Phase

- 3.5.4 The countywide unfilled places position at the start of the Plan period (ie 9% -10%) is not an unsatisfactory one. It reflects the helpful impact of the Net Capacity methodology, successful infant and junior school amalgamations which have removed places, greater non-school use of space and other activity to reduce surplus places.
- 3.5.5 For the 10% target for surplus places to be hit in 5 years time, however, will require a reduction in places which broadly matches the 11% fall in pupil numbers during the Plan period. This will only be achieved through on-going concerted effort and cooperation between the LEA and its relevant partners.
- 3.5.6 Following criticism by OfSTED in 2001 of Cumbria LEA's performance on the removal of surplus places, an action plan designed to address this issue was produced in January 2002. A total of 5 formal reviews of local provision were initiated as part of that plan. Despite the investment of a great deal of effort by the Authority, the arguments for the need for action were not generally accepted by the Communities involved. As a consequence, the Authority only succeeded in taking out a limited number of places.

- 3.5.7 In the recollectable but fairly distant past, wholesale formal area reviews of primary education provision were undertaken in the County. These also involved much effort and mobilised great opposition but secured relatively little change. Repeating such approaches without local support is unlikely to bring much success. As already stated, overprovision is wasteful of scarce educational resources and needs to be avoided because it can dilute standards and achievement levels. Concerted action is necessary in order to gain the education community's acceptance of this reality.
- 3.5.8 The available options for reducing the number of unfilled places are essentially the same as they have always been i.e. closure/amalgamation or productive alternative use. This was what the LEA's Surplus Places Action Plan of 2002 acknowledged. It also committed the Authority to reviewing the situation in 2003 and to deciding the next steps.
- 3.5.9 The most relevant statements in the Authority's Corporate Strategy suggest that:-
- The Council needs to meaningfully and effectively engage with its partners on the surplus places issue and to try to gain much greater acceptance of the need for action.
 - In addressing the issue, the Authority needs to take more account of social, economic and community needs and generally have a more rounded approach.
 - There will be a real commitment to tackling the management of school places (and in Cumbria's position this means surplus places).
- 3.5.10 The thrust of all of this argues both against a rush into further formal reviews and for increased levels of activity. The overarching policy statements are in place and the Authority intends to adopt a rather more resource-intensive and corporate approach to secure their delivery.
- 3.5.11 The Council's Cabinet has agreed that an approach along the following lines should be followed:-
- The unfilled places position predicted at the end of the Plan period in relation to each individual area covered by the data sheets be identified.

- For those areas above an identified threshold, and on a worst case first basis, a ‘forum’ approach to the consideration of the surplus places issue should be instigated. The process will be strongly driven and supported appropriately. It will focus on a range of possibilities for action designed to preserve and enhance educational standards in a declining ‘client-base’-situation.
- This forum approach is likely to involve:-
 - heads, governors, parents, County Council officers from the key directorates, partner organisations and community representatives
 - establishing from that larger group a small working group to look at the full range of possible ways forward which might well include:-
 - embracing the extended schools concept covered in section 3.13
 - other kinds of alternative use, leasing out etc
 - federation/greater collaboration between schools (which is dealt with in section 3.10)
 - closure/amalgamation
 - agreement to ‘corrective’ action within the forum

3.5.12 Towards the end of the second year of the Plan period, the intention is to take stock and to determine whether this approach has the prospect of pegging surplus places close to the 10% target. If this does not appear to be the case, more direct action to reduce surplus places will have to be seriously considered.

3.5.13 The approach outlined above picks up on the statements in the Council’s Corporate Strategy concerning engagement with stakeholders. The issues of educational standards and extended schools will be embraced within it. Its aim will be to foster the development of locally agreed ways of achieving the SOP’s 10% surplus places target.

3.5.14 It would seem appropriate for the threshold referred to in para 3.5.11 to be set at 15% with those over 20% being tackled first. The primary school areas above the threshold are:-

- **Over 20%**
 - Aspatria (29%)
 - Coniston (28%)
 - Millom (26%)
 - Brampton (25%)
 - Cleator (23%)

- Egremont (22%)
- Ulverston (22%)
- Carlisle North (21%)
- **15% - 20%**
 - Grange (20%)
 - Maryport (20%)
 - Silloth (20%)
 - South-East Cumbria (20%)
 - Walney (20%)
 - Alston (19%)
 - Carlisle South (19%)
 - Carlisle West (19%)
 - Sedbergh (19%)
 - Whitehaven (18%)
 - Kirkby Stephen (17%)
 - Penrith (17%)
 - Dalston (16%)
 - Keswick (16%)
 - Wigton (15%)
 - Workington (15%)

3.5.15 Given the potential level of surplus places throughout the Plan period, it is not envisaged that there will be a shortage of places in any areas of the County. It is worth pointing out that the DfES' yardstick for judging whether there is a need for extra places in an area (and for resources to be made available to provide them) is whether the number of future pupils will exceed the top of the capacity range resulting from the application of the Net Capacity methodology. The top of the range is shown on the data sheets as 'Basic Need Capacity'. Taking the County as a whole over using this measure of capacity, there would be a surplus of **26%** at the end of the Plan period.

