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East Dunbartonshire Council

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EDUCATION, PEOPLE AND BUSINESS

JACQUI MACDONALD

Chief Education Officer

12 Strathkelvin Place

KIRKINTILLOCH

Glasgow

G66 1TJ

Telephone: 0300-1234-510

If phoning or calling ask for: Jacqui MacDonald

Ext No. 8739

e:mail: jacqueline.macdonald@eastdunbarton.gov.uk

Dear Consultee

CONSULTATION ON PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH ENHANCED SUPPORT BASES AT CASTLEHILL AND WESTER CLEDDENS PRIMARY SCHOOLS, AND TO RELOCATE LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION RESOURCE SERVICES PROVIDED AT TWECHAR PRIMARY SCHOOL.

I am writing to invite you to take part in a consultation on the Council's proposals to develop enhanced support bases in primary schools. These will support primary and early years' age children.

What are we proposing to do?

To more effectively meet the needs of a wider range of learners, it is proposed that:

- A. An enhanced support base should be established at Wester Cleddens Primary School, providing support to children with a range of additional support needs. The provision would be for children in the early years and primary stages.
- B. Castlehill LCR should be renamed as an Enhanced Support Base in recognition of the wide range of needs already met by this resource at the primary level. The provision should be further extended to assess and support children's needs in the early years.
- C. Language and Communication Resource services provided at Twechar Language and Communication Resource should be relocated to the enhanced support bases at Castlehill and Wester Cleddens.
- D. Children currently attending Castlehill and Twechar LCRs, as well as other children who meet the criteria for enhanced support, should access the base that most suits their needs and geographical location.

These proposals will take effect from August 2018.

What is the educational impact of the proposal?

- Locally accessible provision to meet children's needs in each locality;
- Reduction of time children spend being transported to school and associated reduction in costs, allowing resources to be directed to learning and teaching;
- Opportunities for inclusion within local community - which will enhance relationships, sense of belonging with peers at school and access to local community resources.

- Greater flexibility of provision which can be adapted to meet the needs of each child – a wider range of support and skills in each base will allow the base to respond to learners needs.
- Development of staff capacity - professionals with different areas of expertise will be able share their knowledge skills both within bases and with the host school
- Greater range of experiences and opportunities for all children. Children in Castlehill and Wester Cleddens will benefit from more interaction with children with a wider range of need. In addition, staff within the schools and bases will have a wider range of skills and experiences.

What is the consultation process?

The formal consultation process requires that:

- A defined list of stakeholders are provided with a formal consultation document, including a detailed educational benefits statement, and invited to comment on the proposal;
- The consultation period is 30 school days following the publication of the proposal document. The last date for responses is **22nd December 2017**;
- A public meeting to discuss the proposal is held. This will be held in Wester Cleddens Primary School on 6 December 2017 at 6:30pm.
- Education Scotland will provide an independent report on the proposal; and
- The Council publishes a consultation report the lays out the findings of the consultation. This must be public for at least three weeks before the Council may decide whether or not to proceed with the proposal.

For more information on the consultation, please visit: <https://www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/enhanced-support-bases>

How do I respond to the consultation?

Please return the attached consultation document to your local East Dunbartonshire Council Hub or please email the Council's Primary School Improvement Team.

Email: primaryimprovement@eastdunbarton.gov.uk
 Telephone: 0300-1234-510
 Post: Primary School Improvement Team, Southbank Marina, 12 Strathkelvin Place, Kirkintilloch, G66 1TJ

Yours sincerely

JACQUI MACDONALD
Chief Education Officer

CONSULTATION ON PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH ENHANCED SUPPORT BASES AT CASTLEHILL AND WESTER CLEDDENS PRIMARY SCHOOLS, AND TO RELOCATE LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION RESOURCE SERVICES PROVIDED AT TWECHAR PRIMARY SCHOOL.

SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

As part of the Council's strategy for Additional Support Needs education (ASN), East Dunbartonshire Council is considering proposals to develop enhanced support bases in primary schools. These will support primary and early years' age children. You are being asked to take part in a statutory consultation process that will help the Council in deciding whether or not to go ahead with the proposal. Please read this document and return the form on page 7 to your school, by **22 December 2017**.

1.1 What is the purpose of this consultation?

This consultation is designed to gather your views on changes to school provision. This process is defined by the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, and is referred to as statutory consultation. The Act defines a process which all councils must follow if there is a proposed change to education provision.

