



THE MORAY COUNCIL EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CARE

SECONDARY SCHOOL REZONING PROPOSAL

Proposal Paper

To vary the catchment areas of Forres Academy, Lossiemouth High School, Elgin Academy, Elgin High School and Milne's High School.

Statutory Consultation Period:

Tuesday 9th February – Thursday 24th March 2016 (30 school days)

All submissions expressing views on the proposals detailed in this document must be submitted **by 5.00pm on 24th March 2016** for them to be taken into account as part of the consultation.

It is intended to respond to issues raised during the consultation within a consultation report that will be published before the meeting of the Children and Young People's Services Committee on 22nd June 2016.

This document has been issued by The Moray Council for consultation in terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

1. THE PROPOSALS

- 1.1 It is proposed to vary the zones (catchment areas) of Forres Academy, Lossiemouth High School, Elgin Academy, Elgin High School and Milne's High School based on geographical areas which are delineated on plans contained within this document and described below.
- 1.2 It is proposed that the implementation date for this proposal will be 24th October 2016.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In June 1975 Grampian Regional Council confirmed that, where zones had been designated for existing schools, they should be confirmed as appropriate for these schools and in all other cases children would attend their nearest school.
- 2.2 In February 1996, a few months prior to the disaggregation of the regional councils, Grampian Regional Council prepared maps which show clear delineated zones for all primary and secondary schools. Although there was no formal decision taken by The Moray Council to confirm these zones, the Council continues to operate the catchment areas shown on these maps unless specific decisions have been made by The Moray Council to alter the zones, for example following school closures.
- 2.3 At its meeting on 27 May 2015 the Children and Young People's Services Committee of The Moray Council agreed that the key principles for rezoning secondary schools in Moray would be:
 - a zone change should be made where it has the potential to result in educational benefits for children and young people;
 - on educational grounds there will be significant benefits for pupils, in terms of continuity and progression in their learning, in the zone of a secondary school being co-terminus with the zones of the primary schools in its Associated Schools Group (ASG);
 - the whole of the zone of a primary school should form part of the zone of one secondary school only, except where there is an exceptional case for a different arrangement;
 - existing arrangements under which a primary school is dual zoned or has a zone which is split between two secondary schools should be reassessed with a view to altering zoning arrangements, and
 - any proposed zone changes should have the potential to bring financial benefits, enabling the Council to discharge its duty to secure best value, as required in the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.
- 2.4 A few primary schools currently have a split secondary zone. Pupils who live in one part of the primary school catchment area are zoned for one secondary school whilst pupils from another part of the catchment area are zoned for a different secondary school.

- 2.5 **Forres Academy:** The zone for Forres Academy dates back to the time of Moray and Nairn County Council. The zone currently includes the catchment areas of Dyke, Pilmuir, Applegrove, Anderson's, Logie, Dallas, Kinloss and Alves primary schools. Alves Primary is mainly zoned to Forres Academy but a small part in the east of the zone (35 properties in the Newton area) falls within the Elgin Academy catchment area. There are also 13 properties in the Alves catchment area zoned to Elgin High School.
- 2.6 **Elgin High School:** The zone for Elgin High School was established on 7 June 1977 by the Grampian Regional Council Education Committee. The zone includes what was then part of the catchment area of Elgin Academy lying to the south of the Aberdeen/Inverness railway line and including the catchment areas of Greenwards, New Elgin and Mosstowie primary schools. Pupils who lived to the south of the railway line and west of Palmers Cross Bridge at Pittendreich Mill were excluded from the Elgin High zone. As a result, Mosstowie Primary is mainly zoned to Elgin High School but there is a small part of the catchment area (17 properties) zoned to Elgin Academy.
- 2.7 **Elgin Academy:** The zone for Elgin Academy dates back to the time of Moray and Nairn County Council when it was the only senior secondary school (providing education for pupils up to S6) serving large parts of Moray. The zone was amended in June 1977 as stated in paragraph 2.6, and was further amended in July 1981 as stated in paragraph 2.10. The catchment area currently includes the whole of the catchment areas of Seafield, Bishopmill, West End, and East End primary schools, along with parts of other primary school catchment areas described elsewhere in this paper. Geographically, St Sylvester's Roman Catholic Primary School is in the Elgin Academy ASG (i.e. the group of primary schools from which pupils would normally progress to Elgin Academy); however, as there are no Roman Catholic secondary schools in Moray, pupils attending one of the Roman Catholic schools transfer to the secondary school in the zone in which they live.
- 2.8 **Milne's High School:** The zone for Milne's High School dates back to the time of Moray and Nairn County Council. The whole of the Mosstodloch and Milne's Primary School catchment areas are zoned to Milne's High School. Lhanbryde Primary is mainly zoned to Milne's High School but a small number of pupils (currently approximately 13% of the roll) are resident within the part of the catchment area zoned to Elgin Academy. There is also a small part of the Lhanbryde catchment area zoned to Elgin High School.
- 2.9 **Lossiemouth High School:** The zone for Lossiemouth High School was established at the start of session 1972/73 when Lossiemouth High School became a senior secondary school, providing education for pupils beyond the age of 15 as had previously been the case. The catchment area drew pupils from Burghead, Hopeman and the Lossiemouth primary schools. The zone was amended in July 1981 as explained in paragraph 2.10. The catchment area includes the catchment areas of Burghead, Hopeman, Hythehill and St Gerardine primary schools. Hopeman Primary is mainly zoned to Lossiemouth High School but a small part of this catchment area (18 properties) is zoned to Elgin Academy.

