

**REPORT TO CABINET – 31 JANUARY 2006**

**ROSEBERY PRIMARY SCHOOL, LOUGHBOROUGH**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES  
(DESIGNATE)**

**PART A**

**Purpose of the report**

1. The purpose of this report is:
  - to make Cabinet aware of the recent publication of Rosebery Primary School's OfSTED Inspection Report;
  - the Director of Children's Services (Designate) proposed actions resulting from the report.

**Recommendation**

2. Members are recommended to agree that consultation be undertaken on the following two options for Rosebery Primary School:
  - ♦ Option A  
The amalgamation of Rosebery Primary School with another primary school in Loughborough
  - ♦ Option B  
The closure of Rosebery Primary School

**Reasons for Recommendation**

3. The OfSTED Inspection Report published on the 5<sup>th</sup> January 2006 has placed Rosebery Primary School in Special Measures without the capacity to improve and the County Council has a responsibility to address the matter.
4. The County Council has responsibility to consider a range of options including:
  - To propose to close a failing school if there is sufficient capacity in the area for the displaced pupils and to meet future demand.
  - Approve proposals for a school to close so that it may be merged with a more successful school, if there is sufficient evidence that the development will have a positive impact on standards.

5. Rosebery Primary School has a number of problems which, in the view of the Director of Children's Services (Designate), question its long term viability. The problems are:
  - The poor quality of education and behaviour as reported by OfSTED and its effect on pupil development and learning
  - The lack of capacity in the school to improve
  - The lack of effective leadership and management
  - The declining numbers in the school
  - The declining numbers across all of Loughborough Primary Schools
  - The age and unsuitability of Rosebery Primary School buildings
6. Rosebery Primary School's OfSTED Inspection Report highlights the poor quality of education. It is imperative that this situation is changed as quickly as possible for pupils currently at the school. The Local Authority has therefore arranged that an Executive Head Teacher will work in the school on a full-time basis for the spring and summer term 2006.
7. The falling school roll, deficit budget and sustainability and condition of the building make it highly unlikely that the Governors will be able to recruit a Head Teacher with the experience and skill necessary to ensure an acceptable quality of education, in the long term.
8. There is a concern that when the Executive Head Teacher finishes at the school the capacity for the school to sustain any improvements may be compromised.
9. In light of this and the need to ensure a good quality of education for pupils at Rosebery Primary School, the Director of Children's Services (Designate) is proposing to consult on amalgamation or closure of the school.
10. Detailed consideration of issues relating to the two options is set out in Part B paragraph 22 and 23.

#### **Timetable for Decision (including Scrutiny)**

11. At this stage the initial consultation is to establish which of the two options will need to be brought forward for further consultation. A report will be submitted to Education Scrutiny on 27<sup>th</sup> February and Cabinet will receive the views of that Committee, and other consultees, on 7<sup>th</sup> March.
12. There will be a further formal consultation for whichever option is preferred. If amalgamation is the preferred option, a school will need to be found and a range of further consultation will take place. If closure is the preferred option, statutory notices will be published which will open formal consultation for a month. The proposal to close the school and any objections received would then go to the School Organisation Committee at the end of April/ early May for a decision. If they are unable to make a decision the proposal is sent to the Adjudicator, who

is appointed by the Secretary of State, for a decision. If this happens the school will not close before the end of the Autumn Term as the process can take up to 3 months from the date of the School Organisation Committee.

### **Policy Framework and Previous Decisions**

13. The recommendations do not affect policy framework and no previous decisions have been made on this matter.

### **Resource Implications**

14. There may be some financial implications dependent on the decisions made, for example capital receipts in the event of closure and capital expenditure on the provision of additional places at another school.
15. There are implications for staff at the school including the need to consult with Trade Unions on any proposed closure or amalgamation.
16. The Director of Resources has been consulted on this report.

