



BATH & NORTH EAST SOMERSET

REVIEW OF SECONDARY EDUCATION Phase 2: Greater Bath Area

A Review by the Education, Youth, Culture and Leisure
Overview and Scrutiny Panel

24th July 2006

(Revised as agreed by Panel
from report presented on 24th May 2006)

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Report Structure

1. INTRODUCTION.....	3
1.1.Phase Two: The Greater Bath Area	3
1.2.Phase Two: Methodology	5
2. PHASE TWO FINDINGS	7
2.1.A Decline in Pupil Numbers	7
2.2.Development in Bath & North East Somerset.....	7
2.3.The Net Effect	8
2.4.Private Education in the City.....	8
2.5.Relationship with other Local Authorities	9
2.6.Geography	9
2.7.Single Sex Education.....	10
2.8.Denominational Schools	10
2.9.Post 16 Education	11
2.10.The Schools.....	13
2.10.1.Beechen Cliff School.....	13
2.10.2.Culverhay School	15
2.10.3.Hayesfield School.....	17
2.10.4.Oldfield School	19
2.10.5.Ralph Allen School.....	21
2.10.6.St Gregory’s Catholic College.....	23
2.10.7.St Mark’s CofE School	25
3. FUTURE PROVISION IN THE GREATER BATH AREA	27
3.1.The Emerging Area Curriculum	27
3.2.Post 16 Education	27
3.3.Principles of the Panel’s Vision for Secondary Education in Bath.....	28
4. APPENDICES.....	29

A Review of Secondary Education in Bath & North East Somerset

1. INTRODUCTION

The Education, Youth, Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Panel is undertaking a review of Secondary Education in the whole of the Bath and North East Somerset area which will run from September 05 to December 06.

There are thirteen secondary schools in the Bath and North East Somerset area. Nine of these are co-educational schools, including one Church of England school and one Roman Catholic school. There are also four single sex schools, two boys' schools and two girls' schools.

Although results at GCSE are well above national averages and at post-16 are in line with national averages, there are significant differences in the performance of our secondary schools. A number of schools are overcrowded, while others have surplus places.

The Government has announced that the Authority will be receiving a sum of money to renew one secondary school by 2009 and an even larger sum in the middle of the next decade for the replacement and refurbishment of all other secondary schools. It is important that prior to this we fully understand any existing problems and have taken steps to resolve them. We will then be in a good position to spend this money effectively.

The review is taking place in three phases.

- The first phase, looking at the **Keynsham and Chew Valley area**, was completed in December 05.
- The second phase looking at the Greater Bath Area has just been completed and the findings are presented in this report.
- The third phase will focus on the schools in **Midsomer Norton and Radstock** in autumn 2006.

As each phase is completed an interim report containing its findings is published. When all three reports have been completed the panel will consider them in the context of the whole Bath & North East Somerset area. There will be a final report produced containing the panel's recommendations for improvements to secondary education provision, this will complete the whole review. The report will be presented to the Executive Member for Children's Services. Conclusions from the final review report will be incorporated into future publications relating to the planning of school places in the Authority and contribute to the future vision of secondary education in Bath and North East Somerset.

A copy of the Terms of Reference setting out the purpose and objectives of the review can be found at Appendix 1

1.1. Phase Two: The Greater Bath Area

This report deals with the second phase of the Panel's review, looking at the Greater Bath Area. It does not set out the Panel's recommendations, but only their findings for this phase. The Panel will not reach conclusions or formulate recommendations until the end

of the whole review process when the Panel will have a view of the wider picture across the whole of the Bath and North East Somerset area.

This report is therefore not a conclusive document, but rather an indication of the Panel's work so far. It sets out the evidence the Panel have received, and initial findings for the Greater Bath Area. It is important to remember that this process is a review of provision and not a review of schools

The seven schools within the Greater Bath Area are:

- **Beechen Cliff**

The school is located in Alexandra Park, Bath. It is a Foundation school serving boys only from 11-16 and both genders aged 16-18. At September 2005 there are 1047 students on roll. This includes 236 students in the 6th Form.

- **Culverhay**

The school is located in Rush Hill, Bath. It is a Community school serving boys only aged 11- 16 and both genders aged 16-18. At September 2005 there are 463 students on roll. This includes 52 students in the 6th Form.

- **Hayesfield**

The school is located in Brougham Hayes, Bath (Years 7-9) and Upper Oldfield Park, Bath (Years 10-11). The 6th Form is located in Upper Oldfield Park, Bath, in buildings separate from the main school. The main school playing fields are located at Frome Road, Bath. It is a Foundation school serving girls only from 11-16 and both genders aged 16-18. At September 2005 there are 1204 students on roll. This includes 221 students in the 6th Form.

- **Oldfield**

The school is located in Kelston Road, Bath. It is a Foundation school serving girls only from 11-16 and both genders from 16-18. At September 2005 there are 908 students on roll. This includes 79 students in the 6th Form.

- **Ralph Allen**

The school is located in Claverton Down Road, Bath. It is a Community school serving boys and girls from 11-18. At September 2005 there are 1048 students on roll. This includes 167 students in the 6th Form.

- **St Gregory's Catholic College**

The school is located in Combe Hay Lane, Bath. It is an Aided school serving boys and girls from 11-16. At September 2005 there are 795 students on roll. The school does not operate a 6th Form. Students at St Gregory's have preferential treatment in gaining entry to St Brendan's Sixth Form College in Bristol.

- **St Mark's CE School**

The school is located in Baytree Road, Bath. It is an Aided school serving girls and boys aged 11-16. At September 2005 there are 348 students on roll. Although designated as an 11-18 school, it does not currently operate a 6th Form. The pupils here also have preferential entry to St Brendan's Sixth Form College.

