



Welcome to the second BSF newsletter. Things have moved on since the Spring issue was published. Schools are now well on the way towards developing their individual strategies for how education will look in Stevenage. If you have any questions please email me at bsf@hertscc.gov.uk **Lindsay Martin, BSF Programme Director.**



HAVE YOUR SAY

Public consulted on Stevenage school places

Building Schools for the Future offers a unique opportunity to invest £145 million in the future education of all the secondary age school children in Stevenage. This is our chance to make the vision for education that has been developed with the heads, the council and others involved in education a reality - so it is vitally important that the right number of places and schools are provided in the right locations. Those involved so far have already agreed we need fewer mainstream schools with larger sixth forms and more specialisms. They also wanted closer links between mainstream and special schools.

To make these changes to school sizes or locations the

County Council is required by law to undertake a review of secondary school places and consult the public on the options.

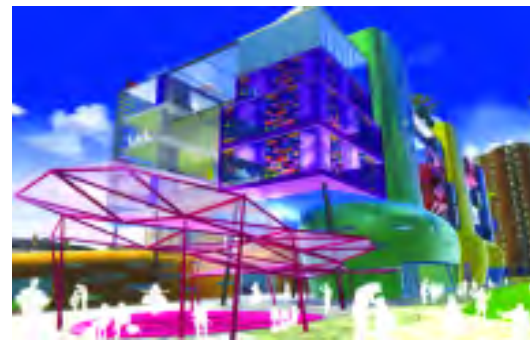
Although the review process will create a number of challenges for the town, with potential rebuilding, relocation and school closure, it is important that the money is invested well.

The public consultation is your chance to have your say on the future of education in Stevenage. The public consultation closes on 7 August.

Full details and an online response form can be found at www.hertsdirect.org/csfc consultations.

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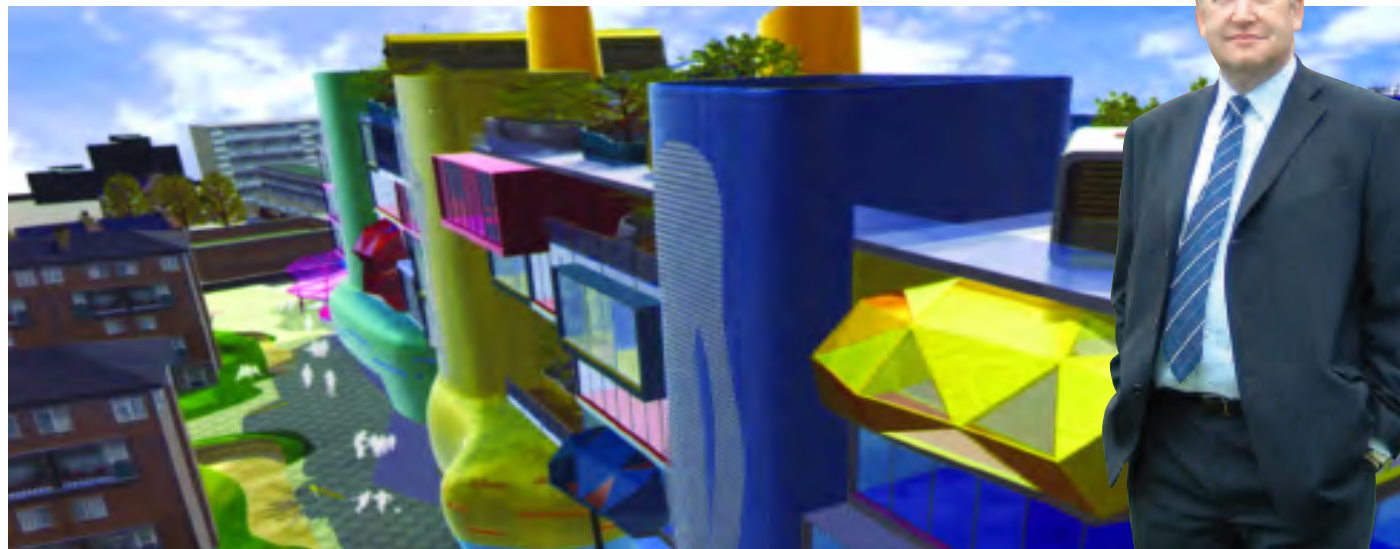
- what BSF means for Stevenage?
- new technology
- ICT and BSF



BSF is short for...

Building Schools for the Future is a Government investment in secondary school estates to transform the learning experience of children. Funding will be rolled out across Hertfordshire over the next 10 – 15 years starting in Stevenage. The money will be used to renew, refurbish or rebuild the town's schools coordinated through an area review, which is currently consulting the public on their size and location. The schools are currently looking at what facilities are required to deliver their individual visions of education. www.hertsdirect.org/scholearn/bsf

JONATHAN BLOCK HEADTEACHER AT THE THOMAS ALLEYNE SCHOOL IN STEVENAGE TALKS ABOUT THE IMPACT BSF WILL HAVE IN STEVENAGE.



HOW WILL OUR SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE LOOK?

We will be working with the architects to interpret our ambitious plans to transform learning for our youngsters. At this stage we can only imagine what they will look like – but we know for sure what we need to achieve. We need to make the facilities fit the curriculum for the wider needs of the students and local community.

This might mean having areas dedicated to specialist subjects, space for pastoral care, rooms for community use, dining facilities available all day or landscaped areas outside, which provide quiet areas for students who don't necessarily want to be in a playground kicking a ball around.

