



PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL
EDUCATION AND LEARNING
CONSULTATION REPORT

**REPORT ON THE OUTCOME OF THE CONSULTATION RELATING TO
THE PROPOSAL TO:**

**Permanently establish a new Intensive Support Provision in St John's RC
Academy for pupils with Additional Support Needs with effect from August
2026**

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 LEARNING**

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

Permanently establish a new Intensive Support Provision in St John's RC Academy for pupils with Additional Support Needs with effect from August 2026.

Having had regard (in particular) to:

- (a) Relevant written representations received by the Council (from any person) during the consultation period;
- (b) Oral representations made to it (by any person) at the public meetings held on 26 November 2025; and
- (c) His Majesty's Inspectorate of Education in Scotland's (HMIE) report on the proposal.

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 26 November 2025;
- Provide a statement of the Council's response to those written and oral representations;
- Provide the full text of HMIE'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 HMIE; and
- Provide details of any omission from, or inaccuracy in, the [Proposal Paper](#) and state how the Council acted upon it.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The Learning and Families Committee on 29 January 2025 approved a report ([Report No. 25/19 refers](#)) on an Options Appraisal for the expansion of Intensive Support Provisions (ISPs) in Perth and Kinross Council primary and secondary schools. The Committee agreed to commence with an expansion of ISPs through three phases over a three-year period.

In preparation of Phase 2, the Learning and Families Committee approved [Report 25/214](#) on Wednesday 27 August 2025, which proposed to establish a new Intensive Support Provision (ISP) in St John's RC Academy. This report presented an [Options Appraisal](#) following an assessment of building capacity.

- 2.2 In the report considered by the Learning and Families Committee on 27 August 2025, it was agreed that the Strategic Lead: Education and Learning (Chief Education Officer) commenced a statutory consultation in respect of the permanent establishment of a new Intensive Support Provision in St John's RC Academy for pupils with Additional Support Needs with effect from August 2026.
- 2.3 The duties in undertaking a statutory consultation on a relevant school proposal are outlined in the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010 and the accompanying Statutory Guidance](#).
- 2.4 Learning and Families 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 is dedicated to fostering a community where everyone can thrive, free from poverty and inequality. Their vision focuses on making the best use of public resources and ensuring continuous improvement of services. The Council's Corporate Plan emphasises collaboration to achieve key priorities, including tackling poverty, addressing climate change, and supporting sustainable places. Perth and Kinross Council aims to create a resilient, stronger, and greener local economy; enable children and young people to reach their full potential; protect and care for the most vulnerable; and support physical and mental wellbeing. By working in partnership with communities, they strive to create vibrant and successful areas, safe and sustainable environments, and educated and responsible citizens, ensuring every child has the best start in life.
- 3.3 Perth and Kinross Council's Corporate Plan aims to tackle poverty, address climate change, and support sustainable places. This vision is further supported by the Council's Learning Estate Management Plan and the Education and Learning Policy Framework Maximising Resources, which aim to enhance the range and quality of learning experiences for all.
- 3.4 Councils have a statutory duty in terms of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 to make adequate and efficient provision of school education across their entire area for the current school population and future pattern of demand.
- 3.5 Councils also have a statutory responsibility in terms of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 to achieve best value. To achieve best value and optimum efficiency, the organisation of the school estate is therefore kept under regular review, including the need for school provision and other factors, such as altering catchment areas.

- 3.6 The [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#) provides a strong, accountable statutory consultation process that local authorities must apply to their handling of all proposals of 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.
- 3.7 [The Education \(Scotland\) Act 2016](#) amends the Standards in Scotland's Schools Act 2000 by adding in new duties to address inequality of outcome. These duties apply in different ways to both Scottish Ministers and Education Authorities. Where the Education Authority is making or implementing strategic decisions about school education, it is required to have due regard to the need to carry out its functions in a way which is designed to reduce inequalities of outcome. This is particularly directed in the Act towards pupils who experience those inequalities through socio-economic disadvantage, but there is also a power to extend the range of pupils who are covered by this duty.

4. REASON FOR FORMULATING THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The proposal to permanently establish an Intensive Support Provision (ISP) at St John's RC Academy has been formulated in response to an identified and growing need for enhanced local specialist provision for children and young people with complex and multiple Additional Support Needs (ASN) living within the school's catchment area.
- 4.2 Currently, there is no ISP within a denominational setting in Perth and Kinross at either primary or secondary stage. As a result, children and young people with complex needs who live in the St John's RC Academy catchment must either travel to non-denominational ISPs across the authority or attend a school that does not align with their family's faith preference. This can lead to longer travel times, reduced access to local community resources, and limited opportunities to learn within their own denominational school community
- 4.3 Perth and Kinross Council has statutory duties under the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 and the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 to make adequate and efficient provision of school education, including for learners with ASN. Establishing an ISP at St John's RC Academy supports the Council in meeting these obligations by expanding the availability of specialist education in response to current and projected need
- 4.4 As of September 2025, 43.5% of children and young people in Perth and Kinross schools have ASN, with a significant number presenting with complex needs. The existing capacity of the ISP network is under pressure, and the establishment of a new ISP at St John's RC Academy will help meet current and projected demand.
- 4.5 The proposal supports the Council's aim to reduce inequalities of outcome, particularly for pupils affected by socio-economic disadvantage or disability, as outlined in the Education (Scotland) Act 2016. Providing a local ISP ensures equitable access to high-quality education and support for children and young people requiring special education.

- 4.6 It is intended that the new ISP will utilise spaces within the existing school building that are already specialist-designed classrooms and areas tailored to meet the needs of young people with ASN.

5. SCHOOL INFORMATION

- 5.1 St John's RC Academy is situated St John's RC Academy is located at North Inch Community Campus, Gowans Terrace, Perth PH1 5BF. It provides all-through Roman Catholic education for primary and secondary level for both girls and boys. The school also has a non-denominational nursery. The school has a combined maximum capacity of 1,256 pupils, with 418 places available in the primary school (August 2025 enrolment: 411 pupils) and 838 places available in the secondary school (August 2025 enrolment: 629 pupils).

6. THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

- 6.1 A link to the [Proposal Paper](#) was issued by letter 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
- 6.2 The Proposal Paper informed consultees that the consultation period would run from Wednesday 5 November 2025 until close of business on Friday 19 December 2025, which includes a period of 31 school days.
- 6.3 The proposal on which consultation took place was to:
- **Permanently establish a new Intensive Support Provision in St John's RC Academy for pupils with Additional Support Needs with effect from August 2026.**
- 6.4 The requirements for consulting on a relevant proposal relating to schools are set out in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. In accordance with these requirements:
- A Proposal Paper was published on 5 November 2025. All statutory consultees were written to, providing a link to the proposal paper and details of where and how to obtain a paper copy. A copy of the 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 and was available in paper copy upon request.
 - A public meeting was held to discuss the proposal on Wednesday 26 November 2025 at St John's RC Academy.
 - The consultation period ended on Friday 19 December 2025.
 - HMIE's involvement consisted of receiving the options appraisal and proposal paper documents, attending the public meeting, and a visit to the school, which included engaging with relevant consultees. They also received a copy of all online and written representations and the minutes of the public meeting. HMIE then prepared a report on the educational aspects of the proposal, which is attached as Appendix 3.

6.5 The following school is directly affected by the proposal:

- St John’s RC Academy

The parents and pupils who are expected to attend the affected school within 2 years at the following schools may also have an interest in the proposal and were consulted:

- Our Lady’s Primary School
- St Stephen’s RC Primary School
- St Dominic’s RC Primary School

6.6 In accordance with statutory requirements and good practice, the following persons were consulted:

- The parents of the pupils and children at the affected school
- The parents of children expected to attend the affected school within 2 years of the date of publication of this proposal document
- The Parent Council of the affected schools
- Pupils at the affected schools
- The teaching and support staff at the affected school
- The trade union and professional association representatives of the above staff
- The Community Council
- Relevant users of the affected school
- Elected Members of Perth and Kinross Council
- HMIE

6.7 The number of letters issued with details of the Proposal Paper was 1657.

6.8 During the consultation period, representations were sought from interested parties, either in oral or written form or electronically. An online response form and generic email account was set up by the Council to receive representations and enquiries on the proposal.

6.9 This Consultation Report is the Council’s response to the issues raised during the consultation period on the Proposal Paper.

6.10 This Consultation Report is to be published on the Council’s website for a period of no less than three weeks prior to final consideration by Learning & Families Committee on 27 May 2026

7 THE PUBLIC MEETING

7.1 A public meeting was held at St John’s RC Academy on Wednesday 26 November 2025, attended by four members of the public. A full note of the meeting, including the questions raised and issues discussed, is provided in Appendix 1.

Consultation was also undertaken with children and young people, including pupils at St John’s RC Academy and P1–P7 pupils across all associated primary schools, between 1 and 19 December 2025. In total, 228 responses were received (199 individual responses and 29 class or group responses).

The majority of respondents (211) indicated they had no concerns about ISP classes being located within their school, and 179 responses felt that the proposed ISP would not change their school day. Further detail on pupil consultation responses and themes is set out in Appendix 2.

8 RESPONSES TO THE CONSULTATION EXERCISE

- 8.1 A total of 6 online response forms were received during the statutory consultation period. Of these, 4 responses agreed with the Council's proposal to establish an Intensive Support Provision (ISP) at St John's RC Academy, 2 responses disagreed. No written representations were received.

Details of the responses are contained within the Summary of Consultation Responses, attached as Appendix 2.

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

The majority of responses were in favour of the proposal to establish an Intensive Support Provision (ISP) at St John's RC Academy.

Positives Identified

- Strong support for increasing local access to specialist education, with respondents valuing opportunities for children with complex ASN to be educated within their own community.
- Recognition that the ISP would promote inclusivity and fairness for children with disabilities, ensuring more equitable access to tailored provision.
- Anticipated reduction in travel time for pupils currently attending ISPs elsewhere, viewed as beneficial for wellbeing and family routines.
- Support for the development of a safe, specialist learning environment designed to meet diverse and complex needs.
- Enhanced opportunities for personalised learning, with improved continuity between home and school.
- Support for enabling siblings to remain within the same school community and for strengthening transitions, including those for care-experienced children.
- Pupils from St John's RC Academy and associated primaries identified benefits such as increased inclusion, diversity and support for peers.

Questions Asked

- **Facilities & Infrastructure:** Whether the school building can appropriately accommodate an ISP. Availability of quiet rooms, sensory spaces, and appropriate natural light.
- **Education & Staffing:** Recruitment of suitably experienced staff. Staffing ratios and how specialist roles will be allocated. Questions about training for new and existing staff and whether mainstream staffing would be affected.
- **Operations & Management:** Requests for clarity on the planned implementation timeline. Whether the ISP will open gradually with phased pupil numbers. How the success of the ISP will be measured and monitored over time.

- **Governance & Communication:** Eligibility criteria and thresholds for accessing an ISP placement. The placement process, including the roles of Child’s Plan meetings, Educational Psychology, and the Transition Panel. Whether children attending ISPs elsewhere would be able to transfer to the St John’s RC Academy ISP.

Overview of Concerns

- Capacity and staffing pressures, with some stakeholders expressing concern that mainstream provision is already stretched and wishing to ensure the ISP would not reduce existing support.
- Support for pupils whose needs fall between mainstream and ISP, with some respondents worried that children with significant needs who are not “intensive level” may not have dedicated provision.
- Uncertainty about demand and movement between ISPs, including how spaces will be allocated and whether families from other ISPs may request transfers.

8.3 In summary, 1657 letters were issued to consultees inviting participation in the statutory consultation. In total, 6 online responses were received. A public meeting was held on 26 November 2025, attended by 4 members of the public, where oral representations and questions were recorded. Full details of the responses and feedback are provided in Appendix 2.

9 EDUCATION AUTHORITY RESPONSE TO WRITTEN AND ORAL REPRESENTATIONS

9.1 Is there sufficient capacity within St John’s RC Academy to accommodate an ISP, and can the building meet the needs of pupils with complex ASN?

St John’s RC Academy has sufficient capacity to accommodate an ISP, and the building is suitable for pupils with complex ASN. The secondary area of the school is operating at around 75% occupancy, creating space for the ISP without affecting mainstream provision. The school has already-designed ASN specialist rooms, including two ASN classrooms, a sensory room, life-skills room, personal care room and a dedicated outdoor area.

9.2 Will the introduction of an ISP create additional pressure on mainstream staffing or reduce support already available to pupils in mainstream classes?