1.2 What is the Council required to do?

The Council is required to publish a proposal, and allow at least 30 school days for consultees to respond and make representations. In that time, there must also be at least one public meeting. The consultation process reflects the Scottish Government's view that educational benefits should be at the heart of any proposal to make a change to a school. The Council must prepare an educational benefits statement, which is part of this proposal paper. Education Scotland will visit the school(s) involved and consider the educational aspects of the proposal. They will then submit a professional and independent report to the Council, which will take account of any representations which are made during the consultation. When the Council has completed the consultation, and received the Education Scotland report, it must consider whether to proceed with the proposal or not.

1.3 Who is consulted?

In line with the legislation, the following stakeholders are consulted: The Parent Council of relevant schools; the parents of the children at relevant schools; the parents of any children expected by the education authority to attend a relevant school within 2 years; the children involved, where appropriate; the staff at relevant schools; trade unions; and other education authorities as appropriate.

Where appropriate, children will be consulted about the proposal in school and further information about this will be provided to parents.

1.4 What are we proposing to do?

To more effectively meet the needs of a wider range of learners, it is proposed that:

- A. An enhanced support base should be established at Wester Cleddens Primary School, providing support to children with a range of additional support needs. The provision would be for children in the early years and primary stages.
- B. Castlehill LCR should be renamed as an Enhanced Support Base in recognition of the wide range of needs already met by this resource at the primary level. The provision should be further extended to assess and support children's needs in the early years.
- C. Language and Communication Resource services provided at Twechar Language and Communication Resource should be relocated to the enhanced support bases at Castlehill and Wester Cleddens.
- D. Children currently attending Castlehill and Twechar LCRs, as well as other children who meet the criteria for enhanced support, should access the base that most suits their needs and geographical location.

These proposals will take effect from August 2018.

1.5 What happens next?

The consultation will run from **13 November 2017** to **22 December 2017**. There will be a public meeting held in Wester Cleddens Primary School on 6 December 2017 to discuss the proposals. In early 2018, Education Scotland will produce a report on the proposal and the Council will consider whether to proceed with the proposal.

Further information on the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 and the consultation process can be found at:

The East Dunbartonshire Council website www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk

The Scottish Government website
www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education/Schools/Buildings/changestoschoolestate

THIS IS A FORMAL PROPOSAL FOR CONSULTATION UNDER THE SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010. PLEASE READ IT CAREFULLY AND RETURN THE CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM ON PAGE 7 TO YOUR SCHOOL.

SECTION 2 - ABOUT THE PROPOSAL

2.1 Current Provision

At present, Language and Communication Resources (LCR) are provided to support children with language and communication difficulties. These are located within mainstream primary schools. A primary LCR is located at Castlehill Primary School, providing support for primary school children from across the authority. An early level LCR is located at Twechar Primary School, providing support for nursery and early primary stage children from across the authority.

An extensive internal review of children with language and communication needs (including autism) was carried out by the authority. This involved detailed profiling of children in both LCRs and existing 'standalone' provision (Merklund and Campsie View Schools). This review identified that a very broad range of additional support needs were being met in all establishments and that teaching staff were drawn from a range of specialist educational fields to meet that need. The renaming of these resources as Enhanced Support Bases is a better reflection of the range of educational strategies used to support a broad range of needs in these settings. Currently Castlehill LCR supports 17 children in the LCR. These children live across the authority, and travel to Bearsden to access the LCR. Twechar LCR supports 26 children on a part time basis.

2.2 Background and rationale for change

The Children and Young People's Act details clear requirements in line with Getting It Right for Every Child. This details how services should be restructured, ensuring that children and families are central to decisions and that professionals provide coordinated support where needed.

The Additional Support for Learning Act (Revised 2009) places a statutory requirement to ensure that barriers to learning are addressed in order that every child can reach their full potential.

A review of the provision for children with additional support needs has been undertaken by the Education Service. The new ASN strategy for East Dunbartonshire was approved by Council in February 2017. This strategy recommends that:

1. The number of children in standalone specialist provision should be reduced, and specialist provision should focus on supporting young people with the most profound needs.
2. Support for children with additional support needs should be increased in mainstream settings to support a greater number of children and meet a wider range of needs;
3. The criteria and assessment for allocation of places in specialist provision should be clearly defined, and robustly applied; and
4. Outreach, capacity building and support from specialist teams based within specialist setting should be expanded to support mainstream settings to deliver outcomes for all young people with ASN.

