

Educational use of the former Hopefield Primary School Site

Report by Dr Mary Smith, Director, Education, Communities and Economy

1. Purpose of Report

This report provides an update and recommendation for the use of the new primary school to be built on the former Hopefield Primary School site, as requested at the Council meeting on 20th December 2016.

2. Background

In May 2016 Council agreed the paper “Educational use of the former Hopefield Primary School site” which set out the following recommendations:

- 7.1 Approves the construction of a 2 stream non-denominational primary school on the former Hopefield Primary School site, to be completed by August 2018, to serve the additional pupils coming forward from the Hopefield Farm development and the first phase of the emerging housing development in Bonnyrigg;
- 7.3 Instructs a further report to be brought back to Council to address the future school capacity requirements of the Bonnyrigg/Lasswade area;
- 7.4 Agrees in principle to build a new school to replace the existing St Mary's Primary School, and instructs a feasibility study to be undertaken and a further report to be brought back to Council outlining the outcome of this study.

The “School Estate Capacity and Pupil Intake Limits - School Session 2017/18” report to Council in December 2016 requested Council designate the non-denominational primary school to be built on the site of the former Hopefield Primary School to be part of Burnbrae Primary School, thereby enabling the school to plan its intake on the basis of growing into a four-stream school. Council agreed to delay this decision until further meetings and discussion were held on the provision of primary schools across Bonnyrigg and Lasswade.

A number of further alternative models for the delivery of primary school provision for the area have been considered and this report presents the recommendation forthcoming from these meetings.

3. Use of the New School

The recommendation from these meetings is that Council revises its May 2016 decision to designate the two stream primary school to be constructed on the former Hopefield Primary School site as non-denominational such that one stream will be the replacement St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School. It is also recommended that Council approves the use of the second stream of the school as additional capacity for Burnbrae Primary School until such time as it is no longer required to provide places for non denominational primary education. This will bring the capacity at Burnbrae up to three stream with accommodation for up to 630 pupils. The additional accommodation will be managed by the school to best meet the needs of the pupils and the community.

In Midlothian there are already joint campus primary schools in Mayfield and Loanhead, both with a denominational and a non-denominational school. The Loanhead St Margaret's campus is recently built and will be used to inform the design of the new school campus building.

A number of proposals were included in the informal consultation carried out in December 2015 and January 2016 and over half of respondents rated a joint campus proposal for St Mary's and a non-denominational primary school as good or okay. A slightly higher proportion rated using the site only for a new single stream St Mary's as good or ok.

Allocating one stream of the school as a replacement St Mary's fulfils Council's decision in May 2016 regarding recommendation 7.4 (above). Allocating the other stream as additional capacity for Burnbrae Primary School provides capacity to accommodate the additional children coming forward from the Hopefield Farm housing development and other developments in the area in the short term.

In the longer term additional primary school capacity will be built in the settlement which will accommodate a significant proportion of the children coming forward from the Hopefield Farm housing development.

It is recommended that the strategy for school capacity in the wider Bonnyrigg and Lasswade area be set out in the learning estate strategy which is to be submitted to Council in Summer 2017. The joint campus approach at the former Hopefield Primary School site aligns with the overall strategy which is being developed and provides flexibility and time to put in place the schools required across the settlement.

4. Report Implications

4.1 Resource

The capital and revenue costs of the new school at Hopefield were set out in the May paper to Council and allocated in the General Services Capital Plan. The construction contract for the school has not been tendered and the changes in the school's specification as a result of the joint campus will be incorporated into the tender.

4.2 Risk

This report addresses the risk of insufficient primary school provision in Bonnyrigg and the surrounding area and removes the risk of allocating the Hopefield site to non-denominational education and then being unable to secure a suitable site for a replacement of St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School.

4.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation

Themes addressed in this report:

- ☐ Community safety
- ☐ Adult health, care and housing
- ☒ Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- ☒ Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- ☒ Sustainable growth
- ☐ Business transformation and Best Value
- ☐ None of the above

4.4 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

Girfec 5: Our people will be successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

4.5 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

It is proposed to provide new and replacement primary school provision which is fit for 21st Century delivery of education and gives children and families and the local community access to modern educational facilities.

4.6 Adopting a Preventative Approach

The proposals adopt a preventative approach through taking advantage of the opportunity to provide new educational facilities at reduced cost to the Council and to create long term sustainable primary school provision for the Bonnyrigg and Lasswade area. The recommendation regarding the use of the new school building aligns with the overall strategy for primary school provision for the area.

4.7 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

An informal consultation on a range of possible options for primary school provision in Bonnyrigg, Lasswade and Rosewell was undertaken with parents, communities and stakeholders in December 2015 and January 2016 and a table summarising the feedback was included in the May report to Council.

Where required, formal consultation will be undertaken on the proposals adopted by Council.

4.8 Ensuring Equalities

This paper proposes to Council the provision of additional primary school capacity in the Bonnyrigg and Lasswade area and replacement of the St Mary's Primary School building. An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and is available in the Members' Library.

4.9 Supporting Sustainable Development

This proposal supports sustainable development of the primary school estate which serves Bonnyrigg and the surrounding area.

4.10 IT Issues

There are no IT issues arising at this stage. The IT requirements of the new schools and extensions/refurbishments of existing schools resulting from this paper will be developed as part of the projects' specification.

5. Recommendations

It is recommended that Council:

- 5.1 Revise the May 2016 decision and approve the construction of a joint campus on the former Hopefield Primary School site with one stream as non-denominational and one stream as the replacement St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School;
- 5.2 Authorise officers to commence formal consultation on the relocation of St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School;
- 5.3 Approve the use of the non-denominational stream of the school as additional capacity for Burnbrae Primary School until such time as it is no longer required.

26 January 2017

Report Contact:

Sandra Banks Tel No 0131 271 3727
sandra.banks@midlothian.gov.uk

Background Papers:

Members' Library:

Options appraisal for the Bonnyrigg, Lasswade and Rosewell primary school provision
Equality Impact Assessment

Catchment Review Programme report presented at the 15th December 2015 Council
Educational use of the former Hopefield Primary School site report presented at the 17th May
2016 Council

School Estate Capacity and Pupil Intake Limits – School Session 2017-18 report presented at
the 20th December 2016 Council

