

Consultation on relocation of secondary element of Willowbank School

A decision was taken at the recent meeting of East Ayrshire Council's Cabinet to launch a consultation on the proposed relocation and establishment of the secondary pupils (S1-S6) from Willowbank School to St Joseph's Campus.

The consultation, which will start on Monday 16 November and run until Friday 15 January 2021, will seek the views of parents and carers of children and young people who currently attend Willowbank School and St Joseph's Campus, the children and young people and other relevant stakeholders, including Education Scotland.

Inclusion within the current provision at Willowbank School and St Joseph's Campus will be a key part of the consultation. It will also evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of altering St Joseph's Campus to accommodate Willowbank as a separate school for secondary pupils, will look closely at appropriate accommodation and most importantly evaluate the readiness of young people from Willowbank to be co-located within the Campus.

This will happen in a number of ways. A summary of the consultation, which will be published on the Council's website, will be provided to a wide range of stakeholders including the Parent Council of each school, parents and carers, pupils, teaching staff and trade unions representatives. Public meetings will be held in Council Chambers on Tuesday 24 November at 19:00 and Thursday 26 November at 19:00. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, the main panel will be limited to eight people and it is anticipated that each Parent Council will also be represented. The meeting will be accessible digitally, please contact your Head Teacher to register your interest and they will provide you with login details closer to the time.

The children and young people from each school will also be consulted directly. In line with guidance published by the Scottish Commissioner for Children and Young People (SCCYP) the Council has asked an independent organisation, Common Ground Mediation, to carry out this part of the consultation. This will consist of focus groups and a questionnaire taking account of each child and young person's needs and abilities. This process will be supported by teaching staff to ensure that children and young people feel comfortable and confident to participate in discussions. Any decision taken, following the completion of the consultation, will be explained clearly to all the children and young people, detailing how their views were taken into consideration.

Once the consultation is completed and feedback is received from Education Scotland, a Consultation Report will be presented to the Council's Cabinet for consideration by elected members.

For further information on the consultation, please have a look online. If you cannot find the information you need online please call 01563-576000 or e-mail: education.consultation@east-ayrshire.gov.uk .