1.2. Phase Two: Methodology

This second phase of the Secondary Education Review has broadly followed the same methodology as the first phase that took place in the Keynsham and Chew Valley area in Autumn 2005. The Panel carried out a number of research and evidence gathering activities in order to inform their findings.

Reports from the Service

The Panel have received several briefings and a discussion paper from the Education Service (See Appendix 2).

The information provided has included:

- Numbers of pupils on the school rolls
- Levels of academic achievement
- Site and building areas
- Outstanding maintenance issues
- Financial information, e.g. funding per pupil, standards funding, budget share per pupil etc.

The Panel have been able to discuss these issues with the Education Service and this has facilitated defining the scope and Terms of Reference for this review.

Engagement with Schools, Parents, and Governors

The Panel issued a four page information leaflet to Headteachers, Chairs of Governors and parents at the seven secondary schools in the area. The same information was also sent to the primary schools in the area.

The leaflet consisted of a letter from the Chair of the Panel, background on the reasons for the review, the timescales for this phase of the review, and an invitation to schools, parents and Governors to respond to the Panel with their views. A copy of the leaflet is available at Appendix 3.

The Panel received 26 responses and these are available at Appendix 4.

The Panel also sought to engage with the public through a web page and a series of press releases through which they encouraged the public to attend meetings, or write to or e-mail the Panel with their views.

Visits to Schools and engagement with School Councils

Phase Two: Secondary Provision in the Greater Bath Area

The Panel visited each of the seven schools and spent time touring the buildings and grounds and talking to the Head teachers. The Panel also spent time talking to each of the Student Councils without teaching staff present. The information provided by the Student Councils was particularly helpful and much valued by the Panel members.

Contributor Sessions

Two public meetings (known as Contributor Sessions) were held by the Panel on 20th March and 24th April. During these meetings the Panel heard from the Headteachers and Governors from each of the secondary schools in the Greater Bath Area.

For Monday 20th March

Beechen Cliff School – Andrew Davies (Headteacher)
Hayesfield School – Erica Draisey (Headteacher)
Culverhay School – Duncan Fleet (Headteacher)
Oldfield School – Kim Sparling (Headteacher)

For Monday 24th April

Ralph Allen School – Libby Lee (Headteacher)
St Gregory's School – Raymond Friel (Headteacher)
St Mark's School – Cherril Pope (Headteacher)

Full notes for the contributor sessions are attached at Appendix 5.

The Panel also invited the Learning & Skills Council (LSC) and the City of Bath College to attend the meeting on Monday 24th April to share their thoughts about post-16 education in the city. Unfortunately, neither was able to attend, although the LSC provided a briefing for the Panel as an alternative. This can be found at Appendix 6.

2. PHASE TWO FINDINGS

2.1. A Decline in Pupil Numbers

Pupil numbers nationally are falling. In Bath & North East Somerset, there were 967 fewer pupils starting in reception classes in 2005 than in 1998. The effects of this decline in numbers are already beginning to show. Anecdotal evidence from some schools shows that applications from further a field are now being successful and schools which were previously heavily oversubscribed are now simply full or even undersubscribed.

In Bath & North East Somerset as a whole, there are already 607 unfilled secondary school places, 407 of these being in the Bath area. Two of the Bath schools are operating at less than 80% of their capacity, thus indicating that at least in Bath itself there are presently too many secondary school places.

In future years it is expected that there will be a 10% decline in Year 6 pupils who will go to the Bath area secondary schools. This assessment is based on the present numbers of children in the primary schools from which children generally enter Bath area secondary schools. To illustrate this, in July 2006, 861 pupils will leave Year 6 to join Year 7 in September. By September 2012 this will have fallen to 786 pupils, a reduction of 75 pupils.

There was also a sharp decline in the birth rate in 2002. Below is a table showing the effect this will have on Bath & North East Somerset primary pupil numbers, notably a sharp decline in 2006/7. This in turn will lead to an exceptionally low secondary intake in 2013.

Year	The number of children reaching 4yrs old	93% start at B&NES LEA School
2005/6.	1705	1585
2006/7	1400	1302
2007/8	1600	1488
2008/9	1700	1581

Nationally the primary population is expected to continue to fall sharply from 3.9 million in 2004 to a low of 3.65 million in 2009 and then increase to around 3.8 million by 2020 (DfES). Population estimates for 2020 can only be regarded as "best estimate" as they are based solely on past patterns.

2.2. Development in Bath & North East Somerset

Significant development in the area will mitigate some of the effect of falling pupil numbers. The Regional Spatial Strategy indicates that between 2006 and 2026 there should be almost 17,000 new homes built in Bath & North East Somerset. 6,000 of these are planned to be located in the urban area of Bath and a further 1,000 located on an extension to the urban area to the south of the City. The Council is contesting the overall level of development and considers that only 5,000 homes can be provided within the existing

