



**Midlothian Council  
Children, Young People and Partnerships  
Directorate**

**Statutory Consultation Proposal**

**Report on the outcome of the consultation on the proposed discontinuation of primary education provision at Glencorse Primary School and extension to the catchment areas of Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools to include Glencorse catchment area.**

**22 December 2020**

This Consultation Proposal has been issued by Midlothian Council in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

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## Midlothian Council

### Children, Young People and Partnerships Directorate

This report has been prepared following a statutory consultation on the following proposal:

#### **Proposed discontinuation of primary education provision at Glencorse Primary School with effect from 25 June 2021.**

Subject to the outcome of the consultation:

- the provision of primary education at Glencorse Primary School will be discontinued from 25 June 2021
- the catchment areas of Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools will be extended to include the Glencorse catchment area
- remaining pupils will have the choice of attending Mauricewood or Roslin Primary Schools, the nominated school will be considered to be the pupil's catchment school
- children residing in the Glencorse catchment area who in the future become of primary school age will have the choice of attending Mauricewood or Roslin Primary Schools, and the nominated school will be considered to be their catchment school
- school transport will be provided for all children affected, where there is no safe walking route to school and/or the distance from home to school is more than two miles
- provision of Early Learning and Childcare will continue as per current arrangements

The closure of Glencorse Primary School will directly affect the following schools:

- Glencorse Primary School
- Mauricewood Primary School
- Roslin Primary School

The following schools will be indirectly affected by the proposal:

- Beeslack High School
- Bilston Primary School

Having had regard (in particular) to:

- a) Relevant written representations received by the Council (from any person) during the consultation period
- b) Oral representations made to it (by any person) at the public meeting held on 27 October 2020 and the virtual public meeting held on 29 October 2020
- c) Oral representations made to it at the virtual parent council meetings held on 6 and 7 October 2020
- d) Oral representations made to it at the virtual public drop-in session on 7 October 2020
- e) Oral representations made to it at the pupil sessions
- f) Education Scotland's report on the proposal

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Midlothian Council at full council on 25 August 2020 agreed to undertake a statutory consultation on the proposal as outlined above.
- 1.2 This is a Consultation Proposal prepared in compliance with the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* on the above proposal
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to:
  - Provide a record of the total number of written responses made during the Statutory Consultation period;
  - Provide a summary of the written responses;
  - Provide a summary of the oral representations made at the public meetings held on 27 and 29 October 2020;
  - Provide a statement of the Council's response to those written and oral representations;
  - Provide the full text of Education Scotland's report and a statement of the Council's response to this report;
  - State how the Council reviewed the above proposal following the representations received during the Statutory Consultation period and the report from Education Scotland;
  - Provide details of any alleged omission from, or inaccuracy in, the Consultation Proposal Document and state how the Council acted upon it; and
  - State how the Council has complied with Section 12 of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* when reviewing the above proposal.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 *The Education (Scotland) Act 1980* places a legislative duty on the Council to make adequate and efficient provision of school education across its area. This duty applies in respect of both the current school population and anticipated pattern of demand.
- 2.2 Section 3D of the *Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 (as inserted by Section 2 of the Education (Scotland) Act 2016)* introduces a requirement on education authorities to carry out their duty to ensure the delivery of improvement in the quality of school education which is provided in the schools they manage, with a view to achieving the strategic priorities of the National Improvement Framework. It is, therefore, the duty of the education authority to ensure that the education it provides is directed to the development of the personality, talents and the mental and physical abilities of the children to their fullest potential.
- 2.3 In addition, Councils have a statutory duty to secure best value in terms of the *Local Government in Scotland Act 2003* by continuous improvement in performance of the local authority's functions, while maintaining an appropriate balance between quality and cost and having regard to economy, efficiency, effectiveness, equal opportunities and the achievement of sustainable development.
- 2.4 The Council has a number of statutory duties relating to the provision of education in its area including the statutory consultation that must be undertaken when proposing a permanent change to any of their schools, including Nursery Schools, such as closure, relocation or change of catchment area. *The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* principal purpose is:

“to provide strong, accountable statutory consultation practices and procedures that local authorities must apply to their handling of all proposals for school closures and other major changes to schools.”

- 2.5 The Proposal Document and this Final Report have been prepared in accordance with the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*, having regard to the statutory guidance published by the Scottish Government on 14 May 2015, both of which are available for reference at the following websites:

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010:  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2010/2/contents>  
Statutory Guidance (14 May 2015):  
<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2015/05/4615>

[The following information has also been used to prepare the report:](#)

- Relevant written representations received by the Council (from any person) during the consultation period
- Oral representations made to it (by any person) at the public meeting held on 27 October 2020 and the virtual public meeting held on 29 October 2020
- Oral representations made to it at the virtual parent council meetings held on 6 and 7 October 2020
- Oral representations made to it at the virtual public drop-in session on 7 October 2020
- Oral representations made to it at the pupil sessions
- Education Scotland’s report on the proposal

### **Midlothian’s Vision for Education**

- 2.6 The Council is ambitious for the future of Midlothian. The Vision for Midlothian is a Great Place to Grow. The Community Planning Partnership has identified Carbon Neutral by 2030 as an overarching aim supported by 3 main priorities:

- Reducing inequalities in learning outcomes
- Reducing inequalities in health outcomes
- Reducing inequalities in economic circumstances

- 2.7 We continue to aspire to deliver a world-class education system through equity and excellence. Our vision is to provide the highest quality inclusive education, learning and employability service for all individuals and families in Midlothian. To realise this vision we will support the priorities set out in the Single Midlothian Plan, Getting it Right for Every Child and will:

- give all our children the best possible start in life, providing an inclusive learning environment that builds resilience;
- ensure that every young person has the opportunity to be a successful learner, confident individual, responsible citizen and an effective contributor who is healthy and happy, especially those who are care experienced;
- work with our communities to promote high expectations which deliver the best educational outcomes for all learners; and
- celebrate diversity, reduce inequalities and remove barriers to learning.

- 2.8 Pre-consultation meetings were held with staff and parents in January 2020. In June 2020 officers of the Council held a virtual parental engagement meeting and subsequently wrote to parents offering them two options:

- to mothball Glencorse Primary School from October 2020, or
- to mothball Glencorse Primary School from June 2021

These options were offered as an alternative to immediately engaging in statutory consultation on closure, subject to obtaining approval at the next meeting of Council on 25 August.

Additional information was provided with the letter to help parents and carers to understand the rationale for this proposal and what it would mean for them. Parents and carers were offered the opportunity to engage with officers directly over the summer break and again at the start of the new term in order that their queries could be answered, views could be gathered and an informed decision made.

None of the parents of the 7 children currently attending the school sought further engagement, and none agreed to the proposal to mothball the school.

2.9 Consequently on 25 August 2020 at full Council the Executive Director Children, Young People & Partnerships was authorised to undertake statutory consultation on the proposal to permanently discontinue primary education at Glencorse Primary School and to extend the catchment areas of the neighbouring primary schools to include the Glencorse catchment area.

### **3. Considerations**

3.1 The main considerations relating to the proposal are fully explained in the Proposal Paper, and the main points are highlighted as follows:

- Midlothian's population is projected to grow by 8% over the next 6 years with significant growth projected across our early years and school age population.
- Midlothian's Learning Estate Strategy 2017-2047 cautions against the building of smaller primary schools, with capacity for up to 210 pupils and prefers a model with larger primary schools which are more sustainable, particularly in non-rural areas.
- Glencorse Primary School is situated in the Penicuik settlement, 1.8 miles from Penicuik town centre and the school serves the Milton Bridge area of Penicuik and the village of Auchendinny. Due to its proximity to Penicuik town centre it is not classified as a rural school.
- The school has four classrooms, a PE hall and an ICT suite in the main building and the dining hall is located in a separate building.
- The school does not have a nursery and the site is not large enough to provide space for one and in recent years some families have cited this as one of the reasons they chose an alternative primary school for their child. There is sufficient provision of early learning and childcare places across Penicuik at other local authority and partner provider settings.
- The school previously served Glencorse Barracks until 2006 when the Army moved a regiment to Glencorse which required Midlothian to provide capacity for approximately 100 primary pupils. Glencorse PS could not accommodate this level of growth and Mauricewood Primary School became the catchment school for Glencorse Barracks.
- The school roll has fallen over recent years from 82 pupils in 1998 to 7 pupils in 2020. 78 primary-aged children currently reside in the area and attend a Midlothian Primary school, 7 pupils currently attend Glencorse in one composite P4-P7 class.

- Children from Glencorse catchment area who attend other schools in the Beeslack High School Associated School Group continue to benefit from education in a locality familiar to them, and still relatively close to home.
- This is the third consecutive year where families have decided to make a choice other than Glencorse for their children who are starting primary school, with no Primary 1 intake since 2017.
- The Education Service vision is to provide the highest quality inclusive education, learning and employability service for all individuals and families in Midlothian.
- Curriculum for Excellence is intended to nurture successful, effective, confident and responsible children, able to learn and utilise learning in a way that helps them reach their full potential and to respond to the increased variety and pace of change in today's and tomorrow's world.
- Whilst the Education Service of Midlothian Council recognises the quality of education provision offered at Glencorse Primary School, it considers that the very small number of children attending Glencorse Primary School will benefit more from the wider range and breadth of learning experiences available to them within other learning environments and within a wider peer group at their age and stage. This will also ensure that the children will have parity of access to learning and opportunities offered within larger establishments with the remaining children being placed at alternative schools of their choice. Further information on the skills for learning, life and work can be found within the PowerPoint presentation delivered at the two public meetings held during the consultation period.

3.2 The educational benefits that will arise from this proposal for children affected or likely to be affected were outlined in the Consultation Proposal Document and the main points are highlighted as follows:

- The very small number of children attending Glencorse Primary School would benefit more from the wider range and breadth of learning experiences available to them within other learning environments and within a wider peer group at their age and stage;
- Implementing the proposal would ensure that the children have parity of access to learning and opportunities offered within larger establishments;
- The co-location of Early Learning and Childcare and the primary classes at Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools enables a strong transition process.

3.3 In addition to the key benefits noted above, the proposal provides further considerable educational benefits which centre around:

- Learning and teaching - the curriculum includes a broad range of experiences which are planned for children and young people through their education, to help every child and young person to develop knowledge, skills and attributes for success in learning, life and work.
- Meeting learners' needs - through the Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) practice model, meeting the needs of every child continues to be a priority and teachers carefully plan and assess to ensure each child has the opportunity to reach their potential.
- Broadening the range of opportunities - Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) helps our children gain the knowledge, skills and attributes needed for life in the 21st century
- The environment for learning - Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools are suitably-equipped and well supported schools, situated on either side and within 2.1 miles of Glencorse Primary School. The buildings are well maintained and the school sites are large enough to provide a full range of facilities, including Early

Years provision and there are facilities for pupils and visitors with special access needs

3.4 In summary, in terms of educational benefits, the proposal supports:

- Development of peer collaboration and cooperation, of social and emotional skills, as well as the educational benefits resultant from access to a more diverse curriculum.
- The opportunity to participate in a wider range of active learning strategies, using larger atria and dedicated expressive arts and PE spaces.
- The ability for children to participate in a broader range of learning experiences.
- The ability to learn within a wider peer group at their age and stage, and to have parity of access to learning and social opportunities.

3.5 In line with the duty to secure best value the proposal will assist in ensuring that the Education budget is more sustainable into the future as the costs per pupil in under-occupied schools are excessively high.

#### 4. The Consultation Process

- 4.1 The Council has met the requirements set out in the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* with regards to ensuring the views of the community were listened to and their views are included in this report. Midlothian officers also engaged with Education Scotland and Scottish Government to ensure that COVID guidance was followed, while fulfilling statutory consultation requirements. This meant that almost all meetings took place virtually, apart from one physical public meeting held as a requirement of Scottish Government. In order to further ensure compliance with the Act, an independent consultant was engaged to chair all meetings to ensure impartiality.

The Council believes that this report accurately reflects the views of the community, which have been gathered through a range of engagement events and response mechanisms.

It is for members of Midlothian Council to decide to adopt the proposal, withdraw it or seek to consult on another proposal.

