Midlothian Council

Children, Young People and Partnerships Directorate

Statutory School Consultation

THIS IS A PROPOSAL DOCUMENT

This consultation is on the following proposal:

Proposal to establish a new Additional Support Needs (ASN) stage at Loanhead Primary School.

Subject to the outcome of this consultation exercise, Midlothian Council proposes that:

- A new Additional Support Needs (ASN) stage will be established at Loanhead Primary School;

- The ASN stage will be under the leadership of the Head Teacher of Loanhead Primary School;

The following schools are directly affected by the proposal:

- Loanhead Primary School

In accordance with the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010,* Midlothian Council wants to hear your views on the proposal to establish a new additional needs provision at Loanhead Primary School.

Within this consultation paper you will find information about the proposal, the reasons behind it, its likely impact and how you can tell us what you think about it. A short questionnaire is included within the proposal. (Appendix 2)

Midlothian Council hopes that as many of you as possible will complete the questionnaire and would like to thank you in advance for taking the time to share your views as they are extremely important to us.

We would like to be as open as possible with the results of this consultation so please note that your response will be anonymised and made public at the end of the consultation period. You may wish to ensure that you do not give any identifying details in your response.

If you do not wish your response to be made public, you can specify this in the questionnaire and within any written response.

Distribution

A copy of this document is available on the Midlothian Council website: https://midlothiancouncil.citizenspace.com/education/loanhead-asn-consultation

A summary of the proposals will be provided to:

- The Parent Councils of the affected schools
- The parents/carers of the pupils at the affected school
- Parents of children expected to attend an affected school within 2 years of the date of publication of this Proposal Document
- The pupils, deemed to be of suitable age and maturity to be able to communicate a view on the proposal, at the affected schools
- The teaching and ancillary staff at the affected schools
- The trade union representatives of the above staff
- Midlothian Councillors
- Community Council of Loanhead and District
- Community Planning Partnership
- Relevant users of the affected schools
- Constituency MP and MSP
- Education Scotland

A copy of this document is also available from:

- Loanhead Primary School, 34 Edgefield Road, Loanhead, EH20 9DY
- Loanhead Library, The Loanhead Centre, George Avenue, Loanhead, EH20 9LA
- Midlothian House, 40 – 46 Buccleuch Street, Dalkeith, EH22 1DN

This document can be made available in alternative formats or in translated form for readers whose first language is not English.

If you would like this document in another language or format, or if you require the services of an interpreter, please call 0131 270 7500 or email: enquiries@midlothian.gov.uk

To be taken into consideration, responses to the consultation must be received by **2 June 2025.** These can be made electronically through the online consultation questionnaire at https://midlothiancouncil.citizenspace.com/education/loanhead-asn-consultation or emailed to EducationConsultation@midlothian.gov.uk.

Written responses can be returned to:

Loanhead ASN Consultation, Freepost SCO 622, Midlothian Council, Dalkeith EH22 1DN

The affected consultees are:

The pupils attending Loanhead Primary School

The pupils attending the additional support needs provision

The Parent Council of Loanhead Primary School

The parents / carers of pupils and children expected to attend Loanhead Primary School within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper

The staff employed by the Council and based at Loanhead Primary School

The Trade Union and Professional Associations Representatives of the above staff

The Community Council of Loanhead and District

Community Planning Partnership

Consultation with Children and Young People

Children in the directly affected schools will be consulted on this proposal in accordance with the Children's Commissioner Guidance and further information will be provided to parents/carers via their child's school.

INDEX	Page No.
Section A: Summary of Process for this Proposal Document	4
Section B: Proposal for Consultation Introduction	7
Section C Educational Benefits Statement	13
Section D: Consideration of Alternative Options and Other Implications	17
Section E: Conclusion	19
Appendix 1: Loanhead Additional Support Needs (ASN) Consultation Timeline	21
Appendix 2: Loanhead Additional Support Needs (ASN) Consultation Response Form	22

Section A: Summary of Process for this Proposal Document

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

1. 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 its schools, including Nursery Schools, such as closure, relocation or change of catchment area. The *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* principle 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. This Proposal Document has 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 and the complementary guidance published by Education Scotland (revised July 2023), 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

   Education Consultation Guidance for Local Authorities (revised July 2023)
   https://education.gov.scot/media/rh0jzhvo/external-schools-consultation-education-scotland-guide-for-local-authorities-july-2023.pdf

3. The process for consultation, summarised in this section, details how the Council is undertaking this consultation.

Consideration by Council

4. The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 places a legislative duty on the Council to ensure the adequate and efficient provision of school education in their area. This duty applies in respect of both the current school population and anticipated pattern of demand. In addition, Councils have a statutory duty to secure best value in terms of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.

