
Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	Date:	1 September 2020
Report By:	Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	Report No:	EDUCOM/32/20/RB
Contact Officer:	Ruth Binks	Contact No:	01475 712748
Subject:	Outcome of the statutory consultation in relation to the admission policy for village schools		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Education and Communities Committee about the outcome of the statutory consultation which took place in February and March 2020 in relation to the admission policy for village schools.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 In December 2019 Education Services undertook a pre-consultation exercise about the transition arrangements for village schools (Inverkip, Kilmacolm and Wemyss Bay Primary Schools) and the demand for Roman Catholic Education in the west of Inverclyde. This was to help manage the overcapacity of St Columba's High School, Gourrock.
- 2.2 A statutory consultation in relation to the transition from village primary schools (Inverkip, Kilmacolm and Wemyss Bay Primary Schools) to secondary schools took place from 13 February 2020 to 27 March 2020. The outcome report is attached as Appendix 1 and the consultation proposal paper is attached as Appendix 2. The consultation included public meetings and an online survey. The majority of the responses to the survey were in favour of the proposal.
- 2.3 Education Scotland reviewed all documentation in connection with the consultation provided by the Council and met with stakeholders. Education Scotland concluded that the Council's proposal provides a sound case for changes to the policy on admission and pupil placement in mainstream schools in relation to the transition from village primary schools (Inverkip, Kilmacolm and Wemyss Bay Primary Schools) to secondary schools. Education Scotland's report is attached as Appendix 6.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Education and Communities Committee is asked to:
- (i) approve that the wording of the current policy for admission and pupil placement in mainstream schools in relation to village schools is changed as outlined in paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2 of this report and summarised in the outcome paper attached as Appendix 1.
 - (ii) approve the proposed transition arrangements as outlined in paragraphs 5.3 and 5.4 of this report and summarised in the outcome paper attached as Appendix 1.

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director
Education, Communities & Organisational Development

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 In January 2017, after statutory consultation the Education and Communities Committee agreed the policy on Admissions and Placing Requests for Inverclyde Council. In November 2016, the Committee also agreed a consistent method of identifying the maximum yearly intake for secondary schools in Inverclyde.
- 4.2 In August 2019, Inverclyde Council's decision to refuse placing requests to St Columba's High School was appealed at the Sheriff Court. The Council's position was upheld by the Sheriff because the school was full and could not accept placing requests.
- 4.3 In November 2019 in the context of a continuing pressure on St Columba's High School, the Education and Communities Committee agreed to undertake a pre-consultation exercise on the following:
 - to examine a change to the admission policy which allows pupils from the village schools of Wemyss Bay, Inverkip and Kilmacolm to choose denomination at the point of transfer to secondary education;
 - ascertain the possible future need for Roman Catholic education in the west of Inverclyde.
- 4.4 A pre-consultation exercise was held from 18 November 2019 to 5 December 2019. This process included an online survey, 6 public meetings and a specific questionnaire about future choices of those attending village schools.
- 4.5 The Education and Communities Committee of November 2019 approved that:
 - a statutory consultation takes place to change the wording of the current policy for admission and pupil placement in mainstream schools in relation to village schools. The agreed wording for this consultation is in appendix 2 of this paper.
 - the proposed transition arrangements that will be outlined in the statutory consultation as set out in appendix 2 of this paper.

5.0 THE PROPOSED CHANGES

Two changes to the current policy were proposed and taken out to statutory consultation.

- 5.1 Change 1 is a change to the wording of Section B paragraph 2.4 (page 4) of the current policy in relation to arrangements for transferring from primary to secondary school.

The policy currently reads:

There are no denominational primary schools in Quarriers Village, Kilmacolm, Inverkip and Wemyss Bay. Parents often choose to send their children to the local non-denominational primary school because of the travelling distance to their nearest denominational primary school. In such circumstances the following admission arrangements will apply:

- Children whose parents have selected to send their child to the non-denominational school serving the defined catchment area assigned to their address rather than to their assigned denominational primary school because of travelling distance, will have the choice at Primary 7 of seeking admission to either the non-denominational or denominational school assigned to their address. The Council's policy in respect of school transport will apply.

It is proposed to change the policy to:

There are no denominational primary schools in Quarriers Village, Kilmacolm, Inverkip and Wemyss Bay. Parents often choose to send their children to the local non-denominational primary school because of the travelling distance to their nearest denominational primary school. In such circumstances the following admission arrangements will apply:

- Only those children ***who have a certificate of baptism before entry to primary school*** whose parents have selected to send their child to the non-denominational school serving

the defined catchment area assigned to their address rather than to their assigned denominational primary school because of travelling distance, will have the choice at Primary 7 of seeking admission to the denominational school assigned to their address. The Council's policy in respect of school transport will apply.

5.2 Change 2 is a change to the wording of Section C paragraph 1 (page 4/5) of the current policy in relation to the oversubscription of schools

The policy currently reads:

If a school is oversubscribed and cannot take pupils within the defined catchment area and chosen denomination then places will be granted in the following order:

1. A child who has a medical condition or additional support needs, who requires facilities or support only available in the requested school.
2. Those cases where a brother or sister attends the school and will continue in this school during the session.
3. In the case of denominational schools: pupils within the catchment area who can demonstrate an affinity with the religious ethos of the school and can provide documentary evidence of this in the form of a Certificate of Baptism into the Roman Catholic faith.
4. Distance of home address from the chosen school.

It is proposed to change the policy to:

If a school is oversubscribed and cannot take pupils within the defined catchment area and chosen denomination then places will be granted in the following order:

1. A child who has a medical condition or additional support needs, who requires facilities or support only available in the requested school.
2. Those cases where a brother or sister attends the school and will continue in this school during the session.
3. In the case of denominational schools: pupils within the catchment area who can demonstrate an affinity with the religious ethos of the school and can provide documentary evidence of this in the form of a Certificate of Baptism into the Roman Catholic faith.
4. **In the case of a denominational secondary school which has Kilmacolm, Inverkip and Wemyss Bay (village schools) as an associated school: priority will be given to those who have attended the denominational school associated with the secondary school.**
5. Distance of home address from the chosen school.

5.3 If the changes are agreed then arrangements for transition will have to be put into place.

If change 1 is put in place then the following transition arrangements are proposed:

- that those pupils at the village schools with siblings already at St Columba's are allocated a place at St. Columba's, providing the pupil's older sibling will be a pupil of St Columba's at the time of the pupil's entrance to S1.
- that there does need to be a cut-off date for Certificates of Baptism for village schools and that it is reasonable for this to be prior to the date the child started primary school. This is because a Certificate of Baptism is viewed by the Catholic Church as showing a recognised and accepted testament of belonging to the Catholic Church.

5.4 If change 2 is agreed, then the following transition arrangements are proposed:

- any child who is in attendance or has enrolled at the village schools prior to the date the decision to change the Council's Policy on Admissions is made and who had a Certificate of Baptism prior to enrolment in P1 will be treated as attending an associated denominational school during the transition period. This is because the parents who chose to send their child to a village school rather than the catchment denominational school, did so in the expectation that they would have equal rights to a denominational secondary education.

The Education Service will remain sensitive to the concerns parents may have during the transition period and will make every effort where possible to ensure that those with a Certificate of Baptism (obtained before entry to school) who live within the catchment area can access the denominational secondary school associated with their catchment area.

6.0 THE CONSULTATION PROCESS AND OUTCOME

6.1 The formal consultation process began on 13 February 2020 and ended on 25 March 2020. Three public meetings were held as well as an online consultation. The closure of schools on 20 March due to Covid-19 meant that schools were open for 27 days during the consultation period which is just short of the 30 days expected under the Act. However, the ability to respond to the proposal continued to the end of the original planned consultation period. Education Scotland considered that the period of consultation met the timescales albeit only Inverclyde 'hub' schools were open for three of the required days.

6.2 Online Survey

During the consultation period, the Council received 228 responses to the proposal. Of these, 152 were supportive of change one of the proposal and 6 were opposed. One hundred and forty six were supportive of change two of the proposal, and 9 were opposed and three did not answer. The response form and collated comments are attached as Appendices 3 and 4 to this paper.

6.3 Many points were raised through the comments section of the online survey. The main points are outlined below.

- Many respondents who did not agree with the proposal did so because they did not agree with denominational education. This was not the purpose of the survey.
- Other respondents (both for and against the proposal) questioned the use of a baptismal certificate as proof of religion. Those for the proposal wondered if the sacraments may be considered instead and those against disagreed with the use of a baptismal certificate at all. The Roman Catholic Church is very clear that if required for a place at a school, a baptismal certificate is the appropriate document to show commitment into the Roman Catholic Faith.
- Some respondents from the village schools felt that this was discriminating against their right to choose a school. The respondents were perhaps unaware that this proposal would ensure that all schools in Inverclyde were treated the same and that pupils at village schools had previously been treated slightly differently to those at other schools at the point of transition.
- The perception of quality of schools was raised. All schools in Inverclyde perform well and the perceptions parents mentioned are not borne out by achievements and improving trends.
- Some respondents thought that schools should be open to all. The authority policy is very clear, all schools in Inverclyde are open to all. However in the event of oversubscription to a school then places must be allocated on a priority basis.

6.4 Public Meetings

Three public meetings were held. During the public meetings there was inevitably the expected range of people for and against the proposal depending on circumstances. Parents' questions were answered during the meetings. The comments from public meetings are attached as Appendix 5 to this paper.

6.5 During the public meetings two points were raised about the proposed transition phase whilst the changes take effect.