In order to meet recommendation 2, the strategy proposes that:

“The provision of support within the primary sector should be developed with an Enhanced Support Base provided in each locality area. This would expand the range of needs accommodated within the current Language and Communication Resources.”

2.3 Details of the proposal

To more effectively meet the needs of a wider range of learners, it is proposed that:

- A. An enhanced support provision should be established at Wester Cleddens Primary School. This would provide support to children, with a range of additional support needs. The provision would be for children in the early years and primary stages.
- B. Castlehill LCR should be renamed as an Enhanced Support Base in recognition of the wide range of needs already met by this resource at the primary level. The provision should be further extended to assess and support children’s needs in the early years.
- C. Language and Communication Resource services provided at Twechar Language and Communication Resource should be relocated to the enhanced support bases at Castlehill and Wester Cleddens.
- D. Children currently attending Castlehill and Twechar LCRs, as well as other children who meet the criteria for enhanced support, should access the base that most suits their needs and geographical location.

The enhanced support base at Wester Cleddens will support approximately 25 children across primary and early level. There would be provision for support for children in early years on an assessment basis as well as full or part time places. In general, these children will live in Bishopbriggs, Kirkintilloch, Lenzie and the surrounding areas.

Currently the school is significantly under-occupied and suitable areas have been identified within the school to develop the enhanced support provision. The provision would require four classrooms within the school; these can be co-located within the school but would be adapted to ensure a safe environment for children. Children would access mainstream facilities as required. Some dedicated outdoor space will be required.

The enhanced support base at Castlehill will continue to support up to 20 children at the primary level. There would be provision for support for children in early years on an assessment basis as well as full or part time places. Most of the children will live in Bearsden and Milngavie and the surrounding areas.

Children currently attending Twechar LCR will move to attend either the enhanced support base at Castlehill or Wester Cleddens, depending on where they live and their needs. This will be determined through discussion with the team around the child, the parents and the child. The transition to the new placement will be carefully planned to minimise any potential disruption to the child’s education or wellbeing.

Children currently attending Castlehill LCR, who live in Bishopbriggs, Kirkintilloch Lenzie and the surrounding areas, will have the opportunity to move to the enhanced support base at Wester Cleddens. This will be determined through discussion with the team around the child, the parents and the child.

2.4 Enhanced Support Provision

Enhanced support provision is an important part of the Council's ASN strategy. Enhanced support bases will be provided in each locality area, to ensure that children can access support as close to home as possible. Enhanced support bases will support a wider range of needs than currently supported in LCRs and staff will have experience and training in support these needs.

Enhanced support bases will provide Tier 2 support to children with ASN. This means supporting children, whose needs cannot be met wholly met through support in a mainstream environment (Tier 1 support), but who do not require a full time placement in a specialist provision (Tier 3 support). Children will be part of a mainstream school, but will be based in the enhanced support base on a full time or part time as required. Tier 2 support is carefully defined in the ASN strategy including criteria for access, type of support offered, and impact of the support. This is attached as **APPENDIX 1**.

SECTION 3 - IMPACT OF THE PROPOSAL

3.1 What is the Educational benefit of the proposal?

This proposal will ensure:

- Locally accessible provision to meet children's needs in each locality;
- Reduction of time children spend being transported to school and associated reduction in costs, allowing resources to be directed to learning and teaching;
- Opportunities for inclusion within local community - which will enhance relationships, sense of belonging with peers at school and access to local community resources.
- Greater flexibility of provision which can be adapted to meet the needs of each child – a wider range of support and skills in each base will allow the base to respond to learners needs.
- Development of staff capacity - professionals with different areas of expertise will be able share their knowledge skills both within bases and with the host school
- Greater range of experiences and opportunities for all children. Children in Castlehill and Wester Cleddens will benefit from more interaction with children with a wider range of need. In addition, staff within the schools and bases will have a wider range of skills and experiences.

This proposal is an important part of the overall ASN strategy in East Dunbartonshire. The educational benefits of this strategy have been identified as:

- Ensuring provision is in line with the principles of GIRFEC - proportionate to children with greatest needs, holistic and multi-agency.
- Ensuring all aspects of child's developmental needs are identified and taken into account.
- Ensuring parents of the most vulnerable members of school population have opportunity for engagement with professionals and can better understand their own child's developmental trajectory and needs.
- Recommendations are consistent with the priorities of EDC's Autism Strategy (2014-2024): mainstreaming, transitions, training and mainstreaming
- A continuum of educational provision within EDC that has a presumption of mainstream as well as offering specialist provision
- Capacity building across all educational establishments and sectors through increased mainstreaming and outreach, which will be complemented and supported by Autism Advisers and the Language and the Communication Friendly Establishment approach
- Substantially supports the accurate and robust assessment of children with a complexity of needs which in turn leads to appropriate and fully considered placement, provision and planning.

