



Midlothian Council
Children, Young People and Partnerships
Directorate

Statutory Consultation Report

**Report on the outcome of the consultation on the
Proposal to establish a new Additional Support
Needs (ASN) stage at Loanhead Primary School.**

18 August 2025.

This Consultation Proposal has been issued by Midlothian Council in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

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Midlothian Council

Children, Young People and Partnerships Directorate

This report has been prepared following a statutory consultation on the following proposal:

Proposed establishment of a new Additional Support Needs (ASN) stage at Loanhead Primary School.

Subject to the outcome of the consultation:

- A new Additional Support Needs (ASN) stage will be established at Loanhead Primary School;
- The ASN stage will be under the leadership of the Head Teacher of Loanhead Primary School;

The following schools are directly affected by this proposal:

- Loanhead Primary School

The following schools will be indirectly affected by the proposal:

- There are no schools indirectly affected by the proposal.

Having had regard (in particular) to:

- a) Relevant written representations received by the Council (from any person) during the consultation period
- b) Oral representations made to it (by any person) at the public meeting which was held on 7 May 2025
- c) Any representations made to it by Parent Councils
- d) Oral representations made to it at the virtual public drop-in session on 1 May 2025
- e) Oral representations made to it by pupils
- f) Education Scotland's report on the proposal

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In 2021/2022, Midlothian Council's Education Service undertook a comprehensive review of the provisions for children and young people with additional support needs. This review resulted in several changes across the learning estate, aimed at expanding and improving the range and quality of support available. These changes were crucial to meet the increasing demand for such provisions.
- 1.2 In response to the pandemic's impact, it became essential to maximise all available space. This, combined with the rising level of need, led to the decision to temporarily host the Treehouse Provision and Hawthornden Provision at St Margaret's Primary School for up to three years. This arrangement ensured that the increased demand for support could be met effectively within the available facilities.

- 1.3 To facilitate this initiative, temporary hosting arrangements and accommodations were established for Midlothian's Inclusion & Wellbeing Services. This included relocating the Treehouse Provision from Gore Glen Primary School and the Hawthornden Provision from Hawthornden Primary School to the now closed St Margaret's Primary School.
- 1.4 Previous discussions with the Leader of Learning for St Margaret's Primary School and the former Headteacher of Loanhead Primary School confirmed that both provisions could be accommodated within some of the former St Margaret's Primary School classrooms. This arrangement was agreed and that this would coincide with the existing Inclusion and Wellbeing Service provision already situated there.
- 1.5 The school was adapted to ensure that children remained in a safe and secure environment, receiving the appropriate support they needed. The former Leader of Learning and the Quality Improvement Officer for Inclusion & Wellbeing played a crucial role in this process, ensuring that the children were seamlessly integrated as part of the school. They worked closely together as a unified service, fostering greater opportunities for socialisation and collaboration among the children.
- 1.6 Currently, 16 children with additional support needs are currently being hosted in the former St Margaret's PS building. The Children have specialist staffing and access to equipment and resources that meet their needs and share facilities within the school.
- 1.7 The Head Teacher at Loanhead PS has overall responsibility for the leadership and management of the school, including the hosted ASN provision outlined above.
- 1.8 By formally establishing the ASN provision within Loanhead Primary School under the leadership of its Head Teacher, this will continue to ensure that children receive consistent, high-quality support in line with the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This approach will foster an inclusive environment where every child's right to education, protection, and development is upheld, thereby enhancing their overall well-being and educational success.
- 1.9 This is a Consultation Proposal prepared in compliance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 on the above proposal
- 1.10 The purpose of this report is to:
- Provide a record of the total number of written responses made during the Statutory Consultation period;
 - Provide a summary of the written responses;
 - Provide a summary of the oral representations made at the public meeting which was held on 7 May 2025.
 - Provide a statement of the Council's response to those written and oral representations;
 - Provide the full text of Education Scotland's report and a statement of the Council's response to this report;
 - State how the Council reviewed the above proposal following the representations received during the Statutory Consultation period and the report from Education Scotland;

- Provide details of any alleged omission from, or inaccuracy in, the Consultation Proposal Document and state how the Council acted upon it; and
- State how the Council has complied with Section 12 of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* when reviewing the above proposal.

2 Background

- 2.1 *The Education (Scotland) Act 1980* places a legislative duty on the Council to make adequate and efficient provision of school education across its area. This duty applies in respect of both the current school population and anticipated pattern of demand.
- 2.2 Section 3D of the *Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 (as inserted by Section 2 of the Education (Scotland) Act 2016)* introduces a requirement on education authorities to carry out their duty to ensure the delivery of improvement in the quality of school education which is provided in the schools they manage, with a view to achieving the strategic priorities of the National Improvement Framework. It is, therefore, the duty of the education authority to ensure that the education it provides is directed to the development of the personality, talents and the mental and physical abilities of the children to their fullest potential.
- 2.3 In addition, Councils have a statutory duty to secure best value in terms of the *Local Government in Scotland Act 2003* by continuous improvement in performance of the local authority's functions, while maintaining an appropriate balance between quality and cost and having regard to economy, efficiency, effectiveness, equal opportunities and the achievement of sustainable development.
- 2.4 The Council has a number of statutory duties relating to the provision of education in its area including the statutory consultation that must be undertaken when proposing a permanent change to any of their schools, including Nursery Schools, such as closure, relocation or change of catchment area. *The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* principal purpose is:
- “to provide strong, accountable statutory consultation practices and procedures that local authorities must apply to their handling of all proposals for school closures and other major changes to schools.”
- 2.5 This Proposal Document has been prepared in accordance with the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*, having regard to the statutory guidance published by the Scottish Government on 14 May 2015 and the complementary guidance published by Education Scotland (revised July 2023), which are available for reference at the following websites:

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act

2010: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2010/2/contents>

Statutory Guidance (14 May 2015): <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2015/05/4615>

Education Consultation Guidance for Local Authorities (revised July 2023):

<https://education.gov.scot/media/rh0jzhvo/external-schools-consultation-education-scotland-guide-for-local-authorities-july-2023.pdf>

The following information has also been used to prepare the report:

- Relevant written representations received by the Council (from any person) during the consultation period
- Oral representations made to it (by any person) at the public meeting which was held on 7 May 2025
- Any representations made to it by Parent Councils
- Oral representations made to it at the virtual public drop-in session on 1 May 2025
- Oral representations made to it by pupils
- Education Scotland's report on the proposal

Midlothian's Vision for Education

2.6 The Council is ambitious for the future of Midlothian. By working together as a Community Planning Partnership, individuals and communities will be able to lead healthier, safer, greener and successful lives by 2030. No child or household need live in poverty. Midlothian will be a Great Green Place to Grow by achieving our net zero carbon ambitions

2.7 Our outcomes for the next 5 years are:

- Individuals and communities have improved health and learning outcomes
- No child or household living in poverty
- Significant progress is made towards net zero carbon emissions by 2030

2.8 We continue to aspire to deliver a world-class education system through equity and excellence. Our vision is to provide the highest quality inclusive education, learning and employability service for all individuals and families in Midlothian. To realise this vision we will support the priorities set out in the Single Midlothian Plan, Getting it Right for Every Child and will:

- give all our children the best possible start in life, providing an inclusive learning environment that builds resilience;
- ensure that every young person has the opportunity to be a successful learner, confident individual, responsible citizen and an effective contributor who is healthy and happy, especially those who are care experienced;
- work with our communities to promote high expectations which deliver the best educational outcomes for all learners; and
- Celebrate diversity, reduce inequalities and remove barriers to learning.

2.9 The following core principles are to be embedded into Midlothian Council's Learning Estate and underpin the proposals for formally establishing an ASN stage within Loanhead PS.

- Promoting excellence and equity by delivering a more equitable distribution in learning opportunities by ensuring that every one of our children has the right to aim for excellence and to attain excellence in multiple ways;

- Interrupting the cycle of poverty by school hubs having a role at the heart of their community to help address the inequalities that reduce life chances;
 - Getting it right for every Midlothian child by utilising the school estate to deliver early intervention strategies through, where possible, the co-location of services together with a family learning approach;
 - Taking a community-based approach to building schools which meet the needs of communities and enhance the lives of all those who live in those communities.
- 2.10 In short, we aspire to create a learning estate that enhances communities and at its heart supports children and young people through their learning journey from additional support needs, primary and secondary school, college or university to the world of employment, education or training equipped with the skills for life, work and learning both they and society will need to succeed in the growing global knowledge economy of the 21st century.
- 2.11 Midlothian's award-nominated Equipped for Learning project is the Council's £10.5 million investment in ensuring every learner has the digital skills and knowledge they need to thrive in learning, in life and in work. Delivered outcomes include:
- Equipping every school-age pupil with a device for learning
 - Upgrading wifi networks to provide fast and reliable internet access
 - Equipping every learning space with an interactive SMART panel
 - Establishing a Google Workspace tenancy for collaborative learning and teaching
- 2.12 Supporting children and young people with additional support needs requires effective partnership working. Midlothian's Digital Inclusion and Learning Team works closely with schools and partners to identify assistive technology that is bespoke and will meet learners' needs. The team works closely with Digital Services to overcome technical barriers where these arise, plans for improvement and facilitates quality training for pupils, families and staff to ensure assistive technology is used to its full potential.
- 2.13 Midlothian's partnership with Texthelp has brought accessibility tools to every learner in Midlothian through the Read&Write toolbar. 90.7% of pupils and staff now regularly use key tools such as text to speech, screen reader, translate and interactive dictionaries, direct from their device. This work, provided alongside boots-on-the-ground support in all schools and settings, has reduced referrals for assistive technology by 90.6% in the last eighteen months.
- 2.14 Midlothian has also secured a world-first Free for Families offer that will see every Midlothian family able to download the Read&Write toolbar at home on up to five devices, free of charge.
- 2.15 Midlothian Council is committed to establishing a permanent provision for primary-aged children with additional support needs (ASN) within Loanhead Primary School. This initiative aims to create a dedicated and nurturing environment where children can receive tailored support to meet their individual needs. The proposed provision will continue to offer high-quality educational experiences, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.
- 2.16 Under the leadership of the Head Teacher at Loanhead Primary School, the ASN provision will adhere to the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights

of the Child (UNCRC). This commitment guarantees that children's rights to education, protection, and development are upheld, fostering an inclusive atmosphere that promotes their overall well-being and educational success.