The Secondary Phase

Building Schools for the Future

3.5.16 The Government has indicated that it intends, through this initiative, to invest heavily in the secondary school infrastructure between 2005 and 2020. During this period, wholesale renewal is planned with virtually all schools and pupils seen as benefiting. Bids for the first tranche of resources have already been invited. The establishment of a national procurement agency is envisaged to help in the process with much reliance on PFI and other PPP arrangements.

- 3.5.17 Government expects LEAs and their partners to establish/have a clear strategic vision for secondary education in their areas. Ministers see this as an exciting opportunity to determine what kind of secondary school buildings are needed and where they should be located taking all local needs, aspirations and social and economic factors into consideration.
- 3.5.18 Purely maintaining the status quo then in relation to the secondary school network is not a realistic option – and this view is not just generated by the above statement. The existing provision is recognised as having its limitations from a range of perspectives. To that can be added the obvious fact emanating from the demographics that with a 24% drop in pupil numbers over the next 11 years on top of 10% or so surplus places at present, remodelling the system to cater for fewer pupils at the same time as investing heavily in it is essential.
- 3.5.19 The Government is to give priority in terms of the timing of the new investment, to areas where there are high levels of deprivation, school performance in relation to GCSE results is particularly low and school buildings are very poor with investment urgently required. On this basis, Cumbria generally will not be at or close to the top of the national priority list. This means that there is a little time to plan without losing opportunities. Nevertheless, the Authority has to submit an ‘expression of interest’ to the DfES in December 2003 in order to benefit eventually from investment under this initiative.
- 3.5.20 It seems unarguable that the vision for and the map of future provision need to be developed with wide involvement and input from all of the LEA’s partners. A starting point is felt to be the establishment of a project team made up of County Council and key partner representatives to put together an ideas paper for wider consideration and subsequent consultation and development more locally.
- 3.5.21 It is intended that a process along these lines will begin early in the Autumn Term 2003. The timeframe for producing a report for further discussion will be 3-6 months. The expectation is that the project team will also assist in working up Cumbria’s ‘expression of interest’ referred to in para 3.5.19 above.
- 3.5.22 Some degree of change to the current network of provision appears necessary and inevitable; the issue for the Authority and its partners is how to shape it. Building anything like a consensus will be very difficult though that has to be the LEA’s goal.

Managing Places in the Short to Mid-Term

- 3.5.23 With the demographic scenario as it is, there will not be a general need for additional secondary school places during the Plan Period.
- 3.5.24 There are, though, a number of schools where the pupil roll is now, or will be during the Plan period, above the maximum of the Net Capacity range (i.e. the 'Basic Need' capacity). In a lot of these cases, building work is in the pipeline. In most, this effectively represents a positive response on the part of the Authority to the Government's agenda on the expansion of popular schools.
- 3.5.25 The Authority will be assessing with the very small number of schools which might face what is likely to be a short-term difficulty of insufficient accommodation over the next two or three years, how this can best be ameliorated.
- 3.5.26 Any secondary school whatever its status is able to publish proposals to expand by a single form of entry or by more than 25%. It is conceivable that one or more of Cumbria's schools could decide to make such a proposal. Given the existing level of unfilled places, the plummeting client-base generally over the next 11/12 years, the potential effect on neighbouring schools, the imminence of the 'Building Schools for the Future' initiative and the responsibility for the effective use of resources, the Authority would wish to consider very carefully whether it wished to support such a proposal. The Government does, however, expect that proposals of this kind involving schools which are demonstrably popular and successful will normally be approved by the School Organisation Committee.

The LSC Post-16 Review of the Carlisle Area

- 3.5.27 This review has led to the LSC bringing forward rationalisation suggestions for consultation which involve, as a preferred option, the establishment of a sixth form college in Carlisle. If this were to come to fruition, it would change the face of secondary school provision in the Carlisle area.
- 3.5.28 Alongside the LSC's consultation exercise and the subsequent decision-making processes, the LEA will need to work up options for the future pattern of 11-16 schools. Although this could be embraced in the work on the countywide network, it may well have to be fast-tracked.

3.6 ADMISSIONS TO SCHOOLS

3.6.1 The LEA aims to meet parental preference as much as it can within the confines of the efficient use of resources. The majority of parents, are able to secure a place in the primary or secondary school of their choice. In relation to the September 2002 intake, the following proportion of parents had their first preference met:-

- 98.85% for admission to infant/primary school at 4+.
- 98.0% for admission to junior school at 7+.
- 95.5% for admission to secondary school at 11+.

3.6.2 Inevitably, some schools are oversubscribed. Where this occurs, places are allocated by applying the school's admissions policy. In a voluntary aided or foundation school, the Governing Body is responsible for determining the admissions policy. For community and voluntary controlled schools, this responsibility rests with the LEA. The LEA's 2003/2004 General Admissions Policy applies to all but one school where the LEA is the Admission Authority. It is reviewed each year and is the subject of full consultation. The 2003/2004 General Admissions Policy can be found in the supplement to the Plan referred to in para 1.9.

3.6.3 The Admissions Policy is a useful tool for the LEA in helping to manage the utilisation of places in an area. Trends in parental choice can differ from one year to another. Short-term increases in the number of pupils in an individual school's catchment area can also arise, but there may well not be a case for the provision of additional accommodation. However, providing there are sufficient places in an area as a whole, the LEA is able to manage the overall situation using the General Admissions Policy.