The ISP will be staffed separately, with dedicated staffing over and above the existing mainstream allocation. The provision will have its own Principal Teacher, class teachers, and Pupil Support Assistants.

9.3 What staffing model will be used in the ISP, and how will suitably trained staff be recruited and supported?

The provision will be staffed by a Principal Teacher, class teachers, and Pupil Support Assistants, forming a specialist team designed specifically to meet the needs of children requiring intensive support. A staff to pupil ratio of 1:4 will be supported in each class.

Recruitment for these posts is undertaken in conjunction with the Inclusion Service to ensure high-quality specialist appointments. Each role has a specific job description, designed to attract practitioners with the appropriate experience, knowledge, and understanding of children with complex additional support needs.

9.4 What are the eligibility criteria for placement in the ISP, and how will decisions be made?

Eligibility for an ISP placement is based on the child's ASN assessment profile clearly demonstrating a requirement for intensive-level support. This means that all available relevant interventions, adaptations and supports through a Staged Intervention approach have been implemented, reviewed and evidenced as insufficient to meet the child's needs.

As part of this process, the Educational Psychologist must be involved, contributing assessment analysis and professional advice to support decision-making. Their input forms part of the Child's Plan paperwork submitted for consideration.

Decisions about eligibility for placement are made by the Transitions Panel, a multi-disciplinary group including senior officers, educational psychology, inclusion staff and school leaders. The Panel reviews the full assessment picture and reaches a decision based on evidence of need, ensuring transparency, consistency and equity.

9.5 Will children currently attending other ISPs be able to transfer to the St John's RC Academy ISP?

Yes, children and young people currently attending another ISP may be offered the option to transfer to the ISP at St John's RC Academy, if this is appropriate and preferred by the family. There is no requirement for children to move if this is not the preference of the parent or young person.

9.6 Will the ISP open with a full cohort immediately, or will pupil numbers be phased over time?

The ISP will not open with a full cohort immediately. It will begin with a small number of pupils, with numbers phased in gradually over time. This approach ensures that the provision can grow in a planned and sustainable way, allowing staff to maintain the appropriate balance of year groups and ensure that the learning environment remains well-matched to pupils' needs as the ISP becomes established.

9.7 How will inclusion and integration with mainstream classes operate in practice?

The ISP will be fully part of the life of the school, with children and young people taking part in whole-school activities, events and celebrations alongside their peers. Children and young people attending the ISP will also have opportunities to join mainstream classes where appropriate, based on their individual needs and readiness. They will be able to access a range of environments across the school to support learning, social interaction and wider participation.

For the secondary class, young people will additionally access discreet subject lessons delivered by mainstream specialist teachers as a class, ensuring that they benefit from a broad curricular offer and can engage in subjects aligned with their strengths, interests and learning needs.

9.8 What transition arrangements will be in place for pupils entering or leaving the ISP?

Transition arrangements for pupils entering or leaving the ISP will be planned and coordinated through a Child's Plan Transition Planning Meeting. This process ensures that the child's needs, strengths and supports are fully considered, and that all relevant partners and parents are involved in shaping a smooth and well-supported move.

The Principal Teacher of the ISP will be in post ahead of transition activity, enabling work directly with families, current schools and partner agencies. This will support the coordination of enhanced transition visits, familiarisation sessions and any tailored supports required to prepare children and young people for their move into or out of the ISP

9.9 Will the ISP have secure access, and what safety measures will support children at risk of flight?

The ISP area will be fob-controlled. In addition, children and young people will have access to a secure garden area, providing safe outdoor learning and regulation opportunities within an enclosed and supervised environment.

Alongside the physical measures in place, individualised planning will be used to assess and respond to any known risks. This means that where a child or young person presents a risk of flight, or any other safety consideration, specific planning will be developed to meet their identified needs and ensure they can engage safely and confidently in the school environment.

9.10 What facilities will ISP pupils share with the wider school, and how will these shared spaces be managed?

ISP pupils will share specific facilities within the school where this is appropriate and beneficial. Shared spaces will include the Lifeskills Kitchen and the Sensory Room, which will be accessed based on individual need and required use.

There will also be opportunities for children and young people in the ISP to be supported in these shared areas alongside mainstream peers with ASN, where this is mutually beneficial and appropriate. This approach strengthens inclusion, supports social interaction, and enables shared learning experiences while ensuring that all pupils' needs continue to be met effectively.

9.11 How will transport be arranged for pupils attending the ISP, including those placed through preference rather than placing request?

Transport for pupils attending the ISP will be arranged in line with Perth and Kinross Council's existing Home to School Transport Policy. This means that children placed in the ISP by the Council, and who meet the statutory distance criteria, will receive free home-to-school transport in accordance with current policy.

9.12 **How will demand be managed, and what happens if the ISP becomes oversubscribed?**

Demand for ISP placements is monitored carefully across Perth and Kinross to ensure that there is sufficient capacity to meet projected need and to provide specialist placements as close to a child or young person's own community as possible. Projections of required specialist placements are reviewed regularly to support strategic planning and ensure that spaces are available where they are most needed.

If the ISP at St John's RC Academy were to become oversubscribed, the Council would follow established procedures. This may include considering placements in alternative ISPs where appropriate, ensuring that children continue to receive specialist support suited to their needs. In addition, where sustained demand indicates pressure on capacity, the Council may review whether the ISP requires an increase in class numbers or other adjustments to ensure that provision remains equitable and responsive.

9.13 **How will the success and effectiveness of the new ISP be monitored over time?**

The success and effectiveness of the new ISP will be monitored on an ongoing basis. The Council will track outcomes for children and young people accessing the provision and ensure that support remains consistent and responsive to the needs of the children and young people. A set of success metrics will be developed to evaluate the impact of the ISP, including monitoring the satisfaction of children, young people, and their parents or carers.

In addition, the Council will seek feedback from the wider school community to help inform continuous improvement. This approach will ensure that the ISP remains high-quality, effective, and aligned with the needs of the children and young people it serves.

10. **HMIE REPORT**

10.1 In accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, a report was produced by HMIE on the educational aspects of the proposal. The HMIE report is reproduced in full at Appendix 3.

10.2 The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of Perth and Kinross Council's proposal to permanently establish an ISP at St John's RC Academy for pupils with complex Additional Support Needs, effective from August 2026.

