



Reconfiguration of early learning, childcare and primary education in the West area of Cumbernauld.

**A report on the consultation held from
6 November 2023 to 18 December 2023**

Published 11th March 2024

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1.0 Introduction

This report is published by North Lanarkshire Council in response to a statutory consultation carried out under the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this report is to advise all stakeholders on the outcome of the consultation exercise undertaken on proposals to reconfigure early learning and childcare and primary education in the West area of Cumbernauld. The outcome, and any recommendations made by the Education and Families Service, will be presented to Council's Education, Children and Families Committee on Monday 20 May 2023. This report has been made public at least three weeks ahead of this meeting.

1.2 Background

On Tuesday 12 September 2023, North Lanarkshire Council Education, Children and Families Committee agreed to the commencement of a statutory consultation on the reconfiguration of learning provision within Baird Memorial Primary and Nursery and Condorrat Primary. No decision will be taken by the council on the proposals contained within this document until the end of the consultation period.

The consultation focuses on the closure of the current Baird Memorial Primary, phased discontinuation of the Additional Support Needs (ASN) Nursery provision within Baird Memorial Primary, the realignment of Baird Memorial Primary catchment area to Condorrat Primary, the cessation of Gaelic Medium Education provision within Condorrat Primary School and establishment of GME provision within the Baird Memorial Primary buildings.

Condorrat and Baird Memorial Primary Schools are in the former village of Condorrat, which is now included in the new town of Cumbernauld. Both are non-denominational education settings. There is 0.4 miles walking distance and 0.6 miles driving distance between the two school buildings, and both are associated with Greenfaulds High School.

The school capacity of the Condorrat Primary School is 342 with the current roll of 93 English speaking pupils and 145 pupils within Gaelic Medium Education (GME). Condorrat Primary School was opened in 1974, the Gaelic education provision was opened in 1997.

The school capacity for Baird Memorial Primary is 291, with a current role of 183. Baird Memorial Primary School was opened in 2004. In session 2022/23 there were 23 placing requests with 48% coming from the Condorrat area. In session 2023/24 there were 8 placing requests with 50% coming from the Condorrat area.

The current mainstream nursery is provided at Condorrat Primary, with morning provision for Gaelic-speaking children and afternoon provision for English speaking provision. Both current provisions in Condorrat have a capacity of 24 children. There are 15 children in the Gaelic provision for academic session 2023/24.

Baird Memorial School has an ASN nursery provision which currently has 24 children. This is the capacity of the nursery.

The proposals do not impact on secondary provision at the associated Greenfaulds High School.

1.3 Changes

The changes would have an impact on the current education and childcare arrangements in two schools. This is detailed in relation to the Primary Schools of Baird and Condorrat and their associated Early Learning and childcare provision and Gaelic Medium Education located in the area.

Baird Memorial Primary School and ASN Nursery Class

- To close Baird Memorial Primary School for all primary aged children from end of June 2024.
- Transfer the provision of mainstream education and school catchment area to Condorrat Primary School from August 2024. Children due to start Primary 1 in August 2024 will enrol at Baird Primary School for the start in August 24, with transition events planned for June 2024 within Condorrat Primary School.
- To close the Baird Memorial PS ASN nursery class to new entrants from August 2024. With the provision being phased out by June 2025 or at an earlier date when current children have reached school age.
- ASN children would be allocated to settings closer to home, in one of the ASN Family Learning Centres established across the council. Each of these setting has additional capacity.

Condorrat Primary School, GME and Nursery Class

- Realign the school's catchment area to include what is the current Baird Memorial catchment. All non-denominational primary aged children would attend Condorrat Primary from the new catchment area from August 2025.
- GME pupils in both early learning and childcare and primary education would discontinue in Condorrat and move to the site of the current Baird Memorial Primary School.
- English speaking Early Learning and Childcare would offer an enhanced model within Condorrat Primary School. Offering increased choice for families.
- GME early learning and childcare would offer an enhanced model within the current Baird Memorial Primary School. Offering increased choice for families.

1.4 Methodology

The consultation was conducted in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 and carried out over the period 06 November 2023 to 18 December 2023 during which time all interested parties were invited to submit comments via a dedicated email box and/or complete an online questionnaire.

Full details of the changes were published on the council website alongside a frequently asked questions section. Visitors to the council website had access to a range of accessibility tools including translation options.

Text messages were sent to parents from both schools and wider interest stakeholder groups were informed, directing them to the consultation website. Parent Councils and Gaelic Education groups such as Comann nam Pàrant were also informed of the consultation.

As part of the consultation process there were also 2 public meetings held to allow stakeholders to attend in person and discuss specific issues directly with council officers. They were held on:

- Monday 27 November Baird Memorial Primary School
- Thursday 30 November Condorrat Primary School

In addition there were meetings arranged for both parent councils and Comann nam Parant on Thursday 14 December. During that week, children at both schools were given the opportunity to have their voice heard in terms of the consultation proposal. As required, Education Scotland was provided with a summary of all relevant written responses and oral representations made during the consultation period. A report on this was provided to North Lanarkshire Council.

Following the consultation period, it is the Council's duty to review the proposal taking account of the feedback received from stakeholders during the consultation period which includes online responses, written responses and oral representations made during the public meetings. The content of Education Scotland's report has also been taken into consideration.

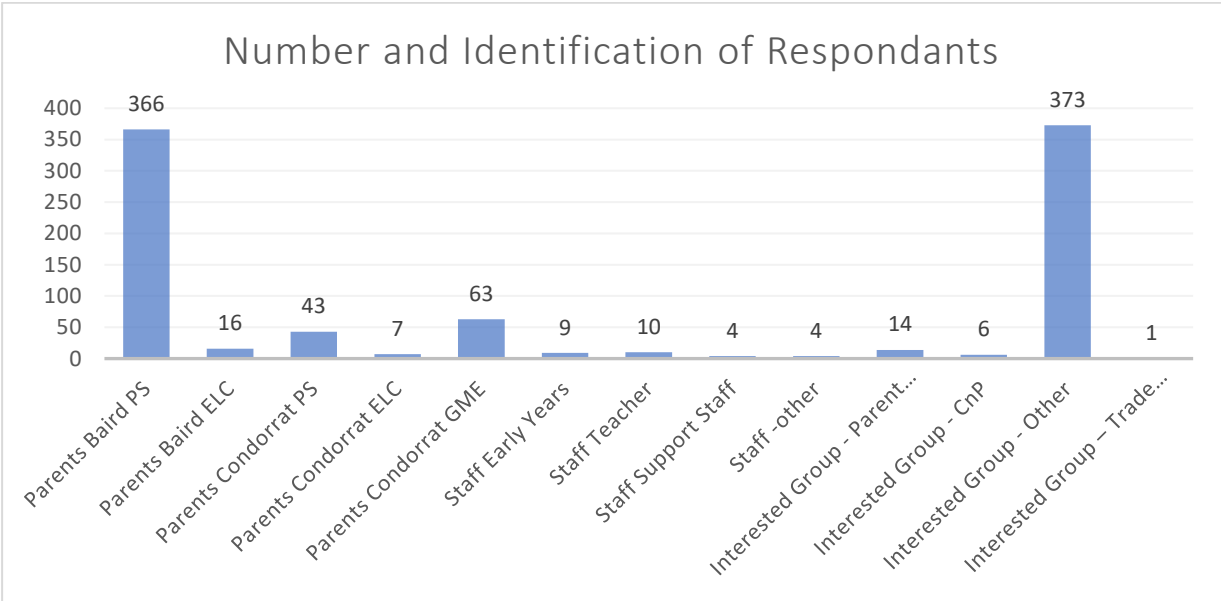
2.0 Analysis of responses

2.1 Online survey

An online form was developed to collect feedback from stakeholders on the proposed changes to reconfigure Early Learning and Childcare and primary education in the West area of Cumbernauld.