- 2.17 The permanent ASN provision will include the required facilities and resources to support children with additional support needs. These enhancements will ensure that children have access to the necessary tools and environments to facilitate their learning and growth. By integrating this provision within Loanhead Primary School, Midlothian Council aims to provide consistent, high-quality support that aligns with best practices in inclusive education.
- 2.18 Furthermore, the establishment of this permanent provision will address the increasing demand for ASN services within the community. It will offer a stable and supportive setting where children can build meaningful relationships, develop essential skills, and achieve their full potential. Midlothian Council's dedication to this initiative reflects its ongoing commitment to improving educational outcomes for all children, particularly those with additional support needs.
- 2.19 The additional support needs provision will be located on the ground floor of Loanhead Primary School within three classes each with access to a secure outside space, social and multipurpose atrium areas, and a sensory/social room.

3 Considerations

- 3.1 The main considerations relating to the proposed establishment of an Additional Support Needs (ASN) stage at Loanhead Primary School are fully explained in the Consultation Proposal Document. The main points are highlighted below:
- The responsibilities associated with the National Improvement Framework and the new duties imposed on Education Authorities by the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 as amended by the 2016 Act.
 - The agreed principles underpinning the development of an empowered school led system set out in the 'Education Bill Policy Ambition- Joint Agreement', June 2018 <https://www.gov.scot/Publications/2018/06/8745/downloads>
 - The duties placed on local authorities in relation to the adequate and efficient provision of school education in their area
 - The duties placed on local authorities to secure best value in the delivery of services

4 The Consultation Process

- 4.1 The Council has met the requirements set out in the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* with regards to ensuring the views of the community were listened to and their views are included in this report. In order to further ensure compliance with the Act, an independent consultant was engaged to chair all meetings to ensure impartiality.

The Council believes that this report accurately reflects the views of the community, which have been gathered through a range of engagement events and response mechanisms.

It is for members of Midlothian Council to decide to adopt the proposal, withdraw it or seek to consult on another proposal.

4.2 Notification of the consultation was given to all statutory consultees prior to the commencement of the consultation.

4.3 The Consultation Proposal Document was published on Midlothian Council's website on 2 April 2025 and paper copies distributed on 2 April 2025 to:

- Loanhead Primary School, 34 Edgefield Road, Loanhead EH20 9DY
- Loanhead Library, The Loanhead Centre, George Avenue, Loanhead, EH20 9LA
- Midlothian House, 40 – 46 Buccleuch Street, Dalkeith, EH22 1DN

4.4 Copies of an information leaflet on the consultation were emailed to affected consultees (see list below) and schools and others on 28 March 2025.

4.5 Affected consultees:

- The pupils attending Loanhead Primary School
- The pupils attending the additional support needs provision
- The Parent Council of Loanhead Primary School
- The parents / carers of pupils and children expected to attend Loanhead Primary School within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper
- The staff employed by the Council and based at Loanhead Primary School
- The Trade Union and Professional Associations Representatives of the above staff
- The Community Council of Loanhead and District
- Community Planning Partnership

4.6 The consultation period commenced on Wednesday 02 April 2025 and lasted until Monday 02 June 2025 being a period of eight weeks, which also included the statutory minimum 30 school days.

4.7 The proposal on which the consultation took place was:

- The proposal to establish a new Additional Support Needs (ASN) stage at Loanhead Primary School.

4.8 The requirements for consulting on a relevant proposal relating to schools are set out in the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*.

4.9 An information leaflet setting out details about the proposal and consultation meetings was issued to the consultees listed in the Consultation Proposal Document. Advice on where the complete Consultation Proposal Document could be obtained was included and was published on Midlothian Council's Consultation Hub:

<https://midlothiancouncil.citizenspace.com/education/loanhead-asn-consultation>

4.10 If requested, copies of the proposal would have been made available in alternative formats or translated for readers whose first language is not English.

- 4.11 In addition the consultation was publicised and received engagement in the following ways:
- There were 09 Facebook posts: Best performing Facebook post reached 25,460 news feeds and 2,669 people engaged with the post.
 - There were 09 X posts (formerly known as Twitter): Best performing Twitter post achieved 618 impressions with 21 engagements.
 - Midlothian Council website consultation page had 14 views.
 - The consultation was pushed during Council news slots on a local radio station.
- 4.12 A generic email account was set up by the Council to receive representations and enquiries on the proposal.
- 4.13 A public meeting was held at Loanhead Primary School on 7 May 2025 at 6:30pm.
- 4.14 In addition, a virtual drop-in session via MS Teams was offered on 1 May 2025, which members of the public and staff were welcome to attend and there were no attendees.
- 4.15 In accordance with statutory requirements, the following persons, including those indirectly affected, were consulted:
- The pupils attending Loanhead Primary School.
 - The pupils attending the additional support needs provision
 - The Parent Council of Loanhead Primary School
 - The parents / carers of pupils and children expected to attend Loanhead Primary School within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper
 - The staff employed by the Council and based at Loanhead Primary School
 - The Trade Union and Professional Associations Representatives of the above staff
 - The Community Council of Loanhead and District
 - Community Planning Partnership
- 4.16 The following schools are directly affected by the proposal:
- Loanhead Primary School.
- 4.17 Representations were sought from statutory consultees and the wider public in the following ways:
- An online questionnaire on Midlothian Council's Citizen Space Consultation Page. The questionnaire asked a specific question and enabled general comments and views to be entered.
 - Digital leaflets, Council web and social media announcements linked to the Consultation Page. These detailed a specific Education Consultations email inbox, to which any queries could be submitted during the consultation period.
 - All Midlothian Council Head Teachers used established methods of communication to engage/remind parents about the consultation.
 - The Council consulted with children and young people potentially affected by this proposal by holding a Pupil Voice session.

4.18 The Consultation Proposal is the Council's response to the points raised during the consultation period on the Consultation Proposal Document.

4.19 This Consultation Proposal will be published for a period of three weeks before a final decision is taken by Midlothian Council on 09 September 2025.

5 The Public Meetings

5.1 A public meeting was held at Loanhead Primary School on 7 May 2025 at 6:30pm.

6 Responses to the Consultation Exercise

6.1 As part of the consultation process, the Council sought the views of a wide range of stakeholders. The Council provided stakeholders with a short online or paper questionnaire and also made arrangements for receiving additional written responses. The Council received 114 responses to its questionnaire during the consultation period. All representations that had been made during the consultation period were submitted to Education Scotland and any issues or concerns raised are also subject to the Council's response in this Consultation Proposal.

The questionnaire responses are summarised by category in the following tables:

Table 1 – Number of respondents by type of respondent

Type of Respondent	No. of Responses	% of Responses
Organisations	0	0%
Individuals	111	98%
Not Answered	3	2%
Total Responses	114	100%

**Numbers are shown to the single decimal point and therefore may not add exactly to 100 in this form.*

Table 2 – Number of respondents by category

Individual Respondent	No. of Responses	% of Responses
Parents	68	60%
Staff	22	19%
Member of Local Community	15	13%
Other/Unknown	9	8%
Total Responses	114	100%

**The total number of respondents differs from the number of respondents by category because some respondents identified with more than one category.*

- 6.2 For the Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to establish an ASN stage at Loanhead Primary School? The responses were as follows:

Table 3 – Number of Responses by Opinion

Response	No. of Responses	% of Responses
Strongly Agree	61	54%
Agree	10	8%
No Opinion	4	3%
Disagree	14	12%
Strongly Disagree	24	21%
Not Answered	1	1%
Total Responses	114	100%

**Numbers are shown to the single decimal point and therefore may not add exactly to 100 in this form.*

Table 4 - Number of respondents by category

Respondents	Agree/Strongly Agree	Disagree/Strongly Disagree	No opinion/Not answered
Parents	35	34	1
Staff	10	2	3
Member of Local Community	21	1	0
Other/Unknown	5	1	1
Total Responses	71	38	5

**The total number of respondents differs from the number of respondents by category because some respondents identified with more than one category.*

- 6.3 For the Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to place the new ASN stage under the leadership of the Head Teacher of Loanhead Primary School? The responses were as follows:

Table 5 – Number of Responses by Opinion

Response	No. of Responses	% of Responses
Strongly Agree	37	32%
Agree	21	18%
No Opinion	7	6%
Disagree	16	14%
Strongly Disagree	32	28%
Not Answered	1	1%
Total Responses	114	100%

**Numbers are shown to the single decimal point and therefore may not add exactly to 100 in this form.*

Table 6 - Number of respondents by category

Respondents	Agree/Strongly Agree	Disagree/Strongly Disagree	No opinion/Not answered
Parents	29	37	4
Staff	7	7	1
Member of Local Community	18	2	2
Other/Unknown	4	2	1
Total Responses	58	48	8

**The total number of respondents differs from the number of respondents by category because some respondents identified with more than one category.*

- 6.4 The comments made as part of the questionnaire submissions are included in Appendix 1, apart from submissions which consultees did not wish Midlothian Council to share publicly. Even if a submission is not shared publicly, it has still been included in the collation of stakeholder's views and informed the Education Authority's response as detailed in Section 10 of this report.