### **Circulation and Sensitive Issues**

Mr. M. J. Hunt CC  
Mr. P. G. Lewis CC  
Mr Mike Jones CC  
Mrs. M. E Newton CC  
Mr. N. A. Stork CC

#### **Officers to Contact:**

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## **PART B**

### **Background**

17. Rosebery Primary School is a 4-11 school in Loughborough. The school has enough space for 230 pupils to attend. However, the number of pupils currently attending the school is 155 and decreasing further as parents react to the inspection report. The number of children being born in the Rosebery catchment area is declining as is the number of parents choosing the school for their children's education. The decline in numbers is having an impact on the finances of the school, which is currently in a deficit position. This is forecast to continue as pupil numbers at the school decline further.
18. Although in the short term the County Council will fund intervention to deal with the issues raised by OfSTED, in the longer term the school's capacity to sustain improvement is in doubt.
19. The falling school roll, deficit budget and sustainability and suitability of the building make it highly unlikely that the Governors will be able to recruit a Head Teacher with the experience and skill necessary to ensure an acceptable quality of education.
20. Detailed background information about the school can be found in Appendix A.

### **Proposals and/or Options**

21. There are two proposed options for Rosebery Primary School. These are:
  - ♦ Option A  
The amalgamation of Rosebery Primary School with another primary school in Loughborough
  - ♦ Option B  
The closure of Rosebery Primary School
22. Option A – The amalgamation of Rosebery Primary School with another primary school in Loughborough  
The issues are as follows:
  - ♦ Two schools would need to close – Rosebery Primary School and the amalgamating school. It is not certain that a school and its governing body could be found who would wish to amalgamate with Rosebery.
  - ♦ A new Head Teacher and staff would need to be appointed to the amalgamated school, which means that staff from two schools would be 'At Risk' of redundancy.
  - ♦ Pupils from Rosebery Primary School may still be placed on another school site and Rosebery Primary School site closed dependant on the school organisation arrangements of the governing body.
  - ♦ Or, indeed pupils would remain in a school building which has a number of problems – including lack of playing field, poor acoustics

and lighting, and is not wholly suitable for education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

- ♦ The school could not amalgamate before September 2007, at the earliest, which prolongs uncertainty for staff and pupils. This is because a school to amalgamate with would need to be found and a formal consultation would need to take place.
- ♦ The school would need to find an acting headteacher for the academic year 2006 –2007.
- ♦ Staff and pupils at the school would have at least 18 months of disruption and uncertainty. Staff from the amalgamating school would also face uncertainty over future jobs.
- ♦ There are questions about the capacity of the school to maintain improvements in teaching, behaviour, learning and management once the Executive Head Teacher leaves. A long period of uncertainty is likely to have a high negative impact on the quality of education in the school, the health of the staff and the welfare of pupils.

23. Option B - Closure of Rosebery Primary School

The issues are as follows:

- ♦ Rosebery Primary School would either close at the end of the summer term 2006 or at the end of the autumn term 2006, dependent on the School Organisation Committee decision.
- ♦ Pupils would move from Rosebery Primary School and transfer to other schools through a managed admission and transition process. There are currently around 400 surplus places in primary schools in Loughborough, and 155 pupils at Rosebery Primary School.
- ♦ All pupils at Rosebery Primary School could be accommodated at Robert Bakewell Primary School, which is the school of the proposed Executive Head Teacher. Places are available at all primary schools in Loughborough and although the situation will inevitably change, places will continue to be available at neighbouring primary schools.
- ♦ The quality of education for pupils at Rosebery Primary School would improve with the leadership of the Executive Head Teacher who has agreed to manage the school until the end of the summer term. Pupils would then, dependant on the School Organisation Committee decision, transfer to other schools in Loughborough. All other schools in Loughborough are deemed by OfSTED to provide a better quality of education.

### **Consultation**

24. Consultation has taken place with elected members in the Loughborough area Mr. Mike Jones, Mr. M. J. Hunt and Mrs. Betty Newton. In principle, they agree with the reasons for consulting on the proposal to close the school. They expressed a wish that a further option of amalgamation should be added to the consultation process, although they recognised this was not a preferred option. Mr. Jones asked that federation should also be considered. However, the school governing body has recently rejected this proposal, as not being a viable option for the school.

### **Equal Opportunities Implications**

25. It is proposed that an admission process operates in conjunction with the consultation process to ensure that if a decision to close the school is made all pupils have access to other places at schools in Loughborough.

