

## Care, Learning and Wellbeing

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Our Ref:

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Date: 24<sup>th</sup> March 2014

If phoning or calling ask for David Strang

Dear Consultee

### **SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 TARBOLTON CONSULTATION – AMENDED PROPOSAL DOCUMENT**

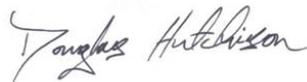
As you are aware, South Ayrshire Council is consulting on the potential relocation of Tarbolton Primary School and Nursery School and the proposed closure and re-designation of Tarbolton Nursery School to a Nursery Class. As part of this statutory consultation a public meeting was held at the primary school on Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> March 2014. During the meeting a question was asked if the re-designation of the nursery school constituted a closure. It was explained that the Council is not stopping nursery provision in Tarbolton Primary School. However, in the context of the consultation legislation the change to nursery provision is technically a closure and we are treating it as such. The proposal document title has been amended to make this clearer. I can also confirm that I will take account of the strongly held view that no member of staff should lose their job as a result of the re-designation from a nursery school to a nursery class.

Under Section 12 & 13 of the Schools (Consultation)(Scotland) Act 2010, any decision to close a nursery or in this case re-designate as a nursery class is subject to the Scottish Ministers call-in procedures. This is already referred to in Section 10 of the proposal document where the call-in process is fully explained.

The 2010 Act defines rural schools as those provided on a list by the Scottish Government and requires their closure to include reference in the proposal document to certain factors. Tarbolton Nursery School is not included in the Scottish Government's list of rural schools. However, we have decided to make explicit reference to these factors in an amended proposal document which is available from the school or the Council's website at [www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/consultation](http://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/consultation). I include a copy of the amendment to the proposal document and hope this will help you make an informed response to the consultation. As explained at the public meeting, I encourage you to complete the response form as part of this consultation process.

Please note that the consultation ends on **Friday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2014** following which all responses will be passed to Education Scotland.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Douglas Hutchison".

Douglas Hutchison  
Head of Education

## **SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010**

### **CONSULTATION ON THE POTENTIAL RELOCATION OF TARBOLTON PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY SCHOOL AND PROPOSED CLOSURE AND RE-DESIGNATION OF TARBOLTON NURSERY SCHOOL TO TARBOLTON PRIMARY NURSERY CLASS**

#### **FACTORS ON CLOSURE OF RURAL SCHOOLS**

##### **7.0 Consideration of Factors Affecting Rural Schools**

As explained in section 3 of the proposal document, the wider strategic driver for this proposal is the provision of a new community campus for the village of Tarbolton which will include high quality nursery provision. Tarbolton Nursery School will be integrated within this community campus, therefore nursery provision will continue as a class in the new Tarbolton Primary School rather than as a separate nursery school. The proposal of a community campus was developed in conjunction with the community through a series of stakeholder meetings.

##### **7.1 Alternatives to the Closure Proposal**

The alternative to the closure of Tarbolton Nursery School has been explained in section 6.0 of the proposal document and demonstrates that the proposed re-designation of the nursery school to a nursery class is a viable alternative to closure and represents best value in relation to the long term educational benefits for young children. Nursery classes provide a more efficient management arrangement for nursery provision without compromising the quality of the provision. South Ayrshire Council already has 29 nursery classes which provide high quality nursery services. This is reflected in the inspection reports published by Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate.

The new nursery class will have provision for an additional 20 nursery places, increasing the capacity from 30/30 to 40/40. The Council is also planning to increase nursery hours and introduce more flexible arrangements for parents in line with Scottish Government recommendations. This will increase employability opportunities within the nursery and support working parents.

##### **7.2 Impact on the Local Community**

The proposed re-designation of the nursery school will have limited impact on the community. Other than nursery provision the existing nursery building is not used by the wider community and has reached the end of its life. Under the re-designation proposal, nursery provision will be part of the primary school which will sit within a modern community campus setting. The campus will include access for the community to high quality facilities including learning, sports, leisure, community and library accommodation. The proposal ensures that local nursery provision and other services can continue to be sustained in the village for the long term.

The impact of the proposed new campus on existing facilities will be considered as part of the design development process of the project and will include further stakeholder engagement.

##### **7.3 Transport**

Although there is no direct impact on the transport arrangements for children, some improvements will be made to the road infrastructure within the village as part of the community campus project.