

Musselburgh Consultation: Frequently Asked Questions (version 8.0)

Q 1 - How will the transition of Musselburgh Grammar Pupils to the new school be managed?

If the proposals are accepted, a Transitional Leadership Team would be established to address the variety of issues that a successful transition would require to be resolved. The Parent Councils would also be consulted before and during the transition process as their input would also be essential. The Education authority would adopt best practise regarding supporting transition, through consultation with other local authorities who have undertaken similar pupil transitions.

Q 2 - How will my children be affected?

Please refer to the transition document on the Consultation Hub titled “Affected Pupil Year Groups Diagram”. In more detail:

i) Pupils who live in the catchments of Whitecraig, Campie, Stoneyhill and Musselburgh Burgh:

There would be no change to their current secondary S1-S6 education provision. They would attend Musselburgh Grammar for the entirety of their secondary education until they leave school.

ii) Pupils who live in the Pinkie St Peters and Wallyford catchment areas:

Pupils in stages S4, S5 and S6 at the effective start date of the new secondary school (August 2020 or as soon as thereafter), will remain at Musselburgh Grammar for the remainder of their Senior Phase until they leave secondary education.

Pupils who start in S1, S2 and S3 at the effective start date of the new secondary school (August 2020 or as soon as thereafter), will transition to the new secondary school and form the first S1, S2 and S3 intake at the new school. This will mean that the S2 and S3 pupils will have spent one or two years at Musselburgh Grammar before moving to the new secondary. The new S1 year group would move straight into the new secondary school from their P7 stage, to become the new S1 intake.

For pupils who have an older sibling remaining at Musselburgh Grammar School (because, for example, the older sibling is in stages S4-S6 and will therefore remain), they will automatically have the choice of whether they want to move to their new catchment secondary or go to Musselburgh Grammar – the school which their older sibling attends. This “Sibling Rule” would not apply in cases where the older sibling has left Musselburgh Grammar by the time the younger sibling is about to move into S1. For example, if an older sibling leaves Musselburgh Grammar in S5, then the following August their younger sibling moves into S1, the younger sibling would not automatically have the choice to attend Musselburgh Grammar – they would have to make a Placement Request to attend Musselburgh Grammar.

Q 3 - Will the new school split the Musselburgh community? How can we address a potential divide in the Musselburgh Community?

- We intend to maintain the integrity of the existing Musselburgh Learning community by including the new secondary provision in the existing cluster group. This would, in effect, enable both secondary schools to work in partnership with each other and their feeder primary schools. This should enable common approaches to transitions, learning and teaching, the delivery of the curriculum and support for children and young people i.e. 'Getting It Right for Every Child.'
- It has been proposed that the learning community can embrace a 'one community' perspective through approaches such as designing school logos and badges to reflect the unique partnership which will exist across the Musselburgh area. This could either be a 'School Community' with both secondary school badges on the school sweatshirts and blazers or another design which incorporates the two badges set within a 'Musselburgh Learning Community' context.
- At an operational level, there would be opportunities for schools to build and reinforce this partnership. A common timetable would allow all young people in the Musselburgh Catchment Area to study in both schools in the Senior Phase (S4-S6). This should allow more choice in relation to national qualifications.
- The schools would explore other opportunities, for example, cluster mentoring, joint student councils and student leadership opportunities. The range and variety of after-school activities on offer to young people should increase i.e. young people being able to access clubs and sporting activities in both schools.
- There would be collegiate opportunities for staff. This would involve staff from both schools coming together to participate in professional learning opportunities or work associated with developing common courses.

Q 4 - How will the new school be staffed?

The normal recruitment procedures would apply, whereby all posts in the new establishment would be advertised through the standard public recruitment channels, and selection/appointment made based on the criteria of each role. Vacancies would be open to any potential candidate as long as they meet the criteria and are successful in the selection process.

Q 5 - What will happen to current staff at Musselburgh Grammar School?

They will continue to be employed in post. The pupil roll projections based on the amount of housing in their respective catchment areas, indicate the projected peak roll of the two secondary schools would be similar in size. The staffing complement in both schools would be determined in line with the East Lothian Council's Devolved School Management Policy. Posts at the new school would be advertised in accordance with the Council's Recruitment policy and open to anyone to apply.

Q 6 - How will infrastructure cope with the development?

An essential part of the planning process is the assessment of the impact on infrastructure. The relevant specialists in East Lothian council would ensure the infrastructure can accommodate the rising population and that they have access to the necessary public facilities. Ensuring that there are safe walking/cycling routes to the proposed new school would be an essential element of this plan. Work would be undertaken to establish “Routes to Schools” could be based on a combination of both upgrading current pathway links, and identifying where new routes can be established based on the housing development which would occur in the area. This would ensure there are appropriate, safe travel routes for pupils.

Q 7 - What will happen to Musselburgh Grammar in terms of quality of facilities?

This proposal does not include specific amendments to the current Musselburgh Grammar School. The quality of school facilities are reviewed on an ongoing basis, and East Lothian Council is duty bound to ensure facilities meet the requirements of delivering the curriculum.

Q 8 - What if I don't live in Pinkie/Wallyford catchment area but want to move to new school?

Parents of pupils who want to attend a school that is not in the catchment area they reside in would need to make a non-catchment placing request in accordance with East Lothian Council's Pupil Placement Policy.

Q9 - What would happen if the new secondary school is not ready in time for the new housing?

East Lothian Council has a direct input into the completion rates of new dwellings (i.e. the number of new houses built in each year) for new residential development sites as part of the planning application process and Section 75 agreements. Although there are elements which cannot be influenced, such as market forces, the number of houses built each year would be planned to ensure there is sufficient capacity at the new school to cope with the number of pupils that live in the catchment.