- 4.2 Notification of the consultation was given to all statutory consultees prior to the commencement of the consultation.
- 4.3 The Consultation Proposal Document was published on Midlothian Council's website and paper copies distributed on 24 September 2020 to:
- Glencorse Primary School, Graham's Road, Milton Bridge, Penicuik, EH26 0QR
  - Mauricewood Primary School, 11 Muirhead Place, Penicuik, EH26 0LE
  - Roslin Primary School, 8 Pentland View Place, Roslin, EH25 9ND
  - Bilston Primary School, 2 Park Avenue, Bilston, EH25 9SD
  - Beeslack High School, Edinburgh Road, Penicuik, EH26 0QF
  - The Glencorse Centre, 4 Firth Road, Auchendinny, Penicuik, EH26 0QZ
- 4.4 Copies of the Consultation Proposal Document were emailed to affected consultees (see list below) and schools and others such as child minders on 24 September 2020 with a follow-up for the correction in Section B paragraph 19 i.e. '79 children of primary school age' changed to '78 children of primary school age' on 30 September 2020.
- 4.5 Affected consultees:
- The pupils attending Glencorse, Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools
  - The Parent Council of Glencorse Primary School
  - The Parent Council of Mauricewood Primary School
  - The Parent Council of Roslin Primary School
  - The parents / carers of pupils and children expected to attend Glencorse, Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper
  - The staff employed by the Council and based at Glencorse, Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools
  - The Trade Union and Professional Associations Representatives of the above staff
  - Penicuik & District Community Council
  - Roslin and Bilston Community Council
  - Community Planning Partnership

- 4.6 The consultation period commenced on Thursday 24 September 2020 and lasted until Friday 13 November, being a period of six weeks, which also included the statutory minimum 30 school days.
- 4.7 The proposal on which the consultation took place was:
- The proposed discontinuation of primary education provision at Glencorse Primary School and extension to the catchment areas of Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools to include Glencorse catchment area.
- 4.8 The requirements for consulting on a relevant proposal relating to schools are set out in the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*.
- 4.9 An information leaflet setting out details about the proposal and consultation meetings was issued to the consultees listed in the Consultation Proposal Document. Advice on where the complete Consultation Proposal Document could be obtained was included and was published on Midlothian Council's Consultation Hub:
- [https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/directory\\_record/48934731/glencorse\\_primary\\_school/category/182/current\\_consultations](https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/directory_record/48934731/glencorse_primary_school/category/182/current_consultations)
- 4.10 If requested, copies of the proposal would have been made available in alternative formats or translated for readers whose first language is not English.
- 4.11 A 'Frequently Asked Questions' document was also prepared which was available at the same location on the Midlothian Council's Consultation Hub.
- [https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/directory\\_record/48934731/glencorse\\_primary\\_school/category/182/current\\_consultations](https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/directory_record/48934731/glencorse_primary_school/category/182/current_consultations)
- 4.12 Social Media: There were 11 Facebook reminders to fill in the survey or join the online/public meetings. The top performing post, the first one on 25 Sept reached 10,966 news feeds and 1,154 people engaged with the post in some way such as clicking into it to find out more. On Facebook 1,528 engaged with posts in some way.
- There were 11 Twitter reminders. The best performing was on 29 Sept – 2714 impressions and 100 engagements. In total, 385 people engaged with the posts in some way on Twitter.
- Website: Consultation pages were created on the Midlothian Council website along with 'friendly' url of [www.midlothian.gov.uk/glencorse](http://www.midlothian.gov.uk/glencorse)
- There were 1,027 views of these pages and 438 individual visitors.
- Advert: An advertisement was placed in the Midlothian Advertiser week beginning Monday 28 September and week beginning 19 October.
- Media releases: Two releases were issued – one on 25 August about the council's decision to hold a consultation. This featured in the Midlothian Advertiser, the Midlothian View and on Edinburgh Live, an online publication
- Another was sent out on 18 September about the consultation starting, which featured in the Midlothian Advertiser.
- 4.13 A generic email account was set up by the Council to receive representations and enquiries on the proposal.

- 4.14 The public meeting was held at Beeslack High School on Tuesday 27 October 2020 at 6.30 pm and a virtual public meeting was held via Zoom on Thursday 29 October 2020 at 6.30.
- 4.15 In addition to specific meetings with statutory consultees, a virtual drop-in meeting via MS Teams was held on 7 October 2020 at which members of the public and staff were welcome to attend.
- 4.16 In accordance with statutory requirements, the following persons, including those indirectly affected, were consulted:
- The Parent Councils of Glencorse, Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools.
  - The parent/carers of children at Glencorse Primary School.
  - The parents/carers of any children expected to attend Glencorse Primary School within two years of the date of publication of the proposal.
  - The staff at Glencorse, Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools.
  - The trade union representatives of the above staff.
  - Penicuik & District Community Council
  - Roslin and Bilston Community Council
  - Community Planning Partnership
- 4.17 The following schools are directly affected by the proposal:
- Glencorse Primary School
  - Mauricewood Primary School
  - Roslin Primary School
- 4.18 Representations were sought from statutory consultees and the wider public in the following ways:
- An online questionnaire on Midlothian Council's Consultation Hub. The questionnaire asked specific questions and enabled general comments and views to be entered.
  - Widely distributed paper copies of the same questionnaire at Council buildings around the Glencorse area.
  - Paper and digital leaflets, in addition to the press advert and Council web and social media announcements linked to the Consultation Hub. These detailed a specific Education Consultations email inbox, to which any queries could be submitted during the consultation period.
  - The Head Teachers of Glencorse, Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools used established methods of communication to engage/remind parents about the consultation.
  - In addition to the public meeting and public drop-in sessions, informal meetings were held with staff at the directly affected schools to discuss any queries or concerns they may have on the proposal based around their availability and at their discretion.
  - At Glencorse Primary School, a formal meeting was held with staff with an HR representative present.
  - A representative group of pupils from both Glencorse, Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools attended separate sessions where they were able to express their views on the proposal;
  - Meetings were arranged with Glencorse, Mauricewood and Roslin Parent Councils.
- 4.19 The Consultation Proposal is the Council's response to the points raised during the consultation period on the Consultation Proposal Document.

4.20 This Consultation Proposal will be published for a period of three weeks before a final decision is taken by Midlothian Council on 19 January 2021.

## 5. The Public Meetings

- 5.1 A public meeting was held in Beeslack High School on Tuesday 27 October 2020. Two members of the public attended. A full note of the meeting is attached as Appendix 1 which details the questions and issues raised at the meeting.
- 5.2 A virtual public meeting was held via Zoom on Thursday 29 October 2020. One member of the public attended. A full note of the meeting is attached as Appendix 1 which details the questions and issues raised at the meeting.
- 5.3 Virtual meetings were also offered to the Parent Councils of Glencorse, Roslin and Mauricewood Primary Schools. The meeting for Glencorse Primary School Parent Council was held on 6 October 2020 and Roslin and Mauricewood Primary Schools on 7 October 2020. A note of the parent council meetings is attached as Appendix 2.

## 6. Responses to the Consultation Exercise

- 6.1 As part of the consultation process, the Council sought the views of a wide range of stakeholders. The Council provided stakeholders with a short online or paper questionnaire and also made arrangements for receiving additional written responses. The Council received 96 responses to its questionnaire during the consultation period. All representations that had been made during the consultation period were submitted to Education Scotland and any issues or concerns raised are also subject to the Council's response in this Consultation Proposal.
- 6.2 For the Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to discontinue primary education provision at Glencorse Primary School? The responses were as follows:

<b>Response Given</b>	<b>No. of Responses</b>
Agree/Strongly Agree	31
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	64
No opinion	1
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>96</b>

- 6.3 The comments made as part of the questionnaire submissions are included in Appendix 3, apart from submissions which consultees did not wish Midlothian Council to share publicly. Even if a submission is not shared publicly, it has still been included in the collation of stakeholder's views and informed the Education Authority's response as detailed in Section 7 of this report.

6.4 The questionnaire responses are summarised by category in the following tables:

**Table 1 – Number of respondents by type of respondent**

Type of Respondent	No. of Responses
Groups	0
Individuals	96
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>96</b>

**Table 2 – Number of individual respondents by category**

Individual Respondent	No. of Responses
Parents	47
Staff	6
Member of Local Community	26
Other/Unknown	17
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>96</b>

6.5 In addition 3 responses to the consultation were received by letter or email.

### **Response Analysis from Groups**

6.6 There were no responses from groups within the online questionnaire however separate Parent Council meetings were held and are detailed in 5.3. In addition an email response was received from Roslin Primary School Parent Council and is detailed in Appendix 4, page 44.

### **Public Meeting**

6.7 A public meeting was held in Beeslack High School on 27 October 2020 which was attended by 2 members of the community and a virtual public meeting via Zoom on 29 October which was attended by 1 member of the community. A full note of the meetings is attached at Appendix 1 which details the questions and issues raised at the meetings. The points raised are addressed within the responses to the Frequently Asked Questions or within this report.

6.8 Additionally, a virtual drop-in session was arranged for 7 October 2020, enabling any member of the public and staff to ask questions and discuss the proposal, the consultation process and how they could make representations. One member of the public attended who consequently made a written submission to the consultation.

### **Pupil Sessions**

6.9 During the consultation period, Council officers facilitated virtual meetings with pupils and staff at Glencorse, Mauricewood and Roslin Primary School to provide good opportunities for them to discuss their views. A representative from Human Resources

was available for informal meetings with staff. As these were informal no record was taken at these staff sessions. A note of the pupil sessions are included at Appendix 5.

### Overview of Proposal Response

6.10 31 of the 96 individual respondents to the consultation were in favour of the proposal, the full text of the responses can be seen in Appendix 3.

6.11 64 of the 96 individual respondents to the consultation were not in favour of the proposal, the full text of the responses can be seen in Appendix 3.

6.12 A number of common points and questions emerged from the responses as follows:

### Summary of Comments:

- Cost/Money/Economic viability
  - Large building to heat, staff etc in a time where money is scarce
  - Pupil numbers low so not viable, not efficient use of very small education budget
  - Money must be spread equally to all schools in the county/need to balance provision
  - Smaller schools offer as much value if not more than larger ones
  - As staff will be employed elsewhere financial savings applying to staffing won't be met
- Several other local schools can provide suitable education
- Consultation decision looks to be sensible
- Current education at Glencorse of a high standard and should be maintained and given investment, all Educational Benefits apply to Glencorse too, children aren't missing out on any opportunities
  - Perfect learning environment
  - Anyone reading the proposal and doesn't know Glencorse would think Children don't currently get any of the Educational Benefits noted
- Significant Housebuilding – ability of existing schools to accommodate a concern/closure short sighted
  - Mauricewood/Roslin already huge class size
  - Children with needs catered for at Glencorse may be overlooked in a larger school
  - Needing to extend Roslin already suggests the Council isn't that good in forecasting pupil numbers
- Glencorse pupils having to travel further to school (need to drive/disruptive to peer relations)
  - Welcome improved transport (currently no bus service from Auchendinny) and cycle/walkways from Auchendinny to Roslin
  - Concern adding to traffic at peak times and difficulties for families walking to school
- Support for smaller schools and need to encourage parents to enrol at Glencorse
  - Parents discouraged from enrolling children at Glencorse, appears moves made to make school non-viable
  - Cap numbers at other schools and you will fill Glencorse

- Given current circumstances it's not the correct decision to close a small school, wiser to utilise Glencorse and reduce class sizes in larger schools
- Losing heart of community/focussing on the money not the people affect/valuable community asset, removal is a major loss for community
  - Opportunity to repurpose parts of school to make more viable?
- Current COVID issues and distancing
- Whilst Glencorse School isn't rural the majority of the catchment area is

## **7. Education Authority Response to the Main Issues Raised**

### **7.1 Cost/Money/Economic viability**

The Consultation Proposal (Page 12 Paragraph 3) states that:

*Councils have a statutory duty to secure best value in terms of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 by continuous improvement in performance of the local authority's functions, while maintaining an appropriate balance between quality and cost and having regard to economy, efficiency, effectiveness, equal opportunities and the achievement of sustainable development.*

In support of this, the following comments were made by respondents:

- Large building to heat, staff etc in a time where money is scarce
- Pupil numbers low so not viable, not efficient use of very small education budget
- Money must be spread equally to all schools in the county/need to balance provision

#### **7.1.1 Smaller schools offer as much value if not more than larger ones**

The Consultation Proposal (Page 25 Paragraph 20) references that:

*Should this proposal be implemented there is an estimated annual revenue budget saving of £187,268.*

In line with the Council's duty to secure best value, the proposal will assist in ensuring that the Education budget is more sustainable into the future as the costs per pupil in under-occupied schools are excessively high. The cost per pupil per year at Glencorse is £23,362. This is significantly higher than other Midlothian schools. This was referenced in the presentation delivered at the 2 public meetings on 27 and 29 October and can be seen in Appendix 1.

#### **7.1.2 As staff will be employed elsewhere financial savings applying to staffing won't be met**

Financial savings applying to staffing were not cited as one of the aims of the consultation, however as all staff from Glencorse will be accommodated in existing vacancies in other schools, there will not be a cost implication as a result of this proposal.

The *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* indicates we can provide information on costs but decision-making should be based on what supports the best educational outcomes for young people.

**7.2 Several other local schools can provide suitable education**

In support of this, the following comment was made by a respondent:

- Consultation decision looks to be sensible

**7.2.1 Current education at Glencorse of a high standard and should be maintained and given investment; all Educational Benefits apply to Glencorse too; children aren't missing out on any opportunities**

**Anyone reading the proposal and doesn't know Glencorse would think children don't currently get any of the Educational Benefits noted**

The Consultation Proposal (Page 14 Paragraph 14) states that:

*Whilst the Education Service of Midlothian Council recognises the quality of education provision offered at Glencorse Primary School, it considers that the very small number of children attending Glencorse Primary School will benefit more from the wider range and breadth of learning experiences available to them within other learning environments and within a wider peer group at their age and stage. This will also ensure that the children will have parity of access to learning and opportunities offered within larger establishments with the remaining children being placed at alternative schools of their choice.*

As required by the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* the Educational Benefits Statement is written from the perspective of benefits, should the proposal be implemented. The benefits are outlined in detail in the proposal in Section C, they were described in detail during the 2 public meetings on 27 and 29 October and in the meeting with the Glencorse Parent Council on 6 October.

The report from Education Scotland, which can be seen in Appendix 6, states:

*Midlothian Council's proposal to close Glencorse Primary School and allow children and parents to choose Mauricewood or Roslin Primary Schools as their catchment school has potential educational benefits. HM Inspectors agree that a wider range and breadth of learning experiences will be available to children within other local schools. Children will be working with a larger peer group closely aligned to their age and stage. There will be more opportunities for after school activities and teamwork.*

The report also states:

*A few Glencorse children expressed the view that moving to a larger school would give them a wider range of opportunities to make more friends and have different learning experiences in a larger group.*

With regards to the staff perspective, the report states:

*Staff in Glencorse, whilst proud of the experiences children have received over time, acknowledge the challenge of the school remaining viable in the future when the roll reduces further.*

### 7.3 Perfect learning environment

The Environment for Learning section of the Education Benefits Statement in the Consultation Proposal (Page 16 Paragraph 25) states that:

*Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools are suitably-equipped and well supported schools, situated on either side and within 2.1 miles of Glencorse Primary School. The buildings are well maintained, Mauricewood is rated satisfactory (B) for condition and Roslin is rated good (A) for condition. Both school sites are large enough to provide a full range of facilities, including Early Years provision. The buildings have facilities for pupils and visitors with special access needs.*

It also states (Page 16 Paragraph 26) that:

*The learning environment in Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools also offers children the opportunity to participate in a wider range of active learning strategies, using larger atria and dedicated expressive arts and PE spaces.*

The school does not have a nursery and in recent years some families have cited this as one of the reasons they chose an alternative primary school for their child. However the school site is not large enough to provide space for a nursery.

