



Leading learning and skills



Planning 11-19 education for the North Copeland area

A consultation document



September 2006

Introduction

We have in front of us an opportunity to begin to reshape, modernise and improve 11-19 education in the North Copeland area.

The number of secondary school pupils is set to decrease rapidly, taking us to a position where there will be a lot more school places than we need. More importantly, not all the secondary schools in the area have been performing well enough to give their pupils the education they deserve.

We need to start to tackle these issues now, in a way which offers enhanced educational provision and outcomes. We want to try to ensure that, in the future, our young people are more inspired and better able to lead fulfilling lives as individuals, as citizens and as employees. We want to give them higher aspirations, improve their educational achievements and help them to secure better life chances.

This is a genuine and open consultation process. We want to know your views on the suggestions for change, so there is a questionnaire in the middle of this document which we'd like you to fill in and send back to us. The Freepost address to use is given on the form. We will use your ideas and comments to develop our thinking and enable much improved secondary education provision to be created.

If you would like further information on our document and the things it covers, you can find out more by:

- visiting our website: www.cumbriacc.gov.uk/childrensservices/school-organisation
- ringing the School Organisation Project Team: 01228 606013

The outcomes of today's planning are not just to the advantage of our children and their future. They will potentially lead to improvements in the area's economy and this will benefit the whole community. Your responses will make a major contribution in helping to achieve these ambitions.



U. Chappelhow *Moira Swann* *Jack Stopforth* *Ruth Bullen*

County Councillor Philip Chappelhow, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Cumbria County Council
Moira Swann, Corporate Director, Children's Services, Cumbria County Council
Jack Stopforth, Chair of the Local Learning and Skills Council Cumbria
Ruth Bullen, Area Director for Learning and Skills Council Cumbria

Index



• About the consultation document	2
• A countywide review	2
• Focusing on the North Copeland area	4
• The options in outline	6
• Information relating to the options	7
• Considering the options and their implications	16
• Drawing conclusions	19
• Next steps	20
• Appendix A: Current situation	23
• Appendix B: Potential locations for Academy sites	24
• Questionnaire	centre pages

About the consultation document



The aim of this document is to provide information on 11-19 education in the North Copeland area, including suggested options about the way that it could be organised in the future. We want to know what you think about these possible changes, so there is a pull-out questionnaire for your views in the middle of this document.

We have tried to achieve the right balance in the document, covering the most important issues whilst keeping it to a reasonable length. The document is written for parents, school staff, governors, young people and other members of the public who will have different starting points in terms of knowledge and understanding. We also wanted to be direct and relevant and keep things as clear as we could. We hope that we have managed to make the document as easy as possible to read and understand.

The group who created the options accept that there will be other possibilities. We welcome your ideas on new options or variations to those identified, and would appreciate you helping us in our thinking. We realise that you may want more data to help you form your views, so details of how to access additional information are given on page 22.

There are three different possibilities for the future identified at this stage. Because of this, the more detailed planning will begin when decisions on a way forward have been taken. This means that we may not provide all the answers to your questions here. We have therefore arranged meetings and drop-in sessions where you can talk to us about any issues or concerns you may have; details are given on pages 20-22.

A countywide review

The review background

Over the next 20 or so years, the number of pupils in Cumbrian secondary schools is set to drop dramatically. Falling pupil numbers will mean fewer teachers and less money to invest in facilities and equipment because school budgets will be reduced. This is because a school's budget is based on the number of pupils it has.

If we do nothing, one out of every three classrooms in our schools will be empty by 2017. And having too many schools, or schools that are bigger than they need to be, results in an ineffective use of resources. This is because too much of a school's budget is spent on maintaining buildings and other overheads. Changing the pattern of schools would 'free up' some of this money to be spent directly on learning.

Furthermore, standards in some of our schools should be higher; similar pupils in similar schools nationally do better. And as our schools get smaller, some of them will find it even more difficult to deliver choice for pupils. With few pupils and therefore a small staff, recruiting specialist teachers is problematic. With small numbers in Year 10, there would be little choice about which subjects young people could take at age 14. Everyone, regardless of ability or interest would have to choose from a small range of subjects. Doing nothing about this is not seen to be an option, especially as the new range of specialised diplomas for 14-19 year olds will start to be introduced in 2008 (see the section on 14-19 education on page 9). We must ensure that schools have the facilities to deliver this curriculum.

Schools currently have a changing role in delivering the 'Every Child Matters' agenda. This involves emphasising children's health, safety and enjoyment in schools so that they can achieve well. It may also involve schools promoting and offering extended services for children and their families.

With all of this in mind, it's important to plan for the future, to ensure that we have the correct number of schools of the right size, in the right place and with buildings and facilities fit for education in the 21st century.

The review process

So, last Autumn, Cumbria County Council launched a strategic review of all nursery, primary, secondary and special schools, as well as other services for children in the county. We see this as a great opportunity to improve the quality of young people's education and their life chances and choices. The aim is to bring about higher achievement and better educational standards, and to limit the effects of falling pupil numbers.

The review is a new and ambitious approach, and the initial stage will be carried out by the end of 2007. It involves all partners with an interest in education and other services for young people, and several groups are involved:

- **Local Partnership Groups (LPGs)** who:
 - look at their areas of the county and identify options for the future
- **School Organisation Forum** which:
 - oversees the whole review process
 - considers options from Local Partnership Groups and makes recommendations to the county council
- **Cumbria County Council** which:
 - decides which options should go to public consultation and considers the results of the consultation
 - makes formal proposals to the School Organisation Committee
- **School Organisation Committee** which:
 - takes decisions on formal proposals from the county council and schools
- **School Organisation Project Team** which:
 - supports the entire review process

The review of 11-19 education in the North Copeland area sits within this countywide context and approach.

Focusing on the North Copeland area

The current provision

A map showing the four secondary schools in North Copeland and their catchment areas is provided as Appendix A on page 23. Basic information about the schools is given in the table below.

School	Status	Age range	No of places*	No of pupils Jan '06	Unfilled places
Ehenside	Community	11-16	571	341	230
St Benedict's	Voluntary Aided Catholic	11-19	1,370	1,346	24
Whitehaven	Community	11-19	1,598	1,453	145
Wyndham	Community	11-19	1,372	841	531
Total			4,911	3,981	930
* maximum of the net capacity range using the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) formula for assessing the pupil capacity of schools					

In addition to the secondary schools, there are other providers which cater for 11-19 year olds. There is Mayfield Special School in Whitehaven which provides for 2-19 year olds. Lakes College West Cumbria at Lillyhall and work based learning providers also make provision for 14-19 year olds.

The case for change

The Local Partnership Group (LPG) looking at North Copeland is the West Cumbria LPG. It was set up quite early in the countywide review process. This was largely because of concerns about educational standards and falling pupil numbers in the North Copeland area. For example:

- the low level of standards and achievement, particularly at two of the schools;
- a fall of almost 20% in pupil numbers over the next 11 years. This means that a third of North Copeland's secondary school classrooms will be empty by 2017; and
- the risks to at least one school's financial and educational future, as a result of this expected fall in pupil numbers.

