

St Joseph's RC Primary School and Broomhouse Primary School accommodation

Education, Children and Families Committee

15 March 2011

1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to propose a solution to the accommodation issues in St Joseph's RC Primary School and Broomhouse Primary School for implementation in August 2011.

2 Summary

- 2.1 No consensus was achieved at the Special Committee meeting on 27 April 2010 on the recommended accommodation switch between Broomhouse Primary School and St Joseph's RC Primary School.

- 2.2 The Education, Children and Families Committee decided:

- a) to acknowledge the divided opinion which still existed in relation to this issue;
- b) to instruct the Director of Children and Families to implement team teaching arrangements in St Joseph's RC Primary School at P1 for the 2010/11 school year on the basis that intake numbers had fallen to a level, at which this can be delivered;
- c) to recognise that the accommodation issue was expected to arise each year and that a permanent solution was still required;
- d) to instruct the Director of Children and Families to seek a determination from Scottish Ministers regarding whether or not either sections 22c or 22d of the Education (Scotland) Act would apply to any proposals to change the accommodation; and
- e) to ask the school management teams and communities of St Joseph's RC Primary School and Broomhouse Primary School to work together in conjunction with the Children and Families Department to identify a solution to the accommodation issues for implementation in August 2011:

and to request a further report on this matter early in 2011,

3 Main report

- 3.1 Since April 2010, the Director of Children and Families has implemented team teaching arrangements in St Joseph's RC Primary School at the P1 stage;
- 3.2 The Director requested from Ministers a determination of relevance under Education (Scotland) Act 1980 sections 22C and 22D to accommodation options for St Joseph's RC Primary School and Broomhouse Primary Schools.

Scottish Ministers have indicated that they are only able to intervene or grant a request for determination under sections 22C and 22D of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 once the Council have agreed a definite way forward. Once this has happened, should there be a disagreement between the City of Edinburgh Council and the Catholic Church over the chosen option, Scottish Ministers could then be approached to decide whether a determination of sections 22C and 22D of the Education (Scotland) Act was appropriate; and officers have had further discussions with all stakeholders in an attempt to identify a solution

- 3.3 The Committee, in April 2010, rejected option 1 to switch accommodation, and discussions have therefore focussed on the other 2 options.
- 3.4 Option 2 is to share accommodation between St Joseph's RC Primary School and Broomhouse Primary School where both schools would remain in their current locations within the building, and the southern wing of the school, presently used by Broomhouse Primary School, would be shared equally to provide accommodation for both schools, alongside Whinpark. The Big Project would remain in its current location in the western wing of Broomhouse Primary School.
- 3.5 Option 3 is to cap intake for St Joseph's RC Primary School where the school's accommodation remains unchanged and the intake is restricted, with priority given, in the first instance, to pupils who are baptised Roman Catholic.
- 3.6 Meetings have been undertaken from October 2010, with the two Head Teachers, with the Church representative (who indicated a preference for a switch of accommodation but also acknowledging the need for flexibility to maintain harmony in the local community), and with senior officials in Children and Families, to identify a mutually acceptable solution to the accommodation issues for implementation in August 2011. Also, meetings between council officers and parents were arranged by school management on 8 February 2011. 29 parents attended an open meeting in St Joseph's RC Primary School, and a separate meeting took place on the same evening with the Parent Council members of Broomhouse Primary School.
- 3.7 The objective of these discussions between parents, school staff and Children and Families staff, has been to arrive at an achievable solution which would maintain harmony in the schools and the community.
- 3.8 After further discussion, on 8 February 2011 with both sets of parents, the position remains that Broomhouse wants to share accommodation as their first preference, and St Joseph's wants to switch, as their first preference.

St Joseph's parents said their views are not faith based, but they want equality and fairness for the children, in terms of more classroom space to grow and accommodate pupils who want to attend, as the 'school is bursting at the seams'. They stated that capping penalises St Joseph's and proposed another option that St Joseph's use the whole southern wing.