Phase Two: Secondary Provision in the Greater Bath Area

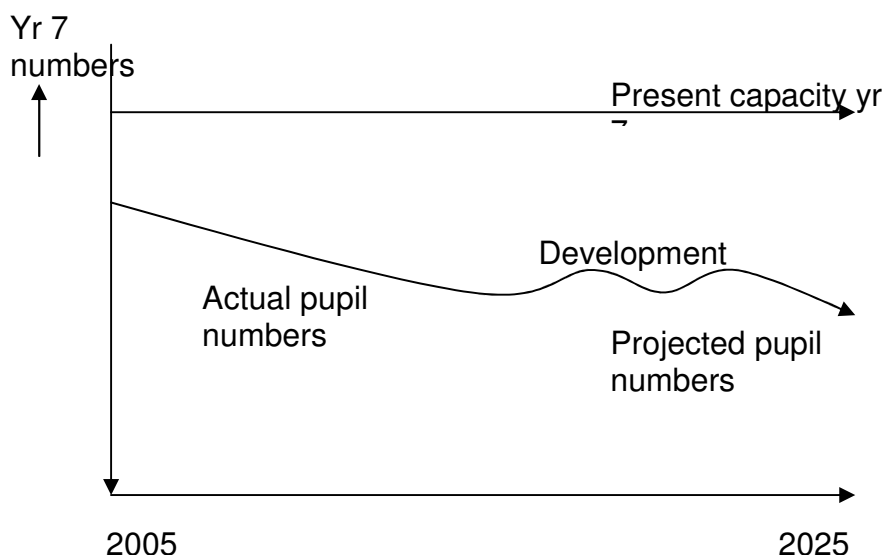
urban area of Bath. Based on national guidelines for “pupil yield” from housing developments, this will generate up to 850 pupils by 2026 although it must be borne in mind that not all of these children will be in secondary school at the same time.

Proposals for the Bath Western Riverside (BWR) development in Bath include approximately 1700 homes of two bedrooms or more. By the time BWR is complete it will contribute approximately 50-60 pupils per Year Group to Bath area secondary schools. The development is unlikely to be complete until the middle of the next decade.

2.3. The Net Effect

These developments will not entirely eliminate the effect of the decline in pupil numbers in Bath. Coupled with the current levels of surplus places and the temporary drop in birth rate, the Greater Bath Consortium area will face a significant and continuous overprovision of secondary places in future years.

A graph showing the decline in yr seven pupils against present capacity in the Greater Bath Area



2.4. Private Education in the City.

The City of Bath is home to five private schools. The Panel have been unable to obtain planned entry numbers. However in 2005 these schools entered a total of 425 pupils for GCSE examinations from which it is possible to infer that they are providing some 2100 places, equivalent to nearly 30% of all places in the city. However, a significant number of these children will travel from outside of the Bath & NE Somerset area to attend these schools.

The number of year six pupils in Bath primary state schools who do not then transfer into Bath secondary state schools at year 7 is relatively small. This means that the numbers of Bath & NE Somerset children attending private school does not represent a strategic challenge for the Council.

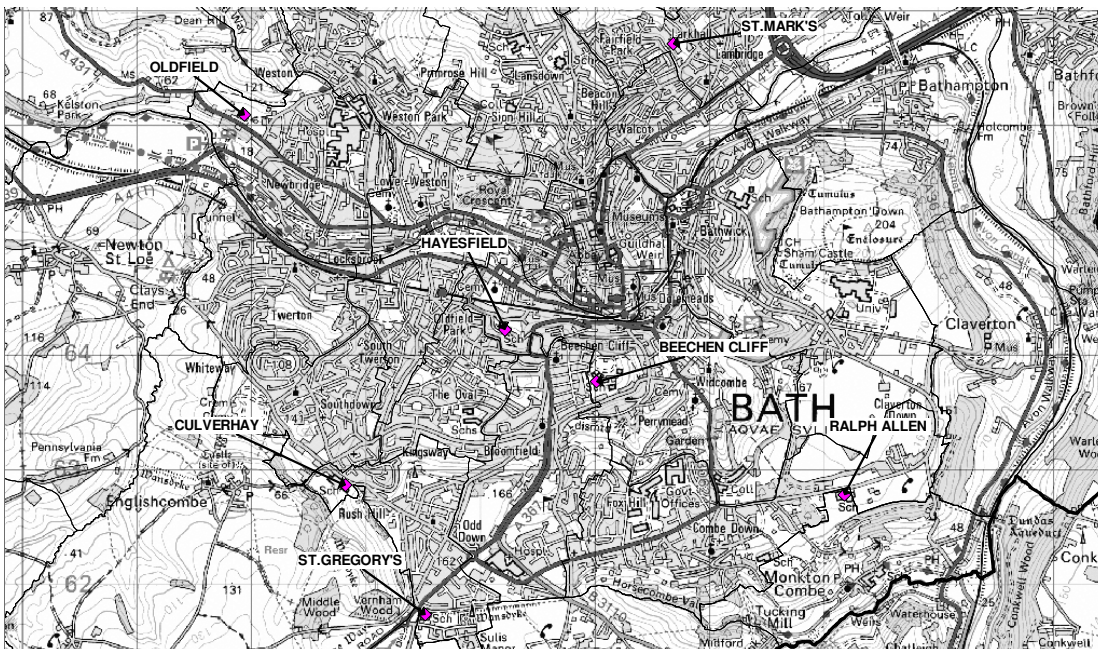
2.5. Relationship with other Local Authorities

In Bath & North East Somerset only 77.4% of the pupils on roll are from within the area, and a relatively high number of pupils cross the border from other local authorities to attend secondary schools here. For example, at Oldfield School 44% of girls come from South Gloucester and 11% come from Bristol. In South Gloucestershire the Council is making significant investments in local schools in order to accommodate the substantial population growth in the area. However, they are not seeking to introduce any single sex provision. In considering future provision of single sex education in the Greater Bath Area the Council should take into account the movement of girls across its borders. For Oldfield School, a change to co-education might result in a greater proportion of Bath & NE Somerset pupils attending the school.