This information is referenced in the Consultation Proposal (Page 14 Paragraph 11) and was part of the presentation given at the public meetings on 27 and 29 October, and the presentation delivered to the Glencorse Parent Council on 6 October.

### 7.4 Significant Housebuilding – ability of existing schools to accommodate a concern/closure short sighted

- Needing to extend Roslin already suggests the Council isn't that good in forecasting pupil numbers

The Frequently Asked Questions section of the Consultation Hub on Midlothian Council's website references this in Question 2:

*As you probably know, Midlothian is one of the fastest growing local authorities in Scotland. Midlothian Council has a Learning Estate Strategy which was introduced in 2017 which plans for this increase over time and the school buildings we need. This document is updated when required. The document is on Midlothian Council website:*

- [See our Learning Estate Strategy](#)

*Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools already educate a number of the children who may have attended Glencorse. There is sufficient capacity at Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools to meet current demand and there are plans in place to expand both schools to meet the additional capacity needed for Early Years Expansion and the growth in pupil population which will arise from housing development.*

*In the longer term, further work will be undertaken to consider the potential new primary school in Auchendinny and whether this should be changed to support more learners, as larger schools are recommended in the [Learning Estate Strategy](#). When we do this, we will also consider other schools' capacity.*

The Frequently Asked Questions that appeared on the Consultation Hub can be seen in Appendix 6 of this document.

Further to that, the Consultation Proposal (Page 11 paragraph 19) clarifies the questions raised about why the Glencorse Primary School building cannot be used to accommodate families who will move into the new housing at Auchendinny:

*There is a committed housing development in Auchendinny, which is within the Glencorse catchment area. The indicative size of this development is 350 houses which it is estimated will, in due course, give rise to 108 pupils of primary school age. That combined with 78 children of primary school age currently residing in the school's catchment will give over 180 children, a greater number than can be accommodated in the Glencorse school building. As the site of the school is constrained and is not large enough to provide the necessary accommodation, should all pupils from current and planned housing in the catchment choose to attend, the Midlothian Local Development Plan 2017 provides for this new housing development to be accommodated in a new primary school to be built in Auchendinny.*

#### **7.4.1 Mauricewood/Roslin have already got huge class sizes**

This year there is an average of 25 pupils in each class at Mauricewood Primary School and an average of 24 pupils in each class at Roslin Primary School. This size of class is similar to that of most of Midlothian's primary schools and is well below the maximum average class size of 31 pupils.

#### **7.4.2 Children with needs catered for at Glencorse may be overlooked in a larger school**

*The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2009* imposes duties on education authorities in connection with the provision of school education for children and young people with additional support needs belonging to their area. Some of the main duties are:

- to make adequate and efficient provision for the additional support required for each child or young person with additional support needs for whose school education they are responsible, subject to certain exceptions
- to make arrangements to identify additional support needs
- to keep under consideration the additional support needs identified and the adequacy of support provided to meet the needs of each child or young person

This means that whatever school a child attends, Midlothian Council has a responsibility to meet their educational needs. Consistent policies and procedures are in place to ensure this happens whatever the size of class and school.

The Act can be found here:

<https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/additional-support/the-additional-support-for-learning-act/>

In addition, Question 15 in the Frequently Asked Questions document on the Consultation Hub (Appendix 6) provides detail on specific arrangements:

#### **15. How will children get the right support they need in an increased class size?**

*Children moving school will be supported with a tailored transition plan to support them in the initial transition but also in their ongoing education. This will take into account: good practice, educational principles, managing change, small group work, learning support needs and confidence levels.*

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The Consultation Proposal states in the Transition Arrangements section:

*Children currently attending Glencorse Primary School will be supported to make the transition to either Mauricewood or Roslin Primary School, or Beeslack High School as appropriate. The Education Service will work closely with the staff, parents and pupils of Glencorse Primary School to ensure children are supported effectively to transition to their new school and that continuity and progression in their learning is sustained.*

#### **7.5 Glencorse pupils having to travel further to school (need to drive/disruptive to peer relations)**

- Welcome improved transport (currently no bus service from Auchendinny) and cycle/walkways from Auchendinny to Roslin
- Concern adding to traffic at peak times and difficulties for families walking to school

The Consultation Proposal (Page 5) states that:

*School transport will be provided for all children affected, where there is no safe walking route to school and/or the distance from home to school is more than two miles.*

Midlothian Council has 155 children currently attending mainstream primary school who travel to school by school transport. It is likely that any child travelling to school by school transport will be accompanied by peers from the same school therefore they would not be at a disadvantage. The educational benefits in a larger school setting will provide numerous opportunities for peer interaction.

#### **7.6 Support for smaller schools and need to encourage parents to enrol at Glencorse**

- Parents discouraged from enrolling children at Glencorse, appears moves made to make school non-viable

Question 15 in the Frequently Asked Questions document on the Consultation Hub (Appendix 6) provides a response in this regard:

#### **12. Some Parents through the consultation have indicated that they felt they were discouraged from enrolling in Glencorse Primary School. Has the Council discouraged enrolments?**

*There has been no Education directive to discourage parents enrolling their children at Glencorse. Parents when enquiring about enrolling their child will have been informed of the pupil numbers attending Glencorse Primary School and this may have led to them enrolling their child elsewhere.*

##### **7.6.1 Cap numbers at other schools and you will fill Glencorse**

Capping of pupil intake at schools is only used in Midlothian where the demand for places exceeds the available capacity. This is not a process which can be used to direct pupils towards a school which is undersubscribed while there is sufficient capacity elsewhere. There is currently sufficient capacity at other primary schools in the area.

##### **7.6.2 Given current circumstances it's not the correct decision to close a small school, wiser to utilise Glencorse and reduce class sizes in larger schools**

The current circumstances do not require the use of the capacity at Glencorse in order to have appropriately sized classes in Midlothian's other primary schools.

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**7.7 Losing heart of community/focussing on the money not the people affected/valuable community asset, removal is a major loss for community**

- Opportunity to repurpose parts of school to make more viable?

Question 10 in the Frequently Asked Questions document on the Consultation Hub (Appendix 6) provides a response to this:

**10. What will happen to the school building and the land if this proposal goes ahead? Will it be sold or used for an alternative council purpose? Could it be deemed suitable for asset transfer to the community?**

*The Council has an agreed process for this. The Directorate that operates the premises will consider if they require the building or land for an alternative purpose, if they do not, they declare it surplus and other Directorates within the Council can put together a business case for its use. If the Council has no purposeful use for it, it can be considered for sale.*

*Currently the Council are looking at how the teaching spaces which are not required to meet the needs of the current pupils attending Glencorse can be used to meet other educational needs for which there is a shortage of suitable accommodation.*

*The Council has a team of people who can support those groups who qualify and wish to put in a note of interest for community asset transfer. There is a more information on the Council website on asset transfer, the process and business cases required.*

In addition to this, Fiona Robertson made additional comments regarding the community in response to a question about this in the public meeting on Thursday 27 October:

*I do hear what you are saying regarding breathing life into the community. I believe that the A701 new school campus will breathe new life into the area and we have a number of ways of working with the community. When discussions on mothballing took place we were considering options for young people and for the life of the community – this remains our vision in terms of Glencorse being part of a learning community. The mothballing didn't happen and so we have brought forward this proposal*

A note of the above meeting can be seen in Appendix 1 of this document.

**7.8 Current COVID issues and distancing**

Question 3 in the Frequently Asked Questions document on the Consultation Hub (Appendix 6) provides a response to this:

**3. Would Glencorse Primary School be needed to accommodate children from other schools due to social distancing requirements during the Covid19 pandemic?**

*Current Scottish Government Guidance states that "On the basis of the scientific advice, and subject to all other risk mitigation measures set out in this advice being appropriately implemented, there is no requirement for physical distancing between children in primary schools." There would therefore be no requirement for the extra space in Glencorse PS to be used for COVID purposes.*

**7.9 Whilst Glencorse School isn't rural the majority of the catchment area is**

The Scottish Ministers use the urban/rural classification to determine which schools in Scotland should be considered rural schools and included in the Rural School List for the purposes of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. Only those schools which, according to the urban/rural classification, are located in a settlement of under 3,000 people are classified as rural schools. Glencorse is located in the settlement of Penicuik and therefore not included in the Rural School List.

## 8. Education Scotland Report

- 8.1 In accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, a report was produced by Education Scotland on the educational aspects of the proposal. The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of Midlothian Council's proposal to discontinue primary education provision at Glencorse Primary School. The Education Scotland report can be read in full at Appendix 7.
- 8.2 In preparing this report, HM Inspectors undertook the following activities:
- attendance at the virtual public meeting held on 29 October 2020 via Zoom in connection with the council's proposals;
  - consideration of all relevant documentation provided by the council in relation to the proposal, specifically the educational benefits statement and related consultation documents, written and oral submissions from parents and others; and
  - virtual visits to the schools directly and indirectly impacted by the proposal, including discussion with pupils and the Head Teachers of Glencorse PS, Roslin PS, Mauricewood PS and Beeslack HS.
- 8.3 The Summary section of the Education Scotland report summarises their findings and conclusions as follows:

*Midlothian Council's proposal to close Glencorse Primary School and allow children and parents to choose Mauricewood or Roslin Primary Schools as their catchment school has potential educational benefits. HM Inspectors agree that a wider range and breadth of learning experiences will be available to children within other local schools. Children will be working with a larger peer group closely aligned to their age and stage. There will be more opportunities for after school activities and teamwork. The proposal will allow the council to deliver 'Best Value' through more efficient and effective use of resources. There is sufficient capacity and a strong willingness to include any children moving into both Roslin and Mauricewood Primary Schools. Should the council proceed with its plans to close Glencorse Primary School, it should continue to support children and parents who feel a sense of loss from the closure of a small school. Stakeholders value the existing relationships in the school community. Staff across the cluster should build on current good practice to support the transition of children displaced from Glencorse Primary School. The council should also work with parents to address their concerns over safe walking routes to school.*

## Midlothian Council's Response to Education Scotland's Report

- 8.4 Midlothian Council welcomes the report by Education Scotland which highlights the benefits of the proposal and the Education Authority accepts its findings. Officers from the Education Authority met to consider the content of the report and the action highlighted in the summary.
- 8.5 In response to the findings contained within the Education Scotland report Midlothian has been asked to address the following points:

*Staff across the cluster should build on current good practice to support the transition of children displaced from Glencorse Primary School. The council should also work with parents to address their concerns over safe walking routes to school.*

Transition plans have already been discussed with the Head Teachers in schools directly affected to ensure robust and supportive plans will be in place should the proposal be accepted.

School staff and Council officers will work with the Council's School Travel Plan Coordinator and parents to address concerns and to ensure safe routes to all schools affected.

## **9 Transition Arrangements**

- 9.1 Subject to the conclusion of the Scottish Ministers eight-week call-in period or the notification of the outcome of a call-in, as appropriate, if approved, the discontinuation of primary education provision at Glencorse Primary School and extension to the catchment areas of Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools to include Glencorse catchment area will take effect from 25 June 2021.
- 9.2 Midlothian Council has effective transition arrangements in place to support children moving from primary to secondary school and for new pupils joining a Midlothian school. Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools will begin developing stronger links with the families of children attending Glencorse Primary School so that pupils who wish to attend either of these schools are identified at the earliest opportunity. The school will then be able to involve the children and their parents in informing and shaping their overall transition strategy.

## **10. Alleged Omissions or Inaccuracies**

- 10.1 *Section (10) (3) of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* also places a requirement on the Council to provide details of any inaccuracy or omission within the Consultation Proposal Document which has either been identified by the Council or raised by consultees. This section of the 2010 Act also requires the Council to provide a statement on the action taken in respect of the inaccuracy or omission, or, if no action was taken, to state that fact and why.
- 10.2 An inaccuracy within the Consultation Proposal Document was identified in Section B paragraph 19 i.e. '79 children of primary school age' changed to '78 children of primary school age'. An update was made to the online document and the paper versions were updated and replaced in the locations identified earlier in this report. A follow-up email advising of the inaccuracy was also issued on 30 September 2020 to all those who had previously received an electronic copy of the document, and Education Scotland was informed of the inaccuracy and actions taken to correct it.

## **11. Compliance with Section 9(1) of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010**

- 11.1 Section 9(1) of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* states that:

After the Education Authority has received Education Scotland's report, the Authority is to review the relevant proposal having regard (in particular) to:

- (i) written representations received by the Authority (from any person) during the consultation period,
  - (ii) oral representations made to it (by any person) at the public meeting,
  - (iii) Education Scotland's report.
- 11.2 Following receipt of the Education Scotland report, 99 written responses received during the consultation period and consideration of oral representations made at a public meeting held during the consultation period, officers reviewed the proposal.
- 11.3 The feedback from the consultation was considered by relevant officers within the Council's Children, Young People's and Partnership Directorate. Data and factual information was checked where required and advice and input was sought from other Council Services where needed to consider the issues raised. This ensured that the Council met the requirements of sections 9(1), 12 and 13(3) (b) of the 2010 Act.

## **12. Legal Issues**

- 12.1 The Council has complied in full with the requirements of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* throughout this statutory consultation.
- 12.2 The Council is mindful of its duties in respect of equality under the *Equality Act 2010*, the *Public Sector Equality Duty 2011*, and the *Fairer Scotland Duty* (Part one of the Equality Act). The Equality Impact Assessment identified that the proposal, if implemented, will result in a small number of children travelling further to attend primary school. This will be mitigated by providing school transport for affected pupils where there is no safe walking route to school and/or the distance from home to school is more than two miles. In terms of Socio Economic Impact, the assessment identified no significant impact from the implementation of this proposal.
- 12.3 Under the terms of the *Schools (Scotland) (Consultation) Act 2010*, it is a legal requirement that the Council should not reach any formal decision without having reviewed the relevant proposal having regard, in particular, to:
- a) relevant written representations received from any person during the consultation period;
  - b) oral representation made to it by any person at the public meetings held on ;
  - c) the Education Scotland report;
  - d) preparing a Consultation Proposal; and
  - e) waiting until a period of three weeks starting on the day on which this Consultation Proposal is published in electronic and printed form has expired.
- 12.4 As it is the intention that this Consultation Proposal should be published, both electronically and in paper form, if required, on 22 December 2020, this meets the statutory requirement to publish this report for more than three weeks before consideration of the proposal by Council on 19 January 2021.

