

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by South Ayrshire Council to establish an additional support needs learning provision at Troon Primary School.

December 2024

1. Introduction

1.1 This report from Education Scotland has been prepared by His 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 a proposal by South Ayrshire Council to establish an additional support needs (ASN) learning provision at Troon Primary School. 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' view. Upon receipt of this report, the Act requires the council to consider it alongside any relevant considerations the council received and then prepare its consultation report. The council's 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 consultation report at least three weeks before it takes its final decision. With all proposals the council needs to follow all statutory obligations set out in the 2010 Act.

1.2 HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for children and young people of the school; any other users; and 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:

- attendance at the public meeting held on 24 October 2024 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 site of Troon Primary School, including discussion with relevant consultees.

2. Consultation process

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

2.2 The council ran a statutory consultation from 1 October until 20 November 2024. Physical copies of the proposal were made available to the public at Troon Primary School, Troon Municipal Buildings and South Ayrshire Council County Buildings, free of charge. The proposal was published on the council's website. The council offered opportunities for stakeholders to respond to the consultation electronically, either online or by email. South Ayrshire Council held a public meeting on 24 October 2024. Three members of the public attended the meeting in addition to a representation of elected members. At the meeting, council officers shared an overview of the proposal with attendees and invited questions. Attendees asked a series of questions and offered thoughts on the proposal, which officers responded to. Overall, attendees were in favour of the

proposal. Attendees enquired around potential improvements to the school campus that would ensure the safety of new children attending the ASN learning provision. The council received 62 written representations from stakeholders. Seven of these were from staff, 31 from parent/carers or family members, with the remainder from other stakeholders. Almost all representations were in favour of the proposal. Those in favour generally agreed that the north area of South Ayrshire required a provision to meet the additional support needs of children in the area better. They agreed that having a provision closer to communities in the north would reduce unnecessary travel for children and young people. Those not in favour had concerns about the resourcing impact on schools and how the council would ensure the safety of all children.

2.3 The council gathered the views of 100 children in Troon Primary School. Children were very positive about the possibility of having two new classes added to their school. They outlined their view of potential benefits very well. They agreed that a reduction in travel time to school was of benefit to children with additional support needs in the local area. They agreed that the proposal has potential to increase opportunities for inclusion and help other children maintain relationships with their local communities. Children shared their concerns around loss of existing learning spaces. They also highlighted their concern around increased traffic around the school.

3. Educational aspects of proposal

3.1 South Ayrshire Council sets out clearly the educational benefits of the proposal to open an ASN Learning Provision at Troon Primary School. HM Inspectors agree that there are a number of potential educational benefits for children in accessing an ASN learning provision closer to their local community.

3.2 The council intimates that the establishment of the proposed new provision will not affect children attending other ASN learning provisions in the council. This includes any necessary relocation of existing pupils from other facilities. HM Inspectors agree that unnecessary transition from one ASN learning provision to the proposed provision at Troon Primary School should be avoided. The council should continue to work with existing children and their parents/carers from across ASN learning provisions to ensure current placements fully meet the child's needs. For example, children in the earlier stages of primary education may benefit from a relocation from their current placement to Troon Primary School ASN learning provision. This may be as a result of reducing lengthy travel from their home to their current placement. In all cases, HM Inspectors agree that parents/carers and children should be full participants in any assessment and decision making.

3.3 The new provision has the potential to increase equity and success for children with ASN in South Ayrshire. The proposal will improve the capacity and availability of specialist ASN provision across South Ayrshire. This increases the likelihood that children will have their needs met in the right place at the right time. It is the view of HM Inspectors that there will be little negative impact on children at Troon Primary School. The school has sufficient capacity to accommodate two new ASN learning provision classrooms within the school. However, children are concerned that they will lose learning spaces which are important to them, for example, art and music areas. If the council moves forward with its proposal, it should work with children from the school and demonstrate how they will access high-quality learning environments.

3.4 HM Inspectors agree with stakeholders that it is important to understand more fully the resourcing commitments for the proposed ASN learning provision. In particular, resourcing required beyond specialist facilities that will be installed in classrooms and play areas. HM Inspectors recommend that the council provides clarity to stakeholders on staffing levels that they intend to have in place for August 2025, should the proposal move forward. This should include whether or not any additional leadership capacity will be allocated to the school.

Additionally, there is a need for the council to be clear on the capacity for delivery of specialist training required for staff before children are enrolled in a new ASN learning provision.

4. Summary

HM Inspectors agree that the proposal to establish a new ASN learning provision within Troon Primary School has potential educational benefits for children with additional support needs in the north of South Ayrshire. This will reduce unnecessary lengthy travel for these children between home and school. It will further increase the potential to support children with additional support needs in the right place and at the right time. Almost all stakeholders agree that a new provision will be a positive addition to Troon Primary School. They agree that it will improve ASN resource for children in the north of South Ayrshire Council.

HM Inspectors
December 2024