



PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL
EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES
CONSULTATION REPORT

**REPORT ON THE OUTCOME OF THE CONSULTATION RELATING TO THE
PROPOSAL TO MAKE A LIMITED VARIATION TO THE SCHOOL
ADMISSION POLICY FOR PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL SCHOOLS
FROM SCHOOL SESSION 2020/2021**

17 February 2020

This Consultation Report has been issued by Perth and Kinross Council in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

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PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL
EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

This report has been prepared following consultation on the Council's proposal:

To make a limited variation to the School Admission Policy for Perth and Kinross Council schools from school session 2020/2021. The limited changes relate to ensuring pupils living in Perth and Kinross are awarded appropriate priority for school places and pupils transferring to secondary school from feeder primaries are awarded appropriate priority.

1. INTRODUCTION

This is a consultation report prepared in compliance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 on the above proposal.

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- Provide a record of the total number of written responses made during the Statutory Consultation period;
- Provide a summary of the written responses;
- Provide a summary of oral representations made at the public meeting held on 9 January 2020;
- Provide a statement of the Council's response to those written and oral representations;
- Provide the full text of Education Scotland's report and a statement of the Council's response to this report;
- State how the Council reviewed the above proposal following the representations received during the Statutory Consultation period and the report from Education Scotland;
- Provide details of any omission from, or inaccuracy in, the [Proposal Paper](#) and state how the Council acted upon it; and
- State how the Council has complied with Sections 11A to 13 of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 when reviewing the above proposals.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 On 4 September 2019, Lifelong Learning Committee agreed to commence formal consultation on a proposal to vary the admission arrangements in respect of the handling of catchment enrolments and placing requests for primary and secondary schools ([Report No 19/243 refers](#)) in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

2.2 The 2010 Act's principal purpose is to provide strong, accountable statutory consultation practices and procedures that local authorities must apply to their handling of all proposals for school closures and other major changes to schools. These consultation processes are expected to be robust, open, transparent and fair, and seen to be so. They are also expected to be consistent across Scotland.

2.3 These duties are outlined in the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010 and the accompanying Statutory Guidance](#).

- 2.4 Lifelong Learning Committee reports and the Proposal Paper referred to above are available on the Council's website www.pkc.gov.uk.

3. CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The main considerations relating to the proposal are fully explained in the [Proposal Paper](#), and the main points are highlighted as follows:
- 3.2 Perth and Kinross Council works to enhance quality of life, make best use of public resources and ensure continuously improving services. Perth and Kinross Council's Corporate Plan "Securing the Future" aims to ensure that individuals, families and communities experience the best possible outcomes from a range of services.
- 3.3 Perth and Kinross Council has a strong identity and clear priorities which everyone works together to achieve, creating areas which are vibrant and successful; safe, secure, healthy and sustainable environments; educated, responsible and informed citizens; confident and active communities; and places where people are nurtured and supported, giving every child the best start in life.
- 3.4 This approach reflects the Single Outcome Agreement National Outcome 15 that "Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs", and the Local Outcome that "Our services will be responsive, of high quality and continually improving". This report also links with the School Estate Management Plan, Education and Children's Services Policy Framework Maximising Resources and with the Education and Children's Services objective to develop the range and quality learning experiences for all.
- 3.5 In terms of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, the Council is obliged to publish its arrangements for the placing of children in schools in its area. Within Perth and Kinross, these arrangements are contained within the School Admission Policy which has been operational since January 2009 when it was last reviewed. The School Admission Policy sets out the arrangements for the placing of catchment pupils and handling of placing requests.
- 3.6 The policy of Perth and Kinross Council is to assign to each school a defined zone known as a catchment area. Each home address has a catchment school for both primary and secondary education. The designated catchment schools are dependent on pupils' home address. Although the Council endeavours to provide enough places for all children in a catchment area to attend the catchment school, living within a catchment area does not guarantee a child a place at that school.

In accordance with the provisions of the legislation, parents have a right to make a request that their child be placed in a school of their choice other than the school which normally serves the catchment area in which they reside. Parents' wishes are to be met wherever possible. If the number of places in any school is limited, priority for admissions shall be determined by the priorities as set out in the School Admission Policy.

- 3.7 Education authorities in Scotland are required to ensure adequate and efficient education is provided for all school age children within their local authority boundary. The impact of parental choice and demand for places in certain schools has highlighted the need to review the current School Admission Policy to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

- 3.8 The arrangements for admission for Primary 1 and Secondary 1 pupils for August 2019 saw 438 placing requests being received, which resulted in 181 pupils being refused places for the school of their choice. Of these refusals, 47 were pupils living outwith Perth and Kinross. This subsequently resulted in an unprecedented number of statutory appeals to the Education Appeal Committee.

Education and Children's Services managed the primary and secondary intakes for August 2019 in accordance with the priority categories as set out within the current Perth and Kinross School Admission Policy.

- 3.9 However, the sole criterion of distance being used to determine the priority between children within each category of Priority 2 and Priority 3 has identified that in some cases in schools where intakes were oversubscribed, children resident within Perth and Kinross were not being afforded the appropriate priority to have their placing request for another school in Perth and Kinross considered. In some cases, pupils from outwith Perth and Kinross were prioritised above Perth and Kinross pupils on the waiting list for an available place, based on geographical proximity to the school.
- 3.10 In addition, using the sole criterion of distance to determine the priority between children within each category has identified that in some secondary schools where intakes were oversubscribed, children who were attending a feeder primary school as a result of a successful placing request, were not being afforded the appropriate priority to have their placing request considered to allow transition to secondary school with their peer group. In some cases, a small number of Primary 7 pupils were not able to transition to secondary school with their peer group as a result of the criterion of distance being the determining factor in prioritisation of placing requests.
- 3.11 St John's RC Academy, which is the only denominational secondary school within Perth and Kinross, had a number of non-RC catchment Primary 7 pupils and a number of non-RC catchment Primary 7 pupils in its feeder primary schools who were not able to transition to a denominational secondary school with their peer groups as a result of S1 places being prioritised using the sole criterion of distance.
- 3.12 Whilst it has not been a significant issue in previous years, the number of catchment and placing request refusals for August 2019 has now identified that the School Admission Policy requires to be revised in order to ensure that it continues to be fit for purpose and provide flexibility to allow appropriate priority to be provided to pupils living in Perth and Kinross, and to those pupils transitioning to secondary school who are attending feeder primary schools.
- 3.13 In varying the current School Admission Policy to include specific priority for pupils who are resident within Perth and Kinross, and for pupils transitioning to secondary school from a feeder primary school, **it is important to note that this proposal will not affect the majority of schools and will not affect most of our 18,018 school pupils.** The proposal would continue to ensure that catchment pupils are awarded places as a priority ahead of any placing requests.

The majority of schools are not oversubscribed and most pupils attend their designated catchment schools. The proposed limited variations will not result in any more or any fewer placing requests being able to be granted. In the majority of cases, the only consequence of this change would be the pupil's position on a waiting list for an available place. Based on the situation for session 2019/2020, **15 affected pupils would have benefitted from the proposed limited variation to the School Admission Policy.**

- 3.14 The vast majority of placing requests are made at key transition stages where pupils are moving into Primary 1 and 1st year at Secondary schools. Placing requests are required to be made within the official placing period each year where placing requests are submitted by 15 March for consideration of places for the new school session in August. This results in large numbers of placing requests being submitted at the same time for the same school stages. Where the number of catchment pupils and/or placing requests exceeds the number of available spaces in any particular school, then the allocation of places requires to be appropriately and fairly prioritised.
- 3.15 In schools where the intake is not oversubscribed, there would be no change to the ability to grant placing requests of all priorities. However, in schools where the intake is oversubscribed, places would continue to be granted in accordance with the agreed capacity and refused placing requests would be maintained on a waiting list in priority determined by the School Admission Policy.
- 3.16 Transition programmes currently in place will be unaffected by the proposed limited variation to the School Admission Policy. However, this proposal will contribute towards improving the primary to secondary transition process for pupils attending feeder primary schools as the result of a placing request and who are seeking to continue to attend secondary school with their peer group by affording these pupils appropriate priority when considering placing requests. This would support a more effective and inclusive transition experience for these pupils where possible.
- 3.17 Introducing more flexibility when considering admissions to schools will ensure that, wherever possible, pupils seeking to transition to secondary school with their peer group will be given appropriate priority ahead of pupils who do not attend a feeder primary school for the chosen secondary school. This would provide a better opportunity for continuity for these pupils to attend secondary school with their Primary 7 peer group and reduce the circumstances in which pupils may be separated from their Primary 7 peer group at a key transition stage.
- 3.18 Pupils attending denominational primary schools will have clarity on the prioritisation of places to ensure, wherever possible, that pupils attending a denominational primary school will be afforded the appropriate priority to attend the only denominational secondary school in Perth and Kinross ahead of pupils who do not attend a denominational primary school or do not have a sibling attending the denominational secondary school. This proposal would provide a better opportunity for pupils seeking to continue a denominational education at secondary school to be considered for places.
- 3.19 This proposal aims to remove the risk that pupils living within Perth and Kinross may be disadvantaged when applying for school places as a result of placing requests being made for pupils living outwith Perth and Kinross. The current use of distance alone to prioritise placing requests can mean that, in some instances, pupils living outwith Perth and Kinross are geographically closer to their chosen school in Perth and Kinross than Perth and Kinross pupils.

