



**REPORT TO: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES COMMITTEE ON
19 NOVEMBER 2014**

SUBJECT: PRIMARY SCHOOL CAPACITIES AND ZONING

BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR (EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CARE)

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To bring to the Committee's attention the current pressures on places within Elgin primary schools. The report outlines the actions which can be taken to ensure the schools retain capacity for in-zone pupils and manage pupil numbers fairly across Elgin.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III D (25) of the Council's Administrative Scheme to consider and monitor problems relating to school capacities and available accommodation and to review school zoning.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
- (a) agree to roll cap the primary schools in accordance with the details in paragraph 3.6;
 - (b) approve the principle of reserved places within the primary schools which have classes with a limited number of spaces at specific stages;
 - (c) agree to grant delegated authority to the Corporate Director (Education and Social Care) to make decisions as to the management of future roll capping and reservation of school places, in consultation with local Members, and to instruct officers to update the Scheme of Delegation accordingly; and
 - (d) agree that the Corporate Director (Education and Social Care) be tasked with presenting a paper to the next meeting of the Children and Young People's Services Committee seeking approval to consult on rezoning Elgin Primary Schools.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The functional capacity of a school is the maximum number of pupils that a school can accommodate in any one year, taking into account the organisational needs of the school and, in particular, the age distribution of the pupils. Functional capacities are calculated in September each year and

are reported annually to the Children and Young People's Services Committee.

- 3.2 As a result of various factors including demographics, new housing developments and transport issues, certain primary schools in Elgin are nearing, and will exceed, their capacities.
- 3.3 Details of roll projections are contained in the table below.

School	Functional Capacity**	Current Roll*	Projected Rolls							
			2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Bishopmill	390	359	363	376	398	407	423	431	450	471
East End	233	203	196	223	263	302	340	353	382	409
Greenwards	390	331	333	323	322	315	328	315	329	341
Mosstownie	75	49	53	55	53	55	54	54	58	50
New Elgin	531	511	504	552	594	625	665	689	721	750
Seafield	353	278	263	278	306	336	364	395	439	467
St Sylvesters	232	205	207	208	202	201	206	203	202	204
West End	249	234	236	239	231	226	234	230	222	223

*Census Data September 2014

** Functional Capacity 2014/15

- 3.4 Increasing demand for places in certain schools has resulted in a number of instances where roll capping is required to ensure sufficient space remains available for in-zone pupils. The number of out of zone pupils for each of the schools is given in the table below.

School	Current Roll	Number of out of zone pupils	% out of zone pupils
Bishopmill	359	183	50.9%
East End	203	52	25.6%
Greenwards	331	236	71.3%
Mosstownie	49	21	42.9%
New Elgin	511	126	24.7%
Seafield	278	69	24.8%
St Sylvesters	205	73	35.6%
West End	234	120	51.3%

- 3.5 At present, primary school classes have the following maximum number of pupils per class:
- P1 - 25 pupils
 - P2 - 30 pupils
 - P3 - 30 pupils
 - P4 - 33 pupils
 - P5 - 33 pupils
 - P6 - 33 pupils

P7 - 33 pupils

Maximum number of pupils for a composite class - 25 pupils

Roll Capping

- 3.6 The decision to roll cap a primary school is based on the number of primary classes the school can accommodate, rather than the number of pupils. Due to increasing demand for in-zone places in certain primary schools, it is proposed to cap the rolls of all of the Elgin primary schools to ensure that sufficient classroom space remains available. This will be achieved by limiting the intake to these schools to ensure that the optimum number of classes, within the schools, is not exceeded. The proposal is to set the maximum number of classes, in each school, as follows:

School	Maximum number of classes
Bishopmill	14
East End	10
Greenwards	14
New Elgin	19
Seafield	13
St Sylvesters	8
West End	9

This should ensure that as far as possible places are available for pupils in their zoned school. Roll capping will be reviewed annually.

