

The background of the slide features a large, light blue outline of the Coat of Arms of the Government of Nunavut. The crest includes a crown with four maple leaves, a shield divided into four quadrants (top-left: diagonal stripes, top-right: a cross, bottom-left: a sailing ship, bottom-right: an eagle), and a banner at the bottom with the motto "ANE FOR A".

## **Agenda Item 7**

### **Specialist Education for Additional Support Needs in Primary and Secondary Schools**

**Falkirk Council**

**Title:** Specialist Education for Additional Support Needs in Primary and Secondary Schools

**Meeting:** Education Executive

**Date:** 23 January 2018

**Submitted By:** Director of Children's Services

**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 This report presents a summary of the findings from the statutory public consultation which took place between the 13<sup>th</sup> September and 10<sup>th</sup> November 2017 to consider the expansion of provision for children and young people who have social and communication difficulties including Autism Spectrum Disorder.

**2. Recommendation(s)**

**2.1 The Education Executive is asked to:-**

- (1) note the responses to the statutory consultation recently undertaken and the recommendations contained within the report attached at Appendix 1; and**
- (2) instruct the Director of Children's Services to bring a further report providing full details and proposals of how Children's Services would progress with this expansion plan.**

**3. Background**

- 3.1 A review of Additional Support Needs was undertaken by the Policy Development Panel early in 2017. The review identified the significant challenges faced by the Children's Services and considered how the future needs of young people with Additional Support Needs may be met in the future. Pupil Census Data (Falkirk) 2010 – 2016 also indicated that Falkirk is experiencing a rise in the number of children with social and communication difficulties and Autism Spectrum Disorder.
- 3.2 The Education Executive agreed on 5 September 2017 that a statutory public consultation be conducted to consider the expansion of Additional Support Needs provision by opening specialist classes in 3 mainstream primary schools and 2 mainstream secondary schools. This will enable a greater number of children with Additional Support Needs to be educated as locally to their home and community as reasonably possible.

- 3.3 A full statutory public consultation on opening specialist classes in Sacred Heart Primary School, Easter Carmuir's Primary School, Moray Primary School, Bo'ness Academy and Larbert High School took place in line with Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 legislation.

## **4. Consultation**

### **4.1 Consultation Process**

The consultation took place over an 8½ week period from 13<sup>th</sup> September to 10<sup>th</sup> November 2017. During the consultation period views were sought from a range of stakeholders and parties including:-

- Parents of all pupils at Easter Carmuir's, Moray and Sacred Heart Primary Schools, Bo'ness Academy and Larbert High School. They were invited to attend a public meeting at their associated school and given the opportunity to complete a consultation document/pro-forma response
- Parents of children and young people at the cluster early years provisions in the catchment areas of Easter Carmuir's, Moray and Sacred Heart Primary Schools were also sent pro-forma documents.
- The Parent Council Chairs, Vice Chairs and Treasurers of Easter Carmuir's, Moray and Sacred Heart Primary Schools, Bo'ness Academy and Larbert High School were sent a consultation document/pro-forma with a covering letter.
- All active community councils in the Falkirk Council area.
- All elected members.
- Trade unions.

In total, 7,703 consultation documents were issued and the consultation was also made available to the wider public on the Council's website.

### **4.2 Summary of Consultation Responses Received**

#### **Overall Response**

Proposal of introducing specialist Additional Support Needs classes to the selected schools.	Total responses 107	
	Number	Percentage
<b>In favour</b>	92	86%
<b>Not in favour</b>	11	10%
<b>Undecided</b>	4	4%

#### **4.3 Summary of Responses for the Proposal:**

**The key comments made by those supporting the proposal were:**

- Raise attainment of the children/young people;
- Promote inclusive attitudes;
- Greater support at this point in their life provides children/young people with Additional Support Needs with a strong platform as they grow and move into adult life;
- Children/young people to attend their local school and their own community
- Class plans can be tailored to the individual needs of the child/young person with Additional Support Needs without detracting from a teacher's ability to focus on mainstream pupils.

**Summary of Responses Against the Proposal Raised by more than one Person, Ranging from two to five Occasions:**

**The key comments made by those who did not support the proposal were:**

- Introducing Additional Support Needs pupils into mainstream classes may lead to disruption and behaviour issues.
- Uncertainty over why the schools in the proposal were chosen.
- Additional strain could be placed on mainstream teaching staff.
- The proposal focuses too much on the most severe Additional Support Needs cases and does not do anything to help children with less severe needs.
- The proposal seems like a cost-cutting exercise.
- Many schools are currently subscribed to in very high numbers and so it will be difficult to find room for extra pupils.
- Construction work could be disruptive to pupils currently attending these schools.
- Pupils with severe Additional Support Needs may find busy mainstream schools overwhelming, particularly secondary schools.

**Summary of Responses Against the Proposal Raised by Individuals on 1 Occasion:**

**The key comments made by those who did not support the proposal were:-**

- A concern with the current performance of one of the schools and the impact of adding an Additional Support Needs unit .
- Mainstream schools' current methods of coping with severe Additional Support Needs was considered to be ineffective.
- A concern that Classroom Assistants could end up performing roles they are not trained for.

- Uncertainty as to whether this provision will really be necessary. The issues raised were responded to and are outlined in the statutory consultation report, attached as appendix 1, pages 9 and 10.

#### **4.4 Report by Education Scotland**

Under the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, Education Scotland must prepare a report on the educational aspects of the proposal out to consultation. The full report is included in the full statutory publication report and is attached as appendix 1, page 12.

The Education Scotland representative met with staff, parents, children and young people and were supportive of the proposal, for example stating that the proposal will allow Falkirk Council to respond to an increase in demand for Additional Support Needs services with children and young people being educated in or closer to their local school, building a sense of inclusion and, where appropriate, giving children and young people with Additional Support Needs the opportunity to access the mainstream learning environment and engage in whole-school extracurricular activities. The proposal also offers scope to integrate support from the Speech and Language Therapy Service more effectively. However, a number of concerns were raised:

- Location and access to the accommodation.
- Recruitment, training and deployment of suitably qualified and experienced staff.
- The timescale for transitions arrangements for the children and young people.

### **5. Children's Services Closer to Home Strategy**

- 5.1 The primary intention of Children's Services Closer to Home strategy is to implement approaches designed to shift the continued growth in children and young people Looked After Away From Home in expensive care provision and improve outcomes for them within their own families or local care provision.
- 5.2 In order to fully support this strategy, the Council is required to have not only care provision but educational provision that means more children live and are educated as locally to their home and community as reasonably possible. This requires additional availability of specialist educational placements in some circumstances.
- 5.3 Children and Young People who are Looked After are automatically deemed to have Additional Support Needs unless the Education Authority can determine that they do not require additional support to benefit from school education.

Some children with multiple and complex Additional Support Needs currently require external residential school placements both to meet their care and education needs. Investment in this proposal will complement the intention of the Closer to Home Strategy.

## **6. Implications**

### **Financial**

- 6.1 £369k has been earmarked within the proposed 2018/19 budget for Additional Support Needs expansion.
- 6.2 If the Education Executive agrees the recommendations full details of the financial consequences and funding options would be included in the follow up report.

### **Legal**

- 6.3 Falkirk Council has duties and responsibilities under the following Acts that pertain to the education of children:-

- Education Scotland Act 1980
- Education Scotland Act 1981
- Children Act 1998
- Standards in Scotland's Schools Act 2000
- Additional Support for Learning (Scotland) Act 2004 (amended 2009)
- Equalities Act 2010
- Children and Young People Act (Scotland) 2015
- Education (Scotland) Act 2016

The legislation, taken together, provides a range of duties on a local authority to provide adequate education for all children, and to presume that the child should be included in mainstream school.

### **Risk**

- 6.4 The changing demographics of the population of children in Falkirk means that the service's current configuration carries:-
- a moderate risk of children not having their Additional Support Needs met within current provision.
  - a legal risk for the council in not meeting its statutory duties.
  - a high risk of current provision for Additional Support Needs being oversubscribed.
  - a moderate risk of a higher than normal number of individual children requiring independent special school placement.
  - a high risk of increased costs with short term additional support.
  - the council faces reputational risk if specialist provision is not available.
  - a high risk of building work being uncompleted by August 2018.

## **Equalities**

- 6.5 An equality and poverty impact assessments will not be required.

## **Sustainability/Environmental Impact**

- 6.6 A sustainability and environmental impact report will not be required due to the use of existing facilities.

## **7. Conclusions**

- 7.1 The need for change in how Additional Support Needs are met within Falkirk is based on:-
- improving educational and life outcomes for children of Falkirk;
  - demographic changes within the population of children with Additional Support Needs; where National and Local trends indicate year on year increase for children with social and communication difficulties and Autism Spectrum Disorder; and
  - providing best value for Falkirk Council.
- 7.2. The additional Primary and Secondary provisions will provide a locality model which will enable children with Additional Support Needs to be educated as locally to their home and community as reasonably possible.
- 7.3 The concerns expressed by Education Scotland will be addressed in a future report to the Education Executive which will seek member approval to develop provision at one or more of the primary and secondary schools involved in the consultation.

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Director of Children's Services

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Date: 18/12/2017

## **Appendices**

**Appendix 1** – Full statutory report of the consultation

## **List of Background Papers:**

**None**



# **INCLUSION AND ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS IN FALKIRK: PROPOSALS FOR 2018 ONWARDS**

## **A REPORT OF THE CONSULTATION**

**13<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER - 10<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2017**



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## 1) INTRODUCTION

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### Background

There has been a rise in the number of children and young people, in line with national trends, who have Additional Support Needs (ASN) in education in the Falkirk Council area. ASN arise from factors including, but not limited to, social and communication difficulties, Autism Spectrum Disorder, and disability and learning factors. While there are currently 15 primary schools in the area with Enhanced Provision and 3 with ASN for complex needs, Falkirk Council has identified an increase in demand to support children and young people with social communication difficulties and Autism Spectrum Disorder.

### Proposal

It is proposed to establish specialist classes in 3 primary schools and 2 secondary schools to provide high quality education for children and young people who have social and communication difficulties and Autism Spectrum Disorder. The Council aims to provide specialist provisions closer to home wherever reasonable or possible.

The details of the proposal can be read in the Consultative Document, the third section of [Appendix D](#).

### Purpose of Consultation

The establishment of new ASN classrooms requires a formal consultation to be carried out in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. This report documents the formal consultation undertaken on this proposal between 13<sup>th</sup> September and 10<sup>th</sup> November 2017.

