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**Report to: People Committee**

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**Date of Meeting: 1 November 2018**

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**Subject: Consultation on amending the Schools Admissions Policy**

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**Report by: Chief Education Officer**

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## **1.0 Purpose**

- 1.1 This paper proposes that Clackmannanshire Council undertake a formal consultation on amending the schools admission policy to change the policy for denominational primary schools. The consultation will be a formal consultation in line with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, which will start immediately and conclude with a report to People Committee in March 2019.

## **2.0 Recommendations**

It is recommended that the People Committee agrees that:

- 2.1 A formal consultation be undertaken on the proposed change to the Clackmannanshire Council schools admission policy
- 2.2 A report on the outcome of the consultation be brought to the People Committee on 14 March 2019

## **3.0 Considerations**

- 3.1 Currently all parents in Clackmannanshire can enrol their children into one of two catchment schools. Either their neighbourhood non-denominational school or one of the two Roman Catholic primary schools. Parents are entitled to send their children to their catchment Roman Catholic primary school (see Appendix 1), regardless of the child's denomination. If children live more than 2 miles from their catchment school (or 1 mile for children under 8) they are entitled to free school transport.
- 3.2 The policy of allowing parents to have 2 catchment schools differs from most other local authorities.

- 3.3 St Bernadette's RC primary school will move into Tullibody South Campus in August 2019. The new school will have 6 classrooms, which is the same number as in the current school, this is maximised by access to additional flexible space. The school roll at October 2018 is 121 and the school has capacity for a further 45 children which means it can accommodate all the children who currently wish to attend. As a new building, St Bernadette's will be attractive to parents and it is possible that demand for places could be greater than the number of available places.
- 3.4 St Mungos' Primary school is currently located in Alloa Academy and has 7 classrooms, which is the same as it had when it was in its previous accommodation. The current configuration in Alloa Academy would make it difficult for the school to expand any further. With 7 classrooms it has 74 spaces for parents who wish to enrol their children and there is no pressure on accommodation.
- 3.5 It is proposed that priority for admission to Roman Catholic primary schools be given to pupils who are baptised Roman Catholics and that other children may be admitted by means of a placing request. This allows the Council to manage the admissions and if necessary, reserve places for Roman Catholic children.
- 3.6 The new admissions policy would only apply for children who are not already attending either St Bernadette's or St Mungo's. While the current cohort of children remains in either school, any sibling can enrol without submitting a placing request. This ensures that parents will not have to enrol their children in two different primary schools.
- 3.7 The following illustrates the consequence of the current policy;  
 In 2015/16 school years, St Bernadette's did not have sufficient capacity to accommodate Roman Catholic children who wished to enrol during the academic year. As the Council has a legal duty to offer denominational education to Roman Catholic children, transport had to be provided to St Mungo's in Alloa. This meant the children had to attend a school outside the community in which they were living.
- 3.8 In order to change the admission arrangements for a school or schools, a formal consultation is required in line with Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 which sets out timescales for the consultation. If the change to the admissions policy is to take effect from the start of 2019-20 school session, the outcome of the consultation will have to be reported back to the People Committee in March 2019. This will allow any parents who wish to enrol in either school and who require a placing request sufficient time to submit one. The timeline for the consultation is set out below:

<b>Permission to consult granted by People Committee</b>	01/11/2018
<b>Publish paper and send copy to mandatory consultees</b>	02/11/2018
<b>Start of Consultation</b>	02/11/2018
<b>Public meetings to discuss the proposal:</b>	20/11/2018
• <b>St Bernadette's Primary school</b>	6/12/2018
• <b>St Mungo's Primary school</b>	14/12/2018
<b>Consultation closes</b>	
<b>A copy of the proposed paper, copy of written representations, summary of oral</b>	21/12/2018

<b>representations sent to Education Scotland</b>	
<b>Education Scotland report received</b>	28/01/2019
<b>Final consultation report to incorporate Education Scotland report and views of consultees</b>	14/2/2019
<b>People Committee take a decision on proposed changes</b>	14/3/2019

In addition to the formal public meetings, to which Education Scotland will be invited, we will consult with pupils, staff, the Church and parents.

#### 4.0 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications

#### 5.0 Sustainability Implications

- 5.1 Implementation of this policy will allow the Council to manage the admission to denominational schools in the same way as it manages admissions to non denominational schools therefore reducing the risk of capacity/ accommodation pressures on schools.

#### 6.0 Exempt Reports

- 6.1 Is the report exempt? No

#### 7.0 Declarations

The recommendations contained within this report support or implement our Corporate Priorities and Council Policies.