3.6.4 In line with the requirements of the 2002 School Standards and Framework Act, Cumbria has established an Admissions Forum. The Admissions Forum is a vehicle for representatives of local Admission Authorities and other interested parties to discuss the effectiveness of local admission arrangements, seek agreement on how to deal with difficult admission issues and to provide advice to admission authorities on ways in which arrangements could be improved.

3.6.5 As part of its role, the Admissions Forum will be considering how admissions relate to published admission numbers. Its views on the sufficiency and distribution of school places across the County will help inform the LEA's decisions regarding the planning of school places.

3.7 EARLY YEARS PROVISION

- 3.7.1 The planning and development of early years provision is the subject of Cumbria's Strategic and Implementation Early Years & Childcare Plan. The Plan is drawn up by the County Council and the Cumbria Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.
- 3.7.2 Diversity of provision is important in order to meet the varying needs of children and families. There is a mix of early years providers. They are located within the maintained, independent, private and voluntary sectors. It is crucial that there is good coordination, co-operation and partnership between providers.
- 3.7.3 From April 2003, all funding for nursery education places across all sectors has been allocated to local authorities through their Education Formula Spending Share (EFSS). No funding for the provision of free places is now provided via Nursery Education Grant. A code of practice has been published to which LEAs must have regard when fulfilling their statutory duties in respect of the provision of free nursery education.
- 3.7.4 In Cumbria from September 2003, all three year olds will be entitled to a free part-time place (term-time only) from the term after their third birthday, until they reach statutory school age, i.e. in the term after their fifth birthday. Of course, here in the County, a full-time 'reception' place is available at the beginning (or early in) the academic year following a child's fourth birthday.
- 3.7.5 In September 2002, the Foundation Stage Curriculum became a statutory entitlement for all children between the ages of 3 and 5 and it is now the first key stage of the National Curriculum. There are also some key elements within the new SEN Code of Practice, 2002, relating to the entitlement of foundation stage children to additional support, in whatever settings they attend.
- 3.7.6 Nationally, the whole early years and childcare agenda has become significantly more important and better resourced over the last five years since the introduction of the first ever national childcare strategy in this country. The Government investment in this area of work will rise to over £1.5 billion nationally by 2005-2006.
- 3.7.7 The DfES issued the Sure Start Guidance 2004-2006 to all local authorities in July 2003. This guidance builds on previous advice issued in respect of Early Education, Early Years Childcare and Sure Start local programmes.

- 3.7.8 Cumbria Early Years & Childcare Service will be acting upon this strategic guidance in Cumbria and will be responsible for strategic planning and co-ordinating local delivery.
- 3.7.9 The Government, the LEA and the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership all wish to see on an ongoing basis greater integration of education, childcare, health and family support services. Many parents require these facilities throughout the working day and outside of school terms. The numbers of out of school clubs, breakfast clubs, parent and toddler groups, pre-schools and so on in school settings is continuing to grow. The Cumbria Early Excellence Network has been established and there are now five local Sure Start programmes, three Mini Sure Start programmes, three Childminding Networks and the Children's Fund in the County, all of which contribute to a comprehensive range of services for children from birth to 16. The Government has also recently announced the Children's Centre programme which will impact on all local authority areas throughout the country. It will link early education, childcare, health and family support together for children aged 0-5. This is a long term programme (2004-2010).
- 3.7.10 The Early Years Plans set out a broad context for developments of this kind. Schools will continue to play a significant part. School capacities, admission numbers and school organisation issues more broadly are likely to continue to be affected as things develop, particularly as legislation has been introduced which permits governing bodies to directly provide childcare and other facilities. In addition, the recent guidance from the Sure Start Unit on the setting up of Children's Centres, has recognised the importance of employing qualified early years teachers to work within nursery education settings. Their recommendations are founded on the recent research into Effective Provision of Pre-School Education Project, (EPPE). Schools will need to have regard to this research when planning provision for foundation stage children.
- 3.7.11 The LEA is currently conducting a strategic review of the maintained nursery schools in the County, considering their future in the context of developing initiatives including Foundation Stage Units, Extended Schools, Children's Centres, Local Sure Start Programmes and Neighbourhood Nurseries. A plan will be developed for each school that will consider a range of options such as extension or enhancement of services, partnership working, federation, amalgamation or closure. Whatever solutions are agreed, the provision of free part-time nursery education places for children in the communities served by the schools will be safeguarded.

3.8 INFANT AND JUNIOR SCHOOLS

- 3.8.1 Within the County there are many effective infant and junior schools. However, on balance, the Authority's preference for the future is for all-through (i.e. 3/4-11) primary schools. Amongst the reasons for this are that, all other things being equal, they offer:-
- Better continuity of education.
 - More financial efficiency.
 - Greater organisational and educational flexibility.
- 3.8.2 The LEA has a track record of facilitating the amalgamation of infant and junior schools (i.e. an average of 1 or 2 each year since the late 1980's). The new schools created have invariably proved successful. The changes involved have in most instances brought about the removal of surplus places.
- 3.8.3 At the start of the Plan period, the latest new primary school created through the amalgamation process opened. The existing schools involved, Priory Grove Infant and Abbotsmead Junior, were located on adjacent sites in Barrow. The name of the new school is Cambridge Primary.
- 3.8.4 The only other such amalgamation in the pipeline is in Whitehaven. Following a decision by the Schools Adjudicator, in May 2003, Valley Infant and Junior Schools will merge with effect from September 2004.
- 3.8.5 There will remain a total of 63 separate infant and junior schools in the County. The Authority believes that the process of amalgamation should continue wherever educational arguments, school size, site, buildings, geographical, people and other factors suggest this is appropriate. It must be recognised, however, that there would be practical difficulties in achieving effective mergers of a considerable proportion of the remaining infant and junior schools.