In total 916 responses were received. The questionnaire asked respondents to choose from a variety of options regarding their identity. The options that respondents could select were:

- Parent Baird Memorial
- Parent Baird ELC
- Parent Condorrat
- Parent Condorrat ELC
- Parent Condorrat GME
- Staff - Early Years Worker
- Staff – Teacher
- Staff – support staff
- Staff – other
- Representing Interested Group - Parent Council
- Representing Interested Group – Comann nam Pàrant
- Representing Interested Group – Other
- Representing Interested Group – Trade Union.



From the total number of respondents 54% (N=495) of the respondents were parents. This was made up from

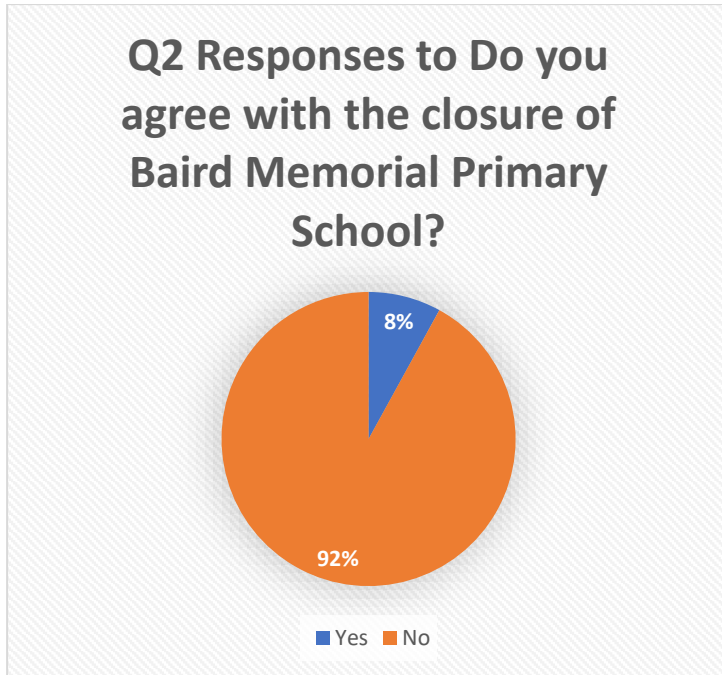
- 40% (N=366) came from Parents of Baird PS,
- 2% (N=16) were parents of children in Baird ELC (Early Learning and Childcare)
- 5% (N=43) were from Parents of children in Condorrat PS
- 7% (N=63) were from parents of children in Condorrat GME
- <1% (N=7) indicated that they were parents of children in Condorrat ELC

3% (N=27) indicated that they were responding as staff. Of this:

- <1% (N=9) responded as early years staff
- 1% (N=10) responded as teachers
- <1% (N=4) responded as support staff
- <1% (N=4) responded as other staff.

There were 43% (N=394) that responded representing interested groups. Of this:

- 2% (N=14) responded on behalf of Parent Councils.
- <1% (N=6) responded on behalf of Comann nam Parant.
- 41% (N= 373) indicated they were representing an interested group -other
- <1% (N=1) indicated they were responding on behalf of a trade union.



Individuals were asked to indicate whether they agree with the closure of Baird Memorial Primary School. 92% (N=843) did not agree with the proposed closure and 8% (N=73) agreed with the proposed closure.

The participants were given the opportunity to provide reasons for their choice through a text box. The following analysis will be broken down into those who support the proposed planned changes and those who oppose them. These responses have been analysed and split into themes.

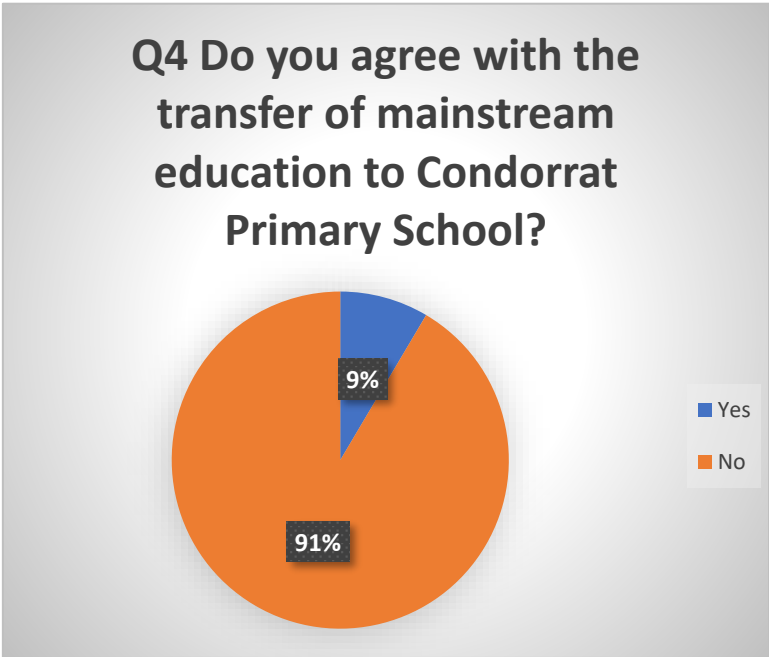
Main themes from those responding **yes** to the closure of Baird Memorial, this does not include duplication.

Key Themes	Theme frequency (Out of 73 responses)
Create a Standalone GME	30
Cost Effective	28
Benefit to Families looking for GME early years.	2
Dislike of Open Plan Layout	2
Beneficial to children	5

Main themes from those responding **no** to the closure of Baird Memorial, this does not include duplication

Key Themes	Theme frequency (Out of 843 responses)
Grade of Building	125
Outdoor Space	40
Community ties	87
Childrens Right to play	9
Small Class Sizes	20
After School Care	16
Disruption to Education	124
Longer Travel to school	43
Better Facilities	129
Stability after Covid	61
No Educational Benefit	124
New P1 Transition	13
Parking	18
Mental Health and Wellbeing of Children	63
ASN Nursery provision	53
Removal of Choice	31

Individuals were asked to indicate whether they agree with the agree with the transfer of mainstream education to Condorrat Primary School? 91% (N=838) responded no to the proposed transfer and 9% (N=78) responded yes to the proposed transfer.