- (1) **Our Priorities** (Please double click on the check box )

Clackmannanshire will be attractive to businesses & people and ensure fair opportunities for all

Our families; children and young people will have the best possible start in life

Women and girls will be confident and aspirational, and achieve their full potential

Our communities will be resilient and empowered so that they can thrive and flourish

The Council is effective, efficient and recognised for excellence

- (2) **Council Policies** (Please detail)

Schools Admissions policy

## 8.0 Equalities Impact

8.1 Have you undertaken the required equalities impact assessment to ensure that no groups are adversely affected by the recommendations?

Yes  No

## 9.0 Legality

The consultation will be in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

## 10.0 Appendices

Appendix 1: Consultation document: 'Proposal for a change in the schools admissions policy a consultation document'

Appendix 2: Geographical catchment areas for St Bernadette's and St Mungo's RCPS

## 11.0 Background Papers

### Author(s)

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### Approved by

NAME	DESIGNATION	SIGNATURE
Anne M Pearson	Chief Education Officer	
Stuart Crickmar	Strategic Director Partnership & Performance	



## **PROPOSAL FOR A CHANGE IN THE SCHOOLS ADMISSIONS POLICY**

### **A CONSULTATIVE DOCUMENT**

# 1 PROPOSAL

**Proposal** It is proposed that the Council’s Admissions Policy is changed, so that pupils who can demonstrate affiliation to the Roman Catholic church by means of baptismal certificate would remain entitled to enrol at their catchment denominational school, but that all other pupils would be required to submit a placing request.

**Background** Clackmannanshire Council has two Roman Catholic primary schools, St Bernadette’s and St Mungo’s. Each school has a catchment area that includes the catchment areas of a number of non-denominational primary schools.

<b>St Bernadette’s RCPS</b>	<b>St Mungo’s RCPS</b>
Abercromby PS	Clackmannan PS
Alva PS	Coalsnaughton PS
Banchory PS	Craigbank PS
Menstrie PS	Deerpark PS
St Serf’s PS	Fishcross PS
	Muckhart PS
	Park PS
	Redwell PS
	Strathdevon PS
	Sunnyside PS
	Tillicoultry PS

All primary school children in the Council area have two catchment schools, one denominational and one non-denominational.

Parents (and child) resident in the catchment area who wish their child to attend either their denominational or non denominational catchment school are not required to make a placing request and are entitled to free home to school transport if the distance entitlement criteria apply, i.e. if the child lives more than 2 miles from their school (or 1 mile for children under 8).

St Bernadette’s RCPS will move into Tullibody South Campus in August 2019. The new school will have 6 classrooms which is the same number as are being used in the current school. The school roll for the current session is 121 and the school has space for a further 45 children which means it can accommodate all the children who currently wish to attend. As a new school, St Bernadette’s will be very attractive to parents and it is possible that demand for places could be greater than the number of available places. The current admissions policy allows any child living in Tullibody, Menstrie or Alva, irrespective of their denomination, to attend the school and the new school is not designed to accommodate such a broad catchment.

Clackmannanshire Council has a legal duty to offer denominational education to Roman Catholic children and this proposal to change the admission policy aims to ensure that this is possible.

**Who would be Affected** Pupils and parents/carers of children wishing to enrol at St Bernadette's RCPS or St Mungo's RCPS.

**Note:** Pupils currently enrolled at these schools would not be affected by the change and would not have to submit any further documentation, either a placing request or baptismal certificate.

Siblings of pupils who are enrolled in the school in August 2019, will automatically be entitled to enrol if at the point of starting school their older sibling remains at the school. This is to prevent parents having to enrol their children in separate primary schools.

**Legislation and Current Policy** Denominational schools in the Clackmannanshire Council area are open to pupils of all denominations, all faiths and none, in the same way that non-denominational schools are. This reflects the duties outlined for education authorities in the Education (Scotland) Act 1980.

However, whilst this legislation also gives education authorities the right to manage pupil intake for schools, the current Admissions Policy limits the Council's ability to do this. The proposed change would mean that if spaces are limited at a denominational school, the Council may use the placing request mechanism to reserve places for Catholic pupils likely to move into a school's catchment area during the school year.

**Educational Benefits** This proposal will not have any impact on the pupils currently attending St Bernadette's or St Mungo's RC Primary Schools as they will not be asked to reenrol or submit a placing request in order to continue their current schooling in either school.

Whilst the current cohort of children remains in either school, any of their siblings will be entitled to enrol without submitting a placing request.

The revised policy will benefit any Roman Catholic children who wish to enrol in the future as they will be confident of getting a place in their school catchment Roman Catholic School.

The new admissions policy should not have any impact on children currently attending other schools in Clackmannanshire as given the additional capacity currently available in both St Mungo's and St Bernadette's too many children would have to attend another school because either St Mungo's or St Bernadette's were full.



