

**Education Services**

***Seirbheis an Fhoghlaim***

**Establishment of a catchment area for primary Gaelic provision in Whinhill Primary School in Inverclyde**

***A’ stèidheachadh sgìre-sgoile airson foghlam bun-sgoile tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig aig Bun-sgoil Chnoc a’ Chonaisg ann an Inbhir Chluaidh.***

**Consultation Outcome Document**

***Sgrìobhainn co-chomhairleachaidh***

*May 2022*

This report has been published by Inverclyde Council in response to the statutory consultation undertaken under the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. This report will be presented to the Education and Communities Committee of Inverclyde Council for consideration on June 14 2022*.*

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**1. Purpose of the report**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise all stakeholders on the outcome of the

statutory consultation exercise undertaken in respect of the establishment of a catchment area for primary Gaelic provision in Whinhill Primary School in Inverclyde

**2. Background on the consultation process**

* 1. A consultation proposal document was issued as a result of a decision taken by the Education and Communities Committee on 25 January 2022to consult on the proposal below to establish a catchment area for primary Gaelic provision in Whinhill Primary School in Inverclyde.

2.1.1 Currently primary Gaelic medium is offered at Whinhill Primary School, however there is no established catchment area for Gaelic and pupils attend by means of a placing request.

2.1.2 The proposal is to create a catchment area that covers the whole of the Inverclyde Council area for Gaelic primary provision in Whinhill Primary School. This means that every pupil who chooses Gaelic medium education for primary school who lives within the Inverclyde boundary but further than a mile from Whinhill Primary School will be entitled to free transport.

2.2 Notice of the proposal and publication of the proposal document was placed in the Greenock Telegraph to engage with the general community.

2.3 A copy of the proposal document was made available from 01 February 2022to statutory and other consultees. In addition further communications were made with parents, pupils, parent councils and Church representatives.

2.4 The consultation document was available from a variety of sources including schools and online and is attached as Appendix 1.

2.5 The consultation, in terms of the Schools Consultation (Scotland) Act 2010 was carried out over the period 01 February – 18 March 2022 during which time all interested parties were invited to submit written representations. A copy of the consultation response form and the collated feedback received from the consultation response forms is shown in Appendix 2.

2.6 As part of the consultation process there were also 2 public meetings. They were held on:

Monday 21 February 2022 on webex, 6:30 pm

Tuesday 22 February 2022 at Whinhill Primary School, 6:30 pm

A summary of the oral representations made at the meetings is in Appendix 3a and b of this paper.

2.7 As required, in March 2022 Education Scotland was provided with a summary of all relevant written responses and oral representations made during the consultation period.

2.8 Inverclyde Council received a copy of Education Scotland’s report in April 2022*.* A summary of this report is included in section 5 of this report and a copy of the full report is included in Appendix 4.

2.9 Following the consultation period it is the Council’s duty to review the proposal taking account of the feedback received from stakeholders during the consultation period which includes online responses, written responses and oral representations made during the public meetings. The content of Education Scotland’s report should also be taken into consideration.

2.10 It should be noted that this consultation outcome report is published at least 3 weeks before it is formally considered by the Education and Communities Committee on *14 June 2022.*

**3. Summary of written responses**

3.1 The total number of responses received on the official consultation response form (via the online survey or hard copy) was 31*.*  Below is a summary of the responses to the questions posed:

* The majority (71%) agreed with the proposal to establish catchment areas for Gaelic Medium Education.
* Most (81%) agreed that the whole of the local authority should be the catchment area for Gaelic Medium Education.
* Most (77%) agreed that children should be provided with free transport if they reside further than a mile by an acceptable walking route.

**5. Summary of response by Education Scotland**

5.1 The section below is the summary of the report by Education Scotland addressing the educational aspects of the proposal by Inverclyde Council

5.2 The full report can be found in Appendix 4.

**Summary:**

HM Inspectors have evaluated Inverclyde Council’s proposal to establish a council-wide catchment area for Gaelic Medium Education at Whinhill Primary School. HM Inspectors agree that the proposal has potential to result in educational benefits. The proposal is well-received for its potential to strengthen the educational benefits associated with Gaelic Medium Education. HM Inspectors recommend that educational benefits would be enhanced further with clarity on secondary provision within the proposed catchment area.

5.3 **Council response**

The Council is pleased that Education Scotland found that there was a sound educational case for this proposal.

**6. Review of proposals by Education Services (Inverclyde Council)**

6.1 Education Services Senior Management Team has considered the original proposal and reflected upon the responses received. For clarity, if a pupil wishes to cease Gaelic provision in primary they will automatically revert to their non - denominational catchment school without the need to submit a placing request. Whinhill Primary is the school associated with Inverclyde Academy and will be classed as such for any admission to secondary school.

6.2 It is recommended that a primary catchment area is established for Gaelic education at Whinhill Primary School. The catchment area will cover the whole of Inverclyde.

**7. Resource, risk and policy implementation**

7.1 **Resource implications**

If the proposal is approved, education services will arrange for appropriate school transport to be in place from the beginning of the academic year 2022/23.

7.2 **Risk implications**

Education Services will continue to monitor the transport arrangements linked to this proposal and any increase in pupil numbers due to the implementation of the policy.

7.3 **Policy Implications**

If the proposal is approved, the necessary changes will be reflected in Council policy immediately.