10.3 A HMIE Inspector visited St John's RC Academy and attended the public meeting held on 26 November 2025, and engaged with pupils, parents, staff, and stakeholders.

The report supports the proposal and is summarised below:

- **Educational Benefits:** HMIE Inspectors agree that the proposed ISP at St John's RC Academy has clear educational benefits.

The ISP is expected to provide an appropriate, accessible and high-quality learning environment for children and young people requiring intensive support, with access to a broad curriculum and opportunities for inclusion within the wider school.

- The ISP would allow children requiring specialist support to remain within a faith-based school community, reducing travel distances and enabling young people to progress through an all-through ISP from primary to secondary, thereby minimising transitions.
- Most stakeholders consulted by HM Inspectors were supportive of the proposal and recognised the value of an ISP within St John's RC Academy. Staff expressed enthusiasm for the development and a willingness to engage in specialist training.
- Stakeholders highlighted the importance of effectively managing shared spaces, such as sensory and life skills areas, and ensuring consistent access for all pupils. They also emphasised the importance of maintaining positive relationships and inclusion across the school.
- A few stakeholders raised the need for well-planned transitions, particularly given the move into the secondary school building, and emphasised the importance of clear communication with families.
- Stakeholders sought clarity regarding travel routes and transport arrangements for young people attending the ISP.

10.4 **Perth and Kinross Council Response to HMIE's Report**

The Council welcomes the report from HMIE and accepts its findings.

In response to the findings contained within the HMIE report, Perth and Kinross response is as follows:

10.5 **HMIE Inspectors note that stakeholders seek reassurance about how places will be allocated and how parental choice will be reflected in placement decisions, including requests for clarity on admission criteria and the possibility of split placements.**

Places in the ISP will be allocated through the Transitions Panel, based on a clear assessment showing that a child or young person requires intensive-level support. Parental views form part of the ASN assessment process, with final placement decisions made on the basis of identified need and appropriateness of setting.

Split placements may be considered where the child or young person's assessed needs indicate this would be beneficial, for example, to maintain aspects of their mainstream experience.

10.6 **HMIE Inspectors note that stakeholders have raised questions about how shared spaces, such as the sensory room and life skills areas, will be used and managed to avoid negative impact on other learners, and how the ISP will integrate with the wider school.**

Shared spaces, such as the sensory room and life skills areas, will be managed through planned and coordinated access to ensure they are used effectively and without negative impact on other learners. Access will be based on individual need, and timetabling will ensure that pupils in the ISP and the wider school community can benefit equitably from these facilities.

The ISP will be fully integrated within the life of St John's RC Academy. Children and young people will participate in wider school activities, and where appropriate, may use shared spaces alongside mainstream peers, including other learners with ASN, when this is mutually beneficial. This approach supports social interaction, inclusive practice and a sense of belonging across the school.

10.7 HMIE Inspectors note that stakeholders seek clarification regarding travel routes and transport arrangements for pupils attending the ISP, particularly for families living out with the immediate area.

Travel routes and transport arrangements for pupils attending the ISP will be confirmed in line with Perth and Kinross Council's Home to School Transport Policy. PKC recognises that stakeholders, particularly families living outwith the immediate area, have sought clarity on how this will operate. The Council will work directly with families to establish and communicate safe travel routes and ensure that transport arrangements are clearly understood in advance of pupils attending the ISP

10.8 HMIE Inspectors note that stakeholders want reassurance that staff will have the right training, skills and support to meet the needs of children and young people accessing the ISP.

PKC recognises that stakeholders want reassurance that staff working in the ISP will have the right training, skills and support to meet the needs of children and young people with complex ASN. The ISP will have its own dedicated staff team, and recruitment will be carried out in conjunction with the Inclusion Service to ensure that staff appointed have the appropriate knowledge, experience and expertise to support intensive-level needs.

Staff will also have access to a range of specialist professional learning, including training in autism, trauma-informed practice and inclusive pedagogy. In addition, the ISP team will be supported through an ISP Specialist Network, providing ongoing opportunities for professional development, collaboration and practice sharing

10.9 HMIE Inspectors note that stakeholders emphasise the importance of well-planned transitions and clear communication throughout the implementation of the ISP.

PKC recognises the importance stakeholders have placed on ensuring transitions are well-planned and clearly communicated. Transitions into the ISP will be supported through Child's Plan Transition Planning Meetings, ensuring that planning is personalised, coordinated and based on the assessed needs of each child or young person. Enhanced visits and opportunities for pupils and families to become familiar with the ISP will be facilitated as part of this process.

Clear and ongoing communication with families will be prioritised throughout implementation to ensure that parents, carers and young people remain fully informed, supported and involved at each stage of the transition.

10.10 HMIE Inspectors recommend continued engagement with stakeholders to address queries raised during the consultation.

The Council will continue to work in partnership with the Parent Council, young people, parents and staff, throughout the implementation phase.

11. ALLEGED OMISSIONS OR INACCURACIES

- 11.1 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.
- 11.2 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.

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

- 12.1 Section 9(1) of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 states that: After the Education Authority has received HMIE'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 meetings; and
 - (iii) HMIE's report.
- 12.2 Following receipt of the HMIE report, ten online representations and oral representations made at the one public meeting held during the consultation period, officers reviewed the proposals.
- 12.3 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.
- 12.4 Officers of the Education Authority have listened carefully to the points made at the public meeting and have also considered equally carefully the HMIE report and the online representations. The proposal was reviewed to consider whether any of the representations led the Council to reconsider other options as being reasonable alternatives to the proposal.
- 12.5 None of the representations led officers to conclude that there were any other reasonable alternatives to the proposal, nor that the proposal should be reconsidered.
- 12.6 The educational benefits were reviewed in respect of the HMIE report and representations made.
- 12.7 There were no factors included in the HMIE report or representations made requiring any aspect of the educational benefits to be reconsidered.

- 12.8 Having reviewed the HMIE report and feedback from consultees, officers concluded that the basis of the original proposal continues to be the most appropriate response to establishing a new Intensive Support Provision (ISP) at St John's RC Academy. The proposal ensures that pupils with complex additional support needs in the St John's RC Academy catchment area can access specialist education locally, enabling them to maintain connections with their peers and community. The Council remains committed to implementing the ISP in a way that enhances existing provision, supports inclusive practice, and delivers the educational benefits outlined in the proposal paper.