- The first point was raised by parents who disagreed with the arrangements to allow non-baptised siblings from village schools into St Columba's High School without a placing request during the transition period. This was because in theory, a non-baptised sibling of a pupil attending St Columba's High School, currently attending a village school, could be allocated a place ahead of a single child who had been baptised, lived in the catchment area and attended St Ninian's Primary School. Whilst it was explained that this situation

would be managed by the education authority, it does still remain a remote but theoretical possibility during the transition period. The intention of the Inverclyde admissions policy is to try where possible to keep siblings together. Whilst it is accepted that this is not always possible, Education Services acknowledge that most families would prefer to keep siblings in the same school. Had parents in the village schools known that the policy for places would change and that siblings would not be placed together, then they may have made different choices of schooling. The complexities of this issue were considered by Education Services when considering options for the transition process. Education Services will make every possible effort to provide places for those who wish to follow a catholic education within their catchment area. This may well mean a managed “overcapacity” of the school. On balance, whilst the point is accepted, Education Services would continue to support siblings from the village schools being given a priority for places during the transition phase.

- The second point about the transition phase was that some parents felt the status quo should remain for all children (not just siblings) who already attended the village schools and the new arrangements should only be put into place for those attending the village schools after August 2020. The proposed changes are being put into place to manage pressure on St Columba’s High School. Given that the pressure is expected to last for the next 5 years, it would not be a sensible option to keep the status quo for the transition phase. This is because the school would not have the capacity to meet the number of pupils living in its catchment area and the authority would have to manage places by prioritising entry and turning down pupils from within the catchment area. It is far better for transitional and educational needs for places to be allocated as part of a managed admissions policy rather than to effectively “turn down” places for those applying to the school from within the catchment area.

6.6 Pupil Consultation

Pupils were consulted as part of the process. Whilst, the majority were in favour of the proposal, the purpose of the consultation is very complex to understand and the concepts of managing places, and the reasons why, had to be explained to pupils.

6.7 Education Scotland Report on the consultation

The consultation paperwork was submitted to Education Scotland and inspectors then prepared a report on the proposal. This report is attached as Appendix 6. In preparation of the report inspectors attended a public meeting, considered all relevant documentation submitted by the Council and conducted telephone interviews with relevant consultees and church representatives.

6.8 Education Scotland’s report summarised the following:

The Council’s proposal provides a sound case for changes to the policy on admission and pupil placement in mainstream schools in relation to the transition from village primary schools (Inverkip, Kilmacolm and Wemyss Bay Primary Schools) to secondary schools. The Council recognises the potential impact of increasing demand for places at St Columba’s High School and its proposal sets out well its response. The Council outlines the associated educational benefits to all affected schools. HM Inspectors endorse this view. All staff and parents who spoke with HM Inspectors indicated that they understood the reasons for the proposed changes. In taking this forward, the Council should, as part of its plans, monitor its proposed transition arrangements to ensure they continue to be fair and transparent. The Council’s proposal, should it proceed, will see improved and fair transition arrangements. This forward planning will assist the authority in managing the rolls in all affected schools.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS

Finance

7.1 There are no financial implications to this report

Financial Implications:

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report £000	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact £000	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

Legal

7.2 The consultation was undertaken in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

Human Resources

7.3 There are no Human resources issues linked to this report

Equalities

7.4 Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

Yes

No This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Fairer Scotland Duty

If this report affects or proposes any major strategic decision:

Has there been active consideration of how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome?

YES – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.

NO

Data Protection

Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – This report involves data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.
✓	NO

Repopulation

7.5 N/A

8.0 CONSULTATIONS

8.1 The proposals in this paper are taken forward after a full statutory consultation process.

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 Outcome of pre-consultation in relation to the admission policy for village schools and the future need for denominational education in the west of Inverclyde. (Report No. EDUCOM/11/20/RB submitted to Education & Communities Committee on 21 January 2020).

9.2 Equality Impact Assessment.

Appendix 1

Outcome of the statutory consultation on the proposal to make changes to the Policy on Admission and Pupil Placement in Mainstream Schools in relation to the transition from village primary schools (Inverkip, Kilmacolm and Wemyss Bay) to secondary schools.

August 2020

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 September 1st 2020.

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1.0 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 proposal to

2.0 BACKGROUND ON THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

- 2.1 A consultation proposal document was issued as a result of a decision taken by the Education and Communities Committee on 05 November 2019 to consult on the proposal below to make changes to the Policy on Admission and Pupil Placement in Mainstream Schools in relation to the transition from village primary schools (Inverkip, Kilmacolm and Wemyss Bay) to secondary schools. Two changes were proposed:

- 2.1.1 Change 1 is a change to the wording of Section B paragraph 2.4 (page 4) of the current policy in relation to arrangements for transferring from primary to secondary school.

The policy currently reads:

There are no denominational primary schools in Quarriers Village, Kilmacolm, Inverkip and Wemyss Bay. Parents often choose to send their children to the local non-denominational primary school because of the travelling distance to their nearest denominational primary school. In such circumstances the following admission arrangements will apply:

Children whose parents have selected to send their child to the non-denominational school serving the defined catchment area assigned to their address rather than to their assigned denominational primary school because of travelling distance, will have the choice at Primary 7 of seeking admission to either the non-denominational or denominational school assigned to their address. The Council's policy in respect of school transport will apply.

It is proposed to change the policy to:

There are no denominational primary schools in Quarriers Village, Kilmacolm, Inverkip and Wemyss Bay. Parents often choose to send their children to the local non-denominational primary school because of the travelling distance to their nearest denominational primary school. In such circumstances the following admission arrangements will apply:

Only those children ***who have a certificate of baptism before entry to primary school*** whose parents have selected to send their child to the non-denominational school serving the defined catchment area assigned to their address rather than to their assigned denominational primary school because of travelling distance, will have the choice at Primary 7 of seeking admission to the denominational school assigned to their address. The Council's policy in respect of school transport will apply.

- 2.1.2 Change 2 is a change to the wording of Section C paragraph 1 (page 4/5) of the current policy in relation to the oversubscription of schools

The policy currently reads:

If a school is oversubscribed and cannot take pupils within the defined catchment area and chosen denomination then places will be granted in the following order:

1. A child who has a medical condition or additional support needs, who requires facilities or support only available in the requested school.
2. Those cases where a brother or sister attends the school and will continue in this school during the session.
3. In the case of denominational schools: pupils within the catchment area who can demonstrate an affinity with the religious ethos of the school and can provide documentary evidence of this in the form of a Certificate of Baptism into the Roman Catholic faith.
4. Distance of home address from the chosen school.

It is proposed to change the policy to:

If a school is oversubscribed and cannot take pupils within the defined catchment area and chosen denomination then places will be granted in the following order:

1. A child who has a medical condition or additional support needs, who requires facilities or support only available in the requested school.
 2. Those cases where a brother or sister attends the school and will continue in this school during the session.
 3. In the case of denominational schools: pupils within the catchment area who can demonstrate an affinity with the religious ethos of the school and can provide documentary evidence of this in the form of a Certificate of Baptism into the Roman Catholic faith.
 4. **In the case of a denominational secondary school which has Kilmacolm, Inverkip and Wemyss Bay (village schools) as an associated school: priority will be given to those who have attended the denominational school associated with the secondary school.**
 5. Distance of home address from the chosen school.
- 2.2 Notice of the proposal and publication of the proposal document was placed in the Greenock Telegraph and on the Council website to engage with the general community.
- 2.3 A copy of the proposal document was made available from 13 February 2020 to statutory and other consultees as listed in Appendix 2. 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. All respondents to the online survey had read the proposal paper.
- 2.5 The consultation, in terms of the Schools Consultation (Scotland) Act 2010 was carried out over the period 13 February – 25 March 2020 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 Appendices 3 and 4.
- 2.6 As part of the consultation process there were also 3 public meetings held on 25th February 2020 at the Community Campus Port Glasgow, 27th February St. Columba's High School and 4th March at Wemyss Bay Primary School. These dates differed from those in the original proposal paper because of a clash with a large parental event. The change of date was publicised through an email to all parents. A summary of the oral representations made at the meetings is in Appendix 6 of this paper.
- 2.7 As required, in April 2020 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 May 2020. A summary of this report is included in section 5 of this report and a copy of the full report is included in Appendix 6.
- 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 1st September 2020.

3.0 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 228. Below is a summary of the responses to the questions posed.
- 3.2 152 were supportive of change one of the proposal and 76 were opposed. 146 were supportive of change two of the proposal, and 79 were opposed and three did not answer. The full response is attached as Appendices 3 and 4.

4.0 SUMMARY OF ORAL RESPONSES FROM PUBLIC MEETINGS

- 4.1 During the public meetings, there was a presentation which provided information on the proposal and statutory consultation process.
- 4.2 A question and answer session then followed involving members of the public and Council officers. The summary of questions and answers are attached in Appendix 5. Two points were raised specifically about the transition phase for implementation of the policy which are outlined below.
- 4.3 The first point was raised by parents who disagreed with the arrangements to allow non-baptised siblings from village schools into St Columba's High School without a placing request during the transition period. This was because in theory, a non-baptised sibling of a pupil attending St Columba's High School, currently attending a village school, could be allocated a place ahead of a single child who had been baptised, lived in the catchment area and attended St Ninian's Primary School. Whilst it was explained that this situation would be managed by the education authority, it does still remain a remote but theoretical possibility during the transition period. The intention of the Inverclyde admissions policy is to try where possible to keep siblings together. Whilst it is accepted that this is not always possible, Education Services acknowledge that most families would prefer to keep siblings in the same school. Had parents in the village schools known that the policy for places would change and that siblings would not be placed together, then they may have made different choices of schooling. The complexities of this issue were considered by Education Services when considering options for the transition process. Education Services will make every possible effort to provide places for those who wish to follow a catholic education within their catchment area. This may well mean a managed "overcapacity" of the school. On balance, whilst the point is accepted, Education Services would continue to support siblings from the village schools being given a priority for places during the transition phase.