3.9 VERY SMALL PRIMARY SCHOOLS – CUMBRIA’S APPROACH

- 3.9.1 Given that Cumbria has a unique terrain, a problematic winter climate, a challenging road network and a wide range of population densities, there is a need for schools of varying sizes. The LEA feels that it would be unhelpful to talk in terms of ‘ideal’ sizes of primary schools in a County like ours.
- 3.9.2 Moreover, most Cumbrian schools, whatever their size, provide a good quality of education for their pupils. OfSTED, through its inspection reports on individual schools, consistently reaffirms this. It is also the case that smaller schools can, through consortia/partnership arrangements and the like, make limited resources stretch further.
- 3.9.3 It is, however, the Authority’s belief that there is a lower limit (in terms of the number of pupils) below which it is necessary to be assured that an effective and efficient education service which serves pupils well can be sustained. It is felt that there is likely to be educational advantage in primary schools being large enough to avoid having extensive age ranges in individual classes.
- 3.9.4 With regard to the primary phase, experience suggests that schools with 20-30 pupils can struggle financially and educationally. It is considered prudent and in line with its responsibilities for the LEA to:-
- Monitor the situation at schools with fewer than, say, 35-40 pupils (suggesting formal reviews where this is thought to be appropriate).
 - Take a close look at any schools whose staffing complements do not include the equivalent of two full-time qualified teachers.
 - Consider undertaking a formal review in cases where the pupil roll falls, or is expected to fall, to 20-25 (or below).
- 3.9.5 Officers will routinely examine intelligence relating to budgets, educational performance, feedback from visits and so on to try to ensure that any early signs of schools being in difficulty are picked up. It is particularly important to be able to react swiftly in situations where, for whatever reason, a small primary school’s roll begins to fall quickly.

- 3.9.6 Although formal reviews might be deemed appropriate in some instances, it is important to stress that the main purpose of such 'safety net' monitoring is to enable support of varying kinds to be provided.
- 3.9.7 The general fall in primary-aged pupils identified in this Plan will mean that there will be more very small schools. It is anticipated that the number of schools having 25 or fewer pupils will increase from the present 6 to 11 by 2007/08. Of those, 6 are likely to have numbers in the teens, the rolls of a couple of which might conceivably drop to single figures.
- 3.9.8 The guidance for School Organisation Committees makes it quite clear that there is a presumption against the closure of rural schools. The Authority's own Corporate Strategy and its Rural Agenda supports the retention of services in rural areas. However, as the Chief Schools Adjudicator has said, the guidance does not say that no rural school should ever close. The Adjudicator has also indicated, in the context of the kind of reducing rolls being experienced in Cumbria, that there are bound to be cases where rural mergers are in the educational interests of local children.

3.10 COLLABORATION AND FEDERATION

- 3.10.1 In Cumbria there are many examples of schools working in partnership and engaging in collaborative working on a range of fronts. To date, however, there have been no formal federations of schools though there are a number of such arrangements nationally.
- 3.10.2 One of the Government's key current aims is to see educational standards rise as a result of schools working together to share ideas and good practice. Examples cited are work on the curriculum, sharing leadership and tackling inclusion issues.
- 3.10.3 The DfES has recently undertaken a consultative exercise on two sets of guidance and regulations, one set dealing with collaborative arrangements, the other with formal federation. The intention in producing these documents was to facilitate the establishment of formal arrangements to assist those schools that want to work together on school improvement and development. The regulations and guidance arose from the Education Act 2002 and are intended to be effective from 1 September 2003.
- 3.10.4 With regard to formal collaboration, this provides an opportunity for two or more governing bodies to meet jointly or have committees meeting jointly and with delegated power.
- 3.10.5 Federation is a more formal process which can initially only be followed by community and voluntary controlled schools. After local consultation and agreement, up to 5 schools can federate under a single governing body. Each school is retained as a separate entity. The schools involved can each have a head or there can be a single head for the federation. The governing body will have a budget which is the sum of the budgets for each school and which it will be able to apply in a strategic way.
- 3.10.6 The LEA welcomes the fact that clear guidance on these possibilities has been issued. The Authority supports any initiative which offers the opportunity of enhancing standards through partnership working. It also feels that the new arrangements have the potential for contributing positively to rural regeneration and the rural agenda more broadly.
- 3.10.7 The Authority will wish to encourage and help those schools which are interested to explore the possibilities on offer. It will consider working with schools, particularly those with a track record of innovative collaboration, in a pilot-orientated fashion so that benefits (and drawbacks) can be assessed and communicated to the generality of schools.

3.10.8 In the secondary phase, those schools who have acquired Specialist and Leading Edge Status work in close collaboration with other schools to ensure that their expertise and experience benefits as many pupils and teachers as possible. Additionally, in taking the 14-19 curriculum forward, collaboration between school and further education colleges will be fostered.

