

Supplement to the School Organisation Plan



September 2003 – August 2008

SUPPLEMENT TO THE SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLAN SEPTEMBER 2003 – AUGUST 2008

Introduction

This document has been prepared as a supplement to the School Organisation Plan [SOP] for Cumbria September 2003 - August 2008.

It is the intention that Cumbria's SOP should be a useful working document 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 and on some of the more technical aspects of school organisation change. Some of the detail could change over a three year period. In preparing the current Plan it was, therefore, considered appropriate to provide the appendices as a supplement to the main Plan, so that they can, if necessary, be updated. It should also help to reduce the volume of paper, by only making them available to recipients of the Plan on request.

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Internet Access

Cumbria's School Organisation Plan and this supplement are available on the internet. The address is www.cumbria.gov.uk/education

SCHOOL CAPACITIES (NET CAPACITIES)

Throughout the Plan, and in particular in the detailed information on each area data sheet, references are made to school capacities.

There is now a new DfES methodology which is fully operational (at the time of the last Plan it was in the process of being introduced) and which is the only determinant of capacity for primary and secondary schools.

The new methodology:-

- provides a capacity range for each school based on the accommodation available and its use;
- allows an Indicated Admission Number (IAN) to be fixed at the most sensible/appropriate point within the range;
- fixes a “net capacity” for each school with reference to the IAN, the number of year groups and, where relevant, the proportion of pupils staying on at post-16 level;
- uses the net capacity of each school to determine whether or not there are surplus places;
- allows a Published Admission Number (PAN) to be set at the level of the IAN or above (but not below without following a formal process) the capacity range, although the PAN, even when different from the IAN, has no impact on capacity.

The new net capacities were agreed with schools during the Autumn of 2002 and the Spring/Summer of 2003. They will be subject to annual review as building work changes the available accommodation.

THE DFES'S APPROACH TO CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

The number of DFES capital funds will, from the beginning of 2004/05, significantly reduce. In particular, in relation to school organisation issues there is no separate/specific allocation or bidding opportunity for either surplus place removal or for basic need [the need for additional school places arising out of a predicted increase in pupil numbers]. Similarly, the specific, but small, allocations which have been available recently from the DfES for early years/nursery facilities no longer exist.

This Appendix concentrates on those remaining or new funds which are most relevant in terms of The School Organisation Plan. DfES support comes mainly in the form of grant for voluntary aided schools and either grant or permission for the LEA to borrow in the case of other types of schools; funding for the Building Schools for the Future initiative will, at least in part, be likely to involve private finance.

1. SURPLUS PLACE REMOVAL

- 1.1 The Authority has, from DfES borrowing cover related to modernisation of the building stock, included within the Education Capital Programme a small sub-programme to deal with small and medium-sized projects to remove surplus places in non-aided schools.
- 1.2 In voluntary aided schools, surplus place removal projects need to compete with other priorities for resources from the Locally Co-ordinated Voluntary Aided Programme and from voluntary aided modernisation funding [both involve the LEA and the Diocesan Authorities allocating fixed amounts of grant on behalf of the DfES].
- 1.3 In both the voluntary aided and non-voluntary aided schools, it is also in theory, possible to obtain DfES support for surplus place removal projects via the Targeted Capital Fund. This has, to some degree at least, been a successful route in the past but recent experience suggests that it is less likely to be so in the future.

2. NURSERY CLASSES

- 2.1 No specific Government capital support is now provided in respect of the creation or expansion of nursery class provision.
- 2.2 Any developments carried out in future will need to be funded from the voluntary aided LCVAP/Modernisation allocation and the non-aided modernisation allocation. In all instances, they will need to compete with other priorities.

3. BUILDING SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE

- 3.1 This is a new government initiative aimed at completely modernising the nation's secondary school (including special schools and pupil referral units) building stock over the next 10 to 15 years. The initiative requires a fundamental review of patterns of provision.

- 3.2 Cumbria has expressed interest in the initiative and has embarked upon local informal consultation. Formal consultation is not likely to begin until late 2005 and no building work is envisaged before 2009 or 2010. Clearly this process will involve the School Organisation Committee if and when any formal proposals for organisational change are considered.
- 3.3 It is probable that funding of £250m+ will be required within Cumbria. Some of this may be through traditional routes such as borrowing cover; some of it will almost certainly be from private finance.
- 3.4 Further information about the initiative is set out in Section 3.5.16 – 3.5.22 (page 130) of the plan.

THE REGULATIONS ON STATUTORY PROPOSALS

1. CHANGES REQUIRING THE PUBLICATION OF PROPOSALS

1.1 Such changes, affecting schools which are most likely to occur in Cumbria are:-

- The opening of new schools.
- The closure of existing schools.
- The significant enlargement of schools (i.e. in most circumstances an increase in capacity of 25% or more subject to a minimum of 30 extra places).
- Variations in the age range catered for by schools (e.g. by the establishment of a nursery class).
- A change of category of schools.

1.2 The power to publish proposals is generally limited to the LEA and governors of voluntary and foundation schools. Responsibility for publishing the proposals varies in accordance with their nature and that of the school(s) involved. The Learning and Skills Council has restricted powers to publish proposals in respect of sixth forms and 16-19 schools.

2. THE PROCESS OF PUBLICATION

2.1 Proposals must be “published in local newspapers, and posted at the main entrance to school(s) named in the proposals and at some other conspicuous place in the areas served or to be served by the school(s).”

3. INFORMATION REQUIRMENTS

3.1 The relevant Regulations prescribe the information which must be given in the proposals. They also specify what data must be submitted to the School Organisation Committee.

3.2 Depending on the nature of the proposals, data requirements relating to schools and more broadly include, for example:-

- The category of school (i.e. community, foundation, voluntary aided or voluntary controlled)
- The proposed implementation date
- Information on religious character
- Transport arrangements

- Admission arrangements
- Details of alteration e.g. enlargement
- Alternative schools
- Details of any federation proposals
- The published admission number (and indicated admission number if it is proposed that the published admission number be lower)
- Accommodation details
- Capital costs
- Ways in which choice, diversity and quality will be enhanced
- Ways in which community cohesion will be enhanced
- Policies relating to special needs
- Staffing information
- Curriculum details
- Life expectancy of buildings
- Information from Ofsted reports
- Exam results
- School development plan(s)
- Integration of nursery education and childcare
- Age range
- Assessments of school quality
- Floor area plans/measurements
- Consultative documents and the responses to consultation exercises

4. OBJECTIONS TO PROPOSALS

4.1 Following the publication of proposals there is a statutory six weeks period during which any person may submit an objection or comment on the proposals.

