

# Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by East Dunbartonshire Council to relocate the Secondary Wellbeing Support Service from Donaldson Street to Southbank Road, Kirkintilloch.

October 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 East Dunbartonshire Council's proposal to relocate the Secondary Wellbeing Support Service from Donaldson Street to Southbank Road, Kirkintilloch. 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 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 12 September 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; and
- visits to the site of Donaldson Street and Southbank Road, Kirkintilloch, including discussion with relevant consultees.

## 2. Consultation process

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

2.2 The consultation ran from August until September 2023. A public meeting was held on 12 September 2023 although very few members of the public attended. The council received 18 responses to the consultation from staff, pupils and parents. All were supportive of the proposal.

## 3. Educational aspects of proposal

3.1 The council sets out the educational benefits of the proposal in terms of the potential improvements to young peoples' learning. The council believes that a larger school space both indoor and outdoor is required for young people.

They feel this will better meet the learning and wellbeing needs of all young people accessing the service. They note that the current location is no longer suitable for the cohort of young people attending. It does not provide appropriate classroom sizes or a place for young people to engage in dining, social and leisure activities. It does not have access to any safe outdoor spaces. The proposed new location is set over a single level. This should be an improvement to the current building, which is split over two levels.

The new location has the potential to significantly improve accessibility of classroom spaces, common areas and the outdoors. However, the overall internal space available in the proposed new location is not significantly larger than the current location. The council will need to manage carefully how the use of the building is developed to ensure young people have access to the best learning experience.

3.2 A single storey floor plan was shared widely as part of the consultation. However, there is a lack of detail regarding the planned use of classroom spaces. For example, there is no identifiable dining space outlined in the proposal and the council need to ensure that this is clear as plans for the new building progress. In relation to young peoples' entitlement to a broad general education, the council needs to set out how expressive arts, science, physical education, technologies and life skills will be delivered.

The council believe that the improved facilities will increase attendance and enhance opportunities for learning, life and work. This may in turn lead to an increase in the number of young people attending the council's proposal regarding the delivery of aspects of the curriculum such as physical education is not as clear as it could be. Additional information for stakeholders would help increase their understanding.

3.3 Almost all stakeholders are positive about the proposal. Parents, young people and staff all recognise the benefits of moving to the new location. Partners working with the service also recognise that the current arrangements are not ideal for curriculum delivery. A few stakeholders who spoke with HM Inspectors expressed concerns that the current location is unable to accommodate confidential discussions with young people due to lack of space. Staff have worked hard to ensure this is rectified by relocating young people within the existing building. However, this can lead to unnecessary disruption to learning and the new building should help to address the lack of suitable space.

3.4 As the council progresses its plans, it will be important to involve key stakeholders in the design of the available spaces in the new building. In doing so there is potential to improve current working practices and enhance spaces where young people can access specialised support. If the proposal is accepted, the council should utilise the expertise of the school staff, parents and young people when designing internal and external learning spaces. In addition, the council should inform stakeholders how roads and carparks around the school will be redeveloped to ensure safety.

## 4. Summary

HM Inspectors agree that the proposed relocation of the Secondary Wellbeing Support Service has potential educational benefits. The new building will provide a much-needed improved learning environment for young people and staff. However, more detailed plans around the functioning of the new building should now be shared with stakeholders prior to a final decision being taken. Involving parents, staff and young people should also help to create a stronger sense of ownership. Additionally, it is important that space for visiting specialists and partners is identified.

**HM Inspectors**

**October 2023**