3.11 SPECIAL NEEDS, INCLUSION AND EQUALITY

The Range of Special Needs Provision at Schools

3.11.1 The LEA provides places for pupils with special educational needs in a variety of different ways. These include, as far as schools are concerned:-

- Special schools (of which there are 5).
- Strategic facilities (at primary and secondary schools).
- 'Ordinary' mainstream schools.
- The purchase of places in recognised independent and non-Cumbrian maintained special schools for a small minority of pupils for whom appropriate provision is not available in the County.

3.11.2 In Cumbria, there has been a commitment to a policy of appropriately supported integration of pupils with special educational needs since the 1981 Education Act became effective. This is in line with the more recent qualified duty placed on LEAs by the 1996 Education Act to secure the education of such children in ordinary schools. The recently enacted Special Educational Needs and Disability Bill has strengthened the parental right to request a mainstream school. The Authority's 'mainstreaming' approach has gone much further than those of many of its peers.

'Inclusive Cumbria'

3.11.3 Following work undertaken by elected Members on inclusion, a report entitled 'Inclusive Cumbria' was produced. As indicated in section 3.1, the Authority's Corporate Strategy has embraced the policy objectives set out in that document.

3.11.4 A key recommendation was that there should be a new and more strategic approach to developing special educational needs provision in the County. There is, therefore, to be a systematic approach which will involve:-

- Area inclusion audits.
- Reviews of all special educational needs provision on an area basis.
- The production of a comprehensive action plan for each area.

Special Schools

- 3.11.5 In the 7 or 8 years prior to the 2003/04 academic year, there was a significant increase in the total pupil roll at Cumbria's special schools (see Data Sheet 5). However, as a proportion of the overall pupil population, the number of young people in those schools remains very small. On the positive side, this increase presented the opportunity for all of the special schools to be provided with much more modern and comprehensive facilities.
- 3.11.6 Previous Plans drew attention to likely further pressure on places at special schools. The reasons for this were felt to include parental preference, school staff/governor attitudes and the level of financial support for pupils with severe/profound and multiple learning difficulties.
- 3.11.7 In keeping with the greater emphasis being placed on inclusive learning, the Authority indicated in the last Plan that it did not want to see further increases in the pupil rolls at special schools. The 2001-2006 Plan stated, in preference, the extension of its network of strategic facilities in the County in order to ensure that special school rolls did not exceed capacity. However, as was also emphasised in the previous Plan, special schools are seen as a very important element of the LEA's overall special needs provision.
- 3.11.8 The Education Service Plan for the current year, as indicated in section 3.1, reiterated as a target that there should be no increase in the total roll of Cumbria's special schools. As can be seen from Data Sheet 5, according to the Heads of the schools, total numbers were set to fall marginally in September 2003.
- 3.11.9 Following on from 'Inclusive Cumbria', consideration is currently being given to the development of the role and function of the 5 special schools. This will involve, in particular, a consultative exercise on the age range to be catered for and the range of special needs to be met.
- 3.11.10 More broadly, the whole role of the special schools will be reconsidered with a view to embracing the concepts of outreach and community support as well as to address the issue of flexible pupil placements. This process will also pick up the content of the DfES consultative paper on the future of special schools.

Strategic Facilities

- 3.11.11 Details of the current strategic facilities, including those newly created ones in line with the statements made in previous Plans, are shown on Data Sheet 4.

3.11.12 The Authority remains committed to developing further the network of strategic facilities in the County. Key issues in that respect currently being considered are the need:-

- To consolidate the existing strategic facilities into a coherent framework with consistency of 'status', 'contact' and resourcing.
- For all future developments to be strategic (as opposed to being e.g. opportunistic).
- For a network of facilities to address the autism issue. (This will be dealt with through the area audits referred to above.)

Behaviour/Out of School Provision

3.11.13 Cumbria has 4 pupil referral units (PRUs) which cater for the needs of children who are excluded from school, are felt to be in danger of being excluded, or who, for a variety of reasons, are out of school. They are located on off-school sites in Barrow, Carlisle, Distington and Kendal.

3.11.14 For a while now, there has been some concern as to the adequacy of Cumbria's provision for pupils with Emotional, Social and Behavioural difficulties. The Authority is about to undertake a 'best value-style' internal review of its provision compared to that made by other shire counties.

3.11.15 One improvement which it is readily accepted is needed is the development of a new PRU in Kendal where the current facilities are much too limited. Resources to make appropriate provision were earmarked some time ago but finding a suitable site in the right location is proving difficult.

Accessibility

3.11.16 Much investment has been made in recent years to improve the accessibility of schools to disabled pupils. The Authority has made extensive provision in each year of its capital plan to continue that process.

3.11.17 LEAs now have a statutory duty to have an Accessibility Strategy whilst schools must have an Accessibility Plan. Both the strategy and schools' plans must cover three key areas:-

- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum.
- Improving the physical environment of schools for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and associated services provided or offered by schools.

- Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information, which is already provided, in writing, to pupils who are not disabled.

3.11.18 Accessibility Strategies should describe how LEAs intend to plan strategically to increase, over time, the accessibility of all schools they maintain. Each governing body, through the Accessibility Plan, should be working to increase the accessibility of their individual schools.