5. DECISIONS ON PROPOSALS

5.1 Statutory proposals that are published by the LEA may be decided by the Authority within 4 months of publication provided there are no objections (and the proposals are not linked to any others, the outcome of which it will fall to the School Organisation Committee to consider). Proposals which are not decided upon by the LEA will pass to the School Organisation Committee to consider.

5.2 Where proposals are published by the LEA and attract objections, the Authority is normally required to forward the objections to the Committee, together with its comments on them, within one month of the end of the objection period. Where objections have been made to the proposals of governing bodies, the Committee will need to seek comments on them from the proposers.

5.3 The Committee reaches a decision when all groups on the Committee who cast a vote on the proposal (each group has one vote) vote for the decision, and none against.

The Committee may decide to:-

- Reject the proposals.
- Approve the proposals without modification.
- Approve the proposals with modifications following consultation with the proposers and others.

or

- Give a conditional approval. This may be appropriate for example, where implementation depends on the proposers obtaining planning permission or acquiring a site.

5.4 The composition of School Organisation Committees is prescribed quite tightly. The groups on Cumbria's Committee represent:-

- The LEA.
- The Catholic Diocese.
- The C of E Diocese.
- The Learning and Skills Council.
- Governing bodies of schools other than denominational schools.

5.5 Where the Committee cannot reach a decision it will pass the proposal to the Adjudicator. The options open to the Adjudicator in reaching a decision are the same as for the Committee.

5.6 Appendix E which follows provides extracts from the DfES guidance for School Organisation Committees on the factors they should consider when taking decisions on individual proposals.

6. **MEMBERSHIP OF THE SCHOOL ORGANISATION COMMITTEE**

6.1 The current members of the Committee and the groups they belong to are set out below:-

The LEA Group

Roger Bingham	County Councillor
Simon Leyton	County Councillor
Liz Mallinson	County Councillor
Chris Southward	County Councillor
Joan Stocker	County Councillor

Church of England Group

Jeffery Brache
Rex Chapman (Chair)
John Lomax

Catholic Group

Keith Durrant
Sue Pitcher
Alex Scott

Learning and Skills Group

Marjorie Pickthall

Schools' Group

Roger Alston (Vice-Chair)	Headteacher Governor, Foundation Secondary School
Jan Corlette	Headteacher Governor, Foundation Primary School
Peter Kent	Co-opted Governor, Community Primary School
Geoff Hudson	Headteacher Governor, Community Primary School
Keith Little	LEA Governor, Community Secondary School
Tina Macur	Minor Authority Governor, Community Primary School
Linda Kitchin	Governor, Special School

THE STATUTORY GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOL ORGANISATION COMMITTEES ON FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED WHEN CONSIDERING FORMAL PROPOSALS

This Appendix provides extracts from the 'DfES guidance for School Organisation Committees' on the factors they should consider when taking decisions on individual proposals. The full guidance can be obtained from the DfES web site www.dfes.gov.uk/schoolorg under the section on 'Guidance for Decision Makers'.

The following factors should not be taken to be exhaustive. Their importance will vary, depending on the type and circumstances of decisions. All proposals should be considered on their individual merits.

1. PROPOSALS FOR NEW SCHOOLS

(For new nursery schools see Section 5 and for new sixth form schools see Section 6)

There should be a presumption to approve proposals for a new school to replace a failing school closed by direction of the Secretary of State.

Effect on Standards and Contribution to School Improvement

- Whether the proposals will improve the standards, quality, range and/or diversity of educational provision in the area.
- Whether they advance the national and local transformation strategies set out in the documents Education and Skills: Investment for Reform and A New Specialist System: Transforming Secondary Education and the local Education Development Plan.
- Whether the proposals will deliver a broad and balanced curriculum.
- The effect of the proposals on other institutions' standards, bearing in mind the effect on quantity and quality of other schools'.
- Intakes and any suggestions put forward for collaboration, partnership or federation.

Need for Places

- Whether there is a need for additional places in the area, or whether there are surplus places.

- The extent of parental demand for the type of school in question, for example, provision for particular faiths or denominations or specialisms.

Finance

- Whether the proposals represent a cost-effective use of public funds.
- Whether the capital resources required are available.
- Whether the sale proceeds of redundant sites are to be made available and whether the Secretary of State's consent has been obtained where necessary.
- If the proposal is for a new voluntary aided school, whether the promoters have provided a statement that the governing body would be able to meet their financial responsibilities for building work.

Views of Interested Parties

- The views of parents and other local residents, including those who may be particularly affected by the proposals or have a particular interest in them.
- The views of any Local Education Authority affected by the proposals or with an interest.
- The views of the CE and RC dioceses in the area.
- The views of the other schools and colleges in the area.
- The views of the Learning and Skills Council (if the proposals affect the provision of post-16 education).
- The views of the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (where proposals affect early education provision).

Community Cohesion, Inclusiveness and Partnerships

- The extent to which, and how satisfactorily in the circumstances of the community, the proposals address the need to promote community cohesion.
- Where a proposed new maintained school already exists as an independent school, its current approach and contribution to community cohesion will be relevant.

- The extent to which the proposals take account of the needs of families and the wider community.

14-19 Issues

- Where 14-19 provision is involved, the extent to which appropriate collaborative arrangements have been considered.
- The criteria for considering new sixth forms should also be taken into account where the proposed school includes 16-19 provision.

Equal Opportunities

- Any sex, race or disability discrimination issues or other human rights issues including any sex discrimination issues in relation to proposals for a single sex school.

Effect On School Journeys

- The existence of safe walking, cycling and bus routes to the proposed site.

Other Issues

- Whether the school will provide strong links with the local community and provide family and community services.
- (Primary provision only) Whether the proposals comply with the infant class size limit.
- For voluntary and foundation schools where a trust is not to hold the freehold of the site, whether the land tenure arrangements are satisfactory.
- For voluntary and foundation schools, whether the proposal is to join an existing group foundation body or to jointly establish a new group foundation body.
- Whether the proposal is to join an existing federation or to jointly establish a new federation.
- Whether the new school will meet the minimum statutory requirement for provision of school playing fields.

