

Responses to Statutory Consultation on Glashieburn and Middleton Park

Aug – Oct 2013 (Part 2 14 Sept to 4 October 2013)

The following comments and views have been received in connection with the Aberdeen City Council proposal

“(a) To close Glashieburn and Middleton Park Schools and establish an amalgamated school within the existing Glashieburn building and campus .

and

(b) to vary the delineated (catchment) area of Middleton Park, Brimmond School and Bucksburn Academy.”

These views and comments do not necessarily represent the views of Aberdeen City Council.

14/9/13

Middleton park & Glashieburn - We don't all fit so please don't make us.
My nieces (and their friends) in Middleton Park primary school will suffer.

Hi,

I am a parent of an 8 year old boy who loves going to his current Glashieburn School.

I think he would be unhappy if other children were to invade his space.

Please give the kids space to have a decent education. These children are our future doctors, teachers etc.

If it is nothing to do with saving money then leave the schools as they are.

Why try to fix something that is not broken ?

Would you like your child / children to go to an overcrowded school ?

I don't so PLEASE PLEASE leave them as they are.

Thanks

Would just like to re-iterate my strong objection to Middleton Park school closure for the reasons given below.

From what I have heard from the consultation meetings I have no further confidence in the council closure plans in the document or find real beneficial reasons for closure of the school.

Thanks,

Dear Councillors,

Just a note to let you that as a parent of two pupils at Middleton Park primary school (Aberdeen) I as well as many others oppose the proposed closing down and merger of MP Primary school. I have already expressed my views in writing to local councillors before in quite detail on more than one occasion, but basically we as parents cannot understand how the new pupil nos will fit into Glashieburn school and all teaching facilities provided to all pupils to benefit their learning and education (capacity issues). Why is a high performing school such as MP Primary being targeted for closure, and has future residential expansion in the area being considered by the council in all details with respect to these decisions. From reading the consultation reports it doesnt look like it this has been detailed enough.

Also having looked over the consultation report I do not see any clear guidelines, recommendations on what will happen to out of zone children. This is a big area of concern to me as we live out of zone and my eldest will be going to Oldmachear next year with my youngest still in Primary.

I strongly object to the proposed merger plans.

Regards,

15/9/13

As the parent of the two newest additions to Bramble Brae I would like to comment on the professionalism and commitment shown by the Head Teacher and staff to ease my children's transition to their school.

My son has mild Autism and has started P3 and my daughter has just started P1 and I was concerned moving them to Bramble Brae from Seaton Primary where they were settled. But Seaton and Bramble Brae are very much schools with their community at the centre and tend to give more than 100% which is evidenced by the enthusiasm of all the staff.

I can give no greater testimony that to have my own children attend Bramble Brae and I hope that this strong community maintains their identity with their own school within their community. And I strongly want Bramble Brae to stay open.

To Aberdeen city council,

I am writing to you in concern to the merger between Glashieburn primary and Middleton park primary. I have a son who attends the ASN Base at Glashieburn school and feel his education would be compromised if this merger goes ahead. My son struggles with reading and writing and needs a quiet environment to learn and feel he would not receive this in the new school. I recently attended one of the meetings and heard that the ASN Base at Glashieburn currently have too much space and this would be reduced to accommodate other classrooms. If the area is reduced and there are other classes along side then I feel this would not be beneficial to either the children in the base and the children working in classes next to the base. My son has problems with concentration and if there is

another class working so close to his own he will become very distracted and not manage to hold concentration on his own work. I feel that there will also be a lack of space for the teaching areas that fit within the new curriculum for excellence. The area that Glashieburn has is not suitable for the proposed amount of children that will be in the new school. I feel that even by rearranging some of the internal areas this will still not solve the problem that there simply is not enough space. How will the new school cope with lunch times with so many children to cater for, will children eating pack lunches be forced to eat in their classrooms as there won't be enough space for everyone to have school dinners at the same time. I also feel that there will be more traffic and congestion at drop off and pick up times, due to parents driving children to school. It is not realistic to assume that the children will walk, sometime circumstances do not allow this, working parents dropping one child at school then another to private nursery and then to work for example. Others may need to pick children up due to after school commitments such as swimming lessons and not have enough time to walk home before lesson start. So my point is even if you would like all the children to walk, this will not happen. This will create an increased problem around Glashieburn school. Please keep our schools as they are.

16/9/13

I run an under fives group in the bridge of don area I currently have a waiting list to attend this group,so I can't understand why two primary school need to be merged together.

Closing school means closing nursery.

Parents who attend the group are very upset that there child/children will be attending a primary school that will have cramp conditions due to lack of space,and continued interruptions as other classes move around them.

Class numbers will be high so teachers will be unable to give one to one teaching to children who may need more support.

Getting to school school is going to be a safety issue as Glashieburn Primary only has a small car park and has no drop off/pick up area at the front of the school as it is on a busy main road.I dread to think what the congestion will be like along with people travelling to work.

I'm aware there is going to be new houses built in the area this to me would bring new families to the area,where do these children go surely not into an already crowded school.

I am writing to express my disappointment with the proposal document and the educational benefits statement.

Overall the proposal seems to suggest that a larger school is the "way forward" for schooling and will provide educational benefit for our children.

However, no-where in the document are there actual facts to prove that larger schools do actually achieve educational benefit to the pupils in Glashieburn or Middleton Park.

Give us examples to show how a school with a capacity of 460 or over, there are some in the city, works differently from GB or MP and prove to us that this creates better results in educational terms for the children concerned. WE NEED PROOF.

In terms of sharing information and planning etc, this is done at GB - there is one full and one composite class for each year group and the teachers work together and also the upper level and lower level teachers works closely together.

The Oldmachar ASG teachers undertake CPD together and know each other well. Surely one of the advantages of having our schools close together is that this pool of expertise could be used between schools - we don't need to merge to do this - ACC employs all staff - do they not ensure this is

happening anyway across schools - stop putting the whole onus on the individual HT - where are all the specialist teachers we used to have & were shared between schools??

Re extra curriculum activities in a larger school- what teacher will have the energy to do this any more than at present given that they will have increased class sizes which must create extra work when in class and afterwards????

We have had no answers or facts behind the sweeping assumptions made in Section 7 - please consider this when reviewing this proposal.

You may recall that at least one of our parents has already emailed you to ask for reassurances that an EHRIA has been carried out as part of planning to merge our two schools. We see this as an absolutely critical part of the process. The Council's own policy says this should happen as soon as possible in the planning process.

There is of course a huge potential for significant adverse impact on the ASN base children in particular. There will be around 200 more children in the same 1970s building at any one time and your officers have made it clear that their plans involve cutting the "overly generous" space currently afforded to the ASN base. In a seeming acceptance that the officers got their sums wrong, there has even been talk of covering over the internal courtyards to use as classrooms. These areas are currently already used as outdoor "flexible teaching areas" that are very well utilised by the base as well as the wider school. It is for these reasons we feel an EHRIA should have been done even before the February decision and should have been included as part of the documentation.

I note Council officials today insisted to the Press and Journal that the EHRIA has been done. We cannot believe this has not been shared as part of the consultation. We would ask you to provide it to us or direct us towards it with immediate effect.

I have attached a copy of the Council's guidance on these matters.

Yours sincerely,

I have tonight spent considerable time looking at the 2012 roll projections for Aberdeen City Primary Schools.

Some things I require clarification on

1. Continually we are being told that by 2015 Middleton Park are 2nd bottom of non denominational schools. For this to be Bramble Brae must be out of the equation. Furthermore a number of schools have a very similar roll. Allowing for margins of error the drastic 2nd bottom stat doesnt necessarily hold true.

2. What is a large school? - 33/49 schools have a roll under 300? Over half under 250! If the Educational Benefits of a large school are so great I would be worrying about the education of a large number of schools in Aberdeen.

3. The capacity of the recent primary new builds is low - Heathryburn 279; Braehead 279; Westpark 360; Hazelhead 306; Manor Park 252. None are near burst primary's 460 capacity. If it is not good enough for a new build ... and if big is so beautiful?

4. Burst Primary would be peaking near top of school rolls in city!
I really don't get it. Because this is apparently not financially motivated and is for the benefit of my children. And for equality of educational provision across the city.

It just doesn't add up.

17/9/13

It has now been more than one week and I have received no response to my correspondence. It is notable from a friend of mine you answered their email dated 11/09/2012. I note it was stated yesterday in the press you have completed the equality impact assessment therefore I am requesting a copy immediately this morning this should require no effort on your part other than sending me the link to what should be a public document that I can find nowhere and have done extensive searching on the internet.

Please also advise when you will respond to my other questions detailed below.

I am also requesting that all the below correspondence be copied to the Consultations views.

Kind Regards

Good Morning

Please note my points below with regards to the proposed closure of Glashieburn & Middleton Park Primary schools:

1. Parking – There is already a limited number of parking spaces at the school for the teaching staff, given the additional number of pupils that will be on-site where will the additional teaching staff required be parking and how much space on the site will additional parking spaces take up. Parents have to park currently in the residential areas nearby when dropping off/picking up and from school, if this is to continue being the practice this is not only going to be problematic but hazardous. This will also cause further annoyance to residents in the area some of which have already had grievances about the usage of street parking; the increased number of parents parking for drop off / pick up will only further increase the level of complaints.
2. Classroom Sizes / Teaching Capability – The increase in the number of pupils in each class will diminish the teaching ability of the teacher as he/she will have reduced one-to-one time with the children and will have to be more vigilant with increased numbers of pupils in the class. The general impression is that the classroom sizes will not be 'fit for purpose' for the numbers of class sizes being discussed do seem to be in anyway suitable for the purposes of teaching children. Glashieburn at present has been setting and achieving high standards which the pupils have

been striving towards, what guarantee is there that the current personnel will remain on-site to continue this progress?

3. Population – the bridge of don population continues to increase all the time, in what way is it beneficial to reduce the number of schools in the area which will ultimately prove to the detriment of the next generation of children’s education. There are more houses being constructed in Dubford which will increase the bridge of Don population and this area is very attractive to young families, with the housing market picking up again there will be an inevitable increase in the number of families in the area.
4. Building / Ground Capacity – Is the current building suitable to hold the capacity that will be introduced in 2014 and how will the playground be structured to deal with the increased number of children, how are the teachers / playground supervisors supposed to monitor the children in the playground.
5. Dietary Requirements – lunchtime can be the busiest time in any primary school, the hall in Glashieburn used for lunchtime barely manages to rotate the children of various ages at present, how is it proposed that the healthy lunchtimes currently provided is maintained and distributed to a larger school population over the same timeframe so as not to interrupt with class times.
6. Social Interaction – my daughter really benefitted from attending Glashieburn nursery and through the nursery made friends that she now has in primary one as well as making new ones. The dynamic currently enjoyed will be completely disrupted by closing the schools and amalgamating them to the complete detriment to the children, it takes time and trust for children to make relationships and this will make school life difficult to say the least having to contend with this adjustment whilst trying to enjoy their learning activities.

Overall I am completely astonished that this matter has actually been taken this far, my initial reaction when I read the documentation was that the people making these decisions on the council had not even visited the sites to examine them for themselves, if they have then they are only interested in cost saving and not the children or their education.

One great example of this was a comment about utilising the Asda car park to then drop of/pick up your child from Glashieburn, anyone who lives in the area would agree that this is not only hazardous with two crossings to make and one of the busiest roads in the Bridge of Don on the right on the way down but would also be extremely time consuming. Also, this would be nowhere near possible in winter time.

I hope that common sense prevails and this proposal is rejected as it should be, Aberdeen City Council have gotten so many things wrong over the last couple of years it would be nice to see them get something right for a change.

Regards,

I would like to express my deep concerns regarding the proposed closure of Middleton Park Primary and subsequent merger with Glashieburn Primary into the existing site. I am very upset by these ridiculous plans by Aberdeen city council to squeeze all the kids into the current Glashieburn school building with no demonstrable educational benefit for any of our children, especially kids with ASN.

Middleton Park is one of the highest attaining schools in Aberdeen, however yet again it finds itself back on the table for proposed school closures. Both Middleton Park and Glashieburn schools are a central part of the community and to lose them in a cost cutting exercise to make way for a new school in the new Grandholm development (which our kids will not be able to attend!) is unthinkable and shocking. I have attended several of the consultation meetings and read the report which I believe is inaccurate and full of errors and has been based on a document for a merger between two academies into a new building!

The proposal fundamentally flawed for a number of reasons outlined below:

1. The proposals do nothing to boost the educational attainment of neither Middleton Park nor Glashieburn Pupils, and I fail to see any benefit to the children and the officers at the meetings can only suggest that it would benefit teachers CPD – this is not acceptable and does not benefit my children!
2. The proposal is very short sighted and certainly does not allow for future pupils, a ridiculous 25 year plan! With MP kids squeezed into the current Glashieburn School it will be close to or over capacity with no room for growth. I am very concerned that my daughter's siblings will not get a place at the amalgamated school as it will be over capacity as the reports predicted figures are unrealistic. Many families are in the same situation as it is impossible to collect children from 2 different schools at the same time!
3. There are no plans to extend or renovate the site, the officers at the meetings have said that the internal courtyards at Glashieburn will need to be covered over to provide teaching spaces suggesting they know there is not enough space.
4. No plans have been made for emergencies such as fire where evacuation of the building is required, but it was suggested they could walk to the academy. There is not enough space outside for the children to muster so there will be in the region of 600 children including the very young nursery kids walking a long way up a very busy road, how can you guarantee the safety of my children?
5. It is ridiculous that the extensive Grandholme development in the Bridge of Don with hundreds of new houses are zoned to Brimmond. Aberdeen city council took the decision to allow this development to proceed, but it seems to be at the cost of our local schools. The Grandholme Trust vision of this new development was that it would join with ease into the existing community which these two schools have been part of for 30 years. This is not what's happening!
6. The Scotia development underway to create approximately 500 homes in the Dubford area, is not having the same effect, the local school is getting an extension!
7. How is it fair for children in Aberdeen to have different standards of education depending on where they happen to live? Kids attending the new 3R schools have lots of space and open learning areas, and a completely different experiences to what's being suggested for our kids, how is this striving for excellence for all pupils!
8. It will take many years for this development to produce a new primary school and the report isn't clear what happens to the kids that will live here. In some places it says they will be zoned to Danestone which involves crossing a busy trunk road during rush hour traffic every day, a terrifying thought! In other places the report suggests that the children are bussed to Brimmond primary, I would be horrified that my 4-5 year old primary 1 child had to go on a bus through the rush hour traffic every morning! Are you going to provide proper car seats for the younger kids?? If I were buying a new house, these issues would definitely put me off buying there! The much more accessible Middleton Park and Forehill Primaries are on their doorstep, it makes no sense at all!
9. Merging the 2 schools will cause traffic chaos on an already busy road, as there are no parking facilities at Glashieburn, residents of neighbouring estates have already complained about the current situation, how will this improve with another 300+ kids being dropped off as parents who will now live too far away for their children to safely walk to school will be forced to drive. It also has an impact on parents getting to work if it takes longer to drop kids off.

10. How are you going to ensure that the kids get a proper lunch each day, both schools already have atleast 2 sittings, 4 sittings will not give the children enough time to eat, let alone queuing up and waiting etc. This will be especially hard for the younger children. Queues of kids waiting for lunch in the corridor "teaching spaces" will be very disruptive. The kids will lose the benefit of interacting with their peers during lunch time play which is very beneficial, currently at Middleton Park this is encouraged and the younger kids thrive from learning from the older kids. To lose this is unthinkable.
11. At lunchtimes and playtime, how can the school cope with nearly 500 children in such a small confined outside space! At present there is a rota for football games as there is only enough outside space for one 7-a-side game at a time! I thought government guidelines suggested kids were supposed to be encouraged to be active to be healthy, what are they going to do?
12. Out of school activities will be effected, how can you have school discos with so many kids, and Christmas nativity plays/shows? Impossible!
13. Existing well established after school and breakfast clubs will be affected due to the longer walk which will not be possible for the younger children causing more expense and disruption to working parents
14. Over-crowding of the Glashieburn site will reduce space for essential learning environments such as computer rooms, libraries, outdoor learning. Its already been suggested by the officers that the outdoor courtyards will have to be covered to make teaching space and the loss of the sensory garden for the ASN unit will be very detrimental. The school will struggle to provide the recommended amount of PE per child per week and the suggestion that PE doesn't have to happen in the gym is ridiculous. Classrooms are not a safe environment for exercise.
15. The ratings of the schools seem to have suddenly changed with no changes! The suitability rating of GB has been changed from C to B, and the suitability rating of MP has been changed from B to C, how convenient!
16. The number of teaching areas inside GB keeps changing. 18 in the previous study in 2009 with no additional work carried out and is now 24, very strange
17. Why has the alleged capacity of GB has suddenly increased from 420 to 460
18. Will there be enough toilet facilities and cloakrooms for so many children or will even more space be lost to provide these?

These are just a few of the questions I have which I'd like answered please.

Creating Burst primary from two well loved successful happy schools is alarming and would certainly not be fit for purpose. How can there be any education benefit to the children at Glashieburn when nothing changes except they have twice as many children and half as much space! I can see no benefit for my children and the whole process has caused incredible upset to my children for nearly a year now. The consultation has failed to provide me with any answers. The educational attainment of children should always be at the heart of any school estates, and by law there has to be educational benefit in making changes which so far has not been demonstrated.

The meetings have produced very little to reassure parents that this is by any stretch of the imagination the best option for the children and staff. No other options have been presented to us or even considered which is disturbing and the consultation appears to be a box-ticking exercise creating more worry and anxiety for all involved.