Standards in some of our schools should be higher; similar pupils in similar schools nationally do better. Whilst Whitehaven School and St Benedict's have upward trends at GCSE, results at Ehenside have fallen over the last five years. Recently this school has been put into Special Measures because of Ofsted's concerns about educational standards. Wyndham School was also in Special Measures until recently, though it is now doing much better. Special Measures means that school inspectors have decided a school is not providing an adequate education for pupils. Senior inspectors then visit the school each term to see what improvements have been made. Schools are expected to be providing satisfactory or better education within two years. If this doesn't happen the school might close.

Our children deserve the best life chances we can give them. There has been no major secondary school reorganisation in North Copeland for over 20 years. During that time, despite investment to create some very good facilities, our school buildings have become largely outdated. Too much of the school accommodation in the area is fit for the last century not this one. Teaching and learning in the 21st century will need to cater for individual choice and talent; new buildings and facilities, modern ICT systems and other equipment and good specialist teaching can make a difference.

This review gives us a real opportunity to begin to transform and modernise the schools in the area. Although there will be different views about outcomes, we can surely all agree that we would like to change things for the better.

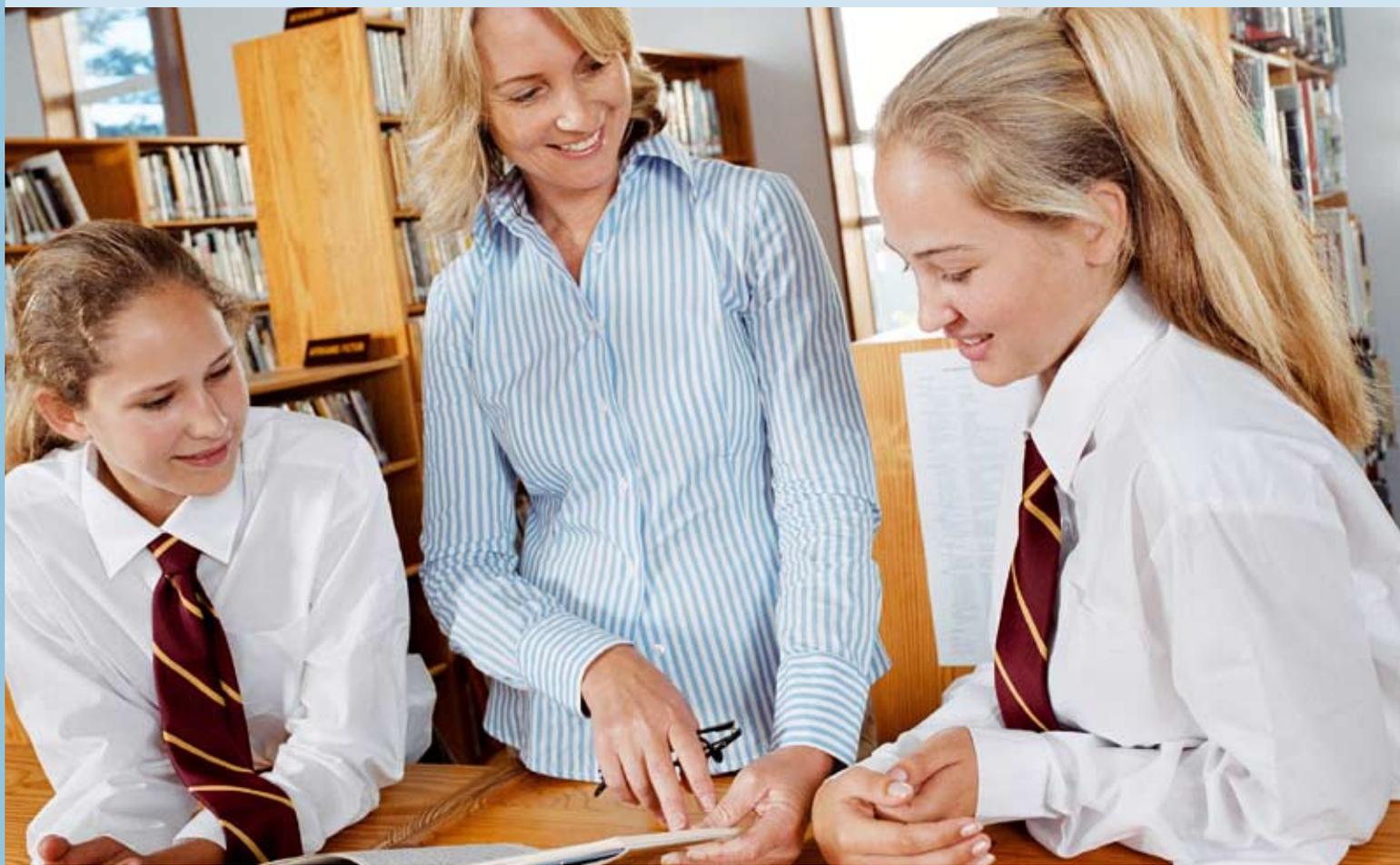
Identifying options

The West Cumbria Local Partnership Group (LPG) had the job of coming up with options for North Copeland. It is made up of representatives of the county council and its partners in providing education and linked services in Allerdale and Copeland.

A small working group of the LPG carried out the 'hands on' work. To help in the process of coming up with an initial list of options, the group was given a lot of information. Importantly, the group worked from a vision and a set of principles that the School Organisation Forum had developed. It also had data on, for example, pupil numbers, educational achievements and standards, school transport, capital costs and funding and the financial position of schools. It also took into account that learning for young people in the area aged 14-19 is also provided by Mayfield Special School, Lakes College West Cumbria, work based learning organisations and voluntary and community providers.

The working group developed a range of outline options which were refined over a couple of meetings and taken to the full LPG. The options did not include leaving things as they are. The group felt that, for the good of the area's young people and the wider community, changes needed to be made.

The LPG agreed to ask schools and other key organisations for their views on three options. Taking account of the feedback received, the LPG put these three options to the School Organisation Forum, where they were accepted. On 18 July 2006, the county council's Cabinet agreed to this public consultation on those options.



