

## **Maidenhill Primary School Transition Planning**

### **Questions / Queries**

**Q1. Will there be open meetings that parents/carers residing in the affected area from both Kirkhill and Mearns can attend in order to ask questions/find out more information?**

*A. The Education Department has scheduled an open meeting for such parents/carers on 27<sup>th</sup> November at 6.30pm in Mearns Primary School.*

**Q2. How will parents/carers be kept up to date with progress?**

*A. We have already set up a website for Maidenhill Primary and will use that to update parents and carers on the progress of the transition.*

*Both Kirkhill and Mearns Primary School websites have links to the Maidenhill website where the following will be posted:*

- *Agendas and Minutes of the Transition Steering Group;*
- *Letters and FAQs from the Education Department;*
- *Newsletters;*
- *Transition Group Remit;*
- *Transition Plan;*
- *Photographs of Building Work Progress.*

*Parents/Carers can also speak to members of the management teams of both Mearns and Kirkhill Primaries and will send out additional any information as required.*

**Q3. Several parents have requested more communication regarding Maidenhill to assist in decision making please. If parents have more questions in the future, who should they contact with these?**

*A. A transition manager has been appointed and will take up post shortly. The transition manager will be the first point of contact for any queries. We will post contact details on all three school websites.*

### **Steering Group**

**Q4. How were parents/carers selected to join the Transition steering group?**

*A. As stated in the Transition Steering Group Remit document:*

#### **‘Membership of the Transition Steering Group’**

*It is recommended that Yvonne Donaldson, Head Teacher of Kirkhill Primary and Sharon Hunter, Head Teacher of Mearns Primary invite the following to join the Transition Steering Group:*

- *2 parent representatives chosen by Kirkhill Parent Council and Mearns Parent Council whose children will remain in the catchment area for Kirkhill Primary and Mearns Primary;*
- *2 parent representatives chosen by Kirkhill Parent Council and Mearns Parent Council whose children will be in the catchment area for the new Maidenhill Primary;*

## **Staffing/Resources**

### **Q5. Will ERC be able to confirm at time of applications, the name of the Head Teacher?**

*A. Mr Alasdair McDonald has been appointed as Head Teacher of Maidenhill Primary School. Mr McDonald will be working closely with Mrs Menzies, Transition Manager prior to the school opening in August 2019 in order to ensure a smooth transition for all.*

## **School catchment applications//Placing requests**

### **Q6. If older siblings remain at Mearns or Kirkhill, will younger siblings have an automatic right to attend the same school?**

*A. No. Decisions about placing requests and catchment applications need to be in accordance with the Education Department's policies which adhere to relevant legislation. Where a family resides in the delineated catchment area of Maidenhill Primary School but would like a younger sibling to commence their primary education from August 2019 at Mearns or Kirkhill primary schools, parents/carers will be required to submit a placing request directly to the Education Department. Placing requests should be submitted no later than 31 January 2019 and will be processed in accordance with the placing request policy. Placing requests from families where an older brother or sister will continue to attend Mearns/Kirkhill Primary School in 2019-2020 will be given a higher priority. For ease of reference, links to the policies are provided below:*

*School Catchment Applications*

*<http://www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=19102&p=0>*

*Placing Requests*

*<http://www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=19100&p=0>*

### **Q7. How will parents/carers be notified by ERC about whether they are in the Maidenhill catchment and what the necessary steps for enrolment should be?**

*A. Details of the affected area / new Maidenhill catchment area, are available on the Maidenhill Primary website (links available from Kirkhill and Mearns websites), and large plans of these 3 school catchment areas have been available at Kirkhill and Mearns primary schools. Parents/carers with a child attending Kirkhill or Mearns primary school, residing within the delineated catchment area of Maidenhill Primary School, will have already received a letter from the Education Department in November. This letter has asked parents/carers to confirm which school their child will attend from August 2019, by 7 December 2018. Further details on the application process will be issued in due course.*

### **Q8. Where will parents/carers of children who will be starting school in 2019 require to make a catchment application to start at the new school given that Maidenhill will not be open until August 2019?**

*A. Parents/carers of children who will be of school age for academic session 2019-20 and who reside within the delineated catchment area of Maidenhill Primary School will apply for a P1 place for Maidenhill at either Mearns Primary or Kirkhill Primary, depending on whichever is most convenient. In all schools, parents/carers are advised of the decision on catchment applications for P1 places in March.*