In Bristol a combination of funding, via the Private Finance Initiative and the Building Schools for the Future programme (Pathfinder and mainstream) has allowed the rebuilding / substantial refurbishment of several schools. However, the effect on schools in the Bath area is likely to be limited as few pupils from Bristol attend Bath schools. Similarly the emerging proposals to create two more City Academies in Bristol are unlikely to have an effect in Bath. There is potential for there to be a greater effect in Keynsham and the Chew Valley. This has been highlighted in the Panel's Phase1 report on secondary provision in that area.

2.6. Geography

The Map below shows the locations of the Secondary Schools in the Greater Bath Area and their relationship with the main arteries of the city.



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Initially this distribution looks even but in reality few of these schools serve only the pupils in their local community. The city of Bath is home to two boys' schools, two girls' schools,

one Catholic school, one CofE school and one co-educational/non-denominational school. Five of the seven schools are located south of the river posing transportation problems for their pupils who live to the north.

Any child living in the west of the city who wants to attend a mixed non-denominational school faces a long journey east. One of the boys' schools is difficult to get to from three quarters of the city and one of the girls' schools is difficult to access from another three quarters. Taken together, the present arrangements result in a great deal of cross-city travel.

The Panel acknowledge that any reorganisation of schools, especially with respect to mixed and single sex schools should consider transport arrangements.

2.7. Single Sex Education

Within the city, 61% of all secondary school places are in single sex schools.

Nationally, the provision of state sector single sex education institutions has dropped from 4000 in the in the 1960s to under 400 in 2005. One per cent of these schools are located in the city of Bath which is a substantial overrepresentation.

It is worth noting that in the private sector, single sex schools, especially for boys, have become less popular. In the last 10 years 130 single sex private schools have either closed or become co-educational. In Bath all of the former private boys' schools have become co-educational and the two former private girls' schools have decided to merge.

The results of a survey undertaken in 2004 by the Education Service, showed that 60% of parents would prefer a co-educational school for their children. Currently Ralph Allen School is the only non-denominational, co-educational school in the city. The other co-educational options available are two denominational schools – St Gregory's Catholic college and St. Marks C of E school.

However, the survey also shows that 26% of parents preferred single sex education in the City. The most popular of the single sex schools in Bath are oversubscribed; two of them have the most central locations and the largest sixth forms in the city. The Panel noted that if single sex provision was to be maintained in the City there would have to be an equal balance of boys and girls schools.

2.8. Denominational Schools

Two of Bath's seven secondary schools are denominational schools.

St Gregory's Catholic School is a co-educational 11-16 school serving the Catholic community. The great majority of its pupils come from within the Bath and NE Somerset area although over 25% of students live more than three miles from the school. The admissions policy gives preference to Catholic children. Approximately 10% of its pupils are non-Catholic and the school has stated that they are open to the possibility of expansion and to providing a Catholic education to more non-Catholic families.

St Mark's CofE secondary school is a Church of England school whose admissions policy in the first instance favours the school's local community, except where the Council requested that priority be given to some of the outlying villages. The admissions criteria favour the siblings of students on roll above the membership of the Christian faith.

It is the desire of the Church of England to maintain the ratio of CofE secondary places in Bath.

The Panel raised the question of the possibility of having a joint faith school in the Greater Bath Area. The Panel learned that schools thought this was more likely to be successful if it came as an initiative from the schools and their Dioceses rather than from the local Authority.

2.9. Post 16 Education

2.9.1. Provision

Post 16 Education in the City of Bath is provided through 6th Forms at five of the seven LEA schools, the City of Bath College and through the private schools. The two LEA schools in Bath not operating sixth forms are St Mark's and St Gregory's. The majority of their pupils move on to post-16 studies at St Brendan's Catholic Sixth Form College located 8 miles from the city, where they are favoured through the admission criteria. At September 2005 there are 755 students in the five LEA Schools with 6th Forms in Bath. At the sixth form level the private schools have a much higher percentage of total pupil numbers than in the younger years, with 850 places being filled at post 16.

Opinion varies as to the minimum numbers required for a 6th Form to be able to offer a broad range of courses and remain viable. The development of a local area prospectus and greater co-operation between schools for the provision of Post 16 studies is part of a national agenda for change. The existing 6th Forms operate at varying sizes and with varying degrees of success and are all co-educational.

The Culverhay, Oldfield and Ralph Allen sixth forms work together in a loose consortium arrangement. A relatively limited number of their pupils (19) opt to study a subject at a partner institution. The geographical spread of these schools does not help this arrangement.

Culverhay and Oldfield operate the smallest sixth forms with only 52 and 79 pupils respectively. Pupils of the opposite gender to that of the school overall, represent a small minority of the sixth form in both cases. Culverhay School has expressed aspirations to focus on providing a greater range of vocational options for students in the Bath area and would not object to providing very different courses from current provision.

The sixth form at Ralph Allen, although significantly larger with 167 pupils, also has difficulties providing an appropriate range of courses. The school buildings currently do not provide adequate study facilities for its post 16 students.

Beechen Cliff and Hayesfield have the largest sixth forms with 236 and 221 students respectively. The partnership arrangements operating between them, and

close geographical proximity, provides greater choice for their students. 70 pupils share courses across the two institutions at post-16 level.

A great deal remains to be done to provide adequate vocational choices at any of the 6th forms in the Greater Bath Area.

2.9.2. Performance

In contrast with a strong performance at GCSE, the quality of post-16 learning in terms of attainment and value added, compares much less favourably with national benchmarks. Both average points per pupil and average points per entry are around the national average and there are considerable variations between schools. There are a number of possible reasons that could explain this.