Please see email below. I have now waited 8 days for a reply to my questions and within those I requested a copy of the equality impact assessment which should be available publicly and is NOT. While I realise things are "busy" this can be passes to anyone within the department who has internet access to simply send me the link to access this information.

I would like this now please.

Regards

Having read your proposals and attended one of the meetings at Ashwood Church I am very disheartened by the apparent lack of logical and reasoned arguments for the actual benefit(s) this will provide for our children and would like to show my objections to the merger proposals.

Among the various reasons, in my opinion that this should not go ahead are the glaringly obvious health and safety aspects to the mere lack of individual space my child will have! I believe clarity is urgently required on where the benefit are in my child having the least internal school space out of the entire Aberdeen City and Shire, bearing in mind by the time toilet and cloakroom facilities are added/increased this will obviously affect our childrens' space even more. Also for the of the travelling to school and back – the current facilities do not have a pick up/drop off point and the streets are already over parked for the current school occupiers.

Having read the proposals and attended one of the meetings at Old Machar Church I am very extremely concerned by the apparent lack of logical and reasoned arguments for the actual benefit(s) this will provide for our children and would like to show my objections to the merger proposals.

If the proposals had shown in any real form a benefit to my child moving I would not be writing this, likewise if the school was being refurbished and increased in size or if a new build was on the cards I could see an immediate benefit and while we would be disappointed to uproot my very happy settled child we would have a valid, beneficial reason to do so.

Among the many reasons, in my opinion that this should not go ahead, are the glaringly obvious health and safety aspects to the mere lack of individual space my child will have! Also for the of the travelling to school and back – the current facilities do not have a pick up/drop off point and the streets are already over parked for the current school occupiers.

I would appreciate if you can please clarify where the benefit is in my child having the least internal school space out of the entire Aberdeen City and Shire. Bearing in mind by the time toilet and cloakroom facilities are added/increased this will obviously drop even more. I would currently like clarification of the estimated space per child once the anticipated changes would be implemented.

Also If you could provide any more actual individual child benefits I would also appreciate this be sent through to me. If you can not provide this information can you please ensure this is passed on to the relevant body who will respond to me queries.

I do not believe that a larger staff within a school necessarily means greater and more meaningful CPD for staff which is apparently one of the main drivers for this proposal. Staff will already be liaising with teachers from all stages within their school. As each child's needs are being met individually, this may require staff to work within all levels of staff within the school. Staff already liaise with each other through staff meetings and curriculum development, both within school and through out of school ASG meetings, inset days and other courses. Many of these courses are attended by staff in their own time to my understanding. As a whole, the teachers are very good at

supporting each other. A change of geographical location for teaching staff is unnecessary to enhance or improve CPD or any of the above points. Further, I see no enhanced educational benefit to the children from this argument.

As children grow, many P7 children are the same height and build of adults. How can each class of potentially 33 Primary 7 children be expected to work, learn and experience the Curriculum for Excellence in limited, squashed class areas? Do adults (who are the same size as some of the older primary children) work in the same cramped conditions in Marischall College? I do not work in such limited space in my employment.

As a parent, I am entitled to make the decision to take my child home for school lunches. With staggered lunchtimes, which seem an inevitable solution to feeding so many children at such a large school, this will probably prove impossible if you have children across different year groups. The council are therefore REMOVING our parental right to spend quality time with our children. How do you propose to manage lunches so that parents can still take their children home for lunch with minimal disruption to their school-day?

Added responsibilities and growing as individuals – all children have the opportunity at present to be selected for added responsibilities such as Playground Leaders (PGLs), Door Monitors and Buddies to younger children as well as Council members and House Captains – this is hugely looked forward to and very much enjoyed. With a much increased school population, how do you propose that every older child has the opportunity to take on this added responsibility which is so important to character building – there are only so many positions available to be shared between the children.

Opportunities for Curriculum for Excellence will be limited if the two schools are merged together. Teachers involve the children in their learning at all stages and this will simply not be possible in the current school building. Curriculum for Excellence encourages children to lead their own learning by looking at what they know already, what they want to learn and how they can achieve this. How will this be possible to achieve when the Council plans to take away our children's opportunity to strive for excellence?

Is it acceptable for the Council to limit our children's achievements, both mental and physical, due to lack of internal space, lack of outdoor space and lack of resources and increased demand on the same, ie ICT and library? I do not think so.

Potentially, the class sizes will be huge. As a parent, I find it very difficult to understand how this can be of any educational benefit to my child. My experience as a parent suggests that my child has always performed better in small classes – this is also the experience of the majority of other parents I have spoken to on this matter and was my own experience as a child. I have consulted with another Primary school teacher, not connected to either of the schools involved here, and he confirms that without any doubt, despite every best intention by the teacher, my child's education will suffer if placed in a class with maximum numbers in a school with the maximum number of possible children across the minimum amount of space.

The sheer reality is that the larger the class, the less time there is to spend interacting and working with my child in any meaningful or productive way.

This proposal is not striving for excellence for our children – please reject it.

I have attended one meeting so far and reviewed the proposal to close Glashieburn and Middleton Park - I have serious concerns on many aspects of the proposal and how this will impact my child. I am a keen cyclist and use this as my form of transport to and from work as well as for recreational purposes at weekends. I therefore fully appreciate the importance of exercise as an aid to concentration and a healthy lifestyle. A huge issue I have is in relation to the reduced space for the children in the combined school and the opportunity to promote the healthy lifestyle which supports my child.

Using outdoor spaces for PE and gym is the ideal – however, realistically, during many times of the school calendar year (not just over Winter), this is simply not possible. Children are not allowed to play in the playground or on the grass area at morning interval or lunchtime when it is rainy, icy or snowy as this is classed as a health and safety issue. Please advise how you plan to ensure my child receives 2 hours of Physical Exercise a week during inclement weather periods (and please do not say they will be expected to use a “flexible teaching area – ie – their classroom.)

And during periods of bad weather, please advise how you propose to provide adequate internal space for the children to allow indoor play during morning interval and lunchtime.

In addition to gym and lunches, please advise how you propose to timetable the following activities into the 2 dinner halls in the Glashieburn building :

1. Drama – as obviously, the class areas / flexible learning areas where tables and chairs are situated are too small to allow for individual expression and movement. Are you proposing that my child moves furniture to accommodate this or are you suggesting that he will no longer be entitled to have freedom of movement ?

2. Assemblies and whole school activities – how can these be accommodated therefore ensuring that all pupils and staff have the opportunity to share successes of individuals, classes, teams and the school at every stage, thereby cementing the “whole school ethos” that has been such an integral part of school culture and such an enjoyable part of my son’s learning experience so far. Please reject this proposal – there is no educational benefit to be gained from reducing space and opportunity for so many children. Thank you.

I would like to register my objections to the proposed closure of Middleton Park Primary School / amalgamation with Glashieburn Primary School on the following basis:-

1. The "proposal" is almost laughable due to the number of typos and inaccuracies contained within it. The committee have had 7 months to put this proposal together and they still cannot get the information correct. One such typo is the fact that Middleton Park have 2 x P6 classes but no P7 class - I am rather concerned then if this is the case as to where my eldest child is going every day!

2. Having attended 2 of the consultation meetings I am still waiting to find out what the true "educational benefit" is to our children. So far all we have heard from Gayle Gorman is how more teachers of the same year gives more benefits. My concerns with this statement are: 1) Glashieburn Primary already have more than one teacher per year so where is the benefit to those children, 2) we are all part of the Oldmachar ASG which provides all the necessary support and 3) have they heard of the internet for sharing information! So what is the true educational benefit to our children?

3. I am extremely concerned about the lack of space within the Glashieburn facility as no extensions are proposed. It is quite clear from the floor plans that the facility is not large enough to accommodate the pupils of Middleton Park in line with Curriculum for Excellence. Active learning clearly requires more space - not less. I know many references have been made to what the roll of Glashieburn Primary was many years ago but that was based around "classroom learning only" and not Curriculum for Excellence. This facility is not fit for purpose for such a high number of pupils.

4. After taking 7 months to come up with the proposal, there is still a lack of detail. No suggested floor plans - now I fully appreciate there are many options and combinations but not even one option has been offered to the parents.
5. Lack of allocated PE time due to conflicting gym hall / dining room times! Again at the consultation meetings one of the members suggested that PE time does not have to take place in the gym hall. While this in itself sounds plausible I do think the committee are forgetting that we do actually live in Aberdeen with very unpredictable weather - how do they propose to schedule PE time during the winter months when it is not feasible for the children to be outside? Aren't we trying to reduce obesity in children????
6. I am also concerned that no risk assessments have been carried out yet. Are they only planning to do this once the amalgamation has taken place? I fail to see, given the space available, how the required walkways/corridors for evacuations can be made available to ensure our children can leave the premises quickly and safely in the event of an emergency. Again had we been shown a proposed floor plan this could be scrutinised further.
7. Traffic problems with a severe lack of parking facilities at Glashieburn Primary - again Charlie Penman stated how it is parents' job to ensure their children arrive at school safely. An acceptable statement to a certain extent however he fails to accept that many parents have purchased their houses with this in mind, knowing full well their children can walk safely to school. The council are the ones moving the goalposts!
It is quite clear that this proposal is just not excellent - surely our children deserve the best possible education we can give them! This is clearly a cost saving exercise and has nothing to do with educational benefit.

I trust these points will be made available to the Education, Culture and Sport Committee for their consideration.

Sorry but not really helpful. I can remember you stating that this would a robust consultation, we were also promised transparency and a working relationship with ACC officers. However today I find out 2 of them are on leave and entitled to this but in the middle of a consultation for 4 schools? seems a bit crazy this is their name to this who should I contact for answers? Apologies for being so direct but unsure how else to put it.

Also what happened to this information being shared with base parents with regard to equality impact assessment ? maybe you can clarify this as it would appear that is a violation of parental rights not knowing if their children are being assessed by an educational psychologists ? I know 2 parents of children in base and they know nothing. Sorry to bombard you but I cant ask Gayle these questions. This is honestly not what I saw coming with regard to this whole process. I thought it would be organised and full of the answers I had questions for the proposed merge.

18/9/13

To whom it may concern,

Seems a terrible shame to close a perfectly good school to save a bit of money.

Middleton Park Primary School exceeds my expectations for a primary school and I am sure it's taken them years to perfect, all of which will be lost if you squeeze all the currently happy children into Glashieburn Primary School.

Aberdeen city council aren't known for making good decisions but hopefully this time they stop before its to late.

I join many other parents and pupils of Middleton Park school in expressing my concerns over the proposed closure and move to the Glashieburn School building.

The main concerns I have are :

Safety concerns over my daughter having to walk much further to and from school on dark winter mornings/evenings.

In bad weather conditions I drive to collect my daughter from school. As far as I can see there is no parking facilities at Glashieburn to accommodate parents vehicles from both schools. This is another safety concern as the traffic / roads will become severely congested in this area. Previously it has been noted that the councils response to this concern is to 'park at Asda' and walk down to the Glashieburn site. This is an unacceptable response. What if the supermarket clamped down on this ? The council should have to make provisions for parking, not Asda !

The Glashieburn building is not large enough to provide an adequate work environment for pupils of both schools. My concern here is that my daughters work and well being suffers, not to mention safety concerns.

My concerns are the same concerns that most of the other parents face. So far the responses from the council against these concerns have not been sufficient enough to alleviate our fears.

I am sorry but this is the dictionary definition of robust-
ro•bust (r -b st , r b st)
adj.

1. Full of health and strength; vigorous.
2. Powerfully built; sturdy. See Synonyms at healthy.
3. Requiring or suited to physical strength or endurance: robust labor.
4. Rough or crude; boisterous: a robust tale.
5. Marked by richness and fullness; full-bodied: a robust wine.

1. Certainly has shown no health, strength, vigorous display ,
2. powerfully built- they have only just gotten architects in to look at the building so we don't even have a clear vision for the school what will be built.? No idea is the answer to that in relation to sturdy we didn't even have a class room layout never mind what will be done with the children when the consultation began
3. non of these apply again the majority of planning is an after though.
4. Rough planning certainly not much planning been done , Crude I will take that out of the equation not appropriate in relation. Boisterous some would agree and is a robust tale but the worst I have ever heard.
5. marked with richness I suppose this part only applies to Aberdeen City Council as I yet have to see this being demonstrated as rich and fulfilling in Educational benefit for the children but all in all the last point certainly applies in this whole process must be requiring parents to drink robust wine.

If I cannot even get an answer within 9 days as to whether I can access a document which is for public domain as well as many other numerous questions, I was promised there would be answers. I am sorry describing this as a robust consultation I feel is not how it should be described at all it is anything but robust. In fact it is the complete opposite.

I thank you for your time and will perhaps see you at the meeting on the 1st of October.

I am writing to you to express my deep concern around the unbelievable farce that is closing Middleton Park School.

Can I just ask if any of you have had sleepless nights as your little one was so unsettled when starting school, if you have had full days at work with only your children on your mind. Well I have and I bet I am not the only Mummy who has. If you have gone through changes in life that has affected your family has a whole??

My 7 year old is now doing amazing at school, she loves her school and has done only since about term 4 in P2!! She was so overwhelmed with school, what was expected from her and also being out to play with what she called the 'Big kids' this was children only a primary or two above her. She used to state she didn't like the noise in the dinner halls, she would not eat lunch just to get out of dinner hall quickly. Being so shy and having no confidence she just wanted to be her friends only. I was going through hell trying to get her to realize how much fun she would have at school and everyone was there to help her, guide her and support her.

She now P3 loves her school, she loves her friends, her teachers, she loves the support she has and knows that she can go speak to her teacher/class room assistant or even one of the other teachers when something is wrong. She is settled. These brilliant teachers/staff also know my daughter inside and out, they know the issues that she has had or still has, as they do with every other face that is in Middleton Park School. This goes for many other Parents that throughout the school, their children have too had at one time something wrong. Some children take to everything like a duck to water, for some children change means something bad. It can remind them of changes at home that maybe were not so good, like in our case my daughters father leaving and never returning, change is not good in her eyes. Change makes her very unsettled!!! Same goes for another parent I know who unfortunately split from her partner, change is not liked taken very well for her son, he is P5 and the change has unsettled him. Or like a P2 child I know, who recently had a death in the family which meant change in routine. Again change was not a good thing. Changes affect children in so many different ways. Don't change the way they are getting an education. Don't unsettle our children!!

This is of course only 1 huge concern in merging the two schools. But it is one that hits home and affects the children the most!!

Other concerns are of course –

- 1) Over crowding
- 2) Taking away so much support systems in place.
- 3) Lack of facility's
- 4) Health & Safety fears & Issues
- 5) Traffic around School
- 6) Our children not getting the best out of their education

I could go on and on. What you are planning on doing is an absolute shambles, the life's you are affecting is ridiculous, the unnecessary stress you are causing is wrong, the unnecessary change you are going to do, that affects our children is criminal and the possibility of closing a brilliant school is diabolical.

Middleton Park School is second to none and every child gets the education, support and help they deserve, need and want.

Concentrate on other issues that needs to be addressed in our city.

Don't close our school, please do not take our children's education away and bring bad changes to our children's life's.

Regards,

- > I am writing in response to the report on the proposed closure of
- > Middleton Park School and merger with the Glashieburn pupils on the
- > existing Glashieburn campus.
- >
- > Both of my daughters attend Middleton Park, therefore I feel I must
- > write to you to express my absolute amazement that this school is even
- > being considered for closure!
- >
- > Apart from the very obvious fact that this is an excellent school with
- > good attainment levels, excellent inspection reports, high attendance
- > and, above all, the pupils here love their school and have a very high
- > standard education in spacious surroundings. There are many other
- > flaws in the proposal.
- >
- > The report on the matter makes for comical reading at best. It is
- > packed full of grammatical errors, cutting and pasting from other
- > school closure reports, fudged numbers and various other very obvious
- > mistakes that I'm sure the Primary 4 pupils at Middleton park could
- > spot at a quick glance (they seem to be particularly good at English,
- > unlike whoever wrote this ridiculous report.)
- >
- > It appears obvious to me that this report has been 'rattled together'
- > as a mere paper exercise and very little thought has gone into how
- > this proposal will affect the pupils of these school.
- >
- > For a start, It is glaringly obvious that despite protests from
- > officers there is NO EDUCATIONAL BENEFIT in squeezing all our children
- > into a sub-standard learning facility, where potentially they could
- > loose playground space, library space or computer areas. 'Burst Primary'
- > would have the lowest internal space per child of any school in
- > Aberdeen, which would clearly mean our children's learning experience
- > will suffer.
- >
- > The report states that there will be 'flexible learning spaces', and

- > there was even a suggestion from one of the councillors at a recent
- > meeting that the children could do gym lessons "in their classrooms"
- > oh yes, the already overcrowded, smaller-than-the-Aberdeen-average
- > classroom will be perfect for a game of rounders!! I'm amazed no one
- > has suggested using the toilets as an art room, surely it's a
- > 'flexible learning space'?
- >
- > It is also plain to see that the main reason for closing our excellent
- > school, would be to SAVE COUNCIL MONEY! This is totally unacceptable
- > as far as I'm concerned. The debt of the city council should in no way
- > have a detrimental impact on the education of my children!
- >
- > I'm not totally unrealistic, I do realise that possibly both schools
- > are now getting on a bit and could do with modernisation, so here's an
- > idea, knock them both down and build us a lovely, shiny new school
- > just like the one the press are leading everyone to believe we are getting anyway?
- > One that will easily accommodate all the pupils in the catchment area,
- > with room for a growing population and one that will provide our
- > children with an even better learning environment than they already
- > have? After all, this whole school amalgamation proposal is solely
- > about the education of our children isn't it? Certainly not about
- > saving money in any way?!
- >
- > I could go on all day listing the flaws in this grand plan, but I have
- > two children to look after and a job to go to so I'll just make a few
- > bullet points for you to consider.
- >
- > - NO EDUCATIONAL BENEFIT WHATSOEVER!
- > - Severe lack of space/overcrowding
- > - Traffic congestion
- > - Walking to school no longer option for many
- > - Parking or lack thereof!
- > - Nursery provision, where will all the extra kids go?
- > - What about the kids who are of catchment area and currently attend
- > our schools?
- > - Logistics of lunchtimes/canteen
- > - Base unit, loss of space?
- > - Grandholm development/population of BoD rising
- > - Re-zoning BoD kids to Brimmond - ludicrous!
- > - How will teachers be split amongst classes??
- >
- > If I think of any more, (I'm sure I will) I'll send them on, but
- > there's a starting point!
- >

Regarding plans by the city council to push through the merger of Middleton Park Primary with Glashieburn Primary I would like to voice my complete opposition to this proposal.

