

The City of Edinburgh Council

10.00am, Thursday, 19 December 2024

Outcome of the Statutory Consultation Process on the Proposal to Establish a New Non-Denominational Primary School and Implement Catchment Changes in South East Edinburgh

Executive
Wards

16 Liberton / Gilmerton

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 Approve the proposal to establish a new non-denominational primary school and nursery and implement the proposed primary and secondary school catchment changes in South East Edinburgh; and
- 1.2 Approve that a sibling guarantee be applied according to the terms set out in this report.

Gareth Barwell

Interim Executive Director Place

Contact: Robbie Crockatt, Strategic Asset Planning Manager

E-mail: robbie.crockatt@edinburgh.gov.uk | Tel: 0131 469 3051

Outcome of the Statutory Consultation Process on the Proposal to Establish a New Non-Denominational Primary School and Implement Catchment Changes in South East Edinburgh

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 Following a statutory consultation, this report recommends that a new primary school is established at Gilmerton Station Road in South East Edinburgh to accommodate the additional children expected from new homes and to relieve pressure on existing primary schools.
- 2.2 The report recommends that the proposed catchment area changes set out in the consultation paper be progressed to realign the Gilmerton Station Road new housing development, the land south of Gilmerton Station Road to the city bypass, the Lasswade Road Housing development east of Lasswade Road, the land east of Gilmerton Road from south of the railway path to the city bypass, and the land west of Lasswade Road between Lang Loan and the city bypass with the new school's catchment area.
- 2.3 The new school's catchment area is currently in the catchment area of Liberton High School and the report recommends that it be realigned with Gracemount High School.
- 2.4 This report also recommends that a 'sibling guarantee' is offered to families who live within the section of Gilmerton Primary School's catchment area realigned with the new primary school catchment. The 'sibling guarantee' would apply to siblings of pupils at Gilmerton Primary School or Liberton High School. It would mean that the siblings of pupils currently living in the area transferring to the new catchment area would be guaranteed a place at Gilmerton Primary School or Liberton High School assuming they meet criteria set out in this paper.

3. Background

- 3.1 On 11 June 2024, the Education, Children and Families Committee approved that a statutory consultation be undertaken proposing the establishment of a new non-denominational primary school and implementation of catchment changes in South East Edinburgh.
- 3.2 In summary, the statutory consultation paper proposed that:
 - 3.2.1 A new 15 class primary school be established on the proposed site between Nisbet Drive and Carter Drive in the new Gilmerton Station Road housing development (see map in [Appendix 1](#));
 - 3.2.2 The new school should be designed so that it can be extended to 21 classes in the future if that should be necessary;
 - 3.2.3 The new Primary School would include a nursery.
- 3.3 A new primary school is required to accommodate the children from new homes built and being constructed in the Gilmerton Station Road housing development site. The new school would also help take pressure off the expanding rolls of the existing local primary schools.
- 3.4 The new school could open in August 2028 at the earliest. All catchment changes would only apply to new P1 pupils. There would be no mandatory transfer of pupils already attending another school; however, pupils in P2-P7 within the catchment of the new primary school will have the opportunity to express their interest in transferring to the new school. The availability of P2-P7 places will be subject to an assessment of demand closer to the time the new school opens.
- 3.5 The new Gilmerton Station Road primary school would be aligned with Gracemount High School. The high school catchment areas of Gracemount High School and Liberton High School would be revised (see map in [Appendix 1](#)).
- 3.6 The proposal does not include any changes to Roman Catholic primary or Roman Catholic high school catchment areas.

4. Main report

- 4.1 The statutory consultation to which this report refers has been undertaken according to the requirements set out in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.
- 4.2 The statutory consultation period ran from Thursday 22 August 2024 to Thursday 3 October 2023. The full statutory consultation paper is available online at the following link:

<https://consultationhub.edinburgh.gov.uk/sfc/gilmertonstationroad> and a summary paper is provided in Appendix 1.

- 4.3 The consultation included an online questionnaire, two public meetings, and a pupil survey of P6-S6 pupils at the affected schools.
- 4.4 Respondents were encouraged to use a response questionnaire which was available online using the Council's consultation hub. Responses to the consultation could also be submitted by email or letter. 153 representations were received, all of which were submitted via the online consultation hub. The tables in Appendix 2 provide a summary of the issues that were raised during the consultation and the Council's response. The full submissions are available to elected members on request.
- 4.5 The majority of the submissions were from parents or local residents.
- 4.6 Those who responded using the online questionnaire on the consultation hub were asked whether they support the proposal. Of the 153, 132 responded that they did support the proposal and 15 responded that they did not. Six responded that they neither supported nor objected to the proposal.

Key Issues Raised

- 4.7 The main themes and issues raised in the responses were:
 - 4.7.1 Perceived urgent need for the new school and nursery;
 - 4.7.2 Need for schools to be within walking/cycling distance;
 - 4.7.3 Other community facilities are needed in the area;
 - 4.7.4 Safe routes to schools, including safe crossings at larger roads;
 - 4.7.5 Opposition to the proposed catchment area from residents whose homes were included/excluded in the new school's catchment area; and
 - 4.7.6 Community use of a new primary school.

Sibling Guarantee

- 4.8 During the consultation questions were asked regarding children currently living in the areas directly affected by the proposal having a different catchment school to an older sibling at Gilmerton Primary School or Liberton High School which could mean that parents and carers are forced to have siblings at different schools.
- 4.9 This issue will be addressed through the provision of a 'sibling guarantee' which guarantees a P1 or S1 place at Gilmerton Primary School or Liberton High School (if they wish to take it) to children who meet the criteria outlined in Appendix 5.
- 4.10 Similar arrangements are in place elsewhere in the city in cases where it is deemed that there will be enough capacity in the existing schools to do so.

4.11 The Council has considered the impact of a 'sibling guarantee' on Gilmerton Primary School and Liberton High School and recommends that it is offered for the following reasons:

4.11.1 It is not expected to have a detrimental impact or create accommodation pressures as the number of homes that could benefit from a 'sibling guarantee' will be limited; and

4.11.2 The affected properties are a reasonable distance from their existing primary and high school provision and so would have lower priority for an out of catchment place than other properties (as set out in the Council's Placing in School Procedures).

Public Meetings

4.12 Public meetings were held on Wednesday 18 October 2024 at Gracemount High School and on Thursday 26 October 2024 at Gilmerton Primary School. The Gilmerton Primary School meeting was rescheduled from Thursday 12 September 2024.

4.13 A total of nine members of the public attended the meetings (three at Gracemount High School and six at Gilmerton Primary School). Council officers answered questions following a short presentation. A minute of the meetings is provided in Appendix 3, setting out the issues that were raised and the Council response.

