

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by West Lothian Council to review admission arrangements arising from school catchment area variations at Seafeld Primary School, Parkhead Primary School, Livingston Village Primary School, Bankton Primary School and Dedridge Primary School.

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 West Lothian Council's proposal to review admission arrangements arising from school catchment area variations at Seafield Primary School, Parkhead Primary School, Livingston Village Primary School, Bankton Primary School and Dedridge 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' 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; children likely to become pupils within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper; 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 virtual public meeting held on 30 September 2021 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
- virtual visits to the site of Seafield Primary School, Parkhead Primary School, Livingston Village Primary School, Bankton Primary School and Dedridge Primary 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 consultation ran from 15 September 2021 until 5 November 2021. Information was made available on the council's website, on social media and in the local press. In addition, information was provided to stakeholders including parents of children attending the five schools. A virtual public meeting was held on 30 September 2021 which no one attended. The council received no objections or written responses to the proposal.

3. Educational aspects of proposal

3.1 Within the West Lothian's Local Development Plan, Gavieside is a major development with over 2,000 new residential properties planned. At present, almost all of the site is split between Seafield Primary School and Parkhead Primary School catchment areas for non-denominational

primary schooling. In order to achieve best value and manage its school estate as these homes are constructed, the council has proposed a number of catchment changes. The changes will ensure that new housing areas are, as far as possible, aligned with the most appropriate local school. This will support local children attending the same non-denomination primary school as their near neighbours. It will assist the delivery of Curriculum for Excellence linking schools with their surrounding communities and future-proof against significant pressures in the school rolls as housing developments grow.

3.2 Headteachers of the affected schools were all supportive of the proposal. They were re-assured that potential excessive growth would not put undue pressure on their school rolls. None had received any objections from members of their own school communities. They believed that the proposals gave a clear and unambiguous outline of the future school catchment areas. Assurance for parents regarding continuity for all current pupils attending any of the schools and for siblings right of attending the same school was welcomed by the communities. The council has made clear that the changes will not alter the secondary schools linked to these catchments. HM Inspectors agree that the educational benefits outlined by the council with regard to viability and sustainability will be supported by the proposal.

4. Summary

HM Inspectors' agree that the proposal provides valid educational benefits. Stakeholders have had significant opportunities to have their say. None of the stakeholders took the opportunity to attend the virtual public meeting. The council has received no objections or alternative views to those outlined in the proposal paper.

**HM Inspectors
November 2021**