Proposal from an Existing Independent School

- If co-educational, whether it would provide equal opportunities for boys and girls.

- Whether it would have suitably qualified staff and the premises would be suitable for the purpose of a maintained school.

2. **PROPOSALS TO CLOSE SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL SITES**

There should be a presumption to:

- Approve both sets of proposals where a failing school is to close and a Fresh Start school is to open on the same site.
- Approve proposals to close a failing school, if there is sufficient capacity in the area for the displaced pupils and to meet future demand.
- Approve proposals for a school to close so that it may be merged with a more successful school, if there is sufficient evidence that the development will have a positive impact on standards.
- Approve proposals for the closure of a school that is to be replaced by an Academy, conditional on the making of the agreement for the Academy.
- Reject proposals for the closure of rural schools and sites unless the case for closure is strong and the proposals clearly in the best interests of educational provision in the area.
- Reject proposals for the closure of a maintained nursery school, unless the case for closure is strong, the proposals are clearly in the best interests of local children and families, and the LEA can show that it has properly evaluated all the options.

In addition, the Adjudicator should not approve proposals for the closure of a denominational school where the relevant church SOC group had voted against its closure and it is clear that the closure, in conjunction with any related changes, will reduce the proportion of such denominational places within the LEA, unless it is failing or severely undersubscribed.

Effect on Standards and Contribution to School Improvement

- Whether the proposals will improve the standards, quality, range and/or diversity of educational provision in the area.
- Whether they advance national and local transformation strategies set out in Education and Skills: Investment for Reform and A New Specialist System: Transforming Secondary Education and the local Education Development Plan.

- The standards of education in existing and proposed alternative provision, and, particularly in the case of nursery schools, that the alternative provision will be able to maintain or enhance the standards of education provision.
- The effect of the proposals on other institutions.

Need for Places

- The overall supply and likely future demand for places.
- Whether there is sufficient capacity to accommodate displaced pupils in the area.
- Whether the proposals will reduce the proportion of denominational places.

Finance

- Whether the proposals represent a cost-effective use of public funds.
- Whether the capital resources required are available.
- Whether the sale proceeds of redundant sites are to be made available and whether the Secretary of State's consent has been obtained where necessary.

Views of Interested Parties

- The views of parents and other local residents, including those who may be particularly affected by the proposals or have a particular interest in them.
- The view of any Local Education Authority affected by the proposals or with an interest.
- The views of other schools and colleges in the area.
- The views of the Learning and Skills Council (if the proposals affect the provision of post-16 education).
- The views of the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (where proposals affect early education provision).

Other Issues

- The length and nature of journeys to alternative provision.

- Any sex, race or disability discrimination issues or other human rights issues.
- Whether the change will affect the ability to meet the minimum statutory requirement for provision of school playing fields.
- The effect of the proposals on infant class sizes.
- The overall effect of a closure on the local community, particularly in areas receiving funding as part of regeneration activity.
- Whether the proposals are in connection with the establishment of an Academy.

Additional Factors if the School is in Special Measures

- If proposals are linked to expansion of other schools for transferring pupils, consider popularity of alternate schools.
- If straight closure of school, whether there are sufficient places available to cater for displaced pupils and foreseeable demand.
- If Fresh Start school proposed, whether the places being provided are needed.
- If Fresh Start school proposed, whether the school is making progress sufficiently quickly.

Rural Schools and Sites

- Whether the case is strong and in the best interests of educational provision in the area.
- The overall effect of the closure on the local community.
- The transport implications.
- Whether the possibilities of federated or extended schools to increase viability has been considered.
- (Closure of a site) Whether the schools had recently been amalgamated and if there was an expectation that the site would continue to be used as part of the school.

Closure of Maintained Schools

- Whether the case is strong and clearly in the best interest of local children and families in the area.

- The quantity, quality, value for money and convenience to parents of the nursery school and proposed replacement provision.
- The impact of the loss of the nursery school's experience and knowledge in delivering early years education.
- Whether the LEA has duly considered alternatives to closing the nursery school, such as using it to support the development of integrated services for young children and their families.

3. **PROPOSALS TO EXPAND SCHOOLS**

There should be a presumption to:

- Approve proposals to expand successful and popular schools unless there is compelling objective evidence that expansion would have a damaging effect on standards overall in the area, which cannot be avoided by LEA action.
- Approve proposals to expand a school in order to replace places removed by the closure of a failing school closed by direction of the Secretary of State.

Effect on Standards and Contribution to School Improvement

- Whether the proposals will improve the standards, quality, range and/or diversity of educational provision in the area .
- Whether they advance national and local transformation strategies set out in Education and Skills: Investment for Reform and A New Specialist System: Transforming Secondary Education and the local Education Development Plan.
- Standards at the school in question, and the impact of expansion on those standards.
- The effect of the proposals on standards in the area generally, bearing in mind effect on quantity and quality of other schools' intakes and any collaborative or other suggestions put forward to mitigate adverse impact.

Need for Places

- Extent of school's popularity and unmet demand for its places.
- Whether there is a need for additional places in the area, or whether there are surplus places.

- Whether expansion will draw in pupils from other local schools, or attract extra pupils to the area or the maintained sector. The effect of the expansion on other schools' intakes.

Finance

- Whether the proposals represent a cost-effective use of public funds.
- Whether the capital resources required are available.
- Whether the sale proceeds of redundant sites are to be made available and whether the Secretary of State's consent has been obtained where necessary.

Views of Interested Parties

- The views of other schools and colleges in the area.
- The views of parents and other local residents, including those who may be particularly affected by the proposals or have a particular interest in them.
- The views of any Local Education Authority affected by the proposals or with an interest.
- The views of the Learning and Skills Council (if the proposals affect the provision of post-16 education).
- The views of the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (where proposals affect early education provision).

14-19 Issues

- Where 14-19 provision is involved, the extent to which appropriate collaborative arrangements have been considered.
- The criteria for considering new sixth forms should also be taken into account where the proposed school includes provision.

Equal Opportunities

- Any sex, race or disability discrimination issues or other human rights issues, including any sex discrimination issues in relation to proposals for a single sex school.

Other Issues

- Whether the change will affect the ability to meet the minimum statutory requirement for provision of school playing fields.
- The existence of safe walking, cycling and bus routes to the school.
- The effect of the proposals on infant class sizes.