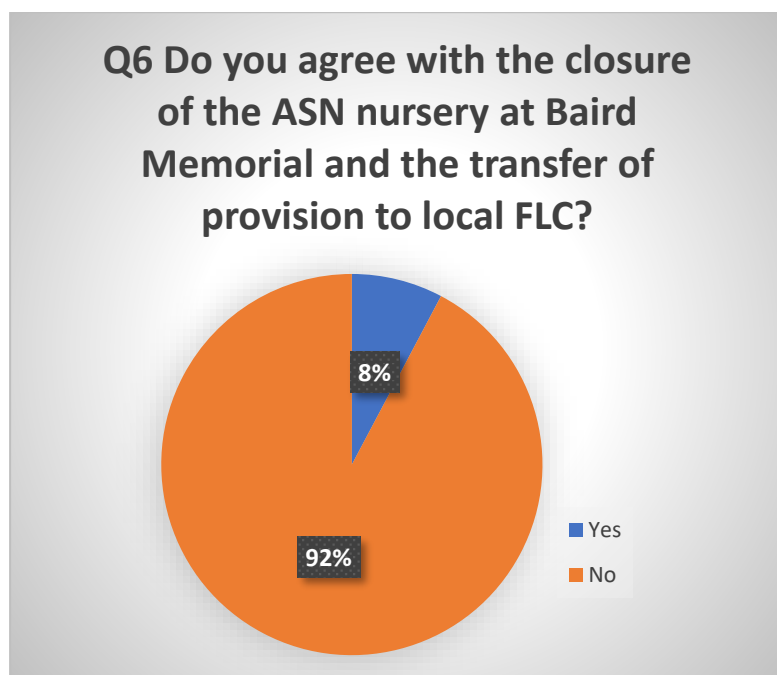


Main themes from those responding **yes** to the transfer of mainstream education to Condorrat Primary School, this does not include duplication.

Key Themes	Theme frequency (Out of 78 responses)
Makes sense to join two English Language provisions	33
Allow for growth in community	9
Create a Standalone GME	10
Cost Effective	5
Benefit to Families looking for GME early years.	2
Better Facilities	11
Beneficial to children	8

Main themes from those responding **no** to the transfer of mainstream education to Condorrat Primary School, this does not include duplication.

Key Themes	Theme frequency (Out of 838 responses)
Age and condition of building	357
Bigger Classes	37
Disruption to education	87
Too far to travel	34
Why segregate GME?	37
Prioritising Gaelic	37
No educational benefits	91
Mental Health and Wellbeing	32
Stability after Covid	21



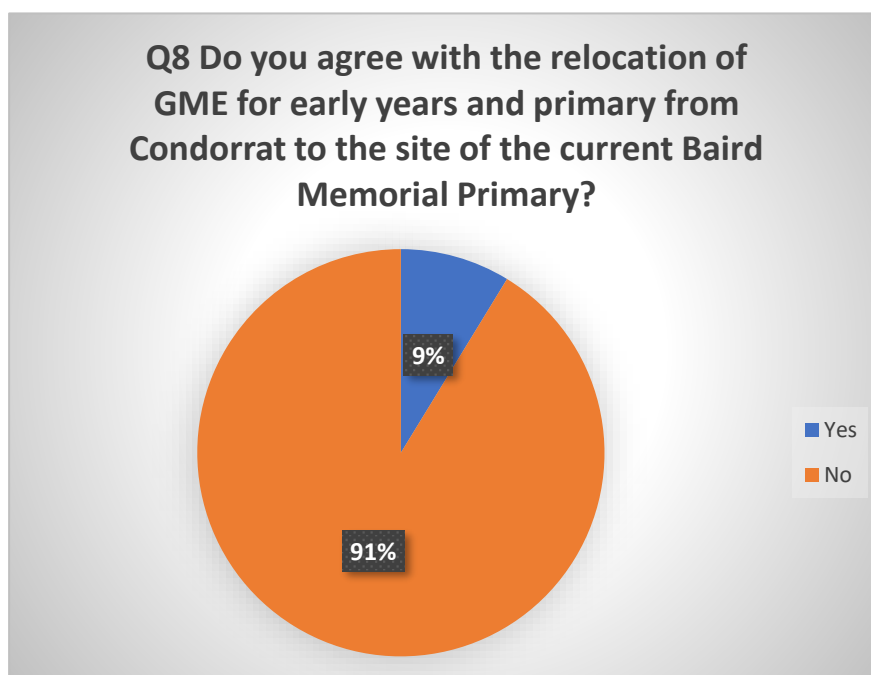
Individuals were asked Do you agree with the closure of the ASN nurse at Baird Memorial and the transfer of provision to local FLC? From the responses, 9% (N=71) replied yes to the closure and 92% (N=845) replied no to the proposed closure.

Main themes from responses that answered **yes** to Do you agree with the closure of the ASN nurse at Baird Memorial and the transfer of provision to local FLC?(this does not include duplication)

Key Themes	Theme frequency (Out of 71 responses)
If children are fully supported	33
Help children integrate	9
Allow for full nursery hours	10
Not enough children to warrant	5
Closer to their communities	2

Main themes from responses that answered **no** to Do you agree with the closure of the ASN nurse at Baird Memorial and the transfer of provision to local FLC? (this does not include duplication)

Key Themes	Theme frequency (Out of 845 responses)
FLC is not suitable	95
Specialist Care is required	331
Further Travel	8
Major disruption	112
No clear benefit	29
Cause distress to children and families	33
Baird is purpose built	48
Network of support for families	42
Transition	8



Individuals were asked Do you agree with the relocation of GME for early years and primary from Condorrat to the site of the current Baird Memorial Primary? From the responses, 9% (N=80) replied yes to the relocation and 91% (N=836) replied no to the proposed relocation.

Below are the main themes, frequency and percentage of those that replied **Yes** to the relocation of GME. (this does not include duplication)

Theme	Frequency	Percentage
GME deserves an independent school	33	43%
Prefer an immersive method	17	22%
Nursey Provision	11	14%
NLC Gaelic Commitment	4	5%
Better use of facilities	11	14%

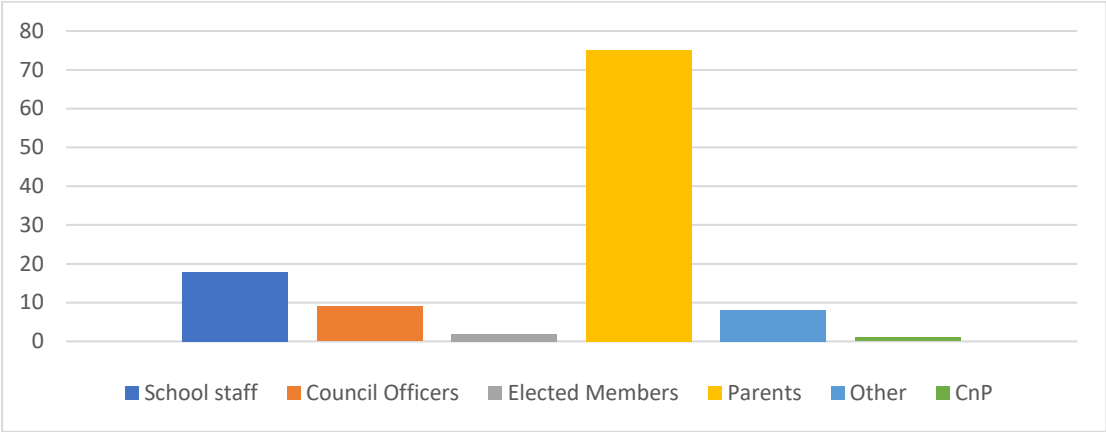
Below are the main themes, frequency and percentage of those that replied 'No' to the relocation of GME(this does not include duplication)

Theme	Frequency	Percentage
Not necessary to relocate	49	7%
Pupils should not need to move for GME	249	34%
Why is Gaelic a priority?	67	9%
Cost is uneconomical for providing Gaelic	41	6%
Is this a Scottish Government Statistic?	8	1%
Disagree with separating GME	74	10%
Why are we not teaching all children Gaelic?	11	1%
Childrens Wellbeing	56	8%
Not a suitable solution	103	14%
No Educational Benefits	79	11%

