

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**THE RESULTS OF THE CONSULTATION ON THE FUTURE EDUCATIONAL
PROVISION FOR NURSERY AGE CHILDREN IN MUIRKIRK NURSERY SCHOOL,
MUIRKIRK.**

Report by Director of Education

**Appendix A – List of respondents
Appendix B - the consultative document**

Written submissions from interested parties on the consultative process are available for inspection in East Ayrshire Council Headquarters, London Road, Kilmarnock, KA3 7BU.

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Report by Director of Education

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** On Thursday 16 March 2000, the Education Committee approved the issue of a consultative document on the future educational provision for nursery age children in Muirkirk Nursery School.
- 1.2** The document recommended that Muirkirk Nursery School be re-designated as a nursery class.
- 1.3** The main points raised in the document were:-
- (i) Muirkirk Nursery School is re-designated as a 20/20 place nursery class
 - (ii) The nursery class would continue to be located in the Nursery School building
 - (iii) The Head Teacher of Muirkirk Primary School would manage the nursery class on an outreach basis
 - (iv) A teacher and a nursery nurse would staff the nursery class.

2. THE CONSULTATION

- 2.1** Written representation on the Committee's proposals were sought from interested parties in terms of the Education (Publication and Consultation, etc.) (Scotland) Regulations 1981 and amended regulations 1987, 1988 and 1989.
- 2.2** In accordance with the statutory requirements, parents of children affected by the proposals and appropriate school boards have been consulted. Copies of the consultative document were also made available to the staff of Muirkirk Nursery School, Muirkirk Primary School and associated nursery provision and schools in the area. Copies were also made available to Local Elected Members, the Member of Parliament, the Member of the Scottish Parliament and to representatives of appropriate unions.
- 2.3** The existence of the document was publicised in the press and copies were made available in the Education offices, the affected schools, the local libraries and the local Council office. A copy of the consultative document is attached as Appendix B.

3. THE VIEWS EXPRESSED

- 3.1** There have been 4 responses to the consultation document. Submissions have been received from the nursery teacher in Muirkirk Nursery School, the Head Teacher of New Cumnock Nursery School, Catrine Primary School Board and the EIS. A list of respondents is attached as Appendix A.
- 3.2** The nursery teacher in Muirkirk Nursery School provided the following comments. The staff were pleased with the decision that the nursery should be retained in the existing premises. The applications received for session 2000/01 will all be satisfied in the proposed 20/20 capacity. The premises could be utilised for additional childcare facilities, as there are no extended daycare facilities in Muirkirk. As the nursery class would be staffed by two adults, an additional telephone sited in the nursery playroom would be beneficial as staff would be able to oversee the children at all times and not have to leave the nursery floor. The issue of obtaining supply cover in the absence of a member of staff is a concern.
- 3.3** The Head Teacher of New Cumnock Nursery School, who has been providing the management support to the nursery, welcomed the proposal for the nursery to be retained in the existing premises and agreed that the re-designation of the school as a nursery class was practical. Concern was expressed in the reduced hours for clerical support.
- 3.4** The School Board of Catrine Primary School was in agreement with the proposals provided that there was no deterioration in the service, the Head Teacher of Muirkirk Primary School received a responsibility payment and the savings incurred through this proposal were made available to Muirkirk Primary.
- 3.5** The EIS do not agree that the proposal should be pursued in its current form. Concerns are expressed that by re-designating the Nursery School as a nursery class, that there would be a loss on the accumulated experience and expertise of a nursery Head Teacher. Through the loss of the nursery Head Teacher post, there would be fewer opportunities for promotion for teachers. The effective management of the nursery is questioned given the spilt sites of the Primary School and the nursery building.

4. COMMENTS ON THE VIEWS EXPRESSED

- 4.1** The principal focus in the consultation exercise is to re-designate Muirkirk Nursery School as a 20/20 nursery class under the management of the Head Teacher of Muirkirk Primary School. From the submissions received, the majority agrees that the proposal should go ahead.
- 4.2** Practical issues that have been raised through the consultation exercise. An additional telephone, will be provided and every effort will be made to arrange supply cover should this be required.

- 4.3 The proposed hours for clerical support for the nursery class are in line with the formula applied to every nursery establishment in this authority i.e. 1 hour per every 10 FTE places.
- 4.4 The suggestion that the premises could be utilised to provide additional childcare facilities is positive and constructive. The proposal to establish a pilot project to extend childcare facilities in Muirkirk Nursery was agreed by Education Committee on 16 March 2000.
- 4.5 The savings from this proposal could be utilised to support the introduction of Wrap Around Care i.e. extended daycare, for the 3 – 5 age group and could be extended to children age 2 – 3 years if there was demand for this service.
- 4.6 There are examples of other nursery classes in this authority where the class is not situated within the school building. In these situations the nursery class is viewed as an integral part of the whole school and the management, curricular planning and support to parents is demonstrated and effective. The same philosophy and support mechanisms should be no different in this case.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 There is support for Muirkirk Nursery School to be re-designated as a 20/20 nursery class under the management of the Head Teacher of Muirkirk Primary School and to remain in the premises that the Nursery School currently occupies.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 It is recommended that the Education Committee agree:
- (i) to proceed with the proposal to re-designate Muirkirk Nursery School as a 20/20 nursery class under the management of the Head Teacher of Muirkirk Primary School from August 2000;
 - (ii) to proceed with the proposal to retain the nursery class in the Nursery School premises.