Response Analysis from Organisations

- 6.5 There were 0 responses from organisations.

Public Meeting

- 6.6 A public meeting was held at Loanhead Primary School on 7 May 2025 at 6:30pm.
- 6.7 Additionally, a virtual drop-in session was arranged for 1 May 2025, enabling any member of the public and staff to ask questions and discuss the proposal, the consultation process and how they could make representations. No one attended this session.

Pupils and Staff

- 6.8 During the consultation period, Council officers facilitated a pupil voice session with pupils from both the ASN provision and mainstream classes at Loanhead Primary School, as part of the consultation on the proposal to establish an ASN stage.
- 6.9 A copy of the information leaflet and a link to the consultation page was sent to all staff, inviting them to respond to the consultation via the online survey and highlighting the consultation mailbox for any queries.

7 Support for the Proposal

- 7.1 71 of all questionnaire respondents (114 responses) to the consultation were in favour of the proposal to establish an ASN at Loanhead Primary School.

The full text of all responses received can be read in Appendix 1, apart from submissions which consultees did not wish Midlothian Council to share publicly. Even if a submission is not shared publicly, it has still been included in the collation of stakeholder's views and informed the Education Authority's response as detailed in Section 10 of this report.

7.2 A number of common points and questions emerged from the responses as follows:

- Safety and wellbeing of children
- Adequacy of staffing and support
- Impact of the ASN provision on Loanhead Primary School
- Need for specialised leadership for ASN
- Questions about integration, resources, and facility suitability

8 Opposition to the Proposal

8.1 38 of all questionnaire respondents (114 responses) to the consultation were not in favour of the proposal to establish an ASN stage at Loanhead Primary School.

The full text of all responses received can be read in Appendix 1, apart from submissions which consultees did not wish Midlothian Council to share publicly. Even if a submission is not shared publicly, it has still been included in the collation of stakeholder's views and informed the Education Authority's response as detailed in Section 10 of this report.

8.2 A number of common points and questions emerged from the responses as follows:

- Disruption caused by the ASN provision
- Lack of resources or staffing
- Concerns about leadership capacity
- Impact on learning environment

9 No Opinion on the Proposal

9.1 05 respondents indicated that they had no opinion on the proposal to establish an ASN stage at Loanhead Primary School.

10 Education Authority Response to the Main Issues Raised

10.1 Safety and wellbeing of children

Midlothian Council is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children in its care. The ASN provision at Loanhead Primary School is designed with safeguarding at its core, including secure access points, supervised transitions, and staff trained in de-escalation and trauma-informed practices. Risk assessments are regularly reviewed, and any incidents are addressed promptly in line with the Council's child protection and wellbeing policies.

10.2 Adequacy of Staffing and Support

This provision is staffed according to SNCT guidance regarding ratio for Additional Support Needs Provisions. Currently the staffing model is maximum class size of six

children with one class teacher and two support staff - one youth worker and one learning assistant.

10.3 Impact of the ASN Provision on Loanhead Primary School

The integration of the ASN provision is intended to enhance the inclusive ethos of the school. While concerns have been raised about disruption, the Council is working closely with the school leadership to ensure that the provision operates in a way that supports all learners. This includes clear communication with families, shared use of facilities with appropriate scheduling, and ongoing monitoring of the impact on the wider school community.

10.4 Need for Specialised Leadership for ASN

Overall leadership of the provision falls under the remit of the head teacher of the school. Each provision is led and managed by a Principal Teacher with a specialism in ASN and is line managed by the Headteacher. The current Principal Teacher has several years of experience working with children with ASN. Strategic overview and support is provided by the ASN central team. The provision has links to a dedicated ASN Quality Improvement Officer, Education Support Officer and relevant ASN Networks within Midlothian Council.

10.5 Questions about Integration, Resources, and Facility Suitability

The ASN provision is part of the Council's wider Learning Estate Strategy, which aims to ensure that facilities are inclusive, accessible, and fit for purpose. The current site has been adapted to meet the needs of ASN learners, and further improvements are under consideration. Integration is supported through shared learning opportunities, while maintaining safe and structured environments for all pupils.

10.6 Disruption Caused by the ASN Provision

The Council takes concerns about disruption seriously. Measures have been implemented to minimise disruption, including staggered transitions, designated outdoor areas, and staff supervision. Behavioural incidents are managed through individualised support plans and restorative approaches, in line with Midlothian's inclusion and wellbeing frameworks.

10.7 Lack of Resources or Staffing

While staffing challenges can arise in any educational setting, particularly within Additional Support Needs (ASN) provision, Midlothian Council has established robust systems to manage and mitigate these effectively. Recruitment and staff absence is the responsibility of the Head Teacher. There are authority-wide processes to be followed when an issue arises. These processes ensure that any staffing issues are addressed promptly and consistently, maintaining continuity of support for learners.

10.8 Concerns about Leadership Capacity

The proposal to establish a new ASN stage at Loanhead Primary School under the leadership of the Head Teacher is supported by a robust leadership structure that

includes a Principal Teacher with significant experience and expertise in Additional Support Needs (ASN). This leadership capacity is critical to the success of the provision and aligns with Midlothian Council's strategic priorities for inclusive education.

10.9 Impact on Learning Environment

Creating a positive learning environment for all pupils is central to the Council's education strategy. The ASN provision is designed to complement the existing school environment, not detract from it. Ongoing dialogue with staff, pupils, and families will inform adjustments to ensure that the learning environment remains inclusive, respectful, and supportive for everyone.

11 Education Scotland Report

11.1 In accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, a report was produced by Education Scotland on the educational aspects of the proposal. The purpose of the report is to establish a new additional support needs (ASN) stage at Loanhead Primary School. The Education Scotland report can be read in full at Appendix 6.

11.2 In preparing this report, HM Inspectors undertook the following activities:

- attendance at the public meeting held on 7 May 2025 in connection with the council's proposals;
- consideration of all relevant documentation provided by the council in relation to the proposal, specifically the educational benefits statement and related consultation documents, written and oral submissions from parents and others, and;
- visit to the site of Loanhead Primary School, including discussion with relevant consultees.

11.3 The Summary section of the Education Scotland report summarises their findings and conclusions as follows:

HM Inspectors agree that there are potential educational benefits to this proposal. Loanhead Primary School has the capacity to accommodate the ASN stage. This will help the council meet the increasing demand for ASN provision. If the council proceeds with the proposal, it should be clearer about the enhancements required to support children to learn and grow. HM Inspectors believe that the school environment requires adaptations to meet all children's needs. This includes ensuring that the stated educational benefits outlined in the proposal reflects the experiences for children attending the ASN stage. It will be important that the council continues to work with staff to address their concerns and provide appropriate professional learning to ensure they have the required skills to support all children effectively. This includes providing appropriate professional learning and resources to better support children in the ASN stage and access to high quality therapeutic interventions.

Midlothian Council's Response to Education Scotland's Report

11.4 Midlothian Council welcomes the report by Education Scotland which highlights the benefits of the proposal and the Education Authority accepts its findings. Officers from the Education Authority met to consider the content of the report and the action highlighted in the summary.

11.5 In response to the findings contained within the Education Scotland report Midlothian has been asked to address the following points:

"If the council proceeds with the proposal, it is the view of HM Inspectors that the current school environment requires adaptations to meet the needs of all children. There is a need for the council to ensure that the educational benefits as outlined in the proposal reflect the educational experiences for all children attending the ASN stage. The council should be clearer about enhancements that are required to ensure children have access to necessary resources or adapted environments which they require. HM Inspectors recommend that the council should work with staff to provide appropriate resources to help children with their sensory needs or access to high quality therapeutic interventions".

11.6 If the proposal is approved, Midlothian Council is committed to working closely with staff across the ASN Inclusion and Wellbeing Team and the Loanhead Primary School ASN provision. Together, we will review the current learning environment and identify appropriate adaptations to ensure it continues to meet the diverse and evolving needs of all children. This will include consideration of enhancements to the physical and sensory environment within the ASN provision, as well as access to high-quality therapeutic interventions, where appropriate and based on individual needs. The Council will continue to engage with stakeholders to ensure every child receives the support they need to thrive in a safe, inclusive, and nurturing setting. Midlothian Council welcomes the feedback provided by HM Inspectors and acknowledges the importance of ensuring that the proposed changes deliver meaningful improvements for all children attending the ASN stage.

12 Transition Arrangements

12.1 It is proposed that there will be no change to the current process for referrals and the allocation of specialist primary support spaces.

12.2 An enhanced transition to secondary education will be offered to all children attending the ASN provision based on the individual needs of each child.

