

Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by North Lanarkshire Council to re-zone part of Greenfaulds High School catchment area to form part of the Cumbernauld Academy catchment area.

1. Introduction

1.1 This report from Education Scotland has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education (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 North Lanarkshire Council's proposal to re-zone part of Greenfaulds High School catchment area to form part of the Cumbernauld Academy catchment 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 young people of the schools; any other users; children likely to become pupils within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper;
- 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:

- 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 Cumbernauld Academy, Greenfaulds High School and Abronhill Primary School, including discussion with relevant consultees.

2. Consultation Process

2.1 North Lanarkshire 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 ran the consultation process from 10 January 2018 until 23 February 2018. Public meetings were held on 29 and 31 January 2018. One hundred and eighty-two young people across both secondary schools watched a presentation on the proposal and were asked their views on the proposal.

3. Educational Aspects of Proposal

3.1 The council proposes to realign the catchment areas of two secondary schools with the transfer of a currently undeveloped site (the Mid Forest site) from Greenfaulds High School catchment area to the Cumbernauld Academy school catchment area. This will help to promote improved community integration for young people residing in this area with their closest school in the future. The proposal has the potential to contribute to improved health and wellbeing through a reduction in school transport. It will also help to balance more evenly the school rolls of both secondary schools in the future, ensuring overcrowding is not an issue.

3.2 Consultation papers were issued to relevant consultees. Only one stakeholder attended the meeting at Greenfaulds High School on 29 January 2018. No stakeholders attended the meeting at Cumbernauld Academy on 31 January 2018. Seven stakeholders responded using the consultation response form, with five in favour, one against and one not answering. One hundred and eighty-two young people in both schools watched a presentation on the proposal and were asked their views on the proposal. The majority were in favour with less than 30% disagreeing. Parental views from the schools affected were positive. They could see value in what the council was proposing and valued the commitment by the council for continuity for existing young people in the delineated area attending Greenfaulds High School and for their siblings.

4. Summary

The proposal has the backing of almost all in the local community. There are educational and social benefits in young people attending the school closest to their community. This will also help North Lanarkshire Council manage more effectively its school estate.

**HM Inspectors
Education Scotland
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