This proposal will ensure that pupils living in Perth and Kinross will always be given appropriate priority for school places ahead of pupils from outwith the local authority area, ensuring that Perth and Kinross pupils are prioritised for school places in accordance with the education authority's duty to provide adequate and efficient provision of school education across their entire area for the current school population and future pattern of demand.

- 3.20 Any proposal to make changes to the School Admission Policy must be subject to a statutory consultation exercise as the varying of any admission arrangements for schools is a relevant proposal in terms of legislation.

4. THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

- 4.1 On 4 September 2019, Lifelong Learning Committee agreed to commence formal consultation on a proposal to vary the admission arrangements in respect of the handling of catchment enrolments and placing requests for primary and secondary schools ([Report No 19/243 refers](#)) in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.
- 4.2 An electronic link to the Proposal Paper was issued by email on 2 December 2019 to those individuals and bodies listed under Distribution within the document. The Proposal Paper was also published on the Council's website: www.pkc.gov.uk
- 4.3 The Proposal Paper made clear to consultees that the consultation period would run from Monday 2 December 2019 until Friday 24 January 2020 – a period of 30 school days.
- 4.4 The proposal on which consultation took place was:
- To make a limited variation to the School Admission Policy for Perth and Kinross Council schools from school session 2020/2021. The limited changes relate to ensuring pupils living in Perth and Kinross are awarded appropriate priority for school places and pupils transferring to secondary school from feeder primaries are awarded appropriate priority.
- 4.5 The requirements for consulting on a relevant proposal relating to schools are set out in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.
- A Proposal Paper was published on Monday 2 December 2019. Statutory consultees were sent an email providing a link to the proposal paper and details of where and how to obtain a paper copy. A copy of this document was available free of charge to the consultees listed within the document.
 - The Proposal Paper was published on the Perth and Kinross Council website www.pkc.gov.uk and was available in paper copy upon request.
 - An advertisement ran in the Courier and Advertiser and the Perthshire Advertiser on 2 December 2019 and 6 December 2019.
 - The consultation was published on the Council's social media channels throughout the consultation period.
 - A public meeting was held to discuss the proposal on Thursday 9 January 2020.
 - The Consultation period ended on Friday 24 January 2020.
 - Education Scotland's involvement consisted of: the proposal paper documents being sent to them, attendance at the public meeting and visits to the sites of both St John's RC Academy and Kinross High School, including discussion with relevant consultees. They also received a copy of all written representations and the minute of the public meeting. They then prepared a report on the educational aspects of the proposal. This is attached as Appendix 3.
- 4.6 All schools in Perth and Kinross are affected by the proposal:
- 4.7 In accordance with statutory requirements and good practice, the following persons were consulted:

- The Parent Councils of the affected schools
- The parents of the pupils and children at the affected schools
- The parents of children expected to attend the affected schools within 2 years of the date of publication of this proposal document
- The pupils at the affected schools
- The teaching and ancillary staff at the affected schools
- The trade union and professional association representatives of the above staff
- The Community Councils
- Elected Members of Perth and Kinross Council
- Lay Members of Lifelong Learning Committee
- The Constituency MSPs and List MSPs covering the Constituency
- The Constituency MPs
- The Executive Director, Housing & Environment, Perth and Kinross Council
- Tayside Contracts
- Live Active Leisure
- Education Scotland

- 4.8 The number of emails issued with details of the Proposal Paper was 14,090. The communication issued made it clear that it was important to note that the limited variation detailed in the proposal will not affect the majority of schools which are not oversubscribed and will not affect the majority of pupils who attend their catchment schools.
- 4.9 During the consultation period, representations were sought from interested parties, either in oral or written form or electronically. A generic email account was set up by the Council to receive representations and enquiries on the proposal.
- 4.10 This Consultation Report is the Council's response to the issues raised during the consultation period on the Proposal Paper.
- 4.11 This Consultation Report was published on the Council's website for a period of no less than 3 weeks prior to final consideration by Lifelong Learning Committee on 18 March 2020.

5. THE PUBLIC MEETING

- 5.1 A public meeting was held in Bertha Park High School on Thursday 9 January 2020. This meeting was attended by 18 members of the public. A full note of the meeting is attached as Appendix 1 which details the questions and comments raised at the meeting.

6. RESPONSES TO THE CONSULTATION EXERCISE

- 6.1 In total, 69 responses were received. 58 responses agreed with the Council's proposal, 10 disagreed with the Council's proposal and 1 neither agreed nor disagreed with the Council's proposal. The 10 responses which disagreed with the Council's proposal relates to 8 respondees as 2 persons submitted 2 responses each.

The details of the respondents are contained within the Summary of Consultation Responses, attached as Appendix 2.

- 6.2 In summary, the oral and written responses and questions can be grouped broadly as follows:

- Parents seeking specific answers to their individual circumstances.
- Proposals are fairer and more equitable.
- Timescales for the proposal to be implemented, places being granted and having an address in catchment.
- Pupils in feeder primary schools seeking to transfer with their peers and whether they could be guaranteed a place at secondary school without the need for a placing request.
- Pupils in denominational primary schools seeking to transfer to St John's RC Academy and agreed priority for these pupils.
- Transition arrangements for pupils transferring to secondary school.
- Clarification on the new priorities and information available regarding oversubscribed schools, class sizes and waiting lists.
- Impact on primary schools if placing requests are made in order to try to get into a particular secondary school and pupils being moved in P7 to get into a secondary school.
- Whether house building would reduce the chance of placing requests being accepted and impact of house building on catchment areas.
- Transport.
- Dundee City Council's consultation on the catchment area for Harris Academy,
- Clarity on the use of criteria of attendance at a feeder primary school.

7. EDUCATION AUTHORITY RESPONSE TO WRITTEN AND ORAL REPRESENTATIONS

7.1 A comment was made that the consultation is very close to the cut off point for places being allocated for this year.

The Council must make its decisions regarding placing requests by 30 April 2020 so a decision by Lifelong Learning Committee on 18 March 2020 would allow this timescale to be met.

7.2 Clarification was sought regarding the new proposal relating to priority 1c. How will pupils be prioritised if there are 10 pupils all from feeder schools applying for one place?

Priority for the place would be determined by length of time in attendance at a feeder primary school. If this is the same for all 10 pupils, then it would be determined by distance from the school with those living closest being highest priority.

7.3 Clarification was sought whether nursery attendance was taken into consideration.

Nursery attendance is not a consideration for priority at school. Children attend a range of different settings for nursery which are not delivered within a school.

7.4 Clarification was sought regarding if a pupil attends a feeder school but doesn't live in the catchment area or in Perth and Kinross, would they be priority 5?

Pupils living outwith Perth and Kinross would be placed after those who live within Perth and Kinross. They would be priority 4 if they had a sibling already at the school or priority 5 if they did not have a sibling already attending the school.

7.5 Clarification was sought regarding if a pupil attends a feeder school for a denominational secondary school but are not baptised Roman Catholic, will they be given a higher priority?

Pupils who are baptised Roman Catholic will have priority for places in denominational schools.

The proposals would ensure that a higher priority is given to those pupils who attend a feeder denominational primary school but are not baptised than is currently the case.

7.6 A comment was made that this is an issue at the minute with uncertainty whether a child will get a place. Children are worrying they will not get to move on with their friends.

The proposals would ensure that a higher priority is given to those pupils who attend a feeder primary school than is currently the case, giving pupils in P7 a better chance of being able to move to secondary school with their friends. This is why the Council is proposing to make the changes to the School Admission Policy to try to reduce the number of situations, wherever possible, that P7 pupils living in Perth and Kinross do not get to transfer to secondary school with their friends.

7.7 Clarification was sought regarding families living in Perth and Kinross near to Clacks and Fife. Have they made the wrong choice in sending their child to a Clacks primary school instead of Kinross Primary School, as priority will be based on attendance at a feeder primary school to attend Kinross High School?

If a child is a Perth and Kinross resident, they will be a priority for attending their catchment secondary school. The Council tries to ensure that all pupils can be accommodated in their non-denominational catchment secondary school. No catchment pupils have not been admitted to Kinross High School as part of the transfer to secondary arrangements and it is not considered that will change.