The options in outline

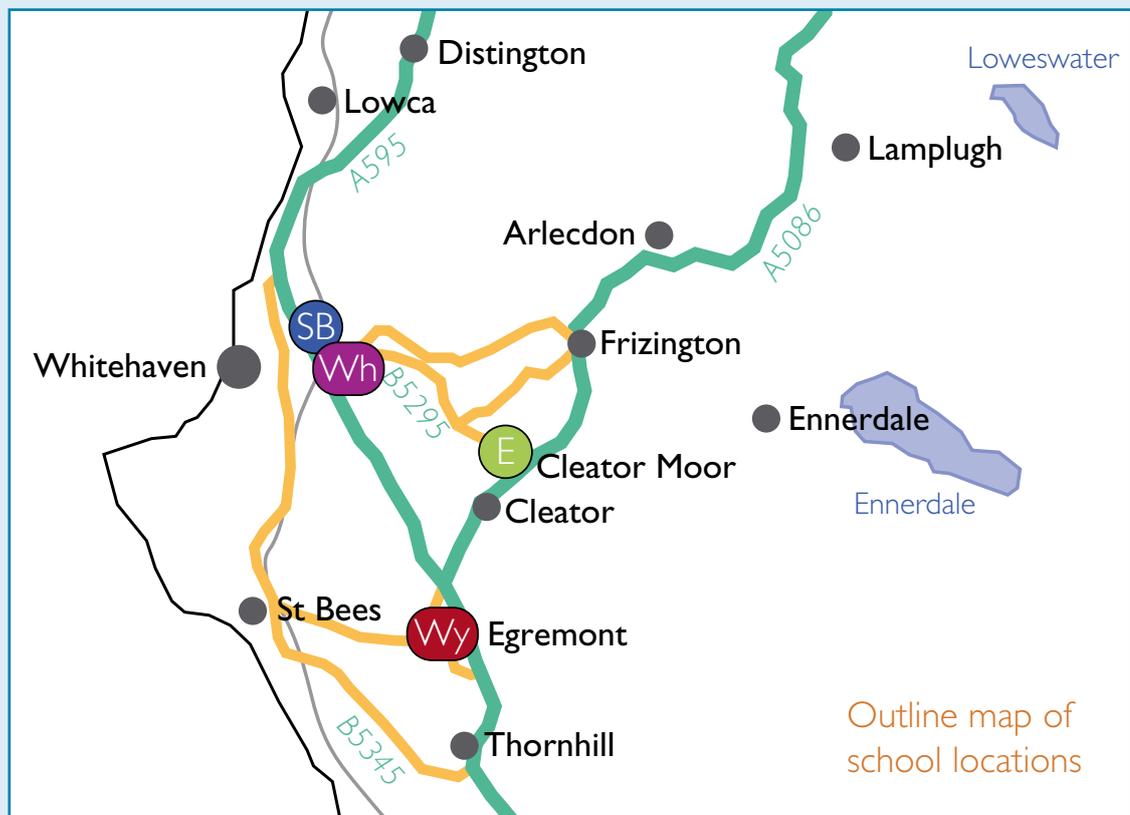
The Local Partnership Group's ideas are aimed at beginning to reshape and improve future learning experiences and outcomes for young people aged 11-19 in the North Copeland area.

There are three options suggested for making this happen. These are summarised quite briefly below:

Option 1	
St Benedict's 1,370 places 11-19 Voluntary Aided Catholic School	No significant change
Whitehaven 1,598 places 11-19 Community School	Possible change to catchment area to include part of current Ehenside area
Wyndham 1,372 places 11-19 Community School	School remains on current site Catchment area: expanded to include some or all of current Ehenside area
Total places = 4,340	
Ehenside is closed	

Option 2	
St Benedict's 1,370 places 11-19 Voluntary Aided Catholic School	No significant change
Whitehaven 1,598 places 11-19 Community School	No significant change
New School 1,372 places 11-19 Category to be determined	New school on Wyndham site, using current buildings remodelled to some extent Possibility of fully rebuilding the school in, say, 7-10 years time, through BSF funding (See page 11 for more information) Catchment area: current Ehenside and Wyndham areas
Total places = 4,340	
Ehenside and Wyndham are closed	

Option 3	
St Benedict's 1,370 places 11-19 Voluntary Aided Catholic School	No significant change
Whitehaven 1,598 places 11-19 Community School	No significant change
New School 1,050 places 11-19 Academy	New build Academy on Wyndham site or new site (For more information on Academies and new sites see pages 10 and 14) Catchment area: current Ehenside and Wyndham areas
Total places = 4,018	
Ehenside and Wyndham are closed	



Information relating to the options

Before focusing on the specific and potential impact on individual schools and their communities, we feel it would be helpful to provide some more general information relevant to the options.

Vision and principles

At an early stage in the school review process we established some principles which would guide discussions, and against which any options for change would be tested. First and foremost, the whole process would be driven by the needs of learners and not by those of schools. It should also raise standards in our schools and increase the numbers of young people continuing in education at 16 and at 18. The many principles, which include statements about everything from rural schools to inclusive education, can be summed up as follows:

We must provide:

- **quality of provision** - the best teaching and learning;
- **equity** - so that all children have access to a good school;
- **collaboration** - so that all education providers work together.

Educational standards and achievements in the North Copeland area

There is some good practice in the four schools and high standards in some areas. Where this is the case we need to build on it. However, there is also evidence that we could do better. The judgements below are based on schools' Performance and Assessment Reports for 2005, produced by the Government, and initial analysis of the 2006 exam results.



- At the age of 14, pupils in all of the North Copeland schools did less well last year than we should expect. Overall, in the core subjects of English, maths and science, performance was below average when compared with similar pupils in similar schools across the country. In 2006, results in two of the schools have improved considerably, making the overall position better.
- At GCSE in 2005, pupils at Whitehaven and St Benedict's did as well as similar pupils in similar schools. At Ehenside and Wyndham, pupils performed well below national expectations. However, Wyndham School's results in 2006 show a big improvement and are above national expectations.
- In our sixth forms, standards were well above a national benchmark for 2005 in Whitehaven School, close to the average in St Benedict's, and below average in Wyndham. (Ehenside has no sixth form.) At this time, no comparative post 16 data is available for 2006.

Wyndham School has been through a difficult period having been placed in Special Measures by Ofsted. The school now performs much better and has been removed from this category. Ehenside, however, is now in Special Measures after a recent inspection.

Overall, pupils at Ehenside and Wyndham performed less well in 2005 than similar pupils in similar schools across the country. In 2006, Wyndham's results at GCSE have greatly improved. Ehenside's are more or less the same as in 2005. As well as enabling us to address the issue of falling numbers of pupils and empty places, the review presents the opportunity to improve educational standards and opportunities for young people.

Pupil numbers, catchment areas and parental choice

We have already touched on falling pupil numbers and explained that keeping a lot more school places than are needed is costly and wasteful. It does not achieve the best use of resources.

Each secondary school in the area, other than St Benedict's, has a catchment area. Across the county these are generally important because they affect priority for admission to schools and entitlement to free home to school transport.

Families have the right to seek places at any school and, in this area, almost all are successful in finding places at their preferred schools. This exercise of parental preference has seen St Benedict's School grow very considerably over the last decade or so. During the same period, Whitehaven School has stayed at broadly the same size whilst the rolls of Ehenside and Wyndham Schools have reduced significantly. Currently, 68% of the children living in Ehenside's catchment area go to other schools. A large proportion of this group is made up of Catholics who attend St Benedict's. Though the pattern of choice varies slightly each year (and this variation could well be affected by the creation of an Academy or other changes contained in these options), this information can be used in our planning.

Our projections take account of pre-school children and pupils currently in schools, but not future housing developments. The extent and timing of new housing is unclear. Whether it would mean extra secondary school pupils, and how many more there could be, is uncertain. The table on the next page shows existing and projected school rolls up to 2017.

January	Ehenside	St Benedict's	Whitehaven	Wyndham	North Copeland
2006	341	1,346	1,453	841	3,981
2007	310	1,350	1,400	805	3,865
2008	280	1,365	1,360	780	3,785
2009	255	1,365	1,335	735	3,690
2010	250	1,365	1,300	740	3,655
2011	220	1,360	1,250	715	3,545
2012	225	1,325	1,225	710	3,485
2013	215	1,315	1,195	680	3,405
2014	205	1,295	1,155	670	3,325
2015	210	1,290	1,140	640	3,280
2016	215	1,280	1,110	640	3,245
2017	215	1,290	1,090	610	3,205

* Projected figures are rounded to the nearest 5 pupils

14-19 education

To prepare young people for the future, and a more global economy, the Government's policy is to transform 14-19 education and training. At the heart of this policy is a more modern curriculum that includes personalised learning, new specialised diplomas and a learning entitlement for all young people.