4.14 Issues that were discussed include:

4.14.1 A Sibling guarantee;

4.14.2 The proposed size of the new school;

4.14.3 Safe routes to school, including traffic calming measures;

4.14.4 The school becoming a community hub or supporting medical facilities; and

4.14.5 After school care provision.

Pupil Consultation

4.15 A consultation survey was carried out with P6 and P7 pupils at Gilmerton Primary School, S1-S6 pupils at Liberton High School, and S1-S6 pupils at Gracemount High School.

4.16 The pupils were asked: if they felt a new primary school was needed; if they felt their school had space for pupils from the new homes being built in the area; if they felt pupils should go to Gracemount High School; and the importance to them of being able to walk, wheel, cycle, or bus to school. Details of the responses are provided in Appendix 2.

4.17 Some of the pupils also provided comments to their answers. The themes and issues raised in their responses were:

- 4.17.1 Enthusiasm for the new school;
 - 4.17.2 Safe routes to school; and
 - 4.17.3 A perception that existing schools were overcrowded.
- 4.18 Going forward, the Council will consider how to involve pupils from the schools in developing the design for the new primary school and mitigate concerns about pupils' routes to school.

Education Scotland

- 4.19 As required by the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, all the responses received during the public consultation were made available to Education Scotland for their consideration. Education Scotland visited the schools directly affected by the statutory consultation and discussed the educational aspects with staff, parents and pupils before producing their final report. The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of the proposal.
- 4.20 Education Scotland's report is attached as Appendix 6.
- 4.21 The conclusion of Education Scotland is that HM Inspectors agree with the educational benefits set out in the proposal and the Council's approach to engaging with stakeholders to tackle challenges and concerns. The report also says that the Council should work with stakeholders to ensure there are safe routes to schools put in place prior to the new primary school opening and that parents would welcome greater clarity around the sibling guarantee.
- 4.22 The Act requires that the Council's Outcome of Consultation report include 'a statement of the authority's response to Education Scotland's report'. In summary, Council's response is to acknowledge HM inspectors agreement with the educational benefits and the council will continue to engage with stakeholders during the next phase to tackle challenges and concerns around safe routes to school. The details of the sibling guarantee are in Appendix 5.

Conclusions

- 4.23 It is recommended that the Council proceeds with the proposed new primary school site as set out in the statutory consultation paper.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 If the report recommendations are approved, a commission will be raised to appoint a design team and begin the feasibility and design work for the replacement school.
- 5.2 Catchment boundary changes will be implemented in time for the P1 registration process in the November prior to the new school opening. The

new school could open in August 2028 at the earliest, which would mean the catchment changes would be in place in November 2027.

- 5.3 The provision of the sibling guarantee will be administered through the regular P1 and S1 intakes process.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 The estimated cost for a new Primary School at Gilmerton Station Road is currently an unfunded pressure in the Council's Capital Investment Programme. Subject to approval of this outcomes report, the capital funding for construction will require to be considered as part of the budget setting process culminating in February 2025.
- 6.2 A new school would lead to an increase in revenue costs. In addition to the additional teaching and support staff, there would be a requirement to create and fill all the management and non-teaching staff positions associated with running a separate primary school. The creation of a new school building would also result in additional building running, maintenance and repair costs for the school estate.
- 6.3 The additional revenue costs will be considered as part of the appropriate budget setting process before the school becomes operational.

7. Equality and Poverty Impact

- 7.1 The recommendations in this report have been made following a statutory consultation undertaken according to the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. This Act is designed "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." (Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010: guidance).
- 7.2 Accordingly, by following the established process set out in the Act, the Council has provided those stakeholders most affected by these proposals with an opportunity to have their say and raise any concerns or issues. This Outcomes Report sets out the Council's response to the issues raised during the consultation and suggests any mitigating measures that may be required.
- 7.3 Equality Duty covers the protected characteristic of age, which refers to a person having a particular age or being within an age group. The age group most directly impacted by the proposal to establish a new school is young

people and children. The Educational Benefits statement in the statutory consultation paper sets out the ways in which the Council believes that children and young people could benefit or be disadvantaged by these proposals. In addition, letters providing information and inviting responses to the statutory consultation were made available to the parents and carers of all pupils in the affected area. Separate pupil consultations were also undertaken to understand the issues important to young people and children. The Council has provided responses to these issues in this Outcomes Report.

- 7.4 This statutory consultation has been undertaken at a formative stage of the project to provide early confirmation of its deliverability. No detailed design work has taken place and the full scope of the project is yet to be confirmed through further stages of public engagement. Approval of the proposals outlined in the statutory consultation will provide the Council with the right to establish a school on the proposed site and implement catchment changes when that new school opens, however; the delivery of a new school and related catchment changes will only be progressed subject to committee approval of a full Business Case and planning permissions.
- 7.5 Approval of the location of a new school will allow the development of a design through engagement with relevant stakeholders, partners and the wider community. The Council's Corporate Property Strategy requires that a school be more than just a school – that it becomes a focus for community activity and wider service delivery. For example, community engagement would include consideration of the services a new school should offer with opportunities to collocate or integrate other services on the school site. Transport and active travel links would also be a key focus for community engagement.
- 7.6 It is on conclusion of this further engagement work, at the point where a brief for the new facility has been set, that the impact a new school or community hub may have on different population groups may fully be assessed and documented.
- 7.7 Accordingly, a more detailed Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) will be undertaken to address the specific changes proposed by the project as part of the formal planning process.

8. Climate and Nature Emergency Implications

- 8.1 The new school will be designed to meet the environmental standards required at the time of its design and with cognisance of the Council's Net-Zero targets. The design will promote active travel opportunities to minimise the impact on carbon emissions and energy consumption.

- 8.2 Outdoor play, learning and exploration are at the heart of Edinburgh's Primary and Early Years settings. New schools and nurseries are designed with high-quality outdoor settings.
- 8.3 Internal spaces are designed to biophilic principles with easy access between indoor and outdoor spaces promoting exploration of external environments.
- 8.4 The heavy focus on the design of outdoor spaces and natural environments is to embed within children's learning and experiences an appreciation and understanding of nature and the outdoors. It is recognised that one of the single most effective ways of addressing climate and nature emergencies is through education.
- 8.5 Should they be approved, the proposals in this paper will eventually allow the removal of an old temporary classroom unit at Gilmerton Primary School that has exceeded its life expectancy. The removal of this building will assist in reducing energy inefficiencies and costs as well as removing a maintenance burden.