3.2 How will this proposal affect children in Wester Cleddens Primary School?

Wester Cleddens Primary School is currently significantly under-occupied. The school has 6 unoccupied classrooms on the upper floor. These are currently used either for storage or to host services such as the instrumental music service. There is substantial outdoor space, and gym and dining areas are large.

It is anticipated that due to the needs of children in the base, teaching groups will be small, and the base would use 4 classrooms. One additional room would be required for professional

meetings and visiting specialist, and a staff office would be provided. A separate entrance would be required, and some investment will be required to ensure that class areas are suitable and appropriately furnished. Given current levels of occupancy at Wester Cleddens, this can be accommodated by the school.

Work is currently underway with EDC Assets team, the school, and ASN professionals to confirm the specific adaptations required that would be used by the base and the specific rooms that would be required. These proposals will be discussed in detail with the parent council before they are confirmed and implemented.

3.3 How will these changes be managed for children currently attending Castlehill and Twechar LCR?

If the proposal goes ahead, individual meetings will be held with parents of children currently attending an LCR. These meetings will discuss:

- If the child currently attends Twechar LCR, would the enhanced support base at Castlehill or Wester Cleddens be more appropriate for future support? This will depend on the child's needs and where they live.
- If the child currently attends Castlehill, would there be benefit to moving to the Wester Cleddens enhanced support base? This will depend on the child's needs and where they live.
- If the child is to change location, what transition planning is required to minimise impact on that child's education and wellbeing. This could include familiarisation visits for children and parents, professional transition meetings to ensure continuity in the child's learning, and team around the child meetings to review decision making.

All children travelling to enhanced support bases will continue to be offered free school transport in line with the school transport policy.

SECTION 4 – CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM

CONSULTATION ON PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH ENHANCED SUPPORT BASES AT CASTLEHILL AND WESTER CLEDDENS PRIMARY SCHOOLS, AND TO RELOCATE LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION RESOURCE SERVICES PROVIDED AT TWECHAR PRIMARY SCHOOL.

Please return this form to your school by **22 December 2017**.

I agree with the proposal as outlined in this consultation

I disagree with the proposal as outlined in this consultation

I would like to make the following representation for consideration:

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Telephone Number:

APPENDIX 1 - TIER 2 SUPPORT DEFINITION

Criteria

- Children who may have:
 - Delays or impairments in expressive and/or receptive language
 - Difficulties in the area of social communication, i.e. interactions with peers and adults, that cannot be supported solely within mainstream school
 - Difficulties with focus and attention
 - Significant difficulties accessing the curriculum due to learning needs
 - Challenging behaviour
- All children must require access to small group learning for a significant proportion of school week but must also be able to access mainstream school for either learning or social activities.
- Access to Enhanced Support base would be available for those children with higher levels of targeted intervention needs who do **not** meet the criteria for fulltime placement in specialist provision. Priority to be given to outreach support to allow child to maintain placement in catchment school where possible

Support Offered

- Small group sessions to develop language, concentration, play skills and/or social interaction for some children
- Small group sessions to develop learning and progress curriculum at earlier level than typically developing peers for some children.
- Inclusion in mainstream
- High level of parental involvement and support offered within the Enhanced Support bases e.g. parenting support
- Enhanced support during transition processes to identify suitable resource for secondary stage and to ensure secondary school staff have a full understanding of additional support needs and strategies which support those needs.

Anticipated impact

- Children have the benefits of both small group learning/a differentiated curriculum and inclusion in mainstream
- Ongoing process of assessment, planning, intervention and evaluations process via Pupil Support Groups (PSGs), Team Around the Child (TAC) meetings and Action Plans will provide rich information on all areas of the child's strengths and development needs
- Parental involvement in the process will result in a higher level of agreement between parents and professionals as to the child's developmental profile and appropriate educational provision at stage of secondary transition.
- Parental capacity will be built across a range of areas e.g. Triple P approach
- Targeted interventions will support the development of children's skills in all areas
- With outreach, capacity will be raised within the child's mainstream school which will benefit all learners (e.g. Language and Communication Friendly Environment (LCFE), autism friendly environment)