5. This Proposal Document has been issued to seek views on the proposals in this paper and report back to Midlothian Council on the outcome of the consultation in order that the Council can make a decision on any proposed changes.

Proposal Document issued to consultees and published on Midlothian's website

6. An information leaflet setting out details about the proposal and consultation meetings will be issued to the consultees listed on page 3. Advice on where the complete Proposal Document can be obtained will be included and published on https://midlothiancouncil.citizenspace.com/education/loanhead-asn-consultation

7. If requested, copies of the Proposal Document will also be made available in alternative formats or translated for readers whose first language is not English.

8. A “Frequently Asked Questions” (FAQs) document has also been prepared which is also available on https://midlothiancouncil.citizenspace.com/education/loanhead-asn-consultation

Publication of advertisement

9. An announcement will be made on the Council’s website and social media platforms.

Length of Consultation Period.

10. The consultation period will commence on **2 April 2025** and will last until **2 June 2025** being a period of 8 weeks, which also includes the minimum 30 school days.

Format of Public Meetings

11. A public meeting will be held on, **Wednesday 7 May 2025**, the details of which are set out below in paragraphs 18-22.

Involvement of Education Scotland

12. When the Proposal Document is published, a copy will be sent to Education Scotland by Midlothian Council. Education Scotland will also receive a copy of any relevant written representations that are received by the Council from any person during the consultation period, or if Education Scotland agree, a summary of them. Additionally, Education Scotland will receive a summary of any oral representations made to the Council at the public meetings and drop-in sessions that will be held and, as available, a copy of any other relevant documentation.

13. Education Scotland require three weeks within which to prepare a report on the educational aspects of the proposal after the Council has sent them all the representations and documents as mentioned above. The three-week period will not start until after the consultation period has ended. In preparing their report, Education Scotland may visit the affected schools and make such reasonable enquiries of such people there as they consider appropriate.

Preparation of the Consultation Report

14. The Council will review the proposal having regard to the Education Scotland report, written representations that it has received and oral representations made to it by any person at the public meeting and drop in session. It will then prepare a final Consultation Report. The report will be published in electronic and printed formats and will be advertised in the local newspaper. It will be available on the Council website, from the affected schools and by request from Council Headquarters, Midlothian House, Dalkeith. Anyone who has made written representations during the consultation period will also be informed about the report. The Consultation Report will include a record of the total number of written representations made at the public meetings and drop-in sessions, the Council’s response to the Education Scotland report as well as any written or oral representations it has received, together with the Education Scotland report and other relevant information. It will also set out the actions the Council has taken to

address any alleged inaccuracies and omissions notified to it. The Consultation Report will also contain a statement explaining how it complied with the requirement to review the proposal in light of the Education Scotland Report and representations (both written and oral) that it received. The Consultation Report will be published and be available for further consideration for a period of 3 weeks.

Decision

15. The Consultation Report together with any other documentation will be considered after the end of the 3-week period, by the Council who will come to a final decision on this matter.

Scottish Ministers Call-in

16. This proposal does not concern a school closure and as such does not require the Council to notify Scottish Ministers after the Council takes its final decision.

Note on Corrections

17. If any inaccuracy or omission is discovered in this Proposal Document either by the Council or any person, the Council will determine if relevant information has been omitted or there has been an inaccuracy. It may then take appropriate action which may include the issue of a correction or the reissuing of a Proposal Paper or the revision of the timescale for the consultation period if appropriate. In that event, relevant consultees and Education Scotland will be advised. The person, or persons who have raised concerns will receive an individual response to their submission.

Public Meeting and Drop-In Session

18. A formal in person public meeting and virtual public drop-in sessions will be held to discuss the proposal. The public meeting, which will be convened by Midlothian Council, will be addressed by the Executive Director Children, Young People and Partnerships and other senior officers of the Council, and chaired by an independent person.

19. The public meeting will be an opportunity to:

    - Hear more about the proposal
    - Ask questions about the proposal
    - Have your views minuted so that they can be taken into account as part of the consultation process

20. The public meeting will be held in person at 6:30pm in Loanhead Primary School on 7 May 2025.

21. A virtual drop-in session will be held on 1 May 2025, there will be 20-minute time slots available from 2pm to 4pm and 5pm to 7pm please contact EducationConsultation@midlothian.gov.uk to book a time.