The second point about the transition phase was that some parents felt the status quo should remain for all children (not just siblings) who already attended the village schools and the new arrangements should only be put into place for those attending the village schools after August 2020. The proposed changes are being put into place to manage pressure on St Columba's High School. Given that the pressure is expected to last for the next 5 years, it would not be a sensible option to keep the status quo for the transition phase. This is because the school would not have the capacity to meet the number of pupils living in its catchment area and the authority would have to manage places by prioritising entry and turning down pupils from within the catchment area. It is far better for transitional and educational needs for places to be allocated as part of a managed admissions policy rather than to effectively "turn down" places for those applying to the school from within the catchment area.

5.0 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 6.

Summary:

The Council's proposal provides a sound case for changes to the policy on admission and pupil placement in mainstream schools in relation to the transition from village primary schools (Inverkip, Kilmacolm and Wemyss Bay Primary Schools) to secondary schools. The Council recognises the potential impact of increasing demand for places at St Columba's High School and its proposal sets out well its response. The Council outlines the associated educational benefits to all affected schools. HM Inspectors endorse this view. All staff and parents who spoke with HM Inspectors indicated that they understood the reasons for the proposed changes. In taking this forward, the Council should, as part of its plans, monitor its proposed transition arrangements to ensure they continue to be fair and transparent. The Council's proposal, should it proceed, will see improved and fair transition arrangements. This forward planning will assist the authority in managing the rolls in all affected schools.

5.3 Council response

The Council is pleased that Education Scotland found that there was a sound educational case for this proposal. If the changes are agreed then Education services will continue to implement and monitor the transition arrangements.

6.0 REVIEW OF PROPOSALS BY EDUCATION SERVICES (Inverclyde Council)

- 6.1 Education Services Senior Management Team has considered the original proposal and reflected upon all the responses received. Education Services recommend the changes outlined in paragraph 2.1 of this report with the proposed transition arrangements in place.

If change 1 is put in place then the following transition arrangements are proposed:

- that those pupils at the village schools with siblings already at St Columba's are allocated a place at St. Columba's, providing the pupil's older sibling will be a pupil of St Columba's at the time of the pupil's entrance to S1.

- that there does need to be a cut-off date for Certificates of Baptism for village schools and that it is reasonable for this to be prior to the date the child started primary school. This is because a Certificate of Baptism is viewed by the Catholic Church as showing a recognised and accepted testament of belonging to the Catholic Church.

If change 2 is agreed then the following transition arrangements are proposed:

- any child who is in attendance or has enrolled at the village schools prior to the date the decision to change the Council's Policy on Admissions is made and who had a Certificate of Baptism prior to enrolment in P1 will be treated as attending an associated denominational school during the transition period. This is because the parents who chose to send their child to a village school rather than the catchment denominational school, did so in the expectation that they would have equal rights to a denominational secondary education.

The Education Service will remain sensitive to the concerns parents may have during the transition period and will make every effort where possible to ensure that those with a Certificate of Baptism (obtained before entry to school) who live within the catchment area can access the denominational secondary school associated with their catchment area.

7.0 RESOURCE, RISK AND POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

7.1 Resource implications

If the proposal is approved, further communications will be made with those affected by the proposal during September 2020.

7.2 Risk implications

Education Services will continue to monitor the transition arrangements for this proposal.

7.3 Policy Implications

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

Village schools public consultation document

Proposal: changes to the Policy on Admission and Pupil Placement in Mainstream Schools in relation to the transition from village primary schools (Inverkip, Kilmacolm and Wemyss Bay) to secondary schools.

Why are we consulting?

In January 2020 the Inverclyde Council Education and Communities Committee approved a proposal to undertake a statutory public consultation on the current policy for admission to mainstream secondary schools from village primary schools. Village primary schools in Inverclyde are Inverkip Primary, Kilmacolm Primary and Wemyss Bay Primary. Currently pupils attending these schools have the choice at primary 7 of seeking admission to either the non-denominational or denominational high school assigned to their address. This is because some parents choose to send their children to the local non-denominational primary school because of the travelling distance to their nearest denominational primary school. This option is only available to village schools and is not an option given to pupils attending other schools in Inverclyde.

St. Columba's High School is currently oversubscribed and entry to the school needs to be managed by the Education Authority. A consequence of the policy currently in place in relation to village schools is that if the school becomes oversubscribed for pupils within its catchment area, there is a risk that pupils who have a Certificate of Baptism into the Roman Catholic faith, or pupils from the villages who have attended the associated denominational primary school for their catchment area may not get in. During a recent pre-consultation process some parents felt that the current policy is unfair.

If the proposals outlined in this paper are agreed then transition arrangements will be put in place for those affected by any changes to the policy. The proposed transition arrangements are fully outlined in the consultation paper.

The consultation process

Where a council brings forward proposals to change the admissions policy for schools there is a requirement to carry out a public consultation within the statutory framework defined by the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, amended through the enactment of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

As part of this process consultation papers have been distributed to a wide range of stakeholders and interested parties including:

- The Parent Councils of affected schools
- The parents/carers of the pupils at the affected schools
- Parents whose children are expected to attend the affected schools within 2 years of publication of the proposal document
- Pupils (where they are considered to be of suitable age and maturity)
- Council employees at the affected schools



- Trade Union representatives
- Church representatives
- Education Scotland
- Inverclyde councillors
- Local Members of Parliament and local members of Scottish Parliament
- General public (Inverclyde)
- Community Councils

The statutory consultation document is available at:

- All early years establishments in Inverclyde (including those working in partnership with the council)
- All primary schools associated with Inverclyde Academy, St. Columba's High School, Port Glasgow High School and St. Stephen's High School
- Inverclyde Council education services, Wallace Place, Greenock
- Inverclyde Council customer service centre, Clyde Square, Greenock
- All public libraries
- Online at <https://inverclyde.citizenspace.com/schools/village-schools>

The indicative timetable for the consultation is as per the table below:

Date	Action
13 February 2020	Start of the statutory consultation period
25 February 2020	Public meeting Inverclyde Academy
26 February 2020	Public Meeting St. Columba's High School
27 February 2020	Public Meeting PGHS Community Campus
25 March 2020	End of the statutory consultation period
27 March 2020	Paperwork sent to Education Scotland
May/June 2020	Report to Inverclyde Council's education and communities committee
1 August 2020	Decision implemented if agreed by Inverclyde Council's education and communities committee.

Proposed changes to the Policy on Admission and Pupil Placement in Mainstream Schools to be taken forward to statutory consultation.

Inverclyde Council propose to consult on 2 changes to the Policy on Admission and Pupil Placement in Mainstream Schools.

Change 1 is a change to the wording of Section B paragraph 2.4 (page 4) of the current policy in relation to arrangements for transferring from primary to secondary school.

The policy currently reads:

There are no denominational primary schools in Quarriers Village, Kilmacolm, Inverkip and Wemyss Bay. Parents often choose to send their children to the local non-denominational primary school because of the travelling distance to their nearest denominational primary school. In such circumstances the following admission arrangements will apply:

- children whose parents have selected to send their child to the non-denominational school serving the defined catchment area assigned to their address rather than to their assigned denominational primary school because of travelling distance, will have the choice at primary 7 of seeking admission to either the non-denominational or denominational school assigned to their address. The Council's policy in respect of school transport will apply.

It is proposed to change the policy to:

There are no denominational primary schools in Quarriers Village, Kilmacolm, Inverkip and Wemyss Bay. Parents often choose to send their children to the local non-denominational primary school because of the travelling distance to their nearest denominational primary school. In such circumstances the following admission arrangements will apply:

- Only those children:
 - (a) who before entry to primary school, have a Certificate of Baptism into the Roman Catholic faith; and
 -
 - (b) whose parents have chosen, because of travelling distance to send to the non-denominational primary school which serves the defined catchment area assigned to their address (rather than to the assigned denominational primary school);
 -
- will have the entitlement of admission, without the necessity of a placing request, to the catchment denominational secondary school. As with all schools, this entitlement is subject to there being space at the specified school. The Council's policy in respect of school transport will always apply.

Change 2 is a change to the wording of Section C paragraph 1 (page 4/5) of the current policy in relation to the oversubscription of schools

The policy currently reads:

If a school is oversubscribed and cannot take pupils within the defined catchment area and chosen denomination then places will be granted in the following order:

1. A child who has a medical condition or additional support needs, who requires facilities or support only available in the requested school.
2. Those cases where a brother or sister attends the school and will continue in this school during the session.
3. In the case of denominational schools: pupils within the catchment area who can

demonstrate an affinity with the religious ethos of the school and can provide documentary evidence of this in the form of a Certificate of Baptism into the Roman Catholic faith.

4. Distance of home address from the chosen school.

It is proposed to change the policy to:

If a school is oversubscribed and cannot take pupils within the defined catchment area and chosen denomination then places will be granted in the following order:

1. A child who has a medical condition or additional support needs, who requires facilities or support only available in the requested school.
2. Those cases where a brother or sister attends the school and will continue in this school during the session.
3. In the case of denominational schools: pupils within the catchment area who can demonstrate an affinity with the religious ethos of the school and can provide documentary evidence of this in the form of a Certificate of Baptism into the Roman Catholic faith.
4. **In the case of a denominational secondary school which has Kilmacolm, Inverkip and Wemyss Bay (village schools) as an associated school: priority will be given to those who have attended the denominational school associated with that secondary school.**
5. Distance of home address from the chosen school.

Proposed transition arrangements if the decision is taken to amend the policy

If the changes are agreed then arrangements for transition will have to be put into place. If change 1 is put in place then the following transition arrangements are proposed:-

- that those pupils at the village schools with siblings already at St. Columba's are allocated a place at St. Columba's, providing the pupil's older sibling will be a pupil of St Columba's at the time of the pupil's entrance to S1.
- that there does need to be a cut-off date for Certificates of Baptism for village schools and that it is reasonable for this to be prior to the date the child started primary school. This is because a Certificate of Baptism is viewed by the Catholic Church as showing a recognised and accepted testament of belonging to the Catholic Church.