7.8 Clarification was sought regarding Kinross Primary School is already full and there are more houses being built. What if parents wanted to move their child to Kinross Primary School?

Kinross Primary School is not full. There are currently no spaces in P5, and this can occur during the school year in any school where parents are seeking to move pupils mid-session. Each year a staffing review is undertaken with Headteachers to consider the pupil intakes for the new school session, the structure of classes and what staffing is required etc. The Council works to prioritise its resources to ensure, wherever possible, that children can attend their catchment schools.

7.9 Clarification was sought regarding parents who have a child in Kinross High School and one in Muckhart Primary School. Even though they can walk to Kinross High School, will they now be at a disadvantage due to time attending a feeder primary being a consideration?

Pupils living in the catchment area of Kinross High School will not be disadvantaged as a result of the proposal. Priority 1c would only be implemented in cases where all catchment area pupils could not be accommodated. This is likely only to be required for denominational schools. The implications and costs to the Council of not being able to accommodate catchment pupils in secondary schools outwith Perth city is significant, and the Council works hard to ensure this does not happen.

7.10 Clarification was sought regarding whether the Council publishes what space is available for placing requests for each school?

Parents have a legal right to make a placing request for any school regardless of how many spaces there might be available. The number of spaces which are available for placing requests can vary significantly on an annual basis. The available spaces are determined by considering how many catchment pupils have enrolled, what levels of staffing are to be allocated to each school from the annual budget allocated in April, class structures and reserved places required which can only be done once the final numbers of pupils registered to attend each school is known.

- 7.11 **A comment was made that with the catchment for Bertha Park High School and all the new houses being built at Bertha Park, Huntingtower etc, pupils at Ruthvenfield want to go to secondary school with their friends. There are concerns as the pupils from the new houses would be in the catchment for Ruthvenfield and Bertha Park High School leaving no space for those currently attending Ruthvenfield from outwith the catchment area.**

The Council works with Planning colleagues regarding build out rates for the new houses and projections of pupils likely to come from new house building to ensure the management of the expansion of the secondary school is in line with the increased catchment pupils in that area. It has been planned that this is the way that Bertha Park High School will grow with pupils and staff and it will not stay the size it currently is. There will be capacity for 1100 pupils to accommodate the pupils from the strategic house building sites at Bertha Park, Perth West and Almond Valley.

- 7.12 **A comment was made that if catchment areas were to be changed, parents would be in the catchment area for the school they want.**

This proposal does not include any plans to amend school catchment areas as part of this consultation. The proposal sets out how the Council will prioritise placing requests going forward. The proposal would benefit pupils who are not living within the catchment of the secondary school they wish to attend by awarding priority to those pupils in feeder primary schools which is not currently a priority category.

- 7.13 **Clarification was sought regarding the decision announcement date of 30 April 2020 which means there is a lot of uncertainty among peer groups for that time. Will that date remain under the new proposal?**

Yes, this deadline will remain. It is a statutory requirement that all parents who have submitted a placing request must be advised no later than 30 April 2020. Perth and Kinross Council considers the allocation of places from the legal closing date of 15 March to ensure all parents have their decision letter before 30 April each year.

- 7.14 **Clarification was sought regarding whether the Council can tell parents which schools are oversubscribed?**

The schools with classes which are oversubscribed can vary from year to year and it is not the case that the same schools are oversubscribed each year. It is dependent on how many children live within the catchment area, how many catchment pupils choose to attend other schools, how many pupils are leaving in P7, staffing levels and class configurations. These can all change annually.

- 7.15 **Clarification was sought regarding whether the criteria for distance is the shortest walking route as the crow flies?**

Distances are not measured as the crow flies. The distance measured is the shortest available walking route.

- 7.16 **Clarification was sought regarding whether Inch View Primary School is oversubscribed?**

In some years some classes have been oversubscribed and other years they have not. Registration for P1 places for August commences on Monday 13 January 2020 and only once registrations have been completed by 15 March will the situation regarding available places for out of catchment pupils be known.

- 7.17 **Clarification was sought regarding if a pupil is refused a placement in a High School, do parents need to apply for another school?**

The Council will write and inform you if your placing request has been successful or not. If it is not successful, then parents can choose their catchment school or can make a placing request application for another school.

- 7.18 **Clarification was sought regarding how long will it take to get a decision on a second choice application?**
The Council tries to process 2nd choice applications as quickly as possible.
- 7.19 **Clarification was sought regarding whether pupils can go on transition days if parents don't know if their child has got a place?**
Pupils cannot attend transition days unless a place at the school has been granted. The Council's proposal will prioritise pupils attending a feeder primary school, wherever possible, to reduce the number of pupils who cannot attend transition days whilst awaiting appeal hearings.
- 7.20 **Clarification was sought regarding if pupils are not accepted for their first choice of school and they have no information of the other school, will they be guaranteed transition in this school?**
Yes. Schools will continue to work to support pupils with transition where they have been unable to be granted a place in their secondary school of choice.
- 7.21 **A comment was made that where a child has depression, being put in this position will put pressure on the child's mental health.**
It is recognised that transition is an anxious time for young people and their parents. The Council's proposals are seeking to improve the current situation to prioritise pupils to attend secondary school with their peers, wherever possible.
- 7.22 **Clarification was sought regarding the timescale when all school places are confirmed?**
The decision for all August intakes must be confirmed to parents by 30 April 2020. If a placing request is refused, then parents have up to 28 days to appeal up to the end of May. Once appeals are submitted, the hearings need to be arranged and papers issued so this usually takes place mid to end of June. This year some appeals ran into the summer holidays.
- 7.23 **Clarification was sought regarding what are the statistics if there are 10 appeals. How many are successful?**
The majority of appeals are not successful. The Appeal Committee considers whether a legal ground for refusal exists and whether the Council has followed the legislation and policy in awarding and refusing requests.
- 7.24 **Clarification was sought regarding why there is only one option for a school on the placing request form? Why can't parents have a second choice on the form?**
Parents can put in a second form with your second choice. However, second choice applications will only be considered once all first choice applications have been dealt with. In cases where a placing request has been refused, then further documentation is issued to parents regarding next steps.
- 7.25 **Clarification was sought regarding if parents go down the appeal route and the appeal is not heard until into the summer holidays, where do the pupils do their transition days?**
Pupils will do their transition days at their catchment school if they have no other school place confirmed.
- 7.26 **Clarification was sought whether Headteachers know what sizes the P1 classes will be?**
Registration for P1 takes place week commencing 13 January 2020.

Until the catchment pupil numbers are confirmed, staff exercise is completed and placing requests are decided by the Council, Headteachers will not know their class configurations for August until 30 April.

7.27 A comment was made that P1 classes must be getting bigger with all the additional houses?

There are approximately 1500 P1 pupils each year and 1500 S1 pupils transfer to secondary school each year. Not all additional houses generate the same numbers of additional pupils of the same age at the same time.

7.28 Clarification was sought regarding when parents will know if this proposal will go through?

The Council is required to publish a Consultation Report at the end of the consultation and this will contain recommendations. This report will be published for 3 weeks before a final decision is taken.

7.29 Clarification was sought regarding whether this proposal could be in place for the end of April 2020?

Yes. It is intended that Lifelong Learning Committee will make a decision on 18 March 2020.

7.30 Clarification was sought regarding how many Councillors are on Lifelong Learning Committee and how many are in agreement with this new proposal?

At this stage the proposal has not been granted or agreed. The only approval which has been given is for officers to undertake formal consultation and seek views on the proposal. Lifelong Learning Committee will take a decision on 18 March 2020. The paper will be public a week prior to the Committee meeting. There are 13 Elected Members, Parent Council Representatives, Religious Representatives and Young People Representatives that sit on the Committee. However, only the Elected Members vote.

7.31 Clarification was sought regarding had this policy been in place last year for S1 pupils, would there have been a benefit to S1 pupils?

Based on the situation for session 2019 / 2020, there would have been 15 pupils that would have benefitted from the proposed limited variation to the school Admission Policy.

7.32 Clarification was sought regarding whether parents would know where they were on the waiting list?

Yes, the Council maintains waiting lists for schools where pupils have been refused places and these are in place until the start of the school session. The Council can advise parents where their child was placed on the waiting list.

7.33 Clarification was sought whether there are any catchment pupils that have not benefited as they didn't get into their catchment school?

There are very few pupils who are not able to be enrolled in their catchment school. No secondary pupils have not been able to be accommodated in their non-denominational secondary school. This proposal will provide further criteria for assessing catchment pupils wishing to attend a denominational school.

7.34 A comment was made that this consultation is excellent and it will benefit a lot of people. Clarification was sought regarding the scenario that pupils are moved in P7 to a different primary school in order to get their child into the secondary school of their choice?

There is a possibility that some parents may try to make placing requests to move their child in P7. However, if there was no space for placing requests then the placing request would be refused, and the child would not be able to move.