13. LEGAL ISSUES

- 13.1 The Council has complied in full with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 throughout this statutory consultation.
- 13.2 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 proposed Intensive Support Provision (ISP) at St John's RC Academy will comply with the Council's Accessibility Strategy and will positively promote equal opportunities for children and young people with disabilities.
- 13.3 In terms of Socio-Economic Impact, the assessment identified that establishing an ISP within St John's RC Academy will improve access to specialist education for pupils living in the local area, including those who may be economically disadvantaged. By reducing the need for long-distance travel to access appropriate support, the proposal enhances equity and inclusion for families across the community.
- 13.4 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.
- 13.5 As it is the intention that this Consultation Report should be published, both electronically and in written form, if required, on 22 April 2026, this meets the statutory requirement to publish this report for more than three weeks before consideration of the proposal by Learning & Families Committee on 27 May 2026.

14. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 Staffing arrangements for the new Intensive Support Provision (ISP) at St John's RC Academy will be consistent with Perth & Kinross Council's Staffing Standard and other relevant local agreements.
- 14.2 Consultation will be undertaken with school staff, Trade Unions, and professional associations where appropriate, to support the implementation plan for staffing the ISP. This will ensure that the provision is appropriately resourced and that staff are supported in delivering high-quality education for pupils with complex additional support needs.

15. CONCLUSION

15.1 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.

15.2 HMIE has identified that the proposal to establish a new Intensive Support Provision (ISP) at St John's RC Academy has clear educational benefits. The ISP has the potential to provide a high-quality learning environment for young people with complex additional support needs. The proposed design and location within the school will offer flexible learning and social spaces tailored to individual needs. Stakeholders recognise the value of the ISP to the local community, particularly in enabling pupils to be educated closer to home, maintain peer relationships, and access specialist support within a mainstream setting. HMIE Inspectors agree that the ISP will enhance inclusive practice and support improved outcomes for young people.

15.3 If the Council adopts the proposal, it is understood that the educational benefits set out in the Proposal Paper would likely materialise.

15.4 The key points that have been highlighted during the consultation period are as follows:

- HMIE's report confirms that the proposal to establish an Intensive Support Provision (ISP) at St John's RC Academy presents positive educational benefits. These include the creation of a high-quality learning environment tailored to the needs of young people with complex additional support needs, with opportunities for inclusion in mainstream activities and reduced travel time for pupils. The provision is expected to strengthen peer relationships and community connections by enabling pupils to be educated locally.
- HMIE Inspectors noted that stakeholders were generally supportive of the proposal but had raised queries that require further clarification, including the use of shared spaces, roles and responsibilities across the ISP, and transition arrangements.
- Stakeholders raised queries focused on admission criteria, allocation processes, class sizes, transitions, staffing qualifications, access and safety, and the use of spaces such as the sensory room, life skills area and garden. They also asked about transport arrangements, particularly how transport would operate when placement is based on parental preference rather than placing request. The Council responded by confirming that admissions will be handled through the Transitions Panel, that class sizes will be phased, and that a dedicated specialist staff team will support the ISP. Shared spaces will be managed through coordinated timetabling, transport will follow existing policy, and transitions will be individually planned. Further clarification on each of these points is provided within the body of this report.

- The proposal received broad support from consultees. The majority of respondents were in favour, and feedback from the public meeting, written submissions, and pupil consultations indicated strong agreement with the educational rationale and operational planning for the ISP at St John's RC Academy.

16. RECOMMENDATIONS

16.1 On the basis of the feedback received and taking account of the educational and social benefits of the proposal, it is recommended that the Council approves:

- To permanently establish a new Intensive Support Provision in St John's RC Academy for pupils with Additional Support Needs with effect from January 2026.



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Statutory Consultation Public Meeting

**Minute of meeting held on Wednesday 26 November 2025
 at 7:00p.m. in St John's RC Academy**

Panel:

David Macluskey	Education & Learning Strategic Lead (Chief Education Officer)
Fiona MacKay	Quality Improvement Manager – Inclusion & Additional Support Needs
Sarah Stephen	Quality Improvement Officer - Inclusion
Marie-Claire Futamata	Head Teacher – St John's RC Academy
Karen Robertson	Service Manager – Business Services

Present:

Jaclyn Meikle – Minutes	ASN Transformation Programme Manager
Councillor John Rebbeck	Convenor, Learning & Families Committee

In addition:

1 x Education Scotland Representative
 4 x Parents / Members of the public

Welcome and Introductions

David Macluskey opened the meeting and welcomed the members of public in attendance to the Statutory Consultation Public Meeting.

David introduced himself and the panel to the members of the public and thanked them for attending.

Marie Claire Futamata introduced herself and briefly outlined the positive impact she anticipated that an ISP would have for St John's RC Academy.

Format of meeting

Fiona MacKay then explained the agenda the meeting would follow.

The proposal

Fiona MacKay explained the consultation proposal to the attendees. The Council proposes to:

- Permanently establish a new Intensive Support Provision at St John's RC Academy for pupils with Additional Support Needs with effect from August 2026.

Presentation

A presentation was provided that explored the proposal in further detail and explained the background to the proposal and the reasons a new ISP is required.

Fiona MacKay outlined:

- The PKC Vision
- Statutory duties of a local authority
- PKC & National ASN Data
- Explained the 4 levels of Staged Intervention (4-Intensive)
- The existing geographic spread of ISPs within PKC
- The requirement for an ISP at St John's RC Academy

Sarah Stephen outlined:

- What is an ISP
- Common profile of needs seen within an ISP
- How needs are met
- The placement of the ISP within the school and what it will include
- How the ISP will operate
- How the ISP will be staffed
- The educational benefits of an ISP

Karen Robertson outlined:

The statutory consultation process including the legal framework, consideration by Learning & Families Committee, the statutory consultation period and the different ways in which representations from interested parties could be made as the first part of the consultation process. Karen Robertson then explained the next stages of the process which includes the involvement of Education Scotland, the preparation and publication of the consultation report and the final decision made by the Learning & Families Committee, currently anticipated to be May 2026.

Fiona Mackay closed the presentation by directing attendees to the PKC website for additional information.

David Macluskey opened the meeting to any questions, comments or observations from the floor:

Q: In relation to figures and allocation of spaces, is there an idea of likelihood of children in ISPs out with filling the spaces?