Q10 - Why were Pinkie St Peter's and the revised Wallyford catchment areas chosen to feed into the proposed new secondary school?

The projected secondary pupil population (approx 1200 to 1300) from the Pinkie St Peter's and Wallyford primary catchment areas feeding into the proposed new secondary school, based on current new house completion rates, provides the most equitable and sustainable split at both schools in terms of pupil numbers with the projected pupil population (approx 1200 to 1300) from the Campie, Stoneyhill, Musselburgh Burgh and Whitecraig primary catchment areas.

Additionally, the A1 corridor creates a barrier to the free movement of pupils between Whitecraig and Wallyford, with the only suitable point of access over the A1 at the Salters Road Interchange. Through the growth of the Wallyford settlement there shall be a predicted increase in vehicles using this junction and as the interchange only has a footway on one side of the over pass it would be undesirable to potentially add additional pedestrians. If additional pedestrians were added pedestrian phases would be required in the signal set up in order to provide adequate crossing facilities for the increase in footfall which would also have an impact on the capacity of the junction.

Given the pedestrian environment at the Salters Rd Interchange and the 60MPH speed limit from the Whitecraig A6094 roundabout, parents from Whitecraig would more than likely choose to drive their children to the new school as public transport links are poor. These movements during the peak periods would add more vehicles to the junction increasing congestion at the interchange.

Q11 - What secondary school will P7 pupils from Loretto RC Primary School transfer to if they choose not to go to St David's RC High School?

Loretto RC school pupils who do not wish to attend St David's RC High School would attend their catchment secondary school, based on their home address. If they wanted to attend a non-catchment secondary school, their parent(s) would need to make a non-catchment placing request in accordance with East Lothian Council's Pupil Placement Policy.

Q12 - Why is Wallyford the preferred location of the secondary school?

A variety of sites were considered and appraised (more detail can be found in Appendix A via the "Council Meeting 26/4/16" link on the Consultation Hub). The Wallyford site is preferred as it can be accessed via a range of suitable foot and cycle and public transport services. Locating it next to the new Wallyford Primary school could also increase opportunities for cross-sector liaison including the potential of extended leadership opportunities for young people and enhanced cross-sector staff collaboration.

Q13 - Will parents and pupils have a say in the design of the proposed new secondary school?

As is usual practice, a "User Reference Group" would be established at a point in the design process where input on specific design requirements need to be identified for end users (ie pupils, staff, parents and the community). This group would have representatives from these stakeholders.

Q14 – Can I see more detail on the financial information regarding the proposal?

There is high level information on costs. These indicative costs are based on national metrics which establish a cost around the required "square metre per pupil". Commercially sensitive information, such as land costs cannot be made available.

Q15 - How would pupils in Senior Phase (S4-S6) share courses between the two schools?

Previous examples of how this has been applied at other schools in Scotland have resulted in an expansion of the range of courses on offer. For example, a certain course subject and qualification level could be offered at one campus, which pupils from BOTH campuses could attend. Additionally, courses could be run so there are fewer timetable constrictions – enabling pupils to select course choices they could not have previously at one single campus due to timetable constrictions.

Q16 - Could the Goshen site ever be reconsidered as a site for a new school again in the future?

As mentioned in the report for the Council Meeting of 26/4/16 (linked on the Consultation Hub), Goshen was removed as a potential housing site at the Council meeting of 17 November 2015. The prospective developers of Goshen had promoted a site for a school there as part of their development. The planning application for development at Goshen is currently under appeal. The outcome of this appeal is not yet known. In the meantime, East Lothian must prepare its Local Development Plan, which must make sure that children from all new housing development can be

educated, and that where a new school is needed there is a suitable site that it can be built that is also allocated in the local development plan. The plan needs to show how that school will be delivered and which new housing developments will be required to contribute towards its cost. In other words, there must be an education solution that works for the new development that is proposed as part of planned growth in the Musselburgh area.

As Goshen is no longer being considered by the Council, it will not form part of East Lothian Council educational requirements as part of the Local Development Plan. However, if the appeal by the proposers of Goshen is successful, and this decision lies with the Scottish Government and not East Lothian Council, then a rethink on the Proposed Local Development Plan may be required.

Q17 - How can my opinions impact on the decision?

The public consultation which is currently underway, is a statutory requirement of East Lothian Council. The public's views and questions have to be sought and recorded in order for their responses to be taken into account. After the consultation period ends on 15 June 2016, Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) working within Education Scotland, review the proposal that East Lothian Council is making. In particular, they focus on the educational aspects of the proposal. The HM Inspectors must prepare a professional and independent report on the educational aspects. The Inspectors must take into account the written responses received by the council from the public (for example all of the questionnaire responses, plus any emails or written responses) and oral representations made at the public meeting. They may also visit schools affected by the proposal including the pupils, staff and parents so they can hear their views on the proposal. East Lothian Council must then review the proposal in light of the Education Scotland report in addition to all the written and oral representations it has received. The Council then publish a final report, containing the Inspectors' report, including a statement on how it has taken account of the HMI reports and written and oral representations

Q18 - What happens if this proposal is rejected?

A final report which summarises the oral and written submissions of the public, Education Scotland's report on the consultation and the Education Service's responses to these proposals, will be presented to Elected Members. Elected Members then take the final decision on whether to progress the proposal or not. If they decide not to progress the proposal, they will instruct Education Service to consider an alternative proposal to then consult with the public, following the same public consultation process again.