9. Risk, policy, compliance, governance and community impact

- 9.1 The statutory consultation to which this paper refers has been undertaken according to the requirements set out in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.
- 9.2 Earlier engagement had raised concerns about the amount of new housing in the area and the limitations of other public services, however there is good support within the wider community for the new primary school and reasonable support for the proposed primary school catchment changes.
- 9.3 Whilst the recommendation would see the creation of a new building, the purpose is to create fit for purpose accommodation to meet demand, facilitate inclusion and community use and alleviate accommodation pressures at existing schools. The new school will be designed to meet the Passivhaus (or equivalent) standard for energy efficiency in a building and promote Active Travel opportunities to minimise the impact on carbon emission and energy consumption.
- 9.4 If the proposal is approved there is a risk that continuing changes to market conditions may escalate costs beyond the approved budget. Initial feasibility work followed by cost analysis at each RIBA stage of the design will inform the project development to ensure financial risks are mitigated and the design of the building meets expectations.
- 9.5 If the proposal is rejected the existing schools are unlikely to provide sufficient accommodation for the projected demand.

- 9.6 The recommendations in the report do not impact on an existing policy of the Council.

10. Background reading/external references

- 10.1 Education, Children and Families Committee, 11 June 2024, '[Statutory Consultations proposing new primary schools at Granton Waterfront and Gilmerton Station Road](#)'.

11. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Summary of the Statutory Consultation Paper.

Appendix 2 - Questionnaire and Written Representations - Issues raised and Council Response.

Appendix 3 - Minute of the Statutory Consultation Public Meetings.

Appendix 4 - Summary of Pupil Responses.

Appendix 5 - Sibling Guarantee.

Appendix 6 - Education Scotland report.

APPENDIX 1 – Summary of the Statutory Consultation Paper

Consultation on the Proposal to Establish a New Non-Denominational Primary School and Implement Catchment Changes in South East Edinburgh

Summary Paper

GIVE US YOUR VIEWS: www.edinburgh.gov.uk/gilmertonstationroad

What is being proposed?

The establishment of a new non-denominational primary school and nursery within the Gilmerton Station Road housing development in South East Edinburgh. The new school would feed to Gracemount High School.

A catchment area for the new school is also proposed. Maps of existing and proposed primary school catchments are attached as [Appendix 1](#).

Where will the new primary school and nursery be located?

It is proposed that the new school will be built on a 2 hectare site within the Gilmerton Station Road housing development. This site is located between Nisbet Drive and Carter Drive. The map in [Appendix 3](#) shows the proposed school location.

Why do we need a new primary school?

New housing in Gilmerton Primary School's catchment area is estimated to create a shortfall of nearly 400 non-denominational school places. This is the equivalent of a two stream (15 class) primary school.

What are the implications for existing secondary schools?

Liberton High School is currently being rebuilt with an increased capacity. However, housing development in Liberton High School's catchment area is projected to cause Liberton High School to breach its new capacity. Gracemount High School does have some spare capacity and a catchment change to realign some of Liberton High School's catchment population with Gracemount High School is proposed.

The new primary school will feed to Gracemount High School. This requires a change to the catchment boundaries of Liberton High School and Gracemount High School. Maps of existing and proposed secondary school catchments are attached as [Appendix 2](#).

Who will the changes affect?

The catchment changes will affect P1 and S1 pupils starting school in August 2028 and pupils moving to the area after August 2028.

When would the changes come into effect?

If the proposal is approved by the Council, the new school could open in August 2028 at the earliest. The catchment changes would be made in the November prior to the new primary school opening.

Why are we consulting?

We want to hear the views of anyone affected by the proposal. There is also a legal obligation to carry out a statutory consultation under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended by the Children and Young people (Scotland) Act 2014.

How will I know if my views have been considered?

All comments made during the statutory consultation period will be recorded and represented in a final 'Outcomes of the Consultation Report' that we expect to be considered by Council in December 2024. The report will be published three weeks in advance of the Council meeting and parents of pupils attending affected schools and anyone who has responded to the consultation will be notified of its publication.

How can I find out more about the proposal or make my views heard?

If you want more information you can find the full consultation paper and other supporting information at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/gilmertonstationroad

We have also organised two public meetings which anyone can attend:

| Date | Time | Venue |
|------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| Thursday, 12 September 2024 | 18:30 – 20:30 | Gilmerton Primary School |
| Wednesday, 18 September 2024 | 18:30 – 20:30 | Gracemount High School |

The meeting will open with a short presentation about the consultation and what is proposed, followed by a question and answer session. We will take a note of the meeting and all of the points made will be captured in the final 'Outcomes of the Consultation Report'.

Please email newgilmertonstationroadprimary@edinburgh.gov.uk by Friday 6 September 2024 if you need translation services at the meeting.

Give us your views: public consultation period closes Thursday 3 October 2024

It would be helpful if you could take time to complete our short survey – you can find it easily online at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/gilmertonstationroad. If you don't have internet access then you can view the full consultation paper at City Chambers, Waverley Court, Gilmerton library or any of the affected schools.

You can also email comments to us directly at:
newgilmertonstationroadprimary@edinburgh.gov.uk

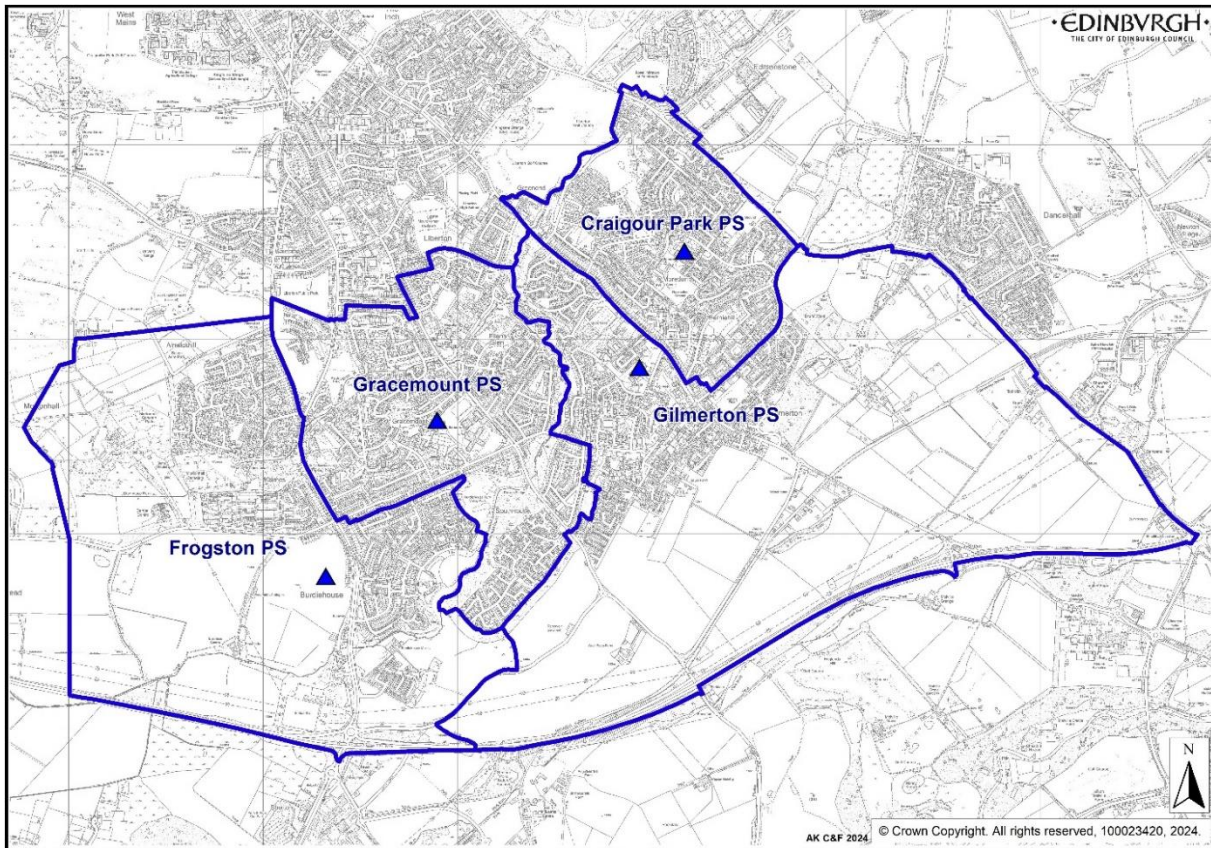
or if you prefer they can be posted to:

