

**Glencorse Primary School****Report by Executive Director Children, Young People & Partnerships****Report for Decision****1 Recommendations**

Council is recommended to approve the following:

- i. the provision of primary education at Glencorse Primary School be discontinued;
- ii. the catchment areas of Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools be extended to include the Glencorse catchment area;
- iii. remaining pupils to have the choice of attending Mauricewood or Roslin Primary Schools, the nominated school to be considered the pupil's catchment school;
- iv. children residing in the Glencorse catchment area who in the future become of primary school age to be given the choice of attending Mauricewood or Roslin Primary Schools, and the nominated school to be considered their catchment school;
- v. school transport to be provided for all children affected, where there is no safe walking route to school and/or the distance from home to school is more than two miles.

**2 Purpose of Report/Executive Summary**

This report advises the outcome of the statutory consultation on the proposal to discontinue the provision of primary education at Glencorse Primary School.

Currently 78 primary-aged children reside in the Glencorse catchment area and attend a Midlothian Primary school, with only 7 pupils attending Glencorse Primary School. The Education Service considers that these children will benefit more from the wider range and breadth of learning experiences available to them within other learning environments and within a wider peer group at their age and stage. This will also ensure that the children will have parity of access to learning and wider opportunities.

The statutory consultation on the proposal was undertaken in the period from Thursday 24 September to Friday 13 November 2020. The report on the outcome of the consultation was published on 22 December 2020 and provides full details of the process undertaken, representations made and Education Scotland's report on the proposal.

**Date:** 8 January 2021

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### 3 Background

1. The *Education (Scotland) Act 1980* places a legislative duty on the Council to make adequate and efficient provision of school education across its area. This duty applies in respect of both the current school population and anticipated pattern of demand.
2. Section 3D of the *Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000* (as inserted by Section 2 of the *Education (Scotland) 2016 Act*) introduces a requirement on education authorities to carry out their duty to ensure the delivery of improvement in the quality of school education which is provided in the schools they manage, with a view to achieving the strategic priorities of the National Improvement Framework. It is, therefore, the duty of the education authority to ensure that the education it provides is directed to the development of the personality, talents and the mental and physical abilities of the children to their fullest potential.
3. In addition, Councils have a statutory duty to secure best value in terms of the *Local Government in Scotland Act 2003* by continuous improvement in performance of the local authority's functions, while maintaining an appropriate balance between quality and cost and having regard to economy, efficiency, effectiveness, equal opportunities and the achievement of sustainable development.
4. The school roll of Glencorse Primary School has fallen over recent years from 82 pupils in 1998 to 7 pupils in 2020/21. 78 primary-aged children currently reside in the area and attend a Midlothian Primary school, only 7 pupils currently attend Glencorse in one composite P4-P7 class. This is the third year where all families have decided to make a choice other than Glencorse for their children who are starting primary school, as a result, the school has had no Primary 1 intake since 2017.
5. Curriculum for Excellence is intended to nurture successful, effective, confident and responsible children, able to learn and utilise learning in a way that helps them reach their full potential and to respond to the increased variety and pace of change in today's and tomorrow's world.
6. Whilst the Education Service of Midlothian Council recognises the quality of education provision offered at Glencorse Primary School, it considers that the very small number of children attending Glencorse Primary School will benefit more from the wider range and breadth of learning experiences available to them within other learning environments and within a wider peer group at their age and stage. This will also ensure that the children will have parity of access to learning and opportunities offered within larger establishments with the remaining children being placed at alternative schools of their choice.
7. Council in August 2020 authorised the Executive Director Children, Young People & Partnerships to undertake statutory consultation on the proposal to permanently discontinue primary education at

Glencorse Primary School and to extend the catchment areas of the neighbouring primary schools to include the Glencorse catchment area.

8. The statutory consultation on the proposal was undertaken in the period from Thursday 24 September to Friday 13 November 2020. The report on the outcome of the consultation was published on 22 December 2020, Appendix B, and provides full details of the process undertaken, representations made and Education Scotland's report on the proposal. The report is available on the Council's website: [www.midlothian.gov.uk/glencorse](http://www.midlothian.gov.uk/glencorse).
9. The Education Service offered additional consultation sessions over and above the required statutory public meeting. Further information on these sessions can be found in the consultation report section 4. Two members of the public attended the public meeting held in Beeslack High School on Tuesday 27 October 2020. One member of the public attended the virtual public meeting held via Zoom on Thursday 29 October 2020.
10. A total of 99 responses to the consultation were received during the period of the statutory consultation, 96 survey responses and 3 other responses received by letter or email. Of the 96 responses to the survey, 31 agreed or strongly agreed with the proposal, 64 disagreed or disagreed strongly and 1 gave no opinion.
11. Education Scotland's Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HM Inspectors) prepare a report in accordance with the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 ("the 2010 Act"). The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of Midlothian Council's proposal. Appendix C.
12. The Education Scotland report summary states:  
 "Midlothian Council's proposal to close Glencorse Primary School and allow children and parents to choose Mauricewood or Roslin Primary Schools as their catchment school has potential educational benefits. HM Inspectors agree that a wider range and breadth of learning experiences will be available to children within other local schools. Children will be working with a larger peer group closely aligned to their age and stage. There will be more opportunities for after school activities and teamwork. The proposal will allow the council to deliver 'Best Value' through more efficient and effective use of resources. There is sufficient capacity and a strong willingness to include any children moving into both Roslin and Mauricewood Primary Schools. Should the council proceed with its plans to close Glencorse Primary School, it should continue to support children and parents who feel a sense of loss from the closure of a small school. Stakeholders value the existing relationships in the school community. Staff across the cluster should build on current good practice to support the transition of children displaced from Glencorse Primary School. The council should also work with parents to address their concerns over safe walking routes to school."
13. The consultation report was published on 22 December 2020 leaving the required period of at least three weeks for further representations to

be made prior to Council's consideration of the report and its decision regarding the recommendations:

- i. the provision of primary education at Glencorse Primary School be discontinued;
- ii. the catchment areas of Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools be extended to include the Glencorse catchment area;
- iii. remaining pupils to have the choice of attending Mauricewood or Roslin Primary Schools, the nominated school to be considered the pupil's catchment school;
- iv. children residing in the Glencorse catchment area who in the future become of primary school age to be given the choice of attending Mauricewood or Roslin Primary Schools, and the nominated school to be considered their catchment school;
- v. school transport to be provided for all children affected, where there is no safe walking route to school and/or the distance from home to school is more than two miles.

14. Section 15 of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* enables Scottish Ministers to call-in a decision to implement the proposed discontinuation of primary education provision at Glencorse Primary School. If the decision of Council is to implement the proposal, it will be required to notify the Scottish Ministers of that decision, and provide them with a copy of the proposal document and Consultation Proposal. This must be done within six working days of that decision. The Scottish Ministers have an eight week period from the date of that final decision to decide if they will call-in the proposal. The legislation allows for any person to make representations to Scottish Ministers within three weeks of the Council taking a decision to implement a closure proposal. The Scottish Ministers will take account of the consultation report, Education Scotland HM Inspectors report and any relevant representations made to them by any person.

15. Until the outcome of the eight week call-in process is known, the Council cannot proceed to implement the proposal. If the Scottish Ministers call-in the proposal, they must refer the proposal to the Convener of the School Closure Review Panels who may refuse to consent to the proposal or grant their consent to the proposal subject to conditions or unconditionally.

16. The recommendation of the consultation report is for Council to approve the discontinuation of the provision of primary education at Glencorse Primary School from 25 June 2021. This is subject to the conclusion and outcome of the Scottish Ministers call-in process. If approved the date of closure will be the later of the last day of the 2020/21 school session or an appropriate date following notification of the outcome of the call-in.

## **4 Report Implications (Resource, Digital and Risk)**

### **4.1 Resource**

1. The financial implications of this proposal are detailed in the consultation proposal document, Appendix E. Should this proposal be implemented there is an estimated annual revenue budget saving of £187,268. As stated within the Education Scotland HM Inspectors report the proposal will allow the Council to deliver 'Best Value' through more efficient and effective use of resources.
2. If this proposal is implemented, the staff in Glencorse Primary School will all be offered positions in other schools and there will be no new implications for teaching and support staff in Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools.
3. The expected saving is net of the estimated additional cost of providing home to school transport for pupils from the Glencorse catchment to attend Mauricewood or Roslin Primary School, based on using a minibus, which is estimated at £120 per day or £22,800 for a school year.
4. There are no capital budget implications directly associated with this proposal. Housing developments across Midlothian make a contribution to the cost of providing consequential educational capacity. This applies equally across the Glencorse catchment and contributions will be applied against the cost of the additional capacity that will be provided to serve the area.

## **4.2 Digital**

None

## **4.3 Risk**

This report addresses the risk to affording parity of access to learning experiences for all Midlothian pupils and the risk that the Council does not deliver best value.

## **4.4 Ensuring Equalities (if required a separate IIA must be completed)**

An Integrated Impact Assessment has been carried out and published, Appendix D.

## **4.4 Additional Report Implications**

None

## **Appendices**

Appendix A – Additional Report Implications

Appendix B – Consultation Report, December 2020

Appendix C – Education Scotland Report

Appendix D – Integrated Impact Assessment

Appendix E – Consultation Proposal Paper, September 2020

## APPENDIX A – Report Implications

### A.1 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

Not applicable

### A.2 Key Drivers for Change

Key drivers addressed in this report:

- ☐ Holistic Working
- ☐ Hub and Spoke
- ☐ Modern
- ☐ Sustainable
- ☐ Transformational
- ☐ Preventative
- ☐ Asset-based
- ☒ Continuous Improvement
- ☐ One size fits one
- ☐ None of the above

### A.3 Key Delivery Streams

Key delivery streams addressed in this report:

- ☐ One Council Working with you, for you
- ☐ Preventative and Sustainable
- ☒ Efficient and Modern
- ☐ Innovative and Ambitious
- ☐ None of the above

### A.4 Delivering Best Value

The implementation of the recommendation of this report will enhance best value in the delivery of Council services.

### A.5 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

This report provides details of the statutory consultation undertaken with communities and all stakeholders regarding the proposal to discontinue the provision of primary education at Glencorse Primary School.

### A.6 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

The report does not directly impact on Midlothian Council's performance and outcomes

### A.7 Adopting a Preventative Approach

Not applicable

### A.8 Supporting Sustainable Development

Not applicable