This will mean schools, colleges, work based learning providers and employers working together to make it happen. Much work has been carried out in West Cumbria through the existing 14-19 collaborative network. An Academy or indeed any new provider of learning for 14-19 year olds would be expected to become an active partner in the 14-19 Strategic Management Group and to work closely with the Learning and Skills Council (LSC).

A key element of the new 14-19 curriculum is the Learning Entitlement and access to the 14 themes of specialised Diploma, such as ICT, Manufacturing and Retail. The Government is phasing in the introduction of these diplomas from 2008, and wants every young person in a school or college to be entitled to pursue any one of the themes at an appropriate level for them. This could not be delivered by any single institution, and therefore providers of learning will need to work together to ensure that they are able to give equal access to the full range of learning opportunities to all young people in the west of the county.

Any area of specialism (see page 12 for more information) planned by the sponsor of an Academy will need to be consistent with the LSC and Local Authority West Cumbria 14-19 strategy, as well as complementing specialist provision and initiatives already in place. These include the Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) and the proposed National Nuclear Skills Academy.

Academies (Option 3)

Over the last few years, the Government has built a number of new schools called Academies. Its target is to create a total of 200 nationwide by 2010. Academies are built to a high specification, with excellent and very modern facilities. They are aimed at giving children in areas where there is deprivation the best possible chance to succeed. They are funded directly from central Government and have more freedom than other schools to decide how they will operate. For example, some Academies have lengthened the school day and provide a different kind of curriculum.



Academies are almost always 11-19 schools. They are usually built to have about 1,200 places, though they can be smaller. Where Academies replace existing schools, those schools are closed. Academies can be built on the site of an existing school or on a new site.

Academies have to be sponsored by an individual or an organisation, or a group of individuals or organisations. The lead sponsor has influence over the way the school is organised. However, Academies have to keep to a national Admissions Code and must operate within a local Special Needs Code of Practice. They must also comply with guidance and regulations on exclusions from school.

If an Academy were to be established in this area, the Government would fund all the building costs involved (approximately £25m-£30m). The sponsor, or sponsors, would provide £2m over five years to go into a trust to allow innovation and to bring about genuine and positive change in local communities.

Cumbria County Council's view is that it would support an Academy if it operated in the following ways:

- for the benefit of learners;
- in partnership with other schools, the college, work based learning organisations and other providers of learning opportunities for 14-19 year olds; and
- in partnership with strategic planning organisations such as the LSC.

Discussions have taken place with Government ministers on the possibility of an Academy to serve part of North Copeland. The Government will support this and it is likely that a sponsor can be found who would support Cumbria County Council's position on how an Academy should operate. At present, there are continuing discussions about the sponsorship arrangements and we await the outcome of these. Option 3 would see the creation of an Academy by closing both Ehenside and Wyndham Schools and opening a new school to take the pupils from both.

'Competitions' for new schools

Normally, local authorities must hold a 'competition' whenever proposals are to be made for a new school. This would involve inviting any interested parties to compete to establish a new secondary school.

This requirement would apply to the new school which is part of Option 2. The legislation requiring competitions is new and untested. It is therefore uncertain how much interest from potential new school providers, other than Cumbria County Council, there would be.

Competitions are not required to create Academies (Option 3). Option 1 does not include a new school, so no competition is required.

Building Schools for the Future (BSF)

This is a countrywide Government initiative. Its aim is to transform secondary education. It involves completely rebuilding, extending or remodelling all secondary schools other than those built recently.

The initiative started in a small number of areas of the country in 2005, and is likely to last for more than 15 years. Cumbria will probably not begin to receive any BSF resources until between 2012 and 2015.

Church schools

The number of church schools is a significant feature of school provision in Cumbria. The church authorities are key partners in service provision. Cumbria County Council's position is that the balance of church and non-church provision should be maintained. The only 11-19 church school in the North Copeland area is St Benedict's Catholic High School.

Special educational needs

Cumbria County Council's vision is for an inclusive education system that enables all learners to benefit from successful learning opportunities in their local community. All new schools would, of course, be built to enable curriculum access for all young people, regardless of special need.

When new schools are built they need to be accessible to children who have specific physical and medical needs. Parents are increasingly concerned that their child should attend the school which serves their community.

Social inclusion might best be achieved when schools have on-site facilities to help young people with social and behavioural difficulties. This can be facilitated through the design of new schools. For example, we could aim for a collaborative community of schools to look after most pupils with these needs. This would imply a culture and ethos which fully supported social inclusion.

A vision for the future education of all children with severe and profound learning difficulties was set out by Cumbria County Council in 2005. This stated that "All pupils with severe or profound learning difficulties will have a learning programme tailored to their individual needs and an appropriately supported inclusive learning experience in a local setting where desired". The review of 11-19 education for the North Copeland area needs to take into account the effect of any new provision on Mayfield Special School. However, the future of this school will not be reviewed as part of this process.



School 'specialisms'

Government initiatives have enabled secondary schools to become 'specialist' schools. Such schools must develop a particular specialist character, raise standards in their chosen specialism and support other schools with the curriculum development of the subject involved, for example sports or science.

Specialist schools develop community links which broaden their educational role. In the North Copeland area, there are well developed links between secondary schools, with primary schools and with local commerce and industry.

Ehenside has a specialism as a member of a community of small schools across Cumbria called the 'Rural Academy' (not to be confused with the option for an Academy referred to in this document). Whitehaven School has a specialism in maths and IT, whilst St Benedict's is in engineering. Wyndham, as yet, has no specialist status.

Extended schools and services

Children need to be healthy and safe and to enjoy school to do well. The 'Every Child Matters' agenda encourages schools to promote and offer a range of extended services for pupils and work more closely with specialist services when children have additional needs. Secondary schools in North Copeland are likely to deliver a network of services to children and their families. Schools will also be encouraged to offer wider opportunities outside the school day. This will not just be for children, but for their families and communities too.

This is a changing role for schools but one which is developing quickly in North Copeland. Both St Benedict's and Whitehaven Schools will be involved in developing services from September 2006. Whitehaven School already offers a wide range of opportunities for both children and adults and is a 'Pathfinder' school, which means that it will be piloting extended services.

Of course, the secondary schools in the area already provide many opportunities for community use. For example, there is a wide range of adult education courses on offer and sports facilities are used extensively by individuals and clubs.

It would be important to seek to preserve community facilities where schools close. We are thinking here of the importance of Ehenside's facilities to the community generally. The swimming pool and public library on the Wyndham site also spring to mind.

In designing any new school, and in consultation with local people, we would want it to be equipped to offer services which meet local needs. We have in mind an extended school day with, for example, childcare facilities, a breakfast club, a 'drop-in' centre for social and medical services, and somewhere which would be a meeting place for parents. In addition, there could be wide community use of facilities, after school activities and study support for people of all ages.

Safeguarding pupils' education during change

The options contain some significant changes. Closing schools and opening new ones brings the risk of disruption. The county council is committed to making sure that children's education is not affected negatively by the change process. For example, the council will need to ensure that curriculum delivery is protected and that the accommodation and facilities needed are always available throughout the period of change.



