

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Director of Education and Cultural Services

Children's Services Committee: 17 May 2006

Subject: Progress report on work relating to the closure of Braidfield High School

1. Purpose

- 1.1** To provide members with a progress report on work relating to the closure of Braidfield High School in June 2006 and the transfer of pupils, staff and resources to Clydebank High School in August 2006.

2. Background

- 2.1** At the meeting of the Children's Services Committee on 15 March 2006, it was agreed that Braidfield High School should close at the end of school session 2005/06 and that, from August 2006, the delineated catchment area of Clydebank High School be redefined to include pupils previously zoned to attend Braidfield High School.
- 2.2** The Children's Services Committee further instructed the Director of Education and Cultural Services to provide future meetings of the Committee with detailed progress reports on work relating to the closure of Braidfield High School and the transfer of pupils, staff and resources to Clydebank High School.

3. Main Issues

3.1 General

- 3.1.1** Braidfield and Clydebank High Schools are a standing agenda item for the weekly Directorate meetings.
- 3.1.2** There have been weekly meetings involving both Head Teachers and the link Head of Service to ensure that all issues are discussed and taken forward.
- 3.1.3** Joint meetings of the Senior Management Teams of both schools have been held.
- 3.1.4** There is good ongoing informal liaison between staff of both schools.

3.2 Staffing

- 3.2.1** Additional staffing has been in place since April 2006 to assist with additional workload issues for both schools arising from the closure of Braidfield.

- 3.2.2** A new Senior Management Team structure for Clydebank High School has been agreed and the personnel involved have been identified.
- 3.2.3** Some additional Principal Teacher posts have been agreed and advertised; interviews for these posts will be held during May.
- 3.2.4** Provisional job-sizing has taken place for all new posts
- 3.2.5** Early retirement packages have been offered to some staff in line with agreed procedures; some staff have accepted these packages and will retire in August.
- 3.2.6** In line with Departmental policy on the staffing of schools affected by closure or amalgamation, an enhanced staffing of 3 FTE teachers has been agreed for Clydebank High School for the next two years.
- 3.2.7** Further teaching vacancies will be advertised during the month of May.
- 3.2.8** Almost all teacher staffing issues have been resolved; any remaining issues are nearing resolution.
- 3.2.9** Some specific issues concerning the deployment of clerical, technical, support, janitorial, catering and cleaning staff remain under discussion; however, the Department is confident that all outstanding issues will be resolved over the next month.
- 3.2.10** Discussions are ongoing to determine the level of janitorial, clerical and cleaning support which will be required to service the groups which will continue to be housed in the Braidfield High School building following the closure of the school.

3.3 Curriculum

- 3.3.1** Joint meetings have been held concerning course choice for pupils in S2, S4 and S5.
- 3.3.2** Course choices have now been made by pupils in both schools.
- 3.3.3** The timetable for 2006/07 is nearing completion and will be checked by an independent timetabling expert.
- 3.3.4** Joint meetings of the Head Teachers of Clydebank High School and Braidfield High School clusters have been held.
- 3.3.5** There is regular ongoing liaison on curricular matters between Principal Teachers in both schools and between the 2 Senior Management Teams.

3.4 Resources

- 3.4.1** A revised Directorate circular on procedures for the closure of schools has been issued to both schools.
- 3.4.2** This circular formed the basis for a meeting involving a Head of Service, senior staff from both schools, the Section Leader (Resources) and representatives from the relevant sections of the Department of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services (HRES). Tasks were allocated and timescales agreed to ensure that all necessary measures will be in place to facilitate the closure of Braidfield High School and the transfer of resources to Clydebank High School or, where appropriate, to other establishments.
- 3.4.3** A Principal Teacher in Braidfield High School has volunteered to coordinate the transfer and disposal of physical resources from the school.
- 3.4.4** The Resources Section in the Department of Education and Cultural Services is coordinating the transfer of materials and furniture, the provision of packing materials and the supply of skips for the disposal of obsolete items.
- 3.4.5** All staff in Braidfield High School have been supplied with 1 gigabyte pen drives to facilitate the secure transfer of teaching and other materials stored in electronic form.
- 3.4.6** Departments from both schools are in regular contact to identify resources for transfer.