22. A minute will be taken at the public meetings of comments, questions and officer responses. A summary of the points raised and responded to will be added to the FAQs published on the Council website. The minute will be forwarded to Education Scotland along with all other submissions and comments that are received by the Council during the consultation process as explained above.

Section B: Proposal for Consultation Introduction

Introduction

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. 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.

3. A National Review of the implementation of additional support for learning in schools was carried out by Angela Morgan (2020) on behalf of the Scottish Government. It considered the implementation of additional support for learning legislation and how this applied to practice across authorities. In seeking to take forward improvements to the education provision for learners with additional support needs, the Education Service undertook a review of Additional Support for Learning including specialist provisions within its schools (Midlothian Council > Meetings (cmis.uk.com))

4. 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. To achieve best value and optimum efficiency, the organisation of the school estate is therefore kept under regular review, including the need for school provision and other factors, such as altering catchment areas.

Midlothian's Vision for Education

5. The Council is ambitious for the future of Midlothian. By working together as a Community Planning Partnership, individuals and communities will be able to lead healthier, safer and greener and successful lives by 2030. No child or household need live in poverty. Midlothian will be a Great Green Place to Grow by achieving our net zero carbon ambitions and supporting local people to strengthen the skills they need for learning, life and work.

6. Our outcomes for the next 4 years are:

- Individuals and communities have improved health and skills for learning, life and work
- No child or household living in poverty
- Significant progress is made towards net zero carbon emissions by 2030

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.

Background and context

Current Service Provision Information

8. In 2021/2022, Midlothian Council's Education Service undertook a comprehensive review of the provisions for children and young people with additional support needs. This review resulted in several changes across the learning estate, aimed at expanding and improving the range and quality of support available. These changes were crucial to meet the increasing demand for such provisions.

9. In response to the pandemic's impact, it became essential to maximise all available space. This, combined with the rising level of need, led to the decision to temporarily host the Treehouse Provision and Hawthornden Provision at St Margaret's Primary School for up to three years. This arrangement ensured that the increased demand for support could be met effectively within the available facilities.

10. To facilitate this initiative, temporary hosting arrangements and accommodations were established for Midlothian's Inclusion & Wellbeing Services. This included relocating the Treehouse Provision from Gore Glen Primary School and the Hawthornden Provision from Hawthornden Primary School to the now closed St Margaret's Primary School.

11. Previous discussions with the Leader of Learning for St Margaret's Primary School and the former Headteacher of Loanhead Primary School confirmed that both provisions could be accommodated within some of the former St Margaret's Primary School classrooms. This arrangement was agreed and that this would coincide with the existing Inclusion and Wellbeing Service provision already situated there.

12. The school was adapted to ensure that children remained in a safe and secure environment, receiving the appropriate support they needed. The former Leader of Learning and the Quality Improvement Officer for Inclusion & Wellbeing played a crucial role in this process, ensuring that the children were seamlessly integrated as part of the school. They worked closely together as a unified service, fostering greater opportunities for socialisation and collaboration among the children.

13. Currently, 16 children with additional support needs are currently being hosted in the former St Margarets PS building.

14. The Head Teacher at Loanhead PS has overall responsibility for the leadership and management of the school, including the hosted ASN provision outlined above.

15. Children are based in classrooms in the main school and have specialist staffing and access to equipment and resources that meet their needs. They share facilities with the school.

16. By formally establishing the ASN provision within Loanhead Primary School under the leadership of its Head Teacher, this will continue to ensure that children receive consistent, high-quality support in line with the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This approach will foster an inclusive environment where every child's right to education, protection, and development is upheld, thereby enhancing their overall well-being and educational success.

Midlothian Council Learning Estate Strategy 2017-2047 (Update):

17. The Learning Estate is a significant and valuable resource for the communities of Midlothian.

18. Education remains a key priority for the Council and The Learning Estate Strategy plays an integral role in supporting the National Strategy and informs the Council's Strategic Priorities.

19. The Strategic Plan commits to increasing skills for learning, life and work as well as enhancing life opportunities, aligning with the national aim to give every child and young person the best possible start in life.