Personnel implications

Falling pupil numbers in the secondary phase will certainly lead to staffing issues. Reorganisation in line with any of the three options would add further complexity to those issues.

It is critical that the concerns of school-based staff about their future employment, and how they will be treated during reorganisation, are addressed in order to:

- ensure a smooth transition during the period of change which safeguards the educational entitlement of pupils;
- maintain staff morale throughout the process of consultation, implementation and delivery of any change;
- ensure effective, appropriate and fair arrangements for the appointment of staff to any new educational establishments;
- minimise potential anxiety and uncertainty for staff; and
- deploy existing staff to maintain the necessary expertise and skills in the continuing service.

It is a long time since the county council has been involved in any major secondary education reorganisation, and there are currently no formal agreements for handling the staffing issues involved. The county council has determined to develop protocols to deal with such wide-ranging staffing matters in consultation with representatives of both support and teaching staff from the recognised trade unions. A working group was established in June this year and the work is now underway. Good progress has been made and a completed draft is now under consideration.



Questionnaire

Planning 11-19 education for the North Copeland area



This questionnaire is to help you put your views, comments and suggestions in writing. All views will be made available to those taking decisions. Please continue on a separate sheet if required.

Please complete, pull out and return to:

Freepost RRBS-RLBG-GZGL
CUMBRIA COUNTY COUNCIL
School Organisation
18 Portland Square
CARLISLE
CA1 1PE

The last date for responses to be received is **Friday 3 November 2006.**

Questionnaire

Planning 11-19 education for the North Copeland area

Q1 The Local Partnership Group felt there was a need for some change in the organisation of schools in the North Copeland area. After reading this document, do you agree?

- Yes 1
No 2
Don't know 3

Q2 What do you think of each of the three proposed options?

Option 1

- Strongly in favour 1 Against 4
In favour 2 Strongly Against 5
No preference 3 Don't know 6

Option 2

- Strongly in favour 1 Against 4
In favour 2 Strongly Against 5
No preference 3 Don't know 6

Option 3

- Strongly in favour 1 Against 4
In favour 2 Strongly Against 5
No preference 3 Don't know 6

Q3 Which is your preferred option?

- None 1 Option 3 4
Option 1 2 Don't know 5
Option 2 3

Q4 Why is this your preferred option?

Q5 Are you a parent of:

An existing pupil at Ehenside School 1

A primary or pre-school child living in the Ehenside catchment area 2

If you have ticked either or both, please go to Question 6.

If neither apply, please go to Question 7.

Q6 In Option 1 Ehenside School closes and there are two choices for reorganising its catchment area.

We would like to know which choice you prefer. (This is important because living in the catchment area of a school is used to determine entitlement to free school transport and priority for admission.)

Absorb Ehenside's catchment area into Wyndham's catchment area 1

Split Ehenside's catchment area, so that part would merge with Wyndham's catchment area and part would merge with Whitehaven's catchment area (NOTE - If Ehenside's catchment area is split, the responses to this questionnaire will influence where the split is made) 2

Q7 If Ehenside and Wyndham Schools were to close, would you like to see an Academy built?

Yes 1 No 2 Don't know 3

Q8 Please give your reasons

Q9 If an Academy goes ahead, which site would you like it to be built on?

Current Wyndham Site 1 Site 6, north of Egremont 2

Q10 Do you have any amendments to the options, or alternative options to suggest?

Q11 Please provide any further comments or suggestions you wish to make. This can be on information covered in this consultation document, or on school organisation in the North Copeland area more generally.

Q12 Please tell us the nature of your interest in the process. Please tick all that apply:

- Student 1
- Parent of current school pupil(s) 2
- Member of teaching staff 3
- Member of support staff 4
- Governor 5
- Pre-school parent 6
- Local resident 7
- Other interest 8
- If other, please specify:

Q13 Tell us at which school(s) you are:

- A student
- A parent of a current school pupil(s)
- A member of teaching staff
- A member of support staff
- A governor

Q14 Name

Q15 Address

.....
..... Postcode

Q16 How old are you?

- Under 20 1 20-39 2 40-59 3 60+ 4

Signature

Thank you for completing this consultation questionnaire.
Please now return it to the FREEPOST address on the front cover of this insert.

Potential sites for an Academy

Option 3 includes an Academy to replace Wyndham and Ehenside Schools. This would be in a new building either on the Wyndham site or on a new site.

Work to identify potential new sites between Egremont and Cleator Moor has been undertaken. Six sites have been identified and these are shown in Appendix B on page 24.

These potential new locations were then assessed against the Copeland District Local Plan. Discussions also took place with Copeland Borough Council's planning officers.

The local plan effectively allows significant development only within 'Key Service Centres' eg Cleator Moor, Egremont and Whitehaven. Consequently, the development of those sites between Egremont and Cleator Moor shown on the map as sites 1-5 would be contrary to the local plan. Achieving planning permission to build a school at these locations would be, at best, very difficult and controversial. Site 5 has the added complication of including a Site of Special Scientific Interest and a Scheduled Monument. The Academies Division of the Department for Education and Skills has indicated that it would expect the county council to identify a site, the development of which would be consistent with the principles set out in the local plan.

Of the new locations, this leaves site 6. As part of this site is allocated for residential use in the local plan, this suggests that the planning authority has already accepted the possibility of extending the Egremont 'Key Service Centre' through edge of town development. Consequently, the development of a new school on the site may well be possible, if the need to develop there can be demonstrated as required by the local plan.

The content of the local plan and discussions with planning officers suggest that the only realistic possibilities for the location of an Academy would be site 6 or the existing site of Wyndham School.

Traffic impact of the options

An Academy to replace Wyndham and Ehenside Schools under Option 3 would require some pupils to make additional or longer vehicle journeys than they do now. Locating the Academy at Wyndham or site 6 would create the fewest additional vehicle journeys. Any other location would mean a greater travel requirement for a significant majority or all of the pupils. Pupils would be provided with transport in accordance with the school transport policy which is described opposite.

Building the new Academy at the Wyndham site would probably be most consistent with the Copeland Local Plan in terms of travel. Locating the facility at site 6 would generate slightly different travel patterns for current Wyndham pupils.

The traffic impact of a new school on the Wyndham site (Option 2) would be the same as for an Academy located there under Option 3. In the event of Ehenside's closure in Option 1 and a split in the catchment area, there may be increased journeys into Whitehaven.



School transport policy

The general policy

Under the normal transport policy, free transport is provided to a child's nearest or catchment school if the distance between their home and the school exceeds the 'statutory walking distance'. The 'statutory walking distance' is three miles for children aged eight and above. The distance is measured by the nearest available walking route.

The policy in a secondary school reorganisation situation

Under the county council's current school transport policy, pupils living in the catchment area who are attending a school at the time of its closure, and who transfer to the new catchment school, receive free transport until they leave school, providing the distance between home and school is more than two miles. This only applies if pupils have to go to a different site which is further from their home than the site they previously attended although, if the distance from their home is more than the statutory walking distance of three miles, the general policy (above) applies.

School transport costs

Given the current school transport policy, there will be additional costs for home to school transport. Their level will be rather different for each option. In the case of Option 3, costs will in part be dependent on the location of the Academy site.