**Q9. If placing requests to Mearns or Kirkhill Primary Schools are not accepted, and a younger child then attends their catchment school (Maidenhill), will there still be an opportunity for older children in the family to then move to Maidenhill? If so, when will that decision need to be made by?**

*A. Should parents/carers submit a P1 placing request for a place at Mearns or Kirkhill Primary Schools this may be refused in April due to a lack of available places and the child would be given a catchment place at Maidenhill. In all schools, parents/carers are advised of the decision on catchment applications for P1 places in March. At this point in the applications process, if parents/carers decide that they would like their older child to transfer and also attend Maidenhill Primary School instead of Kirkhill/Mearns, this will only be possible by submitting a placing request to the Education Department for their older child. Given that the Education Department is bound by legislation to process and respond to all placing requests by the end of April, it may be the case that no places will be available at that time at Maidenhill Primary School for the year stage required, given they may have already been allocated. With this knowledge, it is advisable to make decisions as early as possible, since this provides the optimum chance of securing places at the same school for all primary age children in the family. Families are then assured of their places as early as possible and thereby also inform the number of classes and teachers.*

**Q10. Will there be an opportunity to appeal if the placing request is not granted?**

*A. Yes, as is the case for any placing request applicant, an appeal for a refused placing request may be submitted to the independent Placing Request Appeal Panel. Further information on the appeals process is available via the link above. Details on how to make an appeal is also included in the Education Department's refusal letter.*

**Q11. Mearns catchment children could now find themselves having to travel further as they are in the Maidenhill catchment. Would this be taken into consideration when placing requests/requests to remain are applied for?**

*A. No, placing requests/requests to remain will be processed in accordance with the School Admissions and Placing Requests policies as detailed above. Within the placing request policy you will find the priorities for allocating available school places to applicants.*

**Q12. If a parent omits to indicate if their child is to transfer to Maidenhill or remain at their existing school, what would the default position be? In particular, would they be automatically be enrolled at Maidenhill?**

*A. All parents/carers will be encouraged to indicate whether they want their child(ren) to transfer or remain via the letter which has been issued in November. However, should a parent/carer not respond to the request for a decision on which school their child(ren) will attend from August 2019, the assumption will be that the child will continue to attend the school they are currently enrolled at. Please see the previous response regarding availability of places for Maidenhill at non-P1 stages after processing of catchment and placing request applications.*

**Q13. Will older children still be able to move over to Maidenhill in future years?**

*A. Parents/carers of older children will be able to apply for a place at Maidenhill in future years, but this will need to be in accordance with the School Admissions and Placing Request policies and of course be subject to the availability of places at that time. As described previously, after school applications and placing requests have been processed at the end of April, any parent/carer who wishes their older child to move to Maidenhill must submit a placing request to the Education Department. Please see the previous response regarding availability of*

*places for Maidenhill at non-P1 stages after processing of catchment and placing request applications.*

**Q14. If a child remains at their existing school, will this have any effect on which high school they will go to? Or is it where the child lives i.e. within catchment, rather than the primary school attended, which solely dictates this?**

*A. The secondary school which a child transfers to at the end of their primary education will be determined by the secondary school delineated catchment area in which their residence is located. If a parent/carer wishes their child to attend a non-catchment secondary school they must submit a placing request to the Education Department no later than 31 January of the child's primary 7 year; this placing request will be processed according to policy and the availability of places. The delineated catchment area of the new Maidenhill is associated with Mearns Castle High School.*

**Q15. Will parents/carers who bought a property a number of years ago in order to be in the Mearns or Kirkhill catchments but who now find themselves in the Maidenhill catchment, be given priority when applying for a request to remain/placing request out of Maidenhill.**

*A. No, all applications will be considered consistently in accordance with the Education Department's school admissions and placing request policies.*

**Q16. After 2019, the number of children from Mearns Primary going to Mearns Castle will reduce, could these children be kept together to ease transition to Mearns Castle High School?**

*A. The composition of classes within any school is a decision for the Head Teacher. The Head Teacher will take into consideration a wide variety of information when determining the composition of classes so as to ensure the best educational experience for all children. The staff at Mearns Primary School are very experienced in ensuring a seamless positive transition experiences for pupils moving on to Eastwood or Mearns Castle High Schools. Once Maidenhill Primary is open, the staff in Mearns Primary and Kirkhill Primary will continue to work closely with parents and pupils to provide a successful transition to secondary school.*