12.3 Children will be supported to transition to their catchment area secondary school.

12.4 Where a child's additional support needs continue to require additional specialist support, a referral will be made to the Education Resource Group and following assessment and consultation on their needs, they may be allocated specialist support in one of our provisions.

13 Alleged Omissions or Inaccuracies

13.1 *Section (10) (3) of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* also places a requirement on the Council to provide details of any inaccuracy or omission within the Consultation Proposal Document which has either been identified by the Council or

raised by consultees. This section of the 2010 Act also requires the Council to provide a statement on the action taken in respect of the inaccuracy or omission, or, if no action was taken, to state that fact and why.

13.2 One correction within the Consultation Proposal Document was identified by the Council following the consultation period. This can be found in Appendix 4.

13.3 The correction in the proposal consultation document Appendix 1, Page 21, occurred due to an administrative error and this was the only place this occurred in the documentation.

14 Compliance with Section 9(1) of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

14.1 Section 9(1) of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* states that:

After the Education Authority has received Education Scotland's report, the Authority is to review the relevant proposal having regard (in particular) to:

- (i) written representations received by the Authority (from any person) during the consultation period,
- (ii) oral representations made to it (by any person) at the public meeting,
- (iii) Education Scotland's report.

14.2 Following receipt of the Education Scotland report, 114 questionnaire responses received during the consultation period and consideration of oral representations made at a public meeting held during the consultation period, officers reviewed the proposal.

14.3 The feedback from the consultation was considered by relevant officers within the Council's Children, Young People and Partnership Directorate. Data and factual information was checked where required and advice and input was sought from other Council Services where needed to consider the issues raised. This ensured that the Council met the requirements of sections 9(1), 12 and 13(3) (b) of the 2010 Act.

15 Legal Issues

15.1 The Council has complied in full with the requirements of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* throughout this statutory consultation.

15.2 The Council is mindful of its duties in respect of equality under the *Equality Act 2010*, the *Public Sector Equality Duty 2011*, and the *Fairer Scotland Duty* (Part one of the Equality Act).

15.3 Under the terms of the *Schools (Scotland) (Consultation) Act 2010*, it is a legal requirement that the Council should not reach any formal decision without having reviewed the relevant proposal having regard, in particular, to:

- a) relevant written representations received from any person during the consultation period;
- b) oral representation made to it by any person at the public meetings held on;
- c) the Education Scotland report;
- d) preparing a Consultation Proposal; and

- e) waiting until a period of three weeks starting on the day on which this Consultation Report is published in electronic and printed form has expired.

15.4 As it is the intention that this Consultation Report should be published, both electronically and in paper form, if required, on 18 August 2025, this meets the statutory requirement to publish this report for more than three weeks before consideration of the proposal by Midlothian Council.

16 Personnel Implications

16.1 The proposed ASN provision will be led and managed overall by the Head Teacher at Loanhead Primary School.

16.2 The three classes within Loanhead Primary school will have a higher staff to child ratio than mainstream classes. The presence of a high-quality skilled leadership team, teaching and support staff will increase the expertise within our existing Loanhead Primary school. This expertise will allow the planning and delivery of differentiated curricular pathways that meet the needs of all children with a range of additional support needs.

16.3 The staffing levels will principally be determined by the number of children. The Education Resource Group will continue to allocate places to the specialist provision based on assessment of their needs in partnership with the Head Teacher.

16.4 If this proposal is implemented, the Council does not envisage any adverse effects from the proposal in respect of staffing. Should issues arise however, these will be mitigated through the Council's Education Leadership Team support structure.

16.5 It is acknowledged that should the proposal be approved and implemented, forward planning will be required from the Education Service as a matter of good management practice in ensuring the required staffing is in place. Staffing arrangements for the ASN provision will be consistent with Midlothian Council's recruitment policies and other local arrangements.

17 Environmental Issues

17.1 Overall there are no environmental impacts as a result of this proposal.

18 Conclusions

18.1 On the basis of the feedback received and taking account of the educational and social benefits of the proposal, it is concluded that:

- a) The Council believes that the measures proposed in this document will enhance provision for children with additional support needs in Midlothian;
- b) This proposal of establishing the ASN provision within Loanhead Primary School is educationally beneficial for several compelling reasons. It ensures that children with additional support needs receive consistent, high-quality

support in a familiar and stable environment, which is crucial for their emotional and academic development;

- c) The integration of ASN provision within Loanhead Primary School fosters inclusivity, allowing children to interact and build relationships with their mainstream peers, promoting social integration and a sense of community. The established leadership and specialised staff at Loanhead Primary School are well-equipped to provide tailored support, ensuring that each child's individual needs are met effectively.
- d) The continuity and stability are essential for fostering a conducive learning environment where children can thrive. Moving the provision elsewhere could disrupt these established relationships and support systems, potentially hindering the children's progress and well-being. Therefore, maintaining the ASN provision at Loanhead Primary School is the most beneficial option for the children's educational and social development, ensuring their right to a high-quality, inclusive education is upheld.
- e) This proposal will bring educational benefits to both current and future users of the additional support needs provision. It will ensure that children's learning experiences and achievements are consistently assessed and enhanced as needed, fostering continuous improvement and development.
- f) Overall, there are strong educational arguments in favour of this proposal.

19 Recommendations

19.1 It is recommended that the Council approves the following:

- The establishment of an Additional Support Needs (ASN) stage at Loanhead Primary School under the Leadership of the Headteacher at Loanhead Primary School.

Appendix 1 - Comments from Questionnaire Responses

Of the 114 questionnaire responses, 59 contained comments of which 103 declined permission to make their comments publicly available. However, their representations have been taken account of and responded to in Section 10 of the Consultation Proposal. The summary of comments below, were made from the remaining 11 responses who did not choose the option to decline permission to make their comments publicly available.

Comments
<p>"The school was adapted to ensure that children remained in a safe and secure environment, receiving the appropriate support they needed. The former Leader of Learning and the Quality Improvement Officer for Inclusion & Wellbeing played a crucial role in this process, ensuring that the children were seamlessly integrated as part of the school. They worked closely together as a unified service, fostering greater opportunities for socialisation and collaboration among the children."</p> <p>This can only be described as lies. The school was adapted only to keep the children attending the provision safe. Here was zero consideration to the nearly 200 pupils attending the adjoining school. These children are regularly subjected to verbal abuse, physical confrontation and lack of resources due to the need for prioritising staffing in the provision. They have had personal belonging ruined, all other toys etc taken away and hidden for fear of them being damaged or used as missiles and generally the school has become a ground for organised fighting, lack of respect for others including adults and unstable. There are daily occurrences of children from the provision kicking of in the main corridors, our children being "locked" in atriums and classes for their own safety, attacked with sticks in the playground. It is not safe and it is not a good environment for anyone. I have personally seen children from the provision "escape" over the fences, run away (requiring police involvement) and the staff, who don't ever seem to do anything except follow them, on phones to try and get help while out in public areas I have been walking my dogs. My Child's class has a PE lesson interrupted with a child from the provision who barged into he hall and attacked them with stones, another child from Loanhead Primary School was sent to the office for help with soe sort of emergency card system? There was and is no seamless integration, my child is terrified of the children in the provision. She feels and see them "doing what they want when we have to behave" . Any interaction she has had with them have been bad according to her and they have been racially abusive with no consequences (from my child's point of view)</p> <p>"15. Children are based in classrooms in the main school and have specialist staffing and access to equipment and resources that meet their needs. They share facilities with the school." – They are based in the old St Margaret's but run riot through the whole school, grounds and wider area.</p> <p>"By formally establishing the ASN provision within Loanhead Primary School under the leadership of its Head Teacher, this will continue to ensure that children receive consistent, high-quality support in line with the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This approach will foster an inclusive environment where every child's right to education, protection, and development is upheld, thereby enhancing their overall well-being and educational success." – Tell me how formal establishment will make any changes to the current situation? Will they get more funding, their own space and a private playground? If not, how will my child's current experience of the school change? Since the provision started the schools general behaviour has gone down massively, learning time has</p>

shortened, specialist input had all but gone, learning assistants seem to now only be for specific children.

- Promoting excellence and equity by delivering a more equitable distribution in learning opportunities by ensuring that every one of our children has the right to aim for excellence and to attain excellence in multiple ways; “ – All this has done is take away learning opportunities for our school and take away from attainment in multiple ways due to the locked down school, lack of staff and no freedom of movement
- Interrupting the cycle of poverty by school hubs having a role at the heart of their community to help address the inequalities that reduce life chances;” – Provision children are brought by taxi (which block the car park everyday!) from well out with our community to attend this provision. This hub, which will go ahead because let’s be honest this consultation is a hindsight paperwork exercise as per standard Midlothian council operating procedures, should service children in our community of Loanhead.
- Getting it right for every Midlothian child by utilising the school estate to deliver early intervention strategies through, where possible, the co location of services together with a family learning approach; “ – Their families do not live in this community and are happy in their own, I’m sure they’d love their child schooled closer to home. The families in Loanhead PS are not invited to be involved in anyway with even information about the Provision. We have had to push at every step to even be told what was happening. On top of this we have been given list of benefits to the 16 provision children and not one benefit to the 180 odd Loanhead children.
- Taking a community-based approach to building schools which meet the needs of communities and enhance the lives of all those who live in those communities” – again this provision does not host Loanhead children. The National strategy sets out ten guiding principles which are: • Learning environments should support and facilitate excellent joined up learning and teaching to meet the needs of all learners; - Having the provision means they currently do not but did before.
- Learning environments should support the wellbeing of all learners, meet varying needs to support inclusion and support transitions for all learners; - Having the provision means they currently do not but did before.
- The learning estate should be well-managed and maintained, making the best of existing resources, maximising occupancy, representing, and delivering best value; - Does, at a great expense in repairs I would presume.
- The condition and suitability of learning environments should support and enhance their function; - Having the provision means they currently do not but did before
- Learning environments should serve the wider community and where appropriate be integrated with the delivery of other public services in line with the place principle; - Having the provision means they currently do not but did before
- Learning environments should be greener, more sustainable, allow safe and accessible routes for walking, cycling and wheeling and be digitally enabled; - My child used to cycle to school daily but now can not because her bike was damaged 3 times by children from the provision (once with a staff member watching). I now drive her to school daily.