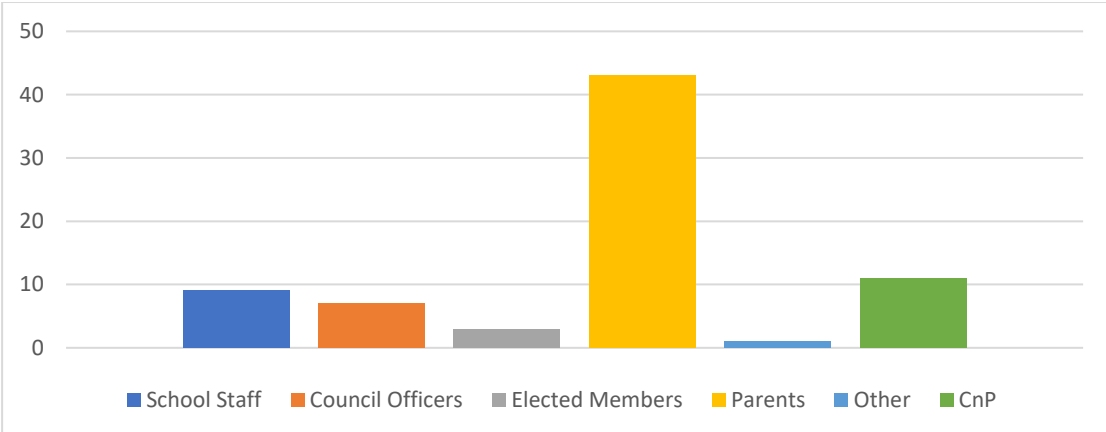
2.2 Public events

During the 6-week consultation period, two public meetings were held in order to share information with stakeholders. On Monday 27th November there was a public meeting at Baird Memorial Primary School and on Thursday 30th of November there was a meeting at Condorrat Primary School. Attendance at the two meetings is detailed in the tables below.

Night 1



Night 2



Officers who engaged with the stakeholders recorded the theme of their concerns which is highlighted in the table below.

Night 1

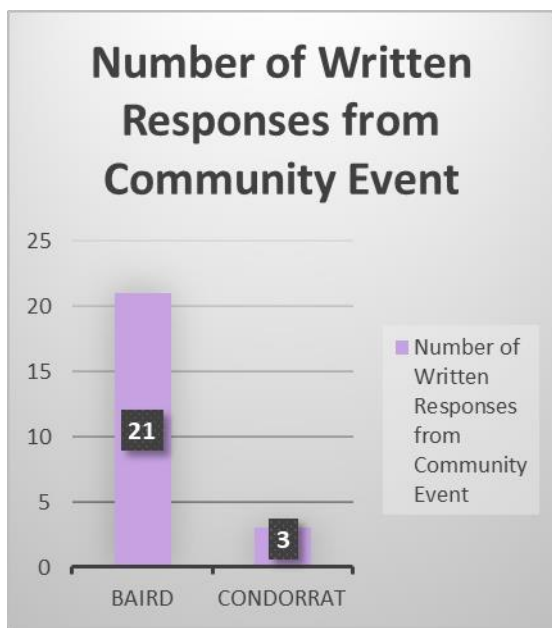
<p>Staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing/HR Issues • Impact of changing school/establishment on children • Timeline for transition • Communication of consultation • Consultation arrangements for stakeholder voice • Educational benefits • School leadership- future of HT position • ASN early years within the community • Future of GME Provision • Uniforms of a new school
<p>Parents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational benefits – remain unclear. This need to be more specific. Not clear what these are for children. • Prioritisation is being given to GME • Baird has had no permanent HT for a number of years • National Standardised Assessment is outperforming in Baird to Condorrat • Facilities at Baird • Staff skills within ASN

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaelic survey bias towards expansion • Transition Timings - Transition concerns and enhanced transition for pupils starting in August when timeline for decision is May • Facilities at Condorrat • Educational Benefits • P1 Transition. • Travel and congestion around Condorrat Pr will increase and no safe walking route • Impact on mental health and wellbeing of children • Questions submitted, but stating no reply and not updated on FAQs (Frequently Asked Question)
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Night 2

Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing/HR Issues • Model for Early Years delivery • Further clarity for early years staff • Gaelic model of stand alone • How do staff manage a school move during term time • Educational benefits • Building Improvements. • Future of GME Provision
Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational benefits – remain unclear. This need to be more specific. Would have clearer to have these split for Early Years ASN- Baird Gaelic Mainstream Primary • Baird has had no permanent HT for a number of years. • Gaelic Leadership – will a standalone facility have a Gaelic HT? Immersion is important. • Reduction in ASN places in ELC if proposal is accepted • Is a further consultation need- for another option eg Condorrat to Baird? • Gaelic moved to another area • Current hostility towards Gaelic families and children being felt. • P1 Transition.

During the meetings, council officers directed members of the community to fill out written responses so their views could be collated. Below is a table outlining the number of written responses from each event and the subsequent themes of the responses.



<i>Baird Public Meeting themes.</i> <i>(21 written responses)</i>	Percentage
<i>Building Safety</i>	11%
<i>Outdoor Facilities</i>	2%
<i>Community Ties</i>	3%
<i>Disruption of Education</i>	3%
<i>Travel Time</i>	3%
<i>Better Facilities</i>	3%
<i>No educational benefit</i>	11%
<i>Parking</i>	5%
<i>ASN provision</i>	5%
<i>Consultation process</i>	54%

<i>Condorrat Public Meeting Themes (3 written responses)</i>	Percentage
<i>Positive for increasing provision</i>	20%
<i>Transition time</i>	20%
<i>Future of GME</i>	40%
<i>Lack of GME Nursery</i>	20%

2.3 Dedicated email box

A dedicated mailbox efwestareacumbernauldconsultation@northlan.gov.uk was established to allow stakeholders to email any questions, queries, or opinions regarding the proposal. There were 361 emails received in total over the six week period. The themes of the emails received are highlighted in the table below and have been categorised further into sub themes for clarification.

Number of Emails opposing the proposal -348

Theme	Frequency	Sub themes
Building Condition	170	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asbestos in building • Lack of green space and outdoor learning facilities. • Located in built up area. • Leaks • Building condition rating • Facilities at Baird are better.
Educational Benefits	145	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No educational benefits. • Children should not be moved to accommodate GME • Bigger class sizes with a negative impact on education. • Not sufficient detail in educational benefits.
Parking	46	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Car park will not support extra families. • Buses will not be suitable in Baird. • Safety concerns for pupils walking to school with the number of cars. • Pollution in local area due to increase of traffic. • Access for residents.
Longer to travel	54	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional travel time. • Families having to now use car instead of walking. • Condorrat situated at top of hill. • Location not suitable for individuals with limited mobility. • Cost of extra fuel for families.
School Uniform	37	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of identity of school in the community. • Cost for families for uniform. • Loss of history.
Community	34	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of links with the wider community. • Parents and grandparents invested in the school. • Community needs the facilities.
ASN Facilities	100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FLC not suitable • Baird is purpose built for ASN provision. • Concerns for staff jobs. • Specialist provision for pupils currently at Baird. • Part of the community. • 21% reduction to ASN spaces. • Need for ASN in the area.
Stability for Children	36	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disruption to children after Covid pandemic. • Disruption to children after industrial action. • Attainment will be affected.
Health and Wellbeing	87	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children are anxious about the proposal. • Causing stress to families. • Children concerned over friendships and loss of staff. • GIRFEC (Getting it right for every child) not adhered to. • e Equality and Children's wellbeing assessments not having enough detail.
Transition	87	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enough transition time for pupils.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enough transition time for teachers. • Not enough time to recruit staff. • Transition times unsuitable for children with additional support needs. • Transition concerns for P1 intake. • Transition time reduced if ministerial call in is required.
Consultation process	84	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation process not transparent. • No prior discussions with stakeholders before proposal. • Other options not explored. • Public meeting did not give answers. • Tick box exercise. • No opportunity to view the building. • Process is rushed • Lack of evidence behind the proposals. • Not meeting criteria set out in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010
Communication	76	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAQ (Frequently Asked Question) page not updated. • Lack of detail in responses. • Council employees not having information at community events. • Short timescale regarding gathering children's views.
After School Provision	33	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns over the continuity of provision. • Parents having to pay more for childcare.
Prioritising Gaelic	44	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GME pupils are not from the area. • Transport costs for GME pupils • GME doesn't need to be standalone. • Proposal to meet aims of council GLP (Gaelic Language Plan) • GME pupils the only one that benefit

