

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**CABINET - 31 MARCH 2021****Report by Head of Education**

**PROPOSAL TO CAP PRIMARY 1 INTAKE AT ANNANHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL
FROM ACADEMIC SESSION 2021/2022 AND CONDUCT AN EXTENSIVE
REVIEW OF GRANGE CAMPUS**

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to recommend that Cabinet approves the revised provision of a cap on the number of pupil places available in Primary 1 at Annanhill Primary School and the intention to conduct an extensive review of Grange Campus to ensure sustainability of numbers on Campus in the longer term.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. It is recommended that Cabinet:-
 - (i) As an interim stage, agree to cap the total number of pupil places available in Primary 1 at Annanhill Primary School, from academic session 2021/2022 at 60, as a revision to the original cap of 75, agreed at Council on 30 March 2020;
 - (ii) Agree that any review of this capping level be submitted to a future Cabinet;
 - (iii) Agree to conduct an extensive review of Grange Campus (including all 3 schools) this session to ensure sustainability.
 - (iv) Otherwise notes the content of this report.

BACKGROUND**Annanhill Primary**

3. On 30 March 2020 the Council considered the report dated 12 March 2020 by the Depute Chief Executive and Chief Financial Officer which recommended approval of the provision of a cap on the number of pupil places available in Primary 1 at Annanhill Primary School. It made the decision:
 - (i) to cap the total number of pupil places available in Primary 1 at Annanhill Primary School in the academic session 2020/21 at 75 (including reserved places for those moving into the catchment area);

- (ii) that an annual report would be submitted to Cabinet on a cap for the number of pupil places available in Primary 1 for the start of the following academic session.
4. The cap on the number of pupil places at P1 at 75 was to ensure all children within the catchment area were guaranteed a place at the school and provide a means to manage the number of Placing Requests which are significantly increasing. The longer term plan was to allow the school to return to a 15 class structure for which the primary was originally built, releasing classrooms back to the secondary sector.
 5. The report dated 12 March 2020 outlined the issues which require to be considered when determining school capacity – the issue of planning capacity (the physical theoretical measure of the total number of children which could be accommodated in a school, based on the total number of teaching spaces, the size of those spaces and the class size maxima) and of working capacity (a dynamic and more realistic measure of the total number of pupils which can be accommodated in school in a particular session). Working capacity is used to determine the number of places available in a school during a particular session and is used when considering placing requests.
 6. In 2014, new guidance was issued in a document ‘Determining Primary School Capacity’ and following this guidance the planning capacity of Annanhill PS was noted as 459. 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.
 7. Since then, the roll of Annanhill Primary School has continued to increase, in significant part due to a large number of placing requests. Accordingly, as at February 2020, the school roll stood at 526 pupils, over the agreed 459 planning capacity. This increased roll 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.
 8. The table below shows the figures for August 2021 P1 intake and the previous 6 years. Figures do not include any families moving mid-term or mid-term placing requests.

Year	Placing Requests	Catchment	P1 Total
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	32 – (31 Approved/1 Refused)	42	73
Aug 2021	31 – under consideration	27	57

9. The cap agreed at 75 (including 3 reserved places) at Council in March 2020, allowed the reduction of classes from 21 to 20 in August 2020 with a view to a further reduction to 19 classes in August 2021. The formation of classes in August 2020 was, three Primary 1 classes (maximum class size at P1 is 25). As these children move into Primary 2, two P2 classes will be formed (maximum class size 30 pupils) and one P1/2 composite class for the remaining 15 pupils (maximum class size is 25). This reduced the number of secondary classrooms being utilised by Annanhill Primary School from 5 to 4.
10. The number of reserved places in each academic session are 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. The reserved spaces for August 2020 were used, leaving a waiting list of catchment children having moved into the area during the academic year.

Grange Academy and Campus

11. The Planning Capacity calculation methodology as specified in SC61 "The Capacity of Secondary Schools", is designed to take into account teaching spaces and the area per pupil. The original agreed Build Capacity for the Grange Campus allowed for a Working Capacity of 1860: Grange Academy: 1280; Annanhill Primary 480; Park School 100. The current occupancy is 1953: Grange Academy 1288; Annanhill Primary 526 and Park School 139.
12. The current capacity within Grange Academy has been calculated as equating to 1256 usable spaces. The projected roll for Grange Academy in August 2021 is 1299. This is based purely on an August intake from the associated primary schools and excludes any placing requests and the SFA Performance School. This exceeds the planning capacity by 43, equating to 2 classrooms.
13. The SEMP has highlighted capacity issues within Grange Academy on an annual basis over a number of years, and it would be prudent to consider a more sustainable option, that safeguards the Campus occupancy levels in the longer term.
14. As a result of the increasing rolls and the need for Annanhill Primary School to utilise 5 classrooms within the main Secondary teaching block, the occupancy levels within the Grange Campus have continued to be closely monitored, not only through SEMP but also by Senior Officers within the Education Service and Head Teachers.
15. Space Strategies tested a range of layouts within the Campus to improve the quality of space within 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. Recommendations and decisions made, followed joint discussions and views of staff, parents and pupils of the Campus. The following issues were highlighted and arrangements put in place:

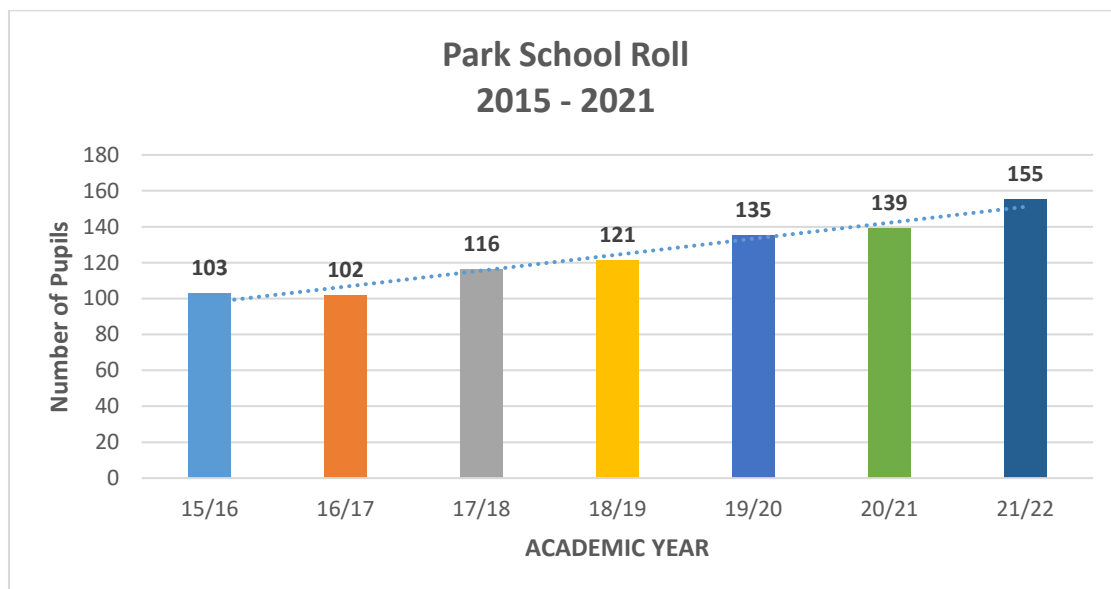
- The timings of the secondary school timetable means that there is movement between classes every 50 minutes which can cause noise disruption to primary classes;
 - Secondary break and lunch times were made different from primary to allow access to catering facilities. This resulted in secondary pupils being outside in social areas during primary teaching blocks, again resulting in disruption from noise; and
 - 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.
- 16.** Grange Campus was designed with carefully planned circulation routes, coherent siting of curriculum areas, ample corridor spaces, a comfortable dining area and shared communal spaces. Due to increasing pupil numbers in recent years however these design principles have been seriously compromised and overcrowding is having a significant impact in a number of areas:
- Despite careful planning and management, corridors and stairwells are overcrowded, congested and at times present a challenge to the safety and wellbeing of our children and young people. This is particularly evident throughout the day as young people move from subject to subject;
 - There is insufficient dining space to accommodate the secondary school which is not conducive to a relaxed and well-ordered experience for young people at break and lunch times;
 - Access to toilets and handwashing facilities presents a significant challenge to children and young people. Overcrowding in toilets is common and children from Annanhill Primary feel unsafe sharing facilities with the secondary school;
 - Communal areas such as the ‘Street’ are no longer sufficient to safely and comfortably meet the needs of the increasing school roll, particularly during inclement weather – a problem which can often give rise to disorderly conduct in other parts of the Campus;
- 17.** Heads work well together and with colleagues in other services, such as Facilities and Property Management to minimise these pressures. However, as a result of the increasing pupil roll, the Campus has experienced unprecedented overcrowding and increasing levels of occupancy. The demand for space on the Campus now means that teaching accommodation and facilities no longer facilitate the delivery of a broad, challenging and innovative curriculum appropriate to the 21st century accessible to all children and young people and particularly those who require additional support for their physical and mental wellbeing.