If change 2 is agreed then the following transition arrangements are proposed:

- any child who is in attendance or has enrolled at the village schools prior to the date the decision to change the Council's Policy on Admissions is made and who had a Certificate of Baptism prior to enrolment in P1 will be treated as attending an associated denominational school during the transition period. This is because the parents who chose to send their child to a village school rather than the catchment denominational school, did so in the expectation that they would have equal rights to a denominational secondary education.
- The Education Service will remain sensitive to the concerns parents may have during the transition period and will make every effort where possible to ensure that those with a Certificate of Baptism (obtained before entry to school) who live within the catchment area can access the denominational secondary school associated with their catchment area.

Educational benefits statement for the proposal

It is the duty of local authorities to make sure that every child whose education they are responsible for is able to access an “adequate and efficient” education. This includes managing the number of pupils attending each school through the annual yearly intake. Whilst numbers in all school need to be managed this change to policy particularly affects secondary schools. In secondary schools numbers attending a school have to be managed for a variety of different reasons including the following:

- Providing the curriculum entitlement for each pupil within the school and ensuring appropriate pupil choice
- Ensuring that specialist rooms are available to teach practical subjects or for specific purposes
- Ensuring that class sizes are not exceeded
- Ensuring that the social areas are adequate to meet the needs of the pupils who attend the school
- Ensuring that the school is safe

Inverclyde Council has a policy on admissions and placing requests for mainstream schools. If a local authority does not manage pupil numbers in its schools then this would have a significant effect on the delivery of the curriculum, educational attainment and safety for those in attendance at the school.

Every pupil is entitled to a Broad General Education up until the end of S3 and then progresses onto the senior phase of their education. Each school works with its community to design its curriculum and develops a rationale for the curriculum it delivers. If a secondary school becomes oversubscribed then the timetable needs to be adapted to cope with the additional pressure. This means that the school may not be able to meet the requirements of its curriculum rationale and the needs of the pupils attending the school. This could mean the school being able to provide fewer periods of a particular subject or delivering subjects in a different way e.g. Drama as part of the English curriculum. It is therefore educationally beneficial for a school to control numbers so that the full entitlement to the agreed curriculum is available for pupils who attend the school.

If the curriculum is restricted and there are issues with the availability of teachers and rooms, then there may be a reduction in pupil pathways through the senior phase. This could mean that because classes are full, subject choices become restricted or limited to pupils in the senior phase of education. This could mean that the school curriculum choices for subjects become less flexible and pupils increasingly do not get their first choice of subject. This reduces personalisation and choice for pupils which is an entitlement of the Curriculum for Excellence.

As a school become increasingly full, then it becomes more difficult to timetable for specialist subject areas, e.g. drama, music, science, technical etc. This can mean that specialist or practical subjects need to be taught in a room not specifically intended for this purpose. This could mean for instance that some science lessons would not be taught in a lab. If specialist rooms are not available then choices of subjects for pupils could be restricted and as a result, the quality of the learning experience could be diminished. The flexibility of use rooms for smaller classes to deliver Advanced Highers would be restricted and pupils requiring smaller group work for additional support could also be affected.

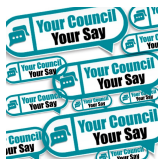
Pupils use a variety of social areas within a school (including lunch halls) and ensuring adequate space is available for those attending the school helps to promote and maintain good relationships and appropriate discipline within the school. Overcrowding social areas means that it is more difficult to ensure discipline and leads to pupils feeling less comfortable in their environment. To achieve the best possible education for young people, pupils should feel safe and secure in their environment and discipline should be maintained.

Every address in Inverclyde is assigned to 2 school catchment areas (a non-denominational school and a denominational school). Parents in Inverclyde have the choice on entry to primary school if they wish to pursue a denominational or non-denominational education within their catchment area. Whilst some parents make placing requests to schools outwith the catchment area in which they live, the majority do not and choose to send their child to the catchment school for their chosen denomination. If this option is not available (because a school is full) then this is disruptive to a child's education. This is because if a catchment place is not available in the pupil's chosen denomination, then a child would have to travel further to attend school and could be removed from their friends and peers within their community. Families would also find it harder to engage with schools e.g. school events and parents evenings because of distance. It is not educationally beneficial to remove children from their peer group and separate them from the community in which they live if this has not been their choice.

Transition between primary and secondary schools is an important time for youngsters and can cause some anxiety. If a child within the catchment area who rightly expect to attend a school along with their peer group is denied a place at that school because the school is full then this may cause unnecessary stress and anxiety for that child.

There is currently a pressure on pupil numbers at St. Columba's High School in Gourock. The current policy for the village primary schools associated with St. Columba's High School (Inverkip and Wemyss Bay) allows parents to choose denomination at the point of transition from P7 to S1. This is because of the distance to the nearest denominational primary school. This particular arrangement is not available elsewhere in Inverclyde where pupils have to choose the denominational pathway for pupils in P1. The only exception to this is pupils attending Kilmacolm primary school which is also classed as a village school. A consequence of the current policy is that it is very difficult for the authority to predict numbers attending St. Columba's High School each year.

As numbers of pupils in the catchment area increase, there could be instances in the future where pupils within the catchment area who have attended the associated denominational schools would not be allocated a place because the school is full. If this were the case then this would mean that those pupils would be separated from their peer group and placed in a school further away outside their catchment area. If this situation was to occur then it would cause stress and anxiety for families who quite rightly wish their child to attend their catchment school for their chosen denomination with their friends. Whilst the education authority will always make every effort to accommodate such cases, in reality this may mean that to do so may result in a further increase in the pressure on the St. Columba's School roll.



Village schools: Summary report

This report was created on Wednesday 15 April 2020 at 09:39.

The consultation ran from 13/02/2020 to 25/03/2020.

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If you chose 'Other' please specify	2
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Question : What is your name?

Name

There were **228** responses to this part of the question.

Question : Address

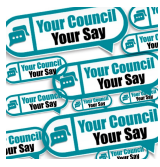
Please complete your address

There were **228** responses to this part of the question.

Question : Post code

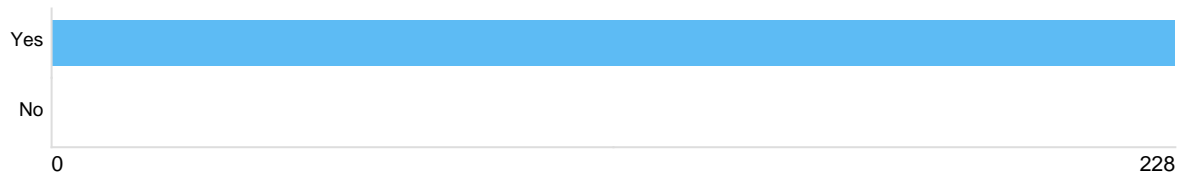
Postcode

There were **228** responses to this part of the question.



Question : Please confirm you have read the statutory consultation document (full document) by ticking this box.

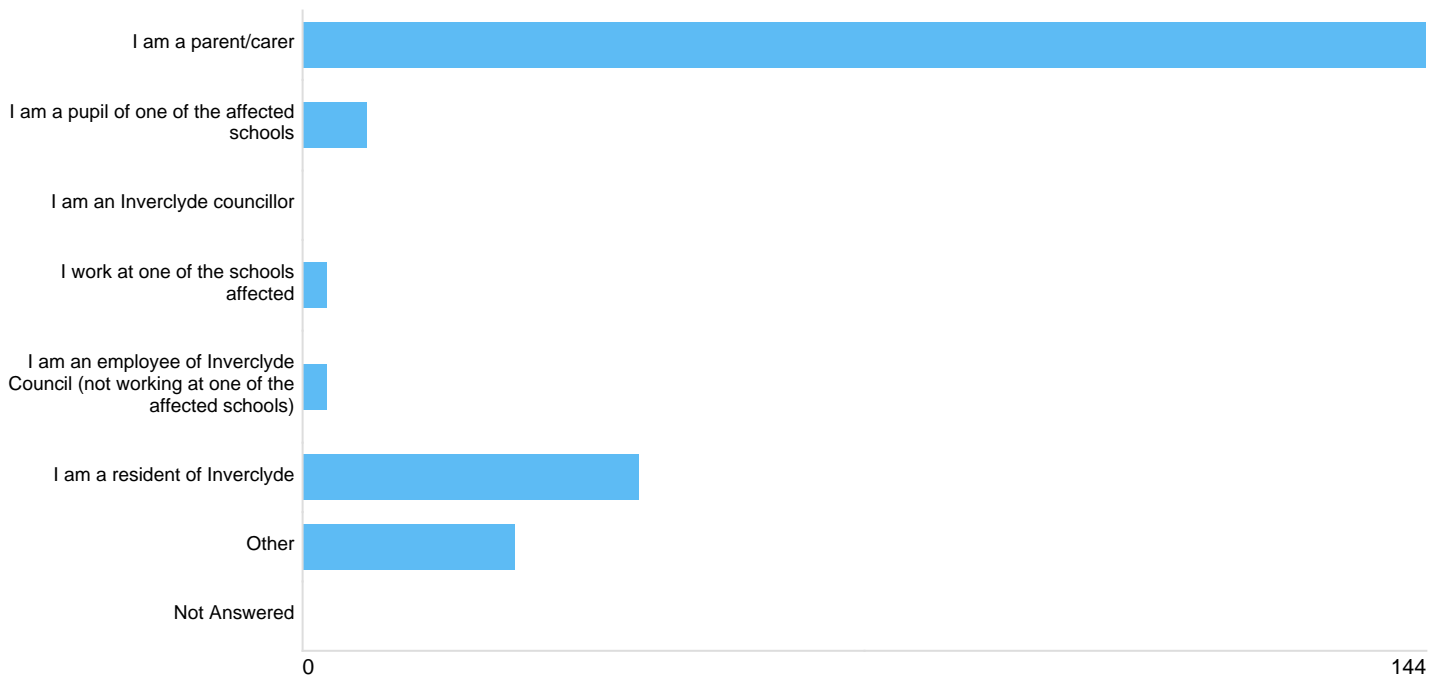
Yes



Option	Total	Percent
Yes	228	100.00%
No	0	0%

Question : Please let us know your interest in this consultation.