- Post 16 Education in Bath suffers from significant over provision predominately in academic curriculum areas.
- Lack of vocational options provided for pupils who are less suited to academic A' levels
- Limited choices for pupils who attend small sixth forms
- Too many 6th form centres and not enough pupils to make them all viable.
- Weak consortium arrangements between the schools
- Tendency for pupils to prioritise their home institution and their favourite teachers in making post-16 choices rather than looking wider and thinking about where their abilities lie.

A recent study by the Learning & Skills Council (Appendix 7) stated that in Bath:

'There is an overprovision of academic Level 3 (A level) courses and insufficient proof that existing partnership arrangements among schools, colleges and work based learning providers are improving choice and achievement.'

They recommended that the Authority should address the issues of over provision and under performance in Bath suggesting that the number of sixth forms be reduced to three school-based centres, managed in a formal federal structure.

A 6th Form College could greatly improve efficiency and ensure the widest possible choice for 16-19 year old students in the city. Each school was strongly opposed to the possibility of moving post 16 education to one new institution in Bath and there is no evidence to suggest that parents or students have a preference for this.

2.10. The Schools

2.10.1. Beechen Cliff School

Beechen Cliff is a boys 11-18 Foundation school located relatively close to the city centre. All land and buildings are owned by the Governors. Over the last three years the numbers of first preferences expressed for the school have been at or above the planned admission number.

Beechen Cliff has spaces for 1035 students. At January 2006 there were 1040 students on roll comprising 813 in Years 7 to 11 and 227 post-16 students. 53 post-16 students are girls.

The admissions policy is determined by the Governors. Pupils are admitted without reference to ability or aptitude.

The school mainly serves children in the City of Bath with fewer than 30 pupils coming from other Local Authorities.

Beechen Cliff occupies the second largest secondary school site in the Greater Bath Area though its location does impose some restrictions. Narrow residential roads provide the main access route to the school leading to congestion problems at peak times and access difficulties for large buses.

Its buildings are in a poor state of repair and the school is in need of more Technology and Science rooms. Many of the classrooms are undersized.

The school enjoys a separate sixth form block that provides extensive teaching rooms and high quality ICT and study facilities.

Beechen Cliff performs well above national averages obtaining an average of 70% 5 A*-C grades at GCSE over the last three years.

In terms of value added (i.e. when compared to pupils with similar prior attainment at KS2) the progress made by these pupils is well above national averages. Taking account of prior attainment and also a wider range of socio-economic factors, their progress is in line with national averages.

At post-16, over the last three years, average points score per student of 286.6 points has been above national averages. Point score per entry of 79 has also been above national averages.

The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs, and taking GCSE in 2005, was 1.4%.

Overall, the school has a low proportion of students with SEN. At January 2006 there were 17 pupils with statements representing 1.63% of the total numbers on roll.

Phase Two: Secondary Provision in the Greater Bath Area

Authorised absence levels are above national and local averages. Unauthorised absence levels are below national and local averages.

The recent OFSTED report (2004) stated that overall achievement is good. The school's specialism is Technology though the Panel noted whilst visiting the school that the evidence to support this was not as strong as in some of the other schools.

Beechen Cliff and Hayesfield schools have harmonised their calendars and times of the school day, they also hold joint senior management team meetings. Beechen Cliff has few vocational options on offer. The school is strongly opposed to becoming co-educational.

2.10.2. Culverhay School

Culverhay School is a 11-18 community school for boys located at the edge of one of the more deprived areas of Bath. All land and buildings are owned by the Council. Over the last three years the numbers of first preferences expressed for the school have been below the planned admission number.

Culverhay has places for 603 students. At January 2006 there were 459 pupils on roll comprising 409 in Years 7 to 11 and 50 post-16 students. Very few post-16 students are girls.

The admissions policy for the school is determined by the Council. The school admits pupils without reference to ability or aptitude.

The school mainly serves boys from its local community. There is a sizeable minority of boys who come from families with little or no previous success in achieving academic qualifications.

The school is located on the largest school site in the Greater Bath Area with twice as much playing field space than is the recommended minimum. All other Greater Bath Area schools are located on sites that do not reach the minimum required area for playing fields. The site is ideal for expansion. It is also host to community sports facilities, a nursery, a doctor's surgery and Bath Spa University teacher training accommodation. The school buildings themselves are in need of refurbishment or replacement.

The 6th form provision is inadequate and the school has acknowledged that something needs to change to give the post-16 students a more viable option.

Culverhay School performs in line with national averages obtaining an average of 46% 5A*-C grades over the last 3 years.

In terms of value-added (i.e. when compared to pupils with similar prior attainment at KS2), the progress made by these pupils is well above national averages. Taking account of prior attainment and also a wider range of socio-economic factors, their progress is well above national averages.

At post 16, over the last 3 years, average points score per student of 145.1 points has been well below national averages and points per entry 59.7 has been well below national averages.

The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs, and taking GCSE in 2005, was 5.9%.

Overall, the school has a high proportion of students with statements of SEN. At January 2006 there were 26 pupils with statements representing 5.6% of the total numbers on roll.

Authorised and unauthorised absence rates are above national and local averages.

Phase Two: Secondary Provision in the Greater Bath Area

The most recent OFSTED report 2006 states that the school's effectiveness is satisfactory overall, good in years 7-11 but inadequate in post 16.

The school's specialism is Maths and Computing

The school is committed to increasing the range of vocational subjects on offer.

The school expressed a strong desire to serve the entire local community by becoming a co-educational school.

2.10.3. Hayesfield School

Hayesfield is an 11-18 Foundation school for girls enjoying the most central location of all the Bath schools. All land and buildings are owned by the Governors. Over the last three years the numbers of first preferences expressed for the school have been at or below the planned admission number.

