Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by Glasgow City Council to establish a new non-denominational primary school within the north of the city and to amend the catchment areas for Cadder, Caldercuilt, Kelvindale, Parkview, Highpark, Dunard, Saracen, Oakgrove and Royston Primary Schools.

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 establish a new non-denominational primary school within the north of the city and to amend the catchment areas of nine primary schools in the area. 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 affected; 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 meeting held on 15 November 2016 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 sites of Cadder Primary School, Caldercuilt Primary School, Kelvindale Primary School, Parkview Primary School, Highpark Primary School, Dunard Primary School, Saracen Primary School, Oakgrove Primary School and Royston Primary School, 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 council undertook the consultation between 7 November and 18 December 2016. Copies of the consultation document were sent to relevant stakeholders and information was provided on the council's website. Public meetings were held on 15 and 16 November 2016. The council received 40 responses to the consultation, of which 28 were in favour of the proposal.

3. Educational Aspects of Proposal

3.1 Glasgow City Council's proposal to establish a new non-denominational primary school and to alter the catchment areas of schools in the north of the city has clear potential educational benefits. The council seeks to address increasing demand for school places resulting from housing development in the area. If implemented, the proposal would ensure sufficient school capacity in the area and potentially result in improved education facilities, including a new outdoor synthetic sports pitch for community use. In addition, the proposal has the potential to achieve enhanced early years provision.

3.2 The proposed revision of primary school catchment areas will enable projected school rolls to be brought within school capacities in eight of the nine schools affected. In the case of Saracen Primary School, the proposal will result in a bigger catchment area and an increased projected school roll. The existing non-revised projected roll is already beyond the stated capacity of the school. None of the stated educational benefits in the proposal would apply to Saracen Primary School. The council will need to clarify this aspect of its proposal in its final paper. The council will need to provide details of its plans to address pupil roll and capacity at Saracen Primary School.

3.3 The proposed changes to primary school catchment areas will result in changes to travelling routes and distances from home to school. The proposal document contains no details on any implications for transport and safe walking routes to school. The council will need to provide details in its final paper.

3.4 Parents, children and staff who spoke with HM Inspectors welcomed the proposal to establish a new primary school. They saw a clear need to respond to increased population size in the area by establishing additional capacity. Staff welcomed the potential of greater opportunities for joint working. Parents welcomed the reassurance that siblings of children currently attending schools will be enabled to attend their existing catchment schools following the proposed changes. However, parents were unclear if existing school transport arrangements would apply. The council will need to clarify this in its final proposal paper.

3.5 Across the nine affected schools, stakeholders had a range of views on the proposed location of the new school. Glasgow City Council had conducted an options appraisal on five potential sites and identified Option 5, Kelvinside Avenue, as the most viable site. Stakeholders in several of the schools visited by HM Inspectors were of the view that other suitable sites to the north of Maryhill should be considered, particularly Option 4, Glenfinnan Drive, the site of the former Wyndford and St Gregory's RC Primary Schools. They felt that this would enable a more even geographical spread of educational establishments in the area. Concerns were raised regarding traffic management and congestion, road safety and the loss of green space at the Kelvinside site. Parents made reference to previous council commitments to develop the Kelvinside site as a multi-use sports facility. They felt that the council's proposal for community facilities was not sufficiently ambitious and that the provision of one synthetic sports pitch was inadequate to meet school and community needs. The council's proposal paper states that the Glenfinnan Drive site is of inadequate size to fully meet its aspirations for enhanced primary, early years and community facilities for the locality. The council will need to consider stakeholders' views on the location of the new school in its final proposal document and provide further detail on its options appraisal process.

3.6 Parents, children and staff who spoke with HM Inspectors expressed some reasonable concerns regarding details of proposed changes to catchment areas. At Kelvinside Primary School, staff hoped to receive assurance that the forecast reductions in the projected school roll would actually be achieved. They were concerned that the high number of placing requests to the school might continue to cause pressure and felt that this would need to be managed. At Highpark Primary School parents were concerned that the Panmure Street area was to be removed from its catchment. This could result in children living close to Highpark Primary School having to walk a considerably increased distance to another school. Staff and parents at Saracen Primary School were concerned that the proposed increase in the school's catchment area would result in their roll increasing further beyond the school's existing capacity. The school already faced challenges associated with shared space including accommodation for physical education and school dining. They felt that the proposal would add additional pressure and had received no information on what plans the council had to address capacity issues at Saracen Primary School. Glasgow City Council will need to respond to these concerns in its final proposal paper. The council will need to consider what scope it has to continue to engage with stakeholders on the detail and impact of the proposed school catchment changes.

4. Summary

Glasgow City Council's proposal to establish a new primary school has clear potential educational benefits. It will increase overall school capacity in the area to meet additional demand and result in new facilities for learning and community activity. The council will need to consider the views of stakeholders on the location of the proposed new school and the specific concerns raised on the proposed changes to school catchment areas. The council will need to provide details of the impact of school catchment changes on transport and travel arrangements, including safe walking routes.

HM Inspectors
Education Scotland
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