### Timeliness

- The Consultation took place over an 8½ week period from 13<sup>th</sup> September to 10<sup>th</sup> November 2017.
- Education Scotland reported back on the educational aspects of the proposal on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2017.
- This Consultation Report was published online on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2017.

### Consultees

During the consultation period, views were sought from a range of stakeholders and interested parties as follows:

- Parents of all pupils at Easter Carmuir, Moray and Sacred Heart Primary Schools, Bo'ness Academy and Larbert High School. They were invited to attend a public meeting at their affiliated school and given the opportunity to complete a consultative document/pro-forma response.
- Parents of children/young people at the cluster nurseries/pre-nursery care in the catchment areas of Easter Carmuir, Moray and Sacred Heart Primary Schools were also sent pro-forma documents. This also occurred for all parents of pupils at catchment area primary schools of Larbert High Schools and Bo'ness Academy.
- Elected Members had the consultative document emailed to them.
- The staff at Easter Carmuir, Moray and Sacred Heart Primary Schools, Bo'ness Academy and Larbert High School were encouraged to attend the public meeting at their affiliated school and sent consultative documents.
- The Parent Council Chairs, Vice Chairs and Treasurers of Easter Carmuir, Moray and Sacred Heart Primary Schools, Bo'ness Academy and Larbert High School were sent a consultative document/pro-forma response with a covering letter.
- The schools' four main trade unions (EIS, GMB, Unison and Unite) were consulted.

In total, 7703 consultative documents were sent out. The consultation was also made available to the wider public on the Council's website.

## 2) RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

### Summary

There were 107 formal responses to the consultation. Of these, all were received from individuals, with none of the groups or organisations (parent councils, trade unions etc.) consulted submitting official responses. These are summarised in this report and additional comments attached to these responses can be read in full in [Appendix A](#).

The written responses were received by post, e-mail and online submission. They are summarised by category in Tables 1-3 below:

**Table 1: Total number of respondents by category.**

Type of Respondent	Number of Responses	%
Individuals	107	100
Groups/Organisations	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 2: Analysis of all individual respondents.**

Type of Individual	Number of Responses	%
Parents	103	96
Staff	0	0
Elected Members	0	0
Others	4	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 3: Analysis of all group/organisation respondents.**

Type of Organisation	Number of Responses	%
Parent Councils	0	100
Trade Unions	0	100
Others	0	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100</b>

### Response Analysis

#### Responses from Individuals

The number of responses to the consultation that were for, against or unsure of the introduction of new ASN classes are shown in Tables 4a, 4b and 4c below. It should be noted that individuals affiliated with primary schools not directly included in the consultation but within the catchment area of one of the secondary schools were classed as being affiliated with the secondary school in question e.g. responses from parents whose child/children currently attend Kinnauld Primary School were documented as having an affiliation with Larbert High School.

**Table 4a: Responses from individuals affiliated with primary schools mentioned in the proposal. The number of people for (F), against (A) or unsure of (U) the introduction of ASN classes within a particular role are given as well as the percentage (%) this represented of those within the role.**

	Easter Carmuir Primary School						Moray Primary School						Sacred Heart Primary School					
	F	%	A	%	U	%	F	%	A	%	U	%	F	%	A	%	U	%
Parents	1	100	0	0	0	0	1	50	0	0	1	50	4	100	0	0	0	0
Staff	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Elected Members	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Others	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
All Individual Responses	1	100	0	0	0	0	1	50	0	0	1	50	4	100	0	0	0	0

**Table 4b: Responses from individuals affiliated with secondary schools mentioned in the proposal. The number of people for (F), against (A) or unsure of (U) the introduction of ASN classes within a particular role are given as well as the percentage (%) this represented of those within the role.**

	Bo'ness Academy						Larbert High School					
	F	%	A	%	U	%	F	%	A	%	U	%
Parents	19	73.1	6	23.1	1	3.8	52	88.1	5	8.5	1	1.7
Staff	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Elected Members	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Others	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1.7	0	0	0	0
All Individual Responses	19	73.1	6	23.1	1	3.8	53	89.8	5	8.5	1	1.7

**Table 4c: Responses from individuals that did not disclose an affiliation to any of the schools mentioned in the proposal. The number of people for (F), against (A) or unsure of (U) the introduction of ASN classes within a particular role are given as well as the percentage (%) this represented of those within the role.**

	F	%	A	%	U	%
Parents	12	80.0	0	0	0	0
Others	2	13.3	0	0	1	6.7
All Individual Responses	14	93.3	0	0	1	6.7

### Responses from Groups and Organisations

There were no responses from any of the groups or organisations consulted.

### Overall Response

Taking into account all that has been discussed thus far, the overall results of the consultation vote was as follows:

**Table 5: Overall response to consultation proposal. The number of votes for (F), against (A) or unsure of (U) the introduction of ASN classes are given as well as the percentage (%) this represented of those within the role.**

	F	A	U	Total
No. Votes	92	11	4	107
%	86.0	10.3	3.7	100

## Consultative Document

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### Public Meetings

Six public meetings were held during the consultation period as follows. Each one consisted of a small presentation at the start followed by a question and answer session:

- **Easter Carmuir Primary School (21<sup>st</sup> September 2017)**

Attended by six members of the public.

- **Bo'ness Academy (26<sup>th</sup> September 2017)**

Attended by fifteen members of the public.

- **Moray Primary School (27<sup>th</sup> September 2017)**

Attended by four members of the public.

- **Sacred Heart Primary School (3<sup>rd</sup> October 2017)**

Attended by seven members of the public.

- **Larbert High School (5<sup>th</sup> October 2017)**

Attended by twenty-three members of the public.

- **Bo'ness Academy (23<sup>rd</sup> October 2017)**

Attended by five members of the public.

### 3) SUPPORT FOR ADDITIONAL NEEDS CLASSES

#### Overall Response

86% of individual respondents (92 votes from a total of 107) to the consultation were in favour of introducing specialist ASN classes to the selected schools. Discounting respondents who submitted official responses but did not state a preference either way, this figure rose to 89.3% from a revised total of 103 votes.

**This is a highly significant majority, regardless of whether or not “unsure” votes are included in the calculation. This is true both for parents (86.4% with “unsure” votes and 89% without) and for the individual respondents who did not disclose a particular role (75% with and 100% without “unsure” votes). Discounting “unsure” votes, all schools were in favour of the introduction of the new ASN classes.**

Individuals who either were not affiliated, or did not disclose an affiliation, to any of the schools mentioned in the proposal followed a similar trend. This held for both parents (100% in favour, with or without including “unsure” votes) and individuals without a specified role (66.7% in favour including “unsure” votes, 100% not including them).

The full text of all additional comments in responses can be read in [Appendix A](#).

#### Summary of Responses for the Proposal

The main points of the individual responses in favour of introducing the ASN classes were as follows:

- The classes should boost the attainment of the children/young people
- The classes will promote inclusive attitudes
- Greater support at this point in their life provides children/young people with ASN with a strong platform as they grow and move into adult life
- The proposal allows more children/young people to go to their local school, making it easier for them to interact with peers from their own community
- Class plans can be tailored to the individual needs of the child/young person with ASN without detracting from a teacher's ability to focus on mainstream pupils

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## 4) SUPPORT AGAINST ADDITIONAL NEEDS CLASSES

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### Overall Response

10.3% of individual respondents (11 votes from a total of 107) to the consultation were not in favour of introducing specialist ASN classes to the selected schools. Discounting respondents who did not state a preference, this figure rose to 10.7% from a revised total of 103 votes.

**This is a very small minority, with not a single school voting against the introduction of the new ASN classes. This statement is true, regardless of whether or not “unsure” votes are included in the calculation.**

A similar trend was followed with the respondents who were independent of any of the schools mentioned in the proposal, with not a single individual of the 15 in this category being opposed to the introduction of the ASN classes.

The full text of all additional comments in responses can be read in [Appendix A](#).

### Summary of Responses Against the Proposal

The main points of the individual responses not in favour of introducing the ASN classes were as follows:

- Introducing ASN pupils into mainstream classes may lead to disruption and behaviour issues
- Uncertainty over why the schools in the proposal were chosen
- Additional strain could be placed on mainstream teaching staff
- The proposal focuses too much on only the most severe ASN cases and does not do anything to help children with less severe needs
- The proposal seems like a cost-cutting exercise
- Many schools are currently subscribed to in very high numbers so it will be difficult to find room for extra pupils
- Construction work could be disruptive to pupils currently attending these schools
- Pupils with severe ASN may find busy mainstream schools overwhelming, particularly secondary schools

## 5) RESPONSES THE MAIN ISSUES TO RAISED

### Issues Raised

Below is a list of the issues raised by the public in the further comments section of the consultative document that were brought up by more than one person, coupled with a response from Children's Services. The number of times each individual issue was raised ranges from two to five. The areas of concern are listed below (**bold text**) along with the response of Children's Services (plain text).

**1. Introducing ASN pupils into mainstream classes may lead to disruption and behaviour issues.**

All of our current ASN provisions (with the exception of Carrongrange School) are part of mainstream schools in order to facilitate the inclusion of learners where in the best interests of all the learners. Children and young people with multiple and complex additional support needs require their inclusion experiences to be planned and monitored carefully. We have evidence informed practice to draw on, including from the ASN provision of this nature that we already have within the local authority. This will inform planning for individual pupils' inclusion.

**2. Parents are uncertain as to why the schools in the proposal were chosen.**

The schools proposed have been identified primarily due to their physical space to accommodate the ASN provision and the space being appropriate to meet the needs of the children/young people. In terms of the proposed secondary provisions, this would enable most children accessing one of the ASN bases (current or proposed) to attend their local secondary school or one close to their own community. The proposed primary provisions would enable some learners to access a provision in or near their own community and in most cases minimise the travel time for children getting to school compared to the current arrangements with one primary ASN unit of this nature.

**3. The introduction of specialist ASN classes to mainstream schools could place additional strain on teaching staff.**

The proposed provisions would be staffed according to the nationally prescribed ratios set out in the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers. When learners from the ASN class access the mainstream environments, they would be supported by additional staff. We have evidence informed practice to draw on, including from the ASN provision of this nature that we already have within the local authority. This would inform planning for additional training required for all staff within a school where an ASN provision is provided.