Park School

- 18.** Cabinet on 22 January 2020: “Transformational Review of Specialist Provision” approved the commencement of a statutory consultation on additional support

needs provision across East Ayrshire, including the provision provided by Park School. The outcome of this consultation and the proposed expansion of ASN provision across schools and centres could potentially alleviate the pressure on capacity within Park School and Grange Campus.

19. There is no guidance on how to calculate capacity in an ASN school, only recommendations on the number of children and young people in a class as outlined in the SNCT guidance on 'Class Sizes for Special Schools and Units' i.e. 6 or 8 or 10 depending on the specific needs.
20. The current roll within Park School is 139. In August 2021, there are 8 pupils who are leaving school and there are an additional 24 new placements required, totalling 155. Included in the 24 new placements are children of mid-primary stage currently requiring a range of ongoing supports that utilise a high percentage of core classroom assistant and support for learning.
21. The following table shows the upward trend in placements within Park School from 2015 through to projected in August 2021:



22. In addition to the 24 who are assessed as requiring provision at Park School, there are potentially a further 6 children and young people who are undergoing assessment and may require a place at Park School. Typically these assessments indicate consideration of a placement at Park School. However, given the pressures on space and the fact that the current mid-primary classes are full we cannot move/bring all of these children forward for consideration.
23. The original working capacity, as detailed in the School Estate Management Plan (SEMP) is 100. The figures shown above clearly indicate that the school has been operating outwith this capacity for several years and as a result significant resourcing and support planning has been required within the Campus.

PROPOSALS

Annanhill

24. The current school roll of Annanhill Primary at February 2020 was 526. The current numbers being considered for P1 intake August 2021 are 60 (27 catchment, 30 placing requests and 3 reserved spaces for children moving into the catchment area throughout the year).
25. As an interim stage, to a more extensive review of the Campus, it is proposed that the Primary 1 intake be capped at 60 in August 2021 (including reserved places). Revising the existing 75 cap on the Primary 1 intake and implementing a cap of 60 (including reserved spaces) will provide sufficient places for the catchment children identified for the Primary 1 intake in August 2021. It would allow the formation of two Primary 1 classes (maximum class size at P1 is 25) and for the remaining 10 pupils to be included in the composite class.
26. An agreed cap of 60 would see the school able to continue towards a 15 class structure, for which it was originally build, and have all of the primary classes located together. This would bring the school roll down to 499, bringing it closer to the Build Capacity of 459 and resolve the issues raised collectively by staff, parents/carers and pupils, as shown in paragraphs 15-16 of the report.
27. This position will be subject to ongoing review and the change in the level of capping will be monitored to ensure all catchment children can continue to be placed in the school. The Education Service would propose to provide a report to Cabinet should there be a need to further review this.

Grange Campus

28. Over the years the number of children and young people attending Grange Campus has increased to the point where we are now operating beyond the capacity of 1860 for which the Campus was built. A long term strategy to reduce our numbers to a more manageable and safe level is required which involves all three schools on the Campus. Therefore, it is proposed that an extensive review of the Campus is conducted this session to ensure sustainability of effective teaching and learning for all children and young people attached to this catchment area.
29. Whilst an agreed cap of 60 on the P1 intake at Annanhill Primary will have a positive impact on the working capacity, this intervention alone may take up to 7 years to rectify the capacity issues facing the whole Campus. It is becoming a reality that in terms of potential options, the Education Service may require in the future, to seek Council agreement to finance modular classrooms as a solution, although this is not conducive to the image of the Campus going forward.

LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS

30. 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 1 Annanhill Primary School and agreeing to conduct an extensive review of Grange Campus this session, the Council is complying with its legal responsibilities. However, should members not agree to the proposed caps, the roll within the Primary School and the Campus will continue to rise, placing continuing pressure on the available space within the entire Campus.

POLICY/HR/EQUALITY/FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

31. 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

32. 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 and the overall Campus 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.

Linda McAulay-Griffiths

Head of Education

15 March 2021

Background Papers:

- Scottish Government Guidance: Determining Primary School Capacity
- Cabinet 26 November 2014: Capacity of East Ayrshire Primary Schools
- Report to Council 30 March 2020, dated 12 March 2020: Proposal to Cap Primary 1 Intake at Annanhill Primary
- School Estate Management Plan 2019-2020

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