



# ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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## **CONSULTATION REPORT**

### **Broomhill School, Airyhall School and Ferryhill School Dual Zones**

This Consultation Report has been compiled in response to the recent public consultation on the proposal to make changes to the school zones for Broomhill School, Airyhall School and Ferryhill School in Aberdeen. The document summarises the responses received on the proposals set out below and Aberdeen City Council's response to the verbal and written comments submitted by interested parties, in compliance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 and the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

#### **Proposals:**

1. To remove an area of dual school zoning for Broomhill School and Airyhall School, and to include this area within the zone for Broomhill School only, from 1 August 2017.
2. To remove an area of dual school zoning for Broomhill School and Ferryhill School, and to include this area within the zone for Ferryhill School only, from 1 August 2017.

## 1. METHODOLOGY

This consultation was conducted in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 and the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. All requirements of the legislation have been met.

## 2. INVOLVEMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS

### 2.1 Public Event

A public consultation event was held on 18 May 2016 to discuss the proposals:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Venue</i>	<i>Recorded Attendees</i>
18 May 2016	7- 8 pm	Broomhill School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 10 parents of pupils at Broomhill School</li><li>• 2 staff members at Broomhill School</li><li>• 6 parents of pupils at Airyhall School</li><li>• 3 Aberdeen City Council officers</li></ul>

### 2.2 Comments Received

The following written submissions were received:

<i>Format</i>	<i>Number of submissions</i>
E-mail	8
Letters	1
Comment Forms	10

The letter noted in the table above was a duplicate of one of the emails received, and one of the comment forms included in the above numbers contained a collective response from Airyhall School's parent council.

The submissions, anonymised as necessary, are available on the Council's website: [www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/broomhilldualzones](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/broomhilldualzones).

### 2.3 Issues Raised

The main issues raised at the public meeting and in the written responses to the consultation, are summarised below.

#### Comments relating to Proposal 1 (Broomhill / Airyhall Dual Zone)

Airyhall School's Parent Council submitted a collective response to the consultation. In this response, it was explained that two of the fourteen parent members objected to Proposal 1, and that the Parent Council had received correspondence from five further families living in the dual zone area who also objected to the proposal.

Comments received from the Parent Council, and from individual respondents, included:

- The Parent Council welcomed the news that children living in the Airyhall / Broomhill dual zone area already attending Airyhall School, and also their younger siblings, will be able to continue to attend the school if the zones are changed.
- One respondent who supported the proposal to remove the dual zone commented that they felt that dual zones are unfair, as it means that some parents have a choice about which school their children attend, and others do not.
- Several respondents expressed concern about the increased distance that children would need to travel to get to school, as a result of the proposal.
- Several respondents were also concerned about road safety, highlighting the fact that children from the Broomhill / Airyhall dual zone area would be required to cross up to 10 road junctions and also the A90 South Anderson Drive, in order to attend Broomhill School.
- Respondents also highlighted potential difficulties with parking at Broomhill School, if the proposal was implemented, and several respondents noted that the Broomhill School area is often busy with traffic, and that implementing the proposal would see an increase in this traffic.
- Some respondents noted concerns about the impact on house prices as a result of the proposal, as they felt that rezoning the Airyhall / Broomhill dual zone area to Broomhill School would result in house prices in this area falling.
- Respondents also pointed to the fact that the pupil roll forecast figures presented in the proposal document showed that there would be no significant impact on the schools if the proposals were adopted. One respondent felt that changes should not be made simply to allow for the more accurate prediction of school rolls in the future, as this was purely an administrative reason.
- Two respondents pointed out that the proposals were based on 2013 school roll figures, and that this was when the local economy was at its peak; it was felt that the economic situation in the city is different now, and that this would have an impact on the actual pupil rolls at the schools.
- It was felt that the proposal if accepted would overrule a decision made in 2013 about the school zoning for the Airyhall / Broomhill dual zone area, and that this sets a dangerous precedent, as the Council could overrule other agreed proposals if it so wished.
- One respondent suggested that most children in the Broomhill / Airyhall dual zone area choose to attend Airyhall School.
- A small number of respondents felt that the Council had not done enough to communicate the proposals with parents of children likely to attend the affected schools in future.