Gilmerton Station Road Primary School Consultation
City of Edinburgh Council
Waverley Court, 1.6
4 East Market Street
Edinburgh EH8 8BG

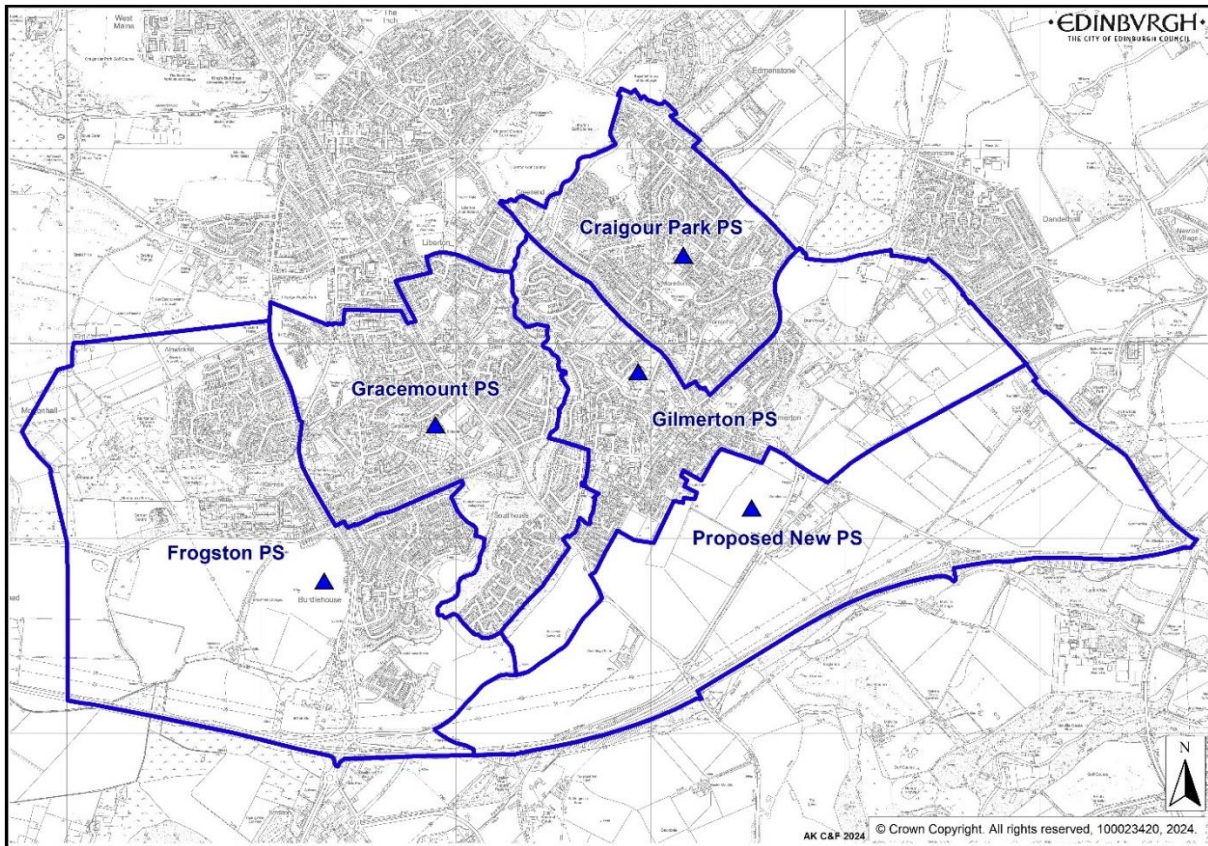
All comments should arrive by Thursday 3 October 2024.