Broomhouse Parent Council on 8 February 2011 were 'keen not to open old wounds', but while they do not want to switch accommodation, they have a real commitment to sharing accommodation. They do not want to lose their valuable resources, Big Project and Whinpark, which give pupils much needed valuable support. They want to work together to break down barriers between the adults of both communities. They also did not want St. Joseph's to have to cap intake at P1.

4 Pupil intake 2011/2012 based on present facilities

- 4.1 St Joseph's RC Primary School currently has 45 registered catchment pupils for the August 2011 Primary 1 intake. Eleven of these pupils have requested other schools and four are likely to be successful. Early indications are that two pupils may defer entry and this leaves an estimated balance of 39 catchment pupils. The school can accommodate a maximum intake of 33 pupils (one class of 25 pupils and a P1/2 composite eight P1/17 P2) based on its current accommodation.
- 4.2 As the school would be unable to accommodate all of its catchment pupils, the prioritisation of baptised Roman Catholics into the school will be necessary. The Department has already issued catchment enrolment forms to parents to collect evidence of baptism.
- 4.3 Broomhouse Primary School currently has 26 registered catchment pupils for the August 2011 Primary 1 intake. Seven of these pupils have requested other schools and three are likely to be successful. Early indications are that two pupils may defer entry and this leaves an estimated balance of 21 pupils. All catchment pupils and the three placing requests into Broomhouse Primary School could be accommodated within a maximum P1 intake of 25 pupils.

5 Accommodation Options

5.1 Option 1 - To share accommodation

In this option, both schools would remain in their current locations and the southern wing of the current Broomhouse accommodation would be shared to provide accommodation for both schools alongside the Forrester cluster facility, Whinpark. The community facility, the Big Project, would remain in its current location, in Broomhouse Primary's west wing.

The southern wing of the building would be split. Classes on the eastern side of the central avenue would be occupied by St Joseph's classes while those on the western side would be occupied by Broomhouse. There would be no physical partition.

This option would ensure that Broomhouse has a capacity of 10 classrooms and two general purposes spaces plus the activity space in the avenue areas. It is anticipated that Broomhouse would operate with an eight class organisation. St Joseph's would have capacity of 11 class rooms and three general purpose rooms, plus the activity space in avenue areas.

It is anticipated that in August 2011, St Joseph's will operate with 10 class organisation should option 1 be adopted.

This arrangement would result in a shared 'avenue' and activity space between the classrooms; shared toilet facilities and separate entrances/exits.

Each school would continue to have its own uniform and its own colours. Broomhouse pupils would continue to be taught exclusively by Broomhouse staff and St Joseph's pupils exclusively by St Joseph's staff. Amalgamated classes are not proposed.

Currently, the southern wing contains four classrooms on its western side and two classrooms, a library, a general purpose space and Whinpark on its eastern side. A broad activity and circulation avenue runs through the centre. This area is served by infant sized toilets and accordingly would be suitable for early years pupils.

Under the shared accommodation option, the eastern side of the southern wing (the side closest to St Joseph's RC Primary School) would provide St Joseph's with 4 additional classrooms.

The west side would provide Broomhouse with 4 rooms. The Big Project would remain on the east side to be used by the Forrester cluster, including both schools.

This option costs one additional teacher and would incur costs in the region of £7,800 mostly for IT works.

5.2 Option 2 - To switch accommodation

The proposed accommodation switch option was not supported by Committee on 27 April 2010.

This option would give St Joseph's 13 rooms and three general purpose rooms, plus the central activity avenue to share.

Broomhouse would be allocated 8 classrooms and 2 general purpose rooms, plus the central activity avenue to share. Whinpark and the Big Project will remain in their present locations.

This option would incur costs of £20,000 for essential works, plus an additional £15,000 for desirable works, and one additional teacher.

This option remains the preferred option for the St Joseph's parents who attended the meeting in school on 8 February 2011. Broomhouse parents did not support this option.

It is anticipated that in August 2011, St Joseph's will operate with 10 class organisation should option 1 be adopted.

