

# **Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by North Lanarkshire Council to re-zone part of Langloan Primary School catchment area to form part of the Bargeddie Primary School 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 Langloan Primary School catchment area to form part of the Bargeddie Primary School 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 children of Bargeddie and Langloan Primary 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
- 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 Monday 5 February 2018, at Langloan Primary School 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 Bargeddie and Langloan Primary Schools 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 formal consultation ran from 10 January to 23 February 2018. Public meetings were held in Langloan Primary School on 5 February 2018 and in Bargeddie Primary School on 6 February 2018. A total of seven people attended the public meetings. The proposal document was sent to all consultees and an online version of the documents was made available. Presentations about the proposal were made to pupils in both affected schools. The council received six written responses to the proposal, with four being in favour, one being against and one undecided. Of the 134, primary school pupils who responded to the survey about the proposal, 127 were in favour with seven against.

2.3 Stakeholders who provided a written response to the proposal were mostly in favour of the changes. They did however have concerns about the impact on children's experiences given existing staff shortages in Bargeddie Primary School due to absence and lack of supply cover. They were worried that this situation would be exacerbated by the increased roll as a result of the catchment area changes proposed. They appreciated the benefit of reduced travelling distance to school for some children as suggested in the proposal.

2.4 Children who responded to the survey about the consultation were almost all in favour of the proposal. They thought the proposal made sense and that as a result pupils affected would be closer to their school hence reducing daily travel time. They were concerned that Bargeddie Primary School may end up with too many pupils on its roll.

2.5 Stakeholders who attended the public meeting were anxious to know what might happen should the proposal not go ahead and how the decision about the proposal would be communicated. They were anxious to know the council's plans to address the significant increase in projected school rolls.

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

3.1 North Lanarkshire Council's proposal to re-zone part of Langloan Primary School catchment area to form part of Bargeddie Primary School catchment area is overall of educational benefit. It is evident that if the catchment areas are not altered then neither school will have the required capacity to cope with the increase in pupil numbers arising from new housing developments. While in the short term the proposal will help alleviate pressures on facilities at Langloan Primary School arising from a significant increase in its roll over the next few years, there will be

corresponding and associated pressures for Bargeddie Primary School in the longer term with significantly increased pupil numbers from 2021 based on current projections. The council needs to outline in more detail what its proposed plans are to address the issues associated with the projected increased roll in both schools. Providing further detail about the single solution referred to in the proposal document will help to reassure parents that the council has appropriate plans in place. However, not all of the educational benefits as expressed in the proposal document are fully justified. It is difficult to understand how the proposal would support the creation of more flexible learning spaces, improve the range of learning environments or ensure schools are better equipped to deliver the full breadth of Curriculum for Excellence.

3.2 Overall, stakeholders welcome the proposed changes. They recognise that they will help alleviate pressure on school facilities at Langloan Primary School in the short term. Stakeholders understand the benefit of pupils from the same housing estate attending the same school and appreciate that the changes will reduce daily travelling distances for some children between home and school. Stakeholders welcomed the sibling guarantee for other children in the same family. Overall, all stakeholders are keen to know more about the council's plans for the next stage in terms of addressing the significant increase in the projected rolls of both schools in the longer term and the associated pressures this brings. A few parents are anxious about the knock on effect on existing staff shortages of increased pupil numbers particularly for Bargeddie Primary School where staffing pressures are more pronounced.

3.3 During the consultation period the council was notified of an omission in the proposal. The council will need to ensure that it takes the necessary steps to investigate the omission. In its final consultation report, the council will need to set out the actions it has taken to address the omission notified to it

## **4. Summary**

4.1 Overall, North Lanarkshire Council's proposal to re-zone the catchment areas of both Bargeddie and Langloan Primary Schools and to align the catchment area of Bargeddie Primary School with that of its co-located denominational school is of educational benefit. It has the potential to help support the council in its next steps of providing an appropriate and effective single solution to addressing the significant increase in pupil rolls arising from the new housing developments in both the Langloan and Bargeddie Primary Schools catchment areas.

4.2 In taking the proposal forward the council should provide further detail about its intentions with regard to the potential single solution referred to in the proposal document to provide further reassurance for parents that appropriate plans are in place to address the potential overcrowding of the schools affected.

4.3 In its final consultation report, the council will need to set out the actions it has taken to address the omission notified to it.

**HM Inspectors  
Education Scotland  
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