APPENDIX 1: Existing and Proposed Catchment Boundaries

Existing Primary School Catchment Boundaries

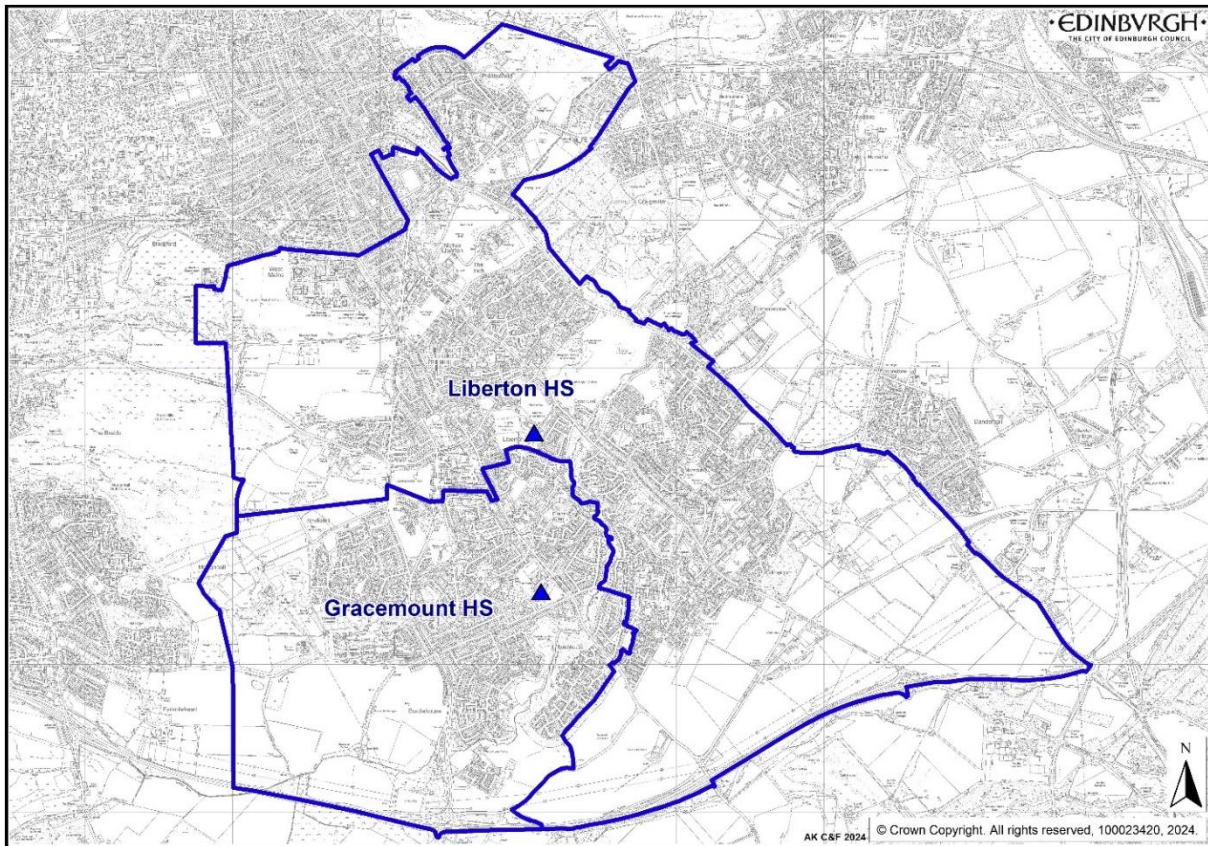


Proposed Primary School Catchment Boundaries

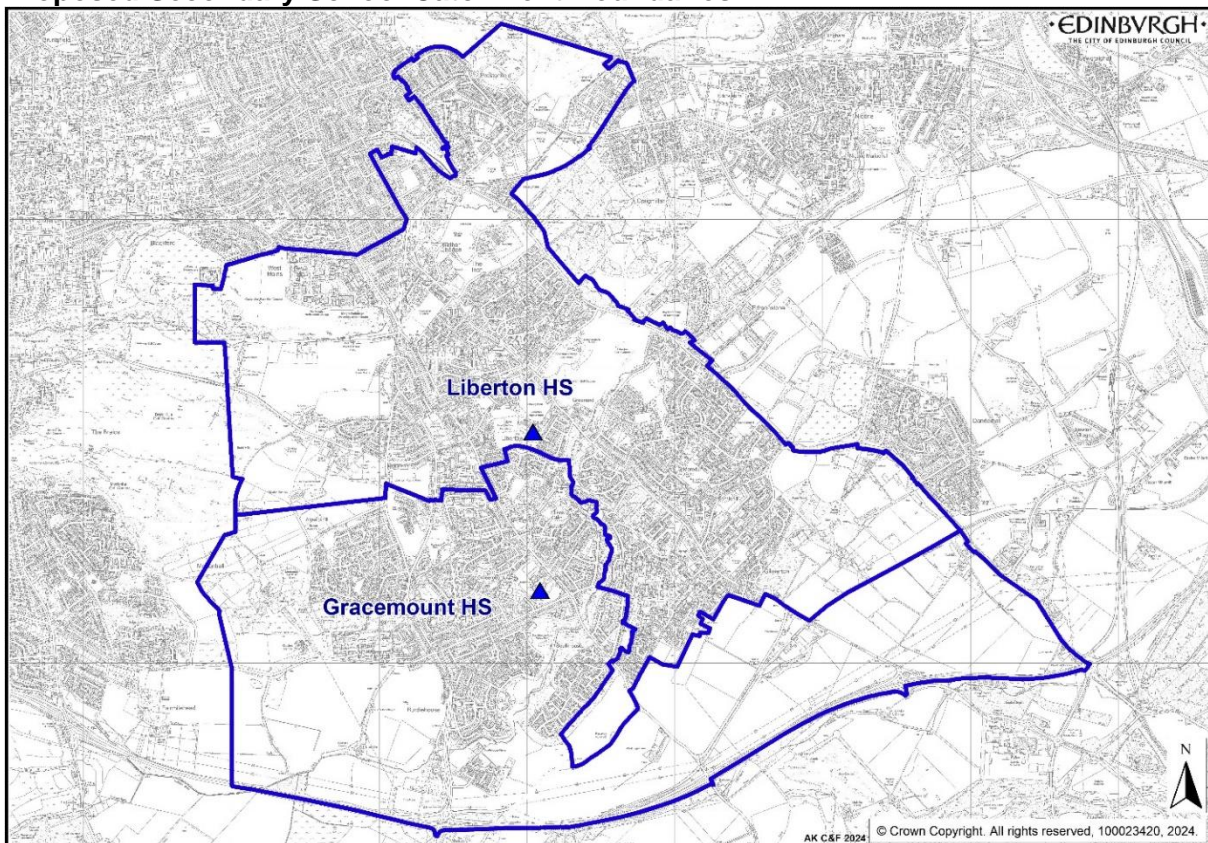


APPENDIX 2: Existing and Proposed Secondary School Catchment Boundaries

Existing Secondary School Catchment Boundaries



Proposed Secondary School Catchment Boundaries



APPENDIX 3: Proposed New Primary School Site (indicated by white rectangle)



HAPPY TO **TRANSLATE**

You can get this document on audio CD, in Braille, large print if you ask us. Please contact Interpretation and Translation Service (ITS) on its@edinburgh.gov.uk and quote reference number **24-1177C**. ITS can also give information on community language translations. You can get more copies of this document by contacting newgilmertonstationroadprimary@edinburgh.gov.uk