Depending on which option is chosen, it is estimated that the extra costs involved would be between £100k and £150k per year. The total cost of transporting pupils to Ehenside and Wyndham Schools currently is £413k each year.

Funding for the building work

If there is an Academy (Option 3), the capital cost is likely to be £25m-£30m. This will be met in full by central Government.

A new school in line with Option 2 would involve some remodelling to improve the buildings on the Wyndham site. The resources for this would be likely to come from the council's general capital allocations and the schools' own capital funds.

Transitional arrangements involving building work

There is not expected to be any significant building work associated with Option 1.

The remodelling of the Wyndham buildings involved in Option 2 would be planned so as to avoid any negative effect on the pupils' education. Building work of this kind on school sites does, of course, happen all the time.

Under Option 3, a completely new school building would be created to house an Academy. If this was to be on a new site, no pupils would be educated there until the work was completed. If the Wyndham site was used, the Academy would operate from the current Wyndham accommodation whilst the new building was constructed elsewhere on the site. The Academy would move into the new building as soon as it was ready.

Considering the options and their implications



Impact on the area as a whole

If implemented, the options set out on page 6 would:

- present the chance to improve the quality and range of educational opportunities and outcomes for young people;
- produce a more viable and effective network of provision;
- mean significant investment to build new school buildings (Option 3);
- change the number of secondary schools from four to three; and
- take out 12% (Options 1 and 2) or 18% (Option 3) of the total school places. This would leave around 26% (Options 1 and 2) or 20% (Option 3) surplus capacity in 2017. This would need to be reduced to around 8% -10% by finding alternative uses for school accommodation and through BSF investment when it eventually comes on stream (see page 11).

In our planning so far, we have assumed that it will not be necessary to change the catchment areas of schools significantly. The only changes envisaged are where schools close. In those situations, catchment areas are either split between, or added to, existing ones. There is a high proportion of children attending schools other than their catchment area school at present. This seems likely to continue and means that extensive change to catchment areas will probably not be necessary.

The timing of the implementation of change

We do not know what the outcome of this review will be and the detailed planning cannot take place until we do. Being absolutely precise now about the timing of any changes is therefore not possible. We expect, though, that any school closures would be at the end of the 2007/08 school year and any new school would open in September 2008. If that was an Academy, it would operate in the existing school buildings on the Wyndham site until the new accommodation was available, probably in September 2010.

Individual schools

Ehenside

Future viability

None of the options see Ehenside School staying open. This is because the West Cumbria Local Partnership Group, who developed them, did not feel that the school would be viable in the future. They did not believe that the school could recover educationally from being placed in Special Measures whilst the number of pupils continued to fall and a significant financial deficit had to be cleared.

The school has around 300 pupils at present. Over the next few years the pupil roll is projected to reduce by one third, which would mean 65% of the school's places would be empty. The low numbers of pupils is due partly to a reducing pupil population in the area, and partly to parents choosing to send their children to other schools.

The school's budget is currently in deficit (over £330k at the end of the last financial year). This is in part due to the school spending more than it could afford to try to sustain educational standards. With the number of pupils predicted together with the burden of removing the deficit, Ehenside will almost certainly struggle to maintain an acceptable breadth of choice at GCSE level.

The Options

In Option 1, the Ehenside catchment area would either be added to the catchment area of Wyndham or be split in some way between Wyndham and Whitehaven Schools. It is important to get the views of parents on their preferred alternative school should Ehenside close, and so we have asked for your opinions in the questionnaire at the centre of this document. Please return it to us using the Freepost address given on the form.

With Option 2, there would be an 'amalgamation' of Wyndham and Ehenside on the Wyndham site. An 'amalgamation' in this sense means that the existing schools involved close and a new school opens to replace them.

Option 3 is quite similar to Option 2. In the case of Option 3, however, the new school would be an Academy, involving a brand new building (see page 10 for more details). The new Academy would either be on the existing Wyndham site or a new site (see pages 14 and 24).

School transport

In the case of Ehenside's existing pupils and younger children living in the school's catchment area, qualification for free transport to school will be in line with the school transport policy set out on page 15.

Choice of school

All parents have a right to state a preference for a place at any school. If there is a place available at the preferred school, there is a legal requirement for the parents' preference to be met.



St Benedict's

The school currently has around 1,350 pupils. Our pupil projections, which take no account of possible school organisation change, suggest that numbers will fall to about 1,300 in ten years' time. The school has a maximum capacity of 1,370.

It is not anticipated that the school would be significantly affected by any of the three options. We recognise, however, that parental preferences may alter if there are changes to the school network as a result of this review. This could mean that there would be a larger or smaller pupil roll at the school in the future than our pupil projections presently suggest. Unlike the other three schools St Benedict's is a voluntary aided school. As such the governors are responsible for the admission arrangements to their school.

Whitehaven

The school has about 1,400 pupils at present. If there is no school organisation change the roll is set to fall to 1,100 by 2017. The maximum capacity is 1,598.

Like St Benedict's, it is not expected that any of the options would have a tremendous impact on the school. It is possible that, under Option 1, the school's catchment area might be extended to include some of Ehenside's catchment area. This would be very likely to result in Whitehaven School's roll being higher than currently predicted. The number of pupils attending the school in the future could also be affected by variations in parental preferences brought about by the other changes included in the options.

Wyndham

Wyndham would be significantly affected by each of the options. At present the pupil roll is about 800. Without a reorganisation of secondary provision, this number is expected to fall to just over 600 by 2017. At that point, 56% of the school's places would be unfilled.

In Option 1, the school's catchment area would be extended to include all or part of the catchment area of Ehenside School, which would close. This would obviously boost the pupil roll at Wyndham and reduce the total number of unfilled places in the area.

In the two other options, Wyndham closes. With Option 2 there would be an 'amalgamation' of Wyndham and Ehenside with a new school operating from the Wyndham buildings, which would be remodelled to some extent. Given the condition and nature of Wyndham's accommodation, this would almost certainly be completely replaced when BSF resources reach West Cumbria (see page 11 for more BSF information).

Wyndham and Ehenside would also 'amalgamate' in Option 3, in this case to create an Academy. This would involve a brand new 'state of the art' building on either the Wyndham site or a new site (see the coverage of potential sites on page 14).

Further detailed planning

As explained earlier, the possibilities for change cannot be fully developed at this stage. There will be much more detailed work necessary once there is an agreed overall plan to take forward. During that planning process we will look in more detail at things like catchment areas, admissions policies, school sites, school transport, accommodation needs and facilities at schools for the wider community. This may lead to changes to some of the details presented in this document.



Drawing conclusions

There is compelling evidence that it would be wrong to do nothing. All those involved in working on the options came to this conclusion.

There are three suggested options for change and now is the time for us to find out which have your support, or if you have any other ideas.

Although Ehenside School's closure features in all of the three options, no decision to close it has been taken and it could be retained. However, the West Cumbria Local Partnership Group, who identified the options, felt that this would not be in the best interests of the school, its governors and, most importantly, the young people of the area.

Ehenside is a small school and the evidence we have indicates it will become even smaller. Small schools have difficulty offering the range of courses, particularly for 14-19 year olds, which pupils are entitled to expect. They have problems recruiting specialist staff and standards may fall further. In the longer term, it is not fair to our children to keep Ehenside as it is. Wyndham is also getting smaller. Many families in the catchment areas of both schools are choosing to send their children elsewhere. There is a need for change.