Number of Emails in support of the proposal – 13

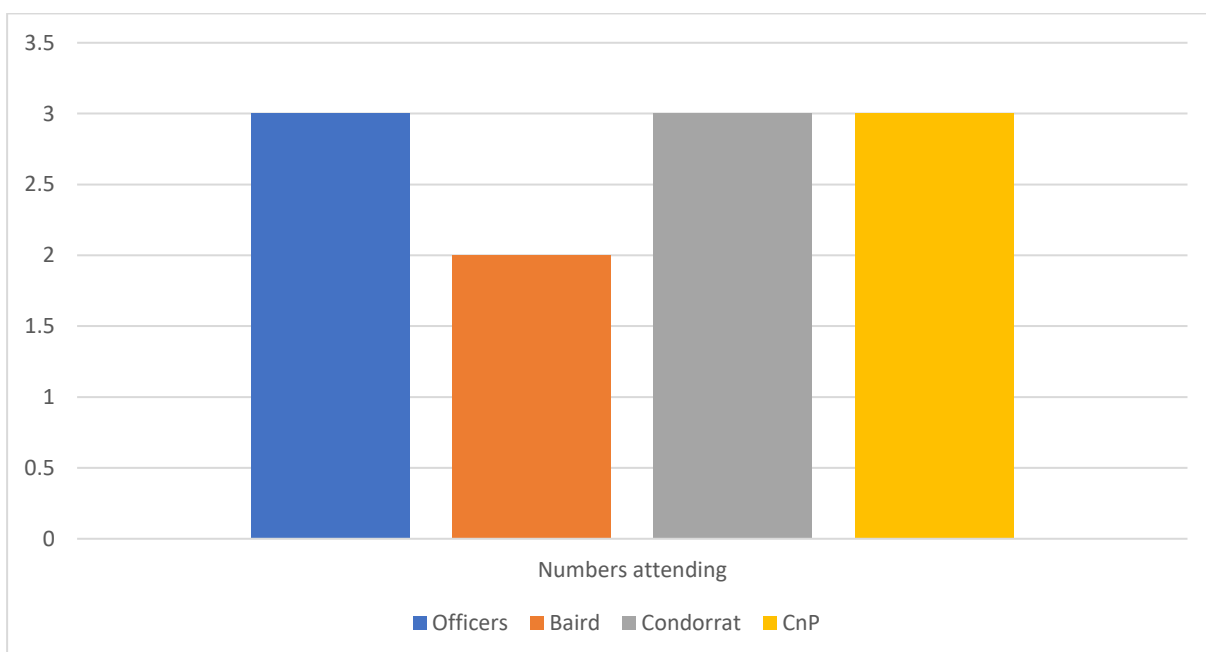
<u>Theme</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Immersion	9	15%
Recruitment of GME staff	11	18%
Increased nursery provision	5	8%
Uniform	9	15%
Traffic	4	7%
Open plan	6	10%
Leadership opportunities	4	7%

Transition arrangements	6	10%
resources	4	7%
Partnerships	3	5%

In addition to email enquiries the service did receive notification of a public petition. This was received on behalf of the Baird Memorial Primary School Parents. Comments within the petition were included as part of the feedback on the terms of the consultation proposal.

2.4 Parent Councils

Officers from the service met with Parent Council representatives from both schools and Comann nam Pàrant. An invitation was issued to the chair and two other members of the Parent Council. Each group was represented, and attendance is shown in the table below.



The conversations at each meeting focussed in detail around key themes. These are listed below.

Baird	<p>Consultation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The comments reflected in the final report are these from the start of the consultation or when the stakeholders were informed. • Education Scotland report- publication and focus • Format of the consultation meetings • When information was shared with parents- this was not at the same time. pre consultation not taking place. • Response to questions – not detailed enough. • GME survey in June 2023- felt this influenced the proposal. <p>Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget information – how this is shared. <p>ASN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents making a placing request to smaller school for children with ASN.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family support at an FLC • Resources within an FLC <p>Pupil Voice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents have limited information on pupil voice. <p>Building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental support for current building • Condition of buildings • Asbestos in building <p>Staffing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leadership arrangements <p>Educational Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detail in the educational benefits • Breakdown into different establishments and sectors of education. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identity of the school moving forward • Timing of transition arrangements • Traffic at school
Condorrat	<p>Staffing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing progression of GME staff. • Proposal gives stability of staffing. • Number of positions for staff moving forward. <p>Building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future class sizes. • Open plan adaptations to suit immersion. <p>Consultation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has been enough information provided as support. • Transition time. <p>Transport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to school – challenges and has this been considered? <p>ASN Nursery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning around FLC in proposals
Comann nam Parant	<p>Building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans for GME – opportunity to grow. • Adaptations to support immersive learning. • Plans for Condorrat Primary <p>Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaelic Leadership • Staffing to support Immersion. • Staffing models for the proposal <p>Consultation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement if there was to be rebranding of a school. • Expansion of GME. • Community impact of consultation. <p>Transitions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing links further with secondary • Timescale of proposal • Transition for those with ASN <p>Early Years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nursery hours – can these be reviewed?