Legally, the Council must accept placing requests if they have spaces and where no other legal ground for refusal exists. This is an area that the Council recognises is a concern regarding how this situation could be fairly managed.

- 7.35 **Clarification was sought regarding whether it states in the proposal paper that those that have been in a feeder school longest get priority?**
Yes, it does state that priority would be given to those pupils who have attended a feeder primary school the longest.
- 7.36 **Clarification was sought regarding if pupils are not in a feeder school, are they in a lower priority category?**
Yes, pupils who do not attend a feeder primary school would be a lower priority category.
- 7.37 **A comment was made that it is detrimental to a child if they are moved to another school for 6 months to get them into the preferred secondary school?**
Yes, it could be considered detrimental, but parents have the legal right to make a placing request at any time for their child. The Council would need to manage any instances of increased numbers of placing requests being made for P6 and P7 pupils.
- 7.38 **Clarification was sought regarding when choosing a primary school, is there information for parents specifying if they chose a particular primary school this is the path for secondary school. With the new system will pupils get placement in the associated secondary?**
The Council publishes information online which advises parents of their catchment primary and secondary schools. Each primary school handbook provides details of the associated secondary school for the school where pupils would normally attend. Places cannot be guaranteed for pupils making placing requests, but this proposal will ensure that where there are available spaces, it will be possible to prioritise pupils in a feeder school which currently does not happen.
- 7.39 **Clarification was sought regarding how many applications would be received for each category?**
It is difficult to say with any certainty as it can change from year to year. For session 2019/20, there were approximately 450 placing requests submitted.
- 7.40 **Clarification was sought regarding if a child is in a small denominational school but are not baptised Roman Catholic, will they get priority to attend St John's Academy?**
In denominational schools, baptised Roman Catholic pupils are awarded the highest priority, and this will remain the case. The proposal would give priority to those pupils in a feeder school who are not baptised Roman Catholic before other pupils who are not baptised Roman Catholic which is not currently the case.
- 7.41 **Clarification was sought whether parents can get their child baptised?**
That would be a matter for parents to discuss with the Roman Catholic Church. However, it is not as straightforward as booking a date for a baptism. There are requirements of the Roman Catholic Church which require to be met before consideration may be given to children being baptised in the Roman Catholic faith.
- 7.42 **Clarification was sought regarding what is the latest date that pupils must have an address in the catchment area to get into a secondary school in August?**
Parents would need to provide proof of permanent address or proof of purchase contract for the house prior to August 2020 to be considered as having a permanent address within the catchment area for the new school session.

At that point, it is likely that there may only be reserved places which can only be awarded to catchment pupils and these will only be awarded to permanent addresses within the catchment area. The Council is updating its guidance on the checks that will be undertaken by the Council regarding temporary addresses and attempted fraudulent enrolment and the evidence which will be necessary to provide proof of residency in any school catchment area.

- 7.43 **Clarification was sought regarding if pupils were refused a place in April, when is the deadline to buy a house in the catchment?**
Proof of purchase would need to be provided to the Council prior to August 2020 for a pupil to be considered for a place at the start of the new school session.
- 7.44 **A comment was made regarding the impact on primary schools if placing requests are made in order to try to get into a particular secondary school.**
It is recognised that the changes to the School Admission Policy may increase the number of placing requests being made for feeder primary schools of popular secondary schools. However, the number of placing requests which will be able to be granted in feeder primary schools will continue to be managed within the capacity and staffing allocated to these primary schools as they currently are. It may result in more placing requests being refused if there is an increase in placing requests for feeder primary schools. The changes will only affect those pupils who have/are able to be granted a placing request in a feeder primary school so they are not then disadvantaged at the point of transfer to secondary school as a result of distance. It will not mean that more placing requests will be granted at primary schools.
- 7.45 **A comment was made regarding whether transport would be provided for non-catchment pupils to attend secondary school.**
In respect transport, there would be no change to the current transport policy where parents who make a successful placing request are required to organise and meet the cost of transport for their child to attend a school which is not their catchment school. This would continue to be the case.
- 7.46 **Clarification was sought regarding whether house building would reduce the chance of placing requests being accepted.**
Where there is significant house building within any school catchment area, then steps do need to be taken to ensure that pupils from within the catchment area can be accommodated in their catchment school. Placing requests can only be granted if there is available space which is not required for catchment pupils. Therefore, house building within a catchment area may reduce the number of placing requests which can be accepted for that school.
- 7.47 **Clarification was sought regarding whether pupils in feeder primary schools could be guaranteed a place at secondary school without the need for a placing request.**
It is important to note that the proposed changes to the School Admission Policy is not altering the entitlement of any pupils. Therefore, pupils who attend a feeder primary school as a placing request are not being guaranteed a place at the associated secondary school. Where there are available places for placing requests to be granted at the associated secondary school, these will be prioritised for pupils attending a feeder primary school. Parents will still be required to submit a placing request and it is important as part of that application that parents understand and accept that they are responsible for all arrangements and costs of transport for any pupil who attends a school as the result of a placing request.

- 7.48 **A comment was made that following Dundee City Council's consultation on the catchment area for Harris Academy, Invergowrie Primary School catchment area should be reviewed to remove the area which lies within Dundee.**
Perth and Kinross Council's consultation on a limited variation to the School Admission Policy does not include any statutory consultation on any school catchment area. The School Admission Policy does not determine the catchment areas for schools.
- 7.49 **A comment was made that the Council should discuss and agree a way forward for a new secondary school to take account of the Western Gateway in Dundee, the wider Carse of Gowrie and West Angus area.**
Perth and Kinross Council's consultation on a limited variation to the School Admission Policy does not include any statutory consultation on the provision of a new school.
- 7.50 **A comment was made that Invergowrie pupils are being impacted by a decision of Dundee City Council to review the catchment area of Harris Academy.**
Perth and Kinross Council's consultation on a limited variation to the School Admission Policy does not determine how school places in Dundee will be allocated. Perth and Kinross Council's School Admission Policy sets out how school places will be prioritised in Perth and Kinross schools and does not determine the transfer to secondary arrangements or catchment areas for schools.
- 7.51 **A comment was made that a pupil's catchment school should be their closest school regardless of which Council area it is in.**
Perth and Kinross Council's consultation on a limited variation to the School Admission Policy does not include any statutory consultation on any school catchment area. The School Admission Policy does not determine the catchment areas for schools.
- 7.52 **A comment was made that it is unfair to include criteria for the length of time attending a feeder primary school as some pupils do not attend their catchment primary school.**
Where pupils live within the catchment area of the secondary school, they will be Priority 1 pupils and the Council seeks, wherever possible, to ensure that Priority 1 pupils can be accommodated within their catchment school. In a non-denominational school, it is very unlikely that this criteria will be necessary.
- 7.53 **A comment was made that it is unfair that pupils attending a PKC primary school but living outside the Council boundary will be given a lower priority.**
Perth and Kinross Council has a statutory duty to provide school places for pupils living in Perth and Kinross. Pupils living outwith Perth and Kinross can only be considered for a school place if there is sufficient space to accommodate any placing requests.
- 7.54 **Clarification was sought regarding whether the feeder school criteria could be restricted to denominational schools.**
Whilst it is acknowledged that the issue of catchment pupils not being able to attend denominational schools is more common than in non-denominational schools, there have been some pupils who attend non-denominational schools as the result of a placing request who have not been able to attend secondary school with their peer group. This criteria may be required to be used in any secondary school when assessing placing requests and therefore should not be restricted to denominational schools.
- 7.55 **Clarification was sought regarding whether a grace period/transition could be allowed so that those pupils in non-feeder schools are not disadvantaged.**

In schools which are not oversubscribed, it may not be necessary to allocate places based on attendance at a feeder school as pupils in all categories may be able to be accommodated. However, in schools which are oversubscribed, the very pupils which this limited change is intended to support will be disadvantaged if this is not implemented.

7.56 Clarification was sought regarding if spaces are not available for placing requests, pupils should not be forced to attend their catchment school.

If a parent makes an unsuccessful placing request, they can choose to either send their child to their catchment school or make a placing request for another school if they do not wish for their child to attend their catchment school.

7.57 A comment was made that there does not appear to be any consideration for pupils with additional needs or disabilities. Placing requests should also consider the child's mental and physical capacity.

Where a child has additional support needs or disability which cannot be met within their catchment school, the Council's School Admission Policy permits the placing of a child by the Authority. This is undertaken through consideration by the Transition Panel.

8. EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT

8.1 In accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, a report was produced by Education Scotland on the educational aspects of the proposal.

8.2 The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of Perth and Kinross Council's proposal to make a limited variation to the School Admission Policy.