## **13. Scottish Ministers Call-in Closure Procedure**

- 13.1 At the end of the consultation process, Section 15 of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* enables Scottish Ministers to call-in a decision to implement the proposed discontinuation of primary education provision at Glencorse Primary School.

- 13.2 If the Council's final decision is to implement the proposal, it will require to notify the Scottish Ministers of that decision, and provide them with a copy of the proposal document and Consultation Proposal. This must be done within six working days of that decision. The Scottish Ministers have an eight week period from the date of that final decision to decide if they will call-in the proposal.
- 13.3 Within the first three weeks of that eight week period, the Scottish Ministers will take account of any relevant representations made to them by any person. Until the outcome of the eight week call-in process is known, the Council cannot proceed to implement the proposal.
- 13.4 If the Scottish Ministers call-in the proposal, they must refer the proposal to the Convener of the School Closure Review Panels who may refuse to consent to the proposal or grant their consent to the proposal subject to conditions or unconditionally.
- 13.5 Recipients of this Consultation Proposal, and other readers, should note that the legislation allows for any person to make representations to Scottish Ministers within three weeks of the Council taking their final decision to implement a closure proposal.
- 13.6 Midlothian Council will take the decision on whether or not to implement the discontinuation of education provision at Glencorse Primary School at its meeting on 19 January 2021. If the decision is taken to implement, any representations to Scottish Ministers, therefore, in this context need to be with the Ministers within three weeks of this date. Therefore, any representations must be made to Scottish Ministers by 9 February 2021.
- 13.7 Anyone wishing to make representation to Scottish Ministers during the three week period referred to above should do so by email to [schoolclosure@gov.scot](mailto:schoolclosure@gov.scot) or in writing to:

School Infrastructure Unit  
The Scottish Government  
Area 2B (North)  
Victoria Quay  
EDINBURGH  
EH6 6QQ

## **14. Personnel Implications**

- 14.1 If the proposal is implemented, the staff in Glencorse Primary School will all be offered positions in other schools. There will be no new implications for teaching and support staff in Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools.
- 14.2 The Council does not envisage any adverse effects from implementation of the proposal in respect of staffing. Should issues arise however, these will be mitigated through the Council's Education Leadership Team support structure.

## **15. Environmental Issues**

- 15.1 Midlothian Council has committed to become carbon neutral by 2030 and to achieve this the Education Service is committed to delivering greener and more sustainable learning environments. The Glencorse School building is inefficient from an energy consumption perspective and, if the building is to be retained and repurposed,

consideration will be given to the possibility of refurbishing it to achieve a minimal carbon footprint.

Providing home to school transport for children residing in the Glencorse catchment area who attend Mauricewood or Roslin Primary School should reduce the number of home to school journeys taken by car. This should reduce overall greenhouse gas emissions in Midlothian. Consideration will also be given to the improvement or additional provision of safe walking/cycling routes to these schools.

## 16. Conclusions

16.1 On the basis of the feedback received and taking account of the educational and social benefits of the proposal, it is concluded that:

- a) education provision at Glencorse Primary School be discontinued with effect from 25 June 2021 and the catchment areas of Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools be extended to include the current catchment area of Glencorse Primary School;
- b) the proposal will bring educational benefits to the present and future users of the affected schools and assist in ensuring that the Education budget is more sustainable into the future, as the costs per pupil in under-occupied schools are excessively high. This is in line with our duty to secure best value;
- c) reducing the burden of unnecessary accommodation allows more equitable funding of education across all Midlothian schools within the financial resources available;
- d) overall there are no environmental impacts as a result of this proposal; and
- e) overall there are strong educational arguments in favour of this proposal.

## 17. Recommendations

17.1 Following the conclusion of the Scottish Ministers eight-week call-in period or the notification of the outcome of a call-in, as appropriate, it is recommended that the Council approves the following:

- the provision of primary education at Glencorse Primary School be discontinued;
- the catchment areas of Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools be extended to include the Glencorse catchment area;
- remaining pupils to have the choice of attending Mauricewood or Roslin Primary Schools, the nominated school to be considered the pupil's catchment school;
- children residing in the Glencorse catchment area who in the future become of primary school age to be given the choice of attending Mauricewood or Roslin Primary Schools, and the nominated school to be considered their catchment school;
- school transport to be provided for all children affected, where there is no safe walking route to school and/or the distance from home to school is more than two miles.

## Appendix 1: Note of Public Meetings

### A1.1 Note of Public Meeting held at Beeslack High School - Tuesday 27 October 2020 (6.30 pm)

#### 27 October public meeting at Beeslack Community High School

2 members of the public attended

Also at the meeting:

John Butcher – Independent Chair

Fiona Robertson – Executive Director Children Young People & Partnerships

Nicola McDowell – School Group Manager

Sandra Banks – Education Resource Manager

Lynn Cochrane – Communications

An attendee asked if she defers her eldest son's place at Roslin Primary until August 2022 and Glencorse closes and they are then in the Mauricewood catchment rather than Roslin, would all three children, in years to come, still be eligible for school transport to Roslin PS?

It was agreed the family is likely to be eligible. Under the proposed arrangements families in the Glencorse catchment can choose to send their child/children to either Roslin or Mauricewood and that school then becomes their catchment school. If they live more than 2 miles from the school they choose to attend or if there is no safe walking route, pupils will be eligible for school transport. Any further catchment changes are unlikely to be implemented before 2024 and there would normally be a two year transition period, so that any changes would not adversely affect children likely to become primary pupils within the subsequent two years. Eligibility for school transport would be maintained throughout the transition period.

### A1.2 Note of Public Meeting held via Zoom – Thursday 29 October 2020 (6.30 pm)

#### Glencorse Primary School Statutory Consultation Virtual Public Meeting – Thursday 29 October 2020 (18.30)

Panel
John Butcher – Independent Adviser Fiona Robertson – Executive Director Children, Young People & Partnerships Nicola McDowell – Schools Group Manager Sandra Banks – Education Resources Manager Education Scotland Observers X3
<b>Attendees - 1</b>

#### Questions

Following the presentation John invited the one attendee to raise any questions with officers.

## Questions

1. The attendee advised that in attending he wanted to see who else in the community would turn up in order to share their thoughts. He then proceeded to share a number of concerns as follows:

- a) I know you are saying that Mauricewood and Roslin are great schools but our kids are getting all that and extra. Glencorse brings in teachers to do IT, PE. Teachers are amazing and kids go outwith the school to do other things. It is a great wee school and a valued asset in the area as not left with anything in the area – nothing to keep community together. I feel that the school is the heart and it's being ripped out. It's a great wee school and sad to see from the lack of attendance at the public meeting that people aren't interested. Being in business I know it doesn't make sense to spend what you spend on such a small number of pupils.

*FR – Thank you and I understand how close this is to your heart. As mentioned there are over 70 children in the Glencorse catchment area and only 7 attending the school. By August 2021 the school will only have 4 pupils. I do hear what you are saying regarding breathing life into the community. I believe that the A701 new school campus will breathe new life into the area and we have a number of ways of working with the community. When discussions on mothballing took we place we were considering options for young people and for the life of the community linked to the Glencorse Community Centre – this remains our vision in terms of Glencorse being part of a learning community. The mothballing didn't happen and so we have brought forward this proposal.*

- b) A couple of people had advised that they were told that the school would close in October or they would have opted for the smaller school as this would suit their child better.

*FR - I am aware that families made enquiries and were informed about expected numbers of children in primary classes. From my investigation into this I am satisfied that parents were not being sent away, it's more about parents' response to the small numbers of pupils resulting in families choosing elsewhere.*

- c) What impact is the growth going to have on Mauricewood and Roslin – both schools need to be extended somehow and Mauricewood is already boxed in. When you were replacing Roslin why wasn't a new school built up at Auchendinny - you could have combined Roslin and Glencorse and had one large school. Putting the primary school with the high school makes sense to me – Mauricewood is an old school and so not fit for certain things where it is and the need to look at the congestion issue. I feel it is short sighted getting rid of Glencorse, it would be better to keep it open for next couple of years and make the school viable. .

*FR - I agree with issues such as parking at Mauricewood and we are looking at this as part of our overall Learning Estate Strategy and review of the learning estate. There is a need to expand Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools anyway due to housing developments in these areas. In terms of the catchment areas, mothballing would have allowed time for discussion on this point, albeit this would still have led to the temporary closure of Glencorse PS August 2021*

- d) The infrastructure isn't there across Midlothian Council as a whole – a local resident advised that he cycles with his children to school from Milton Bridge to Roslin and he was clearing the road himself so that he and his children could cycle to school.

*FR – There is a meeting this week to look at this area as a key requirement is to provide safe routes to school and I will flag the issue raised with the Chief Officer Place and ask him to respond. In terms of the future we are already having those very discussions as we will need safe routes for pedestrians and cyclists.*

- e) What will you do with the Glencorse school building?

*FR – It will go to the Council's Capital Asset Board to look at proposals for use of the building.*

*JB – Thank you for coming along and your points have been well made. Thank you to all attendees.*

## Appendix 2: Note of Virtual Parent Council Meetings

### A2.1 Glencorse Primary School Parent Council Meeting, 6 October 2020

### A2.2 Roslin and Mauricewood Primary School Parent Council Meeting, 7 October 2020

### A2.1 Glencorse Primary School Parent Council Meeting via MS Teams, Tuesday 6 October 2020 (6.30 pm)

Panel
John Butcher – Independent Adviser Fiona Robertson – Executive Director Children, Young People & Partnerships Nicola McDowell – Schools Group Manager Sandra Banks – Education Resources Manager
<b>Attendees - 8</b>

John Butcher, Independent Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and clarified his role as independent chair supporting the consultation process. In addition John provided further information regarding his background i.e. retired Executive Director North Ayrshire 6 years and Deputy Director City of Glasgow Council and added that he has a long history of undertaking consultations. He further advised that he had no locus in Midlothian or relationship with Midlothian Council.

John clarified the purpose of the meeting as forming part of the statutory consultation process regarding Proposed discontinuation of primary education provision at Glencorse Primary School with effect from 25 June 2021 (also shown on the first slide of the presentation)

The format of the meeting was clarified advising that a presentation would be shared on screen by Nicola McDowell and that John would take the participants through each of the slides.

#### Slide 2 – Housekeeping

As shown on the slide John asked attendees to mute their sound until invited to contribute and asked that the hands up function was used to indicate an attendee wanted to ask a question. John further advised that questions would be taken at the end and advised that it was not his role to offer comment or respond to any questions raised. He further acknowledged that whilst consultations were emotive he asked that everyone treat each other with respect and proceed with the meeting with this in mind

#### Slide – Panel/introductions

John advised who was here from MLC and their role and pointed out that whilst a note of the meeting and questions raised would be taken, that this would not be verbatim but that it would be shared with parents.

NB: A parent advised they had problems seeing slides so logged out and back in again to fix the problem.

#### Slide – Agenda

John provided an overview of the meeting structure as follows:

- Welcome and Introductions
- The Proposal
- Questions
- Close and Thanks

### **Slide – Statutory Consultation Process**

John highlighted areas on slide as follows and provided additional info as noted:

- Legal Framework  
*(reference to Education Scotland Act 1980, Local Government Act 2003 (including statutory duty of Best Value), Schools Consultation Scotland Act (2010) (noted as main reference) which covers statutory duty to consult following guidance issued 2015.)*
- Consideration by Midlothian Council – June 2020
- Proposal Paper including Educational Benefits Statement – September 2020
- Statutory Consultation Period – 26 September to 13 November 2020
- Representations from interested parties – throughout the consultation period

### **Slide – Statutory Consultation Process**

John highlighted areas on slide as follows and provided additional info as noted:

- Involvement of Education Scotland  
*(Referenced involvement of Education Scotland who whilst have function in delivering improvement across Scotland and in terms of statutory consultation process they are invited to be involved and will be sent copies of all representations/consultation data at end of consultation period)*
- Preparation of Consultation Proposal – after 13 November
- Decision by Midlothian Council – January 2021  
*(Decision will be made Jan 2021 but only once report produced by Education Scotland is received and then report to Council in Jan 2021 containing Education Scotland report, any representations and recommendations from officers based on outcome of consultations)*
- Potential Call-In Notification - within 8 weeks of Council's decision  
*(Opportunity for ministers for call-in notification within 8 weeks of consultation closure. If call-in then 7 days to notify School Closure Review Panel (Ian Nisbet) who has 7 days to convene panel to review. Can agree local authority decision, overrule it or .....so could be well in to March 2021 before decision is made)*

### **Slide – The Proposal**

John advised that as Independent Chair he would go through proposal and referenced information on slide as follows:

- This meeting is with regard to the following proposal:

The proposed discontinuation of primary education provision at Glencorse Primary School and extension to the catchment areas of Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools to include Glencorse catchment area.