WHY IS THIS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY?

Many of our schools are old and not suitable for modern education. Parts of The Thomas Alleyne School are 450 years old! As we needed better facilities these were added piecemeal, as and

when we could afford them. Our new and remodelled schools will provide customised facilities to fit around our vision for education in Stevenage. State-of-the-art technology will be standard. I hope things like interactive white boards, laptops, PDAs and internet access will be the basics of every teaching area. Plus, all new facilities will automatically be compliant with disabled access regulations.

WHAT ABOUT THE TIME LEADING UP TO IT?

It's natural that parents and staff will be worried about the effect on the education of students now. These are justifiable concerns, but all the heads are utterly determined that standards will not fall. I can only speak for Thomas Alleyne but we will not be run down and left to go to rack and ruin!

CAN EACH SCHOOL DO WHAT THEY LIKE?

Individual schools have a huge amount of flexibility in how they translate their individual strategy

into the buildings to meet the needs of their school and community, but every school will embrace wider government policies and initiatives such as the 14-19 curriculum, extended school services and workforce reform. More importantly it will give us the opportunity to address the Every Child Matters agenda.

WILL SCHOOL EVER BE THE SAME AGAIN?

Maybe not! This is our chance to think creatively and question every part of school life. Why should we start at 9 and finish at 4? What is to stop a 6th former working from home for a day or one teacher delivering a lesson to 3 other supervised locations through the power of technology? Will we need textbooks if resources are on line? It's definitely an exciting time and we need to make the most of this opportunity - we won't get a second chance at this project.

BEAM ME UP SCOTTY

Looking into the future and predicting where technology is going to go has always been rather like looking into a crystal ball. Try as we may to envisage the future of ICT, it develops so quickly and takes so many twists and turns that it usually takes us by surprise.

But one thing is for sure: If the new technologies that are being used in today's classrooms are anything to go by, ICT in the schools of the future is going to be very exciting, and will have an enormous impact on the way we teach and learn.

So what are the new technologies that we might see as part of every day life in the classroom of the future? Once the standard means of communication between Captain Kirk and his crew stranded on a far off planet, it is now possible to Video Conference from the

classroom. This enables learners to communicate in real time with teachers, other professionals and experts, museums, other schools at home and abroad and other young people, no matter how far away they are. They can learn together, collaborate on a virtual whiteboard and share computer applications together.

You will have seen Chris Tarrant's contestants asking the audience to vote by means of remote handsets. Well, teachers are now equipping their pupils with voting systems in order to be able to ask everyone in the class a question, and record their answers. Far more than a game-show gimmick, these systems offer a hugely powerful tool for assessment, as well as engaging the learners and making sure the teacher can monitor everyone's understanding.

Super powerful visualisers enable the teacher to zoom in on tiny objects with immense clarity and show the image to the whole class. There's never been an easier way to share pupils work, observe objects, work on activities as a whole class and demonstrate fine motor skills such as handwriting. You can even capture digital images and video clips.

But perhaps the biggest impact we will see on the way ICT enhances learning, is from handheld technologies. The fact is that today young people are walking around with tiny devices that have more computing power than the room-sized computers of yesteryear. These might be mobile phones, MP3 players or handheld gaming devices. By embracing the power of these gadgets we can open up the door to pupils having their own personal learning tool, which goes with them beyond the school gates to extend their learning. They will be able to sit on the bus, download and listen to a podcast of the latest revision tips, make some notes while they listen and upload these to their personal online learning space, all from a device that fits in their pencil case. In fact, the devices of the future might well replace their pencil case!



ict and bsf

Already our schools are seeing a transformation in teaching and learning, with Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) being used to offer pupils a wide selection of resources, and giving teachers the ability to present learning in a variety of ways. Who could have imagined 20 years ago that modern foreign language pupils would use live video conferencing in class to talk to students in

other countries, or that science experiments could be recorded and reviewed later to support revision work. This is happening now, and with BSF investment the opportunities are there to explore the full potential of ICT in education.



The use of ICT in education can have a hugely positive effect on standards in schools.

Research has shown that when used appropriately, pupils have higher standards of attainment, are more engaged with learning, are more motivated to stay in education and even attend school more regularly.

Hertfordshire has an excellent record in harnessing technology to support learning and teaching. Our schools have an outstanding record in trialling and utilising technologies - schools already use web technologies, interactive whiteboards, video conferencing, email, video and image facilities.

Schools in Hertfordshire are currently trialling a Learning Platform (LP), which will enable teachers and learners to access resources and information about learning from any location at any time. This also has the potential to provide secure information about attendance, assessment and current work topics to parents and carers from any internet connected computer.

BSF will enable us to develop this further and help parents be more involved in the learning of their children. With Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs) students too will be able to access their school work and activities at any time or place through the internet. They can join learning communities in other schools or countries, such as gifted and talented groups for science, and extend or support their learning through discussions and focussed tasks.

Update on the timetable for Stevenage

Autumn 2007

Stevenage schools work on their individual school strategies for change with the design teams. HCC submit a 'Strategy for Change Part 2' document to the DCSF (replaces DfES) for approval to proceed to the next stage.

Spring 2008

An outline business case sets out detailed estate and building options that are agreed following the Stevenage Area Review. The procurement process begins.

Late 2009

Building work is expected to start.

FURTHER INFORMATION

To contact a member of the BSF team: please call **01992 555869** or email **bsf@hertscc.gov.uk**

For further information on Building Schools for the Future please visit:

www.hertsdirect.org/scholearn/bsf



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