3.5 Accommodation

- 3.5.1** The Head Teacher of Clydebank High School, in discussion with the school's Property Officer, the Head of Service (Schools Estate) and the Manager of the Schools Estate, has identified areas of the school which require to be adapted in order to accommodate additional pupils, staff and physical resources.
- 3.5.2** Significant adaptations have already been undertaken on the basement area of Clydebank High School (to create additional office space) and on the main staffroom; further work will be completed on both these areas over the summer.
- 3.5.3** Additional networking has been installed in Clydebank High School.
- 3.5.4** Further adaptations have been approved for Clydebank High School, including the creation of an additional science laboratory, a new computing classroom, general classrooms adapted from former office areas, additional storage spaces and new pupil toilets.
- 3.5.5** It is anticipated that all adaptations will be completed before the start of the 2006/2007 school session.

- 3.5.6** Discussions are ongoing to make the necessary arrangements to move other agencies which use the Braidfield High School building to a single secure wing of the school and to ensure that areas of the school which will not be used are also made secure.

3.6 Roads and Traffic Management

- 3.6.1** Instructions have been issued for improvements to the road configuration and to traffic management arrangements around Clydebank High School, including: a new pelican crossing; a new bus bay; a new drop-off point for parents; a mini-roundabout; additional staff parking places within the school grounds. Plans are progressing and work will be carried out during the summer holiday period. It is anticipated that all work will be completed in time for the start of the new school session.
- 3.6.2** Dialogue is ongoing between the Department of Education and Cultural Services and school transport providers to ensure that all necessary transport arrangements are in place in good time for the start of the 2006/07 school session.

3.7 Parents

- 3.7.1** Parents of pupils in both schools have been kept fully informed of progress via newsletters issued by the Head Teachers.
- 3.7.2** A joint School Board meeting was held recently.

3.8 Integration Activities

- 3.8.1** Joint staff in-service training has been agreed.
- 3.8.2** The Head Teacher of Clydebank High School will meet all Braidfield departments separately and will lead a joint staff meeting in May.
- 3.8.3** A highly successful joint meeting of both Pupil Councils was held at which a range of end-of term activities was agreed.
- 3.8.4** Plans are in place for induction days in Clydebank High School for the P7 pupils of all associated primary schools.
- 3.8.5** Induction days at Clydebank High School for the pupils currently in S1, S2 and S3 in Braidfield have been arranged.
- 3.8.6** It has been agreed that pupils currently in S4 and S5 in Braidfield High School who intend to stay on at school will transfer to Clydebank High School at the end of their study leave in June and will begin their Higher and Intermediate courses alongside current Clydebank High School pupils.
- 3.8.7** A range of joint sporting and other activities for pupils has been organised for the month of June.

3.8.8 A residential field trip to Arran has been organised for S4 pupils from both schools who intend to study Higher or Intermediate Geography next session.

3.8.9 A competition has been held, involving pupils from both high schools and from the associated primary schools, to design a new Clydebank High School tie. It is hoped that the adoption of this new tie from the start of the new school session will help to create a shared identity for all pupils.

4. Personnel Issues

4.1 All personnel issues are dealt with in section 3.2 of this report.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 The final cost of building adaptations is not yet known. It should be noted, however, that many of the additional costs involved will be offset by savings which will accrue from the closure of Braidfield High School.

6. Conclusions

6.1 Staff from both schools have worked hard over the last two months, along with centrally deployed staff, to ensure that the process of closing Braidfield High School and of transferring pupils, staff and resources to Clydebank High School progresses as smoothly as possible.

6.2 Good progress has been made on all fronts to ensure that all transfer arrangements are in place in good time.

6.3 It is anticipated that all necessary building and roads adaptations will be completed in time for the start of the 2006/07 school session.

7. Recommendations

7.1 Members of the Children's Services Committee are asked to note the contents of this report and the fact that a further progress report will be provided to the next meeting of the Committee.

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Background Papers: Paper submitted to the Children's Services Committee on 15 March 2006 recommending the closure of Braidfield High School

Minutes of the Children's Services Committee of 15 March 2006

Wards Affected: Whitecrook, Dalmuir Central, Mountblow, Parkhall, Linnvale/Drumry, Kilbowie, Kilbowie West, Faifley, Hardgate, Duntocher, Bowling/Milton/Old Kilpatrick.