**4. This proposal focuses too much on the most severe ASN cases and does not do anything to help children with less severe needs.**

This proposal is about meeting the needs of a specific population of children with Additional Support Needs arising from social communication difficulties, including Autism Spectrum Disorder and associated barriers to learning. This would supplement the range of provision for ASN already available, including providing additional support in mainstream schools and other specialist units attached to mainstream schools.

**5. The proposal seems like a cost-cutting exercise.**

The proposal requires financial investment, primarily into the facilities and staffing. This would be an efficient way of deploying resources to a group of learners who require the same environmental and curricular adaptations and providing provision that enables learners with similar additional support needs to learn in the same environment. Where children can learn closer to the home, this does reduce transport costs to the Council, although the costs recovered would not be significant.



6. **Many schools are currently subscribed to in very high numbers so it will be difficult to find room for extra pupils.**

The schools proposed have been identified as they have the physical space to accommodate the ASN provision and the space being appropriate to meet the needs of the children/young people.

7. **Any necessary construction work could disrupt pupils currently attending these schools**

Any construction work will be undertaken in a way to minimise disruption to pupils. There would be some construction work required at each proposed site however the modifications required are not anticipated to be extensive.

8. **Pupils with severe ASN may find busy mainstream schools overwhelming, particularly secondary schools**

The position of the ASN area within the school building will be carefully considered to reduce any sensory difficulties that the learners may experience. Other considerations, such as pupil's entry and exit points from the school buildings and proximity of the toilets are all designed with this consideration. We have evidence informed practice to draw on, including from the primary ASN provision of this nature that we already have within the local authority. This will inform our planning to minimise the impact for learners who may be overwhelmed by busy environments and making pupil-led decisions about the supports these learners require to access mainstream learning and environments to support their development and learning.

## Other General Issues Raised

Issues raised in the further comments section of the consultative document by only one individual are listed below. The areas of concern are listed (**bold text**) along with the response of Children's Services (plain text).

1. **A parent was concerned with the current performance of one of the schools and the impact of adding an ASN unit.**

Children's Services have multiple approaches, in line with Scottish Government policy, to raise attainment. Providing the appropriate ASN provision for learners with additional support needs is one approach that supports the attainment of pupils.

2. **Mainstream schools' current methods of coping with severe ASN was considered by one individual to be ineffective.**

Children's Services have multiple approaches and resources to support schools to effectively meet the Additional Support Needs of their learners. Most learners with severe and persistent Additional Support Needs have their needs met within one of the specialist provisions that the Council provides. There will be renewed focus on meeting additional support needs within mainstream schools as the Council engages in the Scottish Government *Consultation on Excellence and Equity for All: Guidance on the Presumption of Mainstreaming*.

3. **One respondent was concerned that Classroom Assistants could end up performing roles that they are not trained for.**

The training requirements of all teaching and support staff will be included in the planning for the proposed provisions. A range of continuing professional development approaches are offered and delivered to support staff across all education establishments to maintain and develop the skills they require to meet learner's needs well.

4. **One respondent voiced uncertainty as to whether this provision would really be necessary.**

The data available to Children's Services indicates the current and future demand for provision to meet learners Additional Support Needs. Falkirk Council, in line

with national trends, has an increase in demand for provision required for learners with social communication difficulties including Autism Spectrum Disorder.

5. **A parent was concerned that placing individuals in an exclusively ASN environment could actually be detrimental to their development.**

There can be significant benefits to a child's development from access to a mainstream environment. This is why we have identified mainstream schools as the locations for the proposed provisions as this would enable the team around each child to make decisions about the level of inclusion, for different areas of the curriculum or social time and at different stages of a child's education that would support their development.

6. **One parent noted that moving her son with ASD to a different provision could be very disruptive.**

Where a child is making good developmental progress in an ASN provision, it may not be in their interests to move to a different provision. The Team Around a Child (that includes parents/carers) would be best placed to advise Children's Services if this was the case. Where there are particular reasons that the Team Around a Child (that includes parents/carers) do request a move of ASN provision, through the processes already established, this is considered and facilitated where reasonable and possible.

7. **One parent raised that the medical member of staff is not currently contracted enough hours to support this proposal.**

Children with and without Additional Support Needs may require medical assistance within school settings for short-term and in some circumstances long-term health needs. The population of children requiring ASN provision for social communication difficulties including Autism Spectrum Disorder and associated barriers to learning do not generally require significant interventions from a health trained member of staff. In any circumstances where schools do require additional staffing to meet the healthcare needs of learners, there are processes already in place for the identification, assessment and provision of these resources.



## 6) REPORT BY EDUCATION SCOTLAND

### Legislative Duty

Under the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, Education Scotland (formerly Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education) must prepare a report on the educational aspects of the proposal out to consultation.

### Summary of Report

The full Education Scotland report can be read in [Appendix C](#).

The summary conclusions, taken directly from this report, were as follows:

- The proposal to establish specialist classes in these schools has the potential to bring educational benefits to children and young people who have social and communication difficulties or Autism Spectrum Disorder.
- The majority of stakeholders who submitted responses were supportive of the proposal.
- The proposal will allow Falkirk Council to respond to an identified increase in demand for ASN services.
- Children and young people with ASN will benefit from joining and being educated either in or closer to their local school, building a sense of inclusion and, where appropriate, giving children and young people with ASN the opportunity to access the mainstream learning environment and engage in whole-school extracurricular activities.
- Children and young people with ASN will benefit from the differentiated and tailored curriculum the proposal will bring.
- The proposal offers scope to integrate support from the Speech and Language Therapy Service more effectively.
- In taking the proposal forwards, the council needs to set out, in detail, how it will:
  - Provide clear detail of how the proposal will be developed within the proposed timescale
  - Ensure access to accommodation that best meets the needs of children and young people with ASN
  - Recruit, train and deploy suitably qualified staff.
  - Ensure that effective transition arrangements for children and young people are planned and implemented.

### Response to the Report

This is a positive response from Education Scotland to the proposal.

If the proposal is agreed at the Education Executive in January 2018, Children's Services will provide more specific details on timescales, accommodation, staffing and transition arrangements to the Education Executive in March 2018.

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## APPENDIX A: WRITTEN RESPONSES

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### Responses from those not affiliated with the five schools named in the consultation.

The written comments attached to responses received from those who did not disclose any affiliation with one the five schools in the proposal are shown below:

#### Pro-forma responses and e-mails

##### i) From Groups and Organisations:

No additional comments received with formal responses.

##### ii) From Individuals:

###### a) Parents

- Enhanced provision for children with additional support needs is absolutely necessary in Falkirk.
- How will transitions be considered and supported for pupils moving from nursery to primary/secondary then beyond? Note, within the consultation regarding appropriate and supportive teaching environments; how will the wider school environment (in terms of the social; physical and cultural environment) be considered so there is a balance between integration within the school whilst still ensuring appropriate support needs are delivered? For example, consideration of noise levels, seating within dining room etc. How will information be presented to parents so they are informed of the provision of e.g. allied health professionals and psychological input?
- I think education staff also need to be educated, my children at school and, despite having frequent meetings and very precise plans from SLT describing his difficulties, staff and peers still make his school days very hard. The numbers you are talking about are very small but it is a start, unfortunately too late for my daughter, but hopefully this will make a difference for my son and all the others struggling in mainstream.
- The resources in the room must be appropriate to the children who will be using it. Staff must be trained and experienced and behave in an appropriate way towards the children in each room. Each child must be considered individually and the learning provided be tailored to their requirements and capabilities. Staff and school must be open and honest with the child and their parent/carers.
- Based on the past 2 years intake when numbers are high it's clear there needs to be a new proposal in place, there has been too much uncertainty in the past. Will this new structure accommodate those numbers or will we need to be back reviewing and changing the system yet again after 3 years? I welcome this proposal however the resources and staffing need to be put in place to match it.
- Is this enough provision?
- I agree with the principle of opening the units. However, there must not be any adverse impact on the rest of the school(s) due to the opening of these units. I would seek a guarantee that the funding for these units is in addition to the existing funding for each school, and would continue to be so every year.



I have concerns that the units may add to the workload of the management team within each school, and would seek reassurance that the units would not impact on the existing staff within the school. This would include reassurance that supply teachers would not be taken from the existing staff which already seems to be stretched (Bo'ness Academy). I also have concerns regarding the level of inclusion, particularly of children who may be disruptive to the learning of the rest of the pupils. However, I would suggest that the inclusion of a team of specialist ASN teachers working in the schools would benefit all staff.

### **b) Elected Members**

No additional comments received with formal responses.

### **c) Other Members of the Public**

- I'm not sure about the change as there is already specialist help for children with ASN in all the schools and they already get individual attention. However, there are other children in school at the moment with some social and behavioural issues that don't get the sufficient help needed as there are not enough resources and staff. I feel that perhaps these children will suffer even more when the resources are stretched further. I am in favour of all children, regardless of ability and need, to be taught together but it is unfair to give some children all the help they need and just abandon other children. I have spoken to many parents and this is common. It would be fantastic if there were no children excluded from the help they need.
- Long overdue. Teachers are struggling to deliver quality lessons whilst managing the needs of ASN children as well as the other demands of a busy classroom. Almost impossible to "close the gap" and "raise attainment" when this is the situation. Everyone has a right to a full education so this should benefit all.

## **Responses from those affiliated with Easter Carmuir's Primary School.**

No written comments were attached to responses received from those affiliated with Easter Carmuir's Primary School.

### **Pro-forma responses and e-mails**

#### **i) From Groups and Organisations:**

No additional comments received with formal responses.

#### **ii) From Individuals:**

##### **a) Parents**

No additional comments received with formal responses.

##### **b) Other Members of the Public**

No additional comments received with formal responses.

## Responses from those affiliated with Bo'ness Academy.

The written comments attached to responses received from those affiliated with Bo'ness Academy are shown below:

### Pro-forma responses and e-mails

#### i) From Groups and Organisations:

No additional comments received with formal responses.