APPENDIX 2 – Questionnaire Representations

Issues Raised and Council Response

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Issue: Access and Travel Routes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe routes to school with crossing measures. • Distance for pupils travelling to school. • Difficult to get to school by public transport. |
| | Council Response | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school will have a Travel Plan to encourage pupils to walk to school by identifying ways that routes could be made safer and prompting initiatives such as 'walking buses'. This will take account of pedestrian and cycle considerations required as part of the planning permission for the new building which will link the new primary school to the wider community. • Schools are within the acceptable walk limit for each age group. • The outcomes report of the statutory consultation will be shared with Lothian buses to assist with planning for future travel demands. |
| 2 | Issue: Traffic and parking | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new school will create more traffic congestion. • Traffic calming measures required. |
| | Council Response | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new school is expected to reduce traffic as the school will be closer to pupil's homes encouraging more families to walk, wheel, and cycle to school. • The potential for any traffic issues as a result of the new school being built will be assessed in detail as part of a Traffic Impact Assessment when a planning application is submitted. |
| 3 | Issue: Other facilities are needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shortage of GPs, Dentists, and shops. • New High school needed. • Provision of community space. |
| | Council Response | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council are working with partners to map service requirements in the area and assess opportunities to co-locate services. While the Council would welcome the opportunity to develop the new school as more than a school; provision of partner services is not within the |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| | | <p>Council's control and will be subject to partners own internal service priority assessments and funding availability within the necessary timescales.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis has shown that following the proposed catchment change both Liberton and Gracemount High Schools are expected to be able to accommodate their catchment demands. This assessment assumes the expanded capacity offered in the new Liberton High School building set to open in 2026 and minor extension of Gracemount High School. • Engagement was undertaken with the community to identify benefits the new school could bring and what spaces could be used by the community. If the proposal for a new school is approved stakeholder engagement will continue through the design process. |
| 4 | Issue: Catchment Area and Changes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moved house to be in catchment for a specific school. • Some of the new housing developments are not included. |
| | Council Response | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As populations rise and fall, catchment change is a tool used by local authorities to ensure that school catchment area boundaries are suitably located to make the most efficient use of available school accommodation. Accordingly, catchment areas are not fixed and may be subject to change. <p>Housing developers make contributions to the Council to ensure that school places are available for pupils generated by their new houses. This may mean contributing to a new school that is not the catchment school for pupils from their development but that through catchment change ensures that sufficient places are available within existing schools.</p> <p>Parents have the right to apply to any school other than their catchment school via an out of catchment Placing Request. Details of this process can be found in the Council's Placements Policy. Pupils with a sibling already attending Gilmerton Primary School or Liberton High School when they transition to P1 or S1 may qualify for the Sibling Guarantee (see Appendix 5).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • |

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| 5 | Issue: Improvements to Existing School | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works to Gilmerton Primary School TU's |
| | Council Response | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The temporary classroom unit at Gilmerton Primary school is now beyond its useful life span. If the proposals in this paper are approved then the TU would be removed, reducing Gilmerton Primary School's capacity. • |
| 6 | Issue: Developer contributions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents bought homes with the promise from developers of a new school. |
| | Council Response | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developer contributions are provided for alleviating accommodation pressures at schools in the contribution zone. This may be through catchment change, extension of existing schools, or establishment of a new school. |
| 7 | Issue: Siblings and Placement Guarantee | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Want to enrol children at schools they can attend together • After school care clubs |
| | Council Response | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No pupil would be forced to transfer school because of a consultation outcome. • Pupils with a sibling already attending Gilmerton Primary School or Liberton High School when they transition to P1 or S1 may qualify for the Sibling Guarantee (see Appendix 5). • The new school will include facilities to accommodate after school club provision. |
| 8 | Issue: Existing School Capacities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns expressed about available places for pupils ahead of the new school opening. |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council monitors school rolls and responds to projected needs to ensure catchment places are available. Should demand at Gilmerton Primary School increase beyond available school accommodation, Council officers will work with the school management team to identify appropriate solutions which may include restructuring class organisations, reconfiguration of existing spaces, temporary use of general purpose spaces or, where necessary, the provision of temporary accommodation.. |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | | |
|--|--|--|

Record of Meeting

Proposal to establish a new non-denominational Primary School and Nursery Classes at Gilmerton, Station Road and implement Catchment Changes

Public Consultation Meeting held at 6.30 pm, Wednesday 18 September 2024, Gracemount High School, Edinburgh

Present: 3 members of the public

In Attendance:

Tom Wood (Independent Chair);

Councillor Joan Griffiths (Convener of the Education, Children and Families Committee);

City of Edinburgh Council Officers: Crawford McGhie (Head of Strategic Asset Planning), Peter Garner (Learning Estate Planning Officer), Lynne Binnie (Head of Education – Inclusion), and Daniel Baigrie (Committee Officer).

1. Introduction

Tom Wood introduced himself and advised that he had been invited by the City of Edinburgh Council as an independent person to chair the public consultation meeting. Mr Wood thanked everyone for coming along and explained his role as well as introducing the key officers in attendance. It was explained that the consultation would continue until the 3 October 2024 and the public had the opportunity to feed in comments until then.

The Schools (Consultation Scotland) Act 2010 required the Council to conduct a public consultation. The public consultation would provide people with the opportunity to express their views and feed directly into the consultation process.

2. Presentation/Proposal

The Learning Estate Planning Officer presented on the Proposal to establish a new non-denominational Primary School and Nursery Classes at Gilmerton, Station Road and implement catchment changes. The existing primary school catchment areas serving this

area of south Edinburgh were presented; specifically, the feeder primary schools to Gracemount High School. It was noted that as part of the broader development at Gilmerton, Station Road a site for a primary school had been identified. Officers emphasised that proposals did not intend to create a situation where there would be unused capacity at other nearby schools. It was proposed that a new school would be a two stream 14 class school with a nursery class.

It was noted that increased capacity within the primary school estate would be required for the predicted number of pupils that would live within the new housing development at Gilmerton Station Road and at other nearby developments.

The current catchment areas and school rolls for Craigour Park, Gilmerton, Gracemount and Frogston Primary Schools were presented. School roll information for Liberton and Gracemount High Schools were presented. Catchment area changes to existing schools, and the proposed catchment for a primary school at Gilmerton, Station Road were presented alongside anticipated future school rolls. It was anticipated that the new primary school would be aligned to Gracemount High School.

It was anticipated, that if approved, the new school would enrol pupils from November 2027 to start at the school from August 2028. There were no changes to the Roman Catholic school catchments proposed.

It was noted that the final decision on the proposal to develop a new school would be considered by the City of Edinburgh Council at their meeting in December 2024. It was noted an Education Scotland report will accompany the report to council.

3. Questions/Comments

Question 1: Will there be a sibling guarantee?

Answer: Yes, there will be a sibling guarantee based on year of birth and aligned to an associated secondary school.

Question 2: When will the number of anticipated high school pupils be arrived at?

Answer: It is anticipated three years after the start of the development, therefore in 2028.

Question 3: If there are 14 classes, how many children will there be in the school?

Answer: The number of pupils per class vary across year groups. For a two-stream school we generally predict up to 420 pupils.

Question 4: How many nursery spaces will there be?

Answer: 64 children can be accommodated, and this is separate to the school capacity.

Question 5: Will the initial intake be primary 1 pupils only?

Answer: Typically, yes, similar to the new Frogston Primary School.

Question 6: If siblings are at another school, but live in the catchment for the new school what happens?

Answer: In line with all schools, priority in the new school will be given to catchment children. Children with a sibling guarantee from out with catchment at any school will then be considered for spaces.