3.11.19 Cumbria is now well advanced in formulating its Accessibility Strategy for local consultation. In many ways it will represent a continuation of what has been happening over the last few years. What the strategy will do additionally is address those relatively few shortcomings in the Authority's previous approaches which have generally been very positive, innovative and productive. The weaknesses which the Accessibility Strategy will address include:-

- The reliance on opportunism and the readily achievable rather than a wholly strategic approach which has left some areas of the County less well served than others.
- An over-concentration on improving access for pupils with mobility difficulties at the expense of improvements for pupils with sensory impairment.
- Access has tended to be seen as a stand-alone issue rather than it being embedded in decision-making processes more generally.
- There are too many situations where schools fail to make organisational adjustments which would benefit pupils with disabilities.
- An emphasis on ensuring disabled pupils can gain access to buildings without a similar concentration on increasing their opportunities to learn and achieve.

Looked After Children

3.11.20 The Council accepts the challenge of corporate parenting. Once the profound and difficult decisions to remove children from families have been taken, it is the Authority's duty under the Children Act to safeguard and promote their welfare.

3.11.21 Children who are looked after by the Authority are, wherever possible, educated at their local school. The general admissions policy referred to in section 3.6 will, in relation to admissions to community and voluntary controlled schools in September 2004, give for the first time a significant measure of priority to this group of young people. The Government's code of Practice on Admissions also recommended voluntary aided and foundation schools to adopt a similar approach.

3.11.22 In line with its responsibilities, the LEA has produced guidance for schools wishing to have a policy for pupils in public care. This local guidance draws on that produced by the Government and local authorities in the Midlands. The guidance includes the following two key measures designed to improve the education and life chances for looked after children:-

- Schools should have a designated teacher with responsibility for such pupils.
- There should be a Personal Education Plan for all children in public care.

Minority Ethnic Groups and Travellers

3.11.23 The Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 places all schools, regardless of the number of ethnic minority pupils, under a statutory duty to develop a Race Equality Policy and action plan.

3.11.24 The policy and the plan need to detail how the school will proactively meet the three statutory responsibilities to:-

- Promote equality of opportunity through the delivery of education.
- Tackle racial discrimination.
- Promote good relations between different racial groups.

3.11.25 The Local Education Authority has a key role to play in encouraging, supporting and helping schools to develop good practice in achieving race equality and has provided guidance on racial harassment and developing race equality policies and action plans. In addition, the LEA has developed procedures to monitor, record and report incidents of racial harassment at the individual school level and across the LEA and to monitor the attainment, attendance and exclusions of children from minority ethnic groups.

3.11.26 The recent OfSTED inspection of the LEA prompted the Council to consider how it could better support schools in this important work and the LEA's Minority Ethnic & Traveller Achievement Plan 2002/07 sets out a coherent strategy across the whole of the education service. By setting out this strategy, Cumbria LEA recognises its responsibility to the whole community to take positive steps to raise the achievement of all pupils and prepare them to take their place in a multicultural society.

3.12 POST-16/14-19 PROVISION

- 3.12.1 There are some 23,000 young people aged 16-19. The 16 year old cohort will be 6300 in 2003 rising to 6450 in 2005. Thereafter, a steady annual decline is forecast.
- 3.12.2 Cumbria maintains 27 11-19 secondary schools. Two of these share a joint sixth form. In addition, there are four general colleges of further education, a sixth form college and further education provision at the Newton Rigg Campus of the University of Central Lancashire and at the Cumbria Institute of the Arts.
- 3.12.3 Nearly 69% of Year 11 leavers remain in education – around 41% in school sixth forms and about 28% in colleges. Within this countywide participation rate there are considerable differences between areas. There are also variations in staying on rate within the school sector ranging from below 20% to 80% of year 11 moving into the sixth form.
- 3.12.4 It is expected that during the Plan period numbers of post-16 students will increase. This will be as a result of the demographic trend and the drive for higher participation rates. However, with annual cohorts beginning to fall, the envisaged higher participation rates are unlikely to prevent an overall reduction in numbers before too long.
- 3.12.5 In January 2003, some 4,280 post-16 students were recorded on school rolls. The variations in the size of sixth forms are broadly as follows:
- 8 (+2*) over 200 students (largest about 380).
 - 8 with 150-199 students.
 - 9 with less than 149 students (smallest about 40).
- * This refers to the joint sixth form in Workington.
- 3.12.6 There are 5 relatively isolated sixth forms situated over ten miles from alternative provision. Within these schools, numbers of post-16 students on roll range from about 60 to 200 students. 15 of the 27 sixth forms are within five miles of alternative provision.

- 3.12.7 Particular issues were identified in the 2002-2007 Plan for sixth forms nationally and within Cumbria. They remain current and include: -
- The long-term financial viability of schools with less than 200 sixth form students.
 - The lack of choice and diversity in curriculum provision particularly in small sixth forms
 - The variation in sixth form achievement and participation which largely reflects social exclusion and inequality of opportunity
 - The duplication of provision and competition between providers (schools, FE colleges, private sector training providers) in many areas
 - The lack of reliable data and evidence to measure standards of achievement in sixth forms in comparison with other post-16 providers.
 - The absence of the involvement of schools in planning mechanisms to meeting local learning and skills needs
 - The need to respond constructively to emerging government intentions and aspirations
- 3.12.8 The 5 area reviews signalled in earlier plans jointly promoted by the Cumbria Learning and Skills Council and the LEA have now been completed. The findings of the reviews in Carlisle, South Lakes, Furness, West Cumbria and Eden are being used to inform the 14-19 Pathfinder project which seeks to promote innovative development and collaboration between schools and between schools, colleges and other providers.
- 3.12.9 The Carlisle review has prompted the LSC to bring forward suggestions for a possible post-16 reorganisation in the Carlisle travel to study area, involving as a preferred option the establishment of a new sixth form college. Any post-16 reorganisation clearly has implications for the 11-18 schools in the area.
- 3.12.10 No other reviews have prompted formal plans for reorganisation. But all have recommended more extensive collaboration between providers in order to secure access to a richer and more varied curriculum for individual learners.