Interest in this consultation



Option	Total	Percent
I am a parent/carer	144	63.16%
I am a pupil of one of the affected schools	8	3.51%
I am an Inverclyde councillor	0	0%
I work at one of the schools affected	3	1.32%
I am an employee of Inverclyde Council (not working at one of the affected schools)	3	1.32%
I am a resident of Inverclyde	43	18.86%
Other	27	11.84%
Not Answered	0	0%

Question : If you chose 'Other' please specify

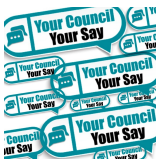
If you chose 'Other' please specify

There were **27** responses to this part of the question.

Question : If your child attends an Inverclyde Council school or early years centre, please let us know which school.

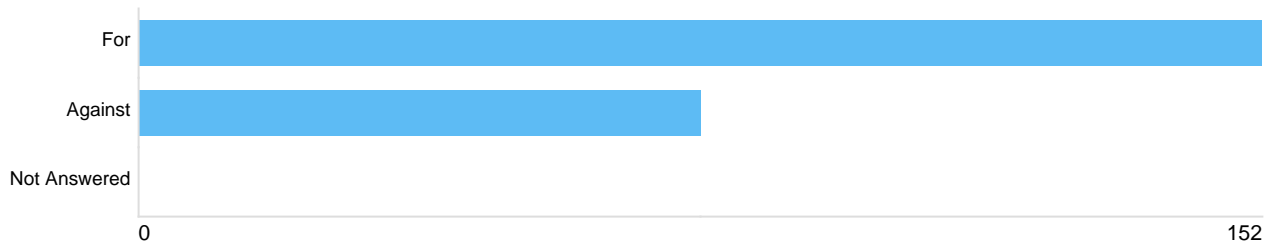
If your child attends an Inverclyde Council school please let us know which one

There were **166** responses to this part of the question.



Question : Are you for or against change 1?

For or against change 1



Option	Total	Percent
For	152	66.67%
Against	76	33.33%
Not Answered	0	0%

Question : If you wish you can give your reason(s) for or against this proposal. Please fill in one reason per line.

Reason 1

There were **122** responses to this part of the question.

Reason 2

There were **54** responses to this part of the question.

Reason 3

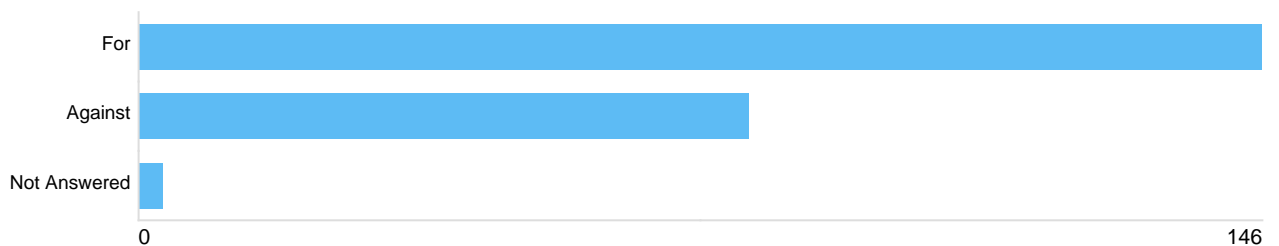
There were **29** responses to this part of the question.

Reason 4

There were **15** responses to this part of the question.

Question : Are you for or against change 2?

For or against change 2



Option	Total	Percent
For	146	64.04%
Against	79	34.65%
Not Answered	3	1.32%

Question : If you wish you can give your reason(s) for or against this proposal. Please fill in one reason per line.

Reason 1

There were **85** responses to this part of the question.

Reason 2

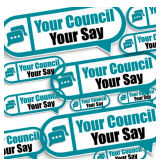
There were **27** responses to this part of the question.

Reason 3

There were **10** responses to this part of the question.

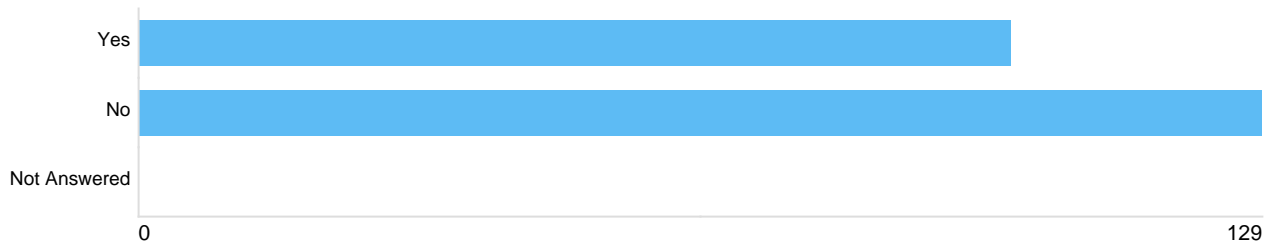
Reason 4

There were **5** responses to this part of the question.



Question : Please let us know if you agree for your comments to be made public.

Comments to be made public (yes/no)



Option	Total	Percent
Yes	100	43.86%
No	129	56.58%
Not Answered	0	0%

Appendix 4 - Village Schools Consultation

Comments received from the survey.

(Some respondents did not wish to make their comments public)

CHANGE 1 – FOR

- People are choosing to send their kids to the little village school as it's handy for them but then using their religious beliefs as an excuse to not send them to the nearest high school. If they are so religious then they should send their kids to a catholic primary school.
- It seems a reasonable stipulation, and I'm assuming that it will be widely publicised to ensure parents know what the conditions are.
- I think if a child is baptised into their chosen faith they should have the right to attend that denominational school
- If you are not of the Catholic faith and move to a village you know your catchment high schools for said village school.
- Catholic schools should be for children baptised Catholics. Non-Catholics should not get in.
- I do agree with Part A bit unsure how part B will help with the Denominational secondary school in question being oversubscribed. So although I have clicked agree, only in part.
- I think the requirement needs to go further not just baptism certificate before starting school but also by P7 to have made all their sacraments (first holy communion and confirmation)
- I agree with this change of policy if it will prevent the building of another denominational Primary School, which discriminates against anyone who is not catholic.
- Makes sense
- I feel that the current system is unfair and that my daughter may not receive the education that I have chosen. I have taken the step to bus her out of the village to be educated both at home and school in the RC faith and under the current system she may not be educated at Secondary level with the friends she has been with through primary. They have become her family.
- My daughter is fully practising Roman catholic religion she attends local primary in Wemyss Bay as this is a good school and on our door steps that is not oversubscribed we have opportunity to attend full Sunday school from primary 1 - primary 7 making all sacraments as a parent I want her to continue with her catholic education which she is entitled to.
- This will have minimal impact on those pupils attending Kilmacolm Primary.
- This will discourage parents who have no connection with the catholic faith having their child baptised in primary 7 in order for them to send their child to a denominational school.
- Should be a practicing catholic with certificate of baptism
- I am for this change as long it is put in place through Inverclyde i.e. admissions to any Catholic school will require a baptism certificate whether at primary or secondary level. This would make it fair for all and not simply shift the problem to primary level as people will use St Ninian's as a route into St Columba's.

- To ensure places for children attending denomination feeder schools to St Columbus.
- This will close the current loophole which allows non-Catholic parents in Inverkip and Wemyss Bay to avoid sending their children to Inverclyde Academy. Perhaps stopping this mass avoidance by families from the more affluent villages could eventually even improve Inverclyde Academy's ailing performance in terms of academic results? I do however have a slight concern that the village parents who still want to avoid Inverclyde Academy will now just shift to using placing requests for Clydeview (which is where my children are due to go) and we will end up with Clydeview bursting at the seams?
- All children attending any catholic school should have a certificate of baptism as there are a lot of religious teachings in catholic schools which non-Catholics would opt out of.
- It makes sense.
- Children who have a baptismal certificate in the Roman Catholic Faith prior to entering Primary School must be given preference to a denominational school, when moving to secondary education.
- To ensure my child who attends St Ninian's has a place at St Columba's
- The updated admission arrangements to the policy are fairer.
- The change represents a fairer process for children, parents and wider families.
- If a Catholic Education is important to a parent then being brought up in the Catholic Religion would go hand in hand. Therefore it would be presumed that their child/children would already have a certificate of baptism to the Catholic Faith.
- The proposal is reasonable and supportive of Catholic education. The linking of the possession of a Certificate of Baptism prior to entry to Primary 1 to entitlement to a place in the catchment denominational Secondary gives reassurance to Catholic parents that their right to choose a Catholic school for their children is given the highest priority.
- A baptismal certificate at entry to primary school should be a requirement for the faith secondary school as I had to make that decision when my daughter entered primary 1 and would have to put in a placement request at P7 if changing to non-denominational school.
- My child's been baptised at birth when we were sending our daughter to school we had chosen St Ninian's primary were my 1st child attended at the time but due to the over subscription I felt my child would be able to get best of both worlds and be in class smaller and able to get same education.
- The Diocese acknowledges the need to reduce and manage the pressure on St Columba's High School and appreciate that the Authority has devoted time and resources to resolve this situation.
- Primary transition I want my child to go through same journey as her brother who's is currently in 6th year at St Columba's Gourock I we will be reviewing were we are currently living
- The work of the Director and her team to consult and develop proposals to come to a conclusion which is workable and fair is appreciated by the Diocese.
- Inverclyde council education need to help protect our children who have spent the last 6 years in continuing their religious right of education. I thought at the time of choosing the primary school I was doing the overcrowding a favour I must say I now feel the process stressful and not helping my child's confidence with possibility if not getting into school her brother had attended
- The Diocese notes the assurance of the Director that the Authority will be sensitive to the views of parents during the transition period.

