

Creating a World Class Secondary Education Provision for Penicuik and the A701 Corridor



What is happening?

Many of the settlements served by Beeslack, Lasswade and Penicuik High Schools have been expanding and more house building is scheduled to take place. This means that we need to review non-denominational secondary school provision in the area to make sure the schools are in the right locations with sufficient capacity and have learning spaces ready for the delivery of 21st Century education.

These high schools serve Bonnyrigg, Penicuik and the A701 corridor, including the settlements of Bilston, Loanhead, Rosewell, Roslin and the surrounding area.

- Lasswade High School is a modern, recently built school but is already at capacity and the number of pupils is forecast to increase significantly.
- Beeslack and Penicuik High Schools are older buildings and the number of pupils attending has been falling, but is forecast to rise to levels which will exceed their current capacities.

What do we need to do?

- Review the expected pupil populations to work out the best locations for the schools
- Consider how to create inspiring learning spaces across all the high schools
- Explore opportunities to build learning partnerships with organisations in the area
- Build on world-class opportunities, drawing on the very best international research

These developments provide an opportunity to work in partnership with organisations at the Bush and Pentland Science Park to create a STEM corridor which is home to a centre of excellence for Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths on the A701 Corridor.

What are we asking?

We are presenting our Big Idea and some of our thinking so far on ways to meet these needs and would like to know your thoughts about them.

We have published information below on the school rolls and capacities, the sites and the options we are considering, and a map showing the current catchment areas.

How do I let you know what I think?

Come along to one of our public meetings:

7pm to 8:30pm, Wednesday 14th September 2016, at Loanhead/St Margaret's Campus, Community Rooms, Loanhead EH20 9DY

7pm to 8:30pm, Tuesday 20th September 2016, at Penicuik Town Hall, High St, Penicuik EH26 8HS

The meeting will include a presentation of options considered to date and an opportunity to ask questions and let us know your thoughts. You can also complete the feedback sheet which is included in the briefing pack, please return this by 2nd October 2016.

What is the current and forecast roll and capacity of these secondary schools?

Secondary School	2015 Pupil Census Students by Stage							Capacity	Occupancy	Roll Forecast 2040
	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	Total			
Beeslack	123	105	120	138	113	99	698	860	81.2%	1,070
Lasswade	298	282	258	271	254	167	1,530	1,480	103.4%	2,267
Penicuik	122	96	95	92	76	88	569	945	60.2%	1,073
Total	543	483	473	501	443	354	2,797	3,285	85.1%	4,410

Which primary schools are associated with these secondary schools?

Beeslack High School	Lasswade High School	Penicuik High School
Bilston Primary School	Bonnyrigg Primary School	Cornbank Primary School
Glencorse Primary School	Burnbrae Primary School	Cuiken Primary School
Mauricewood Primary School	Hawthornden Primary School	Strathesk Primary School
Roslin Primary School	Lasswade Primary School	
	Loanhead Primary School	
	Paradykes Primary School	
	Rosewell Primary School	

Although not part of the Penicuik Associated School Group (ASG), the majority of pupils attending Sacred Heart Primary School choose to attend secondary school in Penicuik.

What is the right size for a secondary school?

When we last sought feedback on this question it was clear that parents in general preferred smaller schools of up to 1,000 pupils but not so small that there would be limitations on the subject choice which could be offered to pupils. When pupils reach senior phase they choose the subjects they want to pursue from options provided to them by the school. As there are minimum numbers of pupils required for each subject to be viable to run, the smaller the number of pupils at the school, the smaller the range of subjects that can be offered by an individual school.

Views from Midlothian's group of secondary school head teachers varied but there was universal agreement that, in the Midlothian context, schools below 750 pupils were undesirable due to the consequent restrictions in curricula choices and overall sustainability. The group also felt there were benefits in larger schools being able to attract high calibre staff from a wider pool of candidates as a career pathway would lead to a bigger school with more responsibilities and opportunities. There was general agreement that an upper limit of about 1,800 pupils would achieve a reasonable balance.