- 2.10 Burghead Primary has a dual zone for both Lossiemouth High School and Elgin Academy. This means that children who live in the zone for Burghead Primary School are entitled to seek places at either of the secondary schools as in-zone pupils. This arrangement necessitates the Council providing transport to both secondary schools. Dual zoning for Burghead Primary School was agreed by the Education Committee of Grampian Regional Council on 14 July 1981. This was in response to accommodation pressures at Lossiemouth High School at the time. Approximately two thirds of pupils from the Burghead catchment area are enrolled at Lossiemouth High School with most of the others enrolled at Elgin Academy.

3. DETAILED PROPOSALS

- 3.1 Forres Academy: The whole of the catchment area of Alves Primary should be zoned to Forres Academy. This would mean that small areas zoned to Alves Primary School which are currently zoned to Elgin Academy and Elgin High School would be zoned to Forres Academy.
- 3.2 Elgin High School: New catchment areas for the Elgin primary schools were implemented by The Moray Council on 11 November 2015. The catchment area of Elgin High School should now therefore include the whole of the new catchment areas of Mosstowie, Greenwards, New Elgin Primaries and the new zone for the south-east Elgin Primary School. A very small part of the Lhanbryde catchment area would no longer be zoned to Elgin High School.
- 3.3 Lossiemouth High School: The catchment area for Lossiemouth High School should include the whole of the catchment areas of St Gerardine, Hythehill, Hopeman and Burghead Primary Schools. This would mean the ending of the dual zoning of Burghead to Lossiemouth High School and Elgin Academy. A small part of the Hopeman catchment area would no longer be zoned to Elgin Academy.
- 3.4 Milne's High School: The catchment area for Milne's High School should include the whole of the catchment areas of Milne's Primary, Mosstodloch and Lhanbryde Primary Schools. This would mean the removal of the split zoning of Lhanbryde Primary between Milne's High School, Elgin Academy and Elgin High School.
- 3.5 Elgin Academy: The catchment area should be amended to include only the new catchment areas of West End, East End, Bishopmill and Seafeld Primary Schools. Areas of the Alves, Hopeman, Mosstowie and Lhanbryde catchment areas and the Burghead catchment area would no longer be zoned to Elgin Academy.
- 3.6 Maps showing the current and proposed catchment areas of each of the above schools are shown in **Appendices 1 and 2.**

- 3.7 A summary map showing the proposed catchment areas for all Moray secondary schools is shown in **Appendix 3**.

4. TRANSITION ARRANGEMENTS

- 4.1 Children in Primary 7 in any of the affected primary schools will transfer to the existing zoned secondary school in August 2016 as per the current catchment areas shown in **Appendix 1**.
- 4.2 Children enrolling in any of the affected secondary schools before 7th October 2016 will enrol in the current zoned secondary school in whose catchment area they reside as per the existing catchment areas shown in **Appendix 1**.
- 4.3 From 24th October 2016 all enrolments to secondary schools will be based on the proposed catchment areas shown in **Appendix 2**.

5. TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS

- 5.1 The removal of the dual zoning of Burghead Primary between Lossiemouth High School and Elgin Academy and the split zoning of: Alves Primary (Forres Academy, Elgin Academy and Elgin High School); Hopeman Primary (Lossiemouth High School and Elgin Academy); and Lhanbryde Primary School (Milne's High School, Elgin Academy and Elgin High School) would mean that, in the longer term, The Moray Council would only provide transport, for eligible pupils, to one zoned secondary school for each Associated Schools Group.
- 5.2 Transport will continue to be provided for pupils to attend the secondary schools they are attending on 7th October 2016 for the remainder of the pupils' time at that school.

6. EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS STATEMENT

6.1 Overall Educational Benefits

- 6.1.1 Dual and split zoning increases the risk of children experiencing a discontinuity in their learning as a result of transition from primary school to a non-ASG secondary school. Implementing these proposals will improve continuity and progression for learners.
- 6.1.2 Partnership working between the schools means that children within the ASG study similar progressions of work which have been agreed between schools and have similar starting points when they arrive at secondary phase. Implementing these proposals will therefore result in improved curricular coherence for pupils.
- 6.1.3 As a member of an ASG children have many opportunities throughout their school life to work collaboratively with children from other ASG primary schools. This is an excellent transition both educationally and socially for those children going to the associated secondary school. These opportunities

are available because of the close working relationships which exist between the staff, head teachers and other agencies supporting the ASG schools. Zoning all pupils to the ASG secondary school will ensure all pupils can enjoy these benefits.

- 6.1.4 Current zones, which do not match the Associated Schools Group, have not always been understood by parents. The proposals will ensure that all secondary schools will have clear and distinct associations with their local communities. Families who live in the affected areas will have clear information on their zoned secondary school.

6.2 Likely effects for children currently attending the affected secondary schools

- 6.2.1 There would be no detriment to current users of the provision. All children currently attending the five secondary schools affected by this proposal will be able to remain at their current school for the remainder of their time at school.
- 6.2.2 Implementing these proposals has the potential to result in slight roll increases for Lossiemouth High School and Milne's High School. This could have positive impacts on staffing levels resulting in greater timetabling flexibility and curricular choice for pupils.

6.3 Likely effects for children who become pupils of the affected secondary schools.

- 6.3.1 This proposal will ensure that pupils living in any primary school catchment area will be able to attend a secondary school along with peers from their primary school.
- 6.3.2 This proposal will assist in reducing future potential capacity problems within Elgin Academy and Elgin High School as a result of planned house-building.

Milne's High ASG

- 6.3.3 Lhanbryde Primary pupils will benefit from all being zoned to Milne's High School through improved pastoral transition. There have been instances of pupils suffering towards the end of P7 when separating from social groups. It is considered that these students have more in common with students going to Milne's living in a semi-rural location than going to Elgin High or Academy with a composition of students who live in the town setting.
- 6.3.4 Lhanbryde Primary pupils would also benefit from a curricular transition, shared curriculum rationale and common teaching and learning strategy which prepares all ASG pupils for a smooth transition to Milne's High School.

Forres ASG

- 6.3.5 All Forres ASG primary school pupils benefit from the Forres Academy transition programme. Children from the small schools can meet and widen their social contacts to make the transition to secondary school smoother. Forres Academy has received very positive parental and pupil feedback

regarding its transition programme, which includes their two day visit to the secondary school, the Saturday activity day and the long standing summer programme. Parents whose children have experienced an enhanced transition programme have expressed their appreciation in being included and involved in the process. Transition plans and timescales identified by the primary school, parents, outside agencies and Forres Academy's Additional Support for Learning department have been tailored to meet specific needs to aid as smooth as a transition as possible.

Elgin High ASG

- 6.3.6 The Elgin High School Associated School Group is increasingly developing curricular and pastoral links that provide a positive experience for pupils that enable them to progress appropriately from the primary to secondary schools. This includes collaboration in a number of curricular areas (e.g. literacy, numeracy, modern languages, home economics and health & wellbeing) as well as thematic experiences (e.g. Remembrance Day, out of school experiences, global citizenship and cultural events). These involve staff collaborating across the primary schools as well as between sectors. Curricular input is provided for primary pupils both in Elgin High School as well as by High School pupils delivering, for example, Master Classes in the Primary Schools. The proposed rezoning for the Elgin High ASG will enable this important focus to be developed further and help ensure greater continuity in the transition process for all pupils.