### **Resources/Provision**

**Q17. Will funding for Maidenhill be at the same level per child as Kirkhill and Mearns?**

*A. Yes, funding will be allocated on the same basis as all other schools in East Renfrewshire.*

**Q18. Will Maidenhill be one or two stream? If numbers are low, will there be composite classes?**

*A. Maidenhill will have the capacity to be two stream. The number of classes at each stage will be dependent on numbers of pupils at each stage.*

**Q19. Will there be the same , "like for like" provision at Maidenhill, for example, will there be a music teacher / art teacher etc. that Mearns Primary has and other facilities/resources that the children currently benefit from at Mearns?**

*A. As can be seen from plans and images, Maidenhill has a wealth of facilities/resources including art space, library space, exploration room, drama box area with full lighting equipment, games hall with retractable theatre seating, separate dining space, outdoor classroom areas, and a large central atrium space. The staffing complement will depend on numbers of pupils. The Head Teacher will then make local decisions about how staff are deployed.*

**Q20. How can parents/carers view plans/images of Maidenhill Primary?**

*A. Kirkhill and Mearns primary have plans and images of Maidenhill available for parents/carers to see. In addition the information is also posted on school websites/twitter accounts.*

**Q21. When will Maidenhill be finished?**

*A. Maidenhill will be finished prior to the start of the new school session in August 2019.*

**Q22. Can there be clarification on the routes to school for walking / bikes as well as for driving and car parking so parents can work out their route to Maidenhill please? Will there be safe walking routes to Maidenhill even although there will be a lot of building work in the surrounding areas?**

*A. Yes, there will be a variety of safe walking routes constructed to coincide with the opening of the new school. Contractually, the developer, Cala are required to have a fully functioning safe walking route in place from Ayr Road to Maidenhill by June 2019. Planning Department are looking into the current status of the path from Mearnskirk to Ayr Road to establish who is responsible for maintenance of this. Routes into the school grounds from surrounding areas are detailed on the site plans which can be viewed on the website. The Head Teacher of Maidenhill will also ensure a School Travel Plan is developed and this will be posted on the school's website.*

**Q23. Will children and parents get a chance to visit/tour the new school once completed prior to those starting in August?**

*A. Our normal practice is to invite parent representatives, groups of pupils, and staff to view the school as its construction progresses. We do this in consultation and partnership with the builders so that visitors do not hold up the construction; as such visits are limited in number. We will keep parents/carers informed of such opportunities. We will also post more images online to share with the community. Of course when the school opens the Head Teacher will arrange for parents to visit the school at the earliest opportunity.*

**Q24. What will happen if there are any issues with the building causing delays? What checks are in place to ensure this doesn't happen and the school will definitely be ready in time?**

*A. East Renfrewshire Council is working closely with the contractors and have been provided with assurances that the work will be completed in time for the start of the new school session in August 2019. This will continue to be strictly monitored and kept under review. The Council has much experience of working with partners to deliver new schools which are suitable and ready for occupation in accordance with planned timescales.*

**Q25. Will the timings of the school day of Maidenhill be adjusted to suit parents/carers who also drop off/collect from either of the other primaries? Will Maidenhill have staggered/phased entry in the morning, like Mearns does, to facilitate drop off and ease congestion in the mornings?**

*A. Once appointed, the Head Teacher, in conjunction with the Education Department and in consultation with parents, will make this decision. Current arrangements at Mearns and Kirkhill Primaries will be taken into account.*

### **Out of School Care**

**Q26. Will there be out of school care at Maidenhill? Could the collection times for after school provision also be different between the schools? Working parents who struggle to meet the 6pm MACS deadline, will have difficulties logistically if they have children at 2 different schools to collect from the after school provision.**

*A. The Education Department will support parents from Mearns and Kirkhill Parent Councils to decide which out of school care provider they wish to offer this service to families. All local Out of School Care providers are invited to submit expressions of interest with a panel of parents making the decision on behalf of the school community. Parents/carers will be kept up to date with the progress of this. Timings will be discussed/explored as part of the provider selection process.*

### **Nursery**

**Q27. Will the nursery have wrap around care and extended hours? Please could you confirm the size of the nursery, hours and options for extended hours?**

*A. The nursery will have wrap around care available. The nursery will have capacity for 120 children. All East Renfrewshire early learning and childcare centres have opening hours of 8.00 am – 6.00 pm.*

**Q28. Will there be an option for children currently at Mearns nursery to move across to Maidenhill nursery for their pre-school year?**