#### ii) From Individuals:

##### a) Parents

- At least not in Bo'ness. Given that the majority of the population is not in the Bo'ness area I do not agree with the proposal to have the ASN classes in Bo'ness. Bo'ness Academy in particular is under performing against the national and local comparators and I feel that having pupils with significant ASN would have a detrimental impact on the headmaster's drive to improve provision and attainment for the other pupils. Whilst I appreciate the drive to provide support to significant ASN children it cannot be to the detriment of others in school that are already struggling to make up ground. I am not clear why you have selected the schools in question, there are much larger schools with larger centres of population that would be better suited to hosting such a provision.
- I do feel that this is a good idea as it may make the additional support pupils feel more like any other child/teenager their age. However, I do feel that if this is to go ahead that additional specially trained staff would be required to take on this role. It shouldn't be up to teachers to take on this extra role already working within these schools.
- This is great news, it can only be beneficial for everyone concerned, especially the child with ASN and the child without ASN. The council will have to ensure, for it to be effective, sufficient manpower support is put in place as well e.g. SLA's, SALT, Autism Outreach etc.
- I have a few concerns regarding this proposal:
  - 1) Communication - At present it takes an average of one week to a week and a half for the pastoral head to get back to you regarding an enquiry made with the school, will this proposal not put added pressure on staff at the school, thus increasing the difficulty in getting a hold of the appropriate member of staff when raising concerns?
  - 2) Is this proposal purely a cost saving exercise for the council? If kids are going to local school this would in turn save transport costs for the council not having to provide taxis (transport) for individual pupils.
  - 3) Carrongrange has just recently moved from Larbert High to a new improved and bigger building, should the increase of ASN requirement not have been considered at the time of planning and building to take increased numbers into consideration, also if Larbert High is also being considered for this scheme should this not have took place before Carrongrange moved to Grangemouth?
  - 4) How many additional staff will be allocated to accommodate the two ASN classes?
- I don't think that, in some circumstances, this is in the best interests of the children. This sounds like a cost cutting programme rather than what is in the child's best interests. I have heard directly from employees in other Councils where this has been introduced – they are classroom assistants who are changing nappies. I certainly don't think this is appropriate.

- I welcome the proposed new changes at Bo'ness Academy as they would allow pupils with ASN to attend their local facility. I had not realised that this proposal was only at consultation stage and it might not happen so the Public Meeting has cleared these issues up. I feel inclusion can only bring positives to a school. Autistic children are unique and as much can be learned from them as they can learn from others.
- I think ASN units can work well within a mainstream school as long as it is managed correctly and the proper preparation and plans are put in place. There needs to be appropriate staff members specifically for the unit, in addition to staff already at the school, not pulling away any resources from the school. I understand from the consultation that this is separate central funding and will NOT have any impact on the Academy's budget. Where it is located within the school is important for the ASN young people so they can access the unit easily, and through a separate door, only for them, so they are not coming out with the large numbers from the main school which can cause a lot of stress. This can lead to problems of making the different, but weighing it up with the stress it can cause, think a separate door is essential. Two classrooms will be required along with office space and a breakout room and it is essential that the work is put into the classes and breakout room so that they are correctly presented for the young people e.g. with separate work stations if required for needs and suitable lighting, chill out area etc. Getting the right mix of their own classes and mixing with the mainstream can be difficult and the teachers presently at the school need a full picture of what this will involve and will need appropriate training on autism, using different communication methods etc. The preparation for this is essential and needs everyone to be on board with it. At the consultation it was stated that it will be a 3:1 ratio for the ASN Unit, but what happens if one young person is then attending mainstream classes? How will staff be split so that a ration in the mainstream classes is suitable and the mainstream staff are not put under extra pressure with this? I understand units do already run within Falkirk Council and it is essential to get feedback from all these units about what works well and what needs improvement or changing and what can be done better. Mainstream staff within the school will require additional training on autism, using different communication methods and other training as required. First aiders in the school will also require additional training such as for epilepsy and any other needs that the ASN young people have. Again it is essential that this this comes out of central funding and does not impact on the already tight budgets within the Academy. I know it is hard to predict what level of ASN will attend the school, but does it go down the route of children with very challenging behaviour, as I know this can then lead to injuries to staff, not only ASN staff, but mainstream school staff as well having relevant training on holding children safely, such as CALM training. More cost again to central, NOT the school. Once again the point needs to be pushed that the correct preparation and planning is essential for this to succeed and that the funding is in place through CENTRAL funding, NOT the school budget. All of this is essential for it to work for all involved, staff in school, pupils presently in the school but especially for the young people with ASN. GIRFEC should be at the forefront of this whole process.
- I think it is a great opportunity for children with additional support needs to attend mainstream school. I am always a huge supporter of such concepts as they can have a positive effect on the other children, I have witnessed this at Grange Primary. I am sure safeguards will be in place to ensure minimal disruption to other children's learning.
- Yes as I have a son with additional needs and a high level of support in Bo'ness Academy.

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- Twelve spaces over the entire secondary education system within Falkirk Council does not sound adequate.
- I agree that extra provision will be beneficial for children within Falkirk who have additional support needs. It is important that these children get the correct support at the right time to fulfil their potential. It is vital, however, that these ASN classes are adequately staffed and resourced so that there is no impact on the children who are attending mainstream education in these schools. For example, during periods of staff absence, it is important that additional staff are available, rather than utilising staff from the mainstream part of the school to provide cover.
- My only concern is that only six spaces will be available.
- I think it's a great plan, my son spends a great deal of his school time in the EP unit. This could hopefully get him into more mainstream classes later in his studies.
- All children deserve the opportunity to learn whilst feeling safe and included. These classes would help the children on the autism spectrum, children with social anxiety or other conditions feel like they fit in, that they're not alone and can achieve the same things as any other child.
- I feel very strongly that this should go ahead, it is definitely needed. My son has autism and I feel he has been let down by his primary school and in other departments. This would benefit him and other children with autism and I feel that Bo'ness Academy would be a great choice of school to be allowed the opportunity to do this. More needs to be done for kids with autism.
- I'm concerned for the following reasons:
  - 1) Disruption to the school/class/lessons during construction/adapting for new classes' exit.
  - 2) That support staff time will be used by Supported Learning children.
  - 3) Use of current budget/time to train BA staff to enable admin/additional care support for the Supported Learning children.
  - 4) Disruption to class when the children are partially integrated into BA classes due to additional learning needs or misbehaviour.

Basically, concerned that any support, lessons, facilities or resources are consumed by this additional department and BA pupils suffer as a result.
- I don't agree because these pupils can be disruptive and badly behaved in school. As a parent I would rather not have an Additional Needs class in Bo'ness Academy.
- The evening consultation meeting at Bo'ness Academy was quite disappointing. Prior to meeting parents I would have expected more research and analysis to have been done on how other schools manage their unit - what FC had learned this far - to be fed back to parents. There really was no real tangible info given about the proposal. Much more investigation needs to be done so that parents know what changes need to be made to Bo'ness Academy e.g. structural, procedural. How will the lighting/noise issues which may negatively impact on these young people be addressed? In theory this could be a good idea however given budget restraints I would not expect current students to be disadvantaged. Currently our medical member of staff is contracted for 17 hours a week. This is insufficient at present and the pressures on her will be increased if this Unit is implemented. Support teachers have been reduced but staff may very well need more help when ASN pupils are integrated to mainstream. Do the proposed schools receive special dispensation to employ extra mainstream staff?



Can you guarantee that no staff/funds will be taken from the Rector's resources at any time for this Unit?

- Units similar to Grangemouth High would be more beneficial.
- Having had experience of the enhanced provision unit at primary school, this proposal concerns me. In my experience, when the children attending this unit access the mainstream environment, they can be very disruptive, sometimes violent and display inappropriate, often dangerous, behaviour. This can have a major impact on the other children in the class. I feel that teachers and pupils already have enough disruption to deal with. I doubt very much that there will be enough suitably qualified staff employed to manage this unit. If it was to go ahead, the school would need assurances that there would be enough qualified staff in place per pupil, not only at the outset but permanently, and that these posts would not be the victim of 'budget cuts' once the unit is in place. I would also like assurances that there would be no detrimental impact to mainstream pupils.
- This is an important step towards realising children's rights to a mainstream education in line with Scottish legislation and the UNCRC. However, all such developments must be adequately resourced in order to provide an education that meets the needs of these children.

#### **b) Other Members of the Public**

No additional comments received with formal responses.

### **Responses from those affiliated with Moray Primary School.**

#### **Pro-forma responses and e-mails**

The written comment attached to responses received from those affiliated with Moray Primary School is shown below:

#### **i) From Groups and Organisations:**

No additional comments received with formal responses.

#### **ii) From Individuals:**

##### **a) Parents**

- My first point I would like to make is that I was only aware of the public meeting for this via a group call text from my son's school three hours prior to the meeting. Unfortunately this is definitely not enough time for parents to organise childcare to be able to attend. It should have been publicised much better and parents with children with ASD should have been lettered. I wanted to be there to hear what the proposals were and give feedback and points in person. We are very lucky to have our son in an EP class, which he is thriving in. He has built up a very good relationship with his teacher we can see him learning and interacting well. My main worry is that yes, I agree that there should be more provision made available for children on the spectrum but I worry that my son could be moved into a class exclusively for children with ASD. My son is enjoying being in his small EP class with a variety of children with different needs and having access to his mainstream class when appropriate. Children with ASD are individually different. After all, it is a very broad spectrum. It's a well-known saying in the autism community "If you've met one person with autism, you've met one person with autism" (Dr. Stephen Shore).



This leads to my second point and main worry. It would be catastrophic to my son if he was moved from the class he's in to a different class, style of teaching structure or area of the school. This can be a major issue for many children/people on the spectrum. I made enquiries when I heard about the meeting but my son's teacher was unaware of what was happening or being proposed either. I would appreciate if a copy of the minutes for the meeting could be forwarded to myself or if it could be pointed out where I could obtain them.

#### **b) Other Members of the Public**

No additional comments received with formal responses.

### **Responses from those affiliated with Sacred Heart Primary School.**

The written comment attached to responses received from those affiliated with Sacred Heart Primary School is shown below:

#### **Pro-forma responses and e-mails**

##### **i) From Groups and Organisations:**

No additional comments received with formal responses.

##### **ii) From Individuals:**

###### **a) Parents**

- I feel this is a good opportunity for children to be supported in a non-stressful environment that is over-stimulated. This enables children to remain in the mainstream and striving for Nat Levels, similar to other children. This will also help class teachers enabling them to spend more time with children.

###### **b) Other Members of the Public**

No additional comments received with formal responses.

### **Responses from those affiliated with Larbert High School.**

The written comments attached to responses received from those affiliated with Larbert High School are shown below:

#### **Pro-forma responses and e-mails**

##### **i) From Groups and Organisations:**

No additional comments received with formal responses.