### **Slide – Proposal**

Further information was shared as shown in slide as follows:

- With effect from 25 June 2021, or as soon as possible thereafter:
  - The provision of primary education at Glencorse Primary School will be discontinued;
  - The catchment areas of Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools will be extended to include the Glencorse catchment area;
  - Remaining pupils will have the choice of attending Mauricewood or Roslin Primary Schools, the nominated school will be considered to be the pupil's catchment school;

### **Slide – Proposal (2)**

Further information relating to the proposal was shared as shown in slide as follows:

- Children residing in the Glencorse catchment area who in the future become of primary school age will have the choice of attending Mauricewood or Roslin Primary Schools, and the nominated school will be considered to be their catchment school
- School transport will be provided for all children affected, where there is no safe walking route to school and/or the distance from home to school is more than two miles
- Provision of Early Learning and Childcare will continue as per current arrangements (*John clarified this refers to there being no current arrangements in place at Glencorse*)

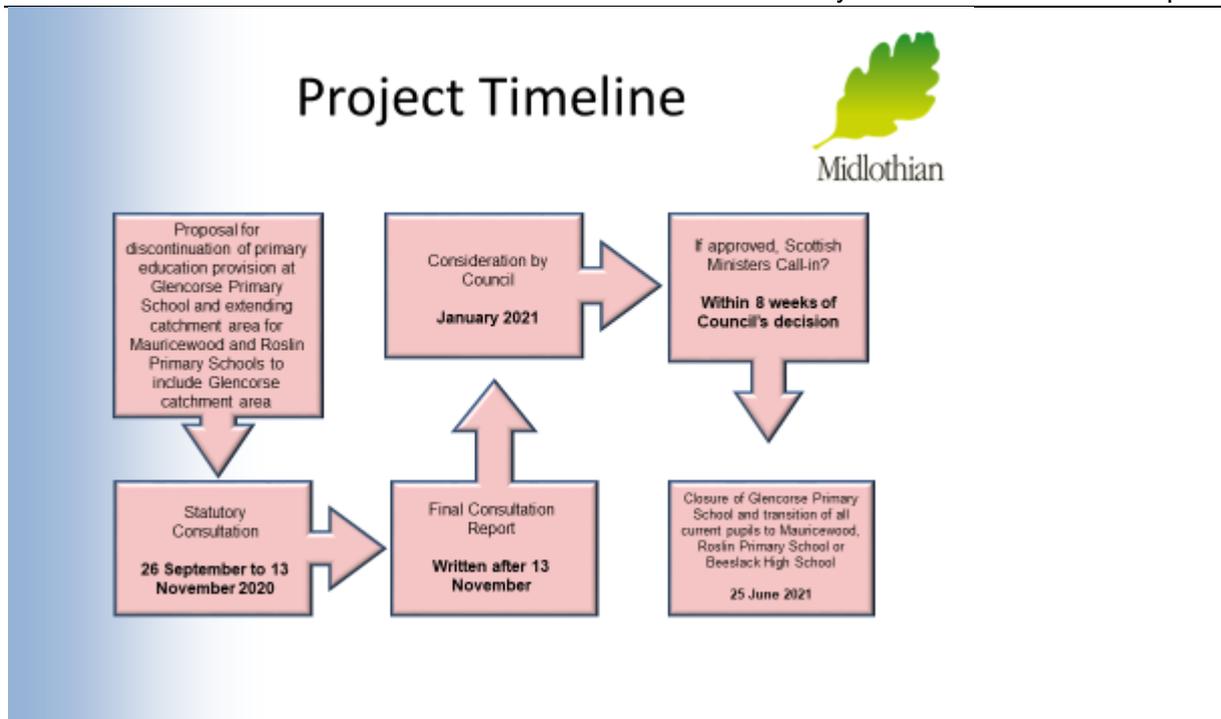
### **Slide – Factors considered in developing Proposal Document**

John shared the factors considered in line with the information shown on the slide as follows:

- The duties placed on local authorities in relation to the adequate and efficient provision of school education in their area in the *Education (Scotland) Act 1980*
- The responsibilities associated with the National Improvement Framework and the new duties imposed on Education Authorities by the *Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 as amended by the 2016 Act*
- The duties placed on local authorities to secure best value in the delivery of services

### **Slide – Project Timeline**

A timeline of the project shown on a slide was shared and discussed as follows:



### Slide – Transition Arrangements

John advised that whilst they had already spoken to the children today that this would continue and that details of the support required would be teased out. Specific information shared was shown on a slide as follows:

- If approved, the closure of Glencorse Primary School will take effect from 25 June 2021
- Children currently attending Glencorse Primary School will be supported to make the transition to either Mauricewood or Roslin Primary School, or Beeslack High School as appropriate.
- The Education Service will work closely with the staff, parents and pupils of Glencorse Primary School to ensure children are supported effectively to transition to their new school and that continuity and progression in their learning is sustained

### Slide – Questions

John reminded everyone of the instructions regarding use of mic and hand up option. In addition he added that as it would not be appropriate to ask the same question a number of times, he would point this out if this was the case and advised that he would also follow-up if officers did not respond to the questions asked. In addition he advised that if officers were unable to answer a question raised during the meeting then an action will be taken to providing a response within the FAQs.

### Questions

2. Timing, appreciate things move slowly but concerned that there doesn't seem to be any reference in the document to current covid-19 pandemic – seems hasty to close a school whilst looking for more space – appreciate this has been sometime in the making but is

the scope of the consultation a little bit outdate as it doesn't reflect current covid concerns.

*FR – We did consult with the Scottish Government who have a unit for consultations to discuss if appropriate to do so and we were advised that it was appropriate to carry out the consultation taking into consideration the draft revised guidance. Guidance on how to carry out a consultation during current pandemic was provided and is being adhered to.*

*Regarding space query, originally during lockdown we were considering blended learning and the space within our schools, and whilst Glencorse could accommodate we would not have had children travelling. Guidance changed in August and space isn't a factor at this time in terms of accommodation.*

3. Explains why no reference in the document but don't think it fully captures the current situation. Grateful if this particular aspect could be captured as part of the consultation process.

*FR – We will respond to this request and pick up under FAQs*

4. Document focus on just Roslin and Mauricewood – at the original meeting in Glencorse last year there was discussion around the consideration of other schools – may not be best option for my child so are we restricted to these two?

*FR – The proposal is to change catchment to Roslin and Mauricewood but parents have the right to make a placing request for other schools and would also need to consider this for siblings. The two schools referred to within the proposal does not prevent parental requests for other schools. We would like to engage with you directly regarding particular support for your child outwith this meeting.*

5. It's more about environment of the school – things that need to be taken into consideration – looking at 'is it the right school'.

*JB – Appropriate to discuss individual needs of your child with officers directly and not as part of this meeting.*

6. Document produced reads like a sales pitch for Roslin and Mauricewood, it doesn't sound like Glencorse children participate in groups. Everything shown for Roslin and Mauricewood children are getting at Glencorse. Should be an unbiased document and it's not that. As parents if we were unhappy with what our children received we would have raised this. It angers me as it makes no reference to quality of education our children get at Glencorse.

*FR - In previous discussions at the end of the last academic session we acknowledged that we were not criticising quality of education at Glencorse, it's about enhancing and enriching their education.*

*We know that that children receive a broad education and collaborate and cooperate with each other. It is our view that their educational experiences will be enriched and enhanced further learning alongside children at their age and stage and making progress at the same CfE level to support and challenge each other. CfE focuses on the development of knowledge and skills, within the Experiences and Outcomes and within a larger peer group pupils have enhanced opportunities to participate*

*The Education Benefit Statement has to talk about benefits at the school children would attend, it's the format for a consultation paper to ensure the quality of their educational experiences will not be diminished.*

7. Can you accommodate the numbers with the new build housing planned?

*SB – Information regarding the anticipated needs as a result of new build housing is addressed in the consultation document which notes the need to extend Roslin or Mauricewood if all the anticipated children come forward, particularly from Auchindinny.*

8. Disappointed outsiders won't pick up on the experience of Glencorse and that for a cash strapped Council to consider extending schools already – why not make use of a facility that is already there? Also advised that there are plans to bring other students in to make use of the upstairs at Glencorse.

*FR – We shared proposal we might use the building for ASN provision for a very short time, it's an option being considered and not confirmed. We felt it was appropriate to be open and transparent and we are exploring the use of Glencorse upstairs for a temporary ASN provision along with other options.*

9. Comment I'd make is that whilst I'm pro efficient use of buildings it's so distressing to empty one if the Council has use for it. Why would you close one school and build elsewhere, also links back to my earlier comments re covid?

The document also covers a lot about the Education experience which is very woolly and can be balanced up any way you like so we are looking for concrete results i.e. reading etc. – how does attainment compare with Rolsin and Mauricewood – can't have social ideas only so needs to be based on results. What concrete results feed into this?

*FR – First attainment data – we didn't publish Glencorse data due to number of pupils in the school.*

*We do not wish to undermine the learning experienced within the school, there are particular aspects of learning where age appropriateness and the ability to collaborate are integral to children's social and emotional development and skill development. In particular, areas of the curriculum relating to health and wellbeing where children learn about keeping themselves safe, safety in relationships, sexual health and substance misuse all of which are introduced sensitively at particular stages.*

*As previously mentioned, CfE focuses on the development of knowledge and skills, within the Experiences and Outcomes and within a larger peer group pupils have enhanced opportunities to participate in and experience learning in drama and dance delivering performances and presentations to a wider audience and being part of an audience for other performers; in physical education learners learn how the skills of cooperation and competition, evaluating and appreciating the skills of others as well as themselves; in literacy children develop tools for listening and talking when presenting or interacting within and beyond their place of learning and such opportunities will again be enhanced within larger peer groups.*

*Every child is entitled to experience a broad general education, represented by learning across all of the experiences and outcomes as far as is consistent with each child's needs. These experiences would be enhanced further within a larger peer group.*

10. In relation to the response to question 8 the contributor commented that they'd park for now and thanked FR for the thorough response.

11. Raised a specific concern regarding an individual child and their needs moving forward as didn't see either of the two schools mentioned being appropriate.

*JB – Advised that we don't want to get into individual child's support needs as this is best discussed with officers personally, out with this meeting. Advised that individuals speak to the local authority regarding additional support needs for their child.*

12. Midlothian's vision for the future talks about being Carbon Neutral by 2030 – as the infrastructure is not there and there will be more vehicles if transporting children, more cars on the road, where's carbon neutral here?

*FR – We have looked at the implications of and how to deal with this. It's about looking at holistically with Best Value and considering keeping a building open with a small number of pupils, and not everyone needs transport. Also looked at safe routes to school and options to walk and cycle. If the proposal goes ahead we need to look at and ensure safe routes to school to address carbon neutral plan.*

13. You state in document that not closing school because of money yet you are talking about Best Value?

*JB – There is a requirement that any proposal put forward considers Best Value and that any service provided is efficient and effective within the council.*

*FR – In terms of service we also have to secure Best Value which introduces viability and best value – any document must include consideration of finite resources across all of our learning estate so Best Value is always part of our considerations.*

14. Document references being part of bigger group – our child is captain of a local sports team – don't think bigger is better.

*JB – I understand the point raised and note that the Director has already given details of the educational benefits of what the other schools offer. I'd encourage you to put this comment into your formal consultation response.*

*JB – Thank you all for your participation – sorry it's not in person*

*FR – Thank you to parents for taking the time to attend this evening.*

## **A2.2 Roslin and Mauricewood Primary School Parent Council Meeting via MS Teams, Wednesday 7 October 2020 (6.30 pm)**

Whilst efforts were made at the start of the meeting to contact the individuals who had noted interest in attending, as no attendees joined the meeting the meeting was closed at 6.45 and therefore no meeting notes were taken. The Schools Group Manager in attendance advised that they would follow-up with the relevant Head Teachers to offer a further drop-in option.

### **Appendix 3: Letter to Parents and Carers of Glencorse Pupils re Mothballing Options**

Dear Parent/Carer *(please address individually)*

**Re:** Glencorse Primary School

Thank you for participating in the virtual meeting yesterday evening and for sharing your views. I appreciate how much you value Glencorse Primary School and what it offers your child. I have taken note of the feedback you provided during the meeting and incorporated it into the options for you to consider. I am offering these options to you as an alternative to engaging now in statutory consultation.

I am aware that your child's school has been subject to speculation about its future for a considerable period of time and this has had a significant impact on the numbers attending the school. On taking up post as Executive Director I initially met with members of the community, including parents at the informal meeting held at the Glencorse Community Centre, on 23 January 2020, as part of a pre-consultation exercise prior to consideration of a statutory consultation on closing the school. Unfortunately, due to the impact of the pandemic and the resultant temporary closure of schools we were unable to progress our discussions with you and the school roll continues to fall.

As a result of the continuing decline in numbers attending the school and our ambition to provide your child with the opportunity to enjoy an educational experience alongside children of a similar age and stage, I am writing to you to seek your views on the option of mothballing the school. Midlothian Council at its meeting 16 June 2020 agreed that the Education Service could engage directly with parents to discuss this matter with you. Mothballing is the term used for temporary closure and we would only do this with the consent of the majority of parents. If Glencorse Primary school was mothballed, your child, and future siblings, would attend another neighbouring school.

A decision to mothball the school would give us time to develop and agree on the optimal solution for primary school provision for the Glencorse catchment. Statutory consultation when we undertake it would then be about the future solution. Whereas, if we proceed to statutory consultation now, it will be a consultation on closure with a redistribution of the Glencorse catchment area to those of the neighbouring schools.

The two options that I offer for your consideration are:

- To mothball Glencorse Primary School from October 2020, or
- To mothball Glencorse Primary School from June 2021

These options are offered as an alternative to engaging now in statutory consultation on closure, subject to obtaining approval at the next meeting of Council on 25 August.

Additional information is provided with this letter to help you to understand the rationale for this proposal and what this may mean for you and your child. We will engage with you directly over the summer break and at the start of the new term to address your queries in order that we can ascertain your views and your decision by 18 August 2020.

I am aware that this comes at a time when you have been dealing with the challenges of home learning and the impact of the pandemic on everyday life. However, of paramount importance to us are the educational benefits to be gained and available to your child within a wider peer group and the learning opportunities experienced within our larger establishments.

