

# **Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010**

**Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by North Lanarkshire Council for a new build non-denominational primary school and to alter the existing non-denominational catchment areas within the Ravenscraig area.**

January 2021

## 1. Introduction

1.1 This report from Education Scotland has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HM Inspectors) in accordance with the terms of the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#) ("the 2010 Act"). The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of North Lanarkshire Council's proposal for a new build non-denominational primary school and to alter the existing non-denominational catchment areas within the Ravenscraig area. Section 2 of the report sets out brief details of the consultation process. Section 3 of the report sets out HM Inspectors' consideration of the educational aspects of the proposal, including significant views expressed by consultees. Section 4 summarises HM Inspectors' overall view of the proposal. Upon receipt of this report, the Act requires the council to consider it and then prepare its final consultation report. The council's final consultation report should include this report and must contain an explanation of how, in finalising the proposal, it has reviewed the initial proposal, including a summary of points raised during the consultation process and the council's response to them. The council has to publish its final consultation report three weeks before it takes its final decision.

1.2 HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for children of the 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 virtual public meeting held on 7 October 2020 in connection with the council's proposals;
- consideration of all relevant documentation provided by the council in relation to the proposal, specifically the educational benefits statement and related consultation documents, written and oral submissions from parents and others;
- virtual visits to the sites of Muir Street Primary, Keir Hardie Primary, Knowetop Primary, Glencairn Primary and Berry Hill Primary Schools, including discussion with relevant consultees; and
- meetings by telephone with the headteachers of Braidhurst High School, Brannock High School, Clyde Valley High School and Dalziel High School.

## 2. Consultation process

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

2.2 The consultation process ran from 2 March to 6 November 2020. The original period of consultation was extended due to periods of lockdown where schools were closed. Taking account of public health concerns, a virtual public meeting was held on 7 November 2020 where approximately 20 people attended. Most were positive about the proposals. Just over

80 stakeholders responded to the council's online survey. In terms of changing the catchment area, 54% are in favour, 13% against and 33% not sure. With regard to building a new non-denominational primary school in the area 65% are in favour, 16% against and 19% unsure. All five Parent Councils were consulted and all five are in favour of the proposals. The council consulted with 136 children across the cluster. The majority of children indicated that they are in favour of the proposals with 74% in favour, 6% against and 20% unsure.

### 3. Educational aspects of proposal

3.1 Significant levels of house building are underway within the Ravenscraig site in Motherwell. Approximately 3,000 new houses are expected to be built. As a result, existing primary schools are expected to face increasing pressure as the proposed housing is built and demand for places rises. The council proposes to build a new non-denominational primary school at Ravenscraig to alleviate this pressure.

3.2 The council has set out a reasonable case for the proposal to establish a new non-denominational primary school and implement catchment changes to address school capacity and accommodation pressures in the Ravenscraig area. There are a number of potential educational benefits. Children attending the new school will benefit from a modern state of the art learning environment. A new 21st century school building will provide a hub for learning and activities with facilities that should make a contribution to improving children's health and wellbeing. The school environment should promote creative and engaging teaching approaches. The new school has the potential to promote further accessible and inclusive learning which will meet the needs of all learners including those with additional support needs.

3.3 Stakeholders who spoke with HM Inspectors are all in agreement with the proposal. They appreciate the advantages that a new school could provide for the children attending. They also recognise the positive impact on the wider community. HM Inspectors agree that there are important potential benefits. Children welcome the opportunity for more outdoor learning and improved digital technology in the proposed new school. They are positive about the increased sports facilities available to the whole community. Parents are positive about the proposed new school and the improved facilities available to the community. A few parents and children welcome the environmental impact of fewer vehicles, including buses, at drop off and pick up times. However, a few parents expressed road safety concerns with regard to a planning application for a major logistics hub nearby.

### 4. Summary

North Lanarkshire Council's proposal to establish a new non-denominational primary school in the Ravenscraig area and implement catchment changes has clear educational benefits. The proposal addresses school capacity and accommodation pressures as a result of planned housing developments in the Ravenscraig area. Children attending the new non-denominational primary school will benefit from a modern, state of the art learning environment which provides full digital learning. A new 21st century school building will provide a hub for learning, activities and facilities that will make a contribution to improving children's health and wellbeing. In taking forward the proposal, the council should continue to address concerns raised regarding the planned development in the local area.

**HM Inspectors  
January 2021**