CHANGE 1 – AGAINST

- I believe it is discriminatory to "village" pupils, particularly those currently in the Primary education system as you are removing a choice that they currently have and leaving them less advantaged to all other children in Inverclyde who had a choice at the start of their educational journey
- You are being prejudice to the Protestant Faith... as you do not mention what the protestant kids will do.
- It is discriminatory against those who do not have a certificate of baptism.
- The Catholic Church does not impose an age restriction on when a child can be baptised into the catholic faith. Why should the education authority?
- I don't believe there should be any denominational schools. Why should a child who has been baptized a Catholic get the choice of a denominational or non-denominational. What about other religions, it discrimination. We need good inclusive schools for everyone.
- Absurd & discriminatory to refuse a child entry to a school on the basis of religion
- I come from a split Sikh and Catholic family background. Sikhs choose baptism when they are old enough to make a commitment for life. My children when of age will make a choice either way which I and they will respect. I would not want their choices limited due to geographical circumstance.
- To stipulate that a baptismal certificate is required to transfer from non denom primary school to a catholic secondary is discriminatory.
- This change will only be made in "West" of Inverclyde and not throughout the whole authority.
- Absolutely no choices with regards to education of children should be determined in any way whatsoever on religious grounds.
- I think it's discrimination against village children we have now lost choice had we known in p1 we may have made a different choice
- I agree that they should have a baptism certificate before entry to primary school. I do not agree with points B&C as the child that attend a non-denominational primary may get a place over my own child that has attended a denominational school for 7 years.
- This creates unequal opportunities for certain children and favours children who have been baptised in the catholic faith, maximising their opportunities over all other faiths and those who do not have a faith
- We welcome Inverclyde Council's decision to rule out its previous proposals to convert one of the non-denominational primary schools into a Catholic faith school; open a new campus with both a Catholic and non-denominational school in West Inverclyde; or remove non-denominational village schools as feeder schools for denominational secondary schools. However, we do not agree with either of the proposed changes in the public consultation, because both would put children from non-Catholic families at a disadvantage. Change 1 would directly disadvantage children from non-Catholic families by prioritising children who have obtained a certificate of baptism prior to entry to primary school.
- It is a segregational based change based on religion. This racist bigotry should not form part of our modern Education system.
- It is very wrong to segregate children on the basis of their parents' religion.
- Denominational schools are paid for by the tax payer and should therefore be open to all. A child's right to enrol in local schools shouldn't be determined by their parents' religion. I ask that you work towards more inclusive school system.

- These changes will automatically disadvantage non-Catholic children. Local schools, for all children, teaching about all religions, not one particular religion, will not only encourage understanding across religions but also open minds to science and reason.
- Why in state schooling should pupils be segregated in any way by their personal beliefs (or more likely that of their parents). What relevance has a baptismal certificate to children's educational needs, other than to suggest they particularly need education about all religions and none? It is a retrograde step.
- Children have no say as to whether or not they have a baptismal certificate so it is wrong to impose this requirement on them as it reduces their choice of school.
- If people want to segregate their children due to religion, they should live near to the school of their religion
- We should not have religious schools
- This type of discrimination is not in the child's interest.
- Schools should not be based on religious foundations. This is a hangover from previous times before the advent of state education. Modern education should be on secular lines. Children should be able to take a view on religious issues without pressure from self-serving groups or individuals.
- Schools should be all inclusive of every religion and none. Whether the school claims to be Catholic, Jewish, Islamic or other denomination is in my view irrelevant. Children deserve better.
- If children with a certificate of baptism are prioritised, it is likely that those without a certificate will not gain entry to primary school. Discrimination!
- Children's rights to enrol in local schools shouldn't be determined by their parents' religion. In this day and age we should all be working towards more inclusive schools for all, not segregating children and making them different from others
- Schools should be neutral; it is ludicrous for admission to a particular school to be determined by the parents' religious beliefs, or by what the parents say their beliefs are.
- As someone brought up in Ireland I have witnessed first-hand the damaging effects that education on the basis of religion can have.
- A child's right to enrol in a local school shouldn't depend on their parent's religion
- I am horrified that State funded schools should be permitted to discriminate against some children on the grounds of religion.
- I do not believe "village" children are the majority cause of the issues you are having with St Columba's and there was nothing offered, despite challenge from the audience, at the initial public meetings that could confirm or deny this. In fact there was very little in the way of useful information or statistics that could back up what Ms Binks was communicating. She simply said what she wanted to hear and heard only what she wanted to hear.
She failed to accept that she and her colleagues have largely failed the Inverclyde Academy campus and its pupils, hence the reason people want to avoid it. She had no answers as to what they might do to rectify this and by not accepting the problem they will fail to deliver an answer.
- Over subscription to St Columbus although not solely due to your non-denominational policy a clear factor is the bad reputation held within Inverclyde of Inverclyde Academy.

- Using Village schools as an excuse for overcrowding in SCHS. When it's been admitted its more people moving to the west of Inverclyde. Village school are the easy unfair target.
- I pay to send my child to a childminder to allow for the travelling time/collection etc. It would have been easier for me to send my child to a non-denominational school 2 mins away from my home but chose a catholic primary to allow her to develop her faith.
- We strongly oppose the introduction of any new religious discrimination or selection in admissions. There is no justification restricting access to a publicly funded school based on the religious beliefs of children or their families.
- It does not allow all children to be treated equally.
- It is stupid to segregate children on the basis of having so-called "holy" water splashed on them before entering primary school.
- Neither one particular religion, nor any religion, is best placed to run a school funded by ALL tax payers. In publicly funded schools let's teach the children about ALL religions, not how to follow one.
- Parents want to send their children to the most suitable school for the childrens' needs. The requirement for a baptismal certificate reduces their choice.
- Children in non-denominational schools should not be displaced, this is unfair on families who live there.
- The divisions of Protestant and Catholic schools in Northern Ireland prove just how divisive religion can be. We need to stop the bigotry.
- A publicly funded school should not use discrimination based on the religion of the parents.
- It is a disgrace that the tax payer needs to fund 2 separate schools just down to a religious ethos, if parents are so concerned about teaching their children religion then this should be done in the home.
- A parent's religion should not determine a child's educational opportunities.
- You should be working towards more inclusion, not less, especially in the current times of trying to reduce sectarianism.
- I don't believe this is the best option. At the initial meetings it was alluded to that Notre Dame was under-subscribed. Therefore, the best and fairest option in my opinion is to transfer the catchment for village schools from St Columba's to Notre Dame and maintain the choice that village schools currently have regarding denominational and non-denominational choice at P1 to P7.
- Religion aside - people are not choosing Inverclyde Academy due to the low position on the educational league table.
- Introducing further religious selection in admissions would needlessly exacerbate sectarian divisions as well as ethnic and socio-economic segregation.
- The system should not change for children already in the school. We moved to Inverkip for the existing choice. This change would penalise our child and the reason for us enrolling him in Inverkip primary.
- Children should be treated equally.
- Education limited by religious selection serves to strengthen sectarian division and accentuate difference that leads to conflict.
- I live in Northern Ireland and know very well what happens when children are segregated by the 'faith' of their parents. I would not like Scotland repeat the mistakes of the past.
- Schools are for learning, church is for religion.
- Publicly funded schools should not discriminate on grounds of religion.

- There is no good reason to divide children according to the religion, or not, of their parent and this sort of discrimination should never be used in publicly funded schools.
What would happen if we were to discriminate because of skin colour? There is no difference!
- Education is a powerful tool for teaching tolerance and acceptance of others. Mixing with children of different faiths and none prepares a young person to understand, tolerate and respect differences and that we can work and socialise together despite such differences.
- I believe village schools are being focussed on as an easy target. the Villages are amongst the highest paying council tax areas per capita yet when it comes to delivering services they are always 2nd class citizens (take play parks for example, mostly self-funded by residents). Ms Binks et al have sought an easier target and a perceived easier option in village schools, despite no evidence that village schools are the defining issue in this problem.
Yet again targeting the soft option in the "villages" rather than facing the problem head on and fixing root causes.
- We need to educate our children together, rather than dividing them according to their parents' religion. For these reasons, religion should not play any role at all in the admissions process.
- This will potentially segregate our child from his friends and peer group going into high school. He is being given a lesser chance in life due to religion. This is not fair.
- No child should be discriminated against.
- Teach children to learn together. Surely that is the best way to encourage mutual respect and understanding?
- Religion should be kept out of schools. Parents should be solely responsible for the religious upbringing of their children.

CHANGE 2 – FOR

- It seems a reasonable stipulation and I'm assuming that the conditions will be widely publicised to ensure that parents know in advance.
- Makes sense
- Again this will not affect many pupils attending Kilmacolm primary.
- With transport provided by the council there is no good reason (apart from where there is a medical condition or additional support needs, who requires facilities or support) for parents from Inverkip not to send their children to St Ninian's.
- Siblings who are already at the school lived within the catchment area when they applied for the placing request. It is the gamble parents take when not sending young people to their immediate cluster secondary school.
- Children who are in Inverkip and Wemyss Bay primary should be given direct entry to the non-denominational school affiliated with the school. Just like any other schools in Inverclyde a placing request should be submitted if there is to be a change in denomination.
- It makes sense, if parents think it's acceptable to send their child or young person to a non-denominational school for primary, then they should accept that spaces may not be available in secondary provision.
- Although I have ticked FOR , for this policy having a catholic child who is baptised but does not attend a catholic school I think one of the main issues for parents in Inverkip is also that the catchment high school for Inverkip if not The catholic high school would be Inverclyde Academy . A very poor, under achieving high school with severe problems is a main worry for most parents. I would choose definitely not to send my child to this high school not only from its reputation but also as it ranks so poorly as one of the lowest achieving schools in the whole of Scotland. We are choosing to live in a good area for the best upbringing for our children but to then be expected to send them to such a poor high school with a terrible reputation. I think this is a matter in its self that needs to be addressed for children in Village areas and perhaps looking at the non-denominational high schools and what is considered our catchment area should perhaps change to reflect better more promising high schools
- The change proposes a fairer process for children, parents and wider families.
- Seems more logical they parents who chose to live near the school should have priority
- The linking of enrolment in Primary 1 of the local Catholic Primary School to transition to the local Catholic Secondary school gives reassurance to the Catholic community that progression from Catholic primary school to Catholic secondary school in linked catchment areas is of paramount importance. Thus Catholic children will be ensured access to Catholic schools throughout their school experience from P1 to S6 assuming enrolment in the local Catholic primary school in P1.
- Village children should be able to access a catholic school of their choice in Inverclyde at primary school stage as there are no catholic schools available within the catchment area. If choosing correctly at this stage, then there should be no issues or questions as to the secondary school the child attends.

