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East Dunbartonshire Council

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EDUCATION, PEOPLE AND BUSINESS

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Dear Consultee

CONSULTATION ON THE CHANGES TO THE CATCHMENT AREA FOR GAELIC MEDIUM EDUCATION

I am writing to invite you to take part in a consultation on the Council's proposal to change the catchment area for Gaelic Medium Education (GME) in East Dunbartonshire Council. A formal consultation is required in line with the Schools Consultation Act 2010. This requires Council to consult with a defined group of people with an interest in the school. The proposal and consultation process are summarised below. Please see attached for the full proposal document, including a detailed statement of educational benefits.

What does the Council propose to do?

To better support and promote GME in East Dunbartonshire Council, it is proposed that the catchment area for admission to Gaelic medium education is changed to include the whole of East Dunbartonshire.

These proposals will take effect from school session 2018/19.

What is the educational impact of the proposal?

This proposal will ensure that all pupils in East Dunbartonshire are able to access GME without the barrier of having to submit a placing request. This will support the delivery of the Councils statutory duties, and will help to meet parents' right to request GME.

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 **13th December 2017**;
- A public meeting to discuss the proposal is held. This will be held on **29th November 2017 at 6:30pm in Meadowburn Primary School**;
- Education Scotland will provide an independent report on the proposal; and
- The Council publishes a consultation report that 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 process, please visit:
<https://www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/gaelic-consultation>

How do I respond to the consultation?

To provide your comments on the proposal, please return the attached consultation document to your local East Dunbartonshire Council Hub or please write to the Council's Primary School Improvement Team stating whether you:

- a) Agree with the proposal; or
- b) Disagree with the proposal.

Please also provide any comments you have on the proposal.

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 THE CHANGES TO THE CATCHMENT AREA FOR GAELIC MEDIUM EDUCATION

SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

The Education (Scotland) Act 2016 placed a duty on local authorities to promote and support Gaelic Medium Education (GME).

In order to ensure this duty is met, the Council is considering proposals to alter the catchment area arrangements for pupils accessing GME.

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 5 to your school, by **13 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 better support and promote GME in East Dunbartonshire Council, it is proposed that the catchment area for admission to Gaelic medium education is changed to include the whole of East Dunbartonshire.

These proposals will take effect from school session 2018/19.

1.5 What happens next?

The consultation will run from **1 November 2017 to 8 December 2017**. There will be a public meeting held in Meadowburn Primary School on 29 November 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/changestatoschoolestate

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 5 TO YOUR SCHOOL.

SECTION 2 - ABOUT THE PROPOSAL

2.1 Current Provision

Gaelic medium education is provided at primary level in the Gaelic unit at Meadowburn Primary School. This is a separate stream of education within the school, where education is delivered within a Gaelic language environment. Gym, dining and communal spaces are shared with the school, and the unit is managed by the school management team.

Gaelic in the secondary sector is provided in Bishopbriggs Academy. This provides continuity and progression for children who attended the Gaelic unit within Meadowburn. This provision is not Gaelic Medium Education, but provides the opportunity to study Gaelic up to the level of national qualifications.

2.2 Background and rationale for change

The Education (Scotland) Act 2016 placed a duty on Local Authorities to promote and support GME. Pupils wishing to access GME may reasonably expect to be able to access provision directly. At present, only pupils living within the Meadowburn Primary School catchment area may enrol directly in the Gaelic unit.

Pupils who wish to attend the Gaelic unit and who reside out with the catchment area are required to submit a placing request. As the unit is part of Meadowburn Primary School, these placing requests are considered alongside all other placing requests to the school. This means that some pupils may not be granted a place in the unit due to placing requests to the mainstream school, which may have a high priority in terms of the admissions policy.

However, given the separate language environment, places in the mainstream school and the Gaelic unit are not interchangeable. Therefore, it is important to separate the enrolment of Gaelic unit and mainstream pupils.

2.3 Details of the proposal

The Council is proposing that the catchment area for pupils accessing GME only at Meadowburn Primary School is changed to include the whole of East Dunbartonshire. This will mean that pupils accessing GME, no matter where they live in East Dunbartonshire, will be able to enrol directly in the school, and will not need to submit a placing request. This proposal will not affect children enrolling in the mainstream school.

SECTION 3 - IMPACT OF THE PROPOSAL

3.1 What is the Educational benefit of the proposal?

This proposal will ensure that all pupils in East Dunbartonshire are able to access GME without the barrier of having to submit a placing request. This will support the delivery of the Councils statutory duties, and will help to meet parents' right to request GME.

3.2 How will this proposal affect children in Meadowburn Primary school?

This proposal is looking to change the admission for the Gaelic Unit and will not affect directly affect pupils in mainstream provision. The current provision is considered separate from the mainstream in terms of teaching capacity. For pupils living within the Meadowburn Primary School catchment areas, there will be no impact. For pupils making a placing request to Meadowburn Primary School, the proposal may increase the likelihood of places being granted, as there will no longer be competition for places with Gaelic unit pupils.

SECTION 4 – CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM

CONSULTATION ON THE CHANGES TO THE CATCHMENT AREA FOR GAELIC MEDIUM EDUCATION

Please return this form to your school by **13 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:
