

# **Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by Glasgow City Council to relocate Kirkriggs Primary School into spare capacity within Toryglen Primary School and then relocate Linburn Academy into the vacated Kirkriggs Primary School building.**

## **1. Introduction**

1.1 This report from Education Scotland has been prepared by HM Inspectors in accordance with the terms of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* and the amendments contained in the *Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014*. The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of Glasgow City Council's proposal to relocate Kirkriggs Primary School into spare capacity within Toryglen Primary School and then relocate Linburn Academy into the vacated Kirkriggs Primary School building. Section 2 of the report sets out brief details of the consultation process. Section 3 of the report sets out HM Inspectors' consideration of the educational aspects of the proposal, including significant 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, in finalising the proposal, it has reviewed the initial proposal, including a summary of points raised during the consultation process and the council's response to them. The council has to publish its final consultation report three weeks before it takes its final decision. Where a council is proposing to close a school, it needs to follow all legislative obligations set out in the 2010 Act, including notifying Ministers within six working days of making its final decision and explaining to consultees the opportunity they have to make representations to Ministers.

### 1.2 HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for children and young people of the schools involved; any other users; 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
- the educational benefits the council believes will result from implementation of the proposal, and the council's reasons for coming to these beliefs.

### 1.3 In preparing this report, HM Inspectors undertook the following activities:

- attendance at the public meetings held on 19, 21 and 22 October 2015 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 Kirkriggs Primary School, Toryglen Primary School and Linburn Academy, including discussion with relevant consultees.

## **2. Consultation Process**

2.1 Glasgow City Council undertook the consultation on its proposal with reference to the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* and the amendments in the *Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014*.

2.2 The proposal paper was posted on the council's website. The formal consultation was scheduled to run from 5 October 2015 until 17 December 2015. At the request of parents the consultation period was extended until 20 December 2015. Due to a technical problem, Glasgow City Council was unable to provide Education Scotland with a summary of all consultation responses within the original time scale, leading to a further delay.

2.3 Public meetings were held in all three schools affected by the proposal. Two parents and ten school staff attended the public meeting in Toryglen Primary School. Concerns were expressed about the proposed layout of the campus and also the impact of the proposal on any future increases to the Toryglen Primary School roll. Forty parents and interested stakeholders attended the public meeting in Kirkriggs Primary School and a further 44 attended the meeting in Linburn Academy. Almost all of those attending opposed the proposal.

2.4 The council received 198 responses from a wide range of stakeholders. Of these, eight supported the proposal and 190 were in opposition.

2.5 The council took appropriate steps to consult with staff, children and young people in all three establishments though a few parents reported that they had experienced difficulties accessing the online consultation. During the consultation period, council officers met with parents' representatives to explore possible alternatives to the proposal.

## **3. Educational Aspects of Proposal**

3.1 Glasgow City Council's proposal has a number of potential educational benefits. In its report in 2013, Education Scotland identified that accommodation at Linburn Academy required improvement. As a result of the council's proposal, young people at Linburn Academy would benefit from a larger, more modern teaching environment with a separate gym and lunch hall and a large library. This has the potential to enhance young people's learning experiences. The proposal will also help the council secure best value by addressing capacity issues in its school estate. Toryglen Primary School is approximately 50% under-occupied and projections indicate that the roll will not increase over the next five years.

3.2 A very small number of parents from Toryglen Primary School met with HM Inspectors. They were not supportive of the proposal. They did not see clear

educational benefits for their children nor fully appreciate the benefits which an integrated school campus might bring. Parents expressed concerns about the possible impact of increased traffic on children who walk to school.

3.3 Almost all Toryglen Primary School management, teaching and support staff who met with HM Inspectors did not support the proposal. They did not see clear educational benefits for their pupils. They acknowledged that the school currently has spare capacity but had concerns about moving all mainstream classes to the upper floor. Though staff expressed some support for the integration of mainstream and provision for children with additional support needs within a single campus, they had fears that the individual identity of their own school may be adversely affected.

3.4 All the children from Toryglen Primary School who met with HM Inspectors were supportive of the proposal. They were enthusiastic about making new friends and increasing the pool of children who might participate in sporting activities. They identified that such a move offered the opportunity for teachers from both schools to work together to the benefit of all pupils. Pupils and teachers shared concerns about the possible impact of increased road traffic around the school and greater congestion in shared areas such as entrance ways, lunch hall and the playground.

3.5 Almost all parents from Kirkriggs Primary School who met with HM Inspectors opposed the proposal. They did not feel that there were any additional education benefits from the proposal. Almost all parents were concerned about the possible negative impact which a transition to the new integrated campus might have on their children's social and emotional development. Parents also had concerns that there may be fewer facilities and resources in the proposed campus.

3.6 Almost all Kirkriggs Primary School staff who met with HM Inspectors opposed the proposal and did not feel that it offered educational benefits. They had concerns that the needs of children from Kirkriggs Primary School would not be met so effectively in an integrated campus and they too had concerns about the possible loss of identity of their own school. They also had concerns that well-established community networks which have enhanced children's learning experiences would have to be re-established in the new community.

3.7 Almost all parents from Linburn Academy who met with HM Inspectors opposed the proposal. They did have some concerns about the quality of the current accommodation in Linburn Academy but would like the council to consider alternative options. Some parents had concerns over an increase in travel time which would result from the proposal. The council is able to demonstrate, however, that while some young people would have further to travel, others would have less and that these changes are, overall, neutral in terms of travel times. Parents also had concerns that the well-established school community, including a popular after-school club, and work experience links may be affected.

3.8 Almost all Linburn Academy teaching staff felt that there are educational benefits from the proposal. They were confident that they will be able to establish new community networks and capitalise on existing ones at Kirkriggs Primary School and that young people will benefit from an improved learning environment. Non-teaching staff who met with HM Inspectors did not support the proposal.

#### **4. Summary**

Glasgow City Council's proposal has a number of potential educational benefits. Young people from Linburn Academy will benefit from access to a larger, more modern teaching environment and this will help to enhance their learning experiences. The proposal will help the council secure best value by making effective and efficient use of its school estate. There is potential for teachers to be able to collaborate across establishments and for staff and pupils to benefit from improved integration and inclusion of provision. Most stakeholders oppose the proposal and, in taking this forward, the council needs to address their concerns. In particular, the council should clarify how the integrated campus will provide educational benefits for all pupils and address any concerns over individual schools' identities, accommodation and resources. It also needs to work with key stakeholders to ensure that appropriate transition measures are in place to support all children and young people affected by the proposal. In taking forward the proposal the council should also set out clearly how it intends to work with key stakeholders to address the issues identified above.

**HM Inspectors  
Education Scotland  
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