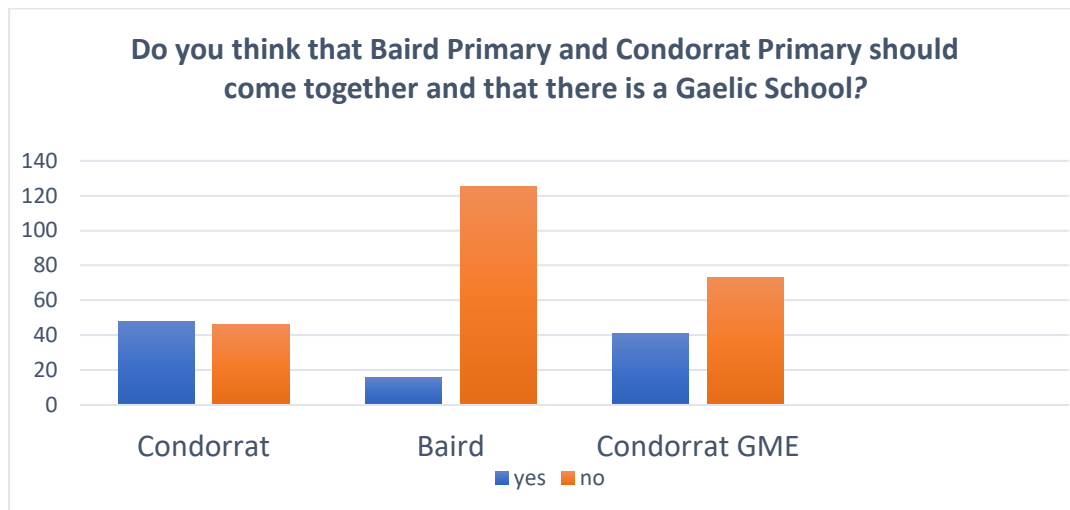
- Spacing for ASN phasing out and GME

2.5 Pupil Voice

Total responses from Condorrat GME were 131. Seventeen responses were discounted because staff felt pupils did not have enough understanding of the questions. The discounted responses were from nursery, P1 and some P2 pupils. The following answers are based on 114 responses from Condorrat GME. The number of pupils that provided responses from Condorrat Primary were 94 and the total amount of responses from Baird Memorial was 140. There were 348 responses in total.

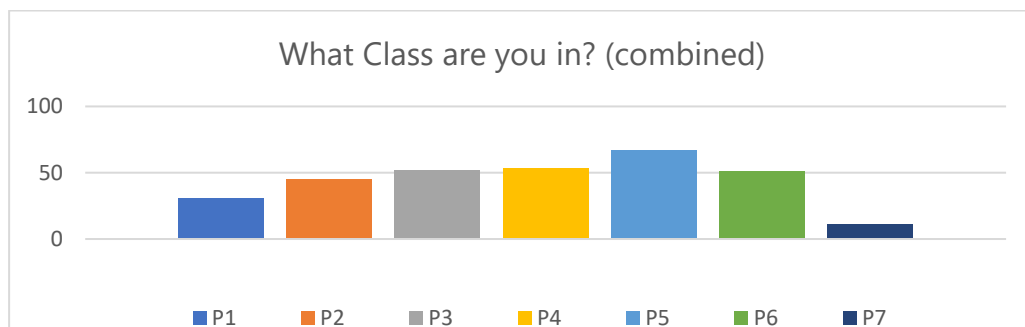
Pupils were asked Do you think that Baird Primary and Condorrat Primary should come together and that there is a Gaelic school? Condorrat Primary school responded no 13% (n=46) and yes 14% (n=48). Baird Memorial responded no 36% (n=124) y and yes 5% (n=16)

Condorrat Primary GME responded no 21% (n=73) and yes 12% (n=41)



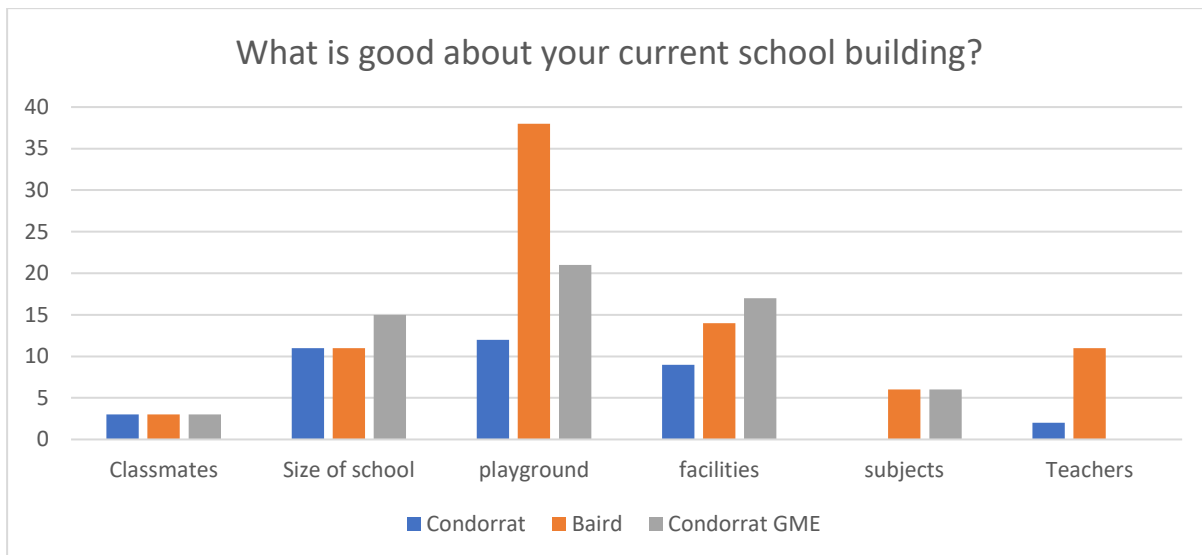
What class are you in?

The combined figures for the schools are below.



What is good about your school building?

A range of themes was recorded from each establishment. Condorrat primary stated that the best thing about their school was the playground. (n=12) Baird Primary school pupils indicated that their playground was the best thing about their school (n=38) and Condorrat GME also indicated that their playground was the best thing about their school (n=21)



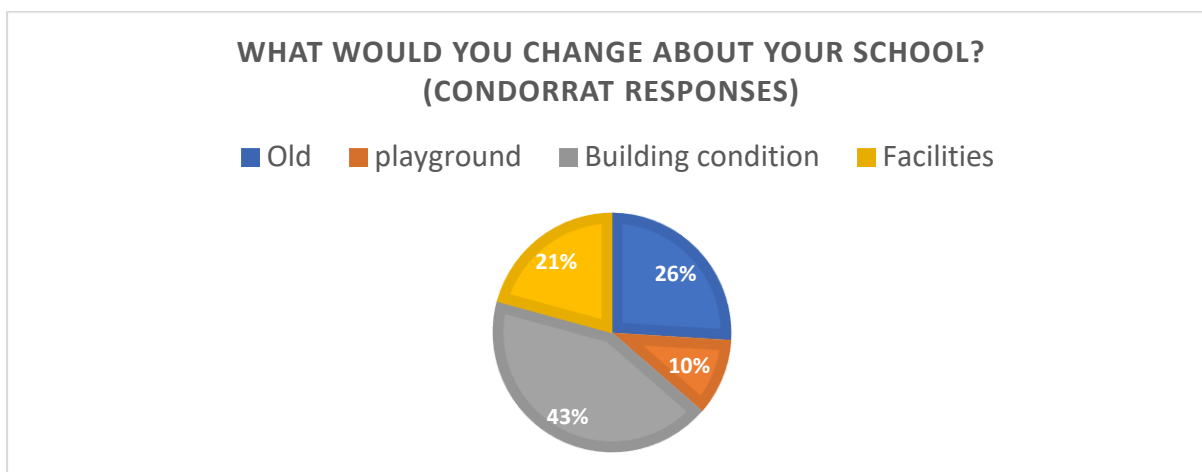
What would you change about your school?

68% of themes from Baird pupils indicated that there was nothing they would like to change about their school.

14% stated that they would like their school to be bigger, 9% indicated that they would like changes to their gym hall, 7% would like equipment fixed and 2% mentioned facilities.

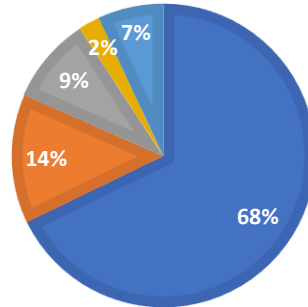
Responses from Condorrat were split into four themes. That the building was old (26%), the playground was unsuitable (10%) the condition of the building (43%) and the school facilities (21%)

There were responses from both schools indicating that they did not want to change anything about the school.



WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE ABOUT YOUR CURRENT SCHOOL BUILDING? (BAIRD)

■ Nothing ■ make it bigger ■ Gym Hall ■ Facilities ■ Fix some equipment

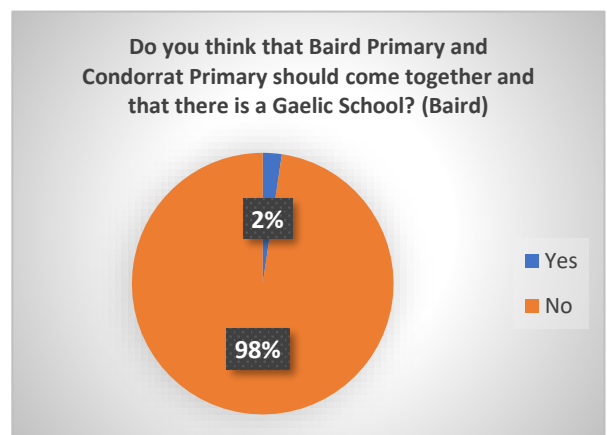
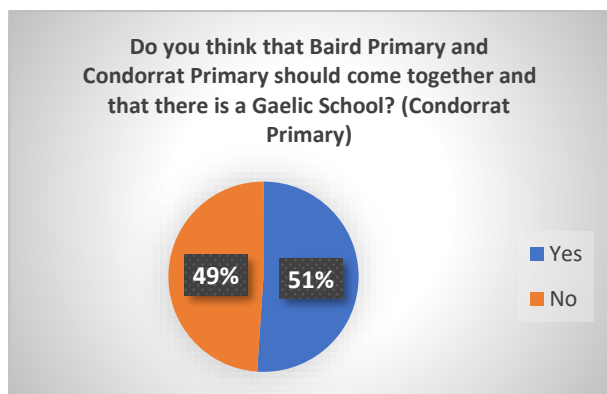
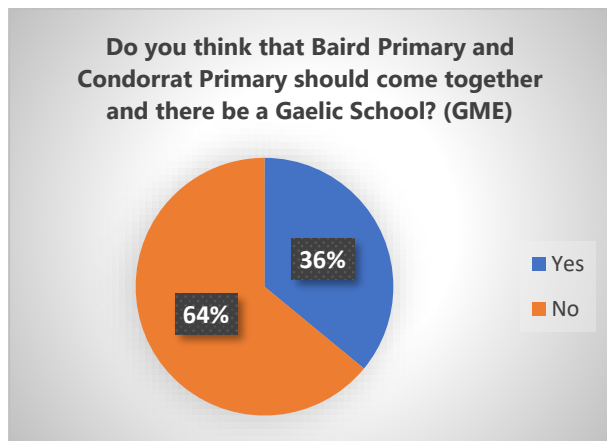


Do you think that Baird Primary and Condorrat Primary should come together and that there is a Gaelic School?

Responses from Condorrat GME indicated that 36% (n=41) replied yes to Baird and Condorrat Primary should come together and there be a Gaelic school and 64% (n=73) replied no to this question.

Condorrat Primary School pupils responded No 49% (n=46) to Baird and Condorrat coming together and there being a Gaelic school. 51% (n=48) replied yes.

Responses from Baird Primary pupils when asked if they thought that Baird Primary School and Condorrat should come together were 2% (n=3) responded with Yes and 98% (n=125) responded no.



Why?

Pupils were asked to give reasons for their answer to question 5-Do you think that Baird Primary and Condorrat Primary should come together and that there is a Gaelic School?

Outlined below are a list of reasons for pupils selecting 'no' And reasons for those selecting 'yes' to the above question. Samples of responses have been selected from Condorrat Primary, Condorrat GME and Baird Memorial.



It will be good to be in a new school.
There will be more Gaelic.
Because I feel like it would be easier if we had a galic and a english school
More Gaelic
I want to see a new school.
It will be one Gaelic school.
I think that it would be relly nice because we would be still all together but it would just be a different building.
English gets its own school and Gaelic gets its own school.
We might be moving school, it will be good fun
Then it would me massive.
Because they are best friends.
Because we can do things together
So you can make new friends
So that people can learn about Gaelic
I think we should come together but be separate schools in the one building. Like other new build schools have with denomination and non-denominational.
To play with them
Make friends
Meet my nursery friendsQ
Because my 2 cousins are there.
New friendsi
Because I want to see my friend
Then we will have new people and it will be an all English school.
Because it would be nice to make friends from baird

I have been in this school six years.
because this doesnt need to happen there is nothing wrong with our school.
Because we have been here for 6 years and we are happy at this school and we don't really want to leave.
I don't think this is good.
because we have a lot of friends.
I want it to stay the same.
Because we've been here for 6 years of our life and sometimes it is hard to move on.
No space for p6 and p7 at the top of the school
Too many people
Like it like this
Too many people
No space

It will cost the mummies and daddies more money to buy school uniforms.
Because I want to stay with my Gaelic friend
I like this school and would be better as it's own school
Because they say different kind of words and they hate our school.
It will become a bigger school and too many people
The school will be too big
I think 2 separate schools.
I want to stay in my class.
It would be too big and noisy and you wouldn't be able to work.
Because there might be rude people at the other school

Any other comments?

Below is a selection of comments from children from each of the establishments Condorrat Primary School, Condorrat GME and Baird Primary School. This is a selection of the comments. Duplications have not been included. Many pupils inserted 'no' into this section.

- no to moving
- a lot but too much to say
- I don't want to move
- we have friends and support in English
- we don't know are way around
- I don't want to go
- our school is amazing, SO PLEASE DONT MOVE US
- I know that people have been very rude about the school
- I also don't want to move because the lunch hall would be smaller
- I don't want it to change
- I like the people they are so kind.
- We don't want to be late for school by travelling further.
- I love my playground and meadow garden.
- If we move, I won't be able to walk home on my own.
- I am happy at Baird.
- I also like this school because the teachers care for their classes, and they are very nice also the staff.
- I also don't want to be split up
- Also, because I like this school and don't want to be forced to leave
- adjusting to new places... DO NOT MOVE
- Will we be in the same class as are friends?
- It is good
- It will be a big change that I don't think I am ready for
- I think the new school will be lovely.
- I don't want to go to another building.
- I would want my teachers to come with me.
- I don't want this school to change and have different classrooms
- We will need a bigger school to move our stuff to
- I think it will be like our school but bigger
- There will be lots of new things and new people.

3.0 Responses to the issues raised

Education and Families Senior Management Team has considered the original proposal in detail and has reflected carefully upon all the responses received during this consultation.

The service is satisfied that the consultation process itself was robust, open, transparent, and fair and that it has achieved its aim of providing stakeholders with sufficient opportunities to give feedback on the proposals and their potential impacts.

The service recognises that a vast majority (over 90%) of respondents are not in favour of the proposals as outlined. The most significant area of concern raised is the condition and suitability of the building at Condorrat Primary and its scope to meet fully the needs of a larger group of pupils.

The service understands that building and improvement works would be optimal given that Condorrat Primary school is rated “C” for Condition and “B” for Suitability as detailed in the Scottish Government School Estates condition survey. The service also recognises concerns raised by respondents over the potential disruption to learning that such work would bring.

