
NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

27 September 2022

Cabinet

Title: Kilwinning Early Years Centre

Purpose: To seek approval from Cabinet to carry out a Statutory Public Consultation on the proposal to close Kilwinning Early Years Centre to allow its incorporation into Pennyburn Primary School as an early years class.

Recommendation: It is proposed that Cabinet:

- a) Approves the proposal to carry out a Statutory Public Consultation on the proposal to close Kilwinning Early Years Centre to allow its incorporation into Pennyburn Primary School as an early years class.
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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This paper seeks approval to carry out a Statutory Public Consultation on the proposal to incorporate Kilwinning Early Years Centre (KEYC), a standalone nursery, into Pennyburn Primary School as an Early Years Class. This proposal would also require the formal closure of KEYC as a standalone nursery in order to introduce this new stage of education into Pennyburn Primary School.
- 1.2 As part of a post-implementation review of the 1140 Expansion, the estate and infrastructure arrangements in North Ayrshire were considered and it was deemed appropriate to incorporate KEYC, presently a standalone centre, into Pennyburn Primary School as an early years class under the leadership of the Head Teacher of the school.
- 1.3 Our objectives continue to be:
 - To ensure the highest quality of educational provision for our children and young people;
 - To maintain the best quality and use of our learning estate;
 - To prioritise effective deployment of staff; and
 - To maximise the benefits of establishment leadership for outcomes for children.
- 1.4 The integration of early years into Pennyburn Primary School under the direction of the Head Teacher will provide further opportunities to evaluate and improve approaches to learning, teaching and wellbeing across the stages.

- 1.5 If approved, North Ayrshire Council will commence Statutory Public Consultation on 24th October 2022. Following the conclusion of this consultation, a report will be prepared for consideration by Cabinet in early 2023.

2. Background

- 2.1 The roll out of the expansion in early learning and childcare (ELC) to 1140 hours was fully implemented across North Ayrshire in August 2021. This followed a one-year delay due to Covid-19.
- 2.2 A post-implementation review of the learning estate and infrastructure for the delivery of high-quality early learning and childcare is nearing completion. This is ensuring the best use of valuable resources to maximise the impact and benefits of 1140 hours of ELC for North Ayrshire's children and families.
- 2.3 North Ayrshire's Early Years Centres are each led by a Head of Centre who reports directly to a Senior Manager who is line managed by a Head of Service. North Ayrshire's Early Years Classes are led by the Head Teacher of the school in which they are situated, and the classes are included in the leadership and direction of the whole primary school community.
- 2.4 KEYC is the smallest of North Ayrshire's six standalone Early Years Centres, and it is smaller than many of North Ayrshire's Early Years Classes. It is presently managed as a standalone ELC facility with capacity for 54 children aged 3–5 years and 15 children aged 2–3 years. It follows a Model 1 pattern of delivery and is open from 8am until 6pm throughout the year. KEYC and Pennyburn Primary School share the same building and the same administrative and office functions and space.
- 2.5 The centre received a £647,000 refurbishment to create new outdoor, nurture and lunch facilities as well as a re-modelling of the main entrance to the school and early years centre. This proposal will further ensure the benefits of these physical improvements are maximised by bringing the learning and teaching together under the same leadership team at Pennyburn.
- 2.6 We do not foresee any negative impact on children and families who currently attend KEYC and we will ensure that plans are in place to support all involved in this transition. The staff team of early years practitioners will remain the same. The building and learning environment will not change.
- 2.7 The ELC staff team will become the responsibility of the school leadership team as a result of the change to the management structure.
- 2.8 The proposal will have an impact on the leadership team of Pennyburn Primary School, who will have new and direct responsibility for the leadership of the new ELC provision, as well as the additional statutory duties required by Care Inspectorate and the Scottish

Social Services Council. If the proposal is accepted, a new Manager post would be created in the early years class, which has the same salary grade as the existing Depute Head of Centre post in KEYC.

2.9 Under the terms of the Schools (Consultation) Scotland Act 2010 (as amended), statutory public consultation is required where there is a proposal to permanently discontinue a “school.” The Act applies to this proposal as it affects KEYC “nursery school” (under the management of the education authority).

2.10 If Cabinet approves the commencement of statutory public consultation, this will start on 24 October 2022. An outcome report will be published in February 2023 and Cabinet approval sought in March 2023. Thereafter, the decision to close Kilwinning Early Years Centre would be referred to Scottish Government for Ministers’ approval.

3. Proposals

3.1 It is proposed that Cabinet:

- a) Approves the proposal to carry out a Statutory Public Consultation on the proposal to close Kilwinning Early Years Centre to allow its incorporation into Pennyburn Primary School as an early years class.

4. Implications/Socio-economic Duty

Financial

4.1 If approved following the Statutory Public Consultation, there will be recurring financial savings of c. £60,000.

Human Resources

4.2 If the proposal is approved, HR arrangements will be progressed in conjunction with staff and trade unions.

Legal

4.3 Under the terms of the Schools (Consultation) Scotland Act 2010 (as amended), statutory public consultation is required where there is a proposal to permanently discontinue a “school.”

Equality/Socio-economic

4.4 There will be no negative impacts on the staff or children and families who attend KEYC through this proposal.

Climate Change and Carbon

4.5 None.

Key Priorities

- 4.6 This proposal contributes to North Ayrshire Council's Key Priority to ensure children and young people have the best start in life.

Community Wealth Building

- 4.7 Early learning and childcare establishments like KEYC support local employment or further study and learning opportunities for parents and families by providing 1140 hours of free flexible childcare as well as providing employment opportunities for local ELC staff. This will not change under this proposal.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 This paper proposes to carry out a statutory public consultation. Early engagement has already taken place with:

- Local Elected Members
- Trade Unions
- Employees impacted by the proposal
- HR
- Finance
- Legal.

Audrey Sutton
Executive Director (Communities & Education)

For further information please contact **Caroline Amos, Head of Service (Education)**, on **(01294) 324416**.

Background Papers

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