- Outdoor learning and the use of outdoor learning environments should be maximised; - We no longer have the staffing to be able to utilise the bing etc like we used to, my child has done zero outdoor learning in 2 years now.
- Good consultation about learning environments, direct engagement with learners and communities about their needs and experiences, and an involvement in decision making processes should lead to better outcomes for all; We had to fight VIA our parent council to be told anything
- Collaboration across the learning estate, and collaboration with partners in localities, should support maximising its full potential; and finally, - Probably does
- Investment in Scotland's learning estate should contribute towards improving learning outcomes and support sustainable and inclusive economic growth – Doesn't

The remaining pages of the document once again list ALL the benefits of the 16 children coming to the provision and don't once mention any to the children at Loanhead Primary...because as far as anyone can tell me there aren't any! Equality and inclusion for 16 children at the exclusion and inequality of the other 180 is not acceptable and should not be the final plan. There are other options not considered. I am strongly against this proposal as parent of a Loanhead primary school pupil.

I feel it is important to integrate and include students with additional support needs alongside other pupils of the same age group where possible. This is greatly beneficial to them later in life.

However it is important that adequate staffing for the pupils needs and extra resources (ie separate classrooms and break out areas if necessary) are available for this so that there is not disruption of other students. It may be more appropriate for the ASN service to be led by a deputy head specifically assigned to that area rather than directly by the head of the existing primary school

There are already enough challenging behaviour from the children in mainstream that need extra support and currently are not getting that. Along with other children who just need more learning support and again are currently not getting it.

We have all been told by the old head teacher last June that this is now permanent as the let has been extended and the new HT is already managing the whole place so this consultation seems pointless but hopefully all responses will be considered. The violence parents and pupils witness as a result of this provision is out of order. The children at Loanhead have their education reduced and their safety is not considered so therefore to state the UNCRC is not accurate as the Rights of the majority are not being met...just to include a few. This is not the legal definition of inclusion.

Loanhead primary is struggling with staff sickness, attendance, etc.. Adding an additional burden to the head is unfair.

There has been a trial of an ASN stage at the Ramsey campus with mixed results. I regularly hear that children have to be "on duty" to bring bikes into the school because otherwise the ASN children take them. This is hardly a safe learning space in action.

These children absolutely deserve an education! The same as all children.

My objection to the ASN Provision situated at Loanhead Primary School is as follows:

1) It is not a purpose built facility with the additional robust resources required for children and young people with serious behavioural and emotional distress. The council is not putting

additional funds into a school, which, already being managed by Skanska, is extremely difficult to get resources repaired or new ones put in (for example, the bike shelters have not had roofs for many, many years, with Skanska refusing to replace the roofs.

2) The current Head Teacher, new to LPS this year, already needs to prioritise rapid action to change the culture of LPS learners, parents and teaching staff, with a serious and disturbing decline in behaviour, teachers off long term sick, and LPS learners disturbed and distressed at the thought of attending school.

3) The council has nowhere provided any evidence as to how the ASN Provision will be of benefit to the LPS learners or to the community as a whole.

- Currently, my understanding is that all the ASN Provision learners come from outwith Loanhead and there has been an increase in taxis and private vehicles driving to the carpark and idling on double yellow lines where the learners are let out.

- At the Public meeting on Wednesday 7th of May no Midlothian Council staff knew of the high costs that Skanska charge to community lets, thus couldn't tell members of the public who would be able to afford to use the "learning hub" of the provision.

- Likewise, again no member of staff attending could name an actual budget put aside to create a "sensory room".

- There has been no quantification of whether ASN learners attending LPS will definitely be able to have access to the highly experienced ASN teaching staff in the Provision.

- Quality and Improvement Officer Mr Colin Maclean, stated at the public meeting that his opinion is that mainstream learners will benefit, in that they will become more understanding of individuals with ASN. I would argue that within LPS there are already learners exhibiting a wide range of additional support needs and behavioural issues, thus his point becomes moot, and again I would refer to point 2) that Ms Annand and LPS teaching staff on a whole have enough ASN learners that require consistent support so that learning is not disrupted for all.

Expansion and evidence for the points above

Over the last three years, when senior leadership in Loanhead Primary School has been disrupted, the ASN Provision has been based in the former St Margaret's School on a temporary basis. LPS has had a new Head Teacher in place this academic year (2024/2025). It was not made clear at the time of her hiring that the ASN Provision would also come under her remit as Head Teacher of LPS. Prior to this, LPS had one year (2022/2023) when the HT, Mrs Donnelly, was on secondment to Danderhall Primary School and Mrs Melanie Caldwell was Acting Head Teacher.

During the last three years I have witnessed the following behaviour from learners (under teaching staff supervision) from the Provision:

- A learner throwing plastic toys onto the shared vehicle/pedestrian path for vehicles to break. Plastic parts of the toys then are scattered along this roadway and into the trees of the Community Woodland (Ramsay Bing).
- A learner with a stick hitting the three apple trees donated to LPS by a local charity (Growing Families) planted as a celebration and part of the Kings' Coronation fund. These were planted at a cost of over £3000, none of which was paid for by Skanska or the Council. Additionally one of these trees has been observed to be nearly ring barked. The willow path

has also undergone severe damage since I, along with two other parent helpers pruned two summers ago.

- A learner visibly upset, shouting and swearing, telling Mr Ross Lyall to F*** off, while next to the lower atrium.
- LPS learners' bikes and scooters being "borrowed" and moved by Provision learners. This has resulted in parents having to purchase locks. If not locked, the LPS learners' bikes and scooters are removed from the playground and placed in the lower and upper atrium entrances, blocking the entrances and potentially creating a hazard in the case of a fire or other emergency evacuation.

Furthermore this year two physical incidents have involved my children. I would note here, that neither of my children know the Provision Learners by name, but do they can identify that they are from the Provision.

- The first was reported to me by the LPS primary one teacher, Miss Waller. On the day in question, my child, and another P1 child were returning from the office to their classroom after handing in the register when a child "in crisis" kicked my child and the other child. My child told me this was a learner from the Provision. In what seems to be a frequent curtailing of LPS learners' opportunities and freedoms in response to events caused since the Provision is in place; Miss Waller stopped letting the P1s go to the office for a while. On questioning Ms Annand as to why the learner wasn't stopped by their teaching staff, she informed me that there is a button entry door between the two schools, which cannot be changed to fob entry because of fire regulations. The learner had run through from St Margaret's ahead of staff and unfortunately encountered the two primary one children. At the time, Ms Annand said their current solution to mitigate the risk was to place temporary Depute Mrs Hughes's office near this door so that she could listen out for the button.
- Secondly, my primary five child reported to me that he was knocked over and his chin was injured when three learners from the provision on scooters collided with him during break time. This is contrary to Ms Annand and indeed before her, Mrs Donnelly's stipulation; that no bikes or scooters are to be ridden through the school grounds to prevent accidents.

These, and other incidents I have outline above leads me to strongly question whether placing children with severe emotional distress and behavioural needs next to LPS is of any benefit to LPS learners. Rather, I think it may be of harm. I, and my children, have observed behaviours from learners in the Provision that directly contradict what senior management at LPS define as acceptable behaviour for learners. I wish to point out that this also directly contradicts what the Quality and Improvement Officer Colin Maclean stated in the public meeting on Wednesday 7 May 2025, that there is consistent levels of behavioural expectations from learners across both schools.

Additionally, over the last three years there has been, in my and many other parents' view, a serious decline in the levels of behaviour displayed in LPS learners and also a decline (due to prolonged staff absence) in the consistency of teaching in LPS. I do not necessarily think this is a direct result of having the Provision placed in the school grounds; but until the "culture" of the classroom, teaching staff and community changes, Midlothian Council Education staff

need to focus on supporting Ms Annand and her teaching team to make LPS a safe and positive learning environment that my children want to attend again. Any ASN Provision that Midlothian Council wants to construct, needs to be adequately designed, resourced and staffed to ensure all learners, whether mainstream or ASN are safe and ready to learn. Without additional resources and planning the temporary Provision that the Council seeks to make permanent is simply not fit for purpose.

While not opposed to ASN at Loanhead, there are inconsistencies between existing and proposed that need to be addressed.

The application just formalises the current provision, as is stated in the Q&A document, but what features proposed in the document are new, over whats already existing? "Midlothian Council does not envisage any financial impacts from establishing the ASN provision within Loanhead PS." Does this mean there is no additional funding to implement this proposal, given that this proposal refers to non-existed resources?