A: This is particularly difficult to predict at St John's RC Academy due to the catchment criteria. It is not straightforward to identify eligible children, therefore it will depend on parents identifying that they wish to move their child, and if so, we will provide support.

Q: Why are proposed ISP class sizes so small?

A: This relates to the number of children identified at ‘Intensive’ level and our statutory obligation known as the presumption of mainstream education. It must be clear that an ISP is the correct stage for a child. Small settings and high staffing ratios are necessary for this level of need. While ASN percentages are rising, they are not necessarily at the intensive level; overall, numbers remain relatively static. Our approach is not driven by pressure of need but by the obligation to allow all children to be educated with peers, siblings, and close to communities, respecting personal choice (including faith-based) and future-proofing provision. Numbers will be kept under close review. We have consulted with the Diocese on this.

Q: What criteria does a child have to meet to access this provision?

A: The child’s assessment picture must show that mainstream education with support at an enhanced level cannot meet the child’s needs—that is the threshold for considering specialist education. We have a robust assessment process involving Educational Psychology to ensure clarity. Decisions are based on individual need. Our data shows we can meet current demand, if needs change, we can adapt without restarting statutory processes.

Q: Will Child’s Plan meetings be used in this process?

A: Yes. If these meetings identify that staged interventions are not working and a change of pathway is required, this will be progressed to the Transition Panel. The decision does not sit with the school; it sits with a panel through a robust process. Parents cannot simply request ISP placement directly with the Head Teacher—there is a formal process that requires to be followed. The assessment process is transparent and includes all relevant voices: parents, child/young person, school staff, Educational Psychology, etc. ISP provisions have existed in PKC for over 15 years, and a clear structure is in place to manage placements.

Q: If a child has a place, will there be transition visits to see classrooms?

A: Yes, this will be an option. Children will not be forced to move if they currently attend an alternative ISP. It is good practice to see the setting before parents decide. Newly created staff posts will be in place early enough to support the transition process. We will appoint at least a PT and aim to have staff ready to make the process smooth. The PT will teach for three days per week and will want to get to know families. We hope to run an open session for parents to visit.

Q: Is there any data on the level of Catholic children wanting to come to St John’s ISP?

A: We have mapped known information and reviewed past decisions, including siblings in different schools. However, the data available is patchy. Tracking data is difficult due to geographical spread and the presence of non-Catholic pupils attending St John’s and catholic pupils in other schools.

Q: What is the process up to the panel—how is information gathered and applications submitted?

A: Parents have the right to submit a placing request for any ISP. Schools can also raise this following discussion at a Child’s Plan meeting. Educational Psychology becomes involved and works with the school to build information for the panel. Paperwork is reviewed by the panel, which may request further interventions first (e.g., group sessions, environmental adjustments) under the presumption of mainstream. If there is clear benefit for the child, the placement will proceed.

Q: Is teacher recruitment specialised?

A: Yes, posts will be advertised on MyJobScotland. We have had good success filling similar posts and anticipate no issues. PKC attracts high-quality teaching candidates.

PSA recruitment has also been positive with PSAs paid at a higher grade. The Inclusion Service appoints staff jointly with the school to ensure appropriate skill levels. We seek motivated staff who want to be part of the school community.

Q: If a teacher is employed but not Catholic, are they employed short-term?

A: All St John's RC Academy teachers, including those who are not Catholic, must apply for Roman Catholic approval. Many non-Catholic teachers work at St John's. Primary teachers deliver sacraments; secondary teachers do not. Staff who take on liturgical aspects must sign up to the Catholic Charter for Schools. This has not affected recruitment. The Diocese is very supportive, welcoming the faith-based ISP and working with us to make it happen.

Q: Will children be able to join peers for other parts of the curriculum?

A: Absolutely. They can participate in school community events. The Head Teacher has experience with similar processes from a previous role in another authority and is confident this will work well. The school has capacity, and the most appropriate area within the school to locate the ISP has been selected. Staff were initially hesitant but now understand the positive impact on the school and wider community.

Q: Will the ISP have its own access, and will it be secure?

A: Yes. Minimal changes are required, with adaptations kept to a minimum.

Q: Will there be shared access to the garden area?

A: The garden room will be relocated to the main school building. A separate sectioned-off area with raised beds and benches in another area of the playground will ensure mainstream pupils do not lose out.

Q: If a child who was assessed as being at 'intensive' level still wanted to be in mainstream for a particular subject, is this possible?

A: Where a child is able to benefit and access mainstream subjects, we will always provide access to the broader curriculum. Secondary pupils can access specialist subject teachers who may teach within the ISP or in mainstream classes. The curriculum offer will vary, and we aim for pupils to reach their full potential. Some pupils start in provision and later move to split provision or return to mainstream as skills develop. This is kept under constant review, with flexibility and ongoing monitoring to ensure maximum attainment.

Q: Is the same process followed when moving on to secondary school?

A: If placed in an ISP at primary, the default is to move to an ISP at secondary unless the assessment picture has changed significantly.

Q: Is a child in primary guaranteed a place at secondary over another child from a different school?

A: There is no automatic guarantee. Admission criteria apply to all schools. St John's secondary catchment covers approximately 80% of PKC. After establishing the need for intensive level support, priority is given to baptism, then siblings, then associated feeder schools. We hope numbers remain low enough to avoid oversubscription.

Q: How does transport apply if placement is based on preference and not a placing request?

A: Transport rules remain the same as in any other school. If a child is placed in an ISP, statutory distance criteria apply, and the council must adhere to these requirements.

Q: When will we know if a place is allocated?

A: Allocation for a P1 placement will be confirmed by the end of February, even if the final decision on the ISP proposal is pending. Letters will indicate St John's is the intended placement, as by then, recommendations to committee will be clear. However, plans will also be in place should an alternative placement be required due to the recommendations not be agreed.

Q: What if a child is still going through the process and we are not ready to decide?

A: Children can be placed in an ISP at any point in the school year. For nursery transitions, we aim for decisions by November to prepare for the academic year. Changes can occur later if evidence supports it. Occasionally, children start in mainstream and later move to an ISP following panel review.

Q: Will all spaces be allocated immediately?

A: No. Classes will start with limited numbers and will increase in size gradually.

No further comments or statements.