These views were based on experience of the traditional delivery model for secondary curriculum, and may have changed as Curriculum for Excellence has become more established and the aspirations of the developing the young workforce become a reality. In Midlothian we are highly ambitious for our children and young people and we want to provide the very best drawing on international research and local context to guide our decisions.

The 2015 Scottish School Estate Statistics show that only 2 out of 361 secondary schools have a roll over 1,800 pupils; St Ninian's in East Renfrewshire with 1,801 pupils and Holyrood in Glasgow City with 2,064 pupils.

Why site a school in the A701 corridor?

The A701 corridor, in particular the section between Penicuik and the Edinburgh City Bypass, is one of the main communication links through Midlothian and provides good links with the settlements along its length. A site on the A701 would provide a central location for a secondary school serving both large and small communities in the surrounding area. Settlements such as Auchendinny, Bilston, Loanhead and Roslin are set to expand considerably in the future.

This section of the A701 Corridor lies in the Midlothian West Ward which includes these settlements as well as the settlement at Rosewell. There is currently no secondary school located within the ward boundary of Midlothian West.

A spirit of community exists already between the school communities in Loanhead, Bilston and Roslin – one example of this is shared after school club arrangements.

A school on an A701 site would be in close proximity to the Bush and Pentland Science Park, providing an excellent opportunity to build partnerships with academic and business organisations and enhance senior phase opportunities for pupils creating a vibrant world-class STEM corridor.

Why change the association of the Loanhead settlement with Lasswade High School? (Loanhead and Paradykes Primary Schools)

Legislation sets the maximum number of pupils that can attend a school depending on the size of its site. The site occupied by Lasswade High School can accommodate up to a maximum of 2,000 pupils.

The planned house building in its catchment area will result in a roll estimated at 2,267 in 2040, above the maximum allowed for by legislation. As a result the catchment area needs to be reduced or additional land acquired to expand the site. The work we have carried out to date indicates that it will not be feasible to expand the site.

If the catchment area for Lasswade is not reduced, catchment pupils would have to be refused places as the school is at capacity. The Council's policy on allocating places at schools sets out that where catchment pupils must be refused, the pupils refused would be those who live furthest away from the school by safe route. As a rough guide, the distance by road from Lasswade High School to Paradykes Primary School is over half a mile further than the distance to Rosewell Primary School, therefore the restriction on catchment pupils would impact first upon Loanhead and then possibly Rosewell.

The current road links between Rosewell and the A701 Corridor are not good so consideration of Rosewell being associated with a secondary school on the A701 Corridor is not being taken forward at this point. This may be revisited in the future if this changes and if the number of pupils attending Lasswade High School is straining the capacity of the school site.

What about the sites?

Site	Condition	Suitability	Area	Maximum site capacity (legislation)	Notes
Beeslack High School	B	B	11.0 hectares including playing fields	2,800 pupils	1 mile from Penicuik High School. Existing building needs refurbishment but design makes this difficult. Potential capital receipt for land.
Lasswade High School	A	A	8.6 hectares including playing fields	2,000 pupils	High quality, modern learning facilities. Building capacity 1,480 pupils, would require some investment to increase this.
Penicuik High School	C	B	3.2 hectares plus playing fields of 4 hectares	1,800 pupils	1 mile from Beeslack High School. Original building category B listed and needs refurbishment, later additions need replacement. School site includes use of the playing fields in front of the school.
A701 Corridor site requirements			Up to 12 hectares including playing fields	3,000 pupils	

Reference: Scottish School Estate Statistics 2015 – Supplementary Data

A: Good – Performing well and operating efficiently

B: Satisfactory – Performing adequately but with minor problems

C: Poor – Showing major problems and/or not operating optimally

D: Bad – Does not support the delivery of services to children and communities

What are the options we have considered so far? You may have more ideas ...

