

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**SPECIAL COUNCIL - 24 MARCH 2020****Report by Depute Chief Executive and Chief Financial Officer
Economy and Skills****PROPOSAL TO CAP PRIMARY 1 INTAKE AT ANNANHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL
FOR ACADEMIC SESSION 2020/2021****PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1. The purpose of this report is to recommend that Council approves the provision of a cap on the number of pupil places available in Primary One at Annanhill Primary School, Grange Campus, Kilmarnock for academic session 2020/2021.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. It is recommended that Council:-
 - i. Agree to cap the total number of pupil places available in Primary One at Annanhill Primary School in academic session 2020/2021 at 75 as set out more fully in paragraph 17 of this report;
 - ii. Agree that an annual report will be submitted to Cabinet on a cap for the number of pupil places available in Primary One for the start of the following academic session; and
 - iii. Otherwise note the content of this report.

BACKGROUND

3. Annanhill Primary School was opened in 2008 as part of Grange Campus, which also includes Grange Academy and Park School. At that time the school roll was 392 which was well within the planning capacity for the school of 459.
4. At the time of the planning and build, it was envisaged that Annanhill Primary School would occupy 15 classrooms to provide the base classrooms for Primary One to Primary Seven, a General Purpose Room, PE hall, and share the assembly hall and lunch area ("the street") with the other two schools on the campus.
5. Since then, the roll of Annanhill Primary School has increased, in significant part, due to a large number of placing requests. Accordingly, as at February 2020, the school roll stood at 526 pupils. This increased roll has resulted in the primary school expanding over time into the main teaching block utilising 5 classrooms that ordinarily would have been used by Grange Academy for secondary pupils in Modern Languages and Home Economics.

DETERMINING CAPACITY

6. The Scottish Government published guidance entitled “Determining Primary School Capacity” in October 2014. The purpose of this guidance was to provide advice to Local Authorities on the determination of “School Capacity” with the aim to provide a more consistent approach to calculating the capacity of primary schools across Scotland. Whilst this guidance is intended to be flexible to allow Local Authorities to respond to their differing contexts, it sets best practice in calculating primary school capacity.
7. Within this guidance, there are two measures of primary school capacity: planning capacity and working capacity. Planning Capacity is a physical, theoretical measure of the total number of children which could be accommodated in a school, based upon the total number of teaching spaces, the size of those spaces and the class size maxima.
8. By contrast, Working Capacity is a dynamic and more realistic measure of the total number of pupils which can be accommodated in a school in a particular session. This is adjusted based on the organisational needs of each school each academic session. The working capacity should be used to determine the number of places available in a particular school during a particular session and used when considering placing requests in the interests of promoting educational achievement.
9. The Cabinet paper of 26 November 2014: Capacity of East Ayrshire Primary Schools agreed the approach of calculating the planning and working capacities of primary schools within East Ayrshire in accordance with the above guidance.

OCCUPANCY LEVELS

10. Occupancy levels within the Grange Campus have been closely monitored over the past few years, not only through the School Estate Management Plan, but also by Senior Officers within the Education Service and Head Teachers. However, given the occupancy issues, a longer term solution is required.
11. As members will be aware, Space Strategies were engaged to undertake a review of accommodation within the campus, taking account of the potential impact of falling and rising school rolls. Whilst the Space Strategies Report has confirmed that there is sufficient capacity within the Grange Campus to accommodate future growth, this will, however, require a more collaborative approach in the planning and management of campus space for the benefit of all users, including those using Annanhill Primary School.
12. Space Strategies have proposed and tested a range of layouts within the campus designed to improve the quality of space within the campus and address the main issues highlighted by Head Teachers and senior Council Officers to provide a learning environment in line with the 21st century learning and

teaching. The recommendations included a requirement for there to be joint discussions and decisions made to find a solution for the location of the primary school classes that meet the needs of all sectors and does not result in staff and pupils being isolated. This is reinforced by the views of staff, parents and pupils who have reported the following issues with the current arrangements:

- The timings of the secondary school timetable means that there is movement between classes every 50 minutes which can cause noise disruption to primary classes;
- Secondary break and lunch times need to be different from primary to allow access to catering facilities. This results in secondary pupils being outside in social areas during primary teaching blocks, again resulting in disruption from noise;
- Primary classes are currently over two floors in the secondary teaching block and this means that Annanhill Primary pupils are located in a wide area across the Campus which can be challenging to manage in a range of circumstances, such as management team support required for pupils and emergency evacuation procedures; and
- Primary pupils being taught in the secondary block do not have easy access to primary toilet facilities during teaching time. This means that some primary pupils are accessing unsupervised secondary toilet provision with secondary pupils.

13. In addition, there are currently significant pressures across the Campus on the use of shared facilities such as PE accommodation (internal and external), social areas and catering facilities. Again, Head Teachers work well with colleagues in other services such as Facilities and Property Management to minimise these pressures, but the projected rise in the secondary roll alone (1349 projected roll in 2021/22) means that these pressures will remain.