Yours sincerely

Fiona Robertson  
Executive Director Children, Young People & Partnerships

**Enclosures:**

Fiona Robertson's script for meeting with parents on 24 June

Rational for the proposal

Planned Class Formations 2020/21

Form to return

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## Glencorse Primary School

### Rationale for Proposal

Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) sits at the heart of what Midlothian Council is committed to achieving in terms of raising attainment and achievement, and improving educational outcomes for all children. CfE is intended to nurture successful, effective, confident and responsible children, able to learn and utilise learning in a way that helps them reach their full potential and to respond to the increased variety and pace of change in today's and tomorrow's world. Whilst the Education Service recognises the quality of education provision currently offered at Glencorse Primary School it considers that the very small number of children attending will benefit more from the wider range and breadth of learning experiences available to them within other learning environments and within a wider peer group at their age and stage. This will also ensure that the children will have parity of access to learning and opportunities offered within our larger establishments with the remaining children being placed at alternative neighbouring schools of their choice.

Currently, of the 73 primary-aged children residing in the Glencorse Primary School catchment and attending primary schools in Midlothian, only 12 pupils have attended Glencorse this year. Furthermore, of the 10 Glencorse catchment pupils who will attend Primary 1 in Midlothian from August, all have chosen to attend other schools. This will be the third year where families have decided to make a choice other than Glencorse for their children who are starting primary school. This will mean that the school will have had no Primary 1 intake for three years and as of August 2020 only 7 pupils will remain, in one composite P4-P7 class.

In these circumstances we consider that Glencorse Primary school is not presently viable but do not wish to close it immediately because there is the prospect of growth in the number of catchment pupils due to the planned housing development in Auchendinny, and the optimal solution for providing primary schooling for this larger catchment requires further exploration and agreement. We had embarked on a consultation regarding the future provision of primary education for the Glencorse catchment which would have enabled us to reach that agreement. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, we have not been able to progress as planned, however, we will resume the statutory consultation at an appropriate point in the future.

Midlothian Council therefore decided to approve engagement with the parental community on the 'mothballing' of Glencorse Primary School from October 2020. Subject to parental agreement, this would mean that from 15 October 2020 the school would close temporarily. The remaining children attending the school may choose to attend their choice of an alternative neighbouring primary school either early into the start of the new session or after the October break. Having listened to your views, there is a second option of mothballing the school from June 2021, giving your child another full academic session at Glencorse in 2020/21. An appropriate transition experience would be planned for either option. School transport would be arranged for all of the children affected, where there is no safe walking route to school and/or the distance from home to school is more than two miles.

The alternative primary schools in Beeslack's Associated School Group are Bilston Mauricewood and Roslin. You would be able to choose any of these schools as an alternate catchment primary school for your child. Any younger siblings who

commence primary school while their older sibling is still attending would also be treated as being within the catchment of the school you choose. All three schools have space at all stages and will be pleased to accommodate your child. The planned class formations for the 2020/21 school year are attached to assist you with your considerations.

All the remaining pupils will restart at Glencorse Primary School on 12<sup>th</sup> August 2020. Should you wish to visit other primary schools as part of your considerations please let us know and we will facilitate this. If you decide that your child will transition to another school we will put in place arrangements to ease their transition to your choice of alternate primary school.

Once we know the decisions of all of the families affected we will be able to determine whether to progress with mothballing the school, and from what date, or to progress to statutory consultation subject to Council approval to do so.

Members of the Education Team will be available to engage with you over the summer break:

Fiona Robertson can be contacted on [fiona.robertson@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:fiona.robertson@midlothian.gov.uk) and will be available from 6 July throughout the summer break.

Nicola McDowell can be contacted on [nicola.mcdowell@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:nicola.mcdowell@midlothian.gov.uk) and will be available next week.

Sandra Banks can be contacted on [sandra.banks@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:sandra.banks@midlothian.gov.uk) and will be available next week and during July.

**Planned Class Formations 2020/21****Mauricewood**

Class	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	TOTAL	Classes
Roll	55	53	40	45	55	44	50	342	14
P1	24							24	
P1	23							23	
P1/2	8	16						24	
P2		28						28	
P2/3		9	14					23	
P3			26					26	
P4				22				22	
P4				23				23	
P5					28			28	
P5					27			27	
P6						22		22	
P6						22		22	
P7							25	25	
P7							25	25	
Total	55	53	40	45	55	44	50	342	

**Roslin**

Class	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	TOTAL	Classes
Roll	37	25	42	27	30	29	28	218	9
P1	19							19	
P1	18							18	
P2		25						25	
P3			21					21	
P3			21					21	
P4				27				27	
P5					30			30	
P6						29		29	
P7							28	28	
TOTAL	37	25	42	27	30	29	28	218	

**Bilston**

Class	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	TOTAL	Classes
Roll	18	18	13	19	15	14	7	104	5
P1	18							18	
P2		18						18	
P3/4			13	11				24	
P4/5				8	15			23	
P6/7						14	7	21	
TOTAL	18	18	13	19	15	14	7	104	

**Form to return re Glencorse Primary School**

Name of Pupil \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate your view on the following questions:

1. Do you agree with the option to mothball Glencorse Primary School from October 2020 and for your child to attend another neighbouring school during session 2020/21?

Yes	
No	

2. Do you agree with the option to mothball Glencorse Primary School from June 2021 and for your child to attend another neighbouring school during session 2021/22?

Yes	
No	

3. Please use the space below to provide us with feedback on the plans we have put in place for the mothballing of Glencorse Primary School and the alternative arrangements for the remaining pupils.

Parent/Carer Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Carer Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete and return to [Pupil.Placement@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:Pupil.Placement@midlothian.gov.uk)

## Appendix 4: Comments from Questionnaire Responses

Of the 95 questionnaire responses, 69 contained comments of which 24 declined permission to make their comments publicly available. However, their representations have been taken account of and responded to in Section X of the Consultation Proposal. The summary of comments below, were made from the remaining 45 responses who did not choose the option to decline permission to make their comments publicly available.

**Responses from Groups** – None in terms of questionnaire returns

### Responses from Individuals

Responses from those in support of the proposal for the discontinuation of primary school education provision at Glencorse Primary School and extension to the catchment areas of Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools to include Glencorse catchment area.

The comments included with those responses received that were in favour of the proposal area shown below:

<b>Comments (13 total)</b>
1. It seems like a ridiculous waste of money having a school open for only a few pupils esp when you have another primary school only minutes away. Close it down and save our money. Sell the site.
2. The school roll is too low to be economically viable. It isn't good for children to be in this environment when they could be in another school. The proposed use is better use of scarce council money.
3. I think the school should be shut because it is costing far too much money for the building to be kept open and hardly any pupils attend. Most pupils that are in the catchment area for Glencorse go to Mauricewood so there is no point in keeping the school open.
4. Sadly numbers are so low that it is no longer viable. There is good quality education at best by primary schools
5. Large building to heat, staff etc in a time when money is scarce.
6. Budget. Money must be spread equally to all schools in the county. Sorry, but the money used to keep such a small school open can only be spent once - this means it affects the budgets if all the other schools in Midlothian
7. Children benefit from mixing in larger social groups than is currently possible at Glencorse. It is not an efficient use of very small education budget to maintain this school as is.
8. Needed for the local community
9. Building could be used more productively for other purpose
10. Too few pupils to warrant upkeep and staff resource input of school. Several other local schools can provide suitable education for these children.
11. Not cost effective for number of pupils
12. With the limited numbers and the high costs to keep this school open it does not make financial sense.

13. The school has had a vastly reduced roll for a number of years. I'm not sure how the Council can justify keeping it open, with the associated costs, in the current climate. Especially when Mauricewood is in desperate need of an extension to house a gym hall that actually conforms to current standards. There are many more pupils at Mauricewood who would benefit from this investment.

Responses from those who are not in favour of the proposal for the discontinuation of primary school education provision at Glencorse Primary School and extension to the catchment areas of Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools to include Glencorse catchment area.

The comments included with those responses received that were not in favour of the proposal are shown below:

<b>Comments (32 total)</b>
<p>1. Substantial new housing at Auchendinny so why close a listed building school. We understand there are plans for a ' Through' school covering ages 3-18 to replace Beeslack at some stage in the area ( change from previous consultation re Gowkley Moss). If closure does proceed will Roslin for instance require to be extended.</p>
<p>2. Instead of closing the school, more emphasis should be put onto educating the local community on the benefits of a smaller size of school and encouraging local parents send their children to this school.</p>
<p>3. Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools are both massive schools which have huge class sizes, which are continuing to grow. With all the new housing proposed for Auchendinny and Mauricewood surely these schools will be ever more stretched. If the families from Auchendinny attended Glencorse the school role could increase and would allow these families to walk to school instead of driving.</p>
<p>4. As a long term resident of Roslin, and having attended Roslin Primary myself, with full intentions of sending my child to same school when she is old enough, I am already concerned at the lack of spaces available. I'm aware of issues other parents and friends of mine have had getting their kids placed. To offer Roslin School as a catchment to another area, when it struggles to accommodate as it is, is a bit of a shocker.</p>
<p>5. This school has been part of the community for many years. There is more houses being built. There are three estates there. This school should be kept open and used for children's education and as a community space. Closure will add to traffic at peak times and will mean difficulties for families walking to school. It will put pressure on Mauricewood and Roslin Primaries. Penicuik continues to grow with services reducing every year it's not acceptable.</p>
<p>6. As there are at least 300 new houses going to be built in Auchendinny and you have stopped the new school. The kids have no school as Roslin and all other schools are full already. The council have been stopping parents from enrolling kids at Glencorse for years now. If they hadn't been doing this the school would have had good numbers. Also sometimes small classrooms work out better. The village of Auchendinny has lost so much over the years and to now lose our school is just really sad. Please bear in mind that Auchendinny has no bus service and parents that don't drive will have to walk kids to school as both proposed schools mean Auchendinny won't benefit from school transport.</p>

<p>7. The school has been used for the children of Auchendinny for decades. You plan to close here but what happens when the other 2 schools are over crowded from all the new builds, the parents who can't drive and Glencorse is an easy destination to walk to, it's not so over crowded you feel yourself/ child gets proper education and not just another number in a large school system. More and more people will move to Mauricewood/ Bellwood, Glencorse and Auchendinny area and you then won't have the facilities to cope... you as a council have already allowed Auchendinny to be left to rot in a sense by allowing bus companies to allow there services to stop going through, no shops for a distance once again no public transport without a long walk up a horrible path and worse in the rain. Now you want to push people further away yet allow houses to be built. Glencorse should stay open because you fine well know as I do that it will soon be used again and don't let the building be abandon or used for more housing.</p>
<p>8. This school should be getting investment at a time when the local population is increasing at an alarming rate. Primary schools are better for children if they are within walking distance. Walking and cycling to school is good for children's health and well-being and also reduces the carbon footprint. The education provided at Glencorse is of a high standard and should be maintained and given investment.</p>
<p>9. This school has been here for years and should still be used there are plenty children that could use it.</p>
<p>10. School is heart of the community</p>
<p>11. I strongly disagree with this. The council are allowing hundreds of houses to be built and there is not the additional educational facilities being built to accommodate.</p>
<p>12. Penicuik is now growing exponentially so the need for schools is incredible. Why don't you use Glencorse Primary School to serve children from out of town locations including Howgate and Silverburn Leadurn etc. This would then free more space in schools such as Cuiken which will service the additional building from Deanburn etc. I don't think 5 extra classrooms at Cuiken will be enough.</p>
<p>13. The current primary schools in Penicuik are reaching capacity and there are many many more family homes being built. Reducing the number of primary schools is counterintuitive. My daughter attends Cornbank, out of catchment for Glencorse, for personal reasons at the time of starting school. And her class is at capacity. There are not enough resources to manage a class of this size currently, so I am unsure how the area will cope with further admissions and less schools to accommodate them.</p>
<p>14. At a time when hundreds of homes are being built in Penicuik and potentially in the thousands of new families it seems ridiculous to close a currently active school. Why not try for more pupils, I know I would prefer to travel an extra mile to have my children here rather than the more crowded schools in central Penicuik.</p>
<p>15. My view is that the majority of schools in Midlothian are running at the point of full capacity. If I look at Woodburn primary and it's catchment it's enormous and more and more new houses are being built with an almost reactive planning for expansion. A school closure in one of the largest and fastest growing areas in Scotland in my view is absolutely ludicrous. Particularly given the current Covid issues and distancing.</p>
<p>16. We took a look at the school before moving to the area. We loved the idea that the school was not overcrowded in comparison to some of the other schools. There is a great community feeling. I have concerns about whether she will get the same quality at a larger school.</p>

17. It would be preferable to give support for the school, utilise the building and both retain what character remains of the village and prevent yet more opportunities for building in an area without the infrastructure to support the housing already foisted on it.
18. Development of new houses in Penicuik will overwhelm the capacity of Mauricewood when an alternative option of keeping Glencorse open is available. I worry the numbers squeezed in to accommodate the changing catchment will negatively affect her and others. If there was option to send her to Glencorse itself instead I would prefer this. My personal primary education thrived in smaller class sizes, which Glencorse can provide.
19. Discontinuation Primary Education at Glencorse Primary School is going to put more pressure to other local schools. Roslin Primary will have its own pressure when all the housing in Roslin is complete and there will be a significant increase on the number of pupils in the school.
20. The stated reason for closure is due to having low enrolment however there are cases within the community of people wishing to send their children to Glencorse primary school and being discouraged from doing so or flat out refused. In addition to this the recent increase in building activity in the local area will lead to an increase in demand for school places. With Mauricewood Primary already near capacity the available capacity at Glencorse may be badly needed in the short term. The only circumstances that Glencorse should be closed in the near future should be if a replacement school has been build.
21. Numerous new houses being built at Auchendinny, Bilston and Roslin. Schools in the areas will be unable to cope with the influx of new primary school children. Glencorse should remain open to take in the children from Auchendinny
22. Smaller schools offer as much value if not more than larger ones. a perfect learning environment and a valuable community asset
23. I feel it could cause over crowding at other local schools, especially with more housing being built locally
24. Excellent school, recognised that my son was dyslexic and HT did everything in her power to help him. He now has a successful career for which I am grateful to her for her intervention. I'm convinced he may have been overlooked in a larger school.
25. It's ridiculous to expect Mauricewood Primary to take on the majority of pupils when new houses are being built on the area. Glencorse Primary would have been an option for me along with Mauricewood. Roslin is too far to send some children.
26. Penicuik needs schools to go with the stupid amount of new houses being built
27. I feel like taking this school from the community is a major loss especially with all the new houses being built.
28. With all the new houses planned for Auchendinny where are they going to send their children. There was a chance years ago to make full use off the school but the council decided to take the money from the army and extend Mauricewood School, then change the catchment area shocking. I and my children went to Glencorse primary and have benefited from the fact it was a small school where everyone knew everyone else a proper community school. It's sad that money talks again.
29. The Council have done nothing to help the school get more pupils. Taking away the after school facility meant pupils left. In 2015 there were 24-26 pupils and no effort made to support the school to remain open. It will be very difficult for the children to have to leave. It's a great school.