20. The Learning Estate Strategy seeks to provide improved, flexible and adaptable learning environments to deliver 21st century education as part of a wider place making agenda. This vision is key to meet the principles of Scotland's Learning Estate Strategy and to address the three key national education and skills priorities:

    - *Getting it Right for Every Child* (GIRFEC)
    - *Curriculum for Excellence* (CfE)
    - *Developing the Young Workforce* (DYW)

21. The following core principles are to be embedded into Midlothian Council's Learning Estate and underpin the proposals for formally establishing an ASN stage within Loanhead PS.

- Promoting excellence and equity by delivering a more equitable distribution in learning opportunities by ensuring that every one of our children has the right to aim for excellence and to attain excellence in multiple ways;
- Interrupting the cycle of poverty by school hubs having a role at the heart of their community to help address the inequalities that reduce life chances;
- Getting it right for every Midlothian child by utilising the school estate to deliver early intervention strategies through, where possible, the co-location of services together with a family learning approach;
- Taking a community-based approach to building schools which meet the needs of communities and enhance the lives of all those who live in those communities.

22. In short, we aspire to create a learning estate that enhances communities and at its heart supports children and young people through their learning journey from additional support needs, primary and secondary school, college or university to the world of employment, education or training equipped with the skills for life, work and learning both they and society will need to succeed in the growing global knowledge economy of the 21st century.

Midlothian Council – Equipped for Learning Project

"*Midlothian will take full advantage of the opportunities offered by technology to equip children and young people with the knowledge and skills essential for learning, life and work in the 21st century.*"

23. Midlothian's award-nominated Equipped for Learning project is the Council's £10.5 million investment in ensuring every learner has the digital skills and knowledge they need to thrive in learning, in life and in work. Delivered outcomes include:

    - Equipping every school-age pupil with a device for learning
    - Upgrading wifi networks to provide fast and reliable internet access
    - Equipping every learning space with an interactive SMART panel
    - Establishing a Google Workspace tenancy for collaborative learning and teaching

24. Supporting children and young people with additional support needs requires effective partnership working. Midlothian's Digital Inclusion and Learning Team works closely with schools and partners to identify assistive technology that is bespoke and will meet learners' needs. The team works closely with Digital Services to overcome technical barriers where these arise, plans for improvement and facilitates quality training for pupils, families and staff to ensure assistive technology is used to its full potential.

25. Midlothian's partnership with Texthelp has brought accessibility tools to every learner in Midlothian through the Read&Write toolbar. 90.7% of pupils and staff now regularly use key tools such as text to speech, screen reader, translate and interactive dictionaries, direct from their device. This work, provided alongside boots-on-the-ground support in all schools and settings, has reduced referrals for assistive technology by 90.6% in the last eighteen months.

26. Midlothian has also secured a world-first Free for Families offer that will see every Midlothian family able to download the Read&Write toolbar at home on up to five devices, free of charge.

27. More about Midlothian's Equipped for Learning project can be found at: Equipped for Learning | Equipped for Learning (midlothian.education)

Rights Respecting Schools (RRS)

28. Midlothian Council's Vision seeks to put the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child at the heart of each and every school's ethos and culture. Midlothian Council's aim is to improve well-being and develop every child's talents and abilities to their full potential.

29. Teaching children about their rights can reduce exclusions and bullying, improve teacher-pupil relationships, raise attainment and make for more mature, responsible students according to research published by UNICEF UK.

30. Within Midlothian, a number of schools are embracing this approach and embedding the Right Respecting Schools (RRS) principles in their school improvement plans, for example featuring it within the curriculum programme, promoting children's rights on a daily basis in class and displaying class charters.

31. As stated in Included, Engaged and Involved, Part 1, every child has the right to grow up fully included in their learning experience and to be treated with respect. A positive school ethos and culture is essential to developing good relationships and positive behaviour in the classroom, playground and wider community.

32. These principles and their implementation will be integral to the vision and values of the establishment of an ASN stage within Loanhead PS.

Meeting National Outcomes

33. The National strategy recognises the importance of the learning estate in supporting outcomes that are necessary for a more successful Scotland. This vision is for: '*A learning estate which supports excellence and equity for all.'*

34. The National Learning Estate Strategy is aligned to the education policy aims set out in the *National Improvement Framework* (NIF) of achieving excellence and equity for all children and young people and closing the poverty related attainment gap.