- 3.12.11 This objective has been strongly reinforced by an Ofsted/Adult Learning Inspectorate 16-19 Area Wide Inspection of West Cumbria. The inspection report looks to the LSC and the LEA to adopt a more strategic approach to 16-19 provision, and, in particular, turn the rhetoric of collaboration and cooperation between institutions and other providers into a working reality. This provides a real opportunity to embrace the new 14-19 agenda. A Post-Inspection Action Plan will be implemented over the 3 year period 2003/04 – 2005/06. In the other 3 areas, action will be taken forward by the local area 14-19 strategy groups.
- 3.12.12 In addition, jointly with Connexions and the LSC, the LEA has published (July 2003) a Statement on “Learning (14-19) in Cumbria” which sets out the agreed aim of the County’s learning agenda for 14-19 provision over the next few years. OfSTED has also published (July 2003) “Supporting 14-19 Education” and the LEA will address the recommendations made within that document.
- 3.12.13 Further developments are in prospect. By April 2005 all LSCs will have undertaken a series of 14-19 Strategic Area Reviews (SARs), as required by central government. In Cumbria, these will focus on the same geographical grouping of 14-19 schools, colleges and work-based learning providers as those covered by the earlier 16-19 reviews noted above.
- 3.12.14 The objective of the SARs is to thoroughly map local provision and, as necessary, reconfigure this with a view to enabling, in the most cost effective way, all young people, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities, to:-
- Follow either ‘academic’ or ‘vocational/work related’ programmes which are of equal high quality and give equal opportunity to move on to work or to university education.
 - Access high quality personal support appropriate to individual needs.
 - Make the best use of emerging new technologies.

Such provision will meet the needs of those who:

- Want to be stretched academically.
- Are looking for a mixture of academic and vocational learning.
- Are interested in employment with training.
- Need support in reaching their full potential.

The SARs will be completed during the first two years of this School Organisation Plan.

- 3.12.15 As recorded in earlier plans, given Cumbria's very considerable economic, demographic and social diversity, no single whole county approach to post-16 school organisation issues is appropriate. The recent reviews which have been undertaken support this view. Nonetheless, the issues and aspirations set out above provide an appropriate rationale against which to review and develop provision.

3.13 EXTENDED SCHOOLS

- 3.13.1 'Extended Schools' is a national initiative which is currently being rolled out. It involves the encouragement of the development of facilities and services around school provision throughout the country.
- 3.13.2 Of course, the use of schools for a wide range of non-school activities involving formal and informal partnerships has occurred for decades. Furthermore, the Authority's Corporate Strategy had already embraced the basic concept prior to the Government launching its initiative in 2002. The 2003 Strategy continues to stress the wish to see schools increasingly becoming focal points for community and public services.
- 3.13.3 The Authority is committed to the development of a countywide strategy for the development of extended schools and to supporting all schools who wish to fulfil an increasingly broad role in relation to lifelong education and other services for the community.
- 3.13.4 Schools which offer extended services can achieve many benefits. These include:-
- Increased levels of pupil achievement, motivation, behaviour and self-esteem.
 - Improved facilities for sport, the arts and so on.
 - Greater parental involvement in children's learning.
 - More opportunities for local adult education and family learning.
 - Better access to health and other essential and specialist services.
 - Closer community relationships and a contribution to community cohesion.
- 3.13.5 To assist in developing expertise and to learn from experience, the Authority has identified two schools to act as pilots. Both have already gone a long way down the extended schools track and have clear and advanced ideas for going further. The schools concerned are Petheril Bank Primary in Carlisle and Millom Secondary.

- 3.13.6 The Education Capital Plan included £250k in 2003/04 and the same amount over the next 4 years to support developments across Cumbria arising out of this initiative. In return for acting as pilots, the two schools involved will benefit to a significant degree from investment through this funding.
- 3.13.7 The main benefits of extended schools are felt to be as set out in para 3.13.4 above. A not insignificant knock-on advantage which can accrue is the absorption of unfilled school places. A very good example of this involves one of the pilots, Petteril Bank School. The school's capacity has reduced markedly as a result of some of its spare classrooms being used very productively by Sure Start early years facilities and as a satellite operation for Upperby Community Development Centre.
- 3.13.8 Each school will of course decide for itself how far it wishes to go down the extended schools route. Ascertaining and then meeting real community needs through extended services is fundamental to the concept.
- 3.13.9 The Government is keen for every LEA in the country to have at least one of what it calls 'full service extended schools' by 2006. Financial support to help to achieve this will be provided through the DfES. Such schools are to provide childcare, health and social care, lifelong learning opportunities, family learning, parenting support, study support, sports and arts activities and ICT access. Cumbria is intent on developing a full service extended school within the envisaged timeframe.