Hayesfield has spaces for 1165 pupils. At January 2006 there were 1193 pupils on roll comprising 984 Year 7 to 11 and 209 post-16 students. 26 post-16 students are boys.

The admissions policy is determined by the Governors. Pupils are admitted without reference to ability or aptitude.

The school serves girls from all across the City. 86 pupils come from outside the Authority.

The school's central location means that many of the girls can walk to school. It is situated on a split site with the lower and upper school effectively functioning as separate entities, with teachers crossing the half mile between the two. There is also some pupil movement between the sites to make the most of shared facilities.

The school also enjoys a separate 6th form site that they hope to sell in order to build a new 6th Form Centre on the Upper School site. The school has the largest floor area of all the secondary schools in the Greater Bath Area, in spite of this; much of the accommodation is undersized. There are no playing fields on site. The school playing fields are located at Frome Road approximately 1.7 miles from the Upper School.

Hayesfield School performs above national averages obtaining an average of 61% 5A*-C grades over the last 3 years.

In terms of value-added (i.e. when compared to pupils with similar prior attainment at KS2), the progress made by these pupils is in line with national averages. Taking account of prior attainment and also a wider range of socio-economic factors, their progress is in line with national averages.

At post 16, over the last 3 years, average points score per student of 269.6 points has been in line with national averages and points per entry 86.4 has been well above national averages.

The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs, and taking GCSE in 2005, was 0.5%.

Overall, the school has a low proportion of students with statements of SEN. At January 2006 there were 17 pupils with statements representing 1.4% of the total numbers on roll.

Authorised absence rates are below national and local average. Unauthorised absence rates are at or below national and local averages.

Phase Two: Secondary Provision in the Greater Bath Area

The most recent OFSTED report (2006) said "Hayesfield is a good school with some outstanding features"

The school's specialism is Technology. There was strong evidence of its specialist status.

Hayesfield has few vocational curriculum options on offer, though this is an area they have marked to develop.

The school has a successful 6th form that, as previously mentioned, works closely with Beechen Cliff having harmonised their calendars and times of the school day; they also hold joint senior management team meetings. It is also in early development as an Extended Schools partner with Culverhay School.

Hayesfield School is strongly opposed to becoming a co-educational school.

2.10.4. Oldfield School

Oldfield School is an 11-18 Foundation school for girls situated on the north western edge of the City of Bath. All land and buildings are owned by the Governors. Over the last three years the numbers of first preferences expressed for the school have been at or below the planned admission number.

Oldfield has spaces for 983 pupils. At January 2006 there were 901 pupils on roll comprising 823 Year 7 to 11 and 78 post-16 students. There were no boys in the 6th Form.

The admissions policy is determined by the Governors. The school offers **up to** 10% of its places to girls showing an aptitude in the school's specialisms.

The school serves the north west of the City of Bath. 44% of girls come to the school from within South Gloucestershire and 11% from Bristol.

On the site the school is divided between the main buildings and Penn House, an old house that is used for teaching and for 6th form provision. The site is constrained by Green Belt land and has a public right of way running between the two building areas. The school is a specialist Arts and Sports school, but has no sports hall, poor drama facilities and a small playing field. A new dance studio has recently been completed.

The school is generally lacking in building space with only 75% of the recommended building area, the lowest amongst the schools in the Greater Bath Area. Some of the older classrooms are notably small and many of the remaining temporary buildings are in a poor state of repair and need replacing. The school has no facility to provide hot meals for the pupils although the eating area has been well converted.

The school has been designated a Major Existing Development Site by the Council which allows limited infilling or redevelopment providing certain criteria are met.

Oldfield School performs well above national averages obtaining an average of 70% 5A*-C grades over the last 3 years.

In terms of value-added (i.e. when compared to pupils with similar prior attainment at KS2), the progress made by these pupils is in line with national averages. Taking account of prior attainment and also a wider range of socio-economic factors, their progress is in line with national averages.

At post 16, over the last 3 years, average points score per student of 246.9 points has been in line with national averages and points per entry 81.1 has been above national averages.

There were no pupils with statements of special educational needs taking GCSE in 2005.

Phase Two: Secondary Provision in the Greater Bath Area

Overall, the school has a low proportion of students with statements of SEN. At January 2006 there were 5 pupils with statements representing 0.6% of the total numbers on roll.

Authorised absence and unauthorised absence rates are below national and local averages.

The most recent OFSTED report (2003) stated that “this is a very effective school”

The school’s specialism is Sport and it has recently acquired a second specialism in the Arts.

During the Panel’s investigation the school stated that they were open-minded about how Oldfield fits into the larger picture of the provision of secondary education in the Bath area in the future. The Headteacher stated that Oldfield was a good school and would remain so were it to become co-educational

2.10.5. Ralph Allen School

Ralph Allen School is an 11-18 co-educational Community school situated on the south eastern edge of the City of Bath. It is the only school of its type in the area. All land and buildings are owned by the Council. Over the last three years the numbers of first preferences expressed for the school have been above the planned admission number.

The school has spaces for 1034 pupils. At January 2006 there were 1047 pupils on roll comprising 885 in Year 7 to 11 and 162 post-16 students.

The admissions policy is determined by the Council. Pupils are admitted without reference to ability or aptitude.

Ralph Allen serves a mixed community from a variety of backgrounds. The school is mainly accessed by bus though a number of pupils from close by walk to the school. Ralph Allen takes pupils from an increasingly wide area as pupil numbers in the Authority continue to decline.

Ralph Allen is the designated accessible school in the Greater Bath Area. This means that disabled pupils entering secondary schools in the City are more likely to be offered a place at this school.