35. The National strategy sets out ten guiding principles which are:

    - Learning environments should support and facilitate excellent joined up learning and teaching to meet the needs of all learners;
    - Learning environments should support the wellbeing of all learners, meet varying needs to support inclusion and support transitions for all learners;

- The learning estate should be well-managed and maintained, making the best of existing resources, maximising occupancy, representing, and delivering best value;
- The condition and suitability of learning environments should support and enhance their function;
- Learning environments should serve the wider community and where appropriate be integrated with the delivery of other public services in line with the place principle;
- Learning environments should be greener, more sustainable, allow safe and accessible routes for walking, cycling and wheeling and be digitally enabled;
- Outdoor learning and the use of outdoor learning environments should be maximised;
- Good consultation about learning environments, direct engagement with learners and communities about their needs and experiences, and an involvement in decision making processes should lead to better outcomes for all;
- Collaboration across the learning estate, and collaboration with partners in localities, should support maximising its full potential; and finally,
- Investment in Scotland's learning estate should contribute towards improving learning outcomes and support sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

36. This proposal incorporates the Midlothian Learning Estate Strategy and National Learning Estate Strategy Principles.

The proposed permanent provision for primary-aged children with additional support needs (ASN)

37. Midlothian Council is committed to establishing a permanent provision for primary-aged children with additional support needs (ASN) within Loanhead Primary School. This initiative aims to create a dedicated and nurturing environment where children can receive tailored support to meet their individual needs. The proposed provision will continue to offer high-quality educational experiences, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

38. Under the leadership of the Head Teacher at Loanhead Primary School, the ASN provision will adhere to the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This commitment guarantees that children's rights to education, protection, and development are upheld, fostering an inclusive atmosphere that promotes their overall well-being and educational success.

39. The permanent ASN provision will include the required facilities and resources to support children with additional support needs. These enhancements will ensure that children have access to the necessary tools and environments to facilitate their learning and growth. By integrating this provision within Loanhead Primary School, Midlothian Council aims to provide consistent, high-quality support that aligns with best practices in inclusive education.

40. Furthermore, the establishment of this permanent provision will address the increasing demand for ASN services within the community. It will offer a stable and

supportive setting where children can build meaningful relationships, develop essential skills, and achieve their full potential. Midlothian Council's dedication to this initiative reflects its ongoing commitment to improving educational outcomes for all children, particularly those with additional support needs.

41. The additional support needs provision will be located on the ground floor of Loanhead Primary School within three classes each with access to a secure outside space, social and multipurpose atrium areas, and a sensory/social room.

42. The proposed ASN provision will continue to be led and managed overall by the Head Teacher at Loanhead Primary School.

43. The establishment of a new ASN stage at Loanhead Primary School will directly affect the following schools and is considered in this Proposal Document:

    - Loanhead Primary School

44. The factors which have been considered in the development of this Proposal Document are:

    - 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 agreed principles underpinning the development of an empowered school led system set out in the 'Education Bill Policy Ambition- Joint Agreement', June 2018 https://www.gov.scot/Publications/2018/06/8745/downloads
    - The duties placed on local authorities in relation to the adequate and efficient provision of school education in their area
    - The duties placed on local authorities to secure best value in the delivery of services

45. If approved, implementation of the proposal will mean:

- A new ASN stage will be established at Loanhead Primary School;

- The ASN stage will be under the leadership of the Headteacher of Loanhead Primary School;

Section C Educational Benefits Statement

Assessment of Likely Educational Benefits on Pupils

A. The Educational Benefits Statement for this proposal has been prepared having regard to the guidance and explanatory notes published by the Scottish Government in association with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 and which are available for reference at the following websites respectively:

   www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/91982/0097130.doc
   http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2010/2/contents

'An education authority shall endeavour to secure improvement in the quality of school education which is provided in the schools managed by them; and they shall exercise their functions in relation to such provision with a view to raising standards of education.'

B. As required by the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 this Educational Benefits Statement is written from the perspective of benefits, should the proposal be implemented. Additionally, the self-evaluation tool provided by Education Scotland is used to ensure compliance with the amended procedures now in place from the Act.

C. If this proposal is implemented, the Council believes that there will be considerable educational benefits arising from this. These centre around:

- Learning environment;
- Inclusion;
- Learning Teaching and Achievement;
- Health and Wellbeing
- Curriculum
- Local Community

D. 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 todays and tomorrow's world. The principles of Curriculum for Excellence recognise the professionalism of teachers and the importance of this in exercising the freedom and responsibility associated with broader guidance. This means that schools are able to design their curriculum to meet the specific needs of their children and community while delivering their entitlement to a broad general education.

