

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by The City of Edinburgh Council to establish a new non-denominational primary school and implement catchment changes to address school capacity and accommodation pressures in West Edinburgh.

October 2019

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 The City of Edinburgh Council's proposal to establish a new non-denominational primary school and implement catchment changes to address school capacity and accommodation pressures in West Edinburgh. 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 and 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; 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 11 September 2019 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 Corstorphine Primary School, Cramond Primary School, Hillwood Primary School, Craigmount High School and The Royal High School including discussion with relevant consultees.

2. Consultation process

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

2.2 The formal consultation ran from 26 August 2019 to 7 October 2019. Copies of the proposal were made available electronically on the council website. An online response form was set up on the consultation website. Paper copies were made available at all the schools concerned and in local libraries. A public meeting was held at Craigmount High School on 11 September 2019. Ten members of the public attended the public meeting. The majority were supportive of the proposal. However, concern was expressed about the capacity of Craigmount High School to

accommodate additional young people in relation to social space. Pupil consultation events were carried out at each of the affected schools.

2.3 The council received 21 responses. Of these, ten were in support of the proposal. A further ten did not support the proposal. The reasons for opposing related to traffic management, safety of children crossing Maybury Road and the lack of capacity of Craigmount High School to accommodate additional numbers within available social space and dining areas. In its written submission, Craigmount High School Parent Council, whilst supportive of the proposal raised concerns about the school's capacity to manage an increase in pupil numbers based solely on the number of classrooms. In their view, this did not take into account the possible impact on limited social space, dining facilities, corridor traffic and physical education facilities. Corstorphine Community Council expressed a number of concerns about the proposal. The main concerns included adequacy of provision, road traffic crossings, traffic management and impact on air quality.

3. Educational aspects of proposal

3.1 The council estimates new housing developments in West Edinburgh could generate 600-700 additional primary pupils within the area. In addition, secondary school rolls are projected to increase. As a result, existing primary and secondary schools are expected to face increasing accommodation pressures as the proposed housing is built and demand for places rises. The council proposes to build a new primary school at Maybury to alleviate this pressure.

3.2 The council has set out a reasonable case for the proposal to establish a new non-denominational primary school and implement catchment changes to address school capacity and accommodation pressures in West Edinburgh. The proposal recognises pressures as a result of planned housing developments in the West Edinburgh area. Children attending the new Maybury Primary School will benefit from a modern, state of the art learning environment. The new school environment will promote creative and engaging teaching approaches and offer facilities that will encourage further health and wellbeing and outdoor learning.

3.3 The proposal addresses future sufficiency issues at Cramond Primary School and Corstorphine Primary School. This will enable the council to relieve pressure on facilities in these schools and allow it to continue to provide catchment schools for catchment children. All primary schools will have viable and sustainable rolls.

3.4 All parents, staff and children from Corstorphine Primary School, Cramond Primary School, Hillwood Primary School and The Royal High School who met with HM Inspectors were supportive of the proposals. They were of the view that the existing primary schools do not have the capacity to accommodate the additional numbers that the Maybury and Cammo housing developments will generate. The Royal High School is already over capacity. The proposal relieves potential overcrowding and opens up opportunities for joint work across the Craigmount cluster. Children walking to the new Maybury school will potentially reduce car use. Corstorphine parents and children expressed concerns about the potential for overcrowding at Craigmount High School, in particular the demand on limited social space and common areas. Parents were positive about how the council has conducted the consultation exercise.

3.5 Parents, staff and young people from Craigmount High School, who met with HM Inspectors agreed that there was a strong case for a new non-denominational primary school and nursery on the Maybury site. This would help address capacity and accommodation issues at the existing cluster primary schools. Craigmount High School has the classroom capacity to accommodate additional numbers. However, concerns were expressed that the additional demand on the existing social area, dining facility and delivery of physical education may not be able to

cope without additional improvements. Concerns were also raised about ensuring the local infrastructure was suitable. How young people will safely cross Maybury Road from the new development to Craigmount High School was a specific example.

4. Summary

The City of Edinburgh Council's proposal to establish a new non-denominational primary school and implement catchment changes has clear educational benefits. The proposal addresses school capacity and accommodation pressures as a result of planned housing developments in the West Edinburgh area. Children attending the new Maybury Primary School will benefit from a modern, state of the art learning environment which encourages health and wellbeing and supports outdoor learning. In taking forward the proposal, the council should revisit its forecasted numbers of additional children and also the timescale for completing the new primary school to ensure accuracy. It should also work closely with Craigmount High School parents, staff and young people to agree solutions relating to safe routes to Craigmount High School from the Maybury site and the effective management of social and common areas in accommodating increased numbers of young people.

HM Inspectors
October 2019