##### **ii) From Individuals:**

###### **a) Parents**

- Something must be put in place for children. I have been battling for years. In order for anything to work you must listen to parents and the children (which is not happening now), even primary school and secondary schools are not listening and

this adds to the child's anxiety. It will be too late for my daughter though. But hopefully not others.

- My son has been physically assaulted by a boy with ASN. The warning systems and methods to deal with bad behaviour are clearly ineffective and I think separate ASN units/schools are needed to support children with behaviour issues such as this boy. There are huge issues in the capacity primary schools have as it is, so I would definitely not support an ASN class at this school specifically.
- I feel this is too late in coming! My son has left high school. He has traits of autism, dyslexia and a speech and language disorder. The school did not have the right amount of additional support to give him what he needed. He struggled and had to work very hard to achieve the grades he did. The school, at times, were unable to understand what he needed as they are not equipped, or do not understand, what children with these difficulties need. His school's Head of Learning Support was unable to give him the help needed in classes (i.e. a scribe or reader) due to cuts! This is much needed for children with support needs to help them achieve their full potential.
- It should be in all schools and should include FASD as well, given that a lot of these children have got needs within the autistic spectrum.
- I believe they would benefit many children like my son, the greater the support the better prepared they will be going into adult life.
- The Northfield Unit at Denny High School has served its children with severe, specific learning needs very well. Some of these pupils integrate within the mainstream classes and others do not and this is managed on the needs and what is best for the individual child. A specialist class dedicated to the specific needs of individual children will be far more suitable learning environment for those pupils than mainstream classes. Being in a class within a mainstream school will enable them to integrate where possible, whereas a specialist school does not offer this flexibility.
- The primary schools involved are closer to Grangemouth High School than Larbert so why is the proposal for a further away school? Surely the scale of Larbert High is great enough without further development? There is a huge problem with traffic as it is without additional pupils attending this school. Children with additional needs should be in a calm environment, not sent to the largest and busiest school in the district: it is not suitable for them.
- While I think that having separate classes for children with more severe ASN is a great idea, this will only accommodate a small proportion of children with varying degrees of ASN. I feel that alongside this, there should also be more Support for Learning Assistants in place in the mainstream to support teachers with ASN in the classroom and providing better inclusion children with less severe ASN.
- This is needed for the pupils to get what they need and in turn prevent disruption of the mainstream class they may already be in - through no fault of anyone's except the fact there is nowhere else for them to be taught.
- Unclear as to what is meant by "significant" ASN. As far as we have seen, those whom I would consider requiring "significant" ASN are well catered for in EP (although it is clear that more places are required). Our experience is that when lesser support is required, none is available. It appears to be an "all or nothing" approach to support. If a child is academically capable and well behaved, their other issues are ignored. It does not appear that these extra classes will tackle these problems. Whilst I welcome more classes, I would implore the council to consider the children like mine who require minimal intervention to greatly improve

their educational experience. Perhaps more ASN assistants and teachers in existing schools to assist children who do not need a special class, but who benefit from time outside of class.

- I think it is a positive step forward, kids with ASN should be "included" and not be "excluded". These kids need to be integrated into the mainstream where possible. To remove them completely can only cause problems for them in later life. Yes they need to learn in smaller groups, away from distraction, but they also need to learn how to interact with their peers in the mainstream too, this is a very important part in their development growing up.
- All schools should already have these. My son's education has suffered greatly because he found school to be too much. There were too many changes throughout the day. No fault of his own. It has been over a year since he was last in a classroom and he receives next to no formal education. He has lost out on so much. So much more can, and should, be done. He didn't have a say on which school he went to, neither did I. It is important pupils who had high attainment in primary school are also considered to receive ASN provisions upon moving to secondary school.
- Any support that is given to children with ASN can only have a positive outcome and give them skills and understanding to carry through to their adult life. Where the space can be found is another matter, given how oversubscribed most schools are in this council area.
- I think it would be a great benefit to the children who need a bit of extra support.
- I am delighted that it is publicly recognised that there is an increasing number of children identified with ASN. The proposal to open classes for ASN begs a few questions. Do you have enough teachers with the knowledge and ability to directly teach these children? Also, ASN is an umbrella term for a number of different issues/handicaps lumped into the convenient "diagnosis" of ASN with different children presenting a range of different issues. Are children with, more specifically, reading difficulties going to be in the same class as those with writing difficulties? If so, how can one teacher direct a number of different/learning strategies to a class with students of mixed abilities? Surely either children with specific problems only get a portion of the teaching day targeted to their specific needs and, if this is the case, how is this better than the current situation? More importantly the majority of teachers are only competent in traditional teaching methods, the ability to teach children with, for example, dyslexia is surely specialist rather than generalist, therefore where are you going to recruit teachers with specific skills in teaching the various problems?
- I would be very upset if my son had to be moved to another school as a result of this consultation. He is very settled where he is at the moment and they are on top of his complex needs.
- I fully support this idea as it ensures pupils with ASN are given the appropriate pace, style and support, whilst allowing class teachers to focus on 'mainstream' learning.
- I would have liked to see the inclusion of more primary schools. I have a child with ASN who receives no enhanced provision presently.
- My daughter has been attending additional support at school for two years. The Additional Support teacher has been amazing and my daughter has come on amazingly with her help and support. I can't thank the staff at her school enough so yes, I propose these additional classes for our schools for the children of Falkirk who may be struggling and need help.

- I am delighted to learn about the consultation for these specialist classes within Larbert High School. Personally, I think this is well overdue for a school of this size with the amount of primary schools in the area feeding into this high school. My son has been diagnosed with ASN and currently receives enhanced provision at his primary school. Recently we have had meetings regarding which high school would meet his needs best, the options were Denny High, Grangemouth High and Larbert High. Our son was adamant that he wanted to go to the same high school as his friends; we agree that this is extremely important as we want him to be friends with his peers in his own community. It has been a very stressful time for our son but, fortunately, it has now been arranged that he will attend Larbert High with the correct level of support to be put in place and he is very relieved about this decision. Despite the specialist classes opening in August 2018, this may not suit our son. He would prefer to be in a mainstream environment but with "discreet" support. Our main concern as parents is the level of training that the teachers and SLA staff receive in dealing with pupils with additional needs. The nature of his ASN makes it easy for teachers to forget that he has them. In our experience at primary level, many of the situations that arise with our son within school could have been avoided if he had been given the correct support and understanding. Even after TAC meetings when suggestions are still ignored, not followed through or not communicated to staff. We do appreciate the extra support that he receives and he has good relationships with the teachers and support staff he works with. We know our son can be challenging but in our opinion a lot of situations have spiralled out of control unnecessarily. I don't think this should be a question of "IF" a specialist class will be opened within Larbert High but "WHEN".
- I feel there is a real need for greater support on the autism spectrum so this is a great proposal. However, I also feel that is important to address also those on the spectrum that would not be determined as having significant ASN but do not also need additional support due to autism. My daughter has been really well supported in her primary school for her needs and would hope that she will continue to get this at high school so she can reach her potential. However, I am aware that there are many children with similar requirements who do not get the support they need. Although not having significant ASN, they do have ASN and require more additional support than standard mainstream teaching allows. Having said that this proposal is so welcomed and I am really pleased that this will help these children.
- Yes it is needed. I'm surprised that ASN support for behaviour issues which are prevalent across establishments are not referred to. This specialist support is much needed. I am equally surprised that the already high accommodation of Larbert High has been identified as a venue.
- I agree that the area desperately needs more provision for full ASN classes. I wouldn't say it is the perfect solution as having four or more classes each would make for a nicer community feel but I like having more schools over a wider area so many can be close to home. None are particularly near my house so my son would not be near enough to home to feel part of the general school community, but if more can have that then all the better. We all love my son's current school and the care it provides, he is physically fit but has high needs and the security of the wing is ideal for him, I would hope the new classes would be similar.
- My son has been in enhanced provision through all of primary school so far and I feel this system works well for him. He has a twin sister and him and I both hope that he will continue onto high school with her and his friends.
- Excellent to hear the Council are looking to support the children in this sector. My son is partially excluded from his school classes due to escalating behaviour, so it is reassuring to note that recognition is being given to the needs of these children and that they still deserve an education also.

- I am pleased that this proposal is being considered, as a parent it is a daunting prospect to taxi/bus my child, who has autism, to an advanced provision school, away from his peers and isolate him further. I hope this goes ahead!
- I agree absolutely that there is a strong need for classes to be opened for pupils with ASN. I've been helping as a learning support volunteer. I can see enormous variation in knowledge and skills among pupils of the same class. Clearly there are kids in every class who cannot cope with the demands of the school program. They can make more progress in a specialised class.
- I worry my child would not cope well with any more change in moving to another of the proposed schools. Would the new provisions be for pupils who are just being referred?
- My child is planning to attend our local high school. However, they have been experiencing considerable difficulties in coping with mainstream teaching and through consultation with the appropriate academic and council support mechanisms, are currently being assessed for an ASN. Through discussion we have been advised that it would be in their interests to attend Denny High School's Northfield Unit. However we have serious concerns that this will only exacerbate their current difficulties with considerable negative impact to them socially, emotionally and mentally. Our child has spent years building friendships and relationships within their peer group, all of which will be transitioning and moving to the same high school. It is critical for our child's development that they are able to remain within this mainstream community as they transitions into high school. With an ASN diagnosis, it's very important for us to minimise change and ensure developmental growth in a peer group that they are comfortable in. In addition to this, we have a younger child, who will also be planning to attend our local high school when they come of age. To have one child attend Denny and one at our local high school will add to the confusion and difficulties we will already have to face in caring for our child with ASN. As laid out by the Scottish Government which targets to 'get it right for every child', it's critical that the Additional Support Units in the schools mentioned in the proposal are successful and that they allow Falkirk Council Children's Services to 'get it right' for both of my children.
- I would have significant concerns for pupils with major ASN being placed in such a large high school setting such as Larbert High or any other high school. I would fear for their safety and wellbeing and think the primary school is a good option but have misgivings about high school proposals. I think a main placement into Carrongrange but with maybe outreach facilities being provided may be a better option or attendance into some classes if appropriate. This may not work either though due to the needs of the individual pupils. Larbert High is so big with so many pupils if my child had ASN I would worry about them.
- The presumption of mainstream education should be paramount with access to as much mainstream classes as possible, and not just for social time. Children in provisions should be supported to receive their full academic potential so the gap with peers in mainstream classes in literacy and numeracy is minimised. Provisions should always seek to return children to mainstream following a period of tailored intervention and not hold pupils in units indefinitely. Provisions should focus on identifying and addressing barriers to learning for individual pupils. Clear criteria should be set for eligibility for entry to provisions and also for the return to mainstream classes. Central education management should quality assure each enhanced provision and actively monitor how they are meeting the needs of individual children and assess the evidence for progress in addressing each pupils' additional support needs. This should not be devolved solely to head teachers to ensure equity of support and consistent practice across all provisions. Any



increase in additional support for learners facing barriers to learning is welcome and will benefit all pupils within schools.

