

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by Perth and Kinross Council to establish a new Intensive Support Provision in Perth High School.

May 2025

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 Perth and Kinross Council to establish a new Intensive Support Provision (ISP) in Perth High 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 young people of the school; 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 31 March 2025 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;
- held a range of online and in person meetings with relevant consultees; and
- visits to the site of the current Perth High School, the new site of Perth High School and proposed ISP space, and a visit to Inch View Primary School ISP, including discussion with relevant consultees.

2. Consultation process

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

2.2 The consultation ran from 24 March until 23 May 2025. Details of the proposal were issued to relevant stakeholders and published on the council website. The website included a helpful video explaining the consultation in an accessible way. A public meeting was held on 31 March 2025, which 14 members of the public attended. The council received a total of 33 responses to its online surveys and three written submissions. Overall, most respondents were in favour of the

proposal. A few were undecided and a few were against the proposal. Those against are concerned about the potential reduction and limits to available space within the new Perth High School, potential impact on staffing and the proposed location of the ISP within the school site.

2.3 Perth and Kinross Council undertook consultation with children and young people at local primary schools and at Perth High School. One hundred and six responses were received from the local primary schools, and 166 from Perth High School, including individual and group responses. Most children and young people had no concerns about having ISP at the school and did not think it would change their school day. Most children and young people are positive about the proposal. They think it is important for young people to have the opportunity to attend a school close to their home and with their peer group.

3. Educational aspects of proposal

3.1 HM Inspectors agree that opening an ISP provision at Perth High has potential educational benefits. Across Perth and Kinross, existing provision designed to meet the needs of children and young people who require specialist placements are at or over capacity. The council's transitions panel had identified that an increasing number of children who live in the Perth High School catchment, will require access to a primary school ISP. It also identified that a number of young people who live in the Perth High School catchment, currently require to be placed in a secondary school ISP within another Perth and Kinross school. This proposed ISP provision has the potential to support the council in meeting the projected increase in the needs of children and young people requiring specialist support within the locality from January 2026.

3.2 The council has stated a range of educational benefits they consider this proposal will bring. HM Inspectors agree there that this proposal could support young people to access appropriate education close to home. Young people accessing the new ISP at Perth High School will be able to transition from primary school with their peers and siblings. This will help them to maintain important peer relationships. There are potential benefits to providing young people the opportunity to access social and community experiences through their school that help to build stronger connections within their local community. If approved this proposal should also reduce the distance travelled to school. There are also potential benefits to further the opportunities for inclusion in a range of mainstream school activities, as appropriate.

3.3 HM Inspectors agree that the proposed space for the new ISP provision at Perth High School could provide appropriate learning areas for young people with a range of additional support needs. If the council agrees to move forward with the proposal, young people will begin accessing the new ISP provision from January 2026. Interim arrangements to support the needs of a few learners in the broad general education will be in place from August 2025. HM Inspectors believe that the current available space has the potential to meet the learning and wellbeing needs of up to 16 young people. In the longer term, the council should keep the available space under review, as the council's projections suggest that the number may rise beyond this. The council should make clear the capacity of the ISP and its plans should the numbers rise.

3.4 HM Inspectors met with young people, parents, staff and members of the transition panel to discuss their views. Most are in favour of the proposal. They agree that young people requiring ISP should be educated close to their home and with their peers where possible. However, a minority of stakeholders who met with HM Inspectors raised a few queries in regard to aspects of the build and space. This included concerns about the internal location of the ISP within the new Perth High School site. HM Inspectors recommend that the council should continue to work with staff and relevant partners to consider this and how to meet best the needs of young people accessing the provision as it develops. This will ensure all young people have access to

high-quality, appropriate learning spaces to meet their needs, including having regular use of secure outdoor spaces so as not to disadvantage them against their mainstream peers.

3.5 A minority of stakeholders, including children and young people, who met with HM Inspectors raised the concern that the new school site is still under construction. They also stated that all young people, including those with ASN, would require time and support to transition to the new school. HM Inspectors recommend that the council work closely with senior leaders, parents and all young people to make clear plans to support transition to the new school. Well-planned transitions should take account of individual needs supported by staff who have a clear and shared understanding of the requirements of those with additional support and those who are likely to be placed in the ISP from August 2025. The council should also consider opportunities for parents to be included in deciding on and participating in transition activities.

3.6 Stakeholders who met HM Inspectors raised queries on the proposed safe travel routes and transport arrangements that would be in place to support young people attending the ISP. The council should work with parents to make clearer the arrangements for safe travel to and from the ISP should the proposal be agreed.

4. Summary

HM Inspectors agree that the proposal has potential educational benefits for young people with additional support needs. In opening a new ISP provision at Perth High School, more young people should receive the right support at the right time. The new provision should enable more young people to attend school in their own community, reducing unnecessary travel time and supporting connections with peers. This should help the council to meet the national requirements of the presumption of mainstreaming. Young people will have, where appropriate, opportunities to be included within the mainstream school alongside their peers. The new ISP provision in Perth High School will further support the council in meeting the projected increase of young people with a range additional support needs requiring specialist provision keeping them where possible within their own community. The council should continue to engage with stakeholders to address the queries they have raised.

**HM Inspectors
May 2025**