Previous negative physical and behavioural incidents between provision and non-provision children indicate that there is insufficient staffing to ensure children are seamlessly integrated as part of the school. Integration may well have benefits but this should be done with sufficient staffing to ensure this is done without negative impact.

Section B.41 "secure outside space" and Section C.F "a separate enclosed garden space". Where is this secure enclosed garden space? Are the grounds not continuous within Loanhead primary? What measures are being taken to make a physically segregated secure space?

Section C.R "local community woodland space". Is this the bing? I think all children could have equal opportunity to benefit from more outdoor learning. Is this use of this local community woodland space only intended for provision children?

Appendix 2 - Pupil Questionnaire Responses

Proposed establishment of an ASN stage at Loanhead Primary School

Loanhead Primary School Pupil Voice Session

21 May 2025.

Sam Smith (SS) and Katy Johnstone (KJ) met with two groups of pupils from the ASN Provision and the mainstream school to discuss the ongoing consultation and gain their views.

Children from the ASN provision:

SS outlined the proposal and asked what the children thought about the provision.

Being outside to: do gymnastics, play basketball, go on scooters, play in the playground.

I think the adults in the provision are doing good.

I like doing art and music

I don't like the adults following me around - another child answered that this is to keep them safe.

SS asked if the pupils how they thought the provision could be better.

A trampoline would be good.

All the classes should do paintings that we could put on the wall.

There should be a dance club with the whole school.

I would love a swimming pool, water guns and water balloons.

I would like there to be swings.

I like going to the dinner hall and PE hall with the rest of the school.

There should be a water fountain so people can get water if they forget their water bottles.

Children from the mainstream school:

KJ outlined the proposal and asked what the children thought of it.

Good idea – it's good that the Headteacher would also be the headteacher of the provision so that she can get the views of both parts of the school.

Good idea – but they have scooters at play time and it can be a bit dangerous. It would be better if they weren't used at playtime.

Sometimes the children in the provision can lash out.

Good idea - They could get to know us better and then there wouldn't be as many arguments.

Instead of the Learning assistants being next to them 24/7 they could be a little further away and the kids would not feel like they're being watch so they would talk to us more.
The children in the provision could come to PE or Outdoor Learning with us.

I would be worried that some people wouldn't like the provision being here and there would be fights.

Worried that if they came into class, it might be too much work for them and they would get fed up and start rampaging.

I like having the provision here but I remember the children running away, stealing scooters and damaging them. It didn't bother me too much but they should have asked.

Appendix 3 – Public Meeting Minutes

Statutory Public Consultation Meeting

Proposal to establish a new Additional Support Needs (ASN) stage at Loanhead Primary School.

Location: Loanhead Primary School

Date: 07 May 2025

Attendees:

Alastair Delaney, Independent Chair

Michelle Strong, Education Chief Operating Officer

Colin Mclean, Quality Improvement Manager

Carolyn Robertson, Quality Improvement Manager

Sam Smith, Quality Improvement Officer

Katy Johnstone, Learning Estate Resource Officer

Craig Murrin, Business Support Officer

Rebecca Annand, Head Teacher (Loanhead PS)

Debbie Hughes, Depute Head Teacher (Loanhead PS)

Ross Lyall, Principal Teacher (Loanhead PS)

Education Scotland Representative

4 members of the public were in attendance.

Alastair Delaney (AD) welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the Council Officers.

AD Introduced himself and outlined the purpose of the meeting.

AD explained the statutory consultation process and the work that would need to be undertaken by the Council in order to adhere to the schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

Michelle Strong (MS) welcomed everyone to the meeting and then outlined the proposals and spoke through the presentation slides:

Statutory consultation process



- Proposed permanent change – council must follow process contained in national legislation
- Consult for minimum 6 weeks
- Must hold a public meeting
- Must publish its final report

Relevant legislation



- The duties placed on local authorities in relation to the adequate and efficient provision of school education in their area in the *Education (Scotland) Act 1980*
- The responsibilities associated with the National Improvement Framework and the new duties imposed on Education Authorities by the *Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 as amended by the 2016 Act*
- The duties placed on local authorities to secure best value in the delivery of services

Statutory Consultation Process and Timeline



- Proposal Paper including Educational Benefits Statement published 02 April 2025.
- Statutory Consultation Period – 02 April 2025 to 02 June 2025.
- Representations from interested parties are sought throughout the consultation period
- Report by Education Scotland within 3 weeks of end consultation
- Service takes account of all feedback

Statutory Consultation Process



- Preparation of Final consultation Report– after 02 June 2025
- Final consultation report published 18 August 2025
- Decision by Midlothian Council– 09 September 2025

Context



- **2021/2022 Review:** Midlothian Council's Education Service undertook a comprehensive review of the provisions for children with additional support needs, leading to several changes across the learning estate, aimed at expanding and improving the range and quality of support available. These changes were crucial to meet the increasing demand for such provisions.
- **Pandemic Response:** Maximised space usage and temporarily hosted Treehouse and Hawthornden Provisions at St Margaret's Primary School for a period of up to three years. This arrangement ensured that the increased demand for support could be met effectively within the available facilities.
- **Relocation:** Temporary hosting arrangements and accommodations were established for Midlothian's Inclusion & Wellbeing Services. This included relocating the Treehouse Provision from Gore Glen Primary School and the Hawthornden Provision from Hawthornden Primary School to the now closed St Margaret's Primary School.
- **ASN Provision:** By formally establishing the ASN provision within Loanhead Primary School under the leadership of its Head Teacher, this will continue to ensure that children receive consistent, high-quality support in line with the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This approach will foster an inclusive environment where every child's right to education, protection, and development is upheld, thereby enhancing their overall well-being and educational success.

Proposal



- Proposal to establish a new Additional Support Needs (ASN) stage at Loanhead Primary School will be implemented from September 2025, subject to Council decision.
- A new Additional Support Needs (ASN) stage will be established at Loanhead Primary School.
- The ASN stage will be under the leadership of the Head Teacher of Loanhead Primary School.
- This consultation is to formalise the current ASN provision, which has been hosted since 2021/2022 and under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, this is treated as establishing a stage of education in a school.

Proposed Additional Support Needs (ASN) Provision



- Midlothian Council is committed to establishing a permanent provision for primary aged children with additional support needs (ASN) within Loanhead Primary School. This initiative aims to create a dedicated and nurturing environment where children can receive tailored support to meet their individual needs. The proposed provision will continue to offer high quality educational experiences, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.
- Under the leadership of the Head Teacher at Loanhead Primary School, the ASN provision will adhere to the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This commitment guarantees that children's rights to education, protection, and development are upheld, fostering an inclusive atmosphere that promotes their overall well being and educational success.
- The permanent ASN provision will include the required facilities and resources to support children with additional support needs. These enhancements will ensure that children have access to the necessary tools and environments to facilitate their learning and growth. By integrating this provision within Loanhead Primary School, Midlothian Council aims to provide consistent, high-quality support that aligns with best practices in inclusive education

Proposed Additional Support Needs (ASN) Provision



- The additional support needs provision will be located on the ground floor of Loanhead Primary School within three classes each with access to a secure outside space, social and multipurpose atrium areas, and a sensory/social room.
- The establishment of this permanent provision will address and meet the growing demand for ASN services, offering a stable and supportive setting for children to build relationships, develop skills, and reach their potential. Midlothian Council's dedication reflects its commitment to improving educational outcomes for all children, particularly those with additional support needs.

Educational Benefits Overview



- **Learning Environment:** ASN classes at Loanhead Primary School offer a nurturing environment with a social/sensory room, garden space, and drop-off area. The curriculum includes life skills and therapeutic approaches, supported by nurture classrooms and sensory rooms, enhancing multi-agency support.
- **Inclusion:** The ASN provision integrates specialist support with whole school activities, promoting collaboration and shared resources. It removes barriers to learning, offering mainstream experiences based on individual needs, enhancing wellbeing and social skills. Specialist staff foster professional collaboration and career-long aspirations.
- **Learning and Teaching and Achievement:** The proposed ASN provision will enhance motivation and enjoyment for children, staff, and the community. It includes three ground-floor classes with outdoor spaces and a sensory/social room. Tailored resources and specialist staff will foster engagement and achievement. Modern digital approaches will promote independence and skill development.

Educational Benefits Overview (2)



- **Health and Wellbeing:** A modern, flexible ASN provision inspires and motivates children, positively impacting their health and wellbeing. Improved social areas promote healthy eating and peer engagement. Enhanced outdoor spaces and access to the MUGA and community woodland develop social and motor skills.
- **Curriculum:** Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) aims to raise attainment and improve educational outcomes. It nurtures successful, confident, effective, and responsible children, helping them reach their potential. CfE allows schools to design tailored curricula while ensuring a broad education, promoting independence and life skills.
- **Local Community:** Establishing an ASN provision at Loanhead Primary School will boost motivation, aspirations, and enjoyment for children, staff, and the community. The school will become a learning hub, strengthening the community. Dedicated spaces will enhance parental engagement and children's progress, supporting creative use and partnerships.