8.3 Education Scotland visited St John's RC Academy and Kinross High School Schools the week commencing 27 January 2020 to speak to relevant consultees. Education Scotland attended the public meeting held on 9 January 2020 in connection with the Council's proposals.

8.4 The Education Scotland report is reproduced in full (Appendix 3).

8.5 The report supports the proposal and is summarised below:

- Overall, the impact of the proposal is not likely to make a difference to a significant number of children and young people, and the authority's own modelling suggests that in the current year it would have had an impact on only 15 from almost 18,000 pupils in the authority. Families whose children and young people attend their catchment primary school and secondary school, are likely to remain unaffected.
- The proposal is a change and refinement to the admissions policy. The new policy lays out clearer and more precise criteria for priority relating to admissions. This clarity is helpful in giving stakeholders and children and young people a greater confidence regarding their transition route to secondary school.
- The proposal gives stakeholders a greater confidence that children and young people are more likely to progress to the same secondary school as their peers. This is underpinned by criteria within the proposal of prioritising those pupils from associated primary schools. It also helps to ensure that preparation for transitions from associated primary schools are more likely to be suitable and effective. HM Inspectors recognise the value of these arrangements.

- The greater clarity and improved detail should also lessen the need for appeals where placement requests have been unsuccessful. Where appeals are made, the enhanced criteria should make decisions clear and easier for everyone to understand. HM Inspectors recognise the benefit of a more transparent and understandable criteria for such decision making. For the children in denominational primary schools, there will be a greater clarity regarding their priority for places in the authority's only denominational secondary school.
- Stakeholders overall welcome the clarity that the proposals bring, with over 80% of responses to the local authority supporting the proposals. Children and young people value the improved level of confidence about their progression arrangements, and the likelihood of progressing with their peer group. Stakeholders whose priority is not improved with this proposal also recognise the benefit of greater clarity.
- The few stakeholders who do not support the proposal focus primarily on the extra travel distance that might be involved for the young people who may not get a place in the school nearest their home. A small number of the stakeholders affected by the proposal are resident in the neighbouring local authorities, and these residents expressed some concern that the proposal may have an impact on their opportunity for a successful placement request.
- Education Scotland summarised their report by stating that the proposed changes to the admissions policy lay out clearer and more precise criteria for priority relating to admissions. This clarity is helpful in giving stakeholders, children and young people a greater confidence regarding their transition route to secondary school. It also helps to ensure that preparation for transitions from associated primary schools are more likely to be suitable and effective. For the children in denominational primary schools, there will be a greater clarity that they have a priority for places in the authority's only denominational secondary school. Therefore, the proposal supports a level of continuity for those children and young people wishing to continue their education in a denominational school. The proposal is supported by the majority of stakeholders. It is likely to lessen the need for appeals, and where appeals are made, the enhanced criteria will support clearer decision making and improved understanding for the reasons that decisions are made.

8.6 Perth and Kinross Council's Response to Education Scotland's Report

The Council welcomes the report from Education Scotland and accepts its response to the Council's proposal. The Council is pleased that there are no actions to be addressed in taking forward the proposal.

9. ALLEGED OMISSIONS OR INACCURACIES

- 9.1 Section (10) (3) of the 2010 Act also places a requirement on the Council to provide details of any inaccuracy or omission within the Proposal Paper which has either been identified by the Council or raised by consultees. This section of the 2010 Act also requires the Council to provide a statement on the action taken in respect of the inaccuracy or omission, or, if no action was taken, to state that fact and why.
- 9.2 In the course of the consultation exercise, there were no areas identified by respondents as being inaccurate or omitted from the Proposal Paper during the consultation period.

10. COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 9(1) OF THE SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010

- 10.1 Section 9(1) of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 states that: After the Education Authority has received Education Scotland's report, the Authority is to review the relevant proposal having regard (in particular) to:
- (i) written representations received by the Authority (from any person) during the consultation period;
 - (ii) oral representations made to it (by any person) at the public Meeting; and
 - (iii) Education Scotland's report.
- 10.2 Following receipt of the Education Scotland report, 63 online representations, 6 written representations and oral representations made at the public meeting held during the consultation period, officers reviewed the proposals.
- 10.3 The feedback from the consultation was considered by officers where all the questions and comments raised were considered in detail. This ensured that the Council met the requirements to review the proposal under section 9(1) and 13(5) of the 2010 Act.
- 10.4 Officers of the Education Authority have listened carefully to the points made at the public meeting and have considered equally carefully the Education Scotland report and the online representations. The proposal was reviewed to consider whether any of the representations led to the Council to reconsider any other reasonable alternatives to the proposal.
- 10.5 None of the representations led officers to conclude that there were any other reasonable alternatives.
- 10.6 The educational benefits were reviewed in respect of the Education Scotland report and representations made.
- 10.7 There were no factors included in the Education Scotland report or representations made requiring any aspect of the educational benefits to be reconsidered.
- 10.8 Having reviewed the Education Scotland report and feedback from consultees, officers concluded that the basis of the original proposal continues to be the most appropriate variation to refine the School Admission Policy.
- 10.9 It is considered that the proposal addresses the issues of ensuring appropriate priority for pupils living within Perth and Kinross when awarding school places and that pupils transferring to secondary school from associated primary schools are awarded appropriate priority within the School Admission Policy.

11. LEGAL ISSUES

- 11.1 The Council has complied in full with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 throughout this statutory consultation.
- 11.2 The Council is mindful of its duties in respect of equality and the Equality Impact Assessment did not identify that any parent, child or young person would be treated less favourably as a result of this proposal.

The assessment identified that pupils attending a denominational primary school would benefit by having a better opportunity to attend a denominational secondary school. Pupils who are not baptised Roman Catholic who attend a denominational primary school are currently at a disadvantage in terms of the Council's existing School Admission Policy and these changes will address that disadvantage if the proposal is implemented.

- 11.3 Under the terms of the Schools (Scotland) (Consultation) Act 2010, it is a legal requirement that the Council should not reach any formal decision without waiting until a period of three weeks starting on the day on which this Consultation Report is published in electronic and printed form has expired.
- 11.4 As it is the intention that this Consultation Report should be published, both electronically and in written form, if required, on 17 February 2020, this meets the statutory requirement to publish this report for more than three weeks before consideration of the proposal by Lifelong Learning Committee on 18 March 2020.

12. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 There will be no implications for any teaching or support staff in any schools nor will there be any impact on school management arrangements as a result of the limited variation to the School Admission Policy.

13. CONCLUSION

- 13.1 The Council now has 4 broad options to consider, namely:
- (a) adopt the proposal;
 - (b) withdraw the proposal;
 - (c) amend the proposal in some way which allows the proposal to proceed; or
 - (d) amend the proposal significantly and undertake a further consultation exercise on a new proposal.
- 13.2 Education Scotland has identified that the proposal has clear benefits for young people. This includes ensuring that preparations for transitions from associated primary schools are more likely to be suitable and effective and the value of these arrangements was recognised. There will also be greater clarity regarding the priority for places in the authority's only denominational secondary school.
- 13.3 If the Council adopts the proposal, it is understood that the educational benefits set out in the Proposal Paper would materialise.
- 13.4 The key points that have been highlighted during the consultation period are as follows:
- The report from Education Scotland acknowledges that the proposal has clear benefits for pupils and will provide clearer and more precise criteria for priority relating to admissions.
 - The Council's proposals have been supported by 84% of the parents/carers, staff and the wider community who responded to the proposal. The vast majority of those consulted have raised no issues or opposition to the proposal.

- Stakeholders welcome the clarity that the proposals bring, and children and young people value the improved level of confidence about their progression arrangements and the likelihood of progressing to secondary school with their peer group.

14. RECOMMENDATIONS

14.1 On the basis of the feedback received and taking account of the educational and social benefits of the proposal, it is concluded that the following proposal is the most suitable option and it is recommended that the Council approves:

- A limited variation to the School Admission Policy for Perth and Kinross Council schools is implemented from school session 2020/2021. The limited changes relate to ensuring pupils living in Perth and Kinross are awarded appropriate priority for school places and pupils transferring to secondary school from feeder primaries are awarded appropriate priority

Sheena Devlin
Executive Director (Education and Children's Services)
17 February 2020



**Perth & Kinross Council
Education & Children's Services
Statutory Consultation Public Meeting**

**Minute of Meeting Held on Thursday 9 January 2020
At 7.00pm in Bertha Park High School**

Present

Councillor John Duff
Sharon Johnston
Karen Robertson

Vice Convener, Lifelong Learning Committee
Interim Head of Education
Service Manager - Business Services

In Attendance

Dr John Laird
Caroline Nash – Minutes

Education Scotland
Perth and Kinross Council

18 members of the public

Welcome and Introductions

Councillor Duff opened the meeting and welcomed the members of the public in attendance to the statutory consultation public meeting and introduced himself and the Council Officers to the members of the public.