*A. Yes, the Education Department will write to parents in January and ask if they want Nursery children to transfer to Maidenhill. Nursery allocations are organised in March/ April each year.*

### **Other aspects/Issues**

**Q29. How will the schools be selecting pupils to be involved in the plans for Maidenhill (especially before it is known who will transfer)?**

*A. Pupil councils from both Mearns and Kirkhill will be involved initially until it is clear which children are transferring.*

**Q30. Who will decide on the new school uniform? Given that Kirkhill and Mearns both have primarily grey and navy uniforms and blue summer dresses, to prevent parents needing to buy completely new uniforms, will this be the same?**

*A. As per the transition plan, groups of children will help to design the new uniform but this point will be taken into consideration.*

**Q31. The Transition plan seeks to inform the children early and involve them in the project - but there is concern that this is distressing to the children if they do not know if they will be attending the new school as it simply heightens discussion of the topic – what consideration was given to the emotional wellbeing of the children in devising the transition plan?**

*A. The emotional wellbeing of children is of paramount importance. Once we know the children who will be moving to the school, there will be work/activities carried out to ensure that they are resilient and well prepared. We will of course work in partnership with parents to support children to make the move. We all wish children to know which school they will attend as early as possible in the process. This helps children and, of course, families feel more settled. It also facilitates planning for the Head Teacher in liaison with the department to determine classes and teachers.*

**Q32. Parents would like to understand which classmates will be moving too, so is there a plan to help know who is moving.**

*A. Once parents/carers have made the decision by 7<sup>th</sup> December, it will be clearer which children are moving. In our experience this sort of information is usually and naturally shared amongst children and families.*

**Q33. Please could the school provide support and help with ideas for how children can understand the benefits of the new school, and that they will still have friends at the new school, and will make new friends too. Parents are not sure how best to help children understand this, so advice would be appreciated.**

*A. There will be information issued in November 2018 to support parents/carers/children with this.*

**Q34. Please confirm measures to ensure that children will be protected from NOx, PM2.5, PM10 and other toxic emissions from vehicle exhausts in the Maidenhill school car park and immediate surrounds.**

*A. The overall site developers submitted a full Environmental Impact Report which was accepted by the Planning department and formed part of the approved application. The report stated that:*

*'The results of this assessment conclude that there are no significant changes in NO2 and PM10 concentrations at all locations on comparison of the 'with and without' development scenarios. Therefore, the magnitude of impact is considered to be negligible, and therefore no significant air quality effects as a result of the proposed development are predicted. Accordingly, no mitigation is required.'*

**Q35. The new school is positioned with two four lane motorway/dual carriageway running on two borders and the M77 is frequently gridlock to the by-pass roundabout with traffic moving slowly or being stationary right by the school, with engines running in the morning. What measures are ERC going to take to minimise pollution and noise affecting the children and were any studies undertaken in assessing the site on the potential effects on the children, particularly asthma sufferers?**

*A. The overall site developers submitted a full Noise Impact Assessment Report which was accepted by the Planning department and formed part of the approved application. The report stated that:*

*'The predicted day time noise levels at the proposed primary school site are noted to be well below 55dB(A)L Aeq as recommended by the World Health Organisation (WHO) Guidelines for Community Noise (2009) for outdoor playground areas. A Maximum 5 Metre high acoustic fence, to be installed on the Southern boundary of the site; and a 2 metre acoustic fence to be installed on top of a 3 metre high bund on the Western boundary of the site and on the*

*Southern site access. The 3m bund height is measured from the development side of the bund in accordance with proposed site levels, (For information about emissions, please see Q34.)'*

**Q 36. Please specify the type of surfacing material being used for the school pitch and confirm that these will be certified non-toxic.**

*A. The European chemicals Agency (ECHA) recently carried out an exhaustive EU- wide study and has found no reason to advise people against playing sport on 3G pitches with rubber crumb. This advice is based on ECHA's evaluation that there is a very low level of concern from exposure to substances found in the granules.*

*We are confident that 3G pitches in this country are suitable for use given that the concentration limits in the EU's regulations are set to minimise any risk to the users. In addition, ECHA reported on the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2017 that it had "...found no reason to advise against playing sports on synthetic turf containing recycled rubber granules as infill material."*

*The regulations for tyres came into force in 2010. The Environment Agency is one of the bodies responsible for enforcing the regulations in this country and its analysis and enforcement work shows a high level of compliance.*