At previous meetings and consultations it was clear after a short time that there are serious flaws in what seems like a very convenient plan in which Middleton Park (a consistently proven high performing school) is again put under threat in order to save our council money.

You want to move 177 children and teachers in to a school that is at 66% capacity, our school is at 77% (this does not include the children in two portakabins) when it's not a fact of building a big new high spec school, which is clearly not happening!! What we will get is a school crammed with children who lose out on music rooms, computer rooms as well as increased lunch sittings so they can squeeze them all in. Surely a better idea would be to shelve this idea for 5-6 years when the catchment area will be near the capacity where we would be in line for brand new school what with all the proposed new homes?

From your website Glashieburn is graded C and in some parts D therefore not fit for purpose whilst Middleton Park is graded B in most areas which is surely something the Curriculum for Excellence takes into account. Children in a grade C/D environment will not perform as they do not have the facilities and environment to do so! This also does not take into account the impact of a 40% rise in a school roll and the deterioration of the facilities. When you also include things like infrastructure where Glashieburn is also right on Jesmond Drive but does not have the parking of ASDA and there are already two incidents of children being knocked over and adding all these extra children surely increases the risk!!!

Bullet points to consider,

- NO EDUCATIONAL BENEFIT WHAT SO EVER!
- Severe lack of space/overcrowding
- Traffic congestion
- Walking to school no longer option for many
- Parking or lack of!
- Nursery provision, where will all the extra kids go?
- What about the kids who are of catchment area and currently attend our schools?
- Logistics of lunchtimes/canteen
- Base unit, loss of space?
- Grandholm development/population of BoD rising
- Re-zoning BoD kids to Brimmond - ludicrous!
- How will the teachers be split amongst classes??

Now I am totally in favour of change if it is for the better but to me this is a nonsensical proposal that has not been properly researched and causing disruption and upset to the parents/children of a very happy and well performing school, not to mention Glashieburn Primary who are in the same boat!!

I truly hope that you see sense and throw this out, putting our children's education first and look at alternative methods to save money!

On the matter of school mergers in particular the merging of Middleton Park and Glashieburn I would like to raise my strong objection to this merger on the grounds that,

1. The old Glashieburn school will be overcrowded to the point that Health and Safety guidelines will be breached.

2. Guaranteed that class sizes will breach EU law and Scottish Government guidelines although you will claim otherwise.
3. Why close a school that is rated in the top 3 for attainment in the 3 r's.
4. If the reason for closing Middleton Park is that it is underutilised, why then does it still have two portable classrooms?
5. This is the third time that this merger has been mooted and twice before the council have backed down because they accepted it was not in the INTEREST OF THE PUPILS and at the end of the day that is all we are all interested in.

Please do not merge these two schools as it is in the interest of all they stay as separate schools.

I am totally opposed to this idea.

Whilst everyone can accept overall savings from council budgets have to be found / made in the short term, this idea strikes me as short sighted given the ongoing expansions to housing Abdn Council have for the Bridge of Don area.

Having been a resident in the area for almost 20 years, I have seen little in the way of improvements to roads, schools or infrastructure, yet all we seem to face is closures, poorer services and a future where even more housing is being built / considered with even less thought being given to the overall affect or quality of life being offered to the residents.

We continue to have to cope with little or no infrastructure in one of the biggest housing areas in Aberdeen and already have to accept shameful local area services, very little in the way of shopping areas whilst the council continue to accept further proposals for more housing with little in the way of improvements to the overall infrastructure.

The roads, daily commute and access to Bridge of Don is already shocking and beyond broken in most people's opinion and the council should be considering building more schools in the area in my opinion and not considering closing ones, especially ones that are outperforming others in the area and in Aberdeen in general.

It's about time councillors and planners started to listen to the needs of the people they serve and stop following some single minded approach to problems with schools, roads, infrastructure etc and provide better facilities for the future, instead of a very short term, blinkered approach to issues local people care most about.

The whole point of the consultation is for as many people to engage in the process and officers at the meetings have stated they welcome and encourage this. Even though in contrast there has been very little advertisement of this or the fact that child care has been available to enable more people to engage more at public meetings.

I was at the town house last night and the boards outside are pretty empty nothing about consultations which I personally find strange given that is the very place the decision making will take place.

Education or Burst and the parent councils are simply trying to encourage people to engage with the consultation. The large number of queries is a reflection of the fact that a large number of people are extremely concerned about this proposal and that the school communities feel there is a large number of questions unanswered.

Perhaps the consultation period should be extended to allow officers time to catch up, and to allow us time to respond to their answers during the consultation period? My understanding is this both an

option and be a fair way for the consultation to proceed with maximum participation from parents and the public.

Think it is time for it to be given thought as to whether there is sufficient time between now and the 11th of October for this to be fulfilled for a fair consultation. As you clearly pointed out there has been more engagement than normal and I would stress again this needs to be looked at now before we run out of time which is ticking fast and clearly officers are not coping with this work load.

Why would the council see it necessary to close a primary school that excels so well at teaching their pupils. It seems from what we are being informed that our children will have to sit in overcrowded classes in another school which clearly isn't big enough to accommodate. My oldest two children had attended Middleton Park school and both have nothing but praise for the level of commitment given by the teaching staff. Their final grades at secondary in the last two years reflecting the hard work that all schools had in their development. My youngest two are currently attending Middleton Park and it is comforting to know that they will get the same level of tuition that my eldest two had. Only the council reckons that a fantastic achieving school should be closed, for why? To save money? That would be ridiculous though after all the hard work that has been put in to create a primary school that offers so much. Our children's education is PARAMOUNT not something that can be easily discarded to save money. As I tax payer I would hope at least that the council will see sense and do the right thing and that is hold on to something truly worth keeping.

Amalgamating two schools that run on their own perfectly well is going to create an educational monster, stress and bad feeling for our councillors that could be so easily avoided with simple common sense.

There is no discussion in the proposal around the IT provision within the new school. Both schools currently have PC suites to provide access to the necessary equipment for 21st century learning. In the new overcrowded school there is no where within the so called flexible learning spaces to provide access to the IT that our children will need to survive education in the 21st century.

To not provide such detail is unacceptable.

The proposal document needs to be rewritten and this among other issues need addressed before the document progresses to review by Education Scotland.

It has today come to my attention that Education Officers have deliberately deceived key stakeholders, members of the Education, culture and sport Committee and the press.

On 5th September at a public consultation meeting regarding the Glashieburn/Middleton Park proposal (at which members of the Education, culture and sport committee were present) officers were questioned regarding the amount of internal space per child there would be in the proposed amalgamated school.

The officers stated "those figures (referring to the campaign group Education or Burst's figures showing the amalgamated school having the least internal space per child of any school in the city) are wrong". They then told the meeting that they had the correct figures and if we asked for them they would show us.

Today, the 18th September, almost two weeks since those statements, Middleton Park Parent Council received an email which says we cannot have that information because;

"We are endeavouring to ensure that these details are as accurate and reliable as possible. As you will be aware, schools buildings are large and complex establishments, often accommodating other

services and with internal layouts which can be reconfigured vary over time. We will provide these as soon as we are sure that they are reliable and that they are comparing like with like."

It is clear that on the 5th September they did not have the information. Without that information they were in no position to claim that Education or Burst's figures were wrong. It was a lie, designed to deliberately deceive those present at the meeting, intending to make them think that the proposed amalgamated school wouldn't be "bottom of the league" for internal space per pupil.

I ask you to consider this information and provide me with a quick response on how you intend to take this forward. I, and I know once this information becomes more widely known, many others, cannot tolerate this behaviour during such an important consultation. If the officers lied about this what else have they lied about?

Please find below questions for the consultation for submission of views
Please explain how "temporary " the rezoning is for the grand home children to Brimmond ?
Please explain how you think with the advice of an educational psychologist after the temporary rezoning is restructured these children will cope after already being integrated into another community and have formed bonds/friendships with peers and staff and then have to settle with new staff and peers ? How long would it be estimated for those children to settle into their new school and the possibility that they have to entirely break bonds already formed and little contact given that parents live busy lives.

Another point I have never said I believe the opposite of what officers are saying 1 they are not sure what they are saying 2 without clear fact how can I be opposed 3 I clearly say I am not adverse to change I want evidence big difference 4 we were led to believe this document would have answers but instead has created more questions and anxiety 5 no one is giving answers even when they do reply it is all generic waffle 6 a description of robust isn't fitting

I.II think of more

Section 3.1.2

"At a later date, it is the intention that statutory consultations will take place to create new detailed zones within the Grandhome development for the two/three new schools to be delivered within the development;

So. We have a consultation to close Middleton Park before a consultation to discuss the placing of new schools at Grandhome which are directly linked to the closure of Middleton Park.

How can something as important as a school closure be actioned at a time by a development that has not yet reached planning permission stage?

Secondly.What is Aberdeen City Council's track record on forcing developers to build new schools / take responsibility for schools provision in the city?

I am very angry and disappointed, I recently attended a meeting about the closure of Middleton Park and the amalgamation with Glashieburn. quite frankly the Councillors who attended the meeting did not put my mind at ease,We all had lots of questions which they managed to bluff through without giving straight answers and a lot of their facts were incorrect.
Glashieburn School is simply not big enough to accommodate all our pupils!! Why should they lose facilities like their music room .library etc and why should our pupils be squashed in when they have a perfectly great school just now.

This is not going to improve our children s education!!! This is just money saving!!! Our children deserve the best. this is their future you want to disrupt .
Some of the classrooms are going to be in corridors!! My son is already in a class of 30.
PLEASE ACC THINK IF IT WAS YOUR CHILDREN IS THIS WHAT YOU WOULD WANT FOR THEM

19/9/2013

I apologise for my draft last night. I would like to point out further.

Lets look at the logisitics of the 2 current consultations and in my mind why this too isn't working from a professional factual point of view.

1 ACC are running consultations for 4 schools in 33 days

2 All parents and communities have been waiting since February to engage and have been anxiously waiting since

3 how many parents and people are there in those communities?

4 has ACC made a realistic provision for staff to cope ?

My whole point is I don't know much about Bramble brae or Quarryhill. What I do know is Bridge of Don logistically even is a massive amount of householders. These are 4 big communities, How was it projected for how much participation there would be ?

I will reiterate again I am not against officers, it is their job to prove this proposal is justified and had weight in evidence. We were told numerous times by you. You believed in educational benefit and to save up our questions for the consultation. That was the time to do so and now there isn't enough time to attend us all.

I could go on but really I must go to work. This opens up many more points I am sure you will agree.

Thank you to those of you who have replied so promptly. I do appreciate that.

I have been asked to withdraw my accusation. I would like to clarify that I am aware of the seriousness of the accusation I have made. I consider this a very serious situation we find ourselves in. If in a public meeting officers do not have information they should be willing to say that and not claim they do.

Perhaps they did not intend to deliberately deceive us but the facts remain, the statements made by officers at that meeting, cannot be backed up by the facts and figures they said they had available. There is no doubt this misled everyone attending the meeting.

I do not consider this acceptable for this important consultation

I have struggled through your Consultation document re: the aforementioned primary school merger.

I have several questions which relate to the educational benefits you seem to think this new school will provide.

1. I am confused (as everyone is!) as to HOW larger class sizes are of benefit to the children who will attend the school when all of the evidence points to the opposite being the case (if you had done a literature search on any of the Education Databases you could find this out with relative ease).
2. With larger classes children will receive less individual attention from teachers – again HOW can this be a benefit?
3. In not increasing the size of the school – children will have much less space to run around in outside during breaks (regular breaks are important), HOW is this an educational benefit?
4. There will be no way to have whole of school Christmas concerts etc. meaning children (and parents) won't feel part of the WHOLE school as there is no way that all the children will be able to come together in these activities (and not just concerts also assemblies, team time etc). HOW can this be of educational benefit?

Part of the problem with this consultation is the **total lack of detail**.

Saying that you will leave everything for the headteacher to sort out in the 6 week summer holiday isn't an answer its passing the buck – these are two wholly different things.

I am against this merger, **you have thus far been unable to provide any convincing arguments that it is a 'good thing'**.

My daughter has just recently left Middleton Park school to attend the additional needs base at Glashieburn. She was at Middleton Park from nursery to P3. Middleton Park is a great school but just didn't have the support to keep my daughter there, throughout her years there, the school did everything to help her. My daughter started a fresh as a P4 pupil at Glashieburn, I am very saddened to hear that if the two schools merge that the additional needs base will be cut from the school, my daughter has already had to move which caused her a lot of stress and upset, she doesn't like change! If this merge happens, it means her possibly being moved again!!! She has now settled in so well at Glashieburn, the school were so welcoming and friendly towards her. At the time of her visits to Glashieburn I felt really sad and upset for her, watching her cry and hold on to me while I left her. Not only are you causing upset to my daughter but every child who attend both schools. Surely you as councillor have children who attend a great school. how would you feel if this was your child's school?! It's absolutely shocking and disgusting. Your statistics are all wrong, you can't back up anything you have said. There is no need for all this!!!! If this goes ahead my daughter will have to move again, she is coming on so well with the help of Glashieburn base, we have really struggled to get the help for her and now have a happy, outgoing and peaceful little girl, no longer does she struggle and home life with her is fantastic due to the support she receives from her school. I really don't want to go backwards and I don't want my daughter to ever struggle again or have to deal with moving again. Closing these two primaries is the wrong decision for our community!! Surely you can see this with amount of people NOT backing your proposal!!! You will only have more problems in the end if you decide to close and merge.

The 3Rs schools have been excluded from the financial costs in the document. I find it hard to believe that there is no system in place to directly compare the financial burden of these schools with the non PPP / PFI schools.

Please provide details of the 3Rs schools costs allowing direct comparison with the other schools.

Was the affordability of the 3Rs schools considered throughout the life of their contracts, including any impact which indexation may have on the year on year unitary change?

I feel these are relevant questions given this has all supposed to be about effective management of the schools estate.

Was anything other than approximate number of 1970s teaching areas considered before putting forward this proposal?

Do the council's officers feel that it is acceptable to plan a "new" school with classrooms of just over 40m2. A fraction of what is considered modern best practice?

Why are the capacities of old schools exaggerated by a lack of adjustment in their teaching area sizes? This would at least bring them slightly closer to the standard of modern schools.

The following quotes are taken from the foreword of the Scottish Government's "Building Better Schools" document. This is very relevant to consider when planning the amalgamated school "Burst Primary".

"Scottish Government and local authorities will need to work towards eradicating sub-standard schools and ensure that the whole of the school estate is prioritised, reorganised where necessary and well maintained. The Strategy is relevant to all aspects of the school estate – new buildings and improvement of existing ones."

Can you provide evidence that the amalgamated school in the existing Glashieburn facility, filled above its current capacity and based largely on 1970s teaching areas is not sub-standard for the creation of a "new" modern 21st century school?

"A fundamental change is underway in Scottish education – a holistic approach to more effective learning and teaching. Curriculum for Excellence is already driving changes to the concept of the school – its purposes, functions, design and the way spaces are used. In turn, the buildings, the physical environment and facilities must themselves also be drivers of change. They need to be more than just passive or responsive, to be used and adapted. They need to inspire and challenge both learners and teachers to think in new and imaginative ways about the surroundings within which learning takes place, indeed about the very 'how' it takes place. Buildings can and should be real catalysts for creativity."

Can you provide evidence that the amalgamated school will fully support all these aspirations?

"We recognise that although the current government and councils together can ensure that progress and improvements are made"

Can you provide firm evidence that the amalgamated school provides better facilities for learning and space etc than the children currently enjoy?

"as we each play our part in creating a school estate which is a credit to our nation and schools which are a source of pride and pleasure to all who use them."

Do the Council believe that Burst Primary will be a credit to our nation (or even our city) and a source of pride and pleasure for all who use it?

How will the learning environment at Burst Primary compare with a modern school e.g. A 3Rs school?

Sorry me again. I will explain as quickly as possible what I understand of Roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in the statutory consultation at the moment, Where we are at in real terms. Excuse me at times if this is short and sharp if I had the luxury of time. I would make an appointment

to come and see you but I truly mean this without being sarcastic I would have to book the morning or afternoon to discuss this. Unfortunately though I have to work.

Roles

Officers - are trying to review the whole of Aberdeen city schools estates. Within that equation are the children/education who should come first. What has been put first by the officers is space within schools/roll numbers/new developments which will be built/how it can be strategised for adequate provision for the city. There is practically nothing in the report that indicates otherwise. (Feel free to correct me at any time I am not easily offended and like to look at things from other sides too) although I am not political I am just a parent with a strong passion for her children's education and future.

Officers responsibility- to provide sufficient evidence by law that the proposal is good enough and consult with the public regarding options for the above to go to committee to make the final decision not only for the bricks and mortar but for future education for communities and most importantly a structure of education that is not only that is fit for purpose but for the 21st century for the children and future children.