4. PROPOSALS FOR CHANGE IN CATEGORY OF SCHOOL

Effect on Standards and Contribution to School Improvement

- Whether the proposals will improve the standards, quality, range and/or diversity of educational provision in the area.
- Whether they advance national and local transformation strategies set out in Education and Skills: Investment for Reform and A New Specialist System: Transforming Secondary Education and the local Education Development Plan.

Finance

- Whether, if the proposal is for a change in category to voluntary aided, the promoters have provided evidence that the governing body would be able to meet their financial responsibilities for repairs and capital work for at least a period of five years.

Views of Interested Parties

- The view of other schools and colleges in the area.
- The views of parents and other local residents, including those who may be particularly affected by the proposals or have a particular interest in them.
- The views of any Local Education Authority affected by the proposals or with an interest.
- The views of the Learning and Skills Council (if the proposals affect the provision of post-16 education).
- The views of the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (where proposals affect early education provision).
- Where proposals are published by the LEA, the views of the governing body.

- For proposals involving changes in category of schools with a religious character, the views of the relevant diocesan authority or appropriate faith group.

Other Issues

- For proposals involving changes to foundation or voluntary-aided status, any concerns about potential changes to admission arrangements.
- Where 14-19 provision is involved, the extent to which appropriate collaborative arrangements have been considered.
- Any sex, race or disability discrimination issues or other human rights issues.
- Whether the change will affect the ability to meet the minimum statutory requirement for provision of school playing fields.
- For proposals involving schools with a religious character, the effects of any changes to the RE syllabus as a result of the school changing category.
- For proposals to change to VA or foundation, where in exceptional circumstances a trust is not to hold the freehold of the site, whether the land tenure arrangements are satisfactory.
- Whether a trust deed is required or whether an existing trust deed requires variation by the Charity Commission.
- Whether the proposal is to change the category of the school and to join an existing group foundation body or to change the category of the school and jointly establish a new group foundation body.
- Whether the proposal is to change the category of the school and to join an existing federation or to change the category of the school and jointly establish a new federation.
- When the proposals involve a transfer of land, and in particular the transfer by means of “transfer agreement” of non-publicly funded land held by a school’s governing body, the trustees or a foundation body, that the parties agree the terms of the “transfer agreement”.
- Whether the school is in special measures, has serious weaknesses or is subject to a warning notice by the LEA under section 15 of the School Standards and Framework Act.

- Whether the LEA has suspended, or given notice of its intention to suspend, the school's delegated budget (of potential relevance to all proposals, but of particular relevance where a school is becoming VA).
- If the change of category involves a school with a religious character, the outcome of any inspection under section 23 of the School Inspection Act 1996.

5. **PROPOSALS TO OPEN NURSERY SCHOOLS OR ADD NURSERY CLASSES**

Early Years and Development Child Care Plan and child care audit. The Early Years Development and Child Care Partnership and the Local Education Authority are responsible for planning local early education and childcare. Their views should be a key consideration in deciding the proposals.

Effect on Standards and Contribution to School Improvement

- Whether the proposals will improve the standards, quality, range and/or diversity of educational provision in the area.
- Whether they advance national and local transformation strategies set out in Education and Skills: Investment for Reform and A New Specialist System: Transforming Secondary Education and the local Education Development Plan.
- The extent to which proposals will integrate pre-school education with childcare services or are consistent with an integrated approach.
- The effect of the proposals on other institutions, including private and voluntary providers, and the standards, quality, range and diversity of provision.
- The standard of education and viability of the school that wishes to add nursery places.

Need for Places

- Whether there is a need for additional nursery places in the area, taking into account the proportion of three and four year olds who already attend maintained nursery and reception classes.
- Whether there is demand for a particular type of place, for example provision for particular faiths or denominations.

Finance

- Whether the proposals represent a cost-effective use of public funds.
- Whether the capital resources required are available.
- Whether the sale proceeds of redundant sites are to be made available and whether the Secretary of State's consent has been obtained where necessary.

Views of Interested Parties

- The views of other schools and private and voluntary providers in the area.
- The views of parents and other local residents, including those who may be particularly affected by the proposals or have a particular interest in them.
- The views of any Local Education Authority affected by the proposals or with an interest.
- The views of Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

Other Issues

- Any sex, race or disability discrimination issues or other human rights issues.
- Whether the change will affect the ability to meet the minimum statutory requirement for provision of school playing fields.
- Any effect of the proposals on infant class sizes.
- The existence of safe walking and public transport routes to the proposed site.

6. PROPOSALS FOR NEW SIXTH FORMS AND 16-19 SCHOOLS

Effect On Standards and Contribution to Educational Improvement

- Whether the proposals will improve the standards, quality, range and/or diversity of educational provision in the area.
- Whether they advance national and local transformation strategies set out in Education and Skills: Investment for Reform and A New Specialist System: Transforming Secondary Education and the local Education Development Plan.

- Whether the proposed provision will be of sufficient size and quality to deliver a range of courses appropriate to the particular needs and abilities of the likely intake, either on its own or through planned collaboration or partnership arrangements.
- The school's track record in providing a high standard of 11-16 education, and whether the proposed post-16 provision would be likely to have an adverse or beneficial effect on 11-16 provision at the school.
- The effect of the proposals on the staying-on rate, and whether the proposals would be likely to increase participation amongst post-16 learners.
- Whether the proposals would impact adversely on institutions already providing good-quality post-16 provision in the area, including both school sixth forms and FE institutions.

Need for Places

- Whether there are already sufficient 16-19 places in the area.
- Whether there is demand for a particular type of place, for example provision for particular faiths or denominations or specialisms or vocational education.

Finance

- Whether the proposals represent a cost-effective use of public funds taking into account the costs of the new provision relative to the cost of other similar provision in the area.
- Whether the capital resources required are available.
- Whether the sale proceeds of redundant sites are to be made available and whether the Secretary of State's consent has been obtained where necessary.
- Whether the proposals would have a significantly adverse impact on students' travel costs.
- If the proposal is for a new voluntary aided 16-19 school, whether the promoters have provided a statement that the governing body would be able to meet their financial responsibilities for repairs and capital work.

Views of Interested Parties

- The views of other schools and colleges in the area.
- The views of parents and other local residents, including those who may be particularly affected by the proposals or have a particular interest in them.
- The views of any Local Education Authority affected by the proposals or with an interest.
- The views of the Learning and Skills Council.
- The views of local employers.

