
NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

20 February 2024

Cabinet

Title: Naming of the new primary school at Montgomerie Park, Irvine

Purpose: To select a name for the new non-denominational primary school currently being built at Montgomerie Park, Irvine.

Recommendation: That Cabinet:

- Considers the proposed names selected for consultation; and
- Decides the name of the new primary school

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 On 27 April 2021, Cabinet approved the establishment of a new non-denominational primary school at Montgomerie Park, Irvine.
- 1.2 As a result, there is a requirement to formally name the new school. Cabinet is asked to consider the engagement that has taken place with stakeholders within the locality to propose a shortlist of names and make a final decision.

2. Background

- 2.1 New housing developments at Montgomerie Park, Irvine resulted in an increase in the local population and, subsequently, education accommodation pressures at Annick Primary School.
- 2.2 In October 2020, the Scottish Futures Trust (SFT) invited bids for funding to develop innovative educational and community facilities as part of their Phase 2 Learning Estate Investment Programme. North Ayrshire Council submitted a bid to obtain up to 50% funding contribution for the proposed new primary school, inclusive of early learning and childcare provision. An announcement made by the Depute First Minister on 18 December 2020 included North Ayrshire Council as one of the successful bids.
- 2.3 On 27 April 2021, Cabinet approved the establishment of a new non-denominational primary school at Montgomerie Park, Irvine. The new school was scheduled to open in August 2023, however, due to the impact on the construction industry post-Covid, the opening date was revised to August 2024. Currently, the project is on track to be completed on time and is being closely monitored for any potential delays.

- 2.4 Outdoor opportunities for learning have been a key design focus, and the building will be fully digitally capable. The new school has been designed with sustainability as a key priority and will be the first Passivhaus school in the Council's portfolio. The new facilities include:
- 12 classroom bases with direct access to breakout areas;
 - General purpose spaces for STEM and other non-class based school activities;
 - Distinct PE and dining spaces located together with a stage area, for delivery of music and drama;
 - Nurture and Visiting Services spaces; and
 - Staff resource areas.
- 2.5 Agreeing a suitable name for the new school is vitally important for the project to allow a number of key decisions to be taken timeously, e.g., school uniform/branding, signage and décor within the building and creating a sense of identity for the new school community.
- 2.6 In August 2023, Education asked Cultural and Heritage colleagues to compile a list of potential school names based on the history and landmarks of the local area. The Senior Leadership Team in Education and Communities met to consider this list and following their discussion, a shortlist of three names was selected to allow engagement to take place with project stakeholders.
- 2.7 All of the names included below appear on the 1911 Irvine Ordnance Survey map (<https://maps.nls.uk/view/75494366>) and are the names of landmark features in the area. The three names shortlisted for consideration are as follows:
- **Belvidere Primary School** – Belvidere is the name of a hill within the adjacent Eglinton Park
 - **Eglinton Primary School** – due to the close proximity of the Eglinton Estate to the new school
 - **Montgomerie Park Primary School** – the location of the school is within the development of new homes known as Montgomerie Park
- 2.8 Further to Cabinet approval to build the new school, a Stakeholder Reference Group was established in order to facilitate the communication of information between North Ayrshire Council and parent/carers of children who live in the new school catchment area. This group effectively acts as the new school community, until a new Parent Council can be established.
- 2.9 At the most recent Stakeholder Reference Group meeting, held on 26 October 2023, the shortlist of names was presented, and feedback requested. Further engagement then took place across the local school communities to gather feedback on the shortlisted names.
- 2.10 In order to involve local children in the process, it was agreed that engagement would take place with children from Annick and Lawthorn primary schools. Officers visited both school assemblies in December 2023 and following a short presentation outlining the background and relevance of each name, a show of hands indicated the following overall order of preference:

1. Montgomerie Park Primary School
2. Eglinton Primary School
3. Belvidere Primary School

Each assembly indicated a strong preference for Montgomerie Park Primary School. A flavour of the comments heard:

- 'It is exactly the place that it's in' (Montgomerie Park Primary School), and
- 'Eglinton is a nice name for a school'

2.8 Further to the school assemblies, the Parent Councils of both Annick and Lawthorn primary schools were asked for their views. Annick Primary School issued an MS Form, to which 11 people responded as follows:

1. Montgomerie Park Primary School - 6
2. Eglinton Primary School - 4
3. Belvidere Primary School - 1

2.9 Lawthorn Primary School Parent Council responded via email to confirm that Montgomerie Park Primary School was the most popular name from their engagement with parents.

2.10 Throughout the engagement, the following feedback and comments were gathered in respect of each school name:

Montgomerie Park Primary School

Those stakeholders who expressed a preference for this name, provided the following feedback:

- Locally, people have already been associating this name with the new school during construction.
- Reflects the location of the new school.

Some stakeholders did not favour this name for the following reasons:

- Potential confusion with Loudoun-Montgomery Primary School.
- Knadgerhill is included within the catchment area and this is not reflected in the name 'Montgomerie Park.'

Eglinton Primary School

Some stakeholders preferred this name because it was viewed as neutral, in that it did not exclude any part of the catchment area. It was also noted that this name conveys the proximity to Eglinton Park and the opportunities which this will offer for outdoor learning.

Some stakeholders felt that this name was more associated with Kilwinning, rather than Irvine.

Belvidere Primary School

During the engagement process, this was the least popular name across all groups.

3. Proposals

3.1 Following the consultation undertaken with the local community, it is proposed that Cabinet:

- Considers the proposed names selected; and
- Decides the name of the new primary school

4. Implications/Socio-economic Duty

Financial

4.1 There are no financial implications within the current report. Costs of branding, signage and associated activities have been incorporated within the financial planning for the new school project.

Human Resources

4.2 There are no HR implications within the current report.

Legal

4.3 There are no legal implications within the current report.

Equality/Socio-economic

4.4 There are no equality/socio-economic implications within the current report.

Climate Change and Carbon

4.5 None.

Key Priorities

4.6 The collaborative process which has led to the development of the options for the naming of the new school has contributed to the creation of an identity for the new school community. This has contributed to the following key activities:

- Developing strong relationships with communities and partners based on trust and shared aspirations using their experiences to inform service provision
- Ensuring an inclusive, fair, rights-based and asset-based approach in our work
- Using dynamic data and lived experiences to inform decision-making

Community Wealth Building

4.7 None.

5. Consultation

5.1 Engagement on this important matter has been undertaken with the following key stakeholders:

- Children and young people;
- Parents/Carers;
- Parent Councils of Annick and Lawthorn primary schools; and
- Stakeholder Reference Group.

The shortlist of names has also been discussed with colleagues in other relevant Council services.

Audrey Sutton
Executive Director, Education and Communities

For further information please contact **Lynn Taylor, Senior Manager**, on 01294 324437.

Background Papers

0