Parents role - to ensure children are looked after at home/loved and cherished there are a millions different extensions to this saying they are the precious people to the parent and their number 1 priority. I would be here all night I said I would try to make it as short as possible.

Parent responsibility they are law bound that we send them to school to be educated and extend that to home which is a challenging but by the time they go to school is almost a relief as their minds need stimulation and guiding from professionals within an educational environment. It also means we form more connections with Community and other parents/ Peers, Alternatively they can home educate personally I don't have the patience.

Your role & responsibilities - BOD councillor - to fulfill what you promised at elections and be the voice for the constituents again that falls into many different topics & listen to your constituents and support their views when appropriate.

My view is at the moment as I said to you in my first email a few days ago I am just a parent fulfilling my role looking for justification and answers. I am frustrated by the lack of facts that apply to my children's education and what will affect their future from next year.

I think the priorities of the way the consultation has been presented are not only the wrong order but totally contradict when it said they want to provide education that is fit for purpose when the work hasn't been done yet to evidence such a statement, There are false claims that that the Glashieburn site can be worked on to bring it up to a 3r standard when it is impossible. Again I could go on all night but sure many other people have been writing their views. I could guarantee I agree with a lot of what they are saying.

I understand the bigger picture but there must be more options to look at also is that not consultation means ?

Lastly we don't have enough time within the consultations to get answers. We are fighting time with 2 others schools/communities for the officers time and attention. Which if broken down between the 4 communities would realistically be broken down into minutes not hours. Officers are fire fighting basically.

I think I will finish up there for just now sorry if there are grammatical errors or typos but I have to continue researching how this is going to benefit my children that is my job. I have to get my answers some how when really I would much rather be watching tv. Again sorry if I sound sarcastic but why am I doing work that should be at my fingertips within this consultation.

I welcome your comments and don't mind you disagreeing.

I have written to you once already, but having had a more thorough read of the rather ironically titled 'Educational Benefit' section, I felt compelled to add to my previous comments.

Some of the statements in this section simply do not apply to this proposal and I can only assume they are part of the Copy & Paste job taken from the Kincorth & Torry Academy proposal, where you are actually building a new school! Let me use some examples...

"A school of the size proposed will enable the Head teacher to plan a curriculum that offers breadth, depth, coherence, relevance, challenge and enjoyment as the flexibility to do this is enhanced within a larger school"

All fair and well, except the school proposed is exactly the same size as the current Glashieburn School, except it will soon be over capacity.

"Greater pupil numbers will result in classes to be structured in such a way to offer greater opportunity than smaller schools by providing more age related classes and more options for grouping by ability, in particular providing enhanced opportunities for gifted and talented pupils"

Please tell me why more pupils means better structure when both schools have full class sizes already? These are not village schools with a handful of pupils in each year meaning that they have to share a teacher!

"The amalgamated school will be able to deploy and maximise resources to ensure the highest quality learning experience. This will widen pupils' access to enhanced opportunities for global learning, integrated technology, interdisciplinary learning, and active learning. These opportunities will motivate learners and ultimately provide them with a 21st century learning experience"

Again, this sounds like another cut and paste job. How do you provide a 21st century learning experience in a 1970s school, which is over capacity and doesn't have enough teaching areas?! Having heard feedback from a recent consultation meeting, I can only assume the phrase "Active Learning" means doing PE in the classroom instead of the Gymnasium?

"Curriculum for Excellence allows for a wider choice of learning experiences for pupils. The more widespread and flexible learning spaces of the combined school will provide more opportunities a variety of approaches to learning"

If I'm not mistaken, all these pupils are already undertaking the Curriculum for Excellence and in schools that have widespread learning spaces. The amalgamated school will not have widespread learning spaces, they will be concentrated and limited (quite the opposite of widespread!)

The document then includes statements from the Curriculum of Excellence (of which none have any relevance to this proposal) before going on to add...

“The Active Schools Programme will also be enhanced in a larger school as there will be more opportunities for a diverse range of activities for pupils to participate in sport before, during and after school such netball, football and other team and individual sports”

In a larger school I would agree with you, but again the amalgamated school will not be larger. There is only just enough space for physical education at the Glashieburn site now with the current roll, let alone when there will be almost double the number of pupils in the school!

Finally, the piece de resistance comes at the end of this section and relates to the research carried out to back up ALL of the points made under Educational Benefit:

“There is limited research evidence to support the optimum size of a primary school or to link the size of a school to performance and outcomes for learners”

I REST MY CASE!

With regard to the section of flexible learning.

Can you confirm what you propose to use.

May I suggest cardboard boxes, or are you just going to suspend kids from the ceilings.

I have read the proposal and cannot believe the claims made regarding educational benefits to children of being packed into a school which is remaining the same size . How can you expect anyone to believe in anything you say , especially when you 'cut and paste ' parts from another document , in your proposal ? How can adding so many pupils to a school , without making it larger and using existing ' free ' space help our children in any way ?

It is plain to see that it is solely about finances and is a complete scam . A complete disgrace !!

20/9/2013

Our figures and claims remain robust. The figures you have given in this email are, as we are coming to expect, irrelevant.

The data you have provided is with all the schools at capacity. Our argument has NEVER been "Burst Primary would have the lowest gross internal floor area per pupil should all the schools in Aberdeen be miraculously full to capacity". Your data is also with the roll at 420, this is less than the combined roll at Burst Primary and a lot less than the new fudged capacity of 460. Our argument has always simply stated, that you are actively planning to create what would CURRENTLY be (based on the 2012 Government figures) the most internally cramped facility in Aberdeen. In addition, the fact this reply has been produced over 2 weeks after it was claimed at a meeting you had it, does little to reassure us.

You refuted our claims publicly. This email does not support that as being justified. Please try again with a set of data relevant to our claims ie with schools at their CURRENT rolls.

Education or Burst?

p.s. Have you decided what this mysterious internal configuration is? Has Dr Who been consulted yet? Maybe just leave it to the head teacher to decide where to cram them?

Thanks for this information.

The bulk of this information was already in the public domain via www.Scotland.gov.uk/publications/2012/2355/0

Can I ask why you have chosen to compare internal space to capacity? What would be more useful is a comparison of actual m2 per pupil actually in school at the moment, ie actual school roll. Thus showing the space per pupil actually in each school.

On 8 September I had requested :

"Do you have internal space information on all ACC primary schools excluding community space/non school space?"

However on your schedule you seem to have just categorised schools with nurseries, without nurseries and with community facilities. This doesn't provide a true comparison of all schools in Aberdeen due to the following:-

Schools have different sized nurseries and different nursery rolls so how can you compare internal floor space of Glashieburn with Middleton Park for example - when MP has 40 place nursery and GB has a 60 place nursery?

The nursery children are not included in the school roll or capacity figures when they occupy the school buildings too?

Some schools house the ASN unit, alike Glashieburn and others don't - this has a great impact on space requirements for schools - should there not be some space factored in for this too?

What space do the community facilities take up in the schools identified and how does this impact on space available to pupils? Does the school have full access to community facilities during school hours - if so this should be included on their space calculations?

I'm sure your comparison will be very different when you factor in the above - showing that Burst Primary (combined Glashieburn & Middleton Park) is firmly at the bottom of the internal space league.

You have all these facts at your fingertips and this information will enable a fair comparison of each school. Please review and reissue the information you have presented to ensure parity.

I also note from the email below that the proposal has increased Glashieburn capacity from 420 to 460 and you have stated that this is due to "changes to the internal configuration" - what are these changes - please expand in detail - where are the extra teaching areas coming from?

We are also eagerly awaiting detailed plans on how 460 pupils plus a 100 place nursery plus 14 ASN children can all fit into the existing or reconfigured building. Can you let me know when this will be available?

The grandhome development features in the reasoning of why Middleton park must shut.

The consultation estimates that a new school will be built there by August 2016. However turnberry planning estimate 2020 AT THE EARLIEST.

What steps are being made to inform the Bridge of Don public over these massive discrepancies. What impact does such a long delay have for the teachers and children of Danestone Primary and their buildings? What investigations have ACC made to ensure danestone can cope with such an influx of children past 2020?

21/9/2013

Curriculum for excellence is about ensuring that we help and develop and educate our young people and invest them to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors with oversized classes and children being taught in 'spaces rather than classrooms this will be very difficult to achieve. Fiona Hyslop quotes "we will continue to add the tools at your disposal to deliver the Curriculum for excellence this is the responsibility all practitioners. As a practitioner I must state that this would not be a good idea to merge the two schools. The increased overcrowding will risk the health and well being of the children. good health and well being is central to effective learning. Children's mental, emotional social and physical well being will be impossible to deliver. Establishing a pattern of well being will be sustained into adult life which will help to promote health and well being of the next generation of Scottish children. I would like to know if any research has been undertaken in the fact that we have more special needs children needing extra support within the school setting with the merger of these two schools these children will not be given the opportunities to achieve the best outcome for them not with the proposals that have been put forward. this would be impossible to achieve. Another concern would be the increase in traffic and putting at risk those children who make their own way to the Glashieburn site. Another point is that the consultation document is definitely not at Oldmachar play group and these are our future families who should have the opportunity to see this!!! On paper it looks a good idea to merge these two schools but it is not until you look into the impact this proposal will have on the education of our children. The proposal also has figures that do not add up I would also invite those that have put forward this proposal to come and spend time not just a visit into a class room !!!!

Could you please advise where and when the informal consultation meeting last year was advertised to the general public ?

23/9/2013

I would like to strongly protest the current laughable proposal to merge Middleton Park and Glashieburn primary schools.

Having read the consultation, I can see no documented evidence that cramming kids into a single school is of educational benefit to our children. I would further suggest that on the slim chance there is in fact any actual corroborated evidence that proves a larger teaching pool improves educational prospects, it would be dependent on having increased space for the pupils...not vastly decreased.

I can only conclude that this is:

- a) A money saving exercise
- b) Not a very good money exercise, because
- c) It will be very expensive for Aberdeen City Council to repair the mistakes should this proposal go ahead.

I suggest that the current proposal is scrapped, and that if the schools must be merged in the future then the council **wait until funding is available for a new purpose-built school building** that is up to current standards.

Please don't jeopardise our kids education. While the content of the consultation document is laughable, the prospect of it coming to fruition is genuinely terrifying.

Please advise the sizes of space across Aberdeen City Education faculties for ASN within primary schools ? It was said by Mr Charlie Penman that Glashieburn primary school has a large base facility.

Please provide a display of the space that will be provided in the proposed amalgamated school comparable to the other schools in terms of space per child in order to display consistency for all children across the city within the frame of additional support needs provided by Aberdeen City Council.

How did you ensure all stakeholders were informed of the consultation? Bearing in mind not everyone reads the local paper.

If the proposal goes ahead when will the headteacher for the amalgamated school be appointed?

Is there a problem with the ethos of Middleton Park school or Glashieburn? When were they last reviewed?

Section 5.1.7 doesn't make sense. Please explain to me what you mean and why it is relevant?

How many internal courtyards does Glashieburn school have?

Why has the number of areas identified as teaching spaces in Glashieburn school increased from 21 in January this year (see FOI) to 24 in the consultation document?

The map of Glashieburn school doesn't not include the boundary fence so does not show the size of the playing field. Why not? How big is the playing field? Sport Scotland recommends the size of playing field needed for direct sizes of schools. Does Glashieburn meet the recommendations with it's current role? Would the merged school meet the recommendations?

Why do your graphs start at 200 on the y axis and not 0?

You state £2.5 million needs to be invested in Glashieburn school, yet on the website you say the majority of that doesn't need to be invested. Why is there a discrepancy in the information you are providing?

Section 5.1.22 "several of these were better and others poorer". When I reread the suitability report none were better. Why do you claim some were?

Do you think Middleton park has two p6 classes and no p7 class? Anyone reading your report would think that is correct.

There were not 156 pupils at Middleton Park in 2012-2013. Why did the director claim that this error was due to fluctuation in numbers of pupils during the writing of the report? Why did she not simply admit and apologise for an error?

Why has this document, containing many errors not been rewritten?

Table 5 and graph 3 in section 5.2.9, despite having the same titles don't match. The data presented is different.

You claim there will be a significant decrease in the projected roll at Middleton Park. Please show me the data demonstrating statistical significance. What are the confidence intervals?

You actually only predict a fall of ten pupils. Your predicted figures for this year's role were ten out.

What additional staffing does Middleton Park receive under the small schools allowance and because of areas of deprivation?

Section 5.2.13 the first paragraph. It doesn't make sense. Please explain what you mean.

Why in the condition survey of Middleton park is electrical marked as non applicable? There are electricians in Middleton Park! Why were they not assessed?

24/9/2013

I am writing as a concerned grandparent as two of my grandchildren are at Glashieburn Primary school.

When their mother was of primary age, we lived in Kingswells where she and her siblings all went to school in Fairley Road. Eventually a new school was to be built to accommodate all the new children moving into the expanding village. Talks and discussions were held, where the parents insisted that the building was going to be too small in only two - three years time as the planners had not taken into consideration all the new houses being built. We were told that we were talking nonsense. So, a couple of years down the line and the lovely new school was too small and the children were 'split' into two schools consisting of nursery -P3 at the old school in Fairley Road and P4-P7 at the new school until such time as the builders could reclaim the playground to build a two storey extension. I can see the same thing happening again with the proposed merger of the two primary schools above. Do councillors and the powers that be never look beyond next month? Please, try to do the 'right thing' instead of just looking at saving money. Our children are worth far more than that.

I would be grateful if you could provide me with a copy of the schedule of accommodation showing how the revised capacity of 460 was calculated for Glashieburn. This would be very useful in order that we can understand why the capacity has changed now.

I would also be grateful if you could let me know when you will be able to respond to my emails of 6 September addressed to you and Charlie and a subsequent emails of 12 September and 20 September.

I also believe that my email addressed to Gayle Gorman of 8 September has also been forwarded to you and would also be grateful for a timeline on replies to these queries too?

Thanks and look forward to hearing from you

One of the officers and the director said at a public consultation meeting that we were wrong to say that Burst Primary would have the least internal space per pupil of any primary school in Aberdeen. It was also clearly stated that officers had the figures to prove this.

Despite these claims, it has taken OVER 2 WEEKS for officers to produce some figures which do not support them in claiming we were wrong! This is totally unacceptable. The claim officers made at the meeting was clearly not based on any firm evidence or facts.

Conveniently your officers have now decided to produce data supposing **ALL THE SCHOOLS IN ABERDEEN WERE FILLED TO THEIR MAXIMUM CAPACITIES (attached)**. Our assertion of course requires the CURRENT roll figures.

We hope that given the comments made in the meeting, that data can still be provided to support your accusation that our data is wrong. This looks distinctly unlikely though, as using the 2013 roll figures predicted in 2012, Burst Primary would indeed **STILL CURRENTLY be the most cramped school in**

Aberdeen. In fact, if we look at the officers' most recent projections and take account of the decisions* progressed at the February Education, Culture and Sport meeting, **Burst Primary would still be at the bottom of the league for internal space per pupil in 2020!**

It should also be noted that Burst Primary will have THREE morning nursery classes, two afternoon nursery classes and a DOUBLE ASN BASE to find space amongst all this too. We did not include the nursery children when working out internal space per pupil.

So it is very clear that, using the officers' own data, Burst Primary WOULD BE THE MOST CRAMPED SCHOOL IN ABERDEEN! Not only that, but it is set to remain that way until 2020 and beyond. The officers' solution? It is up to the new head teacher to choose where to put all the children! We think this is an embarrassing situation to say the least.

We would be very interested to hear what you have to say about this. I have copied in all the elected members. The next time you want to try and publicly discredit us, please ensure you have some factual data to support yourselves. As always, we are very happy to discuss this at any forum of your choosing.

We are not against change per se or even against amalgamation if there was a suitable building and benefit in this. We also understand there may not be the money now for a new school building. However, there is **NO BENEFIT** in intentionally creating a "new" school which is not fit for purpose.

Education or Burst?

In response to your email, which I received, I would like to point out that it came across in a very patronising manner. As the parent of a child with ASD, I am more than aware of the current provision at Glashieburn for an ASN. I understand that the children are not all in the ASN base, all the time but I know that my son uses it 50% of the time and there are 13 other children who use it at different times to my son. There are also times when they do project work together and are all there. My question to you again is what does a standardised base look like? I feel you have not answered this question and by telling me that bases all over the city are different, just clarifies that you, yourselves don't know the answer to this question!

Having visited several ASN bases, from which we had to choose a 1st, 2nd and 3rd choice across the whole city provision, I am struggling to understand why you believe that Glashieburn has too much space when most have the same amount of space or more?!

An ASN is not just a quiet place for the children to do their work, it is where they are supported to work with others, where they get to do work with materials and resources that wouldn't be available to them in a mainstream classroom, i.e. A dark den. As they get older mainstream classrooms have less access to resources like sand trays and water trays which are very useful and calming to children with special needs. Is the new ASN base going to have sufficient space for a wet area?

I do not believe that this proposal is G.I.R.F.E.C and as was stated at the last consultation meeting this proposal is not EXCELLENT!

I would like you to tell me what amount of space the "new" ASN base will have within the amalgamated school and where it will be. This has surely already been designated, as it is such an important thing to get right for the children who use it. I understand that head teachers plan the layout of their schools but bases can't change location too much to avoid confusion and upset for the children who use them.

I very much look forward to your less patronising response!

Could you please provide the timetable/timeline /strategy for conducting the EHRIA for the proposed merge of Glashieburn and Middleton park primary school.