Classes	Numbers of pupils
P1	20
P1	19
P2	23
P2	24
P3	30
P4	17
P4	18

P5	29
P6	18/7
P7	32

5.3 Option 3 - to cap P1 intake in St Joseph's

To maintain the accommodation status quo for both schools, it would be necessary to cap P1 intake at 33 pupils in St Joseph's RC Primary School.

Both parent bodies were against this option, however, Committee will be aware that capping is an approach we take elsewhere with denominational schools when catchment numbers exceed capacity.

- 5.4 The conclusion reached in discussions between the Head Teachers and departmental officers is that sharing accommodation is the most viable option in light of the opposition to the switch of accommodation and capping P1, and the need to maintain harmony with the schools and the community. It should be noted however that St Joseph's parents still take the view that the switch of accommodation is the preferable approach

6 Shared development work

- 6.1 Shared development work undertaken together by the Head Teachers of Broomhouse and St Joseph's RC Primary Schools on the shared accommodation option for implementation in August 2011 has established the following:

- a) Broomhouse and St Joseph's have joined in with the Forrester Cluster Primary Schools and are fully involved with the Whinpark Inclusion Base;
- b) St Joseph's RC Primary School has a resource room in Broomhouse Primary School allowing St Joseph's RC Primary School to have a general purpose room in its own wing used for teaching music and drama;
- c) both schools enjoy a shared Friday playtime. Senior management teams from both schools assist in the supervision of the children during this time;
- d) shared assemblies and gatherings take place on a limited basis, but are successful and will continue;
- e) a Community Arts Project worked in the playground, where both Pupil Councils worked together to build a living willow sculpture for all to enjoy;
- f) both depute head teachers are working on a shared tracking system to progress the Curriculum for Excellence, and are sharing thoughts and ideas regarding work involving GLOW;
- g) both schools are taking part in a joint training session on effective information communications technology (ICT) use through an external company; and
- h) there are joint football, netball and basketball teams for the pupils.

- 6.2 The Head Teachers from St Joseph's and Broomhouse have discussed the sharing option and agreed that, should it be implemented:

- a) Shared accommodation in the southern wing is considered suitable for Early Years pupils because the facilities, such as toilets as designed for purpose;
- b) The pupils from St Joseph's will use the entrance/exit at the end of the southern wing;

- c) Iconography will be displayed in St Joseph's class rooms in the shared wing;
- d) St Joseph's library will remain as St Joseph's and Broomhouse library will remain as Broomhouse;
- e) Whinpark to remain in its current location; and
- f) Shared Friday playtime agreed.

7 Financial Implications

7.1 Costs of Option 1 - shared accommodation

The costs to have the shared wing prepared for classrooms, which both schools will use while maximising the technology resources already there, and bringing in new resources where required are £7,800 plus one additional teacher.

7.2 Costs of Option 2 - switch accommodation

This is for a full switch of all accommodation, and provides St Joseph's with 13 classrooms and three general purpose rooms, plus the central activity avenues.

Broomhouse with the smaller roll would have eight classrooms and two general purpose rooms, plus the central activity area, which is also considered to contribute to the general purpose provision. A budget of £20,000 would be required for essential work, to allow each school to operate, and additional desirable works are estimated to cost £15,000, plus one additional teacher.

7.3 Option 3 - Cap intake

There are no additional cost implications.

8 Environmental Impact

There is no environmental impact.

9 Equality Impact

There is no equality impact.

10 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to approve the proposal to share accommodation as set out in 5.1 of this report from August 2011.

Gillian Tee
Director of Children and Families

Appendices	Plan: Appendix 1
Contact/tel	David Wright 0131 469 3413 / Eilish Garland Munro 0131 469 3399
Wards affected	Ward 7: Sighthill/Gorgie
Single Outcome Agreement	Supports National Outcome 15-Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs Supports Local Outcome- Our services are continually improving and efficient
Background Papers	Strategic Management of School Places P1 and S1 Intakes for August 2010 Report- Children and Families Committee 18 March 2010 Options to address accommodation at Broomhouse and St Joseph's RC Schools Report – Education, Children and Families 27 April 2010

ST Joseph's and Broomhouse Option