30. Given the huge growth in housing within the catchment area, and the numbers of pupils already in the other two schools, it seems folly to close a perfectly sound building at this juncture. One assumes there will also be a number of new children from the new builds in Auchendinny to be accommodated. I have to ask how many people would have chosen to send their children to Glencorse if it was not being constantly threatened with closure but instead presented as a good and sensible option: has the treatment of this school in terms of the guidance from the authority been fair? i.e. it appears that there has been active discouragement to enrol children at the school.

31. During a period of great uncertainty, whilst experiencing a global pandemic, we do not feel it is the correct decision to close a small school and move the children into larger classes. Surely it would be wiser to utilise Glencorse Primary School to its full potential and reduce class sizes in larger schools.

Whilst its proximity to Penicuik Town Centre does not classify Glencorse Primary School as a rural school, the majority of its catchment area is rural.

Your document gives the impression that children will get a better education at either Mauricewood or Roslin Primary Schools. Whilst we have nothing against either of these schools and have no experience of their education, we do not have, and never have had, any issues with the education provided at Glencorse Primary School. In all the time our children have attended this school they have experienced from a wide range of learning experiences within a wide peer group, having participated in pupil groups where they are all encouraged to give their ideas and opinions, they also know that their views are sought, valued and acted upon.

You also highlight the "buddy" systems used in Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools. This is a system that is used in Glencorse Primary also.

Your GIRFEC practice model includes the 7 children at Glencorse Primary also.

"Getting it right for every child" does not mean that "one size fits all", not every child is going to benefit or thrive in a larger learning environment.

A Nursery with links to Glencorse Primary School would have assisted in the transition of children from Nursery to Primary. No effort was made by Midlothian Council to encourage this and indeed it is our belief that Midlothian Council have been quite happy to allow the numbers to dwindle over the previous 10+ years. They never did anything to dispel rumours that the school would be closing, something which would have been very easy to do.

You state that "At Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools, staff are challenged and supported through a range of continuous career long professional learning opportunities gained by working and learning with a range of colleagues" and that "Both schools are part of the Beeslack High School Associated School Group". Are the staff at Glencorse Primary School not being supported in this way? Surely Glencorse is part of the Beeslack High School Associated School Group also?

We find your belief that there will be considerable educational benefits for the children by moving them into larger schools which centre around Learning and Teaching, Meeting Learners needs, broadening the range of opportunities and the environment for learning to be totally inaccurate.

To say they will benefit in Learning and Teaching is totally disrespectful to the HT and her staff at Glencorse Primary School. Over the past 20+ years the HT has provided an excellent education for the children under her tutorage, she always has their individual needs in mind and provides them with the resources, reassurance and help to become the best they can be. At no-time has the HT's commitment to the educational needs of the children been acknowledged during this process, nor the impact that this whole procedure is having on the staff of the school.

The needs of every child in the school is being met. Were this not the case we, as parents, are aware that we have the right to remove our child from that school and request placement elsewhere.

The children at Glencorse Primary School are not missing out on opportunities. Every year they take part in swimming, skiing, excursions etc. They have green flags for their

ecological work, have planted trees along the Old Railway and worked with the Technopole at the Bush Estate also.

Glencorse Primary School is within an old building which, as stated in your document, it is rated satisfactory (B) for condition – the same as Mauricewood. The fact a building 100+ years old is still in satisfactory condition compared to a much younger building speaks volumes.

The Community Planning Partnership has identified its aim to be Carbon Neutral by 2030. How is this ever going to be possible if you close schools within walking distance in Communities and have to provide buses to get children there?

We find it quite incredible that already Midlothian Council is having to extend Roslin Primary School to accommodate the number of children in the area. In a previous meeting linked to the new high school requirements along the A702 corridor, it was stated that Midlothian Council were very good at forecasting pupil numbers long term. This is quite obviously not the case given you are going to have to extend a primary school which has only been open for 2 years. Surely you knew of the planning in place for the 3 new developments in Roslin when you started the new Primary School plans. Likewise, Mauricewood Primary School was extended to accommodate the children from 2 Scots when they moved to the area but now you are having to extend Mauricewood also again due to the enormous number of new housing being built in the Mauricewood/Belwood Road area. Would it not make sense to include the new houses off Belwood Road in the Glencorse Primary School catchment?

The financial analysis states that you will save on School costs including teaching and support staff by closing Glencorse Primary School, however you have said that staff will be offered positions within other schools within the Local Authority. These staff will still need to be paid in their new positions and therefore no saving is being made.

Whilst the Councils Learning Estate Strategy may prefer a model with larger primary schools, this is not an environment that will suit every child.

32. The standard of education at Glencorse is 1st class. My child will struggle in a larger school environment. Auchendinny needs another school, as both Mauricewood and Roslin are not within reasonable walking distance.

#### **Additional Response via email on behalf of Roslin Primary School Parent Council**

I was unfortunately unable to participate in the recent consultation even for Roslin and Mauricewood Primary Schools. The observation I have on behalf of Roslin PS Parent Council is that we are content with the proposal as long as any additional demand on Roslin, and growth in the School Roll above that already anticipated, is met with a concomitant increase in revenue and capital resources for the School.

## **Appendix 5: Virtual Pupil Meetings**

### **A4.1 Glencorse Primary School Pupils – Virtual Meeting 6 October 2020**

### **A4.2 Roslin Primary School Pupils – Virtual Meeting 8 October 2020**

### **A4.3 Mauricewood Primary School Pupils – Virtual Meeting 8 October 2020**

#### **A4.1 Glencorse Consultation - Glencorse Primary School Pupils, Virtual Meeting 6 October 2020**

<b>In Attendance:</b>	Chair	Christine Rednall
	Pupils	7 pupils of Glencorse Primary School
	Facilitator	Julie Barnes, Head Teacher, Glencorse Primary School
	Observer	John Butcher, Independent Consultant, Glencorse Statutory Consultation
	Note taker	Sandra Banks

#### **Q1 WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE PROPOSAL AND IF YOU THINK IT'S A GOOD IDEA WHY?**

Pupils said:

We get more one to one time with our teacher

Not a good idea to close Glencorse, we get really good learning here, we are good friends and we have lots of one to one time with teachers

Like there being fewer pupils in the class, teacher & pupil knows exactly where they are in their learning and what they need to do.

Like pupils of different ages working on same topic at the same time.

#### **Q2 IF YOU DON'T THINK IT'S A GOOD IDEA WHY NOT?**

Pupils said:

It's probably going to close but we will keep trying to save it

Glencorse is a really good school and we have to try to keep it open

Good school because the teachers know us really well and don't think that would happen in a bigger class

#### **Q3 WHAT DO YOU THINK WOULD BE THE BENEFIT OF GLENCORSE PUPILS GOING TO MAURICEWOOD OR ROSLIN?**

Pupils said:

Would have more people to make friends with and would have bigger social groups

Would have more relationships and be able to play more games with more friends

There may be more children to be friends with but the quality of friendships won't be as good

There would definitely be more people to be friends with at Roslin or Mauricewood but all the pupils at Glencorse play together really well and are very good friends

**Q4 WHAT DO YOU THINK THE BENEFIT OF GLENCORSE PUPILS STAYING AT GLENCORSE WOULD BE?**

Pupils said:

Pupils are more used to this school

Everyone would get all their primary years at this school and wouldn't be talking about going to other schools

We would have very strong relationships with everyone that we would carry through to secondary school and into life.

Teachers would be able to focus on what the pupils need.

**Q5 IF IT WAS DECIDED THAT GLENCORSE WERE TO CLOSE, DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEAS ABOUT HOW TO MAKE IT AS EASY AS POSSIBLE TO JOIN YOUR NEW SCHOOL?**

Pupils said:

A few days before Glencorse closes we should spend some time at the new school to meet our new teacher and future classmates.

Find out what is available by way of After School Clubs at new schools so we can plan how to spend as much time as we can with friends.

## **A4.2 Glencorse Consultation - Roslin Primary School Pupils, Virtual Meeting 8 October 2020**

<b>In Attendance:</b>	Chair	Christine Rednall
	Pupils	8 pupils of Roslin Primary School (P4 to P7)
	Facilitator	Andrea Berry, DHT Roslin Primary School
	Observer	John Butcher, Chair, Glencorse Statutory Consultation
	Note taker	Sandra Banks

### **Q1 WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE PROPOSAL AND IF YOU THINK IT'S A GOOD IDEA WHY?**

#### Pupils asked:

Q: Would the school open again? A: If the school closes the plan is that it would close for good.

#### Pupils said:

Good idea to close as they've not had any P1's for a while

Good idea as there are hardly any pupils in school, they could meet more people

No P1's for a while so it is a good idea to move the children on so they can get to know more children, other than those they have known for a while

Good idea as they could make more friends if they go to Mauricewood or Roslin

### **Q2 IF YOU DON'T THINK IT'S A GOOD IDEA WHY NOT?**

#### Pupils said:

Would take quite a lot of time to make new friends and get to know more people

Some children might be upset to be separated from their best friend that they've known for years

Shame it is closing, and the pupils are going to have to travel further to school

Their learning strategies would change from what they had if they go to another school and they might not like the new teacher

### **Q3 WHAT DO YOU THINK WOULD BE THE BENEFIT OF GLENCORSE PUPILS COMING TO MAURICEWOOD OR ROSLIN?**

#### Pupils said:

Our school is eco-friendly and it would be a nice place for Glencorse pupils to come to

There would be more outdoor activities for them, we have more space and more equipment, and lots of learning choices

Might do stuff differently here than at Glencorse which would give pupils a wider exploration of learning, could expand their learning choices

Could make more friends, would be a change of scenery and we might do more stuff at Roslin and have different ways of doing it.

**Q4 WHAT DO YOU THINK THE BENEFIT OF GLENCORSE PUPILS STAYING AT GLENCORSE WOULD BE?**

Pupils said:

They will know their own school better than they would know Mauricewood or Roslin

They may not want to have a bigger school with more space as they are not used to it

They would get to stay with their friends and teachers including their Head Teacher

They would know their way around, Roslin is quite big and we got lost on our first day

They would maybe know lots about a small number of things they've specialised in which may be something they want to continue.

**Q5 IF IT WAS DECIDED THAT GLENCORSE WERE TO CLOSE, DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEAS ABOUT HOW TO MAKE IT AS EASY AS POSSIBLE FOR THE GLENCORSE PUPILS TO JOIN YOUR NEW SCHOOL?**

Pupils said:

Be friendly to them, show them around the school, show them respect

Give them time to speak to lots of people in their new class so they can make new friends

Visit Roslin and we will make them welcome

On their first day we could do things that they like to do

Have a good few transition visits to the school before they move

We have had 2 new classmates come in in the last few weeks and I feel they are settling in well, we are welcoming in school, and it's a good place to join.

**A4.3 Glencorse Consultation - Mauricewood Primary School Pupils, Virtual Meeting 8 October 2020**

<b>In Attendance:</b>	Chair	Christine Rednall
	Pupils	9 pupils of Mauricewood Primary School (P3 to P6)
	Facilitators	Teachers of Mauricewood Primary School
	Observer	John Butcher, Chair, Glencorse Statutory Consultation
	Note taker	Sandra Banks

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**Q1 WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE PROPOSAL AND IF YOU THINK IT'S A GOOD IDEA WHY?**

Glencorse pupils could come to Mauricewood and enjoy it as they would make more friends

Glencorse pupils could be split between Mauricewood and Roslin

Probably a good idea and they would make more friends

It would be sad because they would want to stay but we would make them feel welcome at Mauricewood

We could welcome them easily and they would enjoy it in Mauricewood

Think it is a good idea as there are only 7 pupils and there will only be 4 pupils left in August next year

**Q2 IF YOU DON'T THINK IT'S A GOOD IDEA WHY NOT?**

Think it is hard and stressful, even scary, for the Glencorse children that their school is closing

Think they would feel sad and find it hard

They would be sad as they have lots of friends at the school

They would miss their friends if they do not all go to same school

Older pupils would miss their teacher and want to stay at Glencorse but we would welcome them at Mauricewood

**Q3 WHAT DO YOU THINK WOULD BE THE BENEFIT OF GLENCORSE PUPILS COMING TO MAURICEWOOD OR ROSLIN?**

Pupils would be able to learn in bigger groups which is a good way to learn, be able to learn together, to take part in group games, and be able to work and learn with others at the same level

It would be good because they would have tons of people to make friends with

We would try to be their friends and they may go into classes with the same children as they are with at Glencorse

They would like it as teachers at Mauricewood are very kind

People at Mauricewood are kind and generous and they might enjoy it & we would be welcoming

They would have company of children of the same age, so they would not feel lonely, think that if there is only one young child of your own age in your class that you might feel lonely

May feel overwhelmed at a larger school in a larger class

**Q4 WHAT DO YOU THINK THE BENEFIT OF GLENCORSE PUPILS STAYING AT GLENCORSE WOULD BE?**

Would be good as they would stay with their teachers and friends, they would know where everything is, they would be calmer.

Pupils would know their teachers, feel calm, know where to go, know times things happen, like break times

Might be difficult as they would only have 1 teacher and 4 pupils

They would know everyone in the school

They would stay in a smaller class and would have more space with no crowding

They would have calmness and quiet, it would be peaceful and they would have more time, but could be lonely.