Format of Meeting

Sharon Johnston explained the format the meeting would follow and how other similar events had been undertaken.

The Proposal

Sharon Johnston explained the consultation proposal to the attendees:

The Council proposes that subject to the outcome of this consultation:

To make a limited variation to the School Admission Policy for Perth and Kinross Council schools from session 2020/2021. The limited changes relate to ensuring pupils living in Perth and Kinross are awarded appropriate priority for school places and pupils transferring to secondary school from feeder primaries are awarded appropriate priority.

Statutory Consultation Process

Karen Robertson outlined the process of the statutory consultation. She highlighted that the process is strictly determined by legislation to ensure thorough and robust processes across all authorities in Scotland. The legislation sets out how and when the Council must undertake certain activities. The process started with the consideration by Lifelong Learning Committee on 4 September 2019 which granted permission to undertake a statutory consultation. Karen Robertson emphasised that no decisions regarding the changes to the School Admission Policy have been made. The Council must first seek the views of statutory consultees and report back to Committee with recommendations.

The Proposal Paper, including an educational benefits statement, was published on the Council's website and statutory consultees were written to. Public notice adverts and social media were used to publicise the consultation to all interested parties. The period of consultation will run from Monday 2 December 2019 to Friday 24 January 2020, which includes a period of 30 school days. The purpose of this consultation is to seek representations from interested parties.

Anyone who wishes to make their views on the proposal known to the Council can do so. There are a number of ways they can do this, by an online form, in writing or in person. Any representations made at the public meeting are minuted and will be included as verbal representations.

Karen Robertson outlined the process of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act. She advised that at the end of the consultation period, all documents and representations are submitted to Education Scotland and they then have 3 weeks to review the educational aspects of the proposal. Education Scotland will undertake visits with staff, pupils and parents / carers. Education Scotland is required to produce a formal report. The Council must have regard to that report prior to implementing any changes. The Council is required to prepare and publish a Consultation Report which is published for 3 weeks prior to any decision being taken. A report including recommendations will then be submitted to Lifelong Learning Committee on 18 March 2020 for a decision.

Vision

Comment - It's very close to the cut off point for this year.

A. Sharon Johnston advised that the Council must make its decisions regarding placing requests by 30 April 2020 so a decision by Lifelong Learning Committee on 18 March 2020 would allow this timescale to be met.

Sharon Johnston outlined the Council's vision to enhance the quality of life, make the best use of public resources and ensure continuously improving services.

It aims to optimise the educational experience for every pupil by providing

- A range of social and emotional experiences
- An enriched and broad learning experience and
- The best possible education which meets the needs of all learners

The reasons for the proposed changes was presented to Lifelong Learning Committee on 4 September 2019 seeking permission to undertake statutory consultation on the School Admission Policy.

Background

Karen Robertson provided background information that most pupils attend their catchment school and most schools are not oversubscribed.

Therefore, the proposed changes will not affect most pupils or schools. The limited changes relate to ensuring pupils living in Perth and Kinross are awarded appropriate priority for school places, and pupils transferring to secondary school from feeder primary schools are awarded appropriate priority. On 2 December 2019, the formal consultation process commenced on the proposal to vary the Council's School Admission Policy in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

This public meeting is being held as part of the formal consultation process. The Proposal Paper has been published on the Council's website – www.pkc.gov.uk

Current Admission Arrangements

There are currently 3 categories for determining priority:

- Resident in the catchment area
- Placing request with a sibling already attending the school
- Placing request with no sibling already attending the school

Within each of these categories, priority is determined by distance from the requested school. In denominational schools, priority in each category is given to those pupils who are baptised Roman Catholic.

Q. With the new proposal relating to priority 1c, what if there are 10 pupils all from feeder schools applying for one place?

A. Priority for the place would be determined by length of time in attendance at a feeder primary school. If these are all the same for all 10 pupils, then it would be determined by distance from the school with those living closest being highest priority.

Q. Is nursery attendance taken into consideration?

A. Nursery attendance is not a consideration for priority at school. Children attend a range of different settings for nursery which are not delivered within a school.

Q. If a pupil attends a feeder school but doesn't live in the catchment area or in Perth and Kinross, they would be priority 5?

A. Pupils living outwith Perth and Kinross would be placed after those who live within Perth and Kinross. They would be priority 4 if they had a sibling already at the school or priority 5 if they did not have a sibling already attending the school.

Q. If a pupil attends a feeder school for a denominational school, however are not baptised, will they be given a higher priority?

A. Pupils who are baptised Roman Catholic will have priority for places in denominational schools. The proposals would ensure that a higher priority is given to those pupils who attend a feeder denominational primary school than is currently the case.

Comment - This is an issue at the minute with uncertainty whether a child will get a place. The child is worrying they will not get to move on with their friends.

A. The proposals would ensure that a higher priority is given to those pupils who attend a feeder primary school than is currently the case, giving pupils in P7 a better chance of being able to move to secondary school with their friends. This is why the Council is proposing to make the changes to the School Admission Policy to try to reduce the number of situations, wherever possible, that P7 pupils in Perth and Kinross do not get to transfer to secondary school with their friends.

Q. This makes it worse. We live in Perth and Kinross near to Clacks and Fife. Have we made the wrong choice in sending our child to a Clacks primary school instead of Kinross Primary School, which has now been upgraded, as priority will be based on attendance at a feeder primary school to attend Kinross High School?

A. Your child is a Perth and Kinross resident and, therefore, they will be a priority for attending their catchment secondary school. The Council tries to ensure that all pupils can be accommodated in their non-denominational catchment secondary school.

No catchment pupils have not been admitted to Kinross High School as part of the transfer to secondary arrangements and it is not considered that will change.

Q. Kinross Primary School is already full and there are more houses being built. What if we wanted to move our child to Kinross Primary School?

A. Kinross Primary School is not full. There are currently no spaces in P5, and this can occur during the school year in any school where parents are seeking to move pupils mid-session. Each year a staffing review is undertaken with Headteachers to consider the pupil intakes for the new school session, the structure of classes and what staffing is required etc. The Council works to prioritise its resources to ensure, wherever possible, that children can attend their catchment schools.

Q. I have a child in Kinross High School, a one in Muckhart Primary School. Even though I can walk to Kinross High School, will I now be at a disadvantage due to time attending a feeder primary being a consideration?

A. Pupils living in the catchment area of Kinross High School will not be disadvantaged as a result of the proposal. Priority 1c would only be implemented in cases where all catchment area pupils could not be accommodated. This is likely only to be required for denominational schools. The implications and costs to the Council of not being able to accommodate catchment pupils in secondary schools outwith Perth city is significant, and the Council works hard to ensure this does not happen.

Q. Does the Council publish what space is available for placing requests for each school?

A. No. Parents have a legal right to make a placing request for any school regardless of how many spaces there might be available. The number of spaces which are available for placing requests can vary significantly on an annual basis. The available spaces are determined by considering how many catchment pupils have enrolled, what levels of staffing are to be allocated to each school from the annual budget allocated in April, class structures and reserved places required which can only be done once the final numbers of pupils registered to attend each school is known.

Comment. With the catchment for Bertha Park High School and all the new houses being built at Bertha Park, Huntingtower etc, my daughter is at Ruthvenfield and I want her to go to secondary school with her friends. I am concerned as the pupils from the new houses would be in the catchment for Ruthvenfield and Bertha Park High School leaving no space for those currently attending Ruthvenfield from outwith the catchment area.

A. The Council works with Planning colleagues regarding build out rates for the new houses and projections of pupils likely to come from new house building to ensure the management of the expansion of the secondary school is in line with the increased catchment pupils in that area. It has been planned that this is the way that Bertha Park High School will grow with pupils and staff and it will not stay the size it currently is. There will be capacity for 1100 pupils to accommodate the pupils from the strategic house building sites at Bertha Park, Perth West and Almond Valley.

Comment - If catchment areas were to be changed, I would be in the catchment area. I know the catchment areas are not being changed.

A. This proposal does not include any plans to amend school catchment areas as part of this consultation. The proposal sets out how the Council will prioritise placing requests going forward. The proposal would benefit pupils who are not living within the catchment secondary they wish to attend by awarding priority to those pupils in feeder primary schools which is not currently a priority category.

Educational Benefits

Sharon Johnston detailed a summary of the key Educational Benefits which are set out in detail in the Proposal Paper. There are educational benefits to support transition of pupils into secondary school and an educational advantage for pupils attending denominational schools to support these pupils in continuing school at a denominational secondary school. The proposal, if implemented, will ensure pupils living in Perth and Kinross will always be given appropriate priority for school places. In certain schools, over 25% of the school roll are pupils who live outwith Perth and Kinross Council area.

Q. The decision announcement date of 30 April 2020 means there is a lot of uncertainty among peer groups for that time. Will that remain under the new proposal?