I contacted the Equality and Human Right department to request the previous one that was done when this proposed in 2008. Perhaps you have it easier to hand as presumably you have referenced this to conduct the one you sent last week. I have read the 2008 EHRIA document and had saved the link which I found on the internet roughly a week ago. Although when I went back to compare, the link is no longer working and I cannot find this on the ACC site which displays published documents. If you could do me the courtesy of sending it to me via email as an attachment.

25/9/2013

Why was Middleton park community centre not on the consultation list? As something that will directly impact children attending playgroup / baby groups there it seems odd. Particularly as oldmachar playgroup is.

How do parents at the community centre get informed of the consultation - apart from a newspaper ad? Particularly as it is right next to the school.

I am extremely concerned by the proposals to amalgamate Glashieburn and Middleton Park primaries. Having seen all of the figures and heard the discussions at the public meetings, it seems entirely obvious that there will be no educational benefit to the children and that this can only be a money saving exercise.

How can having the most cramped school in Aberdeen be of benefit?

I am especially concerned about the impact that the proposed move would have on children with special needs. I understand that the new Base would be a lot smaller, and surrounded by other noisy areas of the school. This can only have a detrimental effect upon the children.

This proposal cannot be allowed to pass!

Many thanks for your email. Can I firstly point out it is clear in the draft of the EHRIA you sent out when it will be complete so I am aware of that part. What I asked for was the timetable / timeline / strategy plan for completing the EHRIA. What I am looking for is the breakdown of when certain tasks will be done and the involvement of other professional in order to complete what needs to be fulfilled.

I thank you for looking for the EHRIA report that was done previously.

I look forward to hearing from you.

However I'm a tad disheartened that these answers do not provide me with any additional new information or any comfort that this proposal is any way near acceptable for my children's future education.

If the capacity of the school is now 460 should there not be a revised schedule of accommodations to back up this figure? – per your comment below the last one is dated 2009 (the same date that the whole ACC school estate was reviewed) and this was the back up to the revised capacities figure for all schools then and this was agreed by the Education, Sport & Culture committee in 2010?

Your statement re the figure of 460 is in excess of the forecast pupils – this revised capacity hasn't been agreed at committee and therefore the agreed capacity is surely 420 so you are proposing house pupils in a school that is over agreed capacity? The forecasts are also a matter of debate. Also your statement re our children will be provided with 6.3 sq metres of space – what does this prove? - only that if you look at sq metre per pupil for actual rolls in ACC schools – we have the smallest space per pupil – a disgrace I would say?? From the many articles I have reviewed and from Scottish Government articles on Building Excellence and Building Better Schools – the emphasis is on providing children with quality space to be educated – where is the space for our children?

RE school condition and enhancements – you are now saying that the spend to get Glashieburn up to scratch is only £90K?

According to the published school roll forecasts for Danestone Primary, Parent's Charter for the years 2006 to 2012 were -1, 4, 2, 5, 5, 3, 4. Please explain why the latest 2012-based school roll forecasts for Danestone Primary have zero Parent's Charter included in the P1 intake.

Please provide a forecast school roll for Danestone Primary including the housing from the proposed Grandhome development. To ensure a like-for-like comparison with the predicted roll increase at Middleton Park please ensure the same pupil/household ratio of 0.35 is used in making the forecast.

Should it be deemed suitable to use a different pupil/household ratio in preparing the Danestone Primary school roll forecast, please explain why this number is not used for the Middleton Park forecast? It is intended to represent the same households and pupils from the same area and should be the same.

Please count this email as my opinion against the merger of Glashieburn and Middleton Park in Bridge of Don. The plans are ludicrous and are of no benefit to the children putting them all in the current Glashieburn property.

I would like to raise concerns I have with the proposed merger of Glasieburn and Middleton Park primary schools.

My child is not zoned for these schools, however the merger will have a direct impact on her. In addition as a member of the Bridge of Don community I am concerned to hear how the council are planning on distrusting the education of children in the wider community.

Currently my child is zoned for Danestone primary school, due to commence nursery in April 2014. However, as Danestone nursery is at capacity she is having to start her education at Middleton Park. While I understand that suggests Middleton Park is not currently operating at capacity, I am concerned as it suggests a shortage of nursery places within Bridge of Don as a whole. Can you guarantee that her place would not be affected by the proposed merger? Also, with the government suggesting that the number of nursery places should be increased how will this be accommodated in the proposed merger?

I am also concerned at the distance my child would have to travel to nursery with the proposed merger. It is a substantial increase from Middleton Park to Glashieburn. How will nursery children with special needs be accommodated or their parents who may have mobility issues? Even with buses being available this still represents an increase in journey time which could cause difficulties for parents who have a child at another school, for example primary school child at Danestone and nursery child at the merged Glasieburn who could not be accommodated at Danestone.

I also have concerns regarding the school provisions for new proposed developments within Bridge of Don, namely where will these children be educated? My understanding is they will be zoned for Danestone. However, as my child's case illustrates there is not enough nursery places to accommodate the current demand let alone additional children. Even though the school is not at capacity, zoning all of these houses to Danestone would cause problems with early years education provision. In addition all these family homes will create additional demands on Danestone, making it more likely to reach capacity or beyond. There does not seem to have been a formal consideration of this potential issue. It seems ridiculous when such a large amount of family homes are going to be built to be considering closing a local school and merging it with another to create a school with limited space for additional pupils, plus potentially resulting in another local school being at capacity.

I am seriously concerned with how the education is proposed to be delivered within the Glashieburn school. There does not appear to be adequate accommodation for these children which I feel will negatively impact on the ability for the children to have adequate learning experience. Particularly with the lack of outdoor/P.E space which raises health concerns. The SEN base seems to be inadequately designed next to a music room, which will naturally be noisy and there will be children coming and going for there lessons. For some children with learning disabilities this will likely be disruptive to their learning and may give rise to an increase in incidents of challenging behaviour, which would be extremely distressing for the child. Have you had any input from educational psychology or clinical psychology on how the proposed merger may impact a child's learning experience? In addition how the merger and proposed layout may impact on children with learning disabilities?

In summary, I do not see any benefit to children as a result of this merger and can only see areas of concern which have not adequately been addressed. Education is key for our children's futures and I am concerned that Aberdeen City Council are overlooking this and providing inadequate educational facilities for the City's children.

I have re-iterated the questions I have raised within this email below and look forward to your response.

Will my child's out of zone nursery placement be affected by the proposed merger?

With the government suggesting that the number of nursery places should be increased, how will this be accommodated in the proposed merger?

Where will children in the new proposed housing developments in Bridge of Don be educated?

Have you consulted specialist (e.g. Educational and/or Clinical Child Psychologists) with regard to how the proposed merger may impact on a child's learning experience? In addition have you consulted these specialists on how the merger and proposed layout may impact on children with learning disabilities?

I am a parent of children at Middleton Park Primary School and have been made aware of yet ANOTHER shambles of an idea which I would like made aware that it is ridiculous!

At the last consultation meeting it was brought up that the toilets would need to be brought up to the 20th century and added toilets would be required to fit into "Burst Primary" to which the reply was space would be found!?! Well I for one would like to know where?!

As far as we were told by Board member, he said toilets would be put outside! Unless I misheard along with a lot of other parents at these meetings, How is that an improvement? Why should our children along with 400+ children be disrespected like this and be put in to this kind of situation where

that could be dangerous and let's face it absolutely ridiculous!! No one in the town house Marshall college / town house has 60's facilities why should our children in an ever expanding community be forced in to these disgusting situations?!

Outside space is dismal as it is in the grounds where children are not going to get to play as children should without a set of toilets taking up the room they do have!! More exercise? Less obese children!! Fact! Less exercise and more obese and unhealthy children!

We pay council tax to help towards our community and future education of our children!! We should all demand our money back when it's not even being used to help our future and children's future! What a scam.

I've already previously pointed out my views on Educational Benefits ie: NONE!! This added enquiry is just another in a long line of questions!

26/9/2013

I would like to raise my concerns re the proposed closure of Middleton Park Primary School. As a parent, I have read through the report & was completely appalled at how you can think there is any benefit to the children! My daughter has started P1 & absolutely loves this School. To change schools would affect her dramatically - be a longer commute to School every day & would involve her having to cross the main roads several times! She would have less space to work in, less extra curricular activities due to no rooms, more noisier environment with more children which will effect her learning.

All I can see is this as a cost cutting exercise which will have no benefit to the children, which should be the key factor you should be considering when decision making!

Please leave Middleton Park a Primary School open!

I am disappointed that, being a parent of ex and current pupils of Middleton park school experiencing twice of similar stressful situation with Aberdeen Council proposal to amalgamate best attaining schools Middleton park and Glashieburn schools.

Why this proposal has to revert back once decision has been made in the past not to amalgamate these schools.

It is frustrating that the Councillors who fought on our side to save our schools last time or now wanting to close the schools this time. How can this be possible?

Why a best attainment school has to be closed?? Yes Middleton park is small school, which only proves that good attainment can be achieved through smaller schools rather than large schools.

Why education has to be compromised for lack of sufficient budget and why should we waste our taxpayers money in creating special locations for travelers, instead? especially in Bridge of Don.

At present our daughter walks to school, like in the past 7 seven years when our son walked to school. If our school is closed we have to drive to new school at proposed location, plan time to drive, find a place to park on would-be over crowded new school surrounding area which only be dangerous and unsafe to our children.

In light of objections expressed by numerous people, I request the decision makers to re-consider their decision and put an end to the proposal of amalgamation of our schools.

27/9/2013

If the agreed capacity of Glashieburn is 420 how can you say it is 460 yet when writing the report have no examples of how it will be reconfigured? How were you confident it could be 460?

You are very clear that part of the reasoning for this proposal is the stated under capacity of Middleton Park. Do you believe if Middleton Park was at capacity it would have enough flexible learning areas to deliver the curriculum for excellence well?

Why do you not consider the amount of outdoor space in this document?

You state on page 47 that under the proposal the additional pupils from the Grandhome development will attend Danestone initially. Danestone is not mentioned in this proposal so how can that be the case?

Why do you predict a decrease in the rolls from 2019 onwards? (Excluding Grandhome?)

Since Glashieburn was built how many pupils has it had each year? Including nursery and children with ASN (attending a base at GB) - please provide a breakdown of this.

Please show me how 439 children can fit into 14 classes?

If in the proposal document you state (section 6.1) that there will be more than ample spaces for general purpose use you must have been confident of that. Why then couldn't you show a plan at the start of the consultation and why do you now need to employ an architect?

See table 12 - do you think Middleton Park and Glashieburn are academies?

On the website it is clear that you have no intention of spending £2.5 million to bring Glashieburn up to a 3R standard. So why do you say in the document you will over time be required to spend it.

See section 6.4 there is evidence to suggest that attainment and achievement would be adversely affected by the merger. The Hay group research is an example of this.

If the two schools are in effect within the same community (section 6.5.1) how will the larger school have a more diverse range of pupils (section 7.5)?

What defines a community? Geographical area is not the only definition of community.

Can you please advise of the strategy plan for improvement to be done for Active schools for the oldmachar ASG.

I have noted that it states in the consultation report that you will provide more opportunities for the children once merged.

However I can find no report that has gone to committee for this.

Please advise of the committee meeting that took place for this and provide the report along with the decisions that have been made for this to be done.

I write to you yet again about my utter disgust and disbelief that this merger has even reached this stage.

I would just like to bring an article published in Today's (Friday 27th September) Evening Express - Link below

<http://www.eveningexpress.co.uk/Article.aspx/3410395>

My main concern is the following statement "The report for Monday's NHS Grampian health board meeting also warned that 22% – more than a fifth – of primary 1 children were at risk of being overweight or obese."

My question is how on earth can cramming more children into a school removing working space, playground space and gym time possible benefit a community within a city which has already got 22% of kids at risk of being overweight/obese?

One further request to add to my email below. Please also please also provide the details of the committee meeting/report that made the decision to change the roll number for the current Glashieburn school premises from 420 to 460. As I cannot find that either.

Caren passed on the 2 versions of the plans and thanks for that.

As you probably expected, I have a few questions on the plans but will concentrate firstly on the financials and planning/completing these works.....

Would you be able to gather estimated costing information for these proposed alterations to the Glashieburn building? This would obviously have a bearing on the cost benefit rationale of the proposed closures?

I also have serious concerns that this level of works could be turned around during the summer holiday period and be complete by school opening in August 2014. The final decision on the consultation is March 2014, thereafter I believe you have an obligation to consult with stakeholders prior to making any changes to the school. Obviously the plans will need to be drafted and approved officially, obtain contractors quotes, etc before even starting the work. The school holidays also start during the trades fortnight holiday period, etc AND let's not forget that the school will need to be emptied/ put back together along with MP items and this all takes time and planning too. What is the planned timetable for these works?

Will the works be finished to high 3rs standard and not just a patched up job?

My experience of office moves & renovations and having a tradesman as my husband is that projects on this scale don't happen that quickly.

We certainly couldn't have our kids in school when it is being renovated - there certainly isn't any space available to do that.

Would be great to have this type of information prior to our meeting in just over a weeks time to add value to our discussions?

Will revert back with any further concerns in due course.

I am emailing having just watched the weekly school video from Middleton Park. As has been the case from when this innovation started I have enjoyed watching the weekly videos as have Gayle Gorman and Charlie Penman by the look of the positive comments they have made on one of the videos.

This week the video highlighted the interaction between the primary 5 class and the Scottish Learning Festival. The full video can be seen on the school website or the direct link is <http://vimeo.com/75521581>

I would like to highlight the following quotes from the video

Senior Science Officer Education Scotland

"It's my job just now to make sure I share all your good work and enthusiasm for science with other schools across Scotland"

Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Network

"Incredibly blown away by the presentation I've seen from your school"

Science Development Officer South Lanarkshire Council

"After watching the wonderful presentation from Middleton Park primary I am going to use all that information in the 170 primary Schools in South Lanarkshire council. I'm going to take all your ideas and share across all of those Schools".

I would like to ask how the officers can possibly be suggesting that the new amalgamated school which would be over capacity without internal modification can possibly provide a better opportunity for learning than is demonstrated in this video and will now be cascaded throughout Scotland by the Education Scotland Senior Science Officer.

I'm sure education is the same as other public and private spheres where exemplar areas (in this case the school) are visited by others looking to do replicate such work. Surely it will be embarrassing for the council and Education Scotland when others ask to visit the school and are told that the school is under threat of closure despite a healthy roll and such innovation that it attracts the attention of the rest of the country.

This proposed amalgamation OFFERS NO EDUCATION BENEFIT to our children.

I received an automatic reply when submitting earlier this evening to the consultation process. While in itself this is not surprised the contents did rather take me back.

"Your views or opinions will also be placed within our consultation web pages. Please note that no individual personal data will be included in this process, as a result respondent name will not be shown against comments. Responses from groups ie Parent Councils; Community Councils etc will be identified."

My attention was drawn to where the assurance is made that no personal data and in particular no names will be shown. However on page 62 and 63 an individual called Name is clearly identified as the signatory to her email submissions.

While the individual may not have any concerns over her name being associated with her submission as I would not have with mine being publically associated, it does question parents confidence that if they are submitting comments they will not be personally identified. This type of error with individual's personal data may mean that parents feel unable to comment in case they are personally identified on the website.

I hope for Name's sake you are able to rectify the Your View section quickly.

28/9/2013

I am writing regarding the "proposed" amalgamation of Glashieburn Primary (GB) and Middleton Park (MP) Primary schools. I've put proposed in inverted commas because the document is written in future tense, please could you explain to me why this is? As the tense of this document suggests that the consultation period is just a formality and that the decision has already been made.

My son Name is in primary 3 at GB, Name was put to GB (even though we lived in Danestone at the time) because he is on the Autistic spectrum and needed a school with an Additional Support Needs (ASN) Base. So imagine my disgust now to learn, having moved house to be closer to the school, that the council in its wisdom want to amalgamate the schools and jeopardise my son's future and set back not only his social but educational development. I have some question I would like answers to regarding the merger and details put in the consultation document, I'd also like to put forward my concerns regarding the "proposed" merger.

Firstly I would like to know why the council originally decided to set up ASN Bases in mainstream schools. When they have now decided to put an ASN class in jeopardy? My son has come on leaps and bounds within his mainstream class and the associated time in the ASN class and I can not understand how the Council can think it is at all acceptable to disrupt three years of progress not only for my child but for the staff and all the other children in the ASN.

It is suggested in the consultation document that the ASN will not be affected by the amalgamation of the schools and that the merger will make it easier to provide the support they need. I'd like a detailed explanation as to how this can possibly be. Firstly the ASN currently has a large area which should the plans go ahead will undoubtedly be cut by two thirds to fit in the extra classes needed for so many extra children. Last year when the new primary ones started the teachers in the ASN had to get Name ear defenders in order for him to be able to concentrate enough to do his work and that was because of the extra noise created in the ASN with just three extra children. It doesn't bare thinking about how he would cope with potentially another two classes added to that area. In addition not only will his school life suffer but at the same time as the teachers struggling with him I have to try each morning to convince a child, who normally loves school, that going to school will be ok and that he will eventually feel safe at school again. I really don't think the impact on the ASN has been considered at all. This "proposed" merger would not only affect their school life but impact on his home life as well.

I've been told the Council have to be able to justify the benefit to every individual child in the school before this can go ahead, so by all means please try and justify how this will benefit not only Name but all the other children in the ASN for whom even the slightest change can prove unsettling and make it not only hard for them to concentrate but also affect their communication not only at school but also at home. In addition it would also disrupt the safe environment that we as parents and the teachers in the ASN try to create for these children so that they can learn to the best of their abilities in a nurturing, comfortable, safe space. So if the council has any respect, responsibility of care for their education or any concern for these children at all this will not go ahead.