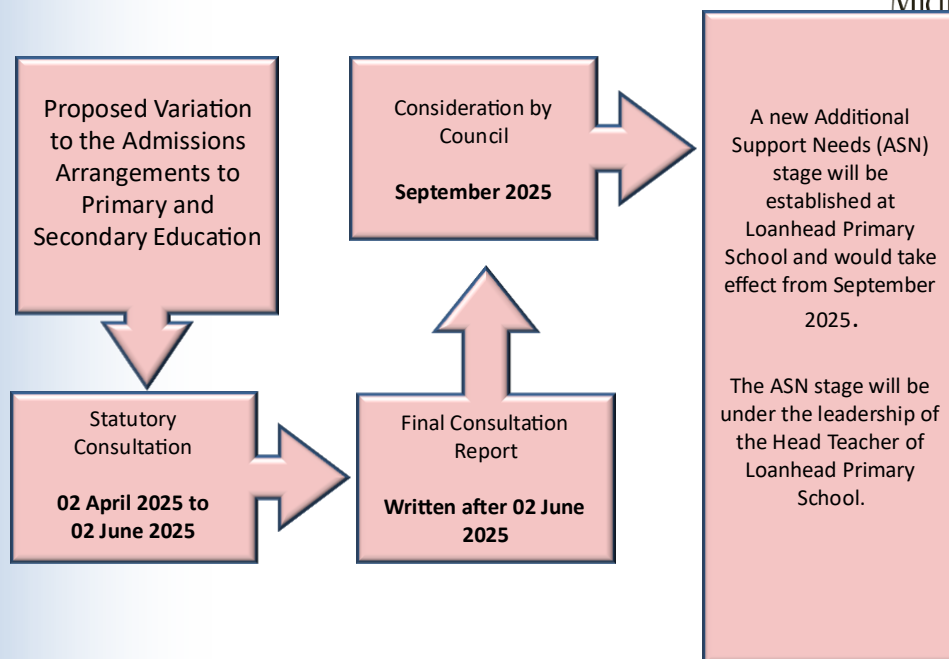
Outcomes



If the decision is taken to establish a new Additional Support Needs (ASN) stage at Loanhead Primary School.

- Subject to the decision by Midlothian Council elected members in September 2025, the proposal to establish a new Additional Support Needs (ASN) stage at Loanhead Primary School would take effect from September 2025.
- The ASN stage will be under the leadership of the Head Teacher of Loanhead Primary School.
- Midlothian Council will share the outcome of the decision made by elected members on our website and social media platforms and the Head Teacher.

Project Timeline





Questions?

For any further or more specific questions
please email
educationconsultation@midlothian.gov.uk

AD then welcome questions from members of the public.

What is a MUGA?

MS – A MUGA is a Multi-Use Games Area where sports and activities can be carried out.

You have said this is a new provision what does this mean in terms of what is being hosted.

MS – What we are doing through the consultation is establishing the provision at Loanhead PS as a permanent provision as it has been hosted with the review that took place, this is formalising that.

AD – Provides certainty and are you asking would there be a difference?

Yes. Will the provision be different to what is currently here.

MS – No there will be no difference, this is us formalising the current hosted provision.

Do our children from here and who attend Loanhead PS have access to the provision, or will they need to go elsewhere?

Carolyn Robertson (CR) - Anyone accessing an ASN provision comes through a panel and are allocated a place dependant on requirement, space and the need of the child.

We were told we could not access this provision.

CR – We have two primary SEBN within Midlothian and other ASN provisions throughout Midlothian, anyone who is looking to access one of our provisions as already mentioned come through the Education Resource Group (ERG) following a referral.

Would Loanhead PS children be guaranteed to come here?

CR – Yes, providing there is available space as it makes sense to keep children in their area.

MS – We would like to keep transport costs down and the allocation of a provision place would also be dependent on space.

Would there be a financial injection for separate spaces, would the outside spaces be enhanced?

MS – No there are no plans for this. The proposal is that we are formalising the current hosted provision and making this permanent into Loanhead PS. The provision has been hosted for a number of years, there are benefits for the learners accessing the provision with the space they have here.

It just makes it sound like there will be a different and secure space and that money will be put into it so it will benefit the provision kids over the mainstream kids.

Colin McLean (CMc) – The Headteacher is clear that for children who attend the provision are part of the community and school. The opportunities that exist are vital and for me as the QIM for the area that the wider vision and commitment is to build a cohesive community.

Rebecca Annand (RA) – There have been small pockets of areas which we are looking to utilise and work with partner providers for both the provision and mainstream. We have had mainstream and provisions come together to utilise the minibuses and looking at outdoor learning and timetabling also. We cannot extend the physical area of the school and by utilising the staffing by timetabling, we will look at this next session if we are going to build on this.

Mrs Simpson used to take outdoor learning on the Bing and this has stopped.

MS – There is a separate conversation which needs to be had here. We are looking to stick to the proposal and there are opportunities for both mainstream and children who are accessing the provision to benefit from integration and this will be managed by need, resource timetabling etc as mentioned by Mrs Annand.

Speaking on behalf of parents, we were not consulted on the provision being hosted here previously and now we are only being consulted with. Feels like it was done sneakily when it was St Margarets RCPS from where we are. Yes, I agree that children have a right but the concern of how this will impact not only them but the Headteacher and teaching staff as they need specific training and additional trained staff and teachers.

CMc – We all have to be skilled to interact with people including those with ASN. We are committed to ensuring that staff have the appropriate support and training.

Children are witnessing behaviours that they not what we would see generally. Our children will be held accountable to a certain standard whereas children with ASN will have a lower standard because of their needs. This is one school.

CMc- There are not lower standards for any children, our aim and goal are to ensure that the children are safe, happy and learning. Sometimes children experience unexpected behaviours, and all children need to be supported. We need to make it successful for it work on both sides.

MS – Couple of things to pick up. I was not here when St Margarets RCPS closed. A decision was made back then for a provision to be hosted as a temporary arrangement. This proposal is for a provision to be agreed and formalised at Loanhead PS under the leadership of the Loanhead PS Headteacher and this would not be separate. I agree with the points raised about the skillsets required to work with children with ASN as well as the support and training. We want this and are committed to making this work, inclusion to work and equally want to make sure that children within the school as well as staff are well supported.

CR – When Mrs Annand applied for the job here it was stated within the job description that there was an ASN provision here.

This was not in the Job description, and it was brought up by us when we were involved in the recruitment process.

AD – These are valid points which you are highlighting, and it is important to speak up so the Council is aware and can also provide a response as part of their report.

We are all for Integrity and inclusion etc. But when you see the behaviour pattern from each child, and how the children will copy bad behaviours this is why we have been concerned about this.

AD – It is important you are raising this, and the Council is committed to support you and move forward to understand and will take this on board.

I have a few questions, first one is around community engagement. The cost to hire the school for activities etc is very expensive which then makes it inaccessible, would this change as it is £100 per hour. Would be great if you could reduce costs.

MS – We will note this.

How will the staff training look?

CR – We have comprehensive training planned and packages ready for next session as the needs are varied. 5% access ASN on a shared placement and there is a rise. We recognise this and we know we need to build confidence.

We do not have a sensory room, what are the plans and costs for this?

Sam Smith (SS) - The plan was previously we were going to try and convert a room within the school into a sensory room. Each provision has a budget (resources, school budget etc)

Could we look at fundraising if we cannot access this budget as there is not sensory room but there are objects which we can use like loose parts play, and it is not the same thing.

AD – It will be noted that there needs to be clarification in terms of the sensory room.

The proposal states that the provision will benefit the whole school in general, how will this be?

CR – It will be done through inclusive practice, peer modelling, nurturing approach and integration under the guidance of Mrs Annand. Everyone is included. It is about showing how we can support everyone in various ways with the expertise we have.

Is there a time goal for this, as this is not new?

CMc – We have been inspected, one of the things they stated was that for a small local authority we pack a punch in terms of professional learning for all staff and the packages we offer.

MS – One of the core functions from our Educational Psychologists is that they have trained over 1000 people in safe to learn. We also have a full-time permanent team teach trainer. Both teaching and non-teaching staff have access to training, team teach look at de-escalation training and various techniques. There is a lot going on in Midlothian and we have also had a change to our ASN outreach teams and recognising we have a higher percentage increase with children who have ASD. We are always responding to the changing needs.

Have the staff been through team teach training?

RA- Our teaching staff have undertaken training. Further training is booked in for August 2025. Team teach 1 & Team teach 2 which were carried out in January 2025 with a full capacity of staff updating their training on de-escalation strategies. Loads have been done.

CR – There is also a Service Improvement Plan and staff also have a personal responsibility for professional learning.

One of the historic issues is parking. We will have taxi's, buses, cars etc. Can the Council find another area to deal with the volume even an overflow?

CMc – Current strategy is not to expand current parking areas etc. Active travel is the long-term goal.

I walk every day and it is the speed and there is a real safety concern.

CMc - The Headteacher can reach out with any concerns, and I am more than happy to help. Raise these with the Headteacher and I will coordinate a response.

We have been asking for things in the playground for all children for inclusion. Can this be considered?

CR – We could look at other outdoor areas / play areas.

CMc – Is it gnarly due to the type of school this is, it is a PPP school and there are limitations as to what can be done.

The Parent Council have raised money, and the cheapest thing is a sandpit at £5k. You would need to look and consider shared spaces for children to bond. As a community you all have to agree and support that and also the loose parts play.

CMc – Advised there is no disagreement for outdoor play and provided a further insight and examples on costs and historic contracts as well as the restrictions on PPP schools.

