

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by Dundee City Council to establish a new primary school with nursery class within the Western Gateway of Dundee and revise the Ardler Primary School catchment area to establish a catchment area for the new school.

October 2022

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 Dundee City Council's proposal to establish a new primary school with nursery class within the Western Gateway of Dundee and revise the Ardler Primary School catchment area to establish a catchment area for the new 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 and young people of the proposed 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 meetings held on 13 and 20 September 2022 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 Liff Primary School, Invergowrie Primary School and Ardler Primary School, including discussion with relevant consultees.

2. Consultation process

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

2.2 The consultation period ran from 22 August 2022 to 30 September 2022. Public meetings were held on 13 September 2022 in Ardler Primary School and on 20 September 2022 at the Landmark Hotel, Dundee. There were no members of the public in attendance at the first meeting and approximately 45 members of the public at the second meeting. The council also held meetings for children in Ardler, Invergowrie and Liff Primary Schools, for staff and parents in Ardler Primary School and for communities in Lochee, Strathmartine and the Western Gateway. Members of the public were encouraged to respond to the consultation by email, either to the address given on the council website or directly to the Director of Education. Three written

responses were received. There is general support for the proposal across all groups of stakeholders.

3. Educational aspects of proposal

3.1 The council believes that the creation of a new primary within the West of Dundee will provide rich opportunities for children to engage in a range of cultural, learning, leisure and sporting activities within their immediate locality, adding to the strength and vibrancy of the community. HM Inspectors agree that there is a significant potential benefit to the Western Gateway community of having a local school for children to attend. Currently, children from this area attend schools across three different local authorities. The council still needs to agree how and when the school will be opened to local children.

3.2 The council sees further educational benefit in the promotion of active travel by reducing the pupil journey to school. It thinks that providing education provision closer to home could positively impact on the environment and health and wellbeing of families due to the geographical location of the proposed provision. HM Inspectors agree that there is potential educational benefit in reducing the journey distance and time to school. At present many children are taken to school by car and taxi. Having a local school will encourage children walking, cycling and scooting to get there. However, the council needs to ensure that all safety issues relating to travel are fully considered as it develops its final report.

3.3 The council also feels that there is educational benefit in the new school providing an attractive, high quality and stimulating environment. The new building should offer a variety of contexts for learning both indoors and outdoors, supported by improved technology. It should further enhance early learning experiences for children, welcoming and fully involving families in the life of the school. The council believes that such an environment will better support children with additional support needs. The council also thinks it will promote opportunities for effective integrated working with other services and partner agencies to provide support to children and families. The new nursery provision will be designed to meet the unique early learning and childcare entitlements of children aged two to five. It will offer flexible, high quality early learning and childcare provision, including a range of flexible spaces for children. HM Inspectors agree that there is potential educational benefit in providing a modern educational establishment with all of these facilities, whilst noting that much of the specification is yet to be agreed with stakeholders.

3.4 All stakeholders who spoke to HM Inspectors are in agreement with the proposal. They have no particular concerns about the proposal but are keen to be involved in discussions as the specifications for the new school are drawn up. Children who spoke to HM Inspectors have clear ideas about the facilities which the new school should have and are mindful of issues relating to traffic and safe routes to school. Staff who spoke to HM Inspectors acknowledged that school rolls are unlikely to be significantly negatively impacted by the building of a new school in the Western Gateway.

4. Summary

HM Inspectors agree that the proposal has the potential to bring clear educational benefits for the children and wider community in the area. Should the proposal go ahead, the council should continue to work with all stakeholders to agree the specification and design of the new school.

The council also needs to ensure that all safety issues relating to travel are fully considered as it develops its final report. Finally, it needs to agree with stakeholders how and when the new school will be opened to local children.

HM Inspectors
October 2022