**Other Members of the Public**

No additional comments received with formal responses.



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## APPENDIX B: MINUTES

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## Consultative Document

### Public Meeting at Easter Carmuir Primary School on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2017

#### In attendance from the Council:

David Mackay (Head of Education) (DM)  
Gill Clark (Additional Support Needs Service Manager) (GC)  
Aileen Leishman (Minute Taker) (AL)

#### Further attendees:

6 members of the public  
Brian McLaren (Head Teacher, Easter Carmuir Primary School) (BM)

#### Introductions

Mr Mackay welcomed everyone to the meeting then proceeded to the presentation.

#### Presentation:

- Background for the requirement for the consultation.
- Detailed reasons why initial decision was taken to consider developing further bases to support children and young people with autistic spectrum disorder and language and communication needs.
- Overview of the whole consultation process and timelines involved
- A copy of the presentation was also distributed to attendees.

#### Questions and Statements

- There was a question from Brian McLaren about children who are provided a place in the provision being on the school roll and a statement from the Head Teacher about children having a sense of belonging and community with the families of the children feeling connected to the school. He noted this was the school endeavour with all children, including those who attend the Enhanced Provision unit already within the school.
- There was one question from a member of the public who noted that her question was not related to this consultation and the individual aspects of this were dealt with separately. Linked to this question, DM did provide a broad overview of the current Team Around the Child processes for planning to meet a child's additional support needs. The spectrum of different resources and provisions were outlined with an emphasis on the variety of different provisions for individual needs
- DM asked if the broad proposal being considering for Easter Carmuir Primary School was mostly acceptable to those present and all responses were supportive.
- Brian McLaren noted there was continued work to build the wider school community, external to the school, to be understanding of this nature of additional support needs and approaches required to meet their needs.
- Those present were reminded they could complete the online survey or provide views in written format and encourage others to respond to the consultation.
- Those present were informed that further engagement with the school community will take place if the proposal was agreed, for a provision in Easter Carmuir Primary School or elsewhere.

Mr. Mackay thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 6.45pm

## Consultative Document

### Public Meeting at Bo'ness Academy on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2017

#### In attendance from the Council:

David Mackay (Head of Education) (DM)  
Gill Clark (Additional Support Needs Service Manager) (GC)  
Aileen Leishman (Minute Taker) (AL)

#### Further attendees:

15 members of the public  
Steve Dougan (Head Teacher, Bo'ness Academy) (SD)  
Carole Anne Morrison (Resource Manager, Bo'ness Academy)  
Stewart Maxwell, Education Scotland

#### Introductions

Mr Mackay welcomed everyone to the meeting then proceeded to the presentation.

#### Presentation:

- Background for the requirement for the consultation.
- Detailed reasons why initial decision was taken to consider developing further bases to support children and young people with autistic spectrum disorder and language and communication needs.
- Overview of the whole consultation process and timelines involved
- A copy of the presentation was also distributed to attendees.

#### Questions and Statements:

- A member of the public asked: To what degree will this unit impact on the current staff's teaching? DM responded that the new resources would be fully staffed and that the current teachers would not be impacted by the proposal.
- A member of the public asked, Will the council provide extra funding for the school to provide school staff with PDP? DM responded yes, in line with current allocation formula based on staff numbers.
- A member of the public asked: Does this PDP training need to be done before the proposed unit opens or is it just a rolling programme? DM responded, a number of colleagues are already engaging in training, this programme will continue to be rolled out over time.
- A member of the public asked: Will there be more staff brought into the unit? DM responded, yes.
- A member of the public stated: I think it is actually potentially really good in that there are children in Bo'ness who need this level of provision and currently have to leave Bo'ness going through. A couple of questions – there's been quite a lot of drop in resource at the centre in the last few years. I was refreshing my memory by looking at a couple of budgets last night and it seems to me that one of the things, with two new units starting up in secondary and a number of primary schools, there's going to be a lot of pull on it. Is there any plan to reinstate some of the posts? I know a lot of expertise has walked out the door.
- A member of the public asked: Is there going to be any work done to prepare the school in advance for this? DM responded yes, we will be fully engaging with each establishment that agreement is given to proceed.
- Statement from a member of the public: This is practically the first PFI school in Scotland. There are lots and lots of things that were learned from the building of the four Falkirk PFI schools and 20 years on we're still living with those lessons that were learned in other buildings but not this one. There are lots of things about this building that are not particularly autism friendly.
- A member of the public asked, Are these two classrooms going to be, one is going to be from first to third (year) and from fourth to sixth (year) or is it going to be right across the school? DM responded, each school will determine how to progress the development to meet their own local needs.
- A member of the public asked, Is it (the classes) going to be (for) kids who are already here, or kids who are just coming up to the school? DM referred to his answer to the previous question.

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- A member of the public asked, Pupils who are already in the school who already get pupil support, they're not going to be affected in any way by this? DM responded, that is correct.
- A member of the public asked: How is this funded? DM responded, this will be funded from within existing resources arising from efficiency savings elsewhere in the service.
- A member of the public asked: What consultation are you doing with children and young people in the school now? DM responded, this was the first of a number of engagements and pupils will be fully involved as the project develops.
- A member of the public asked, Will pupils who are already at the Academy get some sort of understanding about autism and why there might be kids that are appearing to be a bit strange and doing certain things that are a bit odd? DM responded, information and advice will be provided to pupils in advance of the provisions commencing.
- Those present were reminded they could complete the online survey or provide views in written format and encourage others to respond to the consultation.
- Those present were informed that further engagement with the school community will take place if the proposal was agreed, for a provision in Bo'ness Academy or elsewhere.

Mr. Mackay thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 6.50pm.

## Consultative Document

### Public Meeting at Moray Primary School on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2017

#### In attendance from the Council:

David Mackay (Head of Education) (DM)  
Gill Clark (Additional Support Needs Service Manager) (GC)  
Aileen Leishman (Minute Taker) (AL)

#### Further attendees:

4 members of the public  
Stewart Maxwell, Education Scotland  
Ghislaire Tait, Head Teacher (attended part meeting)

#### Presentation:

- Background for the requirement for the consultation.
- Detailed reasons why initial decision was taken to consider developing further bases to support children and young people with autistic spectrum disorder and language and communication needs.
- Overview of the whole consultation process and timelines involved
- A copy of the presentation was also distributed to attendees.

#### Questions and Statements

- A member of the public noted support but raised concerns about the impact the new provisions would have on children accessing current enhanced provisions and children being moved. Ensuring children access provisions in their own communities is extremely important.
- A member of the public raised concerns about local government being underfunded and the impact this will have on resources. Comments were made in relation to maintaining, developing and investing in staff and responding to sick leave. The impact cuts are having on support for learning provision was also raised. DM commented that resources for Enhanced Provisions are continually being looked at. Needs have changed and a review is taking place out with the consultation. The new resources will not impact on the school's existing enhanced provision. It will be resourced separately; savings are being reinvested. Almost all training is twilight, evening or weekend to avoid staff being taken off the floor. Gill Clark advised that In Service days are to be used differently, particularly for Support for Learning Assistants and Support for Learning Teachers.
- DM acknowledged the value of Support for Learning Assistants and their wealth of knowledge, skills and experience.
- A member of the public stated that there is a lack of support and knowledge. It shouldn't be about parents fighting. DM responded that developing the new base will support the knowledge and sharing of information across the school and the Council.
- A member of the public described her experiences about the lack of information and support. Further comments were made not relevant to the consultation and Gill Clark offered to respond at the end of the session.
- A member of the public raised further concerns that education is under resourced with support staff. The right amount of people are required who understand children and ensure there is a joined up approach. It's not about qualifications. DM stated that individuals with these particular skills will be supported further.
- A member of the public questioned the accommodation and the Early Years expansion and asked if schools have been chosen to avoid overcrowding. DM commented that schools that appear to have capacity to cope with the additional demands have been looked at. Work is taking place to ensure one project does not impact on the other. Partnership working will take place in school to accommodate the resource. There is space attached to the building.
- A member of the public asked when the provision will be ready and DM noted that the aspiration is to have at least one of the resources open by August 2018.
- A member of the public noted concerns around the continuum of support post school particularly for Carrongrange pupils. DM noted that the senior phase is being restructured and linking to college and further training experiences is to take place whilst taking into account existing resource challenges.

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- A member of the public raised concerns about the impact insufficient funding will have on community resources which supports families and Grangemouth High School. DM advised that the increase in enhanced provisions in Bo'ness Academy and Larbert High School will release pressure on mainstream provision within Grangemouth and Denny. This release in capacity will allow local communities to be serviced and enable an equal distribution across Falkirk. The current provisions will continue to run as they are. Grangemouth High school isn't changing but, over time, there could be a reduction in numbers. By giving a more locally based provision children will not have to travel as far.
- Points were raised about meeting the needs of all children with additional support needs. DM outlined that, as a result of the inclusion review, a wider exercise is to take place to look at the broader range of needs. Further engagement is taking place with school staff to maintain and identify wider training needs.

Mr. Mackay thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 6.55pm

## Consultative Document

### Public Meeting at Sacred Heart Primary School on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2017

#### In attendance from the Council:

David Mackay (Head of Education) (DM)  
Gill Clark (Additional Support Needs Service Manager) (GC)  
Aileen Leishman (Minute Taker) (AL)

#### Further attendees:

7 members of the public  
Jean Rae (Head Teacher, Sacred Heart Primary School) (JR)

#### Introductions

Mr Mackay welcomed everyone to the meeting then proceeded to the presentation.

#### Presentation:

- Background for the requirement for the consultation.
- Detailed reasons why initial decision was taken to consider developing further bases to support children and young people with autistic spectrum disorder and language and communication needs.
- Overview of the whole consultation process and timelines involved
- A copy of the presentation was also distributed to attendees.