E. The inclusion of an additional needs provision at Loanhead Primary School will result in a number of educational benefits. It will provide suitable, high quality learning environments resourced with specialist staff to ensure the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of learners to their fullest potential. It will increase the number of available specialist placements for learners with additional support needs living in Midlothian.

Learning Environment

F. The ASN classes that are currently hosted at Loanhead Primary School are based in classrooms within the former St Margaret's RC Primary School. They share facilities with Loanhead Primary school. Currently, there is also a dedicated room for the development of a social/sensory area, a separate enclosed garden space and a separate drop off area.

G. The proposed additional support needs provision will provide a nurturing high-quality learning environment designed to support the specific additional support needs of the learners through a differentiated curriculum including life skills and therapeutic approaches. The three nurture classrooms, sensory room, and the life skills-based atrium space are resources that can be used to promote high quality

learning through relational and attachment-based approaches, in a safe environment for primary-aged children with additional support needs. This nurturing environment will further enhance multi-agency working to support children to achieve.

Inclusion

H. Midlothian Council's continued commitment to inclusion focuses on the provision of high-quality support that leads to positive outcomes for all children. The practice of inclusion within our schools and early learning and childcare provisions continues to sit alongside the principles of key national drivers. Curriculum for Excellence has the central purpose of ensuring that all children develop as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors and therefore must be central to an inclusive approach. The (2004) as amended (2009) remains the principal legal framework for driving
practice.

I. The layout of the additional support needs provision at Loanhead Primary School is not only conducive to the creation of a specialist provision but also the integration of this specialist provision into whole school activities. This allows opportunities for collaboration, accessing shared resources and building capacity in our educational staff

J. The ASN learning environment will support the removal of barriers to accessing all curricular areas as well as other learning opportunities. Where appropriate, and based on the individual needs of the learners, children attending the provision will also benefit from opportunities to access learning experiences in a mainstream setting alongside their local peers. This has the potential to improve continuity and progression in their learning and to develop their wellbeing, social and other life skills.

K. Professional collaboration for staff will be enhanced as the specialist ASN provision will encourage collaboration and collegiality of staff across the whole of the Loanhead Learning Campus. The specialist staff supporting the provision working closely within a mainstream building would be advantageous and could provide more effective support to the career-long aspirations of staff. Opportunities for specialist staff to deliver professional learning to the campus can be planned for and more informal professional dialogue can be planned or take place more readily.

Learning and Teaching and Achievement

L. Increased high-quality accommodation and resources associated with the proposed provision are likely to have a positive impact on the motivation, aspirations and enjoyment of children, staff and the wider school community.

M. The additional support needs provision will be located on the ground floor of Loanhead Primary School within three classes each with access to a secure outside space, social and multipurpose atrium areas, and a sensory/social room.

N. At all stages, children would benefit from enhanced resources and pedagogy related to their additional needs in a learning environment that is specifically

designed to meet their additional support needs and specialist staff who support them to achieve their best.

O. The flexible and high-quality learning environment and resources for children with additional support needs at Loanhead Primary School will encourage the planning of learning experiences that strengthen the motivation and engagement of children in their learning and support them to achieve. Spaces, including outdoor space, are designed to be used flexibly and will encourage the planning of a wider range of learning experiences to better meet children's additional support needs.

P. Learning and teaching approaches will include the extensive use of modern, digital approaches to delivering high quality learning experiences for all children. Improved availability and access to up-to-date digital resources by children themselves will support them to become more independent in their learning and provide further opportunities for them to develop skills for learning, life and work.

Health and Wellbeing

Q. Previous experience and knowledge of establishing an ASN provision within an existing school demonstrated that a modern and flexible learning environment inspires and motivates children and has a positive impact on the general health and wellbeing of learners.

R. Social areas will be much improved as the ASN environment provides social and flexible spaces to promote healthy eating and positive engagement with food and with peers. This, along with the development of external areas to create stimulating and inspiring outdoor learning spaces, access to the MUGA and the proximity to a local community woodland space, will encourage children with additional needs to develop their social and motor skills and improve their health and wellbeing.

Curriculum

S. 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 todays and tomorrow's world. The principles of Curriculum for Excellence recognise the professionalism of teachers with broader guidance. This means that schools are able to design their curriculum to meet the specific needs of their children and community while delivering their entitlement to a broad general education.

T. The development of the four capacities of CfE, a key purpose of the school's curriculum, will enable each child to become as appropriately independent as possible through continuous promotion of becoming a successful learner, a confident individual, an effective contributor, and responsible citizen. Ensuring the ethos and life of the school community is structured to enable children to practise life skills as part of their daily routines. This will include preparation of snacks and drinks, moving independently around the school, developing skills of personal care, personal safety, and social etiquette.