These concerns remain consistent across the online survey, public meetings, and written responses along with other views including the stated need for a local specialist early years provision to remain in place.

The service also recognises that a smaller number of respondents (under 10%) are in favour of the proposals. The service considers the information provided by this group to be fair, measured, and helpful in our considerations on the need to create a GME standalone provision within this wider locality.

Review of the proposal and recommendation

Based on our analysis of the feedback received and taking full account of the advice below provided by Education Scotland in relation to educational benefits, it is recommended that proposals to reconfigure early learning and childcare and primary education in the West area of Cumbernauld, as outlined in the consultation process held during November and December 2023, do not proceed.

Alleged Omissions or Inaccuracies

During the consultation period, a submission was received which detailed alleged omissions in the proposal document. These were considered by the service, and it was deemed that no amendment was required.

4.0 Report by Education Scotland

Under the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, Education Scotland (formerly Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education) have produced a report on the educational aspects of the changes consulted upon.

The report can be accessed in full at the Education Scotland website and North Lanarkshire Council website. The report summarises its findings and conclusions as follows:

HM Inspectors agree that reconfiguration of education services is required in west Cumbernauld to establish a standalone provision for Gàidhlig Medium Education. We also agree that the proposal, if implemented, has educational benefits for early learning and childcare through the medium of Gàidhlig and English. The council has still to address very strong opposition from stakeholders who do not see the educational benefits for children currently at Baird Memorial Primary School. The council should ensure that the educational benefits statements in its consultation report, and associated impact assessments, apply to all groups and individuals impacted by the proposal. The educational benefits statements also need to clearly address each of the proposed changes in this proposal. The council should also clarify further clear arrangements for those in the Early Years Support Unit. They should use the correct naming convention for this provision. The council needs to address the concerns of stakeholders. These include continuing to engage with stakeholders on providing a standalone school for Gàidhlig Medium and another for English Medium, the conditions of buildings, travel and transport arrangements and restoring positive relationships. The council should ensure that they receive the views of Falkirk Council on this proposal.

In its consultation report, the council needs to make clear how parents make future requests for establishing further Gaelic Medium Education provisions as set out in the Education (Scotland) Act 2016.

The main recommendations from Education Scotland for consideration by the Council are:

i) The council has presented some educational benefits from their proposal. There are still significant considerations for the council to take forward in presenting compelling educational benefits for all those impacted by their proposal.

Council response

The Council recognises that whilst key messages of Education Benefits were presented in the original proposal that these would have been further developed to be split into the benefits for each establishment and groups of children. It was in the planning that these would have been developed further in partnership with key stakeholders. As the recommendation is not to progress with the proposal options presented, the benefits would not be expanded on through this consultation.

ii) However, the council needs to create better conditions for taking this proposal forward, given the extent of objection received to aspects of their proposal. The council needs to state more clearly the importance of qualified speakers of Gàidhlig, including a headteacher, in realising the educational benefits for Gàidhlig Medium Education.

Council response

The Council recognises and acknowledges the importance of the objections to the proposal and the need for further understanding. This includes the specialist qualified staff required within a stand-alone Gaelic provision. This will be considered in future planning of the service for consultations and particularly where specialist provision such as GME is included within the proposal.

iii) The council, in their consultation report, must provide assurance to stakeholders on their use of buildings' pupil capacity for the reconfiguration of education in west Cumbernauld.

Council response

Included in the Council's original proposal was the capacity of both buildings and the current roles. The service does recognise that this could have been broken down to show capacity and the planning for future use. For example, the capacity of Baird Memorial Primary is 291, current role within GME is 145, with a further 24 places in early years and the ASN early years being phased out would require the capacity would meet requirements. This would also allow for growth.

iv) The council should clarify further the impact any potential increases in school rolls might have. They should explain further their use of data from placing requests and its potential impact on this proposal. The council should calculate further projected rolls of Gàidhlig Medium Education. This needs to recognise that standalone schools for Gàidhlig Medium Education generally attract more parent interest in selecting these schools for their children. The council also needs to ensure that all possible projected capacity is considered at Baird Memorial Primary School. They need to clarify if their proposal includes the capacity of Baird Memorial Primary School Early Years Support Unit.

Council response

Within the proposal increases within mainstream English education was factored into the calculations. The Council does recognise that as GME is parental choice that covers all North Lanarkshire, prediction is challenging. However, projections based on recent requests for GME over the last 5 years was taken into the proposal planning. This is detailed below:

2018/19 - 146
2019/20 - 151
2020/21 - 153
2021/22 - 150
2022/23 - 142

v) The council should help schools and the community build relationships and act on these misconceptions. In realising the resultant educational benefits, the council should also ensure that, in the long-term, the curricula of schools build on Gaelic as a context. This would assist children build their knowledge as part of equity, equality, diversity, belonging and inclusion

Council response

The Council has through its Gaelic Language Plan 2022-2027, recognised the need to develop the teaching of Gaelic across schools. There is ongoing development work to support schools in the delivery of Gaelic and the history of the language in the North Lanarkshire area. This will be further communicated to all establishments.

vi) The council has not engaged in sufficient consultation to build a rationale and understanding to promote their proposal

Council response

The Council does acknowledge that whilst not a statutory element of the Schools Consultation (Scotland) Act 2010, pre consultation would have developed understanding and planning within the proposal. The Council will take this into account for future statutory consultation proposals.

vii) The council needs to ensure a brisk and realistic pace of change in establishing a specialist, immersion standalone provision for Gàidhlig Medium Education. HM Inspectors consider that the council should aim to achieve their second suggested date of August 2025.

Council response

Within the proposal the Council had built in a timeline which was indicative, however it does recognise that the second date of August 2025, would have given clearer timing for all stakeholders. It was clear to the Council through the consultation process that should recommendation be to progress with the proposal, then transition would require the date of August 2025.

viii) The council needs to look at equity of provisions in the conditions that all children and staff learn and work, should they take forward the proposal.

Council response

The Council recognises through the consultation process and the Education Scotland report, that issued raised on the conditions of the buildings would need to be given additional consideration. The service is not recommending that the Council approves the proposal. However, building provisions will be considered in future estate planning.

ix) The council needs to provide more information around catchments, placing requests and transport within the terms of the proposal.

Council response

Should the Council have progressed with the proposal, all stakeholders would have been provided with the updated catchment areas for the schools. This would have been updated on all the service systems, which parents can access through the Council website. Transport and access to the establishments would have been part of the Council's ongoing transport planning. As the recommendation is not to progress with the terms of this proposal, the Council does acknowledge that detailed planning would be better provided in future consultations.

x) the council needs to clarify further their arrangements for the early learning and childcare provision for children with additional support needs.

Council response

The Council recognises through the Education Scotland report and the consultation feedback the need to develop understanding of current and future ELC provision across areas within NLC. Whilst the recommendation is not to progress with the terms of this proposal, the Council will further communicate models of ELC provision to stakeholders across North Lanarkshire.

Summary

The Council appreciates the feedback within the report from Education Scotland. From all the Council comments on the report where it was noted 'the council should' it has been acknowledged that feedback will be built into future consultations and planning. The council also recognises where further detail and consultation would have supported the terms of this proposal.

Whilst through this report the Council has shown the terms of this proposal will not be recommended for progress, the Council does recognise the future planning for Gàidhlig Medium Education and Early Learning and Childcare. This would be planning from within the current learning estate.