Equal Opportunities

- Any sex, race or disability discrimination issues or other human rights issues including any sex discrimination issues in relation to proposals for a single sex school.

Other Issues

- Whether the change will affect the ability to meet the minimum statutory requirement for provision of school playing fields.
- The provision of continuity for students and staff.
- Whether the Secretary of State has proposals from the LSC which could impact on the proposals.
- For non-LEA proposals, where a trust is not to hold the freehold of the site, whether the land tenure arrangements are satisfactory.
- Whether the proposal is to join an existing group foundation body or to jointly establish a new group foundation body.
- Whether the proposal is to join an existing federation or to jointly establish a new federation.

7. **PROPOSALS FOR THE CLOSURE OF SIXTH FORMS AND LEA MAINTAINED 16-19 INSTITUTIONS**

There should be a presumption to approve proposals by the LSC for the closure of a failing sixth form, provided that the Decision Maker is satisfied that the development will have a positive impact on standards.

Effect On Standards and Contribution to Educational Improvement

- Whether the proposals will improve the standards or quality of educational provision in the area.
- Whether they advance national and local transformation strategies set out in Education and Skills: Investment for Reform and A New Specialist System: Transforming Secondary Education and the local Education Development Plan.
- The standard of education provided in the sixth form or institution proposed for closure, and the standards of alternative 16-19 provision, including whether it will be of sufficient size and quality to deliver a range of courses appropriate to the particular needs and abilities of the students.
- The effect of the proposals on the range of 16-19 options available in the area.
- The effect of the proposals on the overall staying-on rate in the area.
- The effect of proposals to close the sixth form on the school as a whole.
- The effect of the proposals on other institutions.

Need for Places

- The overall supply of 16-19 places in the area and the likely future demand for places.
- The length and nature of journeys to alternative provision, including the quality of the transport links and any possible effect on pupil absence.
- Where there is a demand for a particular type of 16-19 place, for example provision for particular faiths or denominations or specialisms or vocational education.

Finance

- Whether the closure of the sixth form will lead to education for the 16-19 age group being provided at least as cost effectively as at present, including long-term transport, road safety and environmental costs.
- Whether the capital resources required are available.

- Whether the sale proceeds of redundant sites are to be made available and whether the Secretary of State's consent has been obtained where necessary.

Views of Interested Parties

- The views of other schools and colleges in the area.
- The views of parents and other local residents, including those who may be particularly affected by the proposals or have a particular interest in them.
- The views of any Local Education Authority affected by the proposals or with an interest.
- The views of the Learning and Skills Council.

Equal Opportunities

- Any sex, race or disability discrimination issues or other human rights issues including any sex discrimination issues in relation to proposals for a single sex school.

Other Issues

- Whether the change will affect the ability to meet the minimum statutory requirement for provision of school playing fields.
- Where the proposals are published by the Learning and Skills Council under section 113 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000, confirmation that the sixth form has received two consecutive adverse Ofsted reports, deeming the provision to be inadequate.
- Whether any transitional arrangements for the education of pupils in the closing sixth form or 16-19 institution are satisfactory.
- The effect, if any, of closure of the sixth form or 16-19 institution on the local community, particularly in rural areas and those receiving funding as part of regeneration activity.

8. OTHER SCHOOL REORGANISATION PROPOSALS

Effect On Standards and Contribution to School Improvement

- Whether the proposals will improve the standards, quality, range and/or diversity of educational provision in the area.
- Whether they advance national and local transformation strategies set out in Education and Skills: Investment for Reform and A New

Specialist System: Transforming Secondary Education and the local Education Development Plan.

- Whether the proposals will deliver a broad and balanced curriculum.
- The effect of the proposals on other institutions.

Need for Places

- The effect of surplus provision in the area.
- Whether there is demand for a particular type of place in the area, for example provision for particular faiths or denominations or specialisms.

Finance

- Whether the proposals represent a cost-effective use of public funds.
- Whether the capital resources required are available.
- Whether the sale proceeds of redundant sites are to be made available and whether the Secretary of State's consent has been obtained where necessary.

Views of Interested Parties

- The views of other schools and colleges in the area.
- The views of parents and other local residents, including those who may be particularly affected by the proposals or have a particular interest in them.
- The views of any Local Education Authority affected by the proposals or with an interest.
- The views of the Learning and Skills Council (if the proposals affect the provision of post-16 education).
- The views of the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (where proposals affect early education provision).

Equal Opportunities

- Any sex, race or disability discrimination issues or other human rights issues.

Closure of a Nursery Class

- Whether the alternative provision will maintain or enhance the standard of education provision.

Other Issues

- Where 14-19 provision is involved, the extent to which appropriate collaborative arrangements have been considered.
- Whether the change will affect the ability to meet the minimum statutory requirement for provision of school playing fields.
- The effect of the proposals on infant class sizes.

9. **PROPOSALS FOR THE REORGANSIATION OF SPECIAL SCHOOLS AND SEN PROVISION IN MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS**

Effect On Standards and Contribution to School Improvement

- Whether the proposals will improve the standards, quality, range and/or diversity of educational provision in the area.
- Whether they advance national and local transformation strategies set out in Education and Skills: Investment for Reform and A New Specialist System: Transforming Secondary Education and the local Education Development Plan.
- Whether the proposals will enable pupils' special educational needs to be met.
- How the proposals will support increased inclusion.
- Whether the proposals will improve standards of accommodation.
- How the proposals will address any specific health, safety and welfare requirements.
- How the proposal will contribute to the efficient use of resources.
- The impact of the proposal on other special educational needs provision within the area.

Note: Where proposals are to close or alter a special school with the result that some pupils will have to change school, it is particularly important to ensure that appropriate full-time education will be available to all displaced pupils. Please see the end of this section for further advice on special school closures.

Need For Provision

- Whether there is a need for a particular type of special educational needs provision within the area.
- Whether there is surplus special educational needs provision within the area.
- The length and nature of journeys to alternative provision.

Finance

- Whether the proposals represent a cost-effective use of public funds.
- Whether the capital resources required can be found.
- Whether the sale proceeds of redundant sites are to be made available and whether the Secretary of State's consent has been obtained where necessary.

