



YOUR SCHOOL NEEDS YOU

Glasgow City Council (GCC) is currently holding two consultations relating to the future of Hillhead Primary School:

A statutory consultation to change the catchment area of Hillhead Primary School

A non-statutory consultation to close Kelvin Park Early Years Centre (EYC)

Why should you be concerned?

- This impacts on the long-term lack of space in school
- Possibility of splitting the school over two sites
- In the future, Park, Woodlands and Kelvingrove may be out of the catchment area
- Impact on siblings of current catchment children no longer in catchment



This document from Hillhead Parent Council is designed to inform your response to these consultations.

Please help us protect our school!

Please read this document carefully and submit a response to the Council before

Monday 29th September

Every response counts.

www.glasgow.gov.uk/schoolconsultations



The aims of Hillhead Primary Parent Council include ‘developing and engaging in activities which support and advance the education and welfare of pupils and ‘promoting parental or carers’ involvement in their child’s education and learning’. The current consultation directly affects the education, welfare and learning of the children of Hillhead Primary and this document is designed to give you relevant information to inform your response.

Points to remember in responding:

- Numbers matter. GCC are obliged to read, validate and follow up all responses. Two adults responding separately has more impact than one answer from each household.
- Your child can also respond.
- Give reasons for your objections. You may be in favour of some parts and against other parts – make this clear in your response
- Make alternative suggestions as part of response. GCC are required to follow through specific alternative suggestions and answer them in their response report.
- Friends and family can respond too.

Catchment Area Review

The consultation document includes maps of the proposed changes to the catchment area for Hillhead Primary School. The change in the catchment is an attempt to reduce the number of catchment children eligible to come to Hillhead Primary. The proposed new catchment reflects to a large extent the capacities of the neighbouring schools which would pick up the children coming out of Hillhead’s catchment area. **Maps showing how distance to school, road networks and local communities are reflected in the proposed new catchment area can be seen on the school website at hillheadprimaryglasgow.org**

The following points are worth taking into account:

- **Exclusion of the local community from the catchment area.** The consultation cites links to the local community as the main educational reason for the redrawing of the catchment. But the new area cuts out most of the Woodlands, Park and Kelvingrove communities closest to the school.
- **Split of the Woodlands community.** The proposal splits the Woodlands area into three parts.
- **Community links to the alternative schools.** For some children, their new catchment area would put them into schools located in areas with little or no community links to where they live.
- **Impact on ethnic diversity.** The Woodlands area has a high concentration of ethnic minorities; removing this area from Hillhead’s catchment would have a negative impact on the diversity of the school.



- **Impact on siblings.** The consultation states that “Siblings of those current catchment area pupils attending Hillhead Primary school in August 2014 would be given ‘priority’ to attend Hillhead Primary School as long as their sibling was also in the school when they enrol. *The consultation process will facilitate exactly what ‘priority’ would mean in practice should the proposal be approved*”.

How can you respond?

In your response, be as specific as possible. For example, you may want to:

- State any specific concerns you have about the proposed changes.
- Provide a statement on what you think ‘priority’ should mean for siblings ie: *I would like siblings of current Hillhead Primary catchment area pupils to have the same right of entry as future catchment children.* This could be time limited eg. for a 7 year period until current Primary 1 children have left the school.
- Ask GCC not to split up the Woodlands community.
- Make specific comment about the value of the ethnic and international diversity of Hillhead Primary and how that will be affected by the changes.
- Ask GCC to take walk to school distance into account in the new catchment.
- Ask GCC to consider major traffic routes and busy roads, as well as walking through the park as an option.
- Give alternative suggestions areas which should/shouldn’t be included in school catchment area.

Closure of the Kelvin Park Early Years Centre

A non-statutory consultation is being undertaken on the closure of the Early Years Centre (EYC). A non statutory consultation means that GCC are not obliged to hold a consultation; but they say they ‘wish to consult as widely as possible’.

There have been a wide range of reactions to this proposal. Each of us will obviously respond to this consultation based on our own situation and feelings about both the EYC provision on the site of Hillhead Primary and the issues of space being faced by the school. From the perspective of the school, it is worth considering the following points.