I have noticed there has been an increase since the provision kids has been here with trees being damaged.

CMc – I would not use the term provision kids. This is something that happens and children will be children. We will work to ensure there is a consistent approach from staff with restorative and consequence learning. Proceeded to give examples of previous schools he has worked in and how Midlothian has good practice examples.

I am sorry for saying provision kids. I have not seen anything in the proposal to see how this will benefit mainstream children. This is historic, under the new leadership there has been changes which have been great, but I want my children to know their names and not to use provision children.

MS – With the proposal of having the ASN provision under one Headteacher and under one school what we are trying to do is to have a blended approach and not just us providing enriched experiences for those in the provision but whole experiences for all children within the school.

I absolutely agree. I am unsure what some of the wording means in the proposal etc.

MS – If there is a parent council meeting before 2nd of June, I wonder whether if there was an opportunity for us to come back and explain it in more detail.

CMc – Advised he is more than happy to come back out to the school for meeting to discuss with parent councils and expand further.

AD – Summarised questions and points raised and how Midlothian Council will look to bridge the gap.

Would our children have emotional intelligence training as well as staff?

CR – That would already have happened through the wellbeing curriculum.

RA – We will be working with our pupil groups in classes focusing on inclusion strategies. We are taking those small steps and supporting learners, for example ensuring that different behaviours are identified and who the trusted adults are etc.

This will help and to highlight the difference between sympathy and empathy. To have a clear understanding of ASN and ideology and it is ok not to be ok.

CMc – Building resilience programs is a 3-year cycle and there is a parent part of the program that comes home for parents to be made aware so that they can also be aware of the terminology.

We need something immediately for when this change comes into effect.

RA – Long term we are talking with our learners and the community about our plan which takes us through to 2030, and what this means for those with ADHD and ASN.

Talking about soft skills and life skills with the children, it would be great to ensure that all children are accepting of each other and grow together.

AD and MS thanked attendees for their time.

Meeting concluded.

Appendix 4 - Omissions, Corrections and Amendments

Consultation on the proposal to establish a new Additional Support Needs (ASN) stage at Loanhead Primary School.

Omissions, Corrections & Amendments - Version 1.0 (Updated 03/04/2025)

This document highlights specific omissions, corrections and amendments regarding the published documentation relating to the above consultation. These have been identified after the documentation has been published so cannot be retrospectively included.

The document version number and date can be found at the top of this document to help establish the most recent omissions, corrections and amendments that have been made.

1) Correction: Consultation Document, Appendix 1, Page 21

The date for the Consideration of Consultation Reports by Midlothian Council should state 09/09/2025.

Appendix 1: Loanhead Additional Support Needs (ASN) Consultation Timeline

	Date beginning	Date ending	Duration
Statutory consultation period Including:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial consultation report Public meetings Drop-in sessions Engagement with staff, pupils, and parent councils 	02/04/2025	02/06/2025	8 weeks
Education Scotland engagement period	09/06/2025	29/06/2025	3 weeks
Publication of consultation report	18/08/2025		
Further considerations after publication of the reports	18/08/2025	08/09/2025	3 weeks
Consideration of Consultation Reports by Midlothian Council	09/11/2025	09/11/2025	1 day

Appendix 5 - Education Scotland Report

1. Introduction

1.1 This report from Education Scotland has been prepared by His Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HM Inspectors) in accordance with the terms of the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#) ("the 2010 Act"). The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of a proposal by Midlothian Council to establish a new additional support needs (ASN) stage at Loanhead Primary School. Section 2 of the report sets out brief details of the consultation process. Section 3 of the report sets out HM Inspectors' consideration of the educational aspects of the proposal, including significant views expressed by consultees. Section 4 summarises HM Inspectors' view. Upon receipt of this report, the Act requires the council to consider it alongside any relevant considerations the council received and then prepare its consultation report. The council's consultation report should include this report and must contain an explanation of how, in finalising the proposal, it has reviewed the initial proposal, including a summary of points raised during the consultation process and the council's response to them. The council has to publish its consultation report at least three weeks before it takes its final decision. With all proposals the council needs to follow all statutory obligations set out in the 2010 Act.

1.2 HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for children of the school; any other users; children likely to become pupils within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper; and other children in the council area;
- any other likely effects of the proposal;
- how the council intends to minimise or avoid any adverse effects that may arise from the proposal; and
- the educational benefits the council believes will result from implementation of the proposal, and the council's reasons for coming to these beliefs.

1.3 In preparing this report, HM Inspectors undertook the following activities:

- attendance at the public meeting held on 7 May 2025 in connection with the council's proposals;
- consideration of all relevant documentation provided by the council in relation to the proposal, specifically the educational benefits statement and related consultation documents, written and oral submissions from parents and others; and
- visit to the site of Loanhead Primary School, including discussion with relevant consultees.

2. Consultation process

- 2.1 Midlothian Council undertook the consultation on its proposal(s) with reference to the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#).
- 2.2 The council undertook the statutory consultation from 2 April to 2 June 2025. The proposal paper was published on the council's website and provided to key stakeholders. The council made copies of the proposal paper in public buildings or in alternative formats upon request. The council held a public meeting in Loanhead Primary School, which four members of the public attended. At the meeting council representatives outlined the consultation process and the proposals, and answered questions raised by member of the public. The council received 114 responses to its online survey. The majority of respondents agreed with the proposal to establish an ASN stage at Loanhead Primary School. The majority of respondents also agreed that the leadership of the ASN stage should be under the headteacher of Loanhead Primary School. Those supportive of the proposal noted the increased need for ASN provision to help children who require additional support. Those not in favour expressed concern of the potential disruption to the learning experiences of children in the mainstream provision. A significant minority of respondents do not believe that the ASN stage should be placed under the leadership of the headteacher of Loanhead Primary School.
- 2.3 The council engaged with a sample of children from the ASN provision and the mainstream school. Children highlighted positive aspects of the school and ASN provision being led with one headteacher. This included children from both settings getting to know each other better. However, they also expressed a few concerns about the potential impact of negative behaviours.

3. Educational aspects of proposal

- 3.1 Loanhead Primary School shares a campus with the former St Margaret's Primary School. In 2021, when St Margaret's Primary School closed, the building was used to host children with social emotional and behavioural needs from Hawthornden Provision and Treehouse Provision (Gore Glen Primary School). This proposal will formalise the previous arrangement. Hawthornden and Gore Glen Primary Schools will also continue to accommodate children with ASN.
- 3.2 The council has set out educational benefits to establish a permanent ASN stage for primary aged children at Loanhead Primary School. This ASN stage will be under the leadership of the headteacher of Loanhead Primary School. HM Inspectors agree there are potential educational benefits to this proposal. This is required to expand and improve the range and quality of support available. The council argues that these changes are required to meet the increasing demand for ASN provision. This includes children on a shared placement who already spend part of their week in Loanhead Primary School from their catchment school. Currently there are 16 children accessing this provision.
- 3.3 Almost all stakeholders who met with HM Inspectors at Loanhead Primary School agree with the proposal. Children from mainstream and the ASN stage would welcome the opportunity to participate in more joint activity. They believe that this will help them to socialise and form more friendships. They spoke positively on

the importance of being inclusive and understood that children learn at different paces and in different ways. Children from the mainstream provision want their equipment and learning environment to be treated with respect. They felt that more could be done to improve this across the school.

- 3.4 Staff expressed the need to have a more consistent approach to promoting positive relationships across both settings. They felt that whole school approaches are important, including having shared values. A few staff expressed concerns over security and the use of shared spaces. Although they noted a decrease in the number of incidents involving children from the ASN stage, they shared concerns about the potential negative impact of children attending mainstream classes. This includes the perceived loss of outdoor space to support learning and teaching. All support staff felt they would benefit from additional training to deal with challenging behaviour safely. They would value an increase in the use of restorative approaches to support positive relationships with children and staff. A few staff noted concerns relating to any increase in responsibilities for the leadership and management of the school. The council should continue with plans to provide career long professional learning for all staff to ensure they have the required skills to support all children effectively.
- 3.5 If the council proceeds with the proposal, it is the view of HM Inspectors that the current school environment requires adaptations to meet the needs of all children. There is a need for the council to ensure that the educational benefits as outlined in the proposal reflect the educational experiences for all children attending the ASN stage. The council should be clearer about enhancements that are required to ensure children have access to necessary resources or adapted environments which they require. HM Inspectors recommend that the council should work with staff to provide appropriate resources to help children with their sensory needs or access to high quality therapeutic interventions.
- 3.6 During the consultation period the council identified an inaccuracy within its original proposal. The council rectified this before the end of the consultation period.

4. Summary

HM Inspectors agree that there are potential educational benefits to this proposal. Loanhead Primary School has the capacity to accommodate the ASN stage. This will help the council meet the increasing demand for ASN provision. If the council proceeds with the proposal, it should be clearer about the enhancements required to support children to learn and grow. HM Inspectors believe that the school environment requires adaptations to meet all children's needs. This includes ensuring that the stated educational benefits outlined in the proposal reflects the experiences for children attending the ASN stage. It will be important that the council continues to work with staff to address their concerns and provide appropriate professional learning to ensure they have the required skills to support all children effectively. This includes providing appropriate professional learning and resources to better support children in the ASN stage and access to high quality therapeutic interventions.