Closing:

David Macluskey thanked everyone and reminded those attending that feedback can still be submitted up until Friday 19th December.



Perth & Kinross Council

Intensive Support Provision at St John's RC Academy

Summary of Consultation Responses

The statutory consultation on the proposal to establish a new Intensive Support Provision at St John’s RC Academy commenced on Wednesday 5 November 2025 and closed on Friday 19 December 2025.

Details of the proposal document were issued to the list of consultees contained within the Proposal Paper. Letters were issued 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.

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.

Online Response Forms

6 online response forms were received. 4 responses agreed with the Council’s proposal and 2 disagreed with the Council’s proposal.

RESPONDENT GROUP	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	AGREE	DISAGREE
Parents	6	4	2
Pupils	-	-	-
Staff	-	-	-
Elected Members	-	-	-
Parent Councils	-	-	-
Community Members	-	-	-
Grandparents	-	-	-
Trade Unions	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-
Total	6	4	2

Representations made were around:

Gap in Provision for Certain Learners

- Some children do not fit existing education pathways:
- They cannot cope with mainstream schooling, even part-time.
- They are not considered complex enough for an ISP.
- Insufficient options to support both learning and wellbeing, particularly for secondary pupils.

Need for Additional, Specialised Support Spaces

- A dedicated space or setting for these learners.
- Provision that forms part of a dual-education approach, offering support while maintaining educational progression.
- Assurance that these children’s needs are properly considered in planning.

Pressure on Existing Schools

- Local schools already have high numbers of pupils with Additional Support Needs (ASN).
- Staff and resources are stretched, making it difficult to meet current needs.
- Adding further ASN pressures to mainstream settings is seen as unsustainable unless the current system is improved first.

Preference for a Standalone Specialist ASN Setting

- Any new provision should be built as a separate, dedicated school.
- Avoid placing additional strain on existing mainstream schools.
- Enable the development of a true specialist ASN environment with appropriate resources and expertise.

Written Representations

During the consultation period between 5 November 2025 and 19 December 2025, written representations were invited from statutory consultees and interested parties. No written responses were received.

Public Meeting

As part of the statutory consultation process, 1 public meeting was held on 26 November 2025 at St John's RC Academy.

Attended by 4 members of the public.

The questions and comments were around:

Admission Criteria & Allocation Processes

Questions around how children will be assessed, selected, and allocated places within the ISP, including:

- Criteria for accessing the provision.
- How information is gathered and submitted to the panel.
- Role of Child's Plan meetings.
- Whether primary pupils are guaranteed a linked secondary place.
- Timing of allocation decisions.
- What happens if a child is still undergoing assessment when decisions are due.
- Whether all spaces will be filled immediately.

Capacity, Class Sizes & Demand

Questions relating to the number of spaces available and concerns about whether they will meet demand:

- Likelihood of external ISP learners filling allocated spaces.
- Reasons for small class sizes.
- Data on the number of Catholic children potentially seeking placement at St John’s ISP.

Transitions & Inclusion Within the Wider School

Questions relating to how children will move into and out of the ISP, and how they will integrate with mainstream peers:

- Whether transition visits will be arranged.
- Opportunities for joining mainstream classes for certain subjects.
- Whether a child assessed as “intensive” can still attend mainstream for a preferred subject.
- Whether the same process applies at transition to secondary school.

Staffing & Recruitment

Questions about the nature of staffing within the ISP:

- Whether teachers require specialist training or qualifications.
- What happens if a non-Catholic teacher is recruited—e.g., contract type and suitability.

Facilities, Safety & Access

Some questions related to the physical environment, its safety, and how it will function in practice:

- Whether the ISP will have its own secure access.
- Whether the garden area will be shared.

Transport Arrangements

- How transport will be provided when placement is preference-based rather than via a formal placing request.

Pupil Consultation

Consultation was undertaken with St John’s RC Academy pupils and P1 – P7 pupils in all associated primary schools. The consultation took place between 1 and 19 December 2025.

St John’s RC Academy Pupils

206 responses were received – 199 individual responses and 7 class responses. 198 respondents indicated they had no concerns about having ISP classes at their school. 165 respondents did not think the new ISP classes would change their school day at school.

What do you think might be good about the new ISP classes at your school?

I think it'll make the school a more inclusive environment and I'm happy more people will be included

The pupils using ISP will feel more included

Gives families a sense of comfort to have their children in a close by environment and with their siblings if they have any.

It will make people want to come to school knowing they can get the support that helps them

Everyone needs education especially them and if it makes any difference at all to there lives it will be worth it

It gives children with additional support needs an opportunity to come to there local school and still get the support they need.

More people joining the school, more diversity.

It will be more inclusive and will really benefit some families so there kids can all go to the same school

it will give people with any disability a chance to learn the way they do

I think it might be good for people to recognise the need and to understand the struggles people might face

I think its good for diversity to have people with different skills and abilities to enter our school community

Shows the community that the school is doing what they can to support children

Reducing transport is good for Eco reasons. They will have more space and friends.

Associated Primary Schools

22 responses were received – 20 class responses and 2 group responses with an adult.

13 respondents indicated they had no concerns about having ISP classes at their school.

14 respondents did not think the new ISP classes would change their school day at school.

What do you think might be good about the new ISP classes at your school?

We are happy for them because they won't have to travel as far and they will get to be in our school.

pupils who attend will feel more included

It will help people to be kind.

It would help the children to learn and feel happy

They might make new friends and play with them every day

Children can still attend the same school as their family

We think it's good they won't have to travel so far and will get more sleep.

There won't be too many children. it will be quieter

Some children need a class that isn't so noisy

feel less anxious about attending school

That children will have access to proper support

Children who couldn't come here before can now come here

It will help children who need extra help to be in their own classroom



Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Report by HMIE addressing educational aspects of the proposal by Perth and Kinross Council to Permanently establish a new Intensive Support Provision in St John's Roman Catholic (RC) Academy

January 2026

1. Introduction

1.1 This report from HMIE has been prepared by His Majesty’s Inspectors of Education (HM Inspectors) in accordance with the terms of the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#) (“the 2010 Act”). The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of a proposal by Perth and Kinross Council to permanently establish a new Intensive Support Provision (ISP) in St John’s RC Academy. Section 2 of the report sets out brief details of the consultation process. Section 3 of the report sets out HM Inspectors’ consideration of the educational aspects of the proposal, including significant views expressed by consultees. Section 4 summarises HM Inspectors’ view. Upon receipt of this report, the Act requires the council to consider it alongside any relevant considerations the council received and then prepare its consultation report. The council’s consultation report should include this report and must contain an explanation of how, in finalising the proposal, it has reviewed the initial proposal, including a summary of points raised during the consultation process and the council’s response to them. The council has to publish its consultation report at least three weeks before it takes its final decision. With all proposals the council needs to follow all statutory obligations set out in the 2010 Act.