Local Community

U. Previous experience of establishing other ASN provisions within Midlothian demonstrates that high-quality accommodation and resources associated with the proposed additional support needs provision at Loanhead Primary School are likely to have a positive impact on the motivation, aspirations and enjoyment of children, staff and the wider school community.

V. Through establishing an additional support needs provision at Loanhead Primary School, a hub for learning, activities and facilities will add strength and vibrancy to Loanhead's community. Dedicated additional support needs spaces for families and professionals to meet together in the provision, and more widely across Loanhead Primary School, will enhance parental engagement with the work of the school and their children's progress. Spaces are designed to be flexible and allow creative and multiple use by the staff, children and pupils and partner services and also by the community. This will enhance the positive impact family learning and partnership working has on the educational journey for children with additional support needs.

Staffing

W. The three classes within Loanhead Primary school will have a higher staff to child ratio than mainstream classes. Wherever appropriate and based on the needs of the children, they will be integrated into school life at Loanhead Primary school and benefit from further learning opportunities either in Loanhead or their catchment primary school. The presence of a high-quality skilled leadership team, teaching and support staff would increase the expertise within our existing Loanhead Primary school. This expertise will allow the planning and delivery of differentiated curricular pathways that meet the needs of all children with a range of additional support needs.

X. The children attending the additional support needs provision at Loanhead Primary School, will transition to a secondary school that best accommodates their individual needs, ensuring continuity of support and educational pathways. Staff will therefore continue to benefit from the strong culture of collaboration and joint planning within this associated school group and the network.

Section D: Consideration of Alternative Options and Other Implications

1. The proposed establishment of an additional support needs provision at Loanhead Primary School will represent best value through the effective and efficient use of Council resources.

2. Maintaining the ASN provision within Loanhead Primary School offers significant educational and social benefits. Firstly, it ensures continuity and stability for the children, allowing them to learn and develop within a familiar environment. This consistency is crucial for their emotional well-being and academic progress.

3. The Midlothian review of Additional Support Needs (ASN) in November 2022 highlighted the increasing numbers of children with more complex additional support needs. Accordingly, the availability of and demand for educational places for children with ASN will continue to be subject to ongoing monitoring and review.

4. Consideration will also be given to any new housing developments and other demographic changes such as the number of families with children with additional support needs moving into the authority which may lead to discussion about the need for any relevant modifications to the educational estate.

Transition Arrangements

5. It is proposed that there will be no change to the current process for referrals and the allocation of specialist primary support spaces.

6. An enhanced transition to secondary education will be offered to all children attending the ASN provision based on the individual needs of each child.

7. Children will be supported to transition to their catchment area secondary school.

8. Where a child's additional support needs continue to require additional specialist support, a referral will be made to the Education Resource Group and following assessment and consultation on their needs, they may be allocated specialist support in one of our provisions.

Transport

9. Owing to the location of the established ASN provision with Loanhead primary school, there should be no significant changes to school transport setting for eligible pupils.

Financial Implications

10. Midlothian Council does not envisage any financial impacts from establishing the ASN provision within Loanhead PS.

Staffing Implications

11. The proposed ASN provision will be led and managed overall by the Head Teacher at Loanhead Primary School.

12. The three classes within Loanhead Primary school will have a higher staff to child ratio than mainstream classes. The presence of a high-quality skilled leadership team, teaching and support staff would increase the expertise within our existing Loanhead Primary school. This expertise will allow the planning and delivery of differentiated curricular pathways that meet the needs of all children with a range of additional support needs.

13. The staffing levels will principally be determined by the number of children. The Education Resource Group will continue to allocate places to the specialist

provisions based on assessment of their needs in partnership with the Head Teacher.

14. If this proposal is implemented, the Council does not envisage any adverse effects from the proposal in respect of staffing. Should issues arise however, these will be mitigated through the Council's Education Leadership Team support structure.

15. It is acknowledged that should the proposal be approved and implemented, forward planning will be required from the Education Service as a matter of good management practice in ensuring the required staffing is in place. Staffing arrangements for the ASN provision will be consistent with Midlothian Council's recruitment policies and other local arrangements.