## Consultative Document

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Effective management of the proposed additional control on denominational school admissions would allow the Council to manage demand for places so that this statutory duty can be met comfortably within the existing denominational school estate.

If denominational school admissions grow, then additional capacity may eventually be required at one or more of these schools in order that the Council can meet its legal duty to provide a denominational education. This would be financially onerous and could reduce the capital investment available for projects in other areas of the school estate.

### Date of Change

It is proposed that this change will come into effect on 14 March 2019.





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## 2 CONSULTATION

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**Legislation**     **Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010**

A formal consultation is required for any proposal to change the Council's school admissions policy. This consultation fully accords with the requirements of this legislation.

**Consultees**     During the consultation period, in accordance with legislative requirements, views are being sought from a range of interested parties including:

- Parents of all children attending Clackmannanshire Council partner nurseries and all pupils attending denominational schools.
- The Parent Councils of all denominational schools.
- Denominational school staff and trade unions.
- Community Councils.
- Elected members.
- Education Scotland.
- The Roman Catholic Church.
- Stirling Council.

**Consultation Period**     The consultation is taking place over 8 week period between 2 November and 14 December 2018.

**Public Meeting**     Two public meetings to discuss the proposal will be held as follows:

- St Bernadette's Primary school on Tuesday 20 November 7pm.
- St Mungo's Primary school on Thursday 6 December 7pm Everyone is welcome to attend.
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Officers of the Council will be present to discuss these proposal and there will be an opportunity to ask questions at the meeting. We appreciate, however, that there will be limited time at the meeting to discuss everything fully and not everyone is comfortable with speaking in a public meeting. To make sure all issues are covered and everyone gets the opportunity to contribute to the discussion, we are happy to accept advance notice of specific questions or issues you would like to raise at this meeting. Advance questions will be accepted in writing only up to 2 days in advance of the meeting (see contact details below). Please let us know how the proposals would affect you and your family, and whether you would like to be named at the meeting as asking the particular question you submit.



**How to Respond** Interested parties are encouraged to complete and return the pro-forma attached with this proposal document. It asks some specific questions regarding the proposal, and provides the opportunity to detail any issues of concern.

Separate written submissions regarding this proposal will also be accepted by letter or e-mail until **14 December 2018** when the consultation period ends. We will be happy to discuss these proposals on the phone, but telephone conversations will not be recorded as part of the consultation and all submissions should be in writing.

**Following the Consultations** Education Scotland will receive details of consultation responses and the public meetings and will provide Education Services with a report after the consultation.

Education Services will then prepare a **consultation report** which will be published on the council website and it will also be made available to read at libraries, council offices and at Clackmannanshire Council Kilncraigs.

The consultation report will be discussed by councillors at the People Committee in March 2019. They will consider whether this proposed change to admissions arrangements should go ahead.

**Contact Details** When completed, please return the attached pro-forma and any further written submission regarding these proposals to:

Admissions Policy Consultation  
Education Services  
Kilncraigs  
Greenside Street  
Alloa  
FK10 1EB

or by e-mail to [education@clacks.gov.uk](mailto:education@clacks.gov.uk)



## 3 RESPONSE FROM

### PROPOSAL FOR A CHANGE IN THE SCHOOLS ADMISSIONS POLICY

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Pupil(s) Concerned:  
(where relevant) \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School(s) Attended: \_\_\_\_\_

QU1: Do you agree with the proposed change in the Clackmannanshire Council Admissions Policy to require a Placing Request for non-RC baptised pupils to attend denominational schools?

Yes

No

**QU2: Do you have any further comments on this proposal? (please continue overleaf if necessary)**

Please complete and return this form by  
14 December 2018 to:

Admissions Policy Consultation  
Education Services  
Clackmannanshire Council  
Kilncraigs  
Greenside Street  
Alloa  
FK10 1EB

Or by email to: [education@clacks.gov.uk](mailto:education@clacks.gov.uk)



## **Appendix 2**

Clackmannanshire Council has two Roman Catholic primary schools; St Bernadette's and St Mungo's. Each school has a catchment area based on the catchment areas of a number of non-denominational primary schools. The catchment areas are as stated below

<b>St Bernadette's RCPS</b>	<b>St Mungo's RCPS</b>
Abercromby PS	Clackmannan PS
Alva PS	Coalsnaughton PS
Banchory PS	Craigbank PS
Menstrie PS	Deerpark PS
St Serf's PS	Fishcross PS
	Muckhart PS
	Park PS
	Redwell PS
	Strathdevon PS
	Sunnyside PS
	Tillicoultry PS

