

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

**Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of
the proposal by West Lothian Council to relocate Eastertoun
Nursery to Eastertoun Primary School**

April 2023

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 West Lothian Council's proposal to change the distance criteria for home to school transport. 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.

1.2 HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for children of the schools; 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:

- attendance at a public meeting held on 14 March 2023 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;
- consideration of further information on all schools affected; and
- visits to the sites of Eastertoun Primary School and Eastertoun Nursery School, including discussion with relevant consultees.

2. Consultation process

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

2.2 The council undertook the consultation between 30 January 2023 to 24 March 2023. The council published the proposal paper on their website. Paper and electronic copies of the proposal paper were made available for a wide range of stakeholders such as Parent Councils, parents and

staff from affected schools. Written responses were also accepted by letter or email. West Lothian Council held a public meeting at Eastertoun Primary School. A total of three people attended.

2.3 Overall, all stakeholders who engaged in the consultation process were supportive of the proposal. A few concerns were noted by attendees at the public consultation meeting such as the potential for disruption to learning and teaching during the construction phase and availability of outdoor space for play. However, the responses from officers of the council were welcomed by the attendees.

3. Educational aspects of proposal

3.1 The council proposal is to relocate Eastertoun Nursery School to Eastertoun Primary School and retain its name as Eastertoun Nursery Class. Eastertoun Nursery School will close with the establishment of Eastertoun Nursery Class. The change will take effect from August 2023. Children attending the re-designated nursery class will transfer to a new facility within Eastertoun Primary School from August 2023, or as soon as possible thereafter.

3.2 The council's proposal sets out a number of educational benefits for those affected. These include; that the re-designation of Eastertoun Nursery as a nursery class with the school building supports continuity and progression in children's learning. The opportunity for further development and enhancement of the current staffing and leadership model. Help to develop a flexible and creative child-centred curriculum and provision of smooth pastoral and curricular transitions. HM Inspectors agree the educational benefits set out in this proposal.

3.3 All children, parents and teaching staff who met with HM Inspectors were overwhelmingly supportive of the proposal. They recognise the benefits of co-location for children, families and staff. This includes child and family familiarity with the school building and its staff, provision of pastoral support, curricular and transition planning and sharing of resources. In particular, the closeness of the nursery and P1 classes will help facilitate the sharing of indoor and outdoor space and resources. A few concerns were noted which relate to any potential reduction in the available outdoor space for children to access for learning and play. However, the responses from council staff during the design phase and consultation period were met with positivity.

4. Summary

West Lothian Council has set out a strong case for the relocation of Eastertoun Nursery to Eastertoun Primary School. The associated educational benefits are clearly outlined. All children, parents and staff who met with HM Inspectors are supportive of the proposal. The council's proposal, should it proceed, should result in a much improved environment for the delivery of Curriculum for Excellence and potentially improved outcomes for children. In addition, the proposed new site will provide enhanced access to shared resources and outdoor play spaces, particularly for nursery and P1 children. As a result, HM Inspectors agree the educational benefits.

**HM Inspectors
April 2023**