CHANGE 2 – AGAINST

- As I am against Change 1, I am inherently against change 2.
- Unfortunately the people of these villages may not have an option but to use given school in village.....there is no option of a denominational school in these villages and often travel is too far for a lot of parents
- The only change is the distance from home address. I think if your child has been baptised into the catholic faith then they should get priority over children who have not been baptised in the faith
- All I can see this achieving is the denominational primary schools now becoming under more pressure with Village Primary schools dropping in significant in take numbers
- You are forcing protestant kids to attend Inverclyde Academy therefore taking the choice away from parents who wish to give their kids the best education.
- It is unfair to give preference to children in the denominational schools. As these schools are too far from the villages the local non-denominational schools are adequately accommodating.
- I live in village of Wemyss Bay how can this be fair to have to catholic amenities in this day in age tear 2020 equal opportunity and I should have the full right to send my child to chosen high school to meet her religious needs carrying on from education she's obtained from Scotland one and only self-lead voluntary catholic education in the area from primary 2- primary 7 years. I want the right to continue this going into secondary school
- Again the same reason as before
- Singling out village schools. Not showing a fair option for village children.
- Same reasons as Change 1
- Singling out village schools if you make changes it should be across the whole region
- I think points 3&4 should be reversed. I feel point 4 should come before point 3.
- Change 2 would indirectly disadvantage children from non-Catholic families by prioritising those children who attend a denominational primary school (and are therefore more likely to be Catholic) *in addition to* prioritising children with a certificate of baptism.
- Any change that includes discrimination on the grounds of religion or race should not be allowed.
- Britain is a multi-cultural, multi-faith country so adherents to one particular faith should not have priority over those of other faiths and over those of no faith.
- A child's access to a school should not be based on their parents' religion
- Change 2 will indirectly disadvantage children from non-Catholic households.
- It cocoons children even more against hearing about learning about world views. Teaching a particular religion as the only real one, which I assume is done e.g. by 'worship', does not make for a more educated world.
- See reasons for Change 1
- This type of discrimination is not in anyone's interest.
- Again, religious discrimination. How are children supposed to learn to live and accept people of other faiths and none when educated in an almost exclusive environment.

- As with Change 1, children should not be divided according to their parent's religion or lack thereof.
- Children have the right to an education, no child should be turned away because of the parents religious beliefs
- There should no religious discrimination or selection in school admissions if we want to create a tolerant society that accepts differences in faith. Schools are a wonderful opportunity for young people to get to know, and be at ease with those from different backgrounds. Please do not squander this opportunity.
- A child's future potential shouldn't be coloured or affected by their parent's religion.
- Again, I am horrified that religion should be grounds for discrimination or for giving priority.
- Please abandon these plans for more faith testing in admissions. Children's rights to enrol in local schools shouldn't be determined by their parents' religion. Please work towards more inclusive schools for all. Thank You.
- I believe the ONLY change should be to consider offering "Village" schools Notre Dame rather than the apparent (no real evidence given that this is true) over-subscribed St Columba's under the EXACT terms currently in place for "Village" schools. Therefore, this would solve the apparent (no evidence given that "villages" are the problem) issue immediately and it would maintain a healthy, equal, inclusive and diverse balance for "Village" children.
- I would expect that the closest denominational school for these villages would not be able to accept all catholic children who would otherwise go to the local non-denominational schools. So the current situation depends on children choosing the local non-denominational schools.
- Does not promote diversity, equity and inclusion.
- We strongly oppose the introduction of any new religious discrimination or selection in admissions. There is no justification restricting access to a publicly funded school based on the religious beliefs of children or their families.
- Racism in schools and school policy should be banned not amended as in this case.
- No child should be given priority over another child on the basis of parents' religion.
- Publicly funded schools should not favour one religion over any other or religion over science and reason.
- You should be working more towards reducing sectarianism, and being more inclusive, not less.
- I believe that both change 1 and change 2 are discriminatory to "Village" children and in particular those who are currently in the system and expected the current conditions to be present.
- The solution you are proposing does not address the issue. It is only an attempt to address the symptoms of Inverclyde Academy's poor performance. Parents in Inverkip and Wemyss bay are preferring to send their children to a Catholic school regardless of their faith. All pupils from deprived areas of Greenock go to Inverclyde Academy. And the west end and Gourock kids go to Clydeview. The catchment areas need to be redistributed including equal deprived areas.
- Introducing further religious selection in admissions would needlessly exacerbate sectarian divisions as well as ethnic and socio-economic segregation.
- As an evident ethnic minority (non-Catholic) I find this change offensive.
- Priority should be given to special needs, sibling attendance and travelling distance only.
- Leave specific religious "education" to the family setting please and allow all schools to teach about ALL religions and none. Surely this leads to greater tolerance and understanding among all of us in the long run?

- We need to educate our children together, rather than dividing them according to their parents' religion. For these reasons, religion should not play any role at all in the admissions process.
- No clause with religious bias should be allowed. Any change should delete this racism.
- Admissions based on parents' religion, and only the one religion? What about the rest of us?

Appendix 5 – Village schools consultation - comments from public meetings

Consultation date	Capacity	Question	Response by Ruth Binks	Other
27/02/2020	Parent St Columba's	128 coming in, and we are now 20 over is there any contingencies in place.	The number of 140 for S1 intake this year is so the school can cope with catchment pupils. We will protect the catchment area first. We know there is pressure which is why placing requests were declined last year. If we accepted placing requests last year and had to decline catchment pupils this year then that would not have been fair.	
27/02/2020	Parent St Columba's / Inverkip	She chose St Columba's as she was given a choice. Older son will have left by the time other children arrive.	It has to be remembered that no other schools in Inverclyde apart from the village schools had the choice.	
27/02/2020	Parent St Ninian's PS	Could IC not have contacted all village schools for their choice ahead of time.	We did ask in Primary 7 for a choice and to show a baptism cert, we also sent information to P1-P6 and we got a 50% response.	
27/02/2020	Parent St Ninian's PS	What are the projections of how many come to St Columba's.	The projections show that there will be continued pressure on the school. There is a large year group going into S4 (where timetabling can relieve a bit of pressure). The school has a very high staying on rate.	
27/02/2020	Parent St Ninian's PS	Can you not undertake an exercise to see who has been baptised.	We did ask and we got a 50% response.	
27/02/2020	Parent St Columba's / St Ninian's	Is there a cut off for when pupils were baptised.	Prior to them starting P1.	
27/02/2020	Parent St Columba's / St Ninian's	Do we have a true figure now for pupils entering S1 next year	It can change over the month but at the moment we are expecting 126.	

Consultation date	Capacity	Question	Response by Ruth Binks	Other
27/02/2020	Parent St Columba's / St Ninian's	Feels discriminated against as older child leaves before younger sibling starts.	Can make a placing request to any school of her choice.	
27/02/2020	Parent St Ninian's PS	Her child has no baptism cert or any siblings in the school, she chose the faith so feels this is unfair.	There is a 7 year transition period and Inverclyde Council will always try to protect the catchment pupils where possible.	
27/02/2020	Parent Council Member	Are people more encouraged to go to Inverclyde Academy.	Inverclyde is beginning to attract more pupils. This is because of improved outcomes, year on year academic improvements and positive feedback from families and pupils who attend	
27/02/2020	Parent St Ninian's PS	What pressure is expected and what pressure be relieved in the next 5 years.	Over the next 5 years the demand is expected to increase then go down. We can see the numbers through primary schools just now, although this can change. Now is the time to start to relieve pressure.	
27/02/2020	Parent St Ninian's PS	What will happen if houses get built on old IBM site.	Builders of such projects will work with the Council taking into account capacity of schools. At the moment the school has not got enough capacity.	
27/02/2020	Parent Council St Columba's	If pupils in St Columba's have a sibling will they receive priority over Gourrock pupil with baptism certificate.	Yes, we will always try to keep siblings together. The consultation proposes siblings to be kept together.	
04/03/2020	Parent St Columba's / Church Rep	A parent has a child in St Ninian's P6 who has been there since P1 with no baptism certificate, and then someone puts in a placing request from Inverkip to St Ninian's into P6 and had a baptism certificate would they have priority over the person who made the choice to go to St Ninian's in P1 or still be classed as a placing request.	Ruth was going to look into this - they would most likely be classed as a placing request and not prioritised even with a baptism certificate, Ruth did mention that a log would need to take place to watch pupils who move before P7.	
04/03/2020	Parent 2 children Inverkip	How many felt this was unfair.	Pre-consultation showed a 50/50 split.	