Space issues are not short term

- The school already **does not have enough classrooms. Two P7 classes are currently sharing the media room.**
- Without additional space, every room in the school apart from the gym/dining hall would be used for teaching in 2015.



- Even with the proposed cap of 90 children for every year of intake proposed by GCC, the number of teaching rooms required will remain permanently at 22. This means there would only ever be the gym/dining hall, the media room and one GP (general purpose) room for well over 630 children.
- Lack of GP space affects expressive arts, music, first stage English as an additional language learners and inclusion needs; it diminishes opportunities for active learning, and keeps children at their desks all day. Combined with Scottish weather, this means less physical activity, less room for imagination and experimentation, less scope for varying activities to keep children engaged. It affects the staff's ability to deliver effectively the Curriculum for Excellence and for all the additional and inclusion needs of a school of this size.
- Intolerable pressure is being put on the staff to manage such a huge roll with insufficient space at a time when staffing cuts are also being imposed. This intolerable pressure could increase staff turnover.
- The number of catchment area children will have to fall considerably to reach the Council's target of 90 – in 2014 there were 137 registrations from within the catchment and at least 20 placing requests, many of which were for siblings of children already in the school.
- There is no guarantee that catchment reduction will deliver a fall in numbers. Rising population, the popularity of the school, numbers of siblings falling outside the new catchment will all make the reduction slower.

An even bigger school?

A common concern is that additional space will simply cause further, unmanageable growth in the school roll. But it's worth considering that...

- The school is already extremely close to its maximum capacity; so there simply isn't space for the school to expand, beyond the two full-sized rooms of the EYC.
- The school does not have the infrastructure to support significant increases from this point; the building can't provide sufficient toilets, gym space etc.
- The inclusion of additional children over and above the stated cap can be refused on grounds that it would require the employment of an additional teacher which, in the current financial climate, will become an increasingly compelling argument for GCC.
- The Parent Council has already approached the Scottish Government on the issue of how to protect GP space and will continue this campaign in the coming year.

Other Options?

Hillhead Primary Parent Council have been talking and writing to GCC over the past year to try and identify solutions to this issue of space which have included buying the house and a range of different options to rework the existing building to create more space. None of these have been taken forward by GCC for a variety of reasons including planning permissions, practicality and financial considerations.



In the public meetings as part of the consultation process, other options have been suggested which would have a direct impact on the school.

Portacabins

- The Parent Council have been told during discussions with GCC that planning permission would not be granted for portacabins in the playground.

Decanting the Primary 7s to another site

- This option, possibly to the Gaelic school, has been suggested during public meetings.
- A decant of Primary 7s would affect the whole school community. It is a key transition year educationally and socially and important activities are built into the school to give P7 pupils confidence and responsibility as they move to high school. These would be lost if the P7s were isolated on a different site.
- There are important staffing considerations of removing a whole school year to an alternative site.

Use of off site facilities by the school for teaching/general purpose use

- There are many difficulties associated with the use of off site facilities. These include the time required to organise and walk a class of children to a nearby facilities and then return them to the school.
- There is also a key staffing implication as a class of 30 children would require a minimum of 3 staff to accompany them. This would be extremely difficult to achieve regularly, particularly in the light of ongoing staffing cuts, and takes support staff who would otherwise be supporting different classes out of the building purely to accompany children to an off site location.

How can you respond?

As with the catchment area, be as specific as possible in your response. For example you might:

- State your opinion specifically on any of the alternatives which are emerging as part of the consultation.
- Support outright the closure of the EYC
- Reject outright the closure of the EYC
- Support the closure of the EYC from its current Hillhead site but ask GCC to investigate its relocation to another local site so it can continue as a unit to provide early years care in the area.



If you have any further questions, please get in touch with us at
hillheadprimaryparentcouncil@gmail.com

This consultation is extremely important for Hillhead Primary school. Whatever your opinion on the issues, please make your voice known by responding before 29 September.

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Thank you.