Integrated Impact Assessment

16. The Council as a public authority has a duty under the Equality Act 2010, the Public Sector Equality Duty 2011, and the Fairer Scotland Duty (Part one of the Equality Act) to have due regard to their provisions when making strategic financial decisions. This is done through assessing the potential impact of the decision on equality through an Equality Impact Assessment. The Council will undertake the process of assessment during the consultation process in respect of this proposal to ensure that due regard is given to such matters in the decision-making process.

17. The result of the Integrated Impact Assessment will be included in the final Consultation Report document.

Equal Opportunities

18. The Council must also consider its duty in respect of socio-economic impact. Having the new provision in the community means that remains accessible for those who may be economically disadvantaged.

19. As part of the consultation process the Council will consult with a wide range of stakeholders, including staff, parents/carers and children and young people and will address comments about equality during this consultation.

20. Under the *Equality Act 2010,* education providers must not treat disabled pupils less favourably and should take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage. The new additional support needs provision will comply with accessibility requirements and therefore would positively promote equal opportunities for any child who has a disability.

Section E: Conclusion

1. The Council believes that the measures proposed in this document will enhance provision for children with additional support needs in Midlothian.

2. This proposal of establishing the ASN provision within Loanhead Primary School is educationally beneficial for several compelling reasons. It ensures that children with additional support needs receive consistent, high-quality support in a familiar and stable environment, which is crucial for their emotional and academic development.

3. The integration of ASN provision within Loanhead Primary School fosters inclusivity, allowing children to interact and build relationships with their mainstream peers, promoting social integration and a sense of community. The established leadership and specialised staff at Loanhead Primary School are well-equipped to provide tailored support, ensuring that each child's individual needs are met effectively.

4. The continuity and stability are essential for fostering a conducive learning environment where children can thrive. Moving the provision elsewhere could disrupt these established relationships and support systems, potentially hindering the children's progress and well-being. Therefore, maintaining the ASN provision at Loanhead Primary School is the most beneficial option for the children's educational and social development, ensuring their right to a high-quality, inclusive education is upheld.

5. This proposal will bring educational benefits to both current and future users of the additional support needs provision. It will ensure that children's learning experiences and achievements are consistently assessed and enhanced as needed, fostering continuous improvement and development.

6. Overall, there are strong educational arguments in favour of this proposal.

Appendix 1: Loanhead Additional Support Needs (ASN) Consultation Timeline

	Date beginning	Date ending	Duration
Statutory consultation period Including: • Initial consultation report • Public meetings • Drop-in sessions • Engagement with staff, pupils, and parent councils	02/04/2025	02/06/2025	8 weeks
Education Scotland engagement period	09/06/2025	29/06/2025	3 weeks
Publication of consultation report	18/08/2025		
Further considerations after publication of the reports	18/08/2025	08/09/2025	3 weeks
Consideration of Consultation Reports by Midlothian Council	09/09/2025	09/09/2025	1 day

Appendix 2: LOANHEAD ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS (ASN) CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM

I wish my response to be considered as confidential with access restricted to Elected Members and Council Officers of Midlothian Council.
❒

Proposal to establish a new ASN stage at Loanhead Primary School.

Further detailed information about the proposal, which you are encouraged to read to help inform your response, can be found at https://midlothiancouncil.citizenspace.com/education/loanhead-asn-consultation

Please note the closing date for submission of completed questionnaires is **02/06/2025.**

You can return this electronically to EducationConsultation@midlothian.gov.uk or by post to Loanhead ASN Consultation, Freepost SCO 622, Midlothian Council, Dalkeith EH22 1DN

About You

1. Are you responding to this questionnaire as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

Individual ❒

Organisation (please give details below) ❒

2. Which category best describes you?

	Loanhead PS	Loanhead ASN	Other
Parent of current pupil(s)	❒	❒	❒
Parent of future pupil(s)	❒	❒	❒
Pupil	❒	❒	❒
Member of staff	❒	❒	❒
Member of the community	❒	❒	❒
Other (please give details)	❒	❒	❒

3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to establish an ASN stage at Loanhead Primary School?

Strongly agree	❒
Agree	❒
Disagree	❒
Strongly disagree	❒
No opinion	❒

4. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to place the new ASN stage under the leadership of the Head Teacher of Loanhead Primary School?

Strongly agree	❒
Agree	❒
Disagree	❒
Strongly disagree	❒
No opinion	❒

5. Please use this box if you wish to give a reason(s) for your view or if you wish to make any further comment on the proposal (if you need to continue on a separate sheet, please attach.)

Thank you for completing this Consultation Questionnaire.