Consultation date	Capacity	Question	Response by Ruth Binks	Other
04/03/2020	Parent 2 children Inverkip	What happened with the publicised court case..	This Sheriff found that St Columba's was full and Inverclyde Council's decision to deny placing requests was upheld.	
04/03/2020	Parent 2 children Inverkip	Other pupils in St Ninian's don't have same criteria to get into St Columba's and don't have a baptism certificate.	No, but they chose a denomination in P1.	
04/03/2020	Parent 2 children Inverkip	How have you engaged with parent councils.	We have sent generic emails, also Education Scotland may engage with parent councils directly.	Parent Council rep - parent councils can't speak for everyone.
04/03/2020	Parent	If St Ninian's/Inverkip pupil didn't get into St Columba's as a placing request and from Inverkip would transport be provided.	Yes. Transport would be provided from Inverkip to Inverclyde Academy (this is catchment).	
04/03/2020	-	Is it only a Scottish baptism certificate that would be recognised and her daughter is dual nationality.	Only a baptism from a Roman Catholic Church would be accepted.	
04/03/2020	Parent St Columba's / Inverkip	Her children attend Sunday School and have made communion and confirmation while attending over the years, would this count to allow her child priority into St Columba's in place of a baptism certificate.	No, if pupils have made sacraments at Sunday School it would not count and this has been discussed with the church. Only a baptism certificate into the Roman Catholic faith would count.	
04/03/2020	Wemyss Bay Parent	Child in P6 and S6, both with baptism certificate her youngest son won't have a sibling as part of the criteria so will his baptism certificate be enough.	Rules at the moment will stay the same, a letter will be sent to ask to choose denomination in P7.	
04/03/2020	St Ninian's Parent	What happens if her child doesn't get into catchment school due to overcapacity.	We will transport your child to the closest school with availability and provide transport for this. If a space becomes available we will offer you the choice to go back to catchment. Some opt to stay where they are although free transport is removed at the end of that academic year.	
04/03/2020	St Joseph's Parish, Inverkip	Will all village schools be treated the same.	Yes. Although the village schools will still have a small element of advantage. If you have a baptismal certificate you can still choose to attend a village school.	

Consultation date	Capacity	Question	Response by Ruth Binks	Other
04/03/2020	St Joseph's Parish, Inverkip	What if everyone has a baptism certificate.	Then the next qualifying criteria is distance. We will always try to get everyone's catchment choice but we cannot continue at 140 each year as it puts more and more pressure on the school.	
04/03/2020	Parent - P6 St Ninian's	Child has additional support needs and wants the best school for her child.	Every parent can submit a placing request for their child to any school. Every school in Inverclyde has a strong inclusive agenda and can meet most needs, with the exception of a child who may need very specialist support.	
04/03/2020	Parent - Wemyss Bay	What if children go to St Ninian's throughout the next 5/7 years from Inverkip/Wemyss Bay as a placing request for a route into St Columba's.	Ruth to look into this.	RB response. This will need to be monitored
04/03/2020	Parent - Inverkip School	People don't want to send their children to Inverclyde Academy due to the stigma that's attached to it, why not change the catchment for NDHS to allow Inverkip/Wemyss Bay to go there without a placing request.	The Admissions Policy is up for consultation not the catchment areas. Positive outcomes come back from Inverclyde Academy. Take the time to speak to the head teacher. Pupils have made strong representations about the unfair perception and want to stop the stigma.	"Speak to me" I am a parent council rep and have been nothing but impressed with Inverclyde Academy, I have children there and they have great support, guidance and pupils are thriving there. They are currently second on the table for positive destinations next to Clydeview Academy. I would encourage you to visit the school before judging it.
04/03/2020	Parent - Inverkip School	How is St Columba's now over capacity.	There is no spare room for additional pupils. The school has already given up a meeting room, and ICT room, and the head teacher has given up her office to allow pupils to have classes.	
04/03/2020	Parent Council Member	In transition period if any family move into a possible 400 houses being built at IBM or Power Station.	If a family move into Inverkip in P3 and had a baptism cert they would be treated the same as a P3 currently in the school.	

Consultation date	Capacity	Question	Response by Ruth Binks	Other
27/03/2020	Parent - Inverkip School	What is the average intake over last 3/5 years.	We haven't previously needed to take an average and to be honest it is not an accurate predictor as placing requests can be allocated up to a multiple of 20. It is the maximum yearly intake that is the important number when determining the overall capacity of a school. Everyone within the catchment area has been able to be allocated a place until academic year 20/21. This year we have extended the S1 intake to 140.	

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by Inverclyde Council to changes to the policy on admission and pupil placement in mainstream schools in relation to the transition from village primary schools (Inverkip, Kilmacolm and Wemyss Bay Primary Schools) to secondary schools.

May 2020

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](#) ("the 2010 Act"). The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of Inverclyde Council's proposal to change the policy on admission and pupil placement in mainstream schools in relation to the transition from village primary schools (Inverkip, Kilmacolm and Wemyss Bay Primary Schools) to secondary schools. 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 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.

1.2 HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for children and young people of the schools; 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;
- 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 meeting held on 25 February 2020 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;
- telephone discussions with relevant consultees; and
- communication with the Catholic Church representative.

2. Consultation process

2.1 Inverclyde Council undertook the consultation on its proposal(s) with reference to the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#).

2.2 The formal consultation ran from 13 February to 25 March 2020. Communication was issued to all statutory stakeholders of the affected schools and in the community informing them of this consultation. Copies of the proposal were distributed to local libraries and a copy was placed on the council website. Adverts to notify the public of the consultation meetings were placed in the local press. The period from 13 February 2020 until most of Inverclyde schools closed on 20 March 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, included 27 days when schools were open. This is short of the six week and 30 days expected duties under the Act. However, despite the fact that most of Inverclyde Council's schools closed on 20 March 2020, the ability to respond

to the proposal continued to the end of the original planned consultation period. The period of consultation met the timescales albeit that only Inverclyde 'hub' schools were open.

2.3 Three public meetings were held on 25 and 27 February 2020, and 4 March 2020 in Port Glasgow Community Campus, Notre Dame High School and St Columba's High School. They were attended by 47 stakeholders. The council responded to all questions from attendees. A pupil consultation took place through pupil councils in the affected schools.

2.4 During the consultation period, the council received 228 responses to the proposal. Of these, 152 were supportive of change one of the proposal and 76 were opposed. One hundred and forty six were supportive of change two of the proposal, and 79 were opposed and three did not answer.

2.5 The main points in support include providing Catholic children priority for denominational schools when over subscription arises. The main points of objection include the perception of some in the relative difference in quality of education being provided between schools and the possibility of siblings being split up across schools.

2.6 Most pupil councils thought the proposals were fair. Whilst there were mixed views on whether a certificate of baptism is the best way to identify commitment to a particular faith, it was acknowledged that this is a sensible option for the council to take.

2.7 If the proposal is approved, the council has helpfully agreed to prioritise the entry of siblings within a seven-year transition period. However, the council recognises that it will be important to monitor all transitions including placing requests from non-denominational to denominational primary schools. This will help to ensure transitions to St Columba's High School are fair and transparent and in line with proposed changes.

3. Educational aspects of proposal

3.1 The council has given due consideration to the potential educational benefits for children and young people affected by the proposal. Proposed changes to the policy on admission and pupil placement in mainstream schools in relation to the transition from village primary schools (Inverkip, Kilmacolm and Wemyss Bay Primary Schools) to secondary schools will help to avoid oversubscription. There are risks as a consequence of the policy currently in place in relation to village schools if the school becomes oversubscribed for pupils within its catchment area. Pupils who have a certificate of baptism into the Catholic faith, or pupils from the villages who have attended the associated denominational primary school for their catchment area may not get a place. HM Inspectors agree that the proposal will help Inverclyde Council to avoid oversubscription and see improved and fair transition arrangements for children and young people within clusters. HM Inspectors recognise the importance of progression in learning between associated schools working in clusters.

3.2 The Education Service has indicated that it will remain sensitive to the concerns parents may have during the transition period. It will make every effort, where possible, to ensure that those with a certificate of baptism (obtained before entry to school) and who live within the catchment area can access the denominational secondary school associated with their catchment area. If change one is approved, then transition arrangements for those pupils at the village schools with siblings already at St Columba's High School will be allocated a place at St Columba's High School, providing the pupil's older sibling will be a pupil of St Columba's High School at the time of the pupil's entrance to S1. If change two is agreed, any child who is in attendance, or has enrolled, at the village schools prior to the date the decision to change the council's policy on admissions is made and who had a certificate of baptism prior to enrolment in

Primary 1 will be treated as attending an associated denominational school during the transition period.

3.3 All staff and parents who spoke with HM Inspectors indicated that they understood the reasons for the proposed changes. However, a few raised concerns relating to parents who had younger siblings who may not qualify for transition to the same secondary school if the age gap between them and older siblings extended beyond the seven-year grace aspect of the proposal.

3.4 The council also received a written submission on behalf of the Diocese of Paisley. The response acknowledges the need to reduce and manage the pressure on St Columba's High School and supports the proposals as being reasonable and supportive of Catholic education. The need for a certificate of baptism prior to entry to Primary 1 gives reassurance to Catholic parents of their right to choose a denominational school for their children with respect to supporting a place in the catchment denominational secondary.

4 Summary

The council's proposal provides a sound case for changes to the policy on admission and pupil placement in mainstream schools in relation to the transition from village primary schools (Inverkip, Kilmacolm and Wemyss Bay Primary Schools) to secondary schools. The council recognises the potential impact of increasing demand for places at St Columba's High School and its proposal sets out well its response. The council outlines the associated educational benefits to all affected schools. HM Inspectors endorse this view. All staff and parents who spoke with HM Inspectors indicated that they understood the reasons for the proposed changes. In taking this forward, the council should, as part of its plans, monitor its proposed transition arrangements to ensure they continue to be fair and transparent. The council's proposal, should it proceed, will see improved and fair transition arrangements. This forward planning will assist the authority in managing the rolls in all affected schools.

**HM Inspectors
May 2020**