Question 7: Will there be a community hub?

Answer: There can be engagement with the community regarding other facilities on the school site. At this stage only the school is being proposed. If the proposal is approved the design can be considered and evening or weekend use by the broader community can be explored, similar to other schools.

Question 8: Can the NHS make use of the space?

Answer: During the design stage if partner agencies identify an opportunity to collaborate and they can provide capital funding for their needs, a joint build could be considered, similar to the new Maybury Primary School, for instance.

Question 9: Can NHS Lothian apply for government for money for a surgery

Answer: Yes, if they identify a need for this.

Question 10: How far south does the proposed catchment area go?

Answer: The proposed catchment area does include the greenbelt area to the south, however, currently, further housing is not anticipated in this area.

4. Conclusion

Mr Wood brought questions to a close and thanked everyone for all their contributions which were extremely valuable. Mr Wood reminded everyone that they had until the 3 October 2024 to make any further contributions on the website or in writing.

Cllr Joan Griffiths thanked everyone for coming and for their contributions.

Record of Meeting

Proposal to establish a new non-denominational Primary School and Nursery Classes at Gilmerton, Station Road and implement Catchment Changes

Public Consultation Meeting held at 6.30 pm, Thursday 26 September 2024, Gilmerton Primary School, Edinburgh

Present: 6 members of the public

In Attendance:

Tom Wood (Independent Chair);

Councillor Joan Griffiths (Convener of the Education, Children and Families Committee);

City of Edinburgh Council Officers: Robbie Crockatt (Learning Estate Planning Manager), Peter Garner (Learning Estate Planning Officer), Catherine Chrystal (Senior Education Officer) and Daniel Baigrie (Committee Officer).

1. Introduction

Tom Wood introduced himself and advised that he had been invited by the City of Edinburgh Council as an independent person to chair the public consultation meeting. Mr Wood thanked everyone for coming along and explained his role as well as introducing the key officers in attendance. It was explained that the consultation would continue until the 3 October 2024 and the public had the opportunity to feed in comments until then.

The Schools (Consultation Scotland) Act 2010 required the Council to conduct a public consultation. The public consultation would provide people with the opportunity to express their views and feed directly into the consultation process.

2. Presentation/Proposal

The Learning Estate Planning Officer presented on the Proposal to establish a new non-denominational Primary School and Nursery Classes at Gilmerton, Station Road and implement catchment changes. The existing primary school catchment areas serving this area of south Edinburgh were presented; specifically, the feeder primary schools to Gracemount High School. It was noted that as part of the broader development at

Gilmerton, Station Road a site for a primary school had been identified near Nisbet Drive and Carter Drive. Officers emphasised that proposals did not intend to create a situation where there would be unused capacity at other nearby schools. It was proposed that a new school would be a two stream 15 class school with a nursery class.

It was noted that increased capacity within the primary school estate would be required for the predicted number of pupils that would live within the new housing development at Gilmerton Station Road and at other nearby developments. Some of the catchment from the current Gilmerton Primary School would be taken into the catchment for the new school

The current catchment areas and school rolls for Craigour Park, Gilmerton, Gracemount and Frogston Primary Schools were presented. School roll information for Liberton and Gracemount High Schools was presented. Catchment area changes to existing schools, and the proposed catchment for a primary school at Gilmerton, Station Road were presented alongside anticipated future school rolls. It was anticipated that the new primary school would be aligned to Gracemount High School. Routes and distanced to schools were considered in relation to proposed catchment areas.

The population social diversity was noted, including the 25% proportion of social housing at the Gilmerton Station Road housing development. It was noted that a sibling guarantee would be anticipated.

There was no school design work undertaken at this stage. If the proposal is approved this work will begin.

It was anticipated, that if approved, the new school would enrol pupils from November 2027 to start at the school from August 2028. There were no changes to the Roman Catholic school catchments proposed.

It was noted that the final decision on the proposal to develop a new school would be considered by the City of Edinburgh Council at their meeting in December 2024. It was noted an Education Scotland report will accompany the report to council.

3. Questions/Comments

Question 1: A parent explained that they had a 14 month old son and they live in the proposed catchment area of the new school. What should they to do to enrol?

Answer: If a child will start P1 in August 2028, they can be enrolled from November 2027. The council will be in touch with parents to advise in due course.

Question 2: Will enrolment be on a rolling basis or will the school open to all year groups at the same time?

Answer: On opening the new school will definitely have a P1 intake. If the building was not ready the school would be accommodated, short-term in alternative premises.

Question 3: What is the likelihood that the proposed catchment will change?

Answer: If this proposal, for the new school and associated catchment changes is agreed with Council in December 2024 then this will be the defined catchment. Parents can make out-of-catchment placing requests if their address falls out with the catchment but they have a desire for their child to attend the new school.

Question 4: Can members of the public see the slides shared tonight?

Answer: Yes, they will be in the report that goes to Council in December 2024 and will be available on the council website.

Question 5: What traffic calming measures will be put in place and will be these be considered ahead of the school opening date. Although schools are within walking distance for many families a lot of parents choose to drive.

Answer: The school site is not designed yet. In terms of car parking, there will be some guidance from the council's planning department. People can also have their say on planning, when planning permission for the new school is sought. Officers in roads will be involved in considering safe routes to school.

Question 6: When the houses in this area were initially build it was indicated there would pedestrian crossings, which had never been installed. Will they be put in now? The 60 mile per hour limit on the main road previously had been reduced to 30 mile per hour however drivers don't stick to this.

Answer: Safe access to the site will need to be considered at the design stage. Work with traffic colleagues will be undertaken, particularly if the new school leads to greater traffic volumes.

Question 7: Will the new school definitely happen?

Answer: If the proposed school is approved at council in December 2024 then a business case will be made for funding and resources to develop the new school. Developers contributions would make up the majority of the required funds.

Question 8: Will there be an after-school club?

Answer: When planning for a new school provision of space for activities, storage and office facilities for an after-school club will be included. An organisation would then need to submit a tender to be the provider in the school.

Question 9: Would the after-school club capacity be in line with the school capacity?

Answer: Capacity is generally dictated by staffing levels and available space. There is generally access to games halls for after-school clubs so if staffing can be secured by the provider the numbers could be significant.

• 4. Conclusion

Mr Wood brought questions to a close and thanked everyone for all their contributions which were extremely valuable. Mr Wood reminded everyone that they had until the 3 October 2024 to make any further contributions on the website or in writing.

APPENDIX 4 – Summary of Pupil Responses

S1 – S6 pupils attending Gracemount High School, Liberton High School, and P6 and P7 pupils attending Gilmerton Primary School were asked to complete a survey to indicate how they felt about aspects of the consultation. 140 responses were received and 67% of pupils who responded were aware of the consultation.

