

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by West Lothian Council to relocate Holy Family Primary School, Winchburgh.

December 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 West Lothian Council's proposal to relocate Holy Family Primary School, Winchburgh. 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 school; any other users; children likely to become pupils within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper; and other children 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:

- 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 Holy Family and Winchburgh Primary Schools, 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 period ran between 26 September and 15 November 2019. A public meeting was held at Holy Family Primary School on 10 October 2019 which six parents attended. No stakeholders provided written responses to the proposal. Overall, there is overwhelming support for the proposal.

3. Educational aspects of proposal

3.1 Currently, Holy Family Primary School and Winchburgh Primary School and Nursery Class are located within the same building. The school communities have worked hard recently, cooperating very well, to manage arrangements within the shared facility. However, all stakeholders agree that within the current situation, there are limited options for flexibility in

teaching and learning for both Holy Family and Winchburgh Primary Schools due to a lack of space. The proposal has the potential to bring benefits to children in both schools. It will increase the number of break out spaces for learning. Children will have a better lunchtime experience and arrangements for physical education will be improved. Opportunities for outdoor learning will be greater at the new joint campus. With the addition of a new early learning centre, transitions will be enhanced for children moving into Holy Family Primary School from nursery.

3.2 Children, parents and staff from both schools all welcome the proposal. All stakeholders who met with HM Inspectors see the benefits that the proposal will bring. Children are looking forward to the new school being built. However, a few children are concerned about the two schools being separated and the impact on their friendships with children in the other school. The school leaders and staff from both schools agree that they will work hard to maintain the strong links with continued cooperation and joint work. Staff at Holy Family Primary School view the proposal very positively and would wish to contribute their ideas as the plans are more fully developed.

3.3 The local Parish and Catholic Church welcome the proposal. They can see that the new school will bring benefits to children in terms of improved space and opportunities for outdoor education. They recognise the existing very successful joint work between Holy Family and Winchburgh Primary Schools and its positive impact on the children and the community. They support the continuation of this good work which includes celebrations of, for example, harvest and the Christmas lights.

4. Summary

HM Inspectors agree that the proposal, should it be approved, will bring educational benefits to the children in Holy Family Primary School. All members of the school communities of Holy Family and Winchburgh Primary Schools expressed their wish for the strong joint work to continue in the future. Stakeholders welcome West Lothian Council's commitment to continue to engage with staff, pupils and parents throughout the development of the proposed new school building.

**HM Inspectors
December 2019**