#### Questions and Statements

- A member of the public noted her support for provision of this nature and asked a question about increasing the number of Support for Learning Assistants employed to work generally across education establishments. DM outlined the proposed staffing model for the proposed provisions and noted that there had been a cut in Support for Learning Assistants in past sessions due to budget pressures and it continues to be a challenging time with budget pressures that makes it unpredictable to know if further cuts may be required in this area, however he noted that last year, in the most recent financial year, elected members did make a decision to give us an increase in Support for Learning staff. There was a follow-up question to clarify if Support for Learning staff would be moved to the proposed provisions. DM noted that staff are not moving to support this.
- A member of the public noted his support for the proposed expansion but questioned the adult:child ratios. DM explained the ratios.
- DM outlined the possible phased approach to implementing the new provision and how the transition of children into the provision may be designed. Gill Clark noted that staff within current provisions may relocate to the proposed provisions as part of the wider recruitment to ensure we redistribute the knowledge and experience that we have got within the Council.
- A member of the public noted positivity about the proposal but recognised the work required and the possible impact of budget constraints along with the support needs and noted that this may be too challenging. DM acknowledged the challenges and also the commitment to have children educated within or nearer to their own communities, where possible.
- A member of the public asked about the age of young people to be supported and DM confirmed it was up to 18 years.
- There was one question from a member of the public who noted that her question was not related to this consultation and this was responded to.
- A member of the Parent Council asked about the accommodation within the school that would be used for the proposed provision and about the staffing and other budgetary aspects.
- Points were made about:
  - - strategies for children with ASD being supportive for a wider group of children so having multiple benefits for ASNs across the school
- This being a fantastic opportunity for the other children in the school to learn about social inclusion

- All of the strategies teachers would learn and gain from it that, you hope, would support everybody. Being more informed and aware, I would like to hope that it would improve all the education experiences.
- A member of the public asked about the teaching staff for this new class being ring-fenced. Teaching staff resources are stretched and there is a struggle to cover classes if a teacher is sick. Would a trained teacher within the school who has undergone some of this training be called in at short-notice to help cover? DM outlined the possible approach to be used when staff are absent. Redeployment from the centre can take place. The staffing complement across the Council will allow flexibility and mean resources are diverted. The pressures on mainstream teaching was acknowledged both at a local and national level
- A Parent Council member suggested that a Parent Council representative from one of the existing provisions speaks to parents about the benefits to their school and their children. DM outlined that the consultation is enabling views and concerns to be heard. Overall the principles are being well received and the views are positive with questions and concerns relating to practical issues. The next stage involves planning the specifics in relation to individual schools.
- A member of the public asked about the budget. Would it be separate and would there be an additional budget to support needs in the new provision? DM noted that at Ladeside there is an additional staffing and resource budget. Existing resources are available and needs have been identified. Conversations are to take place with Finance; it may be recommended that provisions be introduced incrementally. Care is needed about spending Falkirk Council's residents' money.
- JR noted the benefits of learning from successful establishments.
- DM remarked on the schools that have similar established units
- A member of the public noted concerns about the risk of the work being pulled and money not being available to allow the Council to do what it needs to do.
- A member of the public asked if the children accessing the unit would be from Grangemouth. DM confirmed that, as far as possible, children with ASN would attend a school as close to their home as possible.

Mr. Mackay thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 6.45pm

## Consultative Document

### Public Meeting at Larbert High School on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2017

#### In attendance from the Council:

David Mackay (Head of Education) (DM)  
Gill Clark (Additional Support Needs Service Manager) (GC)  
Aileen Leishman (Minute Taker) (AL)

#### Further attendees:

23 members of the public  
Jon Reid (Head Teacher, Larbert High School) (JR)

#### Introductions

Mr Mackay welcomed everyone to the meeting then proceeded to the presentation.

#### Presentation:

- Background for the requirement for the consultation.
- Detailed reasons why initial decision was taken to consider developing further bases to support children and young people with autistic spectrum disorder and language and communication needs.
- Overview of the whole consultation process and timelines involved

#### Questions and Statements:

- You said that the majority of people from Ladeside go on to Carrongrange but you're opening a new facility within Larbert. Who are you expecting to go into that? Is it people who are currently in provision or is it kids who are in mainstream schools that just need that little bit more help but don't actually qualify for the likes of Ladeside? DM responded as children grow and develop their ASNs can change. Children need to be directed to the particular resource(s) that is required (for their ASNs).
- Within Falkirk we're looking for children and young people to be educated as close to home as possible; to be included in their local community as far as possible. DM asked if the individual was in agreement with this and they confirmed they were.
- DM outlined the research and knowledge of the Educational Psychologists in emphasising children and young people who remain within a local authority and community have better outcomes longer term.
- A member of the public asked what will happen to the ASD and MLD kids? Will they be supported in their local school as well? DM responded to note the change in the population for learners who require placement in Carrongrange School and the inclusion of more learners within mainstream schools with additional support. He noted that there would be further consideration and consultation of other natures of ASN provision that the Council need to consider in the coming years.
- Jon Reid noted that the school already has young people and children already with additional support needs and with autism within the school, so we're not starting from scratch here. We've got a lot of staff who are very experienced, highly experienced with (supporting) a whole range of additional support needs and really what we would be doing is just build on that and extend the provision dependent upon additional support that we don't have at the moment.
- A member of the public asked about the timing of the units opening and would there be children in primary seven currently moving into the unit(s). DM noted that the timescales are advantageous and that until the report is considered by the education committee in January 2018 this is still a proposal. If agreed, there would then be further planning about the timescales for specific schools based on the modifications and readiness. Where children in primary seven need planning for provision for S1, this should continue with the current processes and provisions currently available as it is not possible to confirm the availability of these new resources.
- Obviously we (Carrongrange School) had to move to Grangemouth because Larbert High didn't have enough rooms. So to find another two rooms and with the capacity of the school getting bigger and bigger, how is that going to impact? DM responded that Planning and Resources department were working with the school and wider Children's Services staff in planning for the pupil population over the next





three to five years and this provision could be included as well in the space available.

- Is there anything else we could be doing as parents or carers to give you guys the support you need to get this through? DM responded that those present could engage with local elected Members as it would be them ultimately making a decision on the proposal from the advice and recommendations made to them either by children's services or directly from the views of the community.
- DM asked in terms of the proposal, are you broadly in favour of it? Members of the public answered in the affirmative.

Mr. Mackay thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 6.50pm.

## Consultative Document

### Public Meeting at Bo'ness Academy on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2017

#### In attendance from the Council:

David Mackay (Head of Education) (DM)  
Aileen Leishman (Minute Taker) (AL)

#### Further attendees:

5 members of the public  
Steve Dougan (Head Teacher, Bo'ness Academy) (SD)

#### Introductions

Mr Mackay welcomed everyone to the meeting then proceeded to the presentation.

#### Presentation:

- Background for the requirement for the consultation.
- Detailed reasons why initial decision was taken to consider developing further bases to support children and young people with autistic spectrum disorder and language and communication needs.
- Overview of the whole consultation process and timelines involved

#### Questions and Statements:

- A member of the public asked, Is this just for autism at this school? DM responded, yes.
- DM – In terms of the consultation, is that something broadly that you think would be a good idea? Answer – Members of the public responded affirmatively to the question.
- A member of the public asked: Does Falkirk Council know how many kids within the Falkirk region have special needs? DM responded, yes, we have comprehensive figures relating to the range and number of needs.
- A member of the public asked: If this goes ahead it will be next year it will start? Next August?
- A member of the public asked: Do you have autistic kids here already? DM responded, yes, we have a number of children and young people with a range of needs already attending mainstream secondary schools both here and across the other 7 schools.
- A member of the public asked, Are they going to build another unit here or are they going to use classrooms already here? DM responded, we are currently engaging with the school and the planning department to establish the specific requirements for the school.
- Those present were reminded they could complete the online survey or provide views in written format and encourage others to respond to the consultation.
- Those present were informed that further engagement with the school community will take place if the proposal was agreed, for a provision in Bo'ness Academy or elsewhere.

Mr. Mackay thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 6.50pm.

## APPENDIX C: REPORT BY EDUCATION SCOTLAND

Below is a copy of the full report submitted by Education Scotland to Falkirk Council. The report's purpose was to weigh up the merits of introducing the ASN classes outlined in the proposal against any potential drawbacks:

**Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by Falkirk Council to establish specialist classes in three primary schools and two secondary schools to provide high quality education provision for children and young people who have social and communication difficulties and autism.**

### 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* and the amendments contained in the *Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014*. The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of Falkirk Council's proposal to establish specialist classes in three primary schools and two secondary schools to provide high quality education provision for children and young people who have social and communication difficulties and autism. 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 a copy of 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. Where a council is proposing to close a school, it needs to follow all legislative obligations set out in the 2010 Act, including notifying Ministers within six working days of making its final decision and explaining to consultees the opportunity they have to make representations to Ministers.

#### 1.2 HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for children and young people of Moray Primary School, Sacred Heart Primary School, Easter Carmuir's Primary School, Bo'ness Academy and Larbert High School; 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 26 September 2017 and 27 September 2017 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

## Consultative Document

- visits to the site of Moray Primary School, Sacred Heart Primary School, Easter Carmuir Primary School, Bo'ness Academy and Larbert High School, including discussion with relevant consultees.

## 2. Consultation Process

2.1 Falkirk Council undertook the consultation on its proposal(s) with reference to the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* and the amendments in the *Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014*.

2.2 The formal consultation ran from 13 September 2017 to 10 November 2017. Public meetings were held on 21, 26 and 27 September 2017 and 3, 5 and 23 October 2017. In total, 60 members of the public attended the six public meetings. The proposal document was emailed to elected representatives. Parent Councils in each of the five schools were sent the consultation document and a pro-forma for responses. All relevant trade unions were consulted. In total, 107 individual responses to the consultation were received. Of the submissions, 92 (86%) were in favour of the proposal, 11 (10.3%) were against with four (3.7%) undecided. Benefits cited included the promotion of inclusive attitudes and improved social interaction by allowing young people with Additional Support Needs (ASN) to go to their local school or a school closer to their home. For those opposing the proposal, key concerns expressed included the potential for additional strain being placed on mainstream teaching staff and on existing teaching spaces. There were no responses from organisations such as parent bodies or trade unions. There was no response from the Catholic Church.