**Q5 IF IT WAS DECIDED THAT GLENCORSE WERE TO CLOSE, DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEAS ABOUT HOW TO MAKE IT AS EASY AS POSSIBLE FOR THE GLENCORSE PUPILS TO JOIN YOUR NEW SCHOOL?**

Come and visit the school and meet the pupils they will be in class with, see classrooms and playground, where to line up at break times and where to go to find things in the school.

Visit during the school day and participate in classes, assess levels of the pupils and group them with Mauricewood pupils at same level to do some work together.

Visit all schools and have a tour, try out both Mauricewood and Roslin, see which they prefer, which school their best friend is choosing so that they can chose the same one

Visit and see the school and join in play to get to know pupils and adults at Mauricewood

Have a tour around school to meet teachers and other pupils and have time to get to know people at Mauricewood and make friends

Be welcoming, help them out and help them with their learning

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## Appendix 6: Frequently Asked Questions

### Midlothian Council - Children, Young People and Partnerships Directorate

Statutory School Consultation – Discontinuation of Primary Education Provision at Glencorse Primary School with effect from 25<sup>th</sup> June 2021

### Frequently Asked Questions

**1. What is the main purpose of the proposal?**

The main purpose of the proposal is to enter into formal consultation to discontinue Primary Education Provision at Glencorse Primary School from 25<sup>th</sup> June 2021. We are also consulting on extending the catchment areas of Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools to enable existing pupils and new pupils to attend these schools. We must consult following the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

**2. Why are you considering closing a school now with all the house building in Penicuik?**

As you probably know, Midlothian is one of the fastest growing local authorities in Scotland. Midlothian Council has a Learning Estate Strategy which was introduced in 2017 which plans for this increase over time and the school buildings we need. This document is updated when required. The document is on Midlothian Council website:

- [See our Learning Estate Strategy](#)

Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools already educate a number of the children who may have attended Glencorse. There is sufficient capacity at Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools to meet current demand and there are plans in place to expand both schools to meet the additional capacity needed for Early Years Expansion and the growth in pupil population which will arise from housing development.

In the longer term, further work will be undertaken to consider the potential new primary school in Auchendinny and whether this should be changed to support more learners, as larger schools are recommended in the [Learning Estate Strategy](#). When we do this, we will also consider other schools' capacity.

One of the options we did consider was mothballing the school, which would mean it would have closed but with the potential of reopening if required. The feedback from parents, carers and other stakeholders was not positive on this option.

**3. Would Glencorse Primary School be needed to accommodate children from other schools due to social distancing requirements during the Covid19 pandemic?**

Current Scottish Government Guidance states that "On the basis of the scientific advice, and subject to all other risk mitigation measures set out in this advice being appropriately implemented, there is no requirement for physical distancing between children in primary schools." There would therefore be no requirement for the extra space in Glencorse PS to be used for COVID purposes.

**4. Are there any plans to build any more new primary schools in the area for all the new housing?**

Yes, there are outline plans for a school in Auchendinny linked to the new house building there. However, this option will be reviewed and reflected in the [Learning Estate Strategy](#). Other potential schools are outlined in the [Learning Estate Strategy](#).

**5. Why is the proposal happening now? Why can't it wait until the new secondary school near Bilston is agreed and built or until a decision on the Auchendinny Primary School is taken?**

The timescales for these other schools are not imminent. However, we welcome your thoughts on this and we will ensure any feedback relating to this is carefully considered. We want to provide clear information about the future of Glencorse Primary School to support pupils commencing and continuing their education and to help them make informed choices.

**6. How will future catchment areas be affected?**

It is proposed that the catchment areas of both Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools are extended to cover the existing catchment area of Glencorse Primary School.

**7. Who will make the final decision about the proposal and why is there only one option to close as opposed to increasing the size of the school roll through effective marketing?**

While it is Midlothian Council's Children, Young People and Partnership Directorate that is conducting the consultation, it is for the elected councillors on Midlothian Council to decide following the conclusion of the statutory consultation period. They will be asked at a meeting of the full Midlothian Council to adopt the proposal, withdraw it or seek to consult on another proposal.

The statutory consultation is designed to encourage maximum participation. This will allow the views of all members of the community to be included in the Consultation Report which will be used by councillors to make an informed decision.

The *Education (Scotland) Act 1980* places a legislative duty on the Council to ensure the adequate and efficient provision of school education across its area and it must consult on certain changes in such arrangements before it can commit to delivering them. The *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* sets out the statutory consultation that must be undertaken when proposing a permanent change to any of our schools.

The principle of the Act is “... to provide strong, accountable statutory consultation practices and procedures that local authorities must apply to their handling of all proposals for school closures and other major changes to schools.”

The statutory consultation process must be based on a proposal that is viable and deliverable and represents the very best educational outcomes for its young people.

From previous experience, it is not believed that the school roll for Glencorse will increase enough to support the best educational outcomes for its children and young people.

**8. Why are the cost savings not taken into account as part of the decision making process?**

The Act indicates we can provide information on costs but decision-making should be as described above, and based on what supports the best educational outcomes for young people.

**9. What will happen to the staff currently in the school?**

Staff will be fully consulted and supported to consider employment in alternative educational settings within Midlothian.

**10. What will happen to the school building and the land if this proposal goes ahead? Will it be sold or used for an alternative council purpose? Could it be deemed suitable for asset transfer to the community?**

The Council has an agreed process for this. The Directorate that operates the premises will consider if they require the building or land for an alternative purpose, if they do not, they declare it surplus and other Directorates within the Council can put together a business case for its use. If the Council has is no purposeful use for it can be considered for sale.

Currently the Council are looking at how the teaching spaces which are not required to meet the needs of the current pupils attending Glencorse can be used to meet other educational needs for which there is a shortage of suitable accommodation.

The Council has a team of people who can support those groups who qualify and wish to put in a note of interest for community asset transfer. There is a more information on the Council website on asset transfer, the process and business cases required.

- [Find out more about community asset transfer](#)

**11. Why do the children of 2 SCOTS families not attend this school as historically it was the School that hosted most army families?**

In liaison with the Armed Forces, the catchment area school for 2 SCOT families is Mauricewood. This decision was made a number of years ago and was informed by the number of pupil places required - which was over 100 and could not all be accommodated at Glencorse. The preference was to have all children attend the same school.

**12. Some Parents through the consultation have indicated that they felt they were discouraged from enrolling in Glencorse Primary School. Has the Council discouraged enrolments?**

There has been no Education directive to discourage parents enrolling their children at Glencorse. Parents when enquiring about enrolling their child will have been informed of the pupil numbers attending Glencorse Primary School and this may have led to them enrolling their child elsewhere.

**13. If the school does close what transition arrangements would be put in place for the children and families?**

There are very good transition arrangements in place for P7 transition across Midlothian and those pupils changing schools. These will be followed and developed further, tailoring to the needs of the individual pupils changing schools, if the proposal to discontinue education provision at Glencorse is approved.

**14. Will offering to transport pupils to either Mauricewood or Roslin increase our impact on Climate Change?**

School transport will be provided for all children affected, where there is no safe walking route to school and/or the distance from home to school is more than two miles, therefore not everyone may need transport. If the proposal goes ahead we are committed to ensuring safe routes to school, and to addressing the carbon neutral plan.

**15. How will children get the right support they need in an increased class size?**

Children moving school will be supported with a tailored transition plan to support them in the initial transition but also in their ongoing education. This will take into account: good practice, educational principles, managing change, small group work, learning support needs and confidence levels

## **Appendix 7: Education Scotland Report**

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

**Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by Midlothian Council to discontinue primary education at Glencorse Primary School from 25 June 2021 and extend the catchment areas of Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools to include the Glencorse catchment area.**

November 2020

## 1. Introduction

1.1 This report from Education Scotland has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HM Inspectors) in accordance with the terms of the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#) ("the 2010 Act"). The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of Midlothian Council's proposal to discontinue primary education at Glencorse Primary School from 25 June 2021 and extend the catchment areas of Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools to include the Glencorse catchment area. Section 2 of the report sets out brief details of the consultation process. Section 3 of the report sets out HM Inspectors' consideration of the educational aspects of the proposal, including significant views expressed by consultees. Section 4 summarises HM Inspectors' overall view of the proposal. Upon receipt of this report, the Act requires the council to consider it and then prepare its final consultation report. The council's final consultation report should include this report and must contain an explanation of how, in finalising the proposal, it has reviewed the initial proposal, including a summary of points raised during the consultation process and the council's response to them. The council has to publish its final consultation report three weeks before it takes its final decision. Where a council is proposing to close a school, it needs to follow all statutory obligations set out in the 2010 Act, including notifying Ministers within six working days of making its final decision and explaining to consultees the opportunity they have to make representations to Ministers.

1.2 HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for children of the schools; any other users; children likely to become pupils within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper;
- any other likely effects of the proposal;
- how the council intends to minimise or avoid any adverse effects that may arise from the proposal; and
- the educational benefits the council believes will result from implementation of the proposal, and the council's reasons for coming to these beliefs.

1.3 In preparing this report, HM Inspectors undertook the following activities:

- attendance at the virtual public meeting held on 29 October 2020 in connection with the council's proposals;
- consideration of all relevant documentation provided by the council in relation to the proposal, specifically the educational benefits statement and related consultation documents, written and oral submissions from parents and others; and
- virtual visits to the site of Glencorse Primary School, Mauricewood Primary School, Roslin Primary School and Beeslack Community High School, including discussion with relevant consultees.

## 2. Consultation process

2.1 Midlothian Council undertook the consultation on its proposal(s) with reference to the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#).

2.2 The consultation period ran from 25 September 2020 until 13 November 2020. The council produced an information leaflet setting out details of the proposal which was issued to statutory consultees. Copies of the proposal paper and a 'Frequently Asked Questions' (FAQs) document were made available online. An advertisement was placed in the local press and on social media. Taking account of relevant current public health advice and Covid-19 restrictions at the time, the council was proactive and flexible in seeking ways to consult with stakeholders. A public meeting was held at Beeslack Community High School on 27 October 2020 where two stakeholders attended. A virtual public meeting was held on 29 October 2020 where one stakeholder attended. Virtual drop-in-sessions were offered to stakeholders on 7 October 2020. The council also held separate meetings with other groups of stakeholders including learners and the Parent Council of Glencorse Primary School. The council had explored with parents in June 2020 whether mothballing the school would be an option that they might favour. Parents were against this idea. Ninety-nine stakeholders responded to the council including to its online survey with approximately one third in favour of the proposal and two thirds against.

### 3. Educational aspects of proposal

3.1 Glencorse Primary School is a non-denominational school providing education to P1-P7 pupils living in the Milton Bridge area of Penicuik and Auchendinny Village. There is no nursery provision at the school. Currently, there are seven children attending and the school structure has one composite class across stages P4-P7. Whilst 78 children live in the Glencorse catchment area, almost all parents choose to send their children to other local schools. Data shows that the roll in Glencorse has fallen over time. There have been no children enrolling into P1 since 2017.

3.2 The council has set out a number of reasonable arguments in support of its proposal. The council states that there will be educational benefits for children if the proposal goes ahead. In terms of learning, children will have greater opportunities in a larger school to work collaboratively with other children of a similar age and stage of development. There will be a broader range of activities which will enrich the curriculum for learners. Children will have access to a wider variety of lunch time and after school activities where children can socialise and have fun. Included in these activities are opportunities for children to develop teamwork with children of a similar age in sports and other contexts. The learning environment in Mauricewood and Roslin Primary Schools offers children the opportunity to participate in a wider range of active learning experiences with dedicated expressive arts and physical education spaces. The proposal will allow the council to make more efficient and effective use of its resources.

3.3 Parents and children from Glencorse Primary School who spoke with HM Inspectors did not agree with the proposal. They value the supportive environment and close attention provided by staff within the small school setting. Parents feel that there would be a reduction in the quality of the educational experience and individual attention for their children should the proposal go ahead. Parents are concerned about safe walking routes to both Mauricewood Primary and Roslin Primary Schools. A few Glencorse children expressed the view that moving to a larger school would give them a wider range of opportunities to make more friends and have different learning experiences in a larger group. Glencorse parents expressed dissatisfaction with how the council has dealt with the process. They feel that after a long period of uncertainty regarding the future provision at the school, the decision to proceed with the consultation was being rushed at a difficult time.

3.4 Children in Mauricewood Primary and Roslin Primary Schools spoke about the many benefits they believe their schools have to offer children who move into their respective schools. They are well used to welcoming new children into their schools, spoke positively about times where this has happened and look forward to welcoming Glencorse children should the proposal go ahead.

3.5 Staff across the cluster agree that very effective transition arrangements are in place and, should the proposal go ahead, children would be well supported in moving schools. Staff in Glencorse, whilst proud of the experiences children have received over time, acknowledge the challenge of the school remaining viable in the future when the roll reduces further. Close working relationships exist between cluster headteachers and their staffs. Teachers in the local schools work collaboratively on moderation and other aspects of professional learning.

## 4. Summary

Midlothian Council's proposal to close Glencorse Primary School and allow children and parents to choose Mauricewood or Roslin Primary Schools as their catchment school has potential educational benefits. HM Inspectors agree that a wider range and breadth of learning experiences will be available to children within other local schools. Children will be working with a larger peer group closely aligned to their age and stage. There will be more opportunities for after school activities and teamwork. The proposal will allow the council to deliver 'Best Value' through more efficient and effective use of resources. There is sufficient capacity and a strong willingness to include any children moving into both Roslin and Mauricewood Primary Schools. Should the council proceed with its plans to close Glencorse Primary School, it should continue to support children and parents who feel a sense of loss from the closure of a small school. Stakeholders value the existing relationships in the school community. Staff across the cluster should build on current good practice to support the transition of children displaced from Glencorse Primary School. The council should also work with parents to address their concerns over safe walking routes to school.

**HM Inspectors  
November 2020**