3.14 CHOICE AND DIVERSITY

3.14.1 Section 3.6 covers admissions to schools and the way the expression of parental preferences are handled. This element of the Plan deals with the creation and maintenance of a diversity of provision to offer real choices in that process to parents and students. It is inevitable in a county like ours, however, that distance and other factors present constraints.

3.14.2 It is of course the case that, although all schools are required to follow the National Curriculum, each school has its own individual characteristics and identity.

Church Provision

3.14.3 A strong feature of school provision in Cumbria is the number of church schools. The Catholic and Church of England Diocesan Authorities are very important partners in the provision of the County's education service.

3.14.4 Almost 43% of Cumbria's primary and secondary schools are church schools. These add diversity and are crucial to the overall network of provision as well as meeting the needs of families preferring a specific denominational education for their children.

3.14.5 It is the Authority's intention that, in broad terms, the status quo is retained as far as the balance between C of E, Catholic and secular provision is concerned. Church school provision will often be a consideration where change is being discussed. In a number of previous reorganisations over the years, church provision has been maintained or enhanced to ensure access to a diversity of schools. Of course, it may well be the case that, in making the most appropriate decisions regarding the supply of school places in individual instances, the overall balance of provision will be affected marginally.

3.14.6 The LEA will continue to work closely with its diocesan authority partners in the further development of the School Organisation Plan, in connection with future individual proposals for changes in school organisation and, more generally, in contributing to the provision of an efficient and effective education service for Cumbria.

School Size

3.14.7 As indicated at various points throughout the Plan, Cumbria has a range of school sizes in both the primary and secondary phases.

3.14.8 Subject to the constraints on the ability to make reasonable travel arrangements referred to earlier, Cumbria's network of provision offers opportunities for choice for those preferring small or larger schools.

Specialist Schools

3.14.9 Government initiatives have enabled secondary schools to become specialist schools. Such schools are required to develop a particular specialist character and ethos and to raise standards in their chosen specialism and more generally across the school.

3.14.10 The Authority has supported bids made by individual schools. Since the initiative's introduction in 1994 a total of 24 schools have achieved specialist status. The number of schools and the specialisms involved are:-

• Arts	2	• Languages	2
• Technology	5	• Business and Enterprise	4
• Sports	4	• Maths and Computing	4
• Science	2	• Engineering	1

3.14.11 Further bids for specialist status from Cumbria schools are in the pipeline and these will also be supported by the LEA. Two of the County's specialist schools have also become 'Leading Edge' (formerly Beacon) schools.

3.14.12 For some pupils and parents, specialisms will be a key factor in stating their preferences at the secondary transfer stage.

Ethnicity

3.14.13 The Council has a very small (around 0.5%) but albeit increasing proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups in its schools.

3.14.14 Clearly, there is no prospect of the establishment of any new faith or other type of schools specifically for ethnic minorities. The Authority does, of course, aim to provide equal educational opportunity for all and any changes involving individual schools with a significant number of ethnic minority pupils will take into account their particular needs. (The Authority's Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Plan is covered in section 3.11.)

Encouraging New providers

- 3.14.15 As is apparent from section 3.5 on the management of school places, there are unlikely to be any extra places required overall in the primary phase during the Plan period.
- 3.14.16 Responding to the 'Building Schools for the Future' initiative regarding secondary schools and the surplus places issue in the primary phase may, however, mean a relatively small number of what, at least technically, are new schools. The Authority will consider in those circumstances any aspirations on the part of potential new providers/partners in line with the Government's transformation agenda.

Post-16

- 3.14.17 At the moment, most young people on completion of year 11 have some degree of choice if they wish to continue in education i.e. college of further education or school sixth form/sixth form college.
- 3.14.18 As is clear from section 3.12, the area review of post-16 provision in the Carlisle area has led to LSC proposals for a sixth form college. A consideration in the consultation and decision-making processes which will occur over the 2003/04 academic year is likely to be that of diversity of provision.

Selective Education

- 3.14.19 Penrith and the surrounding area is alone in Cumbria in being served by a system which involves formal selection on the basis of general ability levels. The Authority would support a change to comprehensive education only if that was the wish of local parents. This view is in line with the present legal processes regarding arrangements based on such selection processes.

4 ACCESSING THE PLAN

4 ACCESSING THE PLAN

- 4.1 The School Organisation Plan is available on the Internet. The address is www.cumbria.gov.uk/education.
- 4.2 The supplement to the Plan referred to in para 1.9 also appears at the above address.
- 4.3 The supplement contains information on:-
- The Net Capacity Methodology.
 - The DfES' Approach to Capital Expenditure.
 - The Regulations on Statutory Proposals.
 - The Statutory Guidance for School Organisation Committees on Factors to be Taken into Account when Considering Statutory Proposals.
 - Cumbria's Approach to Consultation on School Organisation Issues.
 - The General Admissions Policy 2003/04.
 - Support for Schools via the Scheme for Financing Schools.
 - Providing for Pupils with Special Educational Needs
- 4.4 The documents referred to above are also available for inspection during normal opening hours at Education Offices, Council Centres and Public Libraries around the County.