- One respondent pointed out that this is the third proposal this year for changes to school zones which affect Airyhall School, and asked why these could not have been considered together. The respondent was concerned that some parents at the school may have been less inclined to respond to this consultation, given that they have already been asked to respond to previous consultations.

#### Comments relating to Proposal 2 (Broomhill / Ferryhill Dual Zone)

- A respondent expressing their support for this proposal welcomed the fact that removing the dual zone arrangements for Broomhill and Ferryhill Schools would remove any ambiguity regarding school zoning.
- One respondent from the Broomhill / Ferryhill dual zone area explained they had paid a higher price for their property in order to live in a dual zone area, and that removing the dual zoning arrangement would result in the value of the property being reduced.
- Several respondents expressed concern about the increased distance that children would need to travel to get to school, as a result of this proposal.
- A number of respondents raised road safety concerns regarding children walking from the Broomhill / Ferryhill dual zone area to Ferryhill School, as this would require pupils to cross a dual carriageway.
- Respondents also highlighted potential difficulties with parking at Ferryhill School, if the proposal was implemented.
- One respondent, whilst supportive of the overall proposals, highlighted a concern about a drop in pupil numbers at Broomhill School as a result of the proposal, as it was felt that this would leave the school vulnerable.
- One respondents also noted that most children in the Broomhill/Ferryhill dual zone choose to go to Broomhill School.
- It was also felt by one respondent commenting on this proposal that the figures presented in the proposal document did not give a clear picture.

#### Alternative Proposal

A small number of respondents suggested that as an alternative to the proposals put forwards, and taking into consideration the concerns about road safety with pupils walking from the Broomhill / Ferryhill dual zone area to Ferryhill School, that this dual zone area should instead be zoned to Broomhill School only. It was felt that Broomhill School would have sufficient capacity to accommodate children from both of the existing dual zone areas.

#### **2.4 Education Scotland Report**

An essential element of the statutory consultation process is the involvement of Education Scotland, whose report is provided as Annex A of this Consultation Report.

In its report, Education Scotland noted that the proposals put forward by the Council would be of educational benefit in the long term, and that all three schools could continue to have sustainable and viable pupil rolls which would allow the schools to plan accordingly and ensure effective teacher numbers.

All management, teaching and support staff who met with HM Inspectors were reported to have been in support of the proposals, and that they could not see any negative impact on either staff or existing pupils.

The report highlighted the concerns of some parents and staff regarding road safety and longer journey times, should the proposals be accepted, and it also referred to comments made by parents who questioned the validity of the pupil projection data relating to the proposals, and their requests for information regarding the numbers of children currently living in the dual zones who attend each of the affected schools.

Finally the Education Scotland report noted that the Council should provide reassurance to parents and take steps to allay their concerns by ensuring that there are safe routes to schools where children have to cross major roads. The report also highlighted the need for the Council to clarify the numbers of children from the dual zone areas who currently attend each of the three affected schools.

### **3. THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO ISSUES RAISED DURING THE CONSULTATION PERIOD AND CONTAINED WITHIN THE EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT**

The following paragraphs provide responses to the significant points raised during the consultation period.

#### **3.1 Increased distance to school and road safety concerns**

The walking distance to Broomhill School from the farthest point within the Broomhill / Airyhall dual zone area is approximately 1.3 miles, and the walking distance to Ferryhill School from the farthest point within the Broomhill / Ferryhill dual zone area is approximately 0.8 miles. Walking distances to school of less than 2 miles are generally considered to be acceptable for primary aged school pupils, so the maximum walking distances which would apply to children in both dual zone areas, should the proposals be accepted, are not considered to be a reason to discount the proposals.

A number of respondents to the consultation raised concerns about road safety. This included concerns about children living in the Broomhill / Airyhall dual zone area who would be required to cross the A90 South Anderson Drive in order to walk to Broomhill School.

It should be noted that approximately one third of the existing school zone for Broomhill School lies to the west of South Anderson Drive, so a significant number of children who attend Broomhill School already cross this road in order to travel to school each day. A school crossing patroller is employed to help children to safely cross South Anderson Drive close to its junction with Broomhill Road, using a puffin crossing which is installed at this location. A second school crossing patroller operates directly outside Broomhill School. The route for children in the dual zone area to walk to Broomhill School would be via the patrolled crossing on South Anderson Drive, and is therefore considered to be safe. This, therefore, would not be seen as a reason to discount the proposals.

Concerns were also raised by respondents about children living in the Broomhill / Ferryhill dual zone area, who would be required to cross the dual carriageway at Great Southern Road in order to walk to Ferryhill School. It is accepted that children would be required to cross this dual carriageway in order to walk to Ferryhill School. Whilst a puffin crossing is available on Great Southern Road close to its junction with Murray Terrace, which would be on the walking route from the dual zone to Ferryhill School, there is currently no school crossing patroller operating in this area to help children to cross the road safely.

The concerns raised by respondents to the consultation concerning this aspect of road safety are therefore accepted, and are considered sufficient reason to revisit the proposals for rezoning the Broomhill / Ferryhill dual zone area to Ferryhill School only. This is discussed further in section 3.9 below.

### **3.2 Parking difficulties and increased traffic at Broomhill and Ferryhill Schools**

It is acknowledged that an increase in pupil numbers at any school has the potential to lead to an increase in traffic near to the school at the beginning and end of each school day. However, children and parents are encouraged wherever possible to walk or cycle to school, to promote health and wellbeing, and in order to reduce the volume of traffic and increase road safety in the vicinity of schools. Increases in traffic in the streets near to Broomhill and Ferryhill Schools should therefore be avoided, or at least minimised, so this is not considered to be sufficient reason for discounting the rezoning proposals.

### **3.3 Impact on house prices and changes in local economy**

It is not possible to attribute an impact on property prices to these proposals specifically, and it would be inappropriate for the Council to comment on or take this into consideration when deciding whether the proposals should be accepted.

There was also a suggestion from respondents that the proposals were based on school roll figures which would now be out of date, due to changes in the local economy. Figures from the Council's 2014 school roll forecasts were used to calculate the likely changes in pupil rolls at the affected schools. This was the most recently available data, and is considered to be the most accurate data available for predicting likely changes in school rolls.

Due to the complexities involved in compiling pupil roll forecasts, it is not possible to make adjustments to this data to account for very recent changes in the local economy.

### **3.4 Lack of clarity regarding impact on pupil rolls**

It is accepted that the information provided within the proposal document regarding the anticipated impact on school rolls, if the proposals were to be accepted, could have been explained more clearly. Several queries were raised, focusing in particular on the suggestion in the proposal document that there would be a negligible difference in the numbers of pupils attending Airyhall School, if the changes were to be implemented.

In response to comments received on this matter during the consultation, further information and clarification was provided to the parent councils of each of the affected schools. It was explained that, when proposing changes to school zone areas, the likely impact on future school rolls is calculated using data from the Council's

published school roll forecasts. These forecasts are compiled using information from a range of sources, and by assessing population trends for each individual area of the city.

As with all other schools, the pupil roll forecasts for Airyhall, Broomhill and Ferryhill Schools were calculated using the 2014 school roll figures as a baseline, and adjusting these figures year on year to forecast the pupil rolls for the next seven years. These adjustments include:

- The estimated preschool population in the school zone;
- National birth rate projections for Aberdeen City;
- The estimated impact of any new housing developments in the school zone (if any);
- An adjustment to account for the fact that parents may choose for their child to go to a school out with the school zone;
- An adjustment to account for the fact that some children may go to a special, independent or Roman Catholic school.

With so many variables involved, the forecasts are only intended to give an indication of the changes in the numbers of pupils likely to be attending a school each year; these figures can only be estimates, rather than the actual numbers of children who will be attending a school in any given year.

The two dual zone areas for Broomhill, Airyhall and Ferryhill Schools are relatively small, with only a small number of residential properties within them, compared with the school zones as a whole, so it would be expected that the impact on the school roll forecasts as a result of zoning these areas to one school rather than two, would be very small.

Consequently, the differences in the forecast figures for Airyhall School, as a result of the proposed changes, were calculated to be too small to be statistically significant, and were therefore presented in the proposal paper as zero.

### **3.5 Overturning decisions made in 2013**

The decision made in 2013, as part of the primary school estates review, was to formally consult on a recommendation to rezone the Broomhill / Airyhall dual zone area to Airyhall School only. No decision was made at that time on the rezoning itself, as such changes are always subject to formal public consultation.

Since 2013, the school roll at Airyhall School has continued to grow beyond its intended capacity, and forecasts show that this trend will continue for several years. When preparing to launch the public consultation, officers therefore considered that, given that Broomhill School is predicted to have spare capacity for at least the next seven years, it would be more prudent to propose rezoning the dual zone area to Broomhill School, rather than to Airyhall School.

### **3.6 Numbers of children attending each affected school**

Currently, the majority of the children who live in the Broomhill / Airyhall dual zone area attend Airyhall School, with a minority attending Broomhill School. The majority of children from the Broomhill / Ferryhill dual zone area currently attend Broomhill School, with the minority attending Ferryhill School.

It was not possible to share the actual numbers of pupils attending the schools from the two dual zone areas as part of the public consultation process, as given that the numbers involved are very small, officers were concerned that this may have made it possible to use the data to identify individual children, and to ascertain details of the areas they live in and the schools they attend.

All of the children currently living in the dual zones would be entitled to remain at their current school, should the proposed changes to the school zones be approved. Additionally, any younger siblings of these children who have not yet reached school age, would also be entitled to attend the same primary school, in order to keep family groups together. Consequently any changes will not have any effect on existing pupils at the affected schools, or on their younger siblings.

### **3.7 Communicating proposals to prospective parents**

Whilst officers attempted to publicise the launch of the public consultation as widely as possible, it is acknowledged that some parents of children who had not yet reached school age and who were likely to be attending one of the affected schools in the future, may not have received information about the proposals.

Notice of the consultation was published in local newspapers at the start of the consultation period, and copies of the proposal document were made available on the Council's website, and in hard copy at the schools affected by the proposals, and at Marischal College, Central Library, Airyhall Library, Ferryhill Library and Ferryhill Community Centre.

However it is accepted that some parents of prospective pupils may not have seen the notices through these channels, and officers are therefore reviewing practices in order to improve communication and ensure that proposals can be publicised more widely in future.

### **3.8 Multiple proposals affecting Airyhall School**

It is accepted that several consultations on rezoning for schools in Aberdeen City this year have affected Airyhall School, and that this has meant that parents, pupils and staff at the school have been asked several times to submit their comments on different sets of proposals.

Whilst it may have been possible to group these proposals together into one consultation document, officers considered that the individual proposals put forwards in these consultations covered fairly complex issues. It was felt that it would have been difficult to explain and discuss each issue clearly enough and in sufficient detail to obtain high quality feedback on each of them, had they been considered together.

Moreover, each set of proposals also affected a number of other schools in the City, and considering them together would have required formal consultation with a large number of school communities at the same time. It would have been difficult to do this effectively using the staff resources which were available to support the consultations.

### **3.9 Alternative Proposal**

Several respondents put forward an alternative proposal to rezone the Broomhill / Ferryhill dual zone area to Broomhill School only, as opposed to zoning the area to Ferryhill School only.

Given that the concerns raised regarding the safety of children crossing the Great Southern Road dual carriageway appear to be justified, officers have reconsidered this aspect of the original proposals, and investigated the feasibility of rezoning both the Broomhill / Airyhall dual zone and the Broomhill / Ferryhill dual zone to Broomhill School only.

The impact on the pupil roll at Broomhill School, if both dual zone areas were to be rezoned to Broomhill, is illustrated below:

	<b>Forecast Pupil Numbers</b>						
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Broomhill School (current arrangements)	400	393	392	392	381	381	381
Broomhill School (including whole of Airyhall dual zone and whole of Ferryhill dual zone) from 2017	N/A	400	404	411	406	410	411

The pupil capacity of Broomhill School is 420, and the figures above indicate that, if both the Broomhill / Airyhall dual zone and the Broomhill / Ferryhill dual zone were rezoned to Broomhill School only, there would be sufficient capacity within the school to accommodate the additional pupils expected to attend the school in the foreseeable future.

The impact on the pupil roll at Ferryhill School, if the Broomhill / Ferryhill dual zone area was to be rezoned to Broomhill, is illustrated below:

	<b>Forecast Pupil Numbers</b>						
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Ferryhill School (current arrangements)	342	343	333	333	330	317	317
Ferryhill School (excluding Broomhill dual zone) from 2017	N/A	329	318	318	313	305	304

The pupil capacity at Ferryhill School is 387. The figures above indicate that there would be a reduction of approximately 15 pupils at the school, as a result of rezoning the Broomhill / Ferryhill dual zone to Broomhill School only.

Having carefully considered the comments received during the consultation, and having looked at the pupil roll forecast figures shown above, officers felt that it would be appropriate to implement a revision to the proposals for rezoning the Broomhill / Ferryhill dual zone, so that this dual zone area becomes part of the Broomhill school zone only. The proposals for the Broomhill / Airyhall dual zone will remain unchanged.

The revised proposals are set out in the section below.

#### **4. COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 9(1) OF THE SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 AND CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSALS**

Following the conclusion of the consultation period, Section 9(1) of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, requires the Council to review the relevant proposal, having had regard to any written representations that have been received by it during the consultation period, oral representations made to it at the public meeting held on 18 May, and Education Scotland's report.

In terms of Section 10(2) (e) of the said Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, the Consultation Report requires to contain a statement explaining how the Council complied with its duty under the above Section 9(1) of the Act.

With relation to Section 9(1) of the 2010 Act and having considered all of the information received during the consultation process, officers have revised the original proposal which was issued for public consultation and recommend that the Broomhill School / Ferryhill School dual zone area is rezoned to Broomhill School only, whilst the Broomhill School / Airyhall School dual zone area is also rezoned to Broomhill School only, both with effect from 1 August 2017.

#### **5. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Education and Children's Services Committee agrees to implement the proposals to:

1. remove an area of dual school zoning for Broomhill School and Airyhall School, and to include this area within the zone for Broomhill School only, from 1st August 2017.
2. remove an area of dual school zoning for Broomhill School and Ferryhill School, and to include this area within the zone for Broomhill School only, from 1st August 2017.

**Gayle Gorman**  
**Director of Education and Children's Services**  
**November 2016**

## REPORT FROM EDUCATION SCOTLAND

**Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the following proposals by Aberdeen City Council. Proposal 1: remove the area of dual school zoning for Broomhill School and Airyhall School, and to include this area within the zone for Broomhill School only, from 1 August 2017.**

**Proposal 2: to remove an area of dual school zoning from Broomhill School and Ferryhill School, and to include this area within the zone for Ferryhill School only, from 1 August 2017.**

### 1. Introduction

1.1 This report from Education Scotland has been prepared by HM Inspectors in accordance with the terms of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* and the amendments contained in the *Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014*. The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of Aberdeen City Council's proposal to remove the area of dual school zoning for Broomhill School and Airyhall School, and to include this area within the zone for Broomhill School only, from 1 August 2017. Also to remove an area of dual school zoning from Broomhill School and Ferryhill School, and to include this area within the zone for Ferryhill School only, from 1 August 2017.

1.2 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' overall view of the proposal. Upon receipt of this report, the Act requires the council to consider it and then prepare its final consultation report. The council's final consultation report should include a copy of 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 final consultation report three weeks before it takes its final decision. Where a council is proposing to close a school, it needs to follow all legislative obligations set out in the 2010 Act, including notifying Ministers within six working days of making its final decision and explaining to consultees the opportunity they have to make representations to Ministers.

1.3 HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for children and young people of Broomhill School, Ferryhill School and Airyhall School; any other users; children likely to become pupils within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper; and other children and young people 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.

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

- attendance at the public meeting held on 18 May 2016 at Broomhill School 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
- visits to the sites of Broomhill School, Ferryhill School and Airyhall School, including discussion with relevant consultees.

## 2. Consultation Process

2.1 Aberdeen City Council undertook the consultation on its proposals with reference to the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* and the amendments in the *Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014*.

2.2 The formal consultation ran from 9 May 2016 until 20 June 2016. The council posted the consultation document on its website. Copies of the document were distributed to local libraries and made available at Broomhill School, Ferryhill School and Airyhall School. Notice of the issuing of the proposal document was issued to parents of every pupil in attendance at Broomhill School, Ferryhill School and Airyhall School and to all parent council groups. In addition the consultation document was issued to council officers, Members of the Scottish Parliament, the Member of Parliament for the area and to Education Scotland.

2.3 Eighteen stakeholders attended a public meeting at Broomhill School on 18 May 2016. A number of concerns were raised by those present relating to the proposals. These included children having to undertake longer journeys and having to cross major roads at peak times. The council received 13 written responses from interested parties relating to Proposal 1. More than half were not supportive. The main concerns expressed related to increased distance, the safety of children in relation to crossing major roads and also the potential negative impact on local house prices. A written submission on behalf of Airyhall Parent Council queried the statistical data provided, in particular the lack of clarity regarding the numbers of children from the current dual zone who currently attend Airyhall School and Broomhill School. In terms of Proposal 2 the council received two written responses. These did not support the proposal citing road safety concerns relating to children crossing a major road and also increased distance to travel to Ferryhill in comparison to current distance to Broomhill.

## 3. Educational Aspects of Proposal

3.1 The council has set out a reasonable case for the proposed changes to the school zoning for Broomhill, Ferryhill and Airyhall Schools. In arriving at its proposals it gave good consideration to the significant housing developments in and around the Countesswells Road area to ensure sufficient capacity at Airyhall School. It also gave good consideration to current and planned occupancy at Broomhill School and Ferryhill School to make best use of availability capacity. Proposals 1 and 2 will help the council secure best value by

addressing capacity issues in its school estate. There is no detriment for families with children currently attending Broomhill, Ferryhill and Airyhall Schools. It ensures all three schools, in particular Airyhall School work within capacity in the coming year. It also ensures each school has sustainable and viable pupil rolls which will allow schools to plan accordingly and ensure effective teacher staffing numbers and learning and teaching is maintained.

3.2 A very small number of parents from Broomhill and Ferryhill Schools met with HM Inspectors. Overall they were supportive of both proposals. They liked that the zones would now be clearer. Parents from both schools thought Proposal 1 would offer children in the current dual zone area safe access to Broomhill School along a well maintained route. They did not see any negative impact on Broomhill School as the number of houses in the dual zone areas were reasonably small. Ferryhill Parent Council were supportive of Proposal 2. However, both Broomhill and Ferryhill parents acknowledged concerns regarding the safety of children who walk to school having to cross Great Southern Road under Proposal 2. Broomhill School parents queried the validity of the pupil projection data relating to the proposals. The lack of information on how many children from the dual zone areas currently attend Broomhill and Ferryhill Schools was seen to be unhelpful.

3.3 A very small number of parents from Airyhall School met with HM Inspectors. They felt Proposal 1 would help address potential capacity issues within Airyhall School as a result of current and planned housing developments. The Parent Council had received seven objections from parents. A key issue was the safety of children travelling from the current dual zone area on foot or cycle to Broomhill School.

3.4 All management, teaching and support staff from Broomhill, Ferryhill and Airyhall Schools who met with HM Inspectors supported both the proposals. They did not see any negative impact on either staff or existing pupils. They acknowledged that all three schools currently have capacity to accommodate any additional numbers the proposed zoning changes might generate. However, Broomhill School staff expressed concerns about the safety of children walking on a busy road to Ferryhill School under Proposal 2.

3.5 Children at Broomhill School who met with HM Inspectors were not fully aware of the proposals. Whilst they welcomed the opportunity to make new friends they expressed concerns about Broomhill School's ability to accommodate more children due to current class sizes. They were also concerned about the impact any changes might have on children being able to walk to school safely.

## **4. Summary**

4.1 The council's proposals are of educational benefit in the long term. Proposals 1 and 2 will help the council secure best value by addressing capacity issues in its school estate. There is no detriment for families with children currently attending Broomhill, Ferryhill and Airyhall Schools. It ensures all three schools, in particular Airyhall School, work within capacity in the coming year. It also ensures each school has sustainable and viable pupil rolls which will allow schools to plan accordingly and ensure effective teacher staffing numbers and learning and teaching is maintained.

4.2 In its final consultation report, the council needs to offer reassurance to existing parents in the former dual zone areas who already have children at all three schools and also have younger children about future choices. The council

should also take steps to allay the concerns of parents and children by ensuring safe routes to schools where children will have to cross major roads. It should also address the lack of clarity regarding the specific numbers of children from the current dual zone who currently attend Ferryhill School, Airyhall School and Broomhill School and share this information with parent bodies.

**HM Inspectors**  
**Education Scotland**  
**August 2016**