Reserved Places

- 3.7 The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 empowers Local Authorities to reserve places, not exceeding such number or percentage of places at the school or relating to a particular stage of education, as are, in the opinion of the Education Authority, reasonably required to accommodate pupils likely to become resident in the catchment area of the school during the academic year. Placing requests in respect of children who live outwith the school zone can be refused in order to allow this to happen. Parents who make a placing request by 15 March in any one year will be informed of the result of their request no later than 30 April, as per the legal requirements. In the case of any such other placing request, parents will be informed of the result on the expiry of the period of two months immediately following receipt by the authority of the request.
- 3.8 The revised Policy and Procedures for Admission to Schools in Moray was approved by the Educational Services Committee on 5 December 2001 (paragraph 9 of the minute refers). The policy states clearly the admission priorities and adds the right of the Education Authority, when considered necessary, to reserve places in any given school, in accordance with the above legislation.

- 3.9 There has been a consistent trend over the years for out of zone placing requests for certain primary schools. Taken together with the projected increase in primary roll numbers, figures at primary level will need to be monitored and capped more frequently. There will need to be appropriate reservation of school places for children moving into school zones during the academic year, to ensure there are sufficient places for in zone children in their local schools. As such decisions are essentially operational decisions; the Corporate Director (Education and Social Care) seeks an appropriate delegation of power which will allow flexibility in responding to pupil movement throughout the annual placing round and throughout the academic year. Devolved authority would allow the Corporate Director (Education and Social Care) to make decisions as to the management of future roll capping and reservation of school places, in consultation with local Members.

School Rezoning

- 3.10 It is clear from the data in paragraphs 3.3 and 3.4 that roll capping and reserved places will not, in themselves, resolve the projected over capacity issues in the Elgin primary schools. The current school zones pre-date the Moray Council and some may pre-date the former Grampian Regional Council.
- 3.11 The issue of school revised zoning comes under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended. In order to make changes to school zones the Education Authority must publish proposals and undertake a consultation with all those who are likely to be affected by any change.
- 3.12 It is therefore recommended that the Corporate Director (Education and Social Care) be tasked with presenting a paper to the next meeting of the Children and Young People's Services Committee seeking approval to consult on rezoning Elgin Primary Schools.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Moray 2023: A Plan for the Future/Service Plan

The contents of this report relate to Moray 2023 Priority 2 – 'Ambitious and confident children and young people'.

(b) Policy and Legal

This report relates to the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended and the Moray Council Policy and Procedures for Admission to Schools.

(c) Financial implications

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

(d) Risk implications

Failure to address primary school capacity and zoning issues will increase the risk of local children not being able to attend their local school.

(e) Staffing implications

There are no staffing implications arising directly from this report.

(f) Property

There are no property issues arising directly from this report.

(g) Equalities

An equality impact assessment will be carried out on any proposal to rezone school catchment areas to ensure the proposal would not have a negative effect on any of the categories considered. All schools are required to adhere to all relevant equality legislation, as well as authority equality policies and practices; therefore implementing these recommendations should not have an adverse impact on any groups or individuals.

(h) Consultations

Senior Officers in Education and Social Care; Head Teachers of Elgin Primary Schools; Deborah Brands, Principal Accountant; Margaret Forrest, Legal Services Manager (Litigation and Licensing); Katrina McGillivray, Senior Human Resources Adviser; Don Toonen, Equal Opportunities Officer; and Caroline Howie, Committee Services Officer have been consulted on this report and agree with the sections of the report relating to their areas of responsibility.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 That the Committee considers and agrees the recommendations set out in Section 2 of the report to address the current pressures on places within Elgin primary schools. These are:

- roll capping the primary schools in accordance with the details in paragraph 3.6;
- the principle of reserved places within the primary schools;
- granting delegated authority to the Corporate Director (Education and Social Care) to make decisions as to the management of future roll capping and reservation of school places, in consultation with local Members, and to instruct officers to update the Scheme of Delegation accordingly; and

- **tasking the Corporate Director (Education and Social Care) with presenting a paper to the next meeting of the Children and Young People's Services Committee seeking approval to consult on rezoning Elgin Primary Schools.**

Author of Report: Paul Watson, Continuous Improvement Team Manager

Background Papers:

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