14. Further, members will be aware that the Cabinet paper of 22 January 2020: Transformational Review of Specialist Provision sought approval to commence a statutory consultation on additional support needs provision across East Ayrshire, including the provision provided by Park School. This statutory consultation has not yet commenced. Whilst it would be premature to state what the outcome of that consultation may be or, the implications for Park School and the space utilised by them within the campus, we can confirm that the outcome of the statutory consultation will not be determined by the start of the academic session 2020/2021. Therefore, with the projected increased roll in Grange Academy and the need to add a further section in S1, the room availability for primary in the secondary block will require to be reduced. The current model of the primary school utilising secondary teaching spaces will therefore be impacted by this reduction in room availability.

Annanhill Primary School Placing Requests

15. The Primary One intake at Annanhill Primary School has not been capped and, as a result, a significant number of the Primary One intake are likely to come from placing requests. The table below shows the figures for August intake in the last 5 years and does not include any families moving mid-term or mid-term placing requests.

	Placing Requests	Catchment	P1Total
Aug 2015	24 - all approved	24	48
Aug 2016	33 - (24 Approved/9 Refused)*	43	67
Aug 2017	20 - all approved	46	66
Aug 2018	28 – all approved	35	63
Aug 2019	32 – all approved	52	84
Aug 2020	31 for consideration	49	80

16. Annanhill Primary School has 15 classrooms for its own use in the primary area of the Campus and there is a recognition that to allow access to general purpose areas for Support for Learning, group work, STEM activities and Nurture then these spaces are not sufficient. The Head Teacher has been asked to maximise class numbers, following SNCT guidelines, and create more composite classes. The plan is therefore to reduce from 21 classes to 20 classes in August 2020, retaining the use of a flexible classroom, and then move to 19 classes in August 2021, retaining the use of a flexible classroom. This would then allow Annanhill Primary School to temporarily retain 4 ground floor classrooms in the current Grange Academy teaching block.

PROPOSAL

17. As previously indicated within this report, the planning capacity for Annanhill Primary School is 459. The current roll for the school stands at 529, meaning that the working capacity significantly exceeds the planning capacity. It is clear that the number of placing requests remains high, with a significant number being received for the academic session beginning in August 2020. There is no suggestion that this is likely to change. It is therefore proposed that the Primary One intake be capped at 75 in August 2020 (including reserved places). The number of reserved places in each academic session will be determined by the Head of Education in line with the Council's Scheme of Delegation having regard to the number of in-year moves to the catchment area. In academic session 2020-21 this will be 2 reserved places and would

be managed via Education Standard Circular 9 School Admissions and Placing Requests. This would allow the formation of 3 Primary One classes (maximum class size at P1 is 25 pupils), Assuming these spaces are all taken, this would mean the formation of 2 Primary Two classes in August 2021, each with 30 children (the maximum allowed) and a composite class with the remaining 15 pupils. In future years, consideration can then be given to reducing the number of Primary One spaces further, having regard to class sizes. This would allow the school over time to be able to become dual stream again with one composite therefore utilising their own 15 classrooms as the original design of the building intended. It would be prudent to manage this over time to take account of the increased number of catchment children with the new house building in the catchment area. The Education Service would propose to closely monitor the impact of the provision of the cap to ensure that all catchment children can be placed in the school and provide an annual report to Cabinet on the extent of any proposed cap that may be required.

LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS

18. It is a legal requirement that the Council monitors the capacity of all schools in its area. By seeking to place a cap on Primary One intake the Council is complying with its legal responsibilities. However, should members not agree to the proposed cap, the roll within the Primary School will continue to rise, placing continuing pressure on the available space within the Campus.

POLICY/HR/EQUALITY/FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

19. There are potential financial implications if a cap is not imposed due to the need to appoint additional teaching staff to deal with the ongoing increase in pupil numbers.

CONCLUSION

20. With a growing campus population it is important that steps are taken to review and clearly delineate the areas of the campus which are allocated to the primary school. The model which has evolved of the primary school utilising secondary classrooms is not sustainable given the projected roll increases in Grange Academy and Annanhill Primary School. It is also not the most appropriate way of providing educational experiences for primary-aged children. It is therefore considered appropriate that steps are now taken to reduce the roll of Annanhill Primary School to ensure that children who live in the catchment area of the school are afforded the best possible educational experiences within a primary school environment, while recognising the benefits of being part of a campus provision.

Alex McPhee

Depute Chief Executive (Economy and Skills) and Chief Financial Officer

12 March 2020

Background Papers: Scottish Government Guidance: Determining Primary School Capacity
Cabinet 26 November 2014: Capacity of East Ayrshire Primary Schools
Cabinet 4 March 2020: School Estate Management Plan 2018-2019

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