I'd also like to express my disdain for the following "advantage" of the "new" school

"Specialised area for pupils with additional support needs, not currently provided at Middleton Park"

This suggests that all the children from Middleton Park will benefit from the ASN because they don't currently have one. However if everyone is doing their jobs correctly the children in the MP catchment area who need the support the base provides should already be at GB. Since it is the ASN base for children from the "Oldmachar Academy Associated School Group (ASG)" therefore this "advantage" is irrelevant. Could you please justify this?

Again the following has been taken directly from the document.

"The amalgamated school will be able to deploy and maximise resources to the highest quality learning experience."

I'd really like it if someone could explain to me how you intend to do this for the children in the ASN when they have not even been mentioned until page 61, and are forgotten about by page 63, let alone their needs taken into consideration.

In addition to the conditions in the class room I'd also like to know how you propose Lunch times will work? Name like many other children in the ASN has to go to packed lunches. It took him quite a while to get used to the hustle and bustle at lunch time, so again his life is going to be affected by 200 extra children in lunch halls that were not designed to hold that many children.

I'd also like to question some of the statistics mentioned in the consultation paper, It is stated that

"In session 2012-13, of the 255 pupils attending Glashieburn School in 2013, 56% were 'in-zone' and 43% were 'out of zone'."

I would like to question whether the 43% quoted takes into account the fact that the majority of the children in the ASN are classed as "out of zone"? As to my knowledge if they do not reside in the GB catchment area they have to hold both an ASN place and an "out of zone" place for their mainstream class. If this is not accounted for it is my belief that your figures regarding GBs current standings is flawed as the children in the ASN who are classed as "out of zone" really have no option but to be there so how can they truly be out of zone. In my opinion they are "in zone" for the place that previously suited their needs. However this has now been put in question. In relation to this the figures quoted regarding the "in zone" and "out of zone" figures for MP are also flawed because where we live now is in MP's catchment area so therefore Name is classed as one of the children who is "in zone" for MP but attends a school elsewhere, again because GB is the ASN base for the Oldmachar ASG we have no choice but to send him there, please don't think by my wording that I am not currently happy with the way GB have dealt with Name as they have done a fantastic job and my sympathies are with the staff, who's jobs will only be made harder when the "proposed" goes ahead.

Furthermore with all of the above in mind if Aberdeen City Council say that there is no promise that "out of zone" children will have a place in the amalgamated school I'd like to know how this affects the future of the base considering as I've already pointed out, the majority of the children in the ASN base hold "out of zone" places.

I'd also like to question why it is that in the school profile graphs showing the potential pupil numbers by 2020 the MP graph has a line showing the maximum capacity of the school whereas the maximum capacity line on the GB graph is nowhere to be seen, why is this? As I suspect it is because it would show how quickly GB will be over capacity when these "proposed" plans go ahead.

There is also no mention in the school profile for GB of the ASN and the specialist needs and care required for these children. This as far as I am concerned is a major part of the school profile and again I'd like to know why this has not been included?

I am also appalled by the graph on page 45 of the document "Actual (2012/13) and projected (2013-20) Number of Pupils at Glashieburn and Middleton Park Schools, Combined Number of Pupils and Combined Capacity at the Two Schools" the basic mathematics of your statistics is severely flawed you have stated that the maximum capacity of GB is 420 and that the maximum capacity of MP is 240. You then add both of these together (660) which in effect is a totally pointless exercise because this number is irrelevant, it means nothing! Since the current building at GB is not being altered the maximum capacity can only safely stay at 420 you cannot surely up the maximum capacity of a school/ building purely because you add another school to it! With this in mind by your own figures

showing the current roll numbers of GB and MP as of August 2013. ie 261 and 168 respectively and by your sum of 429 pupils in total you are surely showing that by adding the current two school roll numbers together that the proposed school will already be 9 children over the maximum capacity of the current GB building which will ultimately be the “new” school building, which will therefore be over capacity.

However from reading the document further it appears that upping the maximum capacity figure is exactly what our council wants to do, however this is not addressed until page 68 where we learn the “new” maximum capacity for the building will be 460. With this in mind and taking into consideration your own graph that the projected combined number of children by 2020 will be approximately 548 children. Which will therefore be 88 children over the “new” maximum capacity and 128 children over the current maximum capacity for the building? With this in mind I question the legalities of this “minor re-configuration”, your words not mine, and not to mention the morality of this figure fudging. Please feel free to explain this and also, I’d like to know where the council stands on fire safety? Since I would assume the maximum capacities of schools are set with fire safety standards in mind.

I’d just like to take a minute to think about the teachers and how this affects them I find it hard to believe that

“Staff motivation is likely to be increased and teachers will have much more opportunity to deliver innovative and interesting programmes of work which again is likely to result in improved outcomes for learners.”

I’d like to know how the council can possibly think that having to apply and go through an official interview process for their own jobs can possibly be motivating or of any benefit to the staff at either school? I have trouble believing that being able to do Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is a bonus if you’re faced with losing your job or being downgraded as one or both of the head teachers is surely to be.

I’m also failing to see the relevance of the building of the development at Grandholm, surely the development being built in Dubford is closer and of more relevance considering Greenbrae doesn’t have the capacity for these children? Again in relation to the catchment area queries and rezoning I’d like to know if MP is going to be so overcrowded, because of their catchment area, why GBs catchment area is not extended to incorporate more of the open/ country space towards Dyce? Then surely both schools could be kept separate because MP’s catchment area would be smaller and as already suggested the children from the Grandholm development could initially go to Danestone since by your own omission “This school is nearer to the site.” Which again backs up my opinion that this development is irrelevant and will not affect MP to any great capacity?

In addition to all of the above regarding my eldest son in the ASN base I also have a two year old and a one year old. I am also concerned about their future nursery places and whether GB will still be able to provide a nursery when teaching space is going to be at such a shortage.

What’s more I am disgusted by the justification by the council that because the children and parents from MP will have further to walk they’ll be healthier. But taking into consideration the fact the

playground will be too overcrowded for the children to run about and play I guess they're probably lucky. What a pity for the children who live beside GB who won't get any extra exercise because they have the same distance to walk to school, they can't run about at playtime or lunchtime and the school has trouble fitting in the minimum two hours a week physical education. I'd like some clarity on this matter please.

In a totally unrelated topic, which could in fact be put to better use, I was wondering why the council have never thought of investing the 50 million offered by Ian Wood into the education of the children of our city. As I understand the situation, if the council don't find a suitable use for it he'll be giving it to Africa, where it'd likely get wasted in their corrupt political systems. Surely a better legacy for the man would be an investment in our schools instead of a few potted plants in Union Terrace Gardens. In all seriousness it would be a wasted opportunity for you not to use any money offered for all our children. Instead of amalgamating two schools and subjecting these children to a sub-standard education, not to mention the additional stress put upon children with additional support needs. Surely accepting the money and providing all our children with the best education possible by keeping all the school under threat open and improving those that need it is a suitable use for 50 million pounds?

I hope all of the above makes some kind of sense and I look forward to your reply.

In 2011, the Scottish Government made a commitment to ensure that by 2014, every pupil will benefit from at least two hours of Physical Education in primary school and two periods (100 minutes) in S1-S4.

Can Aberdeen council ensure the minimum of 2 hours of PE be achieved in the proposed school merger, if not then for the health and well being of the children this merger should not go ahead.

Please advise me what will happen to the nursery provision in the proposed merged Glashieburn and Middleton Park Primary schools?

After reading the consultation document nothing was mentioned about the future provision of nursery education. If the council was going to provide the same type of provision it would have been mentioned in the document, so by omitting this information it looks like there will be none and in this day and age no nursery provision is disgraceful. If the council can forget to mention this type of information in a consultation document what else are they not telling us. All facts are supposed to be presented to the public so there can be an informed consultation process.

With the increased numbers of children in the proposed merged school can the council ensure the parents of children who like to play ball games at play time will have enough space for this and it will not be on a rota?

We all have to make sure children have enough exercise, which means the Council should ensure there is enough space for this. The council should not be seen in any way to restrict exercise, if they do they are going against the

growing tide of encouraging children and adults to exercise more.

I am the parent of a child who currently attends Glashieburn Primary and I am writing to raise my concerns regarding the proposed merger of both schools; not against the merger per se, but against the children from Middleton Park merging into Glashieburn Primary in its current condition and there being no clear educational benefit to any of the children.

Improving the Learning Environment for Pupils

“The proposal is to create a new school that is sustainable in terms of numbers of pupils.” What’s proposed is an amalgamation of two schools into existing premises which is now just over 30 years old and not the creation of a “new school” or “campus” which it will certainly not be. Universities or Colleges can be referred to as a campus. Given the lack of commitment from the Committee to upgrade both schools so they meet 3Rs standard, the statutory obligation to deliver adequate school education (which they are clearly not), that Middleton Park will be over capacity in the next five years and Glashieburn will be over capacity if both schools merge now, how can that be sustainable into the future?

One of the benefits quoted in the consultation paper is an “improvement in transitions between Nursery and Primary”. How can this take place when some nursery pupils may have to attend different schools as there will be an inadequate provision of nursery places? The Committee, in their proposal document, hadn’t even provided for any nursery places at the newly amalgamated school and this has only now been identified due to the questions raised by parents.

“Greater flexibility to deploy a more significant pool of resources to provide greater opportunities for all pupils” and “additional benefits will result from having a larger staff... increase in resources available”. How can this be when the ratio of children to staff members won’t change? The child to staff ratio is dictated by the Council on a yearly basis dependent on the number of children in the school. When the two schools merge the Council will take its opportunity to reduce the number of staff required, not increase it. Just because the school increases in size doesn’t mean a larger pool of resources. The school receives a set amount of money from the Council each year so can the Committee outline in its response how there would be an increase in resources?

“Reduced expenditure on maintenance and upkeep which will allow investment in education, greater support of curriculum resources, enhanced learning and teaching and Continuing Professional Development.” The pupils in the school already receive reduced funding per pupil, and given the lack of investment in the fabric of the school, exactly where has that money been spent in the last number of years - can the Committee outline where that money has been spent? They have certainly not provided “greater support of curriculum resources”. This is borne out by the fact that £2.5m and £1.5m will require to be spent upgrading the schools. CPD costs shouldn’t come out of the school budget as this relates to teacher training and not the cost of running the school.

Transformation Programme Objectives

“Ensuring Aberdeen’s pupils and teachers have school buildings fit for the 21st century”.

During previous searches on Aberdeen City Council’s website, Glashieburn was marked as being in poor condition “C” (showing major defects and/or not operating efficiently and the school buildings and grounds impede the delivery of activities that are needed for children and communities in the school) but suddenly it becomes a “B” rating now that a merger is being proposed. The fact that Glashieburn and Middleton Park require £2.5m and £1.5m respectively clearly shows both schools have been severely underfunded in terms of maintenance and upkeep over the years. Given there is a difference in teaching costs per pupil of £180 ($£3,943 - £3,763 \times 261 = £46,980$ but this doesn’t include the cost of the 60 nursery places) and £464 ($£3,943 - £3,479 \times 168 = £77,952$ again doesn’t include the 40 nursery places), which is lower than other schools in Aberdeen, these funds should have been available to the school. However, leaving that aside, adding another 208 children to the school will mean wear and tear will increase dramatically. The school will be at capacity, so where

will any additional children who move into the area go over the next few years, in addition to any siblings that will attend in the future?

The Officer at the meeting on 5 September made it clear that although the school requires work, it is not prepared to spend the £2.5m upgrading it. This clearly shows a lack of commitment on the part of the Committee to “have school buildings fit for the 21st century”. They have provided that “some relatively minor reconfiguration of the Glashieburn building can improve the environment” and will only do what is the bare minimum. The school will not be up to the 3R standard and from responses received from the Education, Culture and Sport Committee members will never be and I would like to know why?

Demographic Trends

Over the next decade 40,000 houses will require to be built to accommodate the growing population and migration of people into Aberdeen. There are new business developments in Westhill, Dyce, Kingswells and there is a new energy corridor planned for Bridge of Don. The new by-pass (if it ever gets underway) will release land along the road for housing and new business developments. We also have 900 houses being built at Dubford and 7,000 houses in Grandhome and the Council are predicting a fall in pupil numbers. I have no faith in their predictions and this has been demonstrated over the last 40 years of a clear lack of vision and planning in the Bridge of Don area and Aberdeen City itself, where the Council had the opportunity to build the third bridge at Danestone, dual the Parkway while it was being upgraded and at the same time upgrade the Haudigan roundabout and build the by-pass, but they have chosen not to do any of these infrastructure projects.

Educational Considerations

I would be against any reduction in the number of nursery places for children in the schools. The Council are under a duty to provide nursery places and they should be in the area in which the children reside. Having nursery places provides the children with an easier transition from anti pre-school to pre-school and then into P1. During those nursery years children make friends and this has been very clear to me since my daughter's first day at school when the majority of children who attended the school nursery had already developed close friendships. Again the Committee, in their own document, say “Transitions, such as from Nursery/Pre-school to Primary One, can be challenging both for children and for staff as the transfer of prior learning is not always easy to achieve. The close association, both physically and philosophically makes this process more efficient and when children at all stages are co-located, their learning is less significantly affected at the point of transition.” I think this says it all really!

It would also make it extremely difficult for parents to have a child in nursery in one school in another area and a child or children at Glashieburn. Parents can't be in two places at once!

Financial Considerations

We have been told the merger of the two schools has to be based purely on educational benefits for the children and staff. However, throughout the report, there is mention numerous times of cost savings to be made. By saying that by 2020 the Council will save £1m, that they refer to the amount to be spent upgrading both schools and the money they will save by closing Middleton Park, clearly shows they are doing this purely as a money saving exercise. The Committee should have provided us with a clear report detailing the works they propose to carry out to bring the school up to 3R standard, how the school will be re-configured to accommodate all the extra children (including the ASN and nursery pupils), the toilets, the cloakrooms, how they see the school halls being used at lunch times for four sittings and also accommodate the children during their two hours of PE a week.

There's also no indication of how they will extend the outside space (as it will be completely inadequate), including additional car parking for staff and visitors. The Council need to be mindful of the fact that the weather in Aberdeen for most of the year is inclement so the children cannot have gym outside.

Unit Cost per Pupil

I am not quite sure why there is a difference on page 15 where it mentions the average cost of educating a child across Aberdeen is £3,885 and on page 48 its £3,943. Could the Committee provide details of why there's a difference? I also don't agree with the fact that the 3R school figures aren't included in the report and I feel the Committee Members should provide us with those costs. The PPI contracts still require to be serviced and the funds to pay these contracts must come from the education budget, so it would only seem right that the true costs for these schools are included.

Re-zoning of Grandhome to Bucksburn

I am confused about why you would re-zone Grandhome to Bucksburn. The map 1 on page 19 isn't great and doesn't clearly show the River Don running between the two areas. They look as if they are next to each other, but for someone who doesn't know the area, they possibly wouldn't realise there's a river running between the two. Bucksburn already has a new housing development at Stonewood so I presume these children will also be in the catchment area for Bucksburn, although I understand that after the two schools merge, that a re-zoning will take place!

Site Plan and Accommodation

On the new plan there are designated 24 teaching spaces. However, what I don't see are any corridors or additional emergency exits on the plans. Has the Chief Fire Officer viewed the plans and given his view on the fire and HSE requirements? I'm sure the last time I looked corridors had to remain clear, however, looking at the plan all the corridors appear to be filled with class rooms? What's happening to the library area and the ICT facilities? I don't see any plans for additional or new ICT facilities to give the children the "21st century learning experience" they deserve. These are both facilities that the children enjoy using, and given the way technology is developing, a necessity in 2013. Can the Committee confirm that these facilities will remain within the amalgamated school and be enhanced?

It was talked about at one of the meetings that the children in the amalgamated school will have the smallest square metre age of any school in Aberdeen. This was denied by one of the Committee Members without providing any evidence to support his argument. Can the Council provide details of the calculations based on all current school rolls (not capacities)? It feels we are going back 20 years rather than looking forward and certainly not what was envisaged by the introduction of the Curriculum for Excellence and the building of 3R schools which have set the benchmark for all schools. Glashieburn will therefore be at a marked disadvantage in terms of space per child (they will have less than a third of the space currently available to children at 3R schools).

There was also mention by Committee Members that children could do gym in their class room areas. I've never heard such nonsense in my life. What happens to all the desks and chairs, and more importantly, who will move it all, not to mention the disruption to other children in their new "flexible areas where the available space can be used for investigative work and active learning". Is that what the Committee Members mean by active learning? I'm sure they wouldn't be too happy having someone jumping up and down beside them while they are sitting at their desk trying to work, so why should it be different for our children at Glashieburn?

The reference throughout the report of widespread learning spaces, flexible areas and opening plan learning is very misleading indeed as it gives the impression the school is larger than it is.

The outside space is completely inadequate – it's simply not large enough (the plan on page 28 is misleading as the school boundary on the land is different to what is shown on the plan in the Consultation document). If anything the space should be extended, but there is no provision in the Consultation document for doing this! They will also need to increase the outside nursery space for the additional 40 nursery children? What plans do the Committee have for this?

The Curriculum for Excellence requires a different way of learning for the children and as the Committee says itself "the formal classroom layout of many schools does not lend itself to implementation of Curriculum for Excellence as the buildings and internal configurations were designed to accommodate a very different curriculum". Yes, learning in the 1980's but not in 2013. The way the children learn today is very interactive and requires movement within the classroom. Each child requires more space, not less.

Educational Attainment/Considerations

"All schools are undergoing significant changes with the introduction of the Curriculum for Excellence. It would therefore be challenging for any school to provide any performance indicators."

"Attainment and achievement at both schools is good, relative to other schools with similar attributes and there is no evidence to suggest that attainment or achievement would be adversely affected by implementing this proposal". I'm not quite sure how the Committee can say this when above they say it would be challenging for any school to provide performance indicators. Therefore they can't say how the children will be affected by the proposal. In this case it's certainly not a small minority of the community who are resistant to this proposal.

