

Inverurie Community Campus

St. Andrews School – Proposed Relocation

Consultation with Inverurie Academy School Council (19 January 2017)

In attendance:

- Inverurie Academy School Council
- Mark Jones, Head Teacher, Inverurie Academy, Aberdeenshire Council
- John Macleod, Project Manager, Aberdeenshire Council
- Anne-Marie Davies, Quality Improvement Manager (ASN), Aberdeenshire Council

1. Introductions

2. Overview of Proposals:

- Location & Orientation
- Layout & Internal Design
- Access to 'Academy' Teaching Spaces
- Indicative External Views
- Outdoor Teaching Spaces

3. Discussion – What do you think?

Officers emphasised the importance of pupils, as key stakeholders, having a voice in the process and decision-making.

Officers then followed by confirming that School Council members and wider pupil forum had received the information regarding the proposed relocation, including an email with links to the proposal document and links to the survey monkey.

School Council members confirmed that the information had been disseminated through the school/pupil email addresses, and that they were planning to liaise with House and registration groups as per their usual engagement processes.

School Council members have had their own discussions regarding the new campus and an issue around the need to preserve the identity of Inverurie Academy came up. They would be keen to ensure this is not lost in any co-location.

Officers emphasised the importance to St Andrew's School parents/carers of the need to retain St Andrew's School identity. In fact, this was a key consideration for them. As this involves a co-location of 2 schools, both schools would retain their identity to ensure a sense of belonging. Rather the

ambition was to bring the 2 school communities together within 'something larger than themselves'.

Officers also gave examples of other community campus models, where 2 schools had worked with other co-located services to develop a campus identity, including a campus badge. It was also explained that a campus stakeholder group would be developed to ensure such issues were appropriately considered and the School Council would have a key voice in this.

School Council members suggested they knew of friends and family who had family members at St Andrew's School and were aware there was a high level of feeling/anxiety about the proposed relocation.

Officers acknowledged that such concerns were also being expressed by some staff and parent/carers at St Andrew's School.

School Council members indicated that in general terms they felt the pupil body would be largely positive about the co-location, although they did recognise there may be issues about bringing together diverse groups and different communities for the first time.

School Council highlighted the importance of planning to bring together pupil groups before any relocation / co-location actually happened. This could involve joint school events/celebrations, or joint school trips.

Officers suggested that perhaps officers and pupils could work together to identify opportunities for pupils from the 2 communities to come together and work to develop aspects of the school design. For example, there might be an opportunity for a project group to work with the landscape architects to design some of the outdoor spaces. School Council agreed to discuss at future meetings what other opportunities there might be.

Officers identified some of the concerns raised by parents/carers of St Andrew's pupils, including issues around possible exposure through social media, and bullying. In particular, there were concerns about outdoor space being overlooked and a request to screen these off.

School Council members indicated that they did not feel this would be an issue. Most pupils would never consider such a thing, and those that did would be responded to by their pupil peers or if necessary by school managers. The school management is strong on messages about acceptable use of social media.

School Council members felt that screening off outdoor spaces would create more issues than it solved. "If you hide something people become more intrigued". School Council members also suggested that the whole point of colocation was to bring people together not to keep them apart. It would also be important to educate all parties coming together, to be sensitive to the needs of others.

School Council members asked about how opportunities for integration and inclusion might look in terms of organisation and arrangement. They had observed groups of St Andrew's School pupils coming to access learning/teaching spaces at the academy, supported by teachers and PSAs.

Officers agreed that this was already happening, but only to a limited extent and involved groups/classes of pupils accessing specific rooms i.e. science labs when not in use by the school. While it is anticipated this will continue, there would be increased opportunities through liaison between both school management teams, particularly as the new academy was being built with a capacity of 1600 in mind, some 600 more pupils than were currently on the roll. Further state-of-the-art drama studios, music rooms and science labs would enhance the experiences of St Andrew's groups/classes being taught at the academy.

Officers also emphasised that through individual planning, certain St Andrew's School pupils would be able to join academy classes, course and programmes where appropriate. For example, some Senior Phase classes provide for learning at National 3, National 4 and National 5. There would be individual St Andrew's School pupils who have particular aptitudes in particular curricular areas, and it is important to ensure there have the relevant opportunities to learn.

Officer also emphasised that this would also be relevant for academy pupils, who could join specialist programmes (independence skills, social/communication skills) or indeed National 1 or National 2 programmes/courses at St Andrew's School. The proposal was about co-locating 2 schools to bring down barriers for individual pupils to participate in the level of learning most appropriate to them.

Officers identified further possible benefits around co-location of services, including access to NHS Child Development Team. One School Council member thought that this would provide good opportunities for work experience, as well as a positive impact for children who needed to access physiotherapy etc

Officers reminded School Council members of the opportunity to either make a written submission and/or to complete the Survey Monkey

4. Next Steps & Further Consultation

- School Council to have conversations with House Captains to feedback to House Councils and registration groups, to gather any feedback or further queries
- School Council to discuss what other opportunities there might be.
- School Council to identify whether a further meeting to discuss points raised is required

5. Close

Officers thanked the School Council members for their time and attention, and indicated that all of the drawings which were presented, along with the Statutory Consultation document, can be viewed on the Aberdeenshire Council website at: <https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/schools/education-consultations/>