### **Background Papers**

Rosebery Primary School OfSTED Inspection Report  
Schools Causing Concern Guidance

### **Appendices**

Appendix A – Significant Issues facing the school  
Appendix B - Consultees

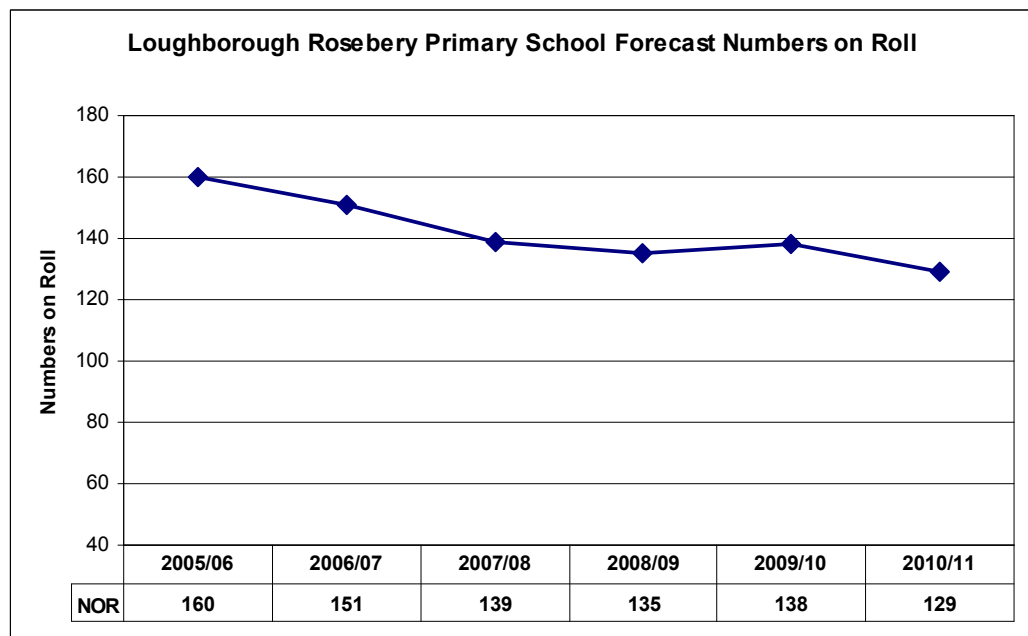
## Appendix A

### Significant issues facing the school

#### Pupil numbers at Rosebery Primary School

Rosebery Primary School currently provides education for 155 pupils in the town of Loughborough. The school is in an area of Loughborough where houses are increasingly owned by landlords and rented to students. There are some new housing developments in the area, however only a further 14 pupils are expected to be gained from current and expected housing developments in the Rosebery catchment area.

The school roll has been falling over the last five years due to the demographic shift of population and parental preference for schools outside the catchment area.



<u>Forecast Produced November 2005</u>						
	<b>Forecast for September:</b>					
	<b>2005/06</b>	<b>2006/07</b>	<b>2007/08</b>	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>2010/11</b>
<b>Number on Roll (NOR)</b>	160	151	139	135	138	129
<b>Number of surplus places</b>	70	79	91	95	92	101
<b>% of school empty</b>	30	34	39.5	41	40	43.9

<u>Catchment Area Statistics</u>	
<b>Pupils at Rosebery Primary School from other catchment areas</b>	55
<b>Pupils going to other schools from the Rosebery catchment area</b>	231

The figures for the predicted number on roll at Rosebery Primary School over the next five years are based on the current pattern of parental choice against the number of pupils living within the catchment area.

The map at the back of this paper indicates where pupils who attend Rosebery Primary School live.

#### Special measures without the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school

Rosebery Primary School was inspected between the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> November 2005. Her Majesty's Chief Inspector has published a report that states that he is of the opinion that Rosebery Primary School requires special measures because it is failing to give pupils an acceptable standard of education and the people responsible for leading, managing and governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

The OfSTED Inspection Report states that the school provides inadequate education for its pupils.