A. Yes, this deadline will remain. It is a statutory requirement that all parents who have submitted a placing request must be advised no later than 30 April 2020. Perth and Kinross Council considers the allocation of places from the legal closing date of 15 March to ensure all parents have their decision letter before 30 April each year.

Q. Can you tell us which schools are oversubscribed? I have one child at Inch View nursery as Kinnoull Nursery has shut down, one child at Inch View Primary school and one child at RDM. How do I drop off 3 kids in 3 different locations?

A. The schools with classes which are oversubscribed can vary from year to year and it is not the case that the same schools are oversubscribed each year. It is dependent on how many children live within the catchment area, how many catchment pupils choose to attend other schools, how many pupils are leaving in P7, staffing levels and class configurations. These can all change annually. Parents must consider how they will manage to get their children to and from school if they do not attend their local catchment schools

Q. If the criteria for distance is the shortest walking route as the crow flies, then that would be over the railway line?

A. Distances are not measured as the crow flies. The distance measured is the shortest available walking route. It is likely the Council would not consider the railway line as a safe walking route to and from school.

Q. Is Inch View Primary School oversubscribed?

A. In some years some classes have been oversubscribed and other years they have not. Registration for P1 places for August commences on Monday 13 January 2020 and only once registrations have been completed by 15 March will the situation regarding available places for out of catchment pupils be known.

Q. If a pupil is refused a placement in a High School, do I need to apply for another school?

A. The Council will write and inform you if your placing request has been successful or not. If it is not successful, then you can choose your catchment school or can make a placing request application for another school.

Q. How long will it take to get a decision on a second choice application?

A. The Council tries to process 2nd choice applications as quickly as possible.

Q. How can my child go on transition days if we don't know if he has got a place?

A. Pupils cannot attend transition days unless a place at the school has been granted. The Council's proposal will prioritise pupils attending a feeder primary school, wherever possible, to reduce the number of pupils who cannot attend transition days whilst awaiting appeal hearings.

Q. We have 2 schools in the catchment area, if he is not accepted for his first choice and has no idea or information of the other school, will he be guaranteed transition period in this school, will he have assistance?

A. Yes. Schools will continue to work to support pupils with transition where they have been unable to be granted a place in their secondary school of choice.

Comment. A child with depression if put in this position it will put big pressure on the child's mental health.

A. It is recognised that transition is an anxious time for young people and their parents. The Council's proposals are seeking to improve the current situation to prioritise pupils to attend secondary school with their peers wherever possible.

Q. Is there a timescale when all school places are confirmed?

A. The decision for all August intakes must be confirmed to parents by 30 April 2020. If a placing request is refused, then parents have up to 28 days to appeal up to the end of May 2020. Once appeals are submitted, the hearings need to be arranged and papers issued so this usually takes place mid to end of June. This year some appeals ran into the summer holidays.

Q. What are the statistics if there are 10 appeals. How many are successful?

A. The majority of appeals are not successful. The Appeal Committee considers whether a legal ground for refusal exists and whether the Council has followed the legislation and policy in awarding and refusing requests.

Q Why is there only one option for a school on the placing request form? Why can't we have a second choice on the form?

A. You can put in a second form with your second choice. However, second choice applications will only be considered once all first choice applications have been dealt with. In cases where a placing request has been refused, then further documentation is issued to parents regarding next steps.

Q. If you go down the appeal route and the appeal is not heard until into the summer holidays, where do the pupils do their transition days?

A. Pupils will do their transition days at their catchment school if they have no other school place confirmed.

Comment - My option B is looking unfeasible and so I am now working on option C for my child.

Q. Do Headteachers know what sizes the P1 classes will be?

A. Registration for P1 is just commencing next week. Until the catchment pupil numbers are confirmed and staff exercise is completed, Headteachers will not know their class configurations for August.

Q. P1 classes must be getting bigger with all the additional houses?

A. There are approximately 1500 P1 pupils each year and 1500 S1 pupils transfer to secondary school each year. Not all additional houses generate the same numbers of additional pupils of the same age at the same time.

Q. When will we know if this proposal will go through?

A. The Council is required to publish a Consultation Report at the end of the consultation and this will contain recommendations. This report will be published for 3 weeks before a final decision is taken.

Q. Could this proposal be in place for the end of April 2020?

A. Yes. It is intended that Lifelong Learning Committee will make a decision on 18 March 2020.

Q. How many Councillors are on Lifelong Learning Committee and how many are in agreement with this new proposal?

A. At this stage the proposal has not been granted or agreed. The only approval which has been given is for officers to undertake formal consultation and seek views on the proposal.

Councillor Duff informed that the consultation closes on 24 January 2020. The Committee wishes to enhance the process and provide appropriate priority to support children and young people in considering school places for children and young people.

Lifelong Learning Committee will take a decision on 18 March 2020. The paper will go public a week prior to the Committee meeting. There are 13 Elected Members, Parent Council Representatives, Religious Representatives and Young People Representatives that sit on the Committee. However, only the Elected Members vote.

Q. Had this policy been in place last year for S1 pupils, would there have been a benefit to S1 pupils?

A. Based on the situation for session 2019 / 2020, there would have been 15 pupils that would have benefitted from the proposed limited variation to the school Admission Policy.

Q. Would you know where you were on the waiting list?

A. Yes, the Council maintains waiting lists for schools where pupils have been refused places and these are in place until the start of the school session. The Council can advise you where your child was placed on the waiting list.

Q. Are there any catchment pupils that have not benefited as they didn't get into their catchment school?

A. There are very few pupils who are not able to be enrolled in their catchment school. No secondary pupils have not been able to be accommodated in their non-denominational secondary school. This proposal will provide further criteria for assessing catchment pupils wishing to attend a denominational school.

Q. This consultation is excellent and it will benefit a lot of people. However, what about the scenario that pupils are moved in P7 to a different primary school in order to get their child into the secondary school of their choice?

A. There is a possibility that some parents may try to make placing requests to move their child in P7. However, if there was no space for placing requests then the placing request would be refused, and the child would not be able to move. Legally, the Council must accept placing requests if they have spaces and where no other legal ground for refusal exists. This is an area that the Council recognises is a concern and would welcome thoughts as part of the consultation on how this situation could be fairly managed.

Q. Does it not say in the proposal paper that those that have been in a feeder school longest get priority?

A. Yes it does.

Q. If you are not in a feeder school are you in a lower priority category?

A. Yes that is correct.

Q. Is that not detrimental to a child if you move them to another school for 6 months to get them into the preferred secondary school?

A. Yes, it could be considered detrimental but parents have the legal right to make a placing request at any time for their child. The Council will need to manage any instances of increased numbers of placing requests being made for P6 and P7 pupils.

Comment - My child is at RDM and I would move them in P7, so they didn't get bullied on the bus to secondary school.

Q. When choosing a primary school, is there information for parents specifying if you chose a particular primary school this is the path for secondary school. With the new system will you get placement in the associated secondary?

A. The Council publishes information online which advises parents of their catchment primary and secondary schools. Each primary school handbook provides details of the associated secondary school for the school where pupils would normally attend. Places cannot be guaranteed for pupils making placing requests, but this proposal will ensure that where there are available spaces, it will be possible to prioritise pupils in a feeder school which currently does not happen.

Q. How many applications would be received for each category?

A. It is difficult to say with any certainty as it can change from year to year. For session 2019/20, there were approximately 450 placing requests submitted.

Q. If my child is in a small denominational school but are not baptised Roman Catholic, will they get priority to attend St John's Academy?

A. In denominational schools, baptised Roman Catholic pupils are awarded the highest priority. The proposal would give award priority to those pupils in a feeder school which is not currently the case.

Q. Can you go and get your child baptised?

A. That would be a matter for parents to discuss with the Roman Catholic Church. However, it is not as straightforward as booking a date for a baptism. There are requirements of the Roman Catholic Church which require to be met before consideration may be given to children being baptised in the Roman Catholic faith.

Q. What is the latest date that you must have an address in the catchment area to get into a secondary school in August?

A. You would need to provide proof of permanent address or proof of purchase contract for the house prior to August 2020 to be considered as having a permanent address within the catchment area for the new school session. At that point, it is likely that there may only be reserved places which can only be awarded to catchment pupils and these will only be awarded to permanent addresses within the catchment area. The Council is updating its guidance on the checks that will be undertaken by the Council regarding temporary addresses and attempted fraudulent enrolment and the evidence which will be necessary to provide proof of residency in any school catchment area.

Q. If refused a place, when is the deadline to buy a house in the catchment?

A. Proof of purchase would need to be provided to the Council prior to August 2020 for a pupil to be considered for a place at the start of the new school session.

Sharon Johnston thanked everyone for attending. The meeting was then closed at 8.50pm.



