

## **Consultation proposal by Glasgow City Council**

### **Report by Education Scotland, addressing educational aspects of the proposal to re-align catchment areas for primary-aged children attending Ashpark, Cleeves, Crookston Castle, Darnley and Gowanbank Primary Schools in Greater Pollok.**

#### **Context**

This report from Education Scotland is required under the terms of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*. It has been prepared by HM Inspectors in accordance with the terms of the Act. The purpose of this report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of the council's consultation proposal. Section 2 of this report sets out the views expressed by consultees during the initial consultation process. Section 3 sets out HM Inspectors' consideration of the educational aspects of the proposal and the views expressed by consultees. Section 4 summarises HM Inspectors' overall view of the proposal. Upon receipt of this report, the Act requires the council to consider it and then prepare its final consultation report. The council's final consultation report should include a copy of this report and must contain an explanation of how it has reviewed the initial proposal, including a summary of points raised during the consultation and the council's response to them. The council has to publish its final consultation report three weeks before it takes its final decision.

#### **1. Introduction**

1.1 Glasgow City Council proposes to re-align catchment areas for primary-aged children attending Ashpark, Cleeves, Crookston Castle, Darnley and Gowanbank Primary Schools in Greater Pollok with implementation from August 2015.

1.2 The report from Education Scotland is required under the terms of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*. It has been prepared by HM Inspectors in accordance with the terms of the Act.

1.3 HM Inspectors undertook the following activities in considering the educational aspects of the proposal:

- attendance at the public meeting held on 24 March 2014 in connection with the council's proposals;
- consideration of all relevant documentation provided by the council in relation to the proposal, specifically the educational benefits statement and related consultation documents, written and oral submissions from parents and others; and
- visits to the site of Ashpark, Cleeves, Crookston Castle, Darnley and Gowanbank Primary Schools, including discussion with relevant consultees.

#### 1.4 HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for children and young people of the Ashpark Primary School, Cleeves Primary School, Crookston Castle Primary School, Darnley Primary School and Gowanbank Primary School; children likely to become pupils within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper; and other children and young people in the council area;
- any other likely effects of the proposal;
- how the council intends to minimise or avoid any adverse effects that may arise from the proposal; and
- benefits which the council believes will result from implementation of the proposal, and the council's reasons for coming to these beliefs.

## 2. Consultation process

2.1 Glasgow City Council undertook the initial consultation on its proposals with reference to the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*.

2.2 Glasgow City Council received 13 responses in total to the proposal. Of these two made no comment. Just over half of those who responded to the consultation were against the proposal. Of those who were against the proposal very few sighted a specific objection. Those that did were mainly concerned about siblings attending two different schools as a result of re-aligning the catchment areas.

2.3 The headteachers of Ashpark Primary School, Cleeves Primary School, Crookston Castle Primary School, Darnley Primary School and Gowanbank Primary School are positive about the proposal. Overall, they feel the proposal addresses and resolves current catchment area issues. It will reduce potential stress for parents over numerous placing requests and make enrolment easier. They are confident they have the capacity to accommodate any increase in numbers. They do not see any detriment to the staff or local community. There are some concerns around increasing traffic flow and related parking issues and the impact this might have on the safety of the children.

2.4 Children from Ashpark Primary School, Cleeves Primary School, Crookston Castle Primary School, Darnley Primary School and Gowanbank Primary School who met with HM Inspectors were fully aware of and supportive of the proposal. They welcomed the opportunity to meet new people, make new friends and increase social interaction. Children in Ashpark were concerned about the potential increase in traffic and the need for effective traffic management to be in place.

2.5 Parents from Ashpark Primary School, Cleeves Primary School, Darnley Primary School and Gowanbank Primary School who met with HM Inspectors were positive about the proposal. They were confident that the council would take the needs of families into account when making decisions. The majority of parents were in favour of re-aligning the catchment areas. They felt it was long overdue. Ashpark and Cleeves Parent Councils and wider community representatives from Darnley are supportive of the proposal. However, parent representatives expressed concerns regarding impact of increased traffic on safety of children, the need for safe walking routes and the need to ensure that school staffing numbers match any increase in pupil numbers.

2.6 The majority of teaching staff from Ashpark Primary School, Cleeves Primary School, Crookston Castle Primary School, Darnley Primary School and Gowanbank Primary School welcomed the proposal. They recognised the need to re-align catchment areas to take account of local planning developments. However, the majority of teaching staff who met with HM Inspectors expressed concerns about the impact of increased rolls on current accommodation, traffic management and parking. A particular concern was the loss of valued flexible space such as art rooms to accommodate additional classrooms.

### **3. Educational aspects of the proposal**

3.1 Glasgow City Council's proposal provides a clear rationale for responding to the impact of new housing developments on school rolls in the Greater Pollok area. The Greater Pollok area has in recent years benefitted from significant housing developments. This has resulted in an increase in demand for primary places. This demand is forecast to increase as more new housing is released over the coming decade. The proposed re-zoning addresses an imbalance in occupancy based on predicted increases and decreases across the Greater Pollok primary school estate. By ensuring all schools have a sustainable and viable pupil roll this will ensure that effective teacher staffing levels are maintained. The proposal removes the need for shared catchment areas. This offers improved clarity to parents. The proposals do not impact adversely on children or other users of the schools either currently or in the future. The council has engaged in a comprehensive consultation exercise inviting responses from a wide range of stakeholders and interested parties.

3.2 The council has consulted with a wide range of stakeholders and is keen to continue to do so. It now needs to manage the concerns raised by children, parents and staff regarding traffic management and safety and impact on existing space. It also needs to address the concerns of those parents with children at an existing school whose siblings may be re-zoned to attend a different school.

#### **4. Summary**

The proposal by Glasgow City Council to re-align catchment areas for primary-aged children attending Ashpark Primary School, Cleeves Primary School, Crookston Castle Primary School, Darnley Primary School and Gowanbank Primary School in Greater Pollok has clear educational benefits. It addresses any imbalances in rolls whilst meeting forecast increased demand for primary places due to local housing developments. It also removes shared catchment areas whilst ensuring all schools have viable and sustainable pupil rolls. In taking forward the proposal the council needs to continue to work with parents, children and staff to address any concerns.

**HM Inspectors  
Education Scotland  
June 2014**