Coming to a view on a preferred option is largely about whether you think there should be an Academy (Option 3). This would enable a brand new building to be built over the next three years or so. The other two options would mean that new buildings would not be provided until 2015 at the earliest, through the BSF programme.

Quality provision is about much more than buildings, but a new school would give us an opportunity to transform education. New schools give us the best chance of state of the art, school-wide ICT systems, modern equipment, and different and new learning environments. We might see a culture change which puts the individual child at the centre and where 'learning centres' and specialist learning areas within a school have much more emphasis. This is a culture of 'learning to learn' and independent learning, tailored to a child's needs. Similarly a new school could provide meeting places for parents, bases for services like health and family support, and specific community access, like that being developed in Whitehaven. We would be looking for different relationships between children, teachers, parents and organisations to provide this quality.

Now it's over to you. We want you to tell us what you think will work and what won't. You might want to test the options against our principles of quality of provision, equal access to good schools and collaboration between providers. Your views are important to the future of 11-19 education in North Copeland, so please fill in the questionnaire at the centre of this document and return it to the Freepost address provided.

Please go now to the final section of the document which takes you through the 'Next steps'.

Next steps

The consultation period

The basis for the consultation is this document, and the consultation period starts on Friday 15 September 2006. The final date for letting us have your thoughts and comments is **Friday 3 November 2006**.

This consultative document has been very widely distributed. It has gone directly to parents of primary and secondary pupils, school staff, governing bodies, all of the county council's key partners in the provision of education, district councils, voluntary organisations, staff associations and unions, the church diocesan authorities and many others. It has also been made available to the general public via community centres, libraries and public offices. It is important that we know what you think about the options set out on page 6. We would also be grateful for any suggestions you may have for new options or variations to the three identified. We look forward to hearing from you.

How to express your views

We have organised a range of ways that you can find out more and have your say. The majority are open to everyone, but some events are solely for groups such as school staff and young people.

For everyone

Questionnaire

There is a questionnaire in the middle of this document, and we would like everyone to complete it and return it to us using the Freepost address given on the form. You can also complete the questionnaire on the county council website from 15 September - 3 November 2006 by going to www.cumbriacc.gov.uk/consultation and following the 'consultation finder' links or related links on North Copeland.

Meetings

We are going to use the council's Neighbourhood Forums. **These meetings will all begin at 7.30pm**, and we would very much like you to attend one of them. Please choose which is the most convenient for you from the schedule below.

Neighbourhood forum	Date	Venue
Cleator Moor	Thursday 28 September	Cleator Moor Civic Hall, Cleator Moor
Whitehaven and NW Copeland (including south Whitehaven, Hillcrest and Hensingham, Bransty & Harbour)	Monday 2 October	United Reform Church Hall, Whitehaven
Egremont and St Bees	Tuesday 3 October	Egremont Parish Church Hall, Egremont
Arlecdon, Frizington, Lamplugh and Ennerdale	Wednesday 4 October	St Joseph's Community Hall, Frizington
Gosforth, Bootle and Seascale	Thursday 5 October	Methodist Church Hall, Seascale

The meetings will start with a short introduction on how the session will be run. Then there will be a brief presentation on the main points in the consultation document. During the rest of the meeting you will be able to say what you feel about the options and issues covered in the document. You can also ask questions about the possible changes. It is expected that the meetings will last 1 1/2 - 2 hours.

Drop-in sessions

You may prefer to come to one of the drop-in sessions we have arranged during October. Here you will have an opportunity to talk the options over with us and find out more about what they mean for you and others. We will be using public libraries, and will be at the venues below as follows:

Whitehaven Library	Tuesday 10 October	5.00 - 6.30pm
Egremont Library	Wednesday 11 October	5.00 - 6.30pm
Cleator Moor Library	Thursday 12 October	5.00 - 6.30pm
Frizington Library	Monday 16 October	5.00 - 6.30pm

For school staff and governors

Separate meetings have been arranged for school staff and for governing bodies. These will be held in schools on the following dates:

Ehenside School	Thursday 28 September
Whitehaven School	Monday 2 October
Wyndham School	Tuesday 3 October
St Benedict's School	Wednesday 4 October

It is intended that each meeting will last for 1-1¼ hours. Staff meetings will begin at 4pm and the meetings for governors will start at 5.30pm.

Joint staff/governor meetings at Mayfield School and Lakes College West Cumbria will be held at these times:

Lakes College West Cumbria	Thursday 5 October	4.30pm
Mayfield School	Tuesday 10 October	3.30pm

For young people

School councils

Special school council meetings are being held at schools on the following dates:

Ehenside School	Thursday 28 September	3.00 - 4.00pm
Whitehaven School	Monday 2 October	2.10 - 3.10pm
Wyndham School	Tuesday 3 October	2.10 - 3.10pm
St Benedict's School	Wednesday 4 October	2.45 - 3.45pm

Drop-in sessions

We will also be dropping in on some youth groups in the area in October. Plenty of information will be available to find out more about the review and the options, and members of the team will be there to answer questions and listen to feedback and comments.

St Peter's Youth Centre, Woodhouse, Whitehaven	Tuesday 10 October	7.00 - 8.00pm
Egremont Youth Centre	Wednesday 11 October	7.00 - 8.00pm
St John's Hall, Cleator Moor	Thursday 12 October	7.00 - 8.00pm
Frizington Youth Centre	Monday 16 October	7.00 - 8.00pm

Website

A dedicated website designed in partnership with local young people will be online from 15 September to 3 November 2006. www.cumbriastudentvoice.org.uk will provide information and a questionnaire to print or complete online.

For work based learning organisations

We have organised a meeting to talk with representatives of work based learning organisations at 3.30pm on Thursday 5 October. This will be held at Lakes College West Cumbria.

How can I find out more?

As was said earlier, we wanted to keep this document as short as possible. There is a lot of extra information available if you want to read the detailed background documents that we used when we wrote this paper. These include summaries of school building condition and use (including use by the community and by other schools), school performance, specialisms, budget position and projected pupil numbers.

All of these documents are available to view or download on our website:

www.cumbriacc.gov.uk/childrensservices/school-organisation

If you do not have access to the internet, we can provide you with a printed copy of any sections of the additional information. All you need to do is to call the School Organisation Project Team on 01228 606013. Alternatively, requests can be made by fax to 01228 606016, or by post to the following address:

Freepost RRBS-RLBG-GZGL
CUMBRIA COUNTY COUNCIL
School Organisation
18 Portland Square
CARLISLE, CA1 1PE

We will also try to answer any questions you have on the consultative document, the additional information or other relevant issues. You can get your questions to us by email at:

school.organisation@cumbriacc.gov.uk or via the telephone, fax and postal address above.

What happens after the consultation process?

Once the responses to the consultation process have been analysed it is likely that they will be discussed initially with the council's key education partners in the area.

Following these discussions, a report will be prepared for the county council's Cabinet. The report will include notes of consultation meetings, a summary of comments received from individuals and photocopies of the responses from recognised organisations. The report will be a public document, so will be available to the media and on the county council website.

The Cabinet will consider the response to the consultation and begin to form a view about what they believe to be appropriate provision for the future. This is likely to occur on 28 November 2006. The LSC will also be considering the outcome of the consultation exercise.