The site is one of the smaller school sites in the Greater Bath Area but Ralph Allen is one of the larger schools in the area. Its playing field space is particularly limiting for the size of the school, though the school is located next to a facility owned by the University of Bath that has playing field space. An agreement exists for the use of these playing fields. There are still a number of temporary buildings on the site and the school has found difficulty in housing subject departments together in the same areas. There is no 6th form study area and the common room is in a very poor state of repair.

Ralph Allen School performs above national averages obtaining an average of 60% 5A*-C grades over the last 3 years.

In terms of value-added (i.e. when compared to pupils with similar prior attainment at KS2), the progress made by these pupils is in line with national averages. Taking account of prior attainment and also a wider range of socio-economic factors, their progress is in line with national averages.

At post 16, over the last 3 years, average points score per student of 283 points has been above national averages and points per entry 90.5 has been well above national averages.

Three pupils with statements of special educational needs took GCSE in 2005.

Overall, the school has a low proportion of students with statements of SEN. At January 2006 there were 24 pupils with statements representing 2.2% of the total numbers on roll.

Authorised and unauthorised absence rates are above national and local average.

Phase Two: Secondary Provision in the Greater Bath Area

The most recent OFSTED report (2004) states that “(the school) is an effective school”

The school has a Science specialism and has new science laboratories.

There are some vocational courses being provided but like other schools, they have some way to go to broaden the curriculum in this area.

The school expressed a desire to broaden its partnership working with other schools in the City.

2.10.6. St Gregory's Catholic College

St Gregory's is an 11-16 co-educational Voluntary Aided school situated on the southern edge of the City of Bath. It is the only Catholic secondary school in Bath & North East Somerset. Pupils leaving St Gregory's at 16 get priority entry to St Brendan's 6th Form College. Ownership of land and buildings is shared between the Diocese of Clifton and the Council. Over the last three years the numbers of first preferences expressed for the school have been above the planned admission number.

St Gregory's has spaces for 775 pupils. At January 2006 there were 795 pupils on roll. Approximately 75% of pupils come from within the Authority. 10% of the pupils come from non-Catholic families.

The admissions policy is determined by the Governors. Pupils are currently admitted without reference to ability or aptitude. For admissions in 2007 and beyond the Governors have consulted on the introduction of admission criteria which will allow the school to admit up to 10% of pupils showing an aptitude in the school's specialisms.

Of the 600 pupils who attend from within Bath & NE Somerset, 268 live over 3 miles away and currently receive free transport to the school, funded by the Council.

The size of the site is inadequate for the number of pupils in the school, with only 54% of the recommended site area. The site is restricted on three sides with the only possibility of expansion being an area of land to the south of the school. The school has aspirations to expand to this area and provide more facilities for its performing arts specialism. Recently a new block has replaced 12 temporary classrooms. The school has made the most of its limited playing field area with a large all weather facility.

St Gregory's School performs well above national averages obtaining an average of 71% 5A*-C grades over the last 3 years.

In terms of value-added (i.e. when compared to pupils with similar prior attainment at KS2), the progress made by these pupils is above national averages. Taking account of prior attainment and also a wider range of socio-economic factors, their progress is in line with national averages.

One pupil with a statement of special educational needs took GCSE in 2005 representing 0.6% of the cohort.

Overall, the school has a low proportion of students with statements of SEN. At January 2006 there were 5 pupils with statements representing 0.6% of the total numbers on roll.

Levels of authorised absence are above local and national averages. Levels of unauthorised absence is above the local average but below national average.

A recent OFSTED report (2005) stated that "The overall effectiveness of the college is good"

Phase Two: Secondary Provision in the Greater Bath Area

Its specialisms are in Performing Arts and more recently Languages. It is working towards Religious Education becoming 10% of its curriculum time. Religious Education is a compulsory GCSE. The school also would like to provide more vocational courses but like others has some way to go to broaden the curriculum in this area.

The school enjoys strong links with St Brendan's 6th Form College located just outside the authority boundaries with around 50% of St Gregory's pupils going on to study here at post-16.

The school also enjoys strong links with St Mark's CE School.

2.10.7. St Mark's CofE School

St Mark's is an 11-18 co-educational Voluntary Aided, Church of England school located north east of the city centre. It does not recruit students to post-16 courses. It is the only co-educational school situated north of the river in Bath. It is the only Church of England secondary school in Bath & North East Somerset. Ownership of land and buildings is shared between the Diocese of Bath & Wells and the Council. Over the last three years the numbers of first preferences expressed for the school have been below the planned admission number.

The school has spaces for 540 pupils. At January 2006 there were 346 pupils on roll.

The admissions policy for the school is determined by the Governors. Pupils are admitted without reference to aptitude or ability.

In the first instance the school serves its local community. The school is the closest secondary school for the villages to the east of Bath.

St Mark's site is situated on a sloping site rendering much of its green space unavailable for games use. The buildings are generally in a good condition. The school is well placed for the local community and in this respect works well as an extended school facility. The school makes the most of this opportunity and benefits from older members of the community being present in the school during school hours.

St Mark's School performs below national averages obtaining an average of 35% 5A*-C grades over the last 3 years.

In terms of value-added (i.e. when compared to pupils with similar prior attainment at KS2), the progress made by these pupils is well below national averages. Taking account of prior attainment and also a wider range of socio-economic factors, their progress is in line with national averages.

The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs and taking GCSE in 2005 was 10%

Overall the school has a high proportion of pupils with statements of SEN. At January 2006 there are 20 pupils with statements representing 5.78% of total numbers on roll.