Views of Interested Parties

- The views of parents and other local residents, including those who may be particularly affected by the proposals or have a particular interest in them.
- The views of any Local Education Authority affected by the proposals or with an interest.
- The views of the Learning and Skills Council (if the proposals affect the provision of post-16 education).
- The views of the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (where proposals affect early education provision).
- The views of parents of pupils at any school(s) affected by the proposals.
- The views of governors and staff of any school(s) affected by the proposals.
- Where appropriate the views of the Health Authority or local NHS Trust.
- The views and concerns of other parties affected by the proposals e.g.
 - Other schools in the area
 - Local residents
 - Where appropriate, local social services departments

Other Issues

- Any sex, race or disability discrimination issues or other human rights issues.
- Whether the change will affect the ability to meet the minimum statutory requirement for provision of school playing fields.

CUMBRIA'S APPROACH TO CONSULTATION ON SCHOOL ORGANISATION ISSUES

1. CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS

- 1.1 Where the LEA or governing bodies are considering the possibility of changes which would involve making statutory proposals, they must consult interested parties. In doing so, they need to have regard to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills' guidance.
- 1.2 In consulting, the Secretary of State believes that proposers should allow adequate time and provide sufficient information for those being consulted to form a considered view on the matters on which they are being consulted, and should make clear how their views can be made known. Those bringing forward proposals should be able to demonstrate how they have taken into account the views expressed during consultation in reaching any subsequent decision as to the publication of proposals. Where, in the course of consultation, a new option emerges which the proposers wish to consider, it will probably be appropriate to consult afresh on this option before proceeding to publish proposals.
- 1.3 The Secretary of State considers that the interested parties who should be consulted by proposers include:-
- Any school which is the subject of proposals.
 - Any LEA likely to be affected by the proposals.
 - Other schools in the area that might be affected by the proposals.
 - Parents and teachers in the area.
 - The appropriate diocesan authorities.
 - The Learning and Skills Council if the proposals relate to 16-19 education.

2. CUMBRIA'S CONSULTATION PROCESSES

General

- 2.1 The format and nature of 'formal' consultation varies depending on the situation. The more fundamental and wide-ranging the impact of any change would be the more extensive are the consultation exercises involved.

2.2 The Authority endeavours always to make arrangements in line with the spirit of the Secretary of State's guidance.

School Closures/Amalgamations, Age-Range Changes Involving More Than One Year Group.

2.3 As a prelude to formal consultation, the Authority usually discusses possibilities, often a number of times, with heads and governing bodies. This can be instigated (and frequently is) at school level. Alternatively, the first move can be by the LEA. Discussions are often likely to stem from the content of the Plan.

2.4 The formal consultation process takes the following broad shape:-

- The Authority agrees to consultation occurring.
- The Authority issues a consultative document intended to encourage the expression of local opinions which:-
 - describes the current situation
 - analyses the important issues
 - outlines options for the future
 - explains how change could be achieved
- The holding of, 3/4 weeks later and normally in the presence of a panel of 3 County Councillors, a series of consultation meetings involving separately:-
 - Staff
 - Governors
 - parents and public
- Where felt to be useful and appropriate, between the time of issue of the consultative paper and the consultation meetings, the Authority prepares a simple question and answer sheet and holds a 'drop in' session for parents as a less formal way of explaining the issues involved in the potential change being considered.
- Following the consultation meetings there is a period of 3/4 weeks for written responses to the consultative document to be provided.
- County Council consideration of the outcome of the consultation exercise.

Provision of Strategic Special Educational Needs Facilities

2.5 The consultation process is largely as for school closures/amalgamations except that:-

- The consultation meetings do not normally involve a panel of County Councillors.
- It is not usual for the supplementary approaches of providing question/answer sheets and 'drop in' sessions to be employed.

Age-Range Changes Related to the Establishment of Nursery Classes

2.6 Consultation on this subject is undertaken by means of a letter. This explains that there is a possibility of setting up nursery education at the school in question and the thinking behind the idea.

2.7 The letter is aimed at:-

- Local schools
- Other early years providers
- The Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership
- Parents
- Other interested parties

2.8 The results of the consultation are then considered by the County Council.

CUMBRIA EDUCATION SERVICE GENERAL ADMISSIONS POLICY 2003/2004 Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools

Some schools receive more applications than there are places available. Where this happens at a community or voluntary controlled school applications will be prioritised using the oversubscription criteria contained in the General Admissions Policy. This means that children will be allocated places in the order of priority given below. The criteria will be applied in conjunction with the explanatory notes below which form part of the policy.

1. Children living in the catchment area who have brothers or sisters in the school (or associated infant or junior school) at the time of their admission - see notes 1 and 2 below.
2. Children living outside the catchment area who, at the time of their admission, have brothers or sisters in the school (or associated infant or junior school) who were directed to that school either by the LEA either (a) in the absence of a place being available in the catchment area school due to oversubscription and the school was identified by the LEA as the next nearest with a place available or (b) in their Statement of Special Educational Need - see notes 1, 2 and 3 below.
3. In relation to Church of England Voluntary Controlled Schools, children living in the catchment area with a parent on the electoral roll of a C of E church. - see note 4 below.
4. Other children living in the catchment area giving priority to those living furthest away from an alternative school where the LEA is able to determine that a place is available, measured by the shortest walking route by road - see note 5 below.
5. Children living outside the catchment area who have brothers or sisters in the school (or associated infant or junior school) at the time of their admission - see notes 1 and 2 below.
6. In relation to Church of England Voluntary Controlled schools, children living outside the catchment area with a parent on the electoral roll of a C of E church. - see note 4 below.
7. Children living outside the catchment area, giving priority to those who live closest to the school, measured in a straight line on the map.

Applications will be prioritised according to the above criteria. An exception will be made:-

- under the Authority's policy for the education of children with special needs (i) where a child holds a Statement of Special Educational Needs, or (ii) is currently undergoing a statutory assessment, and in either case it is considered that attendance at a particular school is necessary to meet the identified needs of that child;

- where admission has been refused to the catchment area school because of oversubscription, in considering a parent's second or third preference and in relation to the next nearest school with a place available. (Such an exception would not be made if this school also is unable to accommodate its catchment area applicants).