1.2 HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for 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 26 November 2025 in connection with the council’s proposals;
- consideration of all relevant documentation provided by the council in relation to the proposal, specifically the educational benefits statement and related consultation documents, written and oral submissions from parents and others; and
- visits to the site of St John’s RC Academy, Our Lady’s Primary School, St Dominic’s Primary School and St Stephen’s Primary School including discussion with relevant consultees.

2. Consultation process

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

2.2 The statutory consultation ran from 5 November to 19 December 2025. The council published the proposal paper on its website and made copies available to relevant stakeholders. The website

included a helpful video, which explained the consultation process in an accessible way. The council held a public meeting on 26 November 2025, which four members of the public attended. The council received a total of six responses to its online survey, the majority (66%) of which were in favour of the proposal. Attendees asked questions about the allocation of spaces, admission criteria and transport arrangements. They also raised queries about the recruitment and training of staff, opportunities for integration with mainstream teaching and resources, and timelines for decisions.

2.3 The council undertook consultation with children and young people from the associated primary schools and at St John's RC Academy. The council received 23 responses from associated primary schools, and 206 responses from St John's RC Academy, including individual and group responses. Most children and young people had no concerns about having an ISP at St John's RC Academy and did not think that it would change their school day. They believe this may help St John's RC Academy to be more inclusive. They also think it is important that young people attend their local catchment high school and with their peer group and siblings.

3. Educational aspects of proposal

3.1 HM Inspectors agree that Perth and Kinross Council's proposal to establish an ISP at St John's RC Academy has potential educational benefits. Across Perth and Kinross there is currently no ISP provision at either primary or secondary stage within a denominational setting for children and young people with complex or multiple needs. As a result, these pupils travel longer distances to access an ISP, which reduces their access to faith-based education within their local community. This proposed ISP has the potential to support the council in meeting the projected increase in the number of children and young people requiring specialist support across denominational schools from August 2026.

3.2 The council has stated a range of educational benefits it considers this proposal will bring. This includes providing a modern learning environment for children and young people with additional support needs who require an intensive level of support. It aims to enhance locally available learning experiences and outcomes through a broad curriculum. This should support progression to the senior phase within an all-through ISP comprising both primary and secondary provision. HM Inspectors agree that proposed adaptations for the new ISP at St John's RC Academy could provide an appropriate and accessible learning environment for children and young people who require intensive support. These adaptations, together with access to wider school facilities, should enable children and young people to experience a broad curriculum within an environment tailored to meet their individual needs.

3.3 Establishing an ISP in a faith-based setting will align religious values and preferences for those who choose a Roman Catholic education. Children and young people accessing the new ISP at St John's RC Academy may benefit from remaining within a faith-based school community and maintain important social connections. They will be able to progress in an all through ISP from primary to secondary education. This has the potential to minimise the number of transitions they experience. There are also potential benefits to further opportunities for inclusion in mainstream school activities, as appropriate.

3.4 HM Inspectors met with children, young people, parents and staff to discuss their views. All stakeholders are in favour of the proposal. They agree that establishing an ISP within St John's RC

Academy will enable children and young people to access to specialist provision, whilst remaining in a faith-based learning environment. They agree that children and young people should be able to progress with their peers and siblings. Stakeholders are aware that children travel out with their catchment area to access specialist support and this is having an impact on children and their families. As a result, children may experience multiple transitions, which may disrupt continuity of the learning experience. A few stakeholders from Crieff also expressed concern over the lack of dedicated school transport to and from St John's RC Academy.

3.5 Children and young people from St John's RC Academy who met with HM Inspectors want to ensure that everyone is welcome and included in their school. They feel strongly that children and young people who are allocated spaces in the ISP are included in the school 'house system'. They believe that this will help to create opportunities to build relationships, make new friendships and learn from each other.

3.6 A few stakeholders raised considerations for the implementation of the proposal. This includes the use of shared spaces such as the life skills and sensory areas. A few staff from St John's RC Academy would like clarity of roles, such as the named person, across the ISP and how this may impact on the wider school. Stakeholders are keen that shared spaces are managed effectively so there is no negative impact on other children or young people. Parents, children and young people expressed the need for choice to be a key consideration in allocation of spaces. Parents would like to be involved in the decisions where their child is placed. They also would like the council to consider the use of split placements in the primary stage to allow children to maintain existing friendships within their catchment primary school.

3.7 All stakeholders who met with HM Inspectors expressed the need for well-planned transition arrangements and clear communication. They believe that this will help all children and young people to understand the proposed changes and how this may affect them. All stakeholders highlighted the importance of the recruiting and retaining staff, including the need for specialist training. They believe that robust policies should be in place to support positive relationships that will help support the continuity of learning.

3.8 HM Inspectors spoke with a representative of the Diocese of Dunkeld. They fully support the proposal. They believe the proposal will create equity of access to specialist support for children and young people who choose a faith-based education setting. They believe this will reduce barriers to children and young people requiring intensive support to access a faith-based education. They believe that the ISP should be supported by qualified Catholic teachers to ensure appropriate pastoral care.

4. Summary

HM Inspectors agree that the proposal has the potential to deliver educational benefits for children and young people who require specialist support. The opening of a new ISP in St John's RC Academy should ensure that more children and young people will be able to access the right support at the right time in a faith-based environment. The new ISP should allow children and young people to remain in their faith-based community and reduce the need for additional travel. This may help support connections with peers and minimise disruption to transition processes. This should help the council to meet the national requirements of the presumption of mainstreaming. Children and young

people will, where appropriate, have opportunities to be included within the mainstream school alongside their peers. The new ISP in St John's RC Academy will further support the council to meet the projected increase in children and young people requiring specialist support and keep them, where possible, within a faith-based community. The council should continue to engage with stakeholders to address the queries they have raised.

HM Inspectors
January 2026