Option	Notes	2040 high school pupil estimate
1. Status quo	<p>Extend Lasswade High School, refurbish and extend Beeslack and Penicuik High Schools, make no change to Associated School Groups (ASG's).</p> <p>The number of pupils is forecast to exceed the combined capacity of the three schools by 2027, with Lasswade High School reaching 2,267 in 2040 compared to a current capacity of 1,480.</p> <p>The maximum capacity of the Lasswade High School site is 2,000 pupils.</p> <p>All schools would need to be extended and any refurbishment or rebuild work would need to be done with pupils on site.</p>	<p>Beeslack: 1,070 Lasswade: 2,267 Penicuik: 1,073</p>
2. Status quo but move the Loanhead settlement into the catchment for Beeslack High School.	<p>Extend Lasswade High School, refurbish and extend Beeslack and Penicuik High Schools, associate Loanhead & Paradykes Primary Schools with Beeslack.</p> <p>Reduces the roll forecast at Lasswade High School to 1,809 pupils in 2040.</p> <p>All schools would need to be extended and any refurbishment or rebuild work would be done with pupils on site.</p> <p>Beeslack's current location may not be ideal for pupils from the Loanhead area.</p>	<p>Beeslack: 1,530 Lasswade: 1,809 Penicuik: 1,073</p>
3. Replace Beeslack High School on a new site on the A701 corridor. Refurbish and extend Penicuik High School to serve the Penicuik area.	<p>Build a new secondary school on the A701 Corridor to serve the Bilston, Glencorse, Loanhead and Roslin areas. Extend Lasswade High School. Refurbish and extend Penicuik High School to serve the Penicuik area including Mauricewood.</p> <p>Reduces the roll forecast at Lasswade High School to 1,809 pupils in 2040.</p> <p>Building work could be carried out so that pupils are not on site while building/refurbishment takes place.</p> <p>For this option to be viable a suitable site on the A701 corridor needs to be obtained. The cost of this would be offset by the capital receipt for the current Beeslack school site.</p>	<p>Beeslack: 1,215 Lasswade: 1,809 Penicuik: 1,387</p>
4. Combine Beeslack High School and Penicuik High Schools into a new school on the A701	<p>Build a new secondary school on the A701 Corridor for a combined Beeslack and Penicuik High School, including Loanhead & Paradykes Primary Schools. Extend Lasswade High School.</p> <p>Reduces the roll forecast at Lasswade High School to</p>	<p>Combined Beeslack and Penicuik: 2,601 Lasswade: 1,809</p>

<p>corridor and rezone the Loanhead settlement to the new school.</p>	<p>1,809 pupils in 2040.</p> <p>The combined school of Beeslack and Penicuik including Loanhead would have a roll forecast of 2,601 pupils by 2040.</p> <p>The new school could be built on the Beeslack site or on a new site to be acquired elsewhere on the A701 Corridor. The Penicuik High School site is too small for a school this size.</p> <p>If built on the Beeslack site, building work would take place while pupils are on site with possible restrictions on the use of playing fields. If built on a new site the building of the new school could be carried out so that pupils are not in the school while this takes place.</p> <p>There has been previous negative feedback from the public to a proposal to merge Beeslack and Penicuik High Schools, albeit split across the two school sites.</p>	
<p>5. Combine Beeslack and Penicuik High Schools on A701 Corridor site. Loanhead area remains associated with Lasswade High School.</p>	<p>Build a new secondary school on the A701 Corridor for a combined Beeslack and Penicuik High School. Extend Lasswade High School, Loanhead & Paradykes remain part of Lasswade Associated School Group.</p> <p>Lasswade High School roll forecast would reach 2,267 pupils by 2040 compared to current capacity of 1,480, which would exceed the maximum site capacity of 2,000 pupils.</p> <p>A combined Beeslack and Penicuik school would have a roll forecast of 2,143 pupils by 2040.</p>	<p>Combined Beeslack and Penicuik: 2,143</p> <p>Lasswade: 2,267</p>
<p>6. Space for your ideas</p>		