Explanatory Notes [These notes are part of the policy]

- (1) To prioritise in categories 1, 2 and 5, priority will be given to those children with the youngest siblings. Brothers and sisters are those living at the same address and includes step and foster children. Priority will only be given where it is known at the time of allocating places that a sibling will be attending the school (excluding a nursery class) at the time of admission.
- (2) Where reference is made to associated infant and junior schools this is to describe those situations where infant and junior schools share the same catchment area.
- (3) If parents believe they qualify for consideration under the General Admissions Policy criterion number 2, they should indicate this on their preference form in the place provided for this purpose. In relation to a child with a Statement of Special Educational Need, the Statement must state that the child is **directed** by the LEA to attend a particular school which is necessary to meet his or her identified needs. It does not include those situations where the Statement indicates that the LEA considers a mainstream school of parental choice to be appropriate.
- (4) To be considered under category 3 or 6 parents must provide proof with the completed form that they are on an electoral roll of a C of E church and have been for two years before the closing date for preference forms. It may relate to more than one church. To prioritise in category 3 or 6 the measurement criteria in categories 4 and 7 respectively will be used.
- (5) Under category 4, an alternative school will only be regarded as having a place available if it is able to accommodate its catchment area applicants and still has places available.

CUMBRIA EDUCATION SERVICE GENERAL ADMISSIONS POLICY 2004/2005 Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools

Some schools receive more applications than there are places available. Where this happens at a community or voluntary controlled school applications will be prioritised using the oversubscription criteria contained in the General Admissions Policy. This means that children will be allocated places in the order of priority given below. The criteria will be applied in conjunction with the explanatory notes overleaf which form part of the policy.

1. Children looked after by Cumbria County Council giving priority, if necessary, to the youngest child(ren) - see note 1 overleaf.
2. Children living in the catchment area who have brothers or sisters in the school (or associated infant or junior school) at the time of their admission - see notes 2 and 3 overleaf.
3. Children living outside the catchment area who, at the time of their admission, have brothers or sisters in the school (or associated infant or junior school) who were directed to that school by the LEA either (a) in the absence of a place being available in the catchment area school due to oversubscription and the school was identified by the LEA as the next nearest with a place available or (b) in their Statement of Special Educational Need - see notes 2, 3 and 4 overleaf.
4. In relation to Church of England Voluntary Controlled Schools, children living in the catchment area with a parent on the electoral roll of a C of E church. - see note 5 overleaf.
5. Other children living in the catchment area giving priority to those living furthest away from an alternative school where the LEA is able to determine that a place is available, measured by the shortest walking route by road - see note 6 overleaf.
6. Children living outside the catchment area who have brothers or sisters in the school (or associated infant or junior school) at the time of their admission - see notes 2 and 3 overleaf.
7. In relation to Church of England Voluntary Controlled schools, children living outside the catchment area with a parent on the electoral roll of a C of E church. - see note 5 overleaf.
8. Children living outside the catchment area, giving priority to those who live closest to the school, measured in a straight line on the map.

Applications will be prioritised according to the above criteria. An exception will be made:-

- under the Authority's policy for the education of children with special needs (i) where a child holds a Statement of Special Educational Needs, or (ii) is currently undergoing a statutory assessment, and in either case

it is considered that attendance at a particular school is necessary to meet the identified needs of that child;

- in considering a parent's second or third preference and in relation to the next nearest school with a place available where admission has been refused to the catchment area school because of oversubscription. (Such an exception would not be made if this school is also unable to accommodate its catchment area applicants).

Explanatory Notes

[These notes are part of the policy]

Note 1

A child looked after by Cumbria County Council is defined as a child accommodated or in care under Section 20 or Part (iv) or (v) of the Children Act 1989, Section 23 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1969 or as a result of Wardship proceedings.

Note 2

To prioritise in criteria 2, 3 and 6, priority will be given to those children with the youngest siblings. Brothers and sisters are those living at the same address and includes step and foster children. Priority will only be given where it is known at the time of allocating places that a sibling will be attending the school (excluding a nursery class) at the time of admission.

Note 3

Where reference is made to associated infant and junior schools this is to describe those situations where infant and junior schools share the same catchment area.

Note 4

If parents believe they qualify for consideration under criterion number 3, they should indicate this on their preference form in the place provided for this purpose. In relation to a child with a Statement of Special Educational Need, the Statement must state that the child is **directed** by the LEA to attend a particular school which is necessary to meet his or her identified needs. It does not include those situations where the Statement indicates that the LEA considers a mainstream school of parental choice to be appropriate.

Note 5

To be considered under criteria 4 or 7 parents must provide proof with the completed form that they are on an electoral roll of a C of E church and have been for two years before the closing date for preference forms. It may relate to more than one church. To prioritise in criteria 4 or 7 the measurement criteria in criteria 5 and 8 respectively will be used.

Note 6

Under criteria 5, an alternative school will only be regarded as having a place available if it is able to accommodate its catchment area applicants and still has places available.

SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS VIA THE SCHEME FOR FINANCING SCHOOLS

1. LOCAL MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS AND FORMULA FUNDING

- 1.1 The 1988 Education Reform Act introduced Local Management of Schools (LMS) and the requirement to fund schools on a formula basis. This was applied to all Cumbrian schools (other than the 6 nursery schools which will receive a delegated budget under the Scheme for the first time in April 2004). The recent change requires all maintained schools to receive a delegated budget, from April 2004, according to a formula approved under the Scheme for Financing Schools. This formula is largely based on pupil numbers. Deployment of the delegated budget is then a matter for a school's Governing Body.
- 1.2 This Appendix does not attempt to explain in full the current scheme of delegation. It concentrates on those areas which are most relevant to the issues raised in the Plan.

2. AGE WEIGHTED PUPIL UNITS

- 2.1 Each pupil attracts a sum of money. This is weighted according to age to reflect the cost of delivering the curriculum to different age groups. Age Weighted Pupil Units (AWPUs) make up the majority of each school's delegated budget.
- 2.2 The value in 2003/2004 of AWPUs in all primary and secondary schools is as follows:

Year Group	Curriculum Stage	£
3	3	1005.03
4	4	1463.29
5,6	KS1	2022.77
7,8,9,10: PRI	KS2	1665.46
11,12,13: SEC	KS3	2224.92
14,15	KS4	2649.38

- 2.3 Post 16 students are funded by the Learning and Skills Council formula, although these are transmitted to the school through the LEA.
- 2.4 The value of the AWPU for all pupils in special schools, irrespective of age, is £2,740.09.