#### Behavioural issues in the school

OfSTED judges that the school has significant behavioural issues that are not being consistently addressed by staff. They say that in too many classes, pupils' behaviour is unsatisfactory and this affects the learning of others and that although pupils are supervised at breaks and lunchtimes they are not always prevented from behaving in ways that could cause hurt to themselves or others.

#### Leadership and Management of the school

There has been a high turnover of senior managers in recent years. The school has had two Head Teachers and an acting Head Teacher during a 5 year period. An acting Head Teacher and acting Deputy Head Teacher have been in post since the beginning of the autumn term 2005. The substantive Headteacher left Rosebery Primary School at the end of the academic year 2004-2005. Governors have been unable to appoint a successor.

The falling school roll, deficit budget and sustainability and condition of the building make it highly unlikely that the Governors will be able to recruit a Headteacher with the experience and skills necessary to ensure an acceptable quality of education.

OfSTED deems the Leadership and Management of Rosebery Primary School to be inadequate.

#### The financial situation

Rosebery Primary School has a deficit budget, due mainly to the falling number on roll. A plan to deal with this deficit has been agreed with the Local Authority, however, there is a significant probability that a deficit budget will continue and increase due to decreasing numbers of pupils attending the school.

### The school building

Rosebery Primary School is a nineteenth century building of brick construction. The design of the building means it is not cost-effective to change its layout. The school was built with the purpose of educating pupils two centuries ago. It is becoming increasingly difficult for the school to manage the modern day curriculum within the confines of the building.

A Suitability Survey undertaken by the Local Authority in conjunction with the Head Teacher indicates that many of the classrooms lack adequate heating and have poor acoustics and lighting.

There is no field attached to the school and the playing area is relatively small. The nearest playing field is five minutes away, which pupils are required to walk to for physical activity. There is no car park for the school increasing the congestion of the streets at the beginning and close of the day.

### The availability of places at other schools in Loughborough

All schools in Loughborough have some surplus places.

Since 1996, the number of primary aged pupils has dropped significantly. In 1996 there were 4543 pupils attending 15 primary schools in Loughborough. The number of pupils in Loughborough schools in 2005 is 3975, a drop of 568 pupils. The reduction in pupils being educated in Loughborough schools roughly equates to one and half primary schools.

### Process for admission to alternative schools

Although the decision to close Rosebery Primary School has not been made, it is important that parents can make a preference for another school to prepare for the possibility of the School Organisation Committee agreeing its closure.

Parents would be asked to complete and return a preference form by 10<sup>th</sup> March 2006. Offers would be made on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2006 if the School Organisation Committee agrees the proposal to close Rosebery Primary School. Parents will be able to appeal against the decisions.

For the purpose of this admission exercise it is proposed that Robert Bakewell Primary School would become the catchment area school for pupils at Rosebery and those children entering the school in September 2006.

## **Appendix B**

### **Consultees**

- Parents, staff and Governors of Rosebery Primary School
- Governors and Senior Management Teams of:
  - Rendell
  - Thorpe Acre Junior
  - Thorpe Acre Infant
  - Booth Wood
  - Outwoods Edge
  - Robert Bakewell
  - Mountfields Lodge
  - Hollywell
  - Shelthorpe
  - Cobden
  - Stonebow
  - Sacred Heart
  - Loughborough C of E
  - St Mary's Catholic
  - Hathern
  - Quorn Rawlins
  - Shepshed High
  - Humphrey Perkins High School
  - Burton on the Wolds
  - Christchurch St Peters
  - Cossington
  - Hall Orchard
  - Highgate
  - Sileby Redlands
  - Seagrave
  - St Bartholomews
  - St Leonards
  - Wymeswold
  - Woodhouse Eaves, St Paul's
  - Burleigh Community College
  - Limehurst High
  - The Garendon
  - Woodbrook Vale
  - De Lisle RC
  
- Residents of the area – through advert in paper and information in libraries in Loughborough and St Peter's Community Centre
- Elected members
- EYDCP
- Voluntary and Community Groups using the school
- Health professionals etc. using the school
- MPs
- District, Parish, Community Councils etc
- Contractual users of premises
- ♦ The Diocesan Boards