If it is decided to seek to make changes to the current provision, there are legal processes to follow. This is the case for the closure of existing schools and the opening of new ones, including Academies. As indicated earlier, it is not possible to say with certainty when any agreed changes would occur. It is very unlikely that changes involving statutory processes would happen before 1 September 2008.



Appendix A: Current situation

Current schools and catchment areas

Secondary catchment areas are shown in a lighter shade of each school's marker. They are made up of the combined catchment areas of the primary schools listed beneath each secondary school. St Benedict's does not have a catchment area but gives priority for admission to pupils from the Catholic primary schools listed.



Catchment areas are very important in determining entitlement to free school transport, in line with the policy set out on page 15. The admission policies of some schools rely on catchment areas as one of the criteria used in establishing priorities for admission where there is over-subscription.

Eghenside

Arlecdon
Ennerdale and Kinniside
Frizington
Lamplugh
Montreal

St Benedict's

St Begh's
St Bridget's, Egremont
St Joseph's, Frizington
St Mary's, Kells
St Patrick's, Cleator Moor

Whitehaven

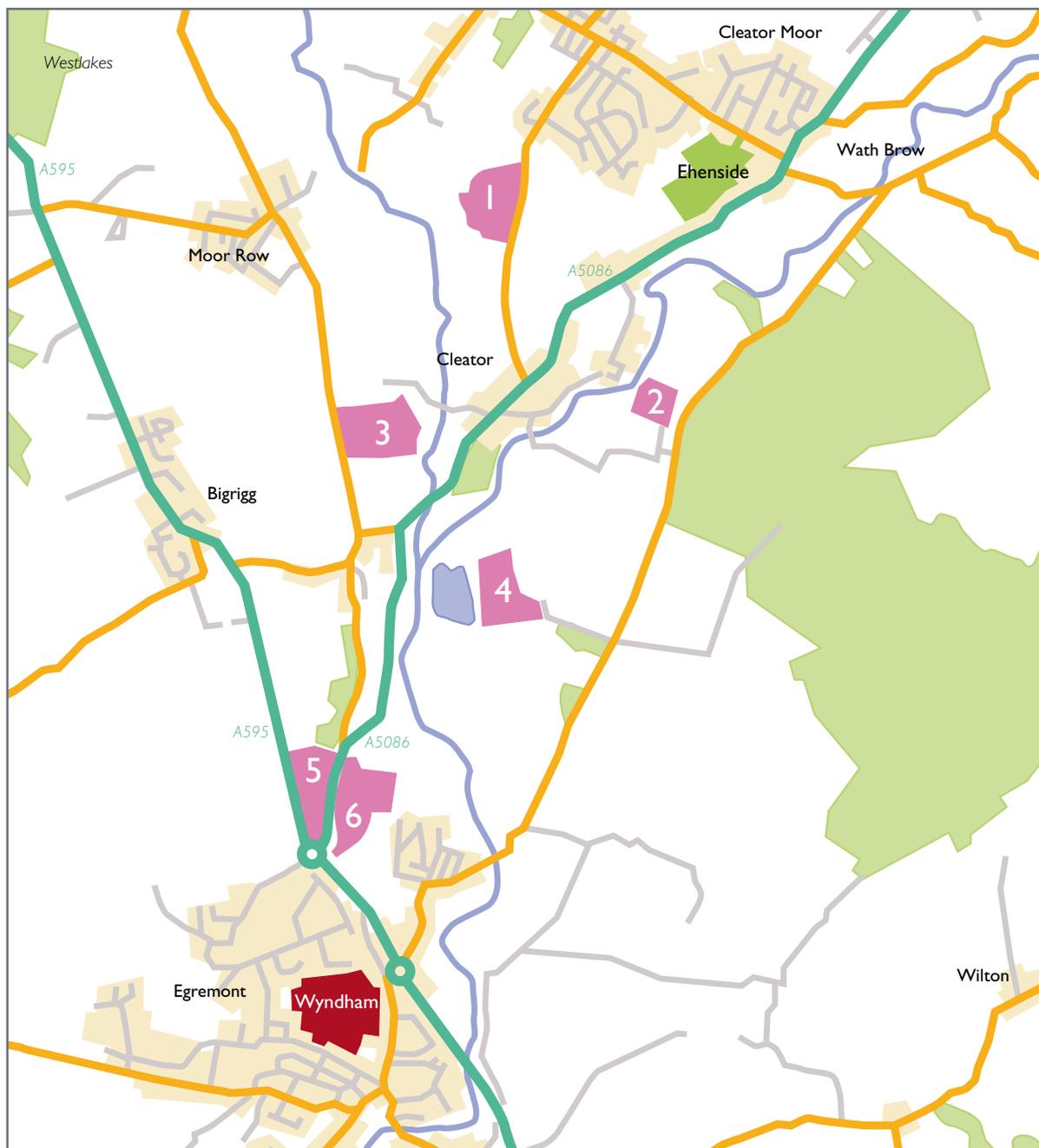
Bransty
Hensingham
Jericho
Lowca
Monkwray
Moresby
St Bees*
St Bridget's, Parton
St James' Valley

Wyndham

Beckermet
Bookwell
Gosforth*
Moor Row
Orgill
St Bees*
Seascale
Thornhill

* denotes a split between two or more secondary schools

Appendix B: Potential locations for Academy sites



Sites

- 1 Land off Jacktrees Road
- 2 Land adjacent to Kangol Factory
- 3 Land west of A5086 (opposite Longlands Lake site)
- 4 Land adjacent Longlands Lake
- 5 Land north of Egremont between A595 and A5086
- 6 Land north of Egremont adjacent to A5086 and Egremont cemetery

Wy Wyndham School site

Assessment has shown that sites 1-5 would be difficult and controversial to develop. It may well be possible to develop on Site 6 or the Wyndham site. See page 14 for more detail.

Translation services

English

You can get a copy of this document in different formats such as large print, braille, audio, or in a different language by calling 01229 894401.

Bengali

আপনি। 01229 894401 -এই নম্বর ফোন করে, বিভিন্ন ফরম্যাট যেমন বড় প্রিন্ট, ব্রেইল, অডিও বা একটি ভিন্ন ভাষাতে এই নথিটির একটি কপি পেতে পারেন।

Portuguese

Pode obter uma cópia deste documento em vários formatos, como por exemplo em Braille, áudio, ou numa outra língua. Para tal ligue para o 01229 894401.

Cantonese

如果您想获取该文件的不同版本，如：大字体印刷、盲文、音频或不同语言版本，请致电：01229 894401。

Lithuanian

Paskambinę telefonu 01229 894401, galite užsisakyti šio dokumento kopiją įvairiais formatais, pavyzdžiui, atspausdintą dideliu šriftu, Brailio raštu, užsisakyti garso įrašą arba gauti dokumentą, išverstą į norimą kalbą.

Polish

Aby otrzymać kopię tego dokumentu w innych formatach, takich jak duży druk, druk Braille'm, audio, lub w innym języku proszę dzwonić pod numer 01229 894401.

Turkish

01229 894401'u arayarak, bu dokümanın bir kopyasını büyük puntolu, körler için kabartmalı, ses dosyası gibi değişik formatlarda veya farklı bir dilde edinebilirsiniz.



School Organisation Project Team

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