

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

**Report by Education Scotland, addressing educational aspects of the proposal to relocate St Stephen's Primary School and St Kevin's Primary School on a new campus to be built in the Sighthill area. It is also proposed to close Sighthill Nursery School and create nursery provision as part of the new campus.**

### **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. As the council is proposing to close a nursery school, it will need 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 the opportunity for representations to be made to Ministers.

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 Glasgow City Council proposes to relocate St Stephen's Primary School and St Kevin's Primary School and a new nursery into a new campus in the Sighthill area. It is also proposed to close Sighthill Nursery School.

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 17 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;

- a meeting with representatives of the Catholic Church; and
- visits to the site of St Stephen's Primary School, St Kevin's Primary School and Sighthill Nursery School, including discussion with relevant consultees.

#### 1.4 HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for children and young people of the three schools; 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
- 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*. The consultation included a public meeting and invitations to submit written submissions, including an online submissions form. The council received 25 written responses. The consultation process started with the school design at a very early stage. There was a clear commitment to incorporate the views of stakeholders in the final design, where possible. Staff of the schools felt that they were able to present their views at consultation meetings. Staff at St Kevin's Primary School acknowledged that they had the opportunity to express their views but perceived that implications of what they were saying in relation to the impact on children who attended St Kevin's Primary School were not fully appreciated. The public meeting gave parents and members of the community the opportunity to express their views. Stakeholders who met with HM Inspectors were satisfied with the consultation process.

2.2 Parents from all schools, who provided written responses and those who met HM Inspectors, were in favour of the proposal. Those interviewed welcomed the building of a modern school with enhanced outdoor learning space and improved sports facilities. They welcomed the fact that these resources would be available to the local community outwith school hours. The general feeling of those attending the public meeting was that the proposal would bring significantly enhanced educational facilities to the Sighthill area. This would be to the benefit of both the children and the local community. However, there were a few issues raised by attendees, particularly from parents of children with additional support needs who attend St Kevin's Primary School. The main concerns related to the management of traffic at the start and end of the school day, how children would be supported to learn within and move around the larger campus, particularly as the building will cover two storeys. Staff and parents of St Kevin's Primary School are keen to work with the council to ensure the building design meets their children's needs.

2.3 Children from all schools, who met with HM Inspectors and those who had been consulted, were very positive about the proposal. They looked forward to having the opportunity to make new friends; a new school with improved opportunities to learn outdoors; the use of information and communications technology, and access enhanced sports facilities. They also welcomed the fact that the new building would be 'eco-friendly'. Children from St Stephen's Primary School thought it would be very good to have the opportunity to learn and play with children from St Kevin's Primary School. Children from Sighthill Nursery looked forward to being in the same campus as their brothers and sisters. They looked forward to having a large outdoor space to play and learn in.

2.4 Staff in all three schools, who met with HM Inspectors, were in favour of the proposal. They felt that the proposal had the potential to improve learning experiences for children by offering modern accommodation. While the schools remain separate schools, they felt there would now be the opportunity for staff from each school to work and plan together in order to develop further the curriculum, and learning and teaching. Staff believed children would have the opportunity to interact and socialise together. While being in favour of the proposal all staff had common, shared concerns. They would like more information on areas and resources which would be shared by staff and children. They felt it was important for each school to retain its individual identity. This view was strongly supported by those representatives of the Catholic Church who met with HM Inspectors.

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

3.1 Glasgow City Council's proposal will bring about significant educational benefits to the children who would attend the new campus. The council has set out in its proposal a range of educational benefits for children who presently attend St Stephen's Primary School, St Kevin's Primary School and Sighthill Nursery School if the proposal goes ahead. The buildings used by the three schools are no longer suitable in the medium- to long-term in relation to supporting implementation of Curriculum for Excellence, developing inclusion and ensuring continuous improvement. A new build, purpose-made campus will support children's learning very well and be a feature of the redevelopment of the Sighthill area.

3.2 The learning environment for children will be greatly improved by the council's proposal. The council has outlined how a modern, purpose-built campus would enhance the learning environment and improve equality of opportunity for all within an inclusive and accessible educational environment. While within the proposal each school would retain its separate identity, children will benefit from increased opportunities to learn and socialise together both formally and informally, as appropriate to their individual learning needs. Children's health and wellbeing has the potential to be enhanced through access to improved sports facilities. The extensive outdoor area will provide opportunities to extend children's learning through developing outdoor learning.

3.3 The council profiles discrete staff skills in each of the three schools. The staff from both primary schools and the nursery have the potential to benefit from increased opportunities for them to work together and to learn from each other. The

children in both schools and the nursery will benefit from the staff sharing their practice and extending their skills further.

3.4 The council outlines a number of benefits for staff should the proposal go ahead. The co-location of management teams will facilitate closer working and learning from each other. Teams from both schools and the nursery will be able to learn together and develop some aspects of the curriculum together. The opportunities for working together on pedagogy, sharing skills and developing new skills which may arise from being on a shared campus will benefit staff and children. These are clear benefits of the proposal.

3.5 The new campus will have improved facilities which will be available to both the school and the local community. This will place the school at the heart of the community and have the benefit of being able to expand and enhance current use. Access to these facilities has the potential to make a difference to people's health and wellbeing, to sustaining economic growth, and bring vibrancy to the community. All bring educational benefits in the widest sense.

## **4 Summary**

4.1 The council has outlined clearly the educational benefits of the proposal. The educational benefits statement has demonstrated how the proposal will improve significantly aspects of the learning environment for children at St Stephen's Primary School, St Kevin's Primary School and Sighthill Nursery School. The move to the shared campus will provide accommodation which is more suited to delivering a curriculum for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is clear that the proposal has the potential to provide increased learning opportunities for all children on the proposed campus and increased professional learning opportunities for staff. The proposal has the potential to place the campus at the heart of the re-generated Sighthill area. Overall, the council has demonstrated how the proposal has the potential to improve the education of children in the two schools and the nursery.

4.2 The council has consulted with a wide range of stakeholders. The consultation has taken place at an early point in the design process. The council should continue with its plans to incorporate the views of stakeholders, where appropriate, in the final design of the school. In taking forward the proposal, it needs to continue to work with the staff and parents of St Kevin's Primary School in addressing their concerns to ensure the final school design incorporates features which will meet the particular needs of children from St Kevin's Primary School. The council also needs to continue to work with staff and representatives of the Catholic Church in taking account of their views on aspects of the new building's design.

**HM Inspectors  
Education Scotland  
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