In the past the school has tended to take in a relatively large proportion of excluded pupils from other schools in the City. However, a new policy has recently been put in place which will mean the school takes a more proportionate share. Parents with children with special educational needs and/or behavioural difficulties have tended to choose St Mark's because of its small size and strong pastoral care.

The most recent OFSTED report (2002) states that St Mark's is "a good and effective school".

Pupils leaving St Mark's at 16 get priority entry St Brendan's 6th Form College for post-16 education.

Phase Two: Secondary Provision in the Greater Bath Area

The school has expressed a desire to become a designated small school that is appropriately designed and functions specifically for a small number of children. The school believes that a small school needs to remain in the Greater Bath Area as a choice for parents. Parents with children with special educational needs and/or behavioural difficulties have tended to choose St Mark's because of its small size and strong pastoral care.

Levels of authorised absence are above local and national averages. Levels of unauthorised absence are above national average but below local average

The most recent OFSTED report (2002) states that St Mark's is "a good and effective school".

Its specialism is Business and Enterprise

The school has expressed a desire to become a designated small school that is appropriately designed and functions specifically for a small number of children. The school believes that a small school needs to remain in the Greater Bath Area as a choice for parents.

3. FUTURE PROVISION IN THE GREATER BATH AREA

3.1. The Emerging Area Curriculum

Following the implementation of the 2006 Education Bill there will be changes made to the local curriculum. Nationally the proportion of pupils on vocational courses is expected to rise from 25% to 40% of the total, with implications for the way the curriculum is offered and delivered. There will be an area prospectus of the subject range on offer for all pupils aged from 14-19 years. This will be based on the needs of young people and marketed as one curriculum for each local education authority and published on one website. The implications are that collaboration between the schools will need to be much tighter to enable them to feature in the prospectus. The key to the emerging area curriculum is to avoid duplication of the non-core subjects, particularly more specialist vocational options.

On July 10th James Dyson announced that a national centre of excellence in design engineering and enterprise is to be located in Bath. The centre is to be known as the Dyson School of Design Innovation. Construction of the school will be funded through the Dyson Foundation, DfES and the Learning & Skills Council. The school will serve four distinct groups of students on courses in design engineering and enterprise:

- 14-16 year olds from Bath and North East Somerset
- 16-19 year olds from across the South West
- Adult learners looking to update their skills
- Gifted and talented students who will join residential holiday courses and work alongside experts from industry and academia on genuine engineering challenges

This centre will not be a competitor with schools but supplement and improve existing provision in these specialised curriculum areas. This will also feature as part of the wider curriculum offered to 14-19 year olds through the Area Prospectus.

3.2. Post 16 Education

There is a need for Schools to develop partnership working and demonstrate strong collaborative practice with each other and the City of Bath College. This would ensure that the drivers for provision are the interests of learners rather than the perceived interests of each institution. The young people of Bath & North East Somerset would be able to access more easily a wide range of appropriate courses. A strong consortium between the post 16 institutions should be set up, with common timetabling. The effectiveness of this provision will need to be reviewed and alternatives sought, including the provision of a Bath 6th Form Centre, should it fail to work effectively.

3.3. Principles of the Panel's Vision for Secondary Education in Bath

In considering the shape of future Secondary Education provision in the Greater Bath Area the Panel are reminded of the overarching objectives of the Review of Secondary Education, as expressed in their Terms of Reference.

- To promote high educational standards, improved attendance and improved standards of behaviour
It is a statutory responsibility of the Council to promote high standards. Good attendance and behaviour are a prerequisite to achievement.
- To promote the effective use of resources (money, buildings, land and people)
This aims to ensure that finite resources are focussed on learning and teaching.
- To seek to provide high quality facilities for young people, staff and communities
This incorporates the extended school concept and aims to ensure that secondary school sites and buildings become the centre of services in each area regardless of whether users have school-aged children or not.
- To make the choice of a local school the natural and easy choice for parents / carers whilst recognising the wider area served by Church schools
This aims to increase the number of young people entering their first preference school, improves community cohesion and reduces travel by car
- To ensure that a school is within reasonable walking / cycling distance of home and /or reasonably accessible by public transport.
This aims to ensure that the negative effects of travel to school are mitigated

In their focus on the Greater Bath Area the panel have also agreed on a range of principles specific to Secondary Education in the city. These along with the objectives above should act as the framework for any decisions that are made in the future regarding reorganisation in the Greater Bath Area. No changes are anticipated for several years.

1. Due to the decline of pupil numbers nationally and in Bath & North East Somerset the panel considers that a reduction in the number of secondary places in the city needs to take place.
2. Increase the provision of co-educational secondary places while retaining parental choice for single sex education at one girl's and one boy's school.
3. Retain CofE and Catholic secondary provision in the Greater Bath Area.
4. Encourage equality of opportunity for every child by ensuring that each school achieves high standards.
5. Increase flexibility at 14 by giving pupils a wider curriculum choice beyond the boundaries of their home institution.
6. Make certain that stronger partnerships between secondary schools in the Greater Bath Area are in place.

4. APPENDICES

Appendix 1	Terms of Reference for the Review
Appendix 2	Discussion Paper
Appendix 3	Information leaflet issued to schools, parents and governors in the Greater Bath Area
Appendix 4	Correspondence received by the Panel during this phase of the review.
Appendix 5	Notes of the Contributor Session
Appendix 6	Learning & Skills Council Briefing
Appendix 7	Learning & Skills Council Post 16 Study

Appendices are available separately and copies can be obtained by contacting the Overview and Scrutiny Team, Democratic Services, Guildhall, High Street, Bath, BA1 5AW, or by e-mail to scrutiny@bathnes.gov.uk or by telephoning 01225 396410.

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