John Mulgrew
Director of Education

JA/SB
17 April 2000

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

Members wishing further information should contact Margaret Burnell, Senior Depute Director of Education, Tel: (01563) 576104, or Janie Allen, Principal Officer, Pre-5 Services, Tel: (01563) 576185.

**FUTURE EDUCATIONAL PROVISION FOR NURSERY AGE CHILDREN IN
MUIRKIRK NURSRY SCHOOL, MUIRKIRK**

LIST OF RESPONDENTS TO CONSULTATION EXERCISE

NAME	ADDRESS
Mr John McIlvean	Chairperson Catrine Primary School Board, 16 Fourfields, Catrine
Mr Iain Harvey	EIS Secretary, Loudoun Academy, Glasgow Road, Galston
June Begg (Teacher)	Muirkirk Nursery School
Mrs Elise Walker	Head Teacher, New Cumnock Nursery School

THIS IS A CONSULTATIVE DOCUMENT

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MUIRKIRK NURSERY SCHOOL, MUIRKIRK**

Report by Director of Education

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

THIS IS A CONSULTATIVE DOCUMENT

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Report by Director of Education

1. BACKGROUND – MUIRKIRK NURSERY SCHOOL

- 1.1 Muirkirk Nursery School has been in existence since 1975. The capacity of the nursery school is 30/30, ie 30 children in the morning and 30 children in the afternoon.
- 1.2 The building is the former St Thomas's Primary School, is brick built and is in good condition. Muirkirk Nursery School relocated into this building in 1996.
- 1.3 It has been noticeable over the last three years that the number of children attending the nursery fluctuates from year to year. At the present time, the nursery has 19 vacant places with no further applications for the spring or summer terms.
- 1.4 The staffing structure consists of a Head Teacher, two nursery nurses and a part-time clerical assistant.

2. THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 It is proposed that Muirkirk Nursery School be redesignated as a 20/20 place Nursery Class. The nursery class would continue to be located in the Nursery School building and would be managed by the Head Teacher of Muirkirk Primary School on an outreach basis. Sessions could be offered both in the morning and the afternoon.
- 2.2 The staffing of the nursery class would consist of a Nursery Class Teacher and a Nursery Nurse. If the number of children seeking a nursery place increased there would be space available to accommodate them and an additional member of staff would be allocated according to the agreed staffing formula: child:adult ratio of 1:10

3. CONSEQUENCE OF THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The proposal to re-designate Muirkirk Nursery School as a nursery class linked to Muirkirk Primary School will negate the need for a Nursery Head Teacher. The nursery class will be managed by the Head Teacher of Muirkirk Primary School. This is consistent with arrangements for nursery classes in other establishments.

3.2 There will be a requirement to staff the nursery classes with a teacher. The difference in salary between a Head Teacher's post and a teacher's post is £5,228.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The present structure of Muirkirk Nursery School is:

1 x Head Teacher	£32,634.96
2 x Nursery Nurses	£27,406.74
10 hrs Clerical Support	£ 3,401.86
TOTAL	£63,443.56

The proposed structure of the nursery class would be as follows:

1 x Nursery Teacher	£24,205.98
1 x Nursery Nurse	£13,703.37
2 hrs Clerical Support	£ 680.37
TOTAL	£38,589.72

These figures are based on average salaries for 1999/2000 and includes National Insurance and Superannuation.

The savings in this proposal would amount to £24,853.84.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 It is recommended that Members of the Education Committee agrees to adopt the proposal to:

- (i) re-designate Muirkirk Nursery School as a nursery class attached to Muirkirk Primary School;
- (ii) issue this report as a consultative document to be made available to all interested parties including school boards;
- (iii) all interested parties be asked to make written representation on the proposals to the Director of Education, John Mulgrew, East Ayrshire Council, Council HQ, London Road, Kilmarnock, KA3 7BU no later than Friday 14 April 2000; and
- (iv) ask the Director of Education to report the results of the consultation exercise to a future meeting of the Education Committee.

John Mulgrew
Director of Education

JA/DL
19 January 2000

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

Members wishing further information should contact Margaret Burnell, Senior Depute Director of Education, Tel: (01563) 576104 or Janie Allen, Principal Officer, Pre-five Services, Tel: (01563) 576185.

AGENDA