Lossiemouth ASG

- 6.3.7 Lossiemouth High School staff are able to work with primary pupils at other schools at an earlier stage than Burghead pupils because Burghead children choose which secondary school to attend relatively late on in their primary career. Being zoned to one secondary school only will improve the transition experience for Burghead pupils.
- 6.3.8 The collegiate way that exceptional needs funding is moderated between colleagues from all ASG schools in the Lossiemouth ASG means that the Support for Learning staff from Lossiemouth High School have many years' worth of information about children coming to high school with additional needs which enhances their transition. The enhanced ASG transition provided for some children in primary 6 cannot always be accessed by children in Burghead because they have not decided which secondary school they are intending to go to. These proposals would therefore benefit Burghead pupils with Additional Support Needs.
- 6.3.9 There is a shared Home School Link Worker for the Lossiemouth ASG schools who works with children from Burghead Primary whilst being based at Lossiemouth High School. This provides excellent continuity in pastoral care especially for those children who are most vulnerable. The coherence of a consistent team dealing with all children with respect to health and welfare can only be of benefit especially for vulnerable children from Burghead.
- 6.3.10 The current position where children from Burghead Primary are able to choose between Elgin Academy and Lossiemouth High School can be very

disruptive in the final term at Burghead Primary School as both secondary schools require children to attend transition events on many different days. This is disruptive to the P7 class who are finishing off major projects including leading the final assembly of the year. It can be impossible to fit school events around the requirements from two secondary schools. The differing transition arrangements reinforce the already emerging divide between pupils as they identify with peers going to 'their' school. This has caused social problems both in and out of school. Zoning Burghead to Lossiemouth High School only will alleviate these problems.

6.4 Likely effects on other users of the schools' facilities

6.4.1 There would be no detriment to other users of the schools' facilities.

6.5 Likely effects on children and young people in other Moray Council schools

6.5.1 This proposal will have no significant adverse impact on children attending other schools in Moray. This proposal has the potential to bring financial benefits to The Moray Council and therefore allow for a more equitable distribution of resources.

6.6 Other likely effects of the proposal

6.6.1 As all of the proposals relate to areas which are more than 2 miles from the proposed zoned secondary school, the Council will continue to provide transport for eligible pupils in line with the Council's transport policy. The proposals provide an opportunity to make more efficient use of services when bus contracts are renegotiated.

6.6.2 Staff in dual-zoned schools are expected to do the work of two or even three transition programmes from different secondary schools. These proposals would benefit staff in these schools by reducing workload associated with transitions.

6.7 How the Council intends to minimise or avoid potential adverse effects

6.7.1 The education authority will continue to monitor the provision in all its secondary schools in accordance with established procedures and will provide support and challenge in order to secure continuous improvement in the quality of education.

6.7.2 An equality impact assessment has been carried out on this proposal and consultation process. This concludes that introducing this proposal will not have an adverse impact on any of the groups considered. The equality impact assessment is attached as **Appendix 4**.

6.8 Summary of benefits resulting from implementation of this proposal

6.8.1 The benefits can be summarised as follows:

- Pupils will be able to attend their ASG secondary school along with peers from their primary school.
- All children in any one primary school will experience the same pastoral and curricular transitions to secondary school.
- Pupils will experience continuity in their learning when moving from primary to secondary school.

6.8.2 The Council has arrived at these conclusions through studying current zone maps, discussing primary-secondary transition with head teachers and discussing transport issues with the Public Transport Managers.

6.8.3 In delivering these broad benefits, the authority is confident that it is discharging its duty to secure best value by continuous improvement in the performance of its functions, as required in the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.

7. THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

7.1 Formal consultation will run from 9th February – 24th March 2016 (30 school days).

7.2 As required by the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, formal consultation includes:

- the preparation of this proposal paper;
- a letter to the parents/carers of children and young people at Forres Academy, Lossiemouth High School, Elgin Academy, Elgin High School and Milne's High School.
- a letter to the parents/carers of children at Alves, Mosstowie, Burghead and Lhanbryde Primary Schools and all Elgin ASG Primary Schools (those children expected to attend the affected schools within two years of the publication of these proposals);
- information, including the proposal paper, placed on the Council's website;
- information on the proposals communicated through social media;
- an announcement of the proposal in the local press, inviting any person to make written representation to the Corporate Director (Education and Social Care);
- public meeting(s) as shown below;
- consultation with the parent councils of all affected schools;
- consultation with the staff of the affected establishments;
- consultation with the pupil councils of all affected schools;
- consultation with Community Councils in the affected areas;
- consultation with representatives of the teacher and support staff trade unions, and
- consultation with other interested bodies.

7.3 Formal Consultation Meetings are arranged as follows:

Date	Venue	Time
Tuesday 16 th February 2016	Milne's High, Fochabers	19.00-20.30
Monday 22 nd February 2016	Lossiemouth High School	19.00-20.30
Wednesday 24 th February 2016	Elgin Library (Gallery)	13.30-15.00
Wednesday 24 th February 2016	Elgin Library (Gallery)	18.30-20.00

- 7.4 Following consultation, it is hoped that the Children and Young People's Services Committee of The Moray Council will be able to take a final decision on the proposals at its meeting on 22nd June 2016.

8. **INVOLVEMENT OF EDUCATION SCOTLAND**

- 8.1 A copy of this proposal document has been sent to Education Scotland. Education Scotland will also receive a copy of any written representations that are received by The Moray Council from any person during the consultation period. In addition, Education Scotland will receive a summary of any oral representation made to the Moray Council at the public meetings and a copy of any other relevant documentation.
- 8.2 After The Moray Council has sent Education Scotland all representations and documents mentioned above, Education Scotland will prepare a report on the educational aspects of the proposal. This will take place during the period - to be decided by Education Scotland. In preparing their report, Education Scotland may visit the affected establishments and make such reasonable enquiries of such people there, or such other people as they consider appropriate.
- 8.3 On receipt of the Education Scotland report, it will be necessary to review the proposal, and thereafter, the Corporate Director (Education and Social Care), on behalf of the education authority, will prepare and publish a consultation report, containing the views of Education Scotland and including an explanation of how The Moray Council proposes to deal with any issues raised. After a period of no less than three weeks, The Moray Council will consider the consultation report and decide whether or not to approve the proposals.

9. **NOTE ON CORRECTIONS**

- 9.1 If any apparent inaccuracy or omission is discovered in this proposal document either by The Moray Council or any person, The Moray Council will determine if relevant information has been omitted or if there has been an inaccuracy. If it is determined that there has been an inaccuracy or omission The Moray Council will then take appropriate action which may include the issue of a correction or the reissuing of the proposal paper or the revision of the timescale for the consultation period as appropriate. In that event, any person highlighting the inaccuracy to The Moray Council, relevant consultees and Education Scotland will be advised.

10. EQUALITY STATEMENT

- 10.1 An equality impact assessment has been carried out on this proposal and consultation process to assess the proposal's relevance to the public sector equality duties on the basis of:
- Sex
 - Religion
 - Racial group
 - Disability
 - Sexual orientation
 - Gender reassignment
 - Pregnancy and maternity
- 10.2 The equality impact assessment concluded that introducing this proposal will not have an adverse impact on any of the groups listed. Any impacts identified through the consultation process will be investigated prior to the final consultation report being issued and a decision being made. The equality impact assessment is attached as **Appendix 4**.

11. SUBMISSION OF VIEWS

- 11.1 Responses to the consultation should be made by writing to:
Secondary School Rezoning Consultation
The Moray Council
Community Support Unit
High Street
Elgin
IV30 1BX

or by e-mail to: futureschools@moray.gov.uk
or by completing the attached consultation response form
or by completing the on-line consultation form by following the links at www.moray.gov.uk

All responses must be submitted by **5.00pm on Thursday 24th March 2016** for them to be taken into account as part of the consultation.

12. OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION

- 12.1 It is intended that a consultation report including a summary of the submissions will be published on the Council website. This will be available by following the links at: www.moray.gov.uk
- 12.2 It is intended that a report on the consultation will be presented to the Children and Young Peoples Services Committee on 22nd June 2016. This will provide information for Elected Members to make a final decision on the proposal.