## 3. Educational Aspects of Proposal

3.1 Falkirk Council has identified an increase in demand to support children and young people with social communication difficulties and autism. The proposal has a number of clear educational benefits for children and young people with ASN. The proposal will offer children and young people with ASN the opportunity to be educated either in or closer to their local school. As a result, travel to existing specialist units will be reduced. Children and young people with ASN will benefit from being able to mix with their peers, friends and siblings. This will encourage inclusion. Children and young people with ASN will benefit from a differentiated curriculum which makes good use of social, communication and autism friendly strategies. The proposal offers scope to integrate support from the Speech and Language Therapy Service more effectively. This has the potential to benefit all children and young people attending these schools. Where appropriate, children and young people with ASN will have the opportunity to access mainstream learning experiences and environment and engage in whole school, extracurricular activities.

3.2 All parents, staff and children and young people from Moray Primary School, Sacred Heart Primary School, Easter Carmuir Primary School, Bo'ness Academy and Larbert High School who met HM Inspectors were supportive of the proposal. They saw a number of clear benefits for all children and young people attending the schools, including those with ASN. The proposal has the potential to encourage inclusion and tolerance and to increase children and young people's awareness of additional support needs. Teaching staff in the schools affected by the proposal welcomed the opportunity to engage in specialist training to improve their own professional practice.

3.3 The majority of staff and parents who met with HM Inspectors, whilst supporting the proposal, had a number of justifiable concerns should the proposal proceed. Falkirk Council has not provided clear detail in its consultation paper of how the proposal will be developed within the proposed timescale. Concerns were expressed about the need to ensure the location and access of accommodation best met the needs of children and young people with ASN. A major concern was the recruitment and

## **Consultative Document**

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training of suitably qualified and experienced staff in the proposed timescale and the potential impact on existing school staff if this was not successful. Another concern related to when transition arrangements for children and young people with ASN would commence to ensure they were suitably prepared to make a confident start in their new schools.

### **4. Summary**

Falkirk Council's proposal to establish specialist classes in three primary schools and two secondary schools has the potential to bring educational benefits to children and young people who have social and communication difficulties and or autism. The majority of stakeholders who submitted responses were supportive of the proposal.

It will allow Falkirk Council to respond to an identified increase in demand for ASN services. Children and young people with ASN will benefit from joining the school roll and being educated either in or closer to their local school, building a positive sense of inclusion. Where appropriate, children and young people with ASN will have the opportunity to access mainstream learning experiences and environment and engage in whole school, extracurricular activities. Children and young people with ASN will benefit from a differentiated and tailored curriculum. The proposal offers scope to integrate support from the Speech and Language Therapy Service more effectively. This has the potential to benefit all pupils attending these schools. In taking forward the proposal, the council needs to set out in detail how it will address the concerns raised during the consultation. These include, ensuring access to accommodation best meets the needs of children and young people with ASN, the recruitment, training and deployment of suitably qualified staff and ensuring that effective transition arrangements for children and young people are planned and implemented.

**HM Inspectors  
Education Scotland  
November 2017**



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## **APPENDIX D: CONSULTATIVE DOCUMENT**

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### **INCLUSION AND ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS IN FALKIRK: PROPOSALS FOR 2018 ONWARDS**

#### **A CONSULTATIVE DOCUMENT**

# 1 PROPOSAL

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**Background** Additional Support Needs arise from four main areas as defined in the Additional Support for Learning (Scotland) Act 2004:

- Learning environment
- Family circumstances
- Medical and disability
- Social, emotional and behavioural development

In practice, many children who have Additional Support Needs (ASN) experience them across more than one of these areas.

In Falkirk there has been a rise in the number of children with significant Additional Support Needs in education arising from:

- Social and communication difficulties
- Autism
- Complex needs arising from disability and learning factors

Falkirk's needs are in line with national trends. In addition there are significant challenges in ensuring that education provision and approaches are sufficiently high in quality to meet children's and young people's Additional Support Needs.

Currently 15 primary schools have Enhanced Provision and 3 have ASN for complex needs. Falkirk Council has identified an increase in demand to support children and young people with social communication difficulties and Autism Spectrum Disorder.

## Proposal

It is proposed to establish specialist classes in 3 primary schools and 2 secondary schools to provide high quality education for children and young people who have social and communication difficulties and Autism Spectrum Disorder. The Council aims to provide specialist provisions closer to home wherever reasonable or possible.

## Consultative Document

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### **Legislation and Current Policy**

Schools in the Falkirk Council area are open to pupils of all denominations, all faiths and none. The local authority is required to meet the ASN of all children for whom they are responsible and is required to consider a presumption of mainstream education. This reflects the duties outlined for local authorities in the:

- Education (Scotland) Act 1980.  
Education Scotland Act 1981
- Children Act 1998
- Standards in Scotland's Schools Act 2000
- Additional Support for Learning (Scotland) Act 2004 (amended 2009)
- Equalities Act 2010
- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2015
- Education (Scotland) Act 2016

The legislation, taken together, provides a range of duties on a local authority to provide adequate education for all children, and to presume that the child should be included in mainstream school. The legislation ensures that local authorities assess and make provision for the additional support needs of children and work in a coordinated approach with partner agencies to both meet children's needs and improve their outcomes.

### **Outcome of the Proposed Change**

The proposed change in the approach to Inclusion and meeting Additional Support Needs is intended to:

- Ensure each additional specialist provision will be in a position to offer a positive educational experience to children with significant ASN;
- Ensure children with significant ASN can have a suitable education and support within their local community;
- Reduce the pressure and demand for intake to existing specialist schools and units;
- The specialist knowledge and skills of the staff in the specialist provisions will benefit the young children and young people within the whole school;



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**Who Would Be Affected?** Pupils with significant ASN and their families will be affected as their education will be provided either in their local school or in one of the existing special schools. Staff, pupils and their families will benefit from the increased level of support within the school community.

**Date of Change** It is proposed that this change will come into effect for August 2018 onwards.

**Educational Benefits** It is proposed that the ASN classes based within the 3 primary schools and the 2 secondary schools will provide additional support for pupils whose needs arise from significant social and communication difficulties. The identified schools will need to have the capacity for 2 ASN classes per school with a maximum of 6 pupils in each. This will provide a total capacity of 60 places.

Pupils who are allocated a placement in the ASN classes in all 5 schools will join the school roll. ASN provision seeks wherever possible to enable pupils who require significant additional support to access the mainstream curriculum and environment. The provisions aim for children and young people to be included, engaged and involved as appropriate, in the wider life of the school.

All specialist provision within Falkirk is non-denominational. All ASN classes provide small group setting to provide:

- access to mainstream learning experiences and environment as appropriate and possible;
- integrated support from the Speech and Language Therapy Service
- significant differentiation of the curriculum using social, communication and autism friendly strategies;
- a visual approach to learning and communication
- a high ratio of teaching and support by staff who are skilled in supporting ASN
- associated with school communication difficulties.

All access to the council's specialist provision, whether by way of placing request or referral, is considered and determined by the council's Pupil Support Resources Group (PSRG). The referral to the PSRG can be made by; the child or young person's mainstream school and/or parent/carer placing a request.

Pupils may be allocated a place with the provision, subject to the council's placing arrangements. The PSRG assesses the referrals made and considers the information which will include;

- the specific needs of the pupils;
- the support strategies required in the learning environment;
- the existence or requirement of other agencies;
- existing levels of support with current school;
- recommendations from other agencies;
- team around the child meetings and the child's plan;

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## 2 CONSULTATION

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

A formal consultation is required for any proposal to change the Council's policy with respect to the constitution of a special class, not in a special school, and for the establishment of a new special school. This consultation is fully accords with the requirements of this legislation.

**Consultees**

During the consultation period, in accordance with legislative requirements, views are being sought from a range of interested parties including:

- the Parent Council or Combined Parent Councils of the 5 schools;
- the wider parent forum and the pupils at the 5 schools, the parents of any children expected by the local authority requiring a place at the identified provision within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper, in particular, the children in Nursery and Early Learning establishments within the localities;
- the staff of the 5 schools;
- the trade unions representative of the staff in affected schools;
- the community councils;
- elected members;
- Education Scotland;
- other local authorities where children attend Falkirk Council schools.

**Consultation Period**

The consultation is taking place over an 8 ½ week period between 13<sup>th</sup> September and 10<sup>th</sup> November 2017.

Five public meetings will be held on the following dates:

- Easter Carmuir Primary School on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2017 at 6 pm
- Bo'ness Academy on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2017 at 6 pm
- Moray Primary School on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2017 at 6 pm
- Sacred Heart Primary School on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2017 at 6 pm
- Larbert High School on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2017 at 6 pm

School staff, parents and carers of these schools will be informed of the dates and times of the public consultation meetings. These will also be published on the council website and social media feeds.

Officers of the Council will be present to discuss these proposals and there will be an opportunity for attendees to ask questions at the meeting.

**How to Respond**

Interested parties are encouraged to complete and return the response form which is attached to this proposal document. It asks some questions regarding the proposal, and provides an opportunity to discuss any concerns.

## Consultative Document

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### ***Following the Consultation***

Education Scotland will receive details of consultation responses and the public meetings and will provide Children's Services with a report within 3 weeks of the consultation end date.

Children's Services will then prepare a **consultation report** which will be published in **December 2017** on the council website and it will also be made available to read in libraries and in Children's Services HQ (Sealock House in Grangemouth).

The consultation report will be discussed by councillors at the Education Executive who will consider whether these proposed changes should go ahead.

### ***Contact Details***

If you would like to discuss these proposals or have any queries regarding the consultation process, please phone 01324 506600.

When completed, please return the attached response form or any further written submission about these proposals to:

Inclusion and Additional Support Needs Consultation,  
Children's Services,  
Sealock House,  
Inchyra Road,  
Grangemouth,  
FK3 9XB

or by email to [educ.consultation@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:educ.consultation@falkirk.gov.uk)



### 3 RESPONSE FORM

#### INCLUSION AND ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS IN FALKIRK: PROPOSALS FOR 2018

Name: .....

Address: .....

Contact Telephone Number: .....

Contact Email Address: .....

Name of Pupil(s) Concerned: .....

Name of School(s) Attended: .....

**Your Role (e.g. parent, pupil or organisation):** .....

Do you agree with the proposed change to open a class or classes for Additional Support Needs in the 3 mainstream primary and the 2 secondary schools? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you have any further comments on this proposal? (please continue overleaf if necessary)

Please complete and return this form by Friday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2017 to:

Inclusion and Additional Support Needs Consultation  
Children's Services  
Sealock House  
2 Inchyra Road  
Grangemouth FK3 9XB

Or by email to: [educ.consultation@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:educ.consultation@falkirk.gov.uk)