Pupils were asked how much they agreed or disagreed with these statements:

- **My school has space for pupils from the new homes being built in the area**
43% of pupils agreed, 19% of pupils disagreed, and 38% of pupils neither agreed nor disagreed.
- **A new primary school is needed in the area**
49% of pupils agreed, 18% of pupils disagreed, and 33% of pupils neither agreed nor disagreed.
- **Pupils from the new primary school should go to Gracemount High School**
27% of pupils agreed, 24% of pupils disagreed, and 49% of pupils neither agreed nor disagreed.
- **It is important to me to be able to walk, wheel, cycle, or bus to school**
81% of pupils agreed, 2% of pupils disagreed, and 17% of pupils neither agreed nor disagreed.

Pupils were asked if they wanted to add anything to their answers. The following comments were provided.

Pupil Comment Themes

| No. | Year Group | Response Theme |
|-----|------------|---|
| 1 | S4 | Pupil felt roads leading up to Gilmerton crossroads should be more pedestrian friendly and pedestrians should be prioritised. |
| 2 | S1 | Pupil commented that it will be more stressful because of more people coming. |
| 3 | S3 | Pupil doesn't disagree with need for new school but doesn't like the idea of more and more pupils attending Gracemount High School. |
| 4 | S3, P6 | Pupils felt Gilmerton primary school was overcrowded. |
| 5 | P6/P7 | Pupils enthusiastic for the new school. |

APPENDIX 5 – Sibling Guarantee

A sibling guarantee is a guarantee that a pupil living in the new primary school's catchment area, but wishing to attend Gilmerton Primary School or Liberton High School because they have a sibling already attending one of those schools, will be afforded the same rights as a pupil living in the catchment areas of these schools if:

- they can demonstrate that they were resident in the catchment area of the new primary school at the time the catchment changes were implemented; and
- that they continue to reside in the catchment area of the new primary school; and
- that they have an older sibling who will be attending the school they wish to attend at the time they would start in P1 or S1 at that school; and
- the older sibling was placed in the school as a catchment pupil; or received a place due to an older sibling attending that school.

Additionally, it should be noted that:

- a sibling guarantee only applies to pupils entering school at P1 or S1 stages;
- any requests for places at stages other than P1 or S1 will be subject to standard placing processes and will be dependent on the requested stage being offered at that school;
- all other requests for places not covered by the criteria above will be subject to standard placing processes.



Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by The City of Edinburgh Council to establish a new non-denominational primary school at Gilmerton, Station Road and implement catchment changes.

October 2024

1. Introduction

1.1 This report from Education Scotland has been prepared by His Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HM Inspectors) in accordance with the terms of the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#) ("the 2010 Act"). The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of a proposal by The City of Edinburgh Council to establish a new non-denominational primary school at Gilmerton, Station Road and implement catchment changes. 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 meetings held on 18 and 26 September 2024 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 Gilmerton Primary School, Gracemount High School and Liberton High School, including discussion with relevant consultees.

2. Consultation process

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

2.2 They undertook the consultation between 22 August to 3 October 2024. Public meetings took place in Gilmerton Primary School and Gracemount High School. A total of nine members of the public attended these meetings. Those stakeholders who attended the public meeting had a few concerns, including traffic control measures and safe routes to school. There were also questions on community use of a new school building and the potential provision of out of school care. The consultation paper was made available to the public via the council website. The council received 153 responses to the consultation. Most respondents were in favour of the proposal, a few did not support the proposal or were undecided. The council received 140 responses to an online questionnaire, completed by children and young people from across the three effected schools. The majority of children and young people were in favour of the proposal that a new primary school was needed. A minority did not support the proposal and a minority neither agreed or disagreed with the proposal.

3. Educational aspects of proposal

3.1 The City of Edinburgh Council has set out a clear rationale of how they intend to establish a new non-denominational primary school and nursery classes. The new school will be aligned to Gracemount High School. The council also proposes to implement catchment changes to Gilmerton Primary School, Gracemount High School and Liberton High School. The council estimates new housing developments in Gilmerton Primary School catchment could generate up to 663 additional primary pupils in the area. As a result, existing non-denominational primary schools anticipate increasing demand for nursery and school places. They state that this proposal will address future capacity issues at Gilmerton Primary School and Liberton High School. The proposal will provide schools in the area with suitable catchment rolls that are appropriate to the capacity of each school.

3.2 HM Inspectors agree that the proposal to build a new non-denominational primary school at Gilmerton, Station Road has potential education benefits. These include access to a modern, inclusive and accessible learning environment. The new building should support creative and engaging learning aligned with the Curriculum for Excellence. It will offer facilities to encourage health and wellbeing and support outdoor learning. Nursery accommodation on site will allow for children to progress in learning from nursery to P1 within a familiar setting. Proposed catchment changes may lead to more socio-economic diversity in schools.

3.3 All children, young people, parents and staff who met with HM Inspectors are supportive of the proposal to build a new non-denominational school and nursery at Gilmerton, Station Road. They recognise the potential educational benefits, which include access to a modern and accessible learning environment and may provide a variety of peer group opportunities. All stakeholders agree that the existing primary schools in the area do not have the capacity for additional pupils that may be generated by the ongoing housing developments. All stakeholders agree with the proposal to change the catchment area to align the new school with Gracemount High School. All stakeholders who met with HM Inspectors, agree that this proposal should streamline transition arrangements, which may help to reduce anxiety for pupils who were uncertain of which secondary school they

would progress to. Children from Gilmerton Primary School also highlighted the importance of progressing to the same secondary school as their peers.

3.4 Almost all young people and parents who met with HM Inspectors had significant concerns about the amount of traffic in and around the surrounding area of the proposed school and associated catchment areas. They suggested that speed restrictions on a few roads could be implemented to help reduce the risk of accidents. If the proposal is accepted, the council should work with stakeholders to ensure there are safe routes to schools put in place prior to the new primary school opening. A few parents are concerned that this proposal may result in their children attending different schools, which may lead to longer travel time to schools. Parents would welcome greater clarity around the sibling guarantee. Parents expressed the need for the council to consider including a community hub as part of the new build and the need for out of school care provision. If the proposal is agreed, it will be important for the council to work with stakeholders to develop ways to mitigate their concerns raised.

Summary

The council's proposal provides strong evidence to support the establishment of a new non-denominational primary school and nursery class at Gilmerton, Station Road and implement catchment changes. HM Inspectors agree that there are potential educational benefits to this proposal. If implemented, the proposal could see an increased number of children in the area accessing a modern and accessible learning environment, which will support the delivery of Curriculum for Excellence. If approved, the council should work with parents, staff, children and young people to ensure safe routes to Gracemount High School and mitigate the concerns of stakeholders.

HM Inspectors
October 2024