3. PREMISES COSTS

- 3.1 When LMS was first introduced premises costs were not delegated via the AWPUs. The premises part of the formula was based on the floor area of a school and not the number of pupils on roll. It also attempted to reflect the condition of the building and its running and maintenance costs.
- 3.2 In April 1998 a move towards delegating premises costs via the AWPUs component began. In the 1999/2000 and 2000/2001 the proportion of such costs delegated in this fashion was increased. Since 2001/02 all premises costs have been delegated through AWPUs. This is consistent with the Secretary of State's view that school budgets should be largely pupil led.
- 3.3 During the three financial years before 2001/02, the arrangements regarding premises costs served to buffer, albeit decreasingly, the financial consequences of movement from funding on building area to AWPUs. Now that the full effects are felt, schools with a significant proportion of surplus places or an imbalance between teaching and non-teaching accommodation will feel the most negative impact.

4. SUPPORT FOR SMALL SCHOOLS

- 4.1 Like many LEA's, Cumbria provides additional support for small schools to assist with the diseconomies of scale. Many small schools would struggle to remain financially viable whilst delivering an effective education for their pupils without this assistance.
- 4.2 The small schools allowance is currently £340 for primary schools per pupils less than 100. A school with 33 pupils therefore receives 67 x £340 ie the sum of £22,780 in its delegated budget. A school with 80 pupils would receive £6,800 ie 20 x £340. In a secondary school the allowance is £440 per pupil less than 400 and in a special school it is £400 per pupil less than 100.
- 4.3 In addition to this small schools allowance, all schools receive a lump sum payment in the formula of £13,380 in primary and secondary schools and £17,525 in special schools.

5. OTHER FUNDING

- 5.1 In addition to funding from the LEA through the formula, each school currently receives direct from the DfES a School Standards Grant which is based on pupil numbers. In 2003/04 the amounts are as follows:-

Primary Schools

Fewer than 100.5 pupils	9,000
100.5 – fewer than 200.5	18,000
200.5 – fewer than 400.5	30,000
400.5 – fewer than 600.5	40,900

Secondary Schools

Fewer than 600.5 pupils	75,000
600.5 – fewer than 1200.5	90,000
1200.5 +	105,000

Special Schools

Fewer than 100.5 pupils	25,000
100.5 +	35,000

PROVIDING FOR PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

1. Cumbria is committed to a policy of appropriately supported inclusion for pupils with special educational needs subject to the qualifications set out below.
2. The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 gives a strengthened right to a mainstream education for children with special educational needs. The Act has amended the Education Act 1996 and provides a positive endorsement for inclusion.

3. Education Act 1996: Section 316

The new section 316 stipulates that a child who has special educational needs and a statement **must** be educated in mainstream school unless this would be incompatible with:

- a) **the wishes of the child's parents;**
- b) **or the provision of efficient education of other children.**

These are the only reasons why mainstream education can be refused outright.

Local education authorities and maintained schools can only deny mainstream education against parental wishes, on the grounds that it would be incompatible with the efficient education of other children.

Mainstream education cannot be refused on the grounds that the child's needs cannot be provided for within the mainstream sector. The general duty assumes that with the right strategies and support most children with special educational needs can be included successfully at a mainstream school.

4. The Disability and Discrimination Act 1995 is also amended and places LEAs and schools under a duty to prepare accessibility strategies and accessibility plans respectively, this came into force in September 2002 with strategies and plans to be in place by April 2003.

5. The Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs (November 2001) upholds the following fundamental principles;

- A child with special educational needs should have their needs met
- The special educational needs of children will normally be met in mainstream schools or settings
- The views of the child should be sought and taken into account
- Parents have a vital role to play in supporting their child's education
- Children with special educational needs should be offered full access to a broad, balanced and relevant education, including an appropriate curriculum for the Foundation Stage and the National Curriculum (paragraph 1.5).

6. Cumbria's policy for inclusion and the strategy to promote inclusion (Inclusive Cumbria) was approved by elected members and introduced in September 2003. It includes a recommendation to review the role of special schools and strategic facilities.
7. At the present time all pupils are included in mainstream schools except
- 7.1 Children with severe or profound learning difficulties who require the focus of expertise and the benefits of the economies of scale provided by the network of special schools within the County;
- 7.2 A small number of children with profound or complex medical, physical or receptive difficulties who require access to resources and expertise that can only be provided in special schools outside of the County;
- 7.3 A small number of young people whose behavioural and emotional difficulties are such that they require the structure and consistency of a twenty-four hour curriculum that is provided by a specialised residential school. In most cases, these children will be jointly resourced by Education and Social Services.
8. Cumbria LEA maintains three Pupil Referral Units (PRUs). Legally they are a type of school for education otherwise than at school. PRUs provide a broad balanced curriculum within a specialist environment to promote the social emotional and behavioural development of pupils on roll. They provide sessional support for some pupils who remain on the roll of and attend mainstream schools and full time education for permanently excluded pupils. For pupils in Key Stages 2 and 3 the main aim is to return children to full time mainstream education. At Key Stage 4 the emphasis is on preparation for post 16 opportunities.

9. Cumbria's special schools for children with severe and profound learning difficulties offer an option of a positive placement with a focus on expertise, skill, equipment and other resources and are in many cases the preferred parental option.
10. Whilst Cumbria's network of special schools caters for pupils with severe and profound developmental difficulties, the considerable distances between these schools generates a need for a complementary pattern of support. In Penrith there is a long established tradition of in-school unit support, which enables children with severe and profound difficulties to remain in the community.
11. Some children may be directed to an ordinary mainstream school, which is not their neighbourhood catchment school to take advantage of a strategic resource or specially adapted building. Such placements are likely, for both primary and secondary pupils with:
 - Severe learning difficulties
 - Physical and/or medical difficulties
 - Hearing impairment
 - Autistic spectrum disorders

Schools designated as strategic facilities offer educational advantages in developing and sustaining expertise and equipment as well as economies of scale in clustering together children with similar needs.

12. There exists in Cumbria a small number of pupils whose needs cannot be met in mainstream schools, schools with strategic facilities or maintained special schools. Where the LEA believes that a pupil's needs cannot be met through any of the above schools consideration will be given to placement in specialist residential provision. Such placements will usually be made in co-operation with Social Services and the local Area Health Authority and might include pupils in the following categories:
 - Hearing impaired pupils
 - Visually impaired pupils
 - Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties
 - In exceptional cases, pupils with physical and/or medical difficulties
 - In exceptional cases, pupils with autism/Aspergers' Syndrome