

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by Glasgow City Council to relocate Cuthbertson Nursery Class into the new nursery in the grounds of Cuthbertson Primary School along with Govanhill Nursery.

November 2021

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](#) ("the 2010 Act"). The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of Glasgow City Council's proposal to relocate Cuthbertson Nursery Class into the new nursery in the grounds of Cuthbertson Primary School along with Govanhill Nursery. The new nursery will be open all year and provide early learning and childcare (ELC) for children from age two to five years. 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 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 statutory 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 the settings; any other users; children likely to become pupils within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper; and other children 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:

- 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;
- visit to the site of Govanhill Nursery, virtual meeting with four members of staff and telephone conversations with five parents; and
- discussions with the headteacher of Cuthbertson Primary School and the head of Govanhill Nursery.

2. Consultation process

2.1 Glasgow City Council undertook the consultation on its proposal(s) with reference to the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#).

2.2 The consultation ran from 30 August to 20 October 2021. The council's proposal paper was made available in the press and a dedicated page was set up on the council website for both information and to enable interested parties to respond to the proposal. Settings and schools were asked to support families to respond where appropriate to ensure the views of everyone were

gathered. Two stakeholders responded to the consultation, one in favour and one against the proposal. No reasons were stated either in support or against the proposal. A public meeting was held on 8 September 2021 where no stakeholders attended.

2.3 Prior to the statutory consultation the council carried out an initial consultation between December 2020 and February 2021, to seek views of stakeholders on the proposal to relocate Govanhill Nursery and Cuthbertson Primary School nursery class into a new nursery building. There were 32 responses to this consultation. Of the respondents, 25 were in favour of the proposal and seven against. The main reason for opposing the proposal was the concern about the loss of playground space for Cuthbertson Primary School. Those in favour of the proposal also stated their wish for improvements to be made to the outdoor space at Cuthbertson Primary School.

3. Educational aspects of proposal

3.1 Glasgow City Council has set out a clear case in support of the proposal to relocate Cuthbertson Nursery Class and Govanhill Nursery into a new nursery building in the grounds of Cuthbertson Primary School. The council has set out a range of educational benefits to be gained if the proposal is taken forward.

3.2 HM Inspectors agree the new, purpose-built building will offer a high quality learning environment for ELC. Additions, such as a dedicated family room, will enhance existing partnership working with parents and families. This room will also provide appropriate quiet and dedicated space to work with children and families.

3.3 Plans are in place for outdoor spaces to be developed to reflect current thinking about outdoor play and will offer enhanced opportunities for learning outdoors.

3.4 It is proposed that the new nursery will be open throughout the year and for extended day provision. This will support families, particularly those who are working or studying.

3.5 The proposal will increase the number of places available for children aged 2-3 years. This is an identified need in the local area and will offer earlier intervention and continuity of experience for young children. Staff from Govanhill Nursery welcome the opportunity to work with younger children and identify opportunities this provides for their own professional learning.

3.6 There is currently significant demand for ELC places in the immediate area. Should the proposal be taken forward it is anticipated that the building currently accommodating Govanhill Nursery will be made available to other providers of ELC through the council's flexible renting policy. If this was successful there is potential to significantly increase the number of places available in the area. This would offer increased flexibility and choice for families. Parents who spoke with HM Inspectors expressed their wish that the building remains as a nursery facility and welcome an increase in availability of places.

3.7 Should the proposal be taken forward, space at Cuthbertson Primary School currently used for the nursery class will be available for use by children in the primary school. This will offer increased flexibility for the delivery of quality learning and teaching for the primary stages. A programme of improvements is already underway to develop and enhance the playground space, including a multi-use games area. Although the size of the outdoor area is reduced these improvements will significantly improve the outdoor experiences of children at Cuthbertson Primary School. Staff at Cuthbertson Primary School welcome the opportunity to work with a standalone nursery within the grounds of their school.

3.8 The move to a new nursery building in a new area will be a significant transition for children and families, particularly from Govanhill Nursery. Staff shared how they are already supporting children and families very well to ensure this is as successful as possible. Examples include the use of a transition mascot, using social media to keep families well informed and floor books recording progress of the build and ongoing discussions with children. To support children and families it will be important that the timing of transition to the new building is as sensitive as possible. This includes children not having an additional transition to a new nursery immediately before they move onto primary school.

3.9 A major concern of families at Govanhill Nursery is the distance between their home and/or the school attended by siblings and the new nursery building. Staff are working hard to support families to view this as an opportunity, for example, increased exercise to support wellbeing. In preparation for the transition they plan to offer 'family walks' to demonstrate the distance is not excessive and the learning opportunities provided by walking in the community.

4. Summary

The proposal is of clear educational benefit for children aged 2-5 years. HM Inspectors agree there is potential for significantly greater choice and flexibility of ELC provision in the immediate area if the proposal is taken forward and the existing nursery building remains as a nursery facility through flexible rental. A key consideration will be the timing of transition to the new building, balancing the needs of children and families and the need to provide continuity of provision. The purpose built building will provide improved learning environments, including outdoor space and free up space in Cuthbertson Primary School for learning and teaching for primary children. The proposal has the potential to provide children with a wide range of quality learning that builds on the existing experiences at Cuthbertson Nursery Class and Govanhill Nursery.

**HM Inspectors
November 2021**