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East Ayrshire
COUNCIL

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL & SOCIAL SERVICES

A CONSULTATIVE DOCUMENT

The proposals in this consultation document have implications for:

- **Woodstock School**
- **Witchhill School**

This document has been issued by East Ayrshire Council Education Committee for consultation in terms of the Education (Publications and Consultation etc) (Scotland) Regulation 1981 and Amendment Regulation 1987, 1988 and 1989.

**EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL & SOCIAL SERVICES**

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- The proposal is to merge the management structures under one headteacher of Witchhill School, Kilmarnock with Woodstock School, Kilmarnock in August 2006 or as soon as possible thereafter.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The two schools that are the focus of this proposal have developed a high reputation for their support to children and families. They offer specialist accommodation together with well-trained, experienced and dedicated staff. This proposal seeks to safeguard and strengthen this quality of provision for the children and young people of both schools.
- 1.2 Over recent years Witchhill School has undergone a steady but constant reduction of its roll. This trend is attributable to a change in the nature of the additional support needs population within the north of the authority.
- 1.3 Changes have also taken place in the nature of provision expected in within the field of special education. Most obviously, there has been the introduction of Higher Still courses, target setting and the elaborated curriculum. This has implications for how special schools are managed since the focus of work has changed with more emphasis towards structured curricular provision.

2. PRESENT POSITION

2.1 Witchhill School

- 2.1.1 Witchhill School is situated at the junction of Witch Road and Hill Street Kilmarnock. The children and young people in Witchhill School are amongst the most vulnerable in the Authority area. Each child needs a well developed educational and care package. Some children require access to modern and large scale mobility devices such as hoists and standing frames to allow them to benefit from their education. Specialist care areas are also required.

The present roll of the school is 6 and its capacity is 20.

- 2.1.2 A detailed roll projection is shown as Appendix 1.

2.1.3 The established management posts for Witchhill School are :

1 Head Teacher

1 Depute Head

2.2 Woodstock School

2.2.1 Woodstock School is situated in Woodstock Street, Kilmarnock. The accommodation was recently extended to accommodate a 16+ base. There are also a number of learning bases and specialist areas such as a home economics base. Owing to the needs of the children, combined with the size of the roll, space is now at a premium in this school.

The present roll of the school is 30 and its capacity is 35.

2.2.2 The management structure presently consists of

1 Head Teacher

1 Depute Head

2.5.3 The children of Woodstock School have a range of needs. They require significant levels of support from staff, but have mobility and are physically active. Some children are diagnosed as having autistic spectrum disorders (ASD), and therefore have particular care needs.

3. PROPOSAL

3.1 It is proposed to merge the management structures under one headteacher of Witchhill School, Kilmarnock with Woodstock School, Kilmarnock in August 2006 or as soon as possible thereafter.

The new structure would consist of :

1 x headteacher

1 x depute head

1 x principal teacher.

3.2 Using established arrangements, the post of headteacher and depute head would be ring-fenced to staff of that level already in either of the two schools affected.

4. JUSTIFICATION FOR THE PROPOSAL

4.1 This proposal recognises the range of learning needs of children, and that they exist on a gradual spectrum of provision. It will therefore allow for a much more flexible and coherent approach to be developed for young

people. For example it will be easier to link with associated services such as social work and health for transition and care planning.

- 4.2** The proposal also recognises that all young people are entitled to a modern and progressive curriculum. The new and modernised management structure with the inclusion of a principal teacher will facilitate curriculum development and will be implemented within the terms of “A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century”.
- 4.3** Being part of a larger establishment will enable the Authority to provide reassurance to the children and families of the present Witchhill School regarding the continuity of services. Woodstock School will also benefit from access to a wider pool of staff experience.

5. IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1** This proposal recognises that the individual needs of children of both schools must be considered fully. The support of skilled and caring staff in sufficient numbers has been essential to the success of both schools to date and this will be maintained and enhanced. This proposal will continue and enhance the conditions in which choices can be offered within a diversity of provision. The educational opportunities for children, young people and staff will be improved as a result of this proposal.
- 5.2** The merging of the management structures of the two schools under one headteacher would be done within the terms of “A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century”. School Boards or any subsequent formal parental body would also require to amalgamate under the conditions of the relevant legislation.
- 5.3** The staffing and resourcing of special schools is closely related to the individual needs of children. It is an important part of this proposal that the needs of the children in both schools are paramount. This principle will be maintained in the new structure.
- 5.5** Staff and trade unions will be consulted on any aspect of this proposal that affects individuals or groups of employees.
- 5.6** The best interests of children and young people are at the heart of this proposal. This new provision will continue to apply best practice in additional support, including the involvement of parents, children and young people in any decisions or plans that affect them.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 It is recommended that the Education Committee agree to adopt the proposal that:

- (i) The management structures of Witchhill School Kilmarnock should be merged with Woodstock School Kilmarnock under one headteacher.
- (ii) This merger will take effect from August 2006 or as soon as possible thereafter.

It is further recommended that:

- (i) all interested parties be invited to make written or electronic submissions on the proposal to the Executive Director of Educational & Social Services, East Ayrshire Council, Council Headquarters, London Road, Kilmarnock KA3 7BU, E-mail: education.consultation@east-ayrshire.gov.uk no later than 05 May 2006
- (ii) the Executive Director prepare a report on the results of the consultative process for consideration at a future meeting of the Education Committee.

GRS/GRS

20/03/2006

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Detailed Roll Projection of Witchhill School

Session	Pre School	Primary	Secondary	Post 16	TOTAL ROLL
2005/06	1	2	3	0	6
2006/07	3	2	2	1	8
2007/08	3	1	3	1	8
2008/09	2	2	2	2	8

THE CURRENT SCHOOL ROLL IS 6 PUPILS

THE SCHOOL CAPACITY IS 20 PUPILS

Appendix 2: Detailed Roll Projection of Woodstock School

Session	Pre School	Primary	Secondary	Post 16	TOTAL ROLL
2005/06	0	21	8	1	30
2006/07	2	18	7	5	32
2007/08	2	16	8	6	32
2008/09	1	11	12	7	31

THE CURRENT SCHOOL ROLL IS 30 PUPILS

THE SCHOOL CAPACITY IS 35 PUPILS