Perth & Kinross Council
Education and Children's Services
School Admission Policy
Summary of Consultation

The statutory consultation on the proposal to make a limited variation to the School Admission Policy for Perth and Kinross Council schools from school session 2020/2021 commenced on Monday 2 December 2019 and closed on Friday 24 January 2020 which includes a period of 30 school days.

Details of the proposal document were issued to the list of consultees contained within the Proposal Paper. Emails were issued to all statutory consultees with a link to the proposal paper and details of where and how to obtain a paper copy. The Proposal Paper was also published on the Council website. Public Notice adverts were placed in the local press on 2 December 2019 and 6 December 2019. The consultation was also published on social media.

A specific email address was set up for representations and enquiries. This was in addition to the usual methods of submitting representations. An online response form was set up on the consultation webpage.

Public Meeting

As part of the statutory consultation process, one public meeting was held on 9 January 2020 at Bertha Park High School.

Attended by 18 members of the public.

The proposals were generally accepted as a positive move to support pupils to have a better chance of being able to attend secondary school with their friends.

Questions and comments raised at the meeting were around:

- Parents seeking very specific answers to their individual circumstances.
- Timescales for places being granted.
- Pupils in feeder primary schools wishing to transfer with their peers.
- Pupils in denominational primary schools wishing to transfer to St John's RC Academy.
- Transition arrangements for pupils transferring to secondary school.
- Clarification on the new priorities.
- Pupils attending primary schools which are not feeder schools for their chosen secondary school.
- When the proposal will be decided.
- Information available regarding oversubscribed schools, class sizes and waiting lists.
- Pupils being moved in P7 to get into a secondary school.
- Proofs and deadline for having an address in the catchment area.

Online Response Forms

63 response forms were received. 53 responses agreed with the Council's proposal and 10 disagreed with the Council's proposal. The 10 responses which disagreed with the proposal relates to 8 respondees as 2 persons submitted 2 responses each.

Questions and comments submitted were around:

- The proposals are fairer and more equitable.

- Pupils in a denominational primary school should have priority after pupils who are baptised RC to attend St John's RC Academy.
- Pupils should be able to move to secondary school with their peers.
- Places should be prioritised for PKC pupils.
- Pupils living outwith PKC with siblings in a school should be the same priority as in catchment pupils.
- This may cause large numbers of pupils to move schools to get into a secondary school.
- Catchment areas should be revised in light of new property builds.
- It is unfair to include criteria for length of time attending a feeder primary school as some pupils do not attend their catchment primary school.
- It is unfair that pupils attending a PKC primary school but living outside the Council boundary will be given a lower priority.
- Could the feeder school criteria be restricted to denominational schools.
- Could a grace period/transition be allowed so that those pupils in non-feeder schools are not disadvantaged.
- If spaces are not available for placing requests, pupils should not be forced to attend their catchment school.
- There does not appear to be any consideration for pupils with additional needs or disabilities. Placing requests should also consider the child's mental and physical capacity.

RESPONDENT GROUP	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	AGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER
Parents	38	31	7	
Pupils	1	1		
Staff	6	6		
Elected Members				
Parent Councils	2	1	1	
Community Members				
Grandparents	1	1		
Trade Unions				
Other/Not disclosed	15	13	2	
Total	63	53	10	

Written Representations

During the consultation period between 2 December 2019 and 24 January 2020, representations were invited from statutory consultees and interested parties. 6 written responses were received in total. Of the responses, 5 responses agreed with the Council's proposal and 1 neither agreed nor disagreed with the Council's proposal.

RESPONDENT GROUP	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	AGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER
Parents	5	4		1
Staff	1	1		
Total	6	5		1

Questions and comments submitted were around:

- Impact on primary schools if placing requests are made in order to try to get into a particular secondary school.
- Whether transport would be provided for non-catchment pupils to attend secondary school.
- Whether house building would reduce the chance of placing requests being accepted.
- Whether pupils in feeder primary schools could be guaranteed a place at secondary school without the need for a placing request.
- Following Dundee City Council's consultation on the catchment area for Harris Academy, Invergowrie Primary School catchment area should be reviewed to remove the area which lies within Dundee.
- The Council should discuss and agree a way forward for a new secondary school to take account of the Western Gateway in Dundee, the wider Carse of Gowrie and West Angus area.
- Invergowrie pupils being impacted by a decision of Dundee City Council to review the catchment area of Harris Academy.
- A pupil's catchment school should be their closest school regardless of which Council area it is in.

Summary

In total, 69 responses were received. 58 responses agreed with the Council's proposal, 10 disagreed with the Council's proposal and 1 neither agreed nor disagreed with the Council's proposal. The 10 responses which disagreed with the Council's proposal relates to 8 respondees as 2 persons submitted 2 responses each.



Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by Perth and Kinross Council to make a limited variation to the Schools' Admission Policy for Perth and Kinross Council schools.

January 2020

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 Perth and Kinross Council's proposal to vary their schools' admission policy. 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 schools; 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 9 January 2020 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;
- consideration of further representations made directly to Education Scotland on relevant educational aspects of the proposal;
- consideration of further information on all schools affected; and
- visits to the site of St John's RC Academy and Kinross High School, including discussion with relevant consultees, including senior staff from associated primary schools, school staff, parents and pupils.

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 statutory consultation on the proposal to make a limited variation to the Schools' Admission Policy for Perth and Kinross Council schools from school session 2020-2021 commenced on 2 December 2019 and closed on 24 January 2020 which includes a period of 30 school days.

2.3 Details of the consultation and proposal paper were issued by email to the list of statutory consultees. Public notice adverts were placed in the local press on 2 December 2019 and 6 December 2019. The consultation was also published on the Council's social media channels. As part of the statutory consultation process, one public meeting was held on 9 January 2020 at Bertha Park High School attended by 18 members of the public. The proposals were generally accepted as a positive move to support children to have improved confidence about their progression route, and to attend secondary school with their peer group.

2.4 In total, 69 responses were received within the consultation period. Fifty-eight responses agreed with the council's proposal, ten disagreed with the council's proposal and one neither agreed nor disagreed with the council's proposal.

3. Educational aspects of proposal

3.1 Overall, the impact of the proposal is not likely to make a difference to a significant number of children and young people, and the authority's own modelling suggests that in the current year it would have had an impact on only 15 from almost 18,000 pupils in the authority. Families whose children and young people attend their catchment primary school and secondary school, are likely to remain unaffected.

3.2 The proposal is a change and refinement to the admissions policy. The new policy lays out clearer and more precise criteria for priority relating to admissions. This clarity is helpful in giving stakeholders and children and young people a greater confidence regarding their transition route to secondary school.

3.3 The proposal gives stakeholders a greater confidence that children and young people are more likely to progress to the same secondary school as their peers. This is underpinned by criteria within the proposal of prioritising those pupils from associated primary schools. It also helps to ensure that preparation for transitions from associated primary schools are more likely to be suitable and effective. HM Inspectors recognise the value of these arrangements.

3.4 The greater clarity and improved detail should also lessen the need for appeals where placement requests have been unsuccessful. Where appeals are made, the enhanced criteria should make decisions clear and easier for everyone to understand. HM Inspectors recognise the benefit of a more transparent and understandable criteria for such decision making.

3.5 For the children in denominational primary schools, there will be a greater clarity regarding their priority for places in the authority's only denominational secondary school.

3.6 Stakeholders overall welcome the clarity that the proposals bring, with over 80% of responses to the local authority supporting the proposals. Children and young people value the improved level of confidence about their progression arrangements, and the likelihood of progressing with their peer group. Stakeholders whose priority is not improved with this proposal also recognise the benefit of greater clarity.

3.7 The few stakeholders who do not support the proposal focus primarily on the extra travel distance that might be involved for the young people who may not get a place in the school nearest their home. A small number of the stakeholders affected by the proposal are resident in the neighbouring local authorities, and these residents expressed some concern that the proposal may have an impact on their opportunity for a successful placement request.

3.8 Catholic church representatives were consulted during the process and are satisfied that there is no disadvantage to the Catholic education provision. They are supportive of the general proposals which aim to ensure improved transitions for more young people.

4. Summary

The proposed changes to the admissions policy lay out clearer and more precise criteria for priority relating to admissions. This clarity is helpful in giving stakeholders, children and young people a greater confidence regarding their transition route to secondary school. It also helps to ensure that preparation for transitions from associated primary schools are more likely to be suitable and effective. For the children in denominational primary schools, there will be a greater clarity that they have a priority for places in the authority's only denominational secondary school. Therefore, the proposal supports a level of continuity for those children and young people wishing to continue their education in a denominational school. The proposal is supported by the majority of stakeholders. It is likely to lessen the need for appeals, and where appeals are made, the enhanced criteria will support clearer decision making and improved understanding for the reasons that decisions are made.

HM Inspectors
January 2020