Pupils with Particular Support Needs

Children in the ASN have additional support needs and require these to be taken into account. The Committee have said "the provision of the larger school with enhanced facilities". There is no mention in the report what these enhanced facilities will be. The amount of space the children currently have will be dramatically reduced and not be conducive to their learning. What form will the enhanced facilities take? They should not lose their sensory or quiet areas as these are necessary for their learning. The Committee Members have said that there an over provision at Glashieburn and these should be reduced to bring them in line with the City average, however, how can that be when schools in the Aberdeen area are crying out for increased ASN facilities – there is obviously a need for these to be looked at.

Staff

I'm sure there are advantages and disadvantages to having different size schools, however, the staff and Senior Leadership Teams must be quite offended by the reference in the report to the fact that by both schools merging it will "lead to an improvement in attainment and achievement".

Closure of Middleton Park

I'm still not quite sure of the argument to close Middleton Park. The Report shows the school is currently under capacity at 208 (168 + 40 nursery children with a school capacity of 240) but when the new houses at Grandhome are built, the school will be at capacity. Surely the whole point is the school roll in the area is changing upwards.

Looking at the numbers in Glashieburn there are 321 children in the school (261 + 60 and not just 251) and in Middleton Park there are 208 (168 (although your document says 179) + 40) which totals 529 and not 429, so Glashieburn will be over capacity by 129 children.

If the children from Grandhome are being rezoned to Danestone, what provisions will be put in place to allow the children to cross safely which meets current legislation? I hope that any traffic assessment takes into account the 7,900 new houses (remembering that each house has 2 cars) and the new energy corridor being proposed which will bring additional traffic passing through the area.

Please don't mention the by-pass because we've been waiting for that for the last 20 years while consecutive Councils have failed to address the issue!

Background

"The amalgamated school will be able to offer more flexibility in terms of class and group configuration. This will allow for a broader range of learning activities, from individual and paired work, to group and whole class work." This already happens at the school and group work by way of team time on a Thursday where children from P1 to P7 come together. However with more children and a significantly reduced amount of space per child, how will there be any flexibility for class and group configuration?

Travelling to School

I am all for children and parents travelling to school on foot, but the road the children will require travel down must be safe. There will be an additional 200 children travelling along Jesmond Drive each day. Over the last 20 years I've seen the cars travelling into the area increase dramatically, along with an increase in HGV traffic. With the addition of 7,900 houses in Bridge of Don and the energy corridor at Murcar, the traffic travelling through Jesmond Drive will increase as drivers cut through the area to get to the Parkway. I have no faith in the Council and their lack of traffic management over the years in the Bridge of Don area. They have allowed house after house to go up and have never increased the infrastructure in the area to match. The land at Grandhome was earmarked for housing over 20 years ago so the Council have no excuse.

There will also be the additional traffic caused by parents dropping and collecting their children.

Conclusion

I feel that the report doesn't provide me with any confidence or evidence of any educational benefit to any of the children should the merge of both schools take place.

The employment market in Aberdeen has changed dramatically with businesses having to compete not only internationally but globally for work. With the different types of businesses investing in Aberdeen, it's more important than ever that we invest in our children's future and education and give them the best chance possible for employment once they finish school, however all this Council appears to be focusing on is cost cutting.

Please remember that these kids are the future of Aberdeen, and by providing them with a less than an adequate primary education, will have a detrimental effect on their prospects in the future. The costs to the City in economic terms will be far greater than the implied financial savings mentioned in the document.

29/9/2013

I know you haven't taken Nursery places into consideration but I think you should. I went to get my youngest to be weighed and got speaking to a Greenbrae School catchment area mum who advised me that her son is on a waiting list for nursery place.

Does this not indicate that we need to increase nursery places as well as school places rather than try closing schools.

On another point I can't believe you're seriously think of increasing nursery. My nearly 4 year old son is completely shattered by a Friday as it is.

I object to the closure of middleton park and feel it would be to the detriment of pupils at middleton park and glashieburn

30/9/2013

I have very serious concerns with plans to close Middleton Park Primary and to cram the children into the Glashieburn School Site. This plan is ill-thought out to the point of lunacy. The whole document is far from impartial and seems to be pushing an agenda based on convenience for the council (rather than based on rational debate and consultation with a view to maintaining or enhancing the educational environment for our children). I believe the proposed plan will be detrimental to the educational environment and learning successes of the children. To suggest otherwise is completely crazy. The consultation document is flawed at so many levels, including copy-and paste of information completely out-of-context to the Glashieburn site, skewed or inaccurate numerical reporting and a clear agenda to attempt to make a case for education benefit.

There simply isn't enough space either within the school building structure for a creative, productive and enjoyable learning environment and there certainly isn't enough space outside in terms of external play and sensory environment. It would in-fact be the most cramped primary school in Aberdeen, being created at a time where flexible and spacious learning spaces are being recommended and implemented as part of the curriculum for excellence. There will be no spare space, no flexibility, no room for the essential services required within a school setting. How can reducing space, increase class numbers, shorten lunch breaks because facilities cannot accommodate all the students (tiny gym hall and dining hall), reducing the number of computers, books and other essentials to add more desks and chairs, how can any of this add to educational benefit. It simply cannot. Not to mention the disruption to children, to families, to out-of-zone children and their younger siblings, the traffic congestion on Jesmond.

I am shocked that this proposal has been given this length of time to breathe, when it is clearly a plan based on anything but educational benefit for our children.

I hope the proposal is rejected and I would like to see an investigation into the writing, reporting and governance of the consultation document.

As a relative of pupils who will be affected by the current proposals I would like to state my opposition to the Council's current plans.

In the past I have been involved in a campaign to prevent closure of a rural primary school. Therefore I am fully aware of the impact that even the publishing of a consultation document can have on all associated with the schools involved.

My reading of the available literature leads me to the conclusion that the main argument against this proposal is lack of space. It seems very poor planning to amalgamate two schools into one and to reduce the available school space leading to potential overcrowding. This would certainly not have a positive impact on the quality of education provision despite the best of efforts from staff involved.

Any disruption to a child's education can have serious long term impact on achievement. This is true for all children but especially relevant to those requiring additional needs. Given the range of provision covered currently by these two schools this must be a serious consideration and as yet the council has not provided sufficient reassurance that support and resources would be available for the more vulnerable.

I would urge Aberdeen Council to look again at these proposals and find a way to save these two schools rather than make short term savings for the council coffers.

As a Aunt of children at these schools I cannot believe that this school merger will offer educational benefit to my nephew & nieces.

This proposal cannot be allowed to go ahead and ruin the education and future prospects for my family.

I am writing to state that I disagree with the proposal to amalgamate Glashieburn and Middleton Park Primary into the existing Glashieburn Building. Additionally, having read the Consultation document I found it to be very misleading and I have various concerns:

The report states that the Capacity at Glashieburn School is 420. There are 261 pupils currently at Glashieburn + 168 pupils at Middleton Park. These figures do not include the 100 nursery pupils. That means that this is a proposal to move 429 pupils + 100 nursery pupils into a school with a capacity for 420! I personally can not believe that this is even being considered, let alone that Aberdeen City Council is trying to justify that this move will have anything but a detrimental affect on my child's education!

Nursery - it is noted that between Middleton Park and Glashieburn there 100 nursery spaces (3 morning and 2 afternoon classes). These nursery spaces are not mentioned anywhere in the figures for the amalgamated school. Is there still to be a nursery in the "new" school? If so where will they go? The space required for the nursery will effect the space in the school. It is misleading not to include the nursery in any capacity figures for the school.

Education Benefit - it appears that the proposed educational benefit for amalgamating the schools are that larger schools have more flexibility in curriculum for learning and in configuring classes. This is great in theory and would be beneficial in a "large" school however there will be very little or no space if the amalgamated school is located in the current Glashieburn building. I feel that the lack of space will infact have an detrimental effect on my child's education.

If the Middleton Park site is used for housing, those children would be zoned to the "New" amalgamated school which will already be over capacity.

If the proposal goes ahead there will be a drastic increase in traffic and parking in the streets around Glashieburn School. I currently walk my child to school each day and am already concerned about the amount of cars parked on the side streets where we cross the roads. This is only going to get worse and children crossing road in between parked cars is dangerous.

At the moment pupils from P1 - P7 are very integrated at Glashieburn, pupils mix outwith their peer groups for "team time" and other activities

and there is a pride in the school with all pupils attending assemblies ect. There will be no room for this at the new amalgamated school.

Pupils will be split to attend assemblies and other activities as there will not be enough room for them all to fit in the gym hall or any other space altogether, this again will have a detrimental effect as I believe it is important for pupils to mix outwith their peer groups.

There will not be enough space for pupils to all have lunch at the same time, this will mean that lunch will probably be

staggered. This again segregates the school and will perlong the time required for lunch.

There will be additional demand for resources such as the gym hall. The additional pupils and possible

perlonged lunch sitting means that it will be difficult for pupils to access the gym halls for the recommended gym times.

I trust that these point will be noted and included into the final consultation report.

Middleton Park/Glashieburn Statutory Consultation Document Errors

Factual Errors

- P27 Glashieburn school has THREE internal courtyards not TWO.
- P27 "24 Areas identified as teaching spaces". In an email from January this year available under FOI here <http://www.aberdeency.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=51786&slD=22462> Derek Samson says there are 21 teaching areas. Nothing has been done to modify the building in that time.
- P28. The site map of Glashieburn does not show the boundary of Glashieburn. P33 "this would require to be invested in the school". The information available on the website here <http://www.aberdeency.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=52958&slD=23570> says that in fact the majority of the £2.5 million (£2.4million) does not need to be taken into consideration.
- P33 "a moderated suitability survey of Glashieburn School was undertaken". In fact Officers admitted at a consultation meeting that a previous suitability survey (which rated it C) was moderated. A subtle but important difference.
- P33 "several of these were better". In fact NONE were better and it only just scraped a B grading overall.
- P36 Middleton Park has one P6 class and one P7 class not two P6 classes as stated.
- P37 "of the 156 pupils". In 2012-13 there were 178 pupils.
- P37 "74% were in zone and 36% were out of zone". That adds up to 110%.
- P38 "significant decrease". They provide no statistics to back up the use of the word significant. What they claim is a significant decrease is only a projected decrease of 10 pupils. Their projections were 10 out for this year.
- P41 "this would require to be invested". Again as above the website states that the majority of the £1.2 million (£0.9million) does not need to be taken into consideration.
- P49 table 12 calls the schools Academies. They are clearly primary schools.
- P50 "require to be invested". Again as above the majority of this sum of money does not, according to the website, need to be invested.
- P50 "no evidence to suggest that attainment or achievement would be adversely affected". This is untrue. There is evidence in the literature that it can be adversely affected.
- P51 "into a single new school". What was meant, I was at the meeting, was a single NEW BUILD school.

- P51 "a summary of submissions can be found at". No it can't.
- P73 It is stated on P72 that the average walking pace with children is 25 minutes per mile. Yet on P73 they claim that walking an extra half mile will only take an extra 7 minutes. Surely it should take almost double that, 12 ½ minutes?!
- P75 "Glashieburn Primary school has 242 pupils including nursery". It has 321 pupils.

 Thank you for your reply. However please can you point out to me the teaching areas which aren't all traditional rectangular spaces? I cannot see any on the plan.

Also the document which the phrase. "Learners and teachers will have more opportunities for challenge and inspiration, this being made possible through the existence of more flexible and non-standard spaces of different dimensions and configuration" I quoted in my email below originally comes from clearly uses this phrase when referring to the design and building of new build schools and the pictures are of very novel and innovative spaces. None of which I see on the Glashieburn plans. I don't think they meant just spaces where different activities can be undertaken at the same time. Rather spaces whose design itself would inspire and motivate pupils. I think Glashieburn is lacking in spaces like that.

Looking forward to hearing your thoughts.

1/10/2013

I am writing as a concerned parent regarding the possible closure of Middleton Park primary school.

The parent and teacher associations for both schools have given Clear and detailed arguments against the proposal regarding their concerns for the children. I would like to express my concerns not only as a parent but also as a teacher myself.

I work in a city school not affiliated with the council. We recently underwent a new build project and the school has worked extremely hard to ensure that it has met ALL of the requirements that the council tagged to the planning consent being given.

One of the most stringent of these was the issue of parking and child safety on the roads in and around the school. The school, parents and pupils were all made to follow strict guidelines with regard to dropping off their children, providing safe drop off zones for children and restrictions on parking in the area for parents, pupils and staff of the school. Leading up to the completion of the school project local council wardens and the police were all involved in overseeing that the guidelines laid out by the council had been met by the school. As a note the school, to meet these guidelines provided a school bus for children and their own parking wardens. I appreciate this is a cost the council may be unable to meet but it is worth noting.

My concern is that in the case of the above the right procedures and measures were put in place to ensure child safety in the area which is in a busy residential part of the city. However in the case of the proposed amalgamation it feels that due to it being a 'council led' project these procedures and promises seem less important to you, however let me assure you when it comes to the safety of MY child they are not.

There are also, as have already been highlighted, numerous learning and teaching issues, too many for me to go into let alone repeat in this letter of concern.

I am not trying to make a case of public vs private but what I am trying to highlight is the lack of detailed consideration which appears to be overshadowing this whole process. I firmly believe that as a council you are working to do the best by our children who will one day be the voters, councillors, teachers and citizens of our community. I do not believe that you are going to do them a disservice by going ahead with this proposal, and I sincerely hope that I am not to be proven to have an unrealistic expectation of MY local council.

I am writing as a concerned parent regarding the possible closure of Middleton Park primary school. The parent and teacher associations for both schools have given Clear and detailed arguments against the proposal regarding their concerns for the children. I would however like to ask a question on what are the plans for the land once Middleton Park closure goes ahead? Is there any plans/discussions being held for the site of the school and adjacent land once the proposed merger goes through?

Are you able to provide a response to this or would this be commercially sensitive information?

If the school was to be demolished and replaced by a modern facility, with Glashieburn and Middleton Park merging being a temporary solution to allow this, the proposals may seem less like a cost cutting exercise.

However, if the school closure makes way for further housing or commercial developments I can understand why parents would feel aggrieved.

I am writing to highlight concerns and questions I have after reading the consultation document for the proposed amalgamation of middleton park and Glashieburn primaries. Concerns not already highlighted or answered in previous consultation meetings.

1. If the proposed amalgamation was to go ahead, (you state in section 4 - proposed date of implementation) that detail of a strategy for this will not be communicated to parents /carers /staff until the proposal is approved.

My concern is that this would be in March 2014. Do you really think one term is adequate time to plan & implement a successful transition process for an ENTIRE school?

How will the children visit their new teaching areas in the finished, fit for purpose school before they are expected to re-locate to there on the 1st day of term in August 2014? (you previously stated in a consultation meeting that no work would take place until summer holidays 2014)

Is it the plan to have the doors close at Middleton Park, end of summer term 2014 and have our children turn up on the doorstep to burst primary on the first day of term in August 2014?

The current transition process at Middleton Park from nursery to p1 takes place over an entire term. This is a vital stage for them and currently takes place seamlessly. How do you propose to implement the same seamless transition for them to a completely different school?

2. Nursery provision

It was originally stated in the initial document that nursery were not included in the move. The updated document then included provision for 100 nursery children. An officer stated in a consultation meeting that the nursery teaching area was of a "very generous size indeed."

I find it very difficult to see how a teaching space so "generous" in size wasn't absolutely apparent to you in the beginning when viewing the school and writing the initial document. Surely it should have stood out to at least one of you?

If it's so big, why did it not instantly stand out as a nursery provision from the start? When will we get to see this "generous" sized teaching area my 4 year old will be taught in?

Is there an outdoor learning space directly off of the nursery, easily and safely accessible for the children?

Middleton park have an outdoor learning area, directly off the classroom, accessed via patio doors. The children freely float between both areas, supervised and safe. A huge bonus for a nursery that are adhering to the curriculum for excellence don't you think?? Possibly why they ace every care inspection and perhaps why Glashieburn don't. Anything less than the nursery learning space middleton park has is not acceptable nor is it excellent.

The sum up of my concerns are :

Will my children be unsettled by a hashed, rushed and poorly planned transition?

Can you and will you provide a nursery provision that is on par or exceeds the current standard of nursery education at Middleton Park?

Despite my summary, I expect all my questions in this entire email answered.

I look forward to hearing your responses

I have just attended the 4th and final public consultation meeting related to this proposal and was expecting to hear more about the educational benefit(s) that are to be delivered by these plans. However, it is clear to me that the council still actually have no idea about the number of classrooms (despite using their forecasts, which they admit are not accurate), have no idea how the school will be configured to hold these extra pupils and no idea what will happen when the balance of pupils per class / year changes!!

We were greeted with a rousing speech from Gail who proclaimed that Aberdeen is a wonderful city, a proud city, a city that is prospering and bucking the trend of decline in other areas and that we were extremely lucky to live in a place where there was such inward investment. Strange then that I found myself sat in a room with over 200 other people discussing the closure of two of the city's best performing primary schools, as the council believe that it would be better to not invest, but scrimp on the education of our children.

As a parent of two Middleton Park pupils, both of whom may I say have been in tears many times since the first time they were told that their school may be being closed. Proof if you need it for your report that even the thought of this happening DOES have a mental impact on these young children, I dread to think of the emotional impact this will have on them if you do proceed with this horrendous idea. There is after all widely available evidence to show that traumatic experiences from childhood can lead to learning difficulties and other mental illnesses in adulthood.

The line was used by one of the panel tonight that the council were "damned if they do and damned if they don't". Well in this case, I would have to say that you will only be damned if you do!

Our public meeting ran out of time before myself and my son (P6 Glashieburn) got to ask some additional questions:

The proposal assumes that the capacity of Glashieburn will be increased from 420 to 460. Can you clarify whether ACC officers have the authority to make this decision or is this a matter for approval at

the Education, Sports & Culture committee? I note that all ACC capacities were revised by committee in 2010 so why would the increase in GB capacity be at the sole discretion of the officers?

My son is a group playground leader at Glashieburn which affords him the responsibility, along with his partner, of organising and controlling one of three sports/activities for the whole school during lunch break. This is a great experience for him not to mention the learning opportunities involved in this task. He is very concerned that should a further 170 pupils join the existing roll that this will become unmanageable for the GPLs themselves due to vast numbers and that the playground area will be so crowded that the activities cannot be offered. Where is the benefit to these children to losing this great responsibility and to the bill of the pupils losing out on organised activities? Never mind the health and well being of physical activities and social side of interacting with peers and other year groups in a regular basis.

As some of the audience pointed out, we are nearing a obesity epidemic so why are we intent on reducing space per pupil outside to such an extent that my child is already worrying about space to play, space to keep him active and the future P7 won't get the opportunities of a GPL? What are the benefits of this?

My son also would like to know why all other new schools, which Glashieburn will be opened as a new school on August 2014, will have a 7 aside AstroTurf/all weather surface - why is this not available to Glashieburn? This however would have a significant impact on the rest of the school playground given its size - but this is his concern for his wee brother.

I am also concerned about the Roll forecast of MP given the apparent mix up of proportion of children per house. The forecast for MP has assumed 0.35 which bursts their capacity however some of your internal documents suggest the figure should be 0.25 which filters into MP having the capacity to cope with the Grandhome children until 2020? I understand that these are forecasts and it is difficult to forecast but why use 0.35 when there seemed to be agreement on 0.25. You must appreciate how this looks from our perspective - the 0.35 gives you the answer to try to justify MP closure when 0.25 doesn't?

There are numerous other questions and will email these later.

I have just returned from the final public consultation meeting.

The Grandhome development appears to have a detrimental influence on the future education of our children in Bridge of Don. I am perplexed at the proposal to send some children to Brimmond. This seems ludicrous, when perhaps some simple rezoning of all Bridge of Don schools could be sufficient to meet current needs until the Grandhome development is ready for their own purpose built school.

The people of Aberdeen and in particular, Bridge of Don, elected a government to represent the views of the people. As Euan Paterson stated we are not a minority group and we are not opposed to change as long as change is for the better. However, we do not believe that there is sufficient evidence to suggest any education benefit and wish for both schools to remain as they are.

I am writing to express my concern at the proposed merger between Glashieburn and Middleton Park Primary Schools. I am a resident of Ashwood Road, not a parent but a concerned resident.

It seems a shame to close two good primary schools (in terms of buildings and educational attainment), in the educational benefits analysis the only justification seems to be big is better, yet there is no literature to support this, and large schools, in my experience, only work well when they have sufficient space.

The proposed new school would have a very large role for the floor space, especially considering the current nursery and ASN provision of the current schools. Curriculum for Excellence requires space to be creative and a move away from traditional chair and table learning. The proposed school appears to go against all the aspirations of Curriculum for Excellence.

When I moved to the area, with four schools on the same road, I expected some traffic congestion around school opening hours. The number of primary schools distributes the traffic and distribution encourages walking to school. Under the current plans there does not seem to be adequate provision for staff parking (the Glashieburn staff car park is often full) or dropping off space for parents, in a school where an increased number of pupils will have to be dropped off at school by vehicle due to increased distances between home and school. An indicator of the problems that could be faces are when there are coaches for school trips waiting outside Glashieburn which means cars can not pass safely.

The consultation documents is littered with spelling, grammar and mathematics errors. This is not a good indicator, if simple sums can not be calculated correctly in a public consultation document, then how can residents (and taxpayers) be assured that a 6 week merger will be completed successfully and problem free?

The timings seem rather rushed, especially considering the relatively recent last consultation on school mergers. The reasoning behind expansion of houses in Grandhome seems that Bridge of Don pupils will suffer so that the developer will be forced to build schools. Six weeks during the holiday is not long enough to create new classroom spaces. The short period of time between announcement and the actual merger seems very short to reassure primary school pupils and ease them through the start of the transition. P7 pupils have a longer time to prepare for transition to S1 and they are older.

I am also concerned about what would happen to the empty school if the merger went ahead. The most likely use for the land would probably be housing, creating more pupils for an already large primary school.

In summary, there appears to be no educational imperative to merge the two schools. There is a cost saving, however, it would appear to be at a cost to children's education creating a new school with the lowest space per pupil in the City.

I was pleased to hear that you had discussed dining arrangements with two larger ACC schools. I have good friends with children at both Cults and Kingswells and am aware that they have staggered lunch times however this too is not without problems at both schools - waiting times being a common issue.

Whilst I have no objection to staggered lunch hours in principal, the issue I have with this at Glashieburn is

both Glashieburn halls are in a very central location within the building with proposed teaching spaces very near to the hall entrances and the main thoroughfares going to and from the halls. The staggering of lunchtimes only adds to length of time pupils will be toing/froing and queuing at the halls for lunch which adds to noise disruption of surrounding teaching areas. At Kingswells the dining hall is located at the corner of the school so passing traffic and noise from the halls back to teaching areas is not a major issue. I don't have the plans if Cults to hand so cannot comment in this for Cults. This is educational detriment for my children not benefit.

There were two space options issued last week for Glashieburn which involved opening up or removing the courtyard walls so that the space was taken indoor rather than outdoor. This and removing the existing office space makes each of the three wings of the school even more open.

Whilst this may lead to more flexibility it doesn't add more space. However, my point here is that how can such large open plan areas cope with additional pupil traffic without disruption caused by staggering lunches and shield kids from the noise of kids queuing for lunch? Detriment not benefit?

Staggering of lunch times will put an additional pressure on both halls on a daily basis, ie if school lunches were staggered at say 12, 12.15 and 12.30 and the pupils get their full hour thereafter, the hall availability will be reduced by 1/2 per day. So previously Derek had calculated that the halls would be available for 37.5 hours per week so this could reduce halls availability to 35 hours per week. The basic PE hours would be 32 hours per Derek so the halls will be available for 3 hours per week for ALL other activities for over 400 children. You must agree with me that this is not good enough given that there are no other spaces available in the building to undertake weekly assemblies, drama, singing, team time, concert practice, etc. All of these activities should be undertaken in a GP or studio room to avoid disruption to other teaching areas. When comparing this with Kingswells, there are also pressures on their hall availability and the school often makes use of the neighbouring community centre hall which is footsteps away from the school. At Glashieburn we do not have the luxury of having a neighbouring hall which our children can use when the school halls are not available so what is your proposal to our hall space predicament? How does this give my children educational benefit??

My children often complain of queuing and lack of choice at school meals however I firmly believe in the benefits of eating a well balanced hot meal at lunchtimes given the proven benefits to children's well being. This is why they persevere with school meals however it is a real worry for me that this can only get worse should there be an additional 170 kids to cater for. Glashieburn currently serves around 120 lunches per day so we would expect around 200 per day(1/2 of MP pupils taking school meals) if merged - can the kitchens cope with this? Please provide your views?

Since we are on the subject of halls, it must be said that our halls are very small in comparison with other city schools especially the new 3r schools and I have experienced school football training for 10 P5 boys in the larger front hall and must say that they struggled to get a good work out or game as the hall was do restrictive. The teams has since moved training to Oldmachar's all weather pitch or larger indoor hall since even in fair weather the Glashieburn grass area is not fit for purpose. I dread to think how this hall, never mind the smaller back hall, can cope with PE for 33 P7s (done are near adult size). Please comment and provide evidence that they P7s can actually get 2 hours of quality PE in this area?

I'm aware that outside can be used for PE but this never seems to be an option in our weather especially since outside is banned when surfaces are wet. My two boys love sports and do so much out of school hours sports because our family are committed to their health & well being. however not all children get these opportunities and this is where the school environment should step in to ensure opportunity for all and encourage this. My question is you need the facilities to do this and Glashieburn doesn't and wont have the space for over 400 children. What are your plans for the outdoor facilities given the above and also given that some of the internal plan options involve taking away the courtyards?Can you please comment on how you plan to overcome these issues

Here is the Scottish Government legislation that is not being adhered within the consultation.
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/91982/0097130.doc> - Government legislation on what should be done and how for schools consultation in particular the Educational benefit statement . There is a whole paragraph on that and how it should apply to to the children/asn and how they will benefit which must be evidenced within the statutory consultation.

I would like to express my dissatisfaction at the lack of answers at this evenings meeting. I am sure from tonight's meeting you can clearly see we have a very concerned wider parent forum and community.

- quote from above link

finally, the authority is required to set out its assessment of the likely effects of the proposal – its potential implications and consequences – on some or all of the pupils in other schools across the authority's area.

It is clear no assesment has been sufficiently done in order to assess the impact to any of the children. The children are not numbers nor buisness propositions each individual is a working progress as all humans are in their own right at each stage of their own journey in life - in this case the one within the cirriculum and the environment which is bring proposed. . Children spend a large proportion of that time in an educational environment and it is vital that every element is assessed to ensure it is fit for purpose for everyone within that equation.

within the EHRIA that has been produced there is nothing relating to how this will impact any of the children. Mr Samson made it clear at the meeting 01/10/2013 that there has been no involvement from professionals ie educational psychologists to evaluate each child and how this will have an impact. Which goes against the policy of GIREFC and the outline of cirriculum for excellence. There is no evidence to support the proposal at all with regard to what I have outlined above and no personalisation to the children which should be applied given the 7 principles for the curriculum for excellences which are - challenge & enjoyment, breadth, progression, personalisation and choice, coherence, relevance. Please explain how this has been evidenced for implementation ?

The ASN children are the most vunerable group within the school and this has been completely ignored by officers the impact this will have on the children by being moved to another part off the building. This would require the involvement of educational psychologist and more importantly the parents who know their own children inside and out. We are not allowed to even discuss this with staff which goes against everything we are striving for in relation to building good relations for children with staff and parents within the school. I personally find staff approachable and helpful but we are not being allowed to work together as we should which is normally encouraged snd now the reverse being imposed by ACC and then taken away when it appears to suit the establishment. I cannot fathom why this is so, surely collaborative work with parents and staff is essentials we all have something to bring to the table in terms of discussion as to what we feel is appropriate and forward thinking even if we choose to disagree at times? We all have valuable imput for a constructive working relationship which ultimatley leads to the children getting the best options to be reviewed.by everyone that has valuable input ?

My view is if the establishment cannot see this then we truly are still in the dark ages and cannot deliver an education that is fit for 21st century education not just for my children but the future of education in scotland to deliver the best we have to give.

Is that not the primary ethics for this consultation it would appear NOT just now I am truly puzzled I thought this would be adult discussion for what was best for the children and the evidence would have been a way of us together working out a strategy. Instead there is no evidence of how this will impact thus creating more questions.

Again as I have said to mr young previously this is not what I expected and I am disappointed the clue is in the word consultation and it.s true meaning.

I hope this all makes sense as you will be aware it is getting late but I really just wanted to express my feelings as I only got to ask one question and I have lots more on top of the ones I have stated in this email.

Having attended the public meeting tonight in which there were many questions posed which were unanswered or only partially answered, I would be grateful if you could give me full answers, (with evidence to back your answers up where applicable), to the following -

You say on page 56 “pupils are likely to experience a higher quality learning experience because of the enhanced facilities which will be available, improving the experience of all pupils.” What enhanced facilities will there be?

You say on page 56 that “there will be an emphasis on innovation and personalization rather than on standardization”. Can you explain what you think the current emphasis is on?

How could the transitions between nursery and primary and between primary and secondary be improved for children attending Middleton Park or Glashieburn?

How will this proposal affect pupils of other Oldmachar ASG schools and also pupils across Aberdeen? Is there a benefit to them? Specific examples please.

You state on page 11 that “there will be advantages in the longer term planning and management of schools in the whole of the north of the city” by amalgamating Glashieburn and Middleton Park schools. Can you first tell me what you mean by long-term and then tell me the long-term advantages?

What curricular limitations do you think Middleton Park currently has?

Is there a problem with the ethos of Middleton Park school or Glashieburn? When were they last reviewed?

Is there a problem with teacher motivation at Middleton Park or Glashieburn as your document implies?

If you are going to add the play equipment and learning resources from Middleton Park to that of Glashieburn, where do you propose to store them?

If assessment strategies are being developed citywide and being rolled out to staff in all schools, how will they be more effective in the amalgamated school?

Have you compared the ethnicity of pupils at Middleton Park and Glashieburn in order to claim that there will be a richer cultural and learning experience by combining the two?

You say on page 55, the amalgamated school will provide a more appropriate range of educational experiences which may be more interesting and relevant to pupils. What inappropriate, uninteresting and irrelevant educational experiences do you think the pupils are experiencing now?

On average due to more pupil numbers per year group, and reduced overall numbers of teaching areas than currently in the two schools, class sizes will be larger, Can you tell me of any educational research where having more pupils per teacher has been found to be of benefit to pupils or teachers?

You state in your need for change that “a straightforward solution would be to increase provision on the Middleton Park site. This, however, would result in the pupils from the new development at Grandhome being educated outwith the self-contained community which is proposed for Grandhome”. So can you tell me why you are then proposing zoning them to Brimmond and then Danestone which are also outwith Grandhome?

You say in the document that Middleton Park parents will likely continue to park in Asda and then walk half a mile to Glashieburn. Did you ask any parents this? Do you think this is likely in poor weather or if parent on way to work?

You state that you wish to improve the equality of educational opportunity for learners in the MP and Glashieburn zones and that educating them in the same school would do this. What inequalities are there now?

On page 21 you state as rationale for closing Middleton Park and Glashieburn and creating the amalgamated school that "The ability of ACC to meet its legislative obligations under the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 to make adequate and efficient provision of school education within the area would be compromised." In what way?

When you say there will be a greater range of more flexible areas, do you mean each area will now have to be used for multi-purpose?

Please describe to me the "intensive consultation and engagement" described in section 2.1 of the document.

Referring to section 3.2 please explain to me how you will be improving facilities for all pupils? Also exactly what will the enhanced curricular opportunities be? Specific examples please.

Please explain to me why it matters that Middleton Park MAY have the second lowest roll of all non-denominational schools? You say there is limited research evidence to support the optimum size of a primary school of link the size of the school to performance and outcomes for learners.

Continuing to refer to section 3.2 you say the low projected roll is likely to have an impact upon curricular arrangements within the school. You in fact project only ten less children than currently attend the school. Please explain to me how exactly having ten less children will affect the curricular arrangements?

Referring to section 4.1 what enabling works had, at the time of writing, been identified at Glashieburn?

Can you give me an example of a non new-build school in Aberdeen where a successful amalgamation has been achieved?

If the proposal goes ahead when will the headteacher for the amalgamated school be in position?

The map of Glashieburn school doesn't include the boundary fence so does not show the size of the playing field. Why not? How big is the playing field? Sport Scotland recommends the size of playing field needed for direct sizes of schools. Does Glashieburn meet the recommendations with its current roll? Would the merged school meet the recommendations?

What additional staffing does Middleton Park receive under the small schools allowance and because of areas of deprivation?

How does this document fit with Getting It Right For Every Child?

Aberdeen City Council states that they are committed to improving the learning environments for all pupils and they want to increase the number of pupils attending new or refurbished schools. Are you classifying Burst Primary as a “new or refurbished school”?

Aberdeen City Council states that they are committed to ensuring that Aberdeen’s pupils and teachers have school buildings fit for the 21st century. How does a 1970’s building with the smallest internal space per pupil in Aberdeen fit with this?

You say in your document “there is more than sufficient capacity at Glashieburn to accommodate the pupils from Middleton Park” (page 11). Can you define “more than sufficient capacity” in terms of area per child internally and externally?

You say on page 11 there will be greater opportunities for pupils due to there being more staff. Will there be more or less staff overall at the proposed amalgamated school compared to the two schools who already work closely together?

You say on page 11 that the proposal is in line with the national initiative “Active Schools”. Can you tell me then why the proposed new school does not comply with the recommendations for primary school sports facilities clearly described on the Active Schools website?
(states size of halls needed and that same hall should not be used for dining as PE, that there should be changing facilities and that it is not acceptable for children to change in the classroom)

Page 11 states that the projected pupil numbers at Middleton Park will exceed capacity by 2018. Page 64 says that the first school at Grandhome is likely to be delivered by 2016. Where is the problem? Or is this another factual error in the document?

Page 11 states that the projected pupil numbers at Middleton Park will exceed capacity by 2018. What are your confidence intervals for this projection?

Your projected pupil numbers at Grandhome are based on number of new homes built not number of new homes sold. Do you think in the current climate these homes will all sell as soon as they are built and if they don’t might there be a delay in building more?

Why are you zoning to Brimmond when you plan for the first children from the Grandhome estate to go to Danestone?

Page 23 “Staff from the two existing schools will have the opportunity to work within the new school.” Will all staff be offered the opportunity or just the opportunity to apply for a job there?

In Section 2.2 of the document why are only two options considered? Clearly there are more options. One being rezoning the Grandhome development but leaving Middleton Park and Glashieburn as they are.

Please describe to me in plain English how this proposal will ensure my children have a school building fit for the 21st century. What should a 21st century building look like?

When was Glashieburn built and what was its expected lifespan?
(Document says 1981 but it was 1979)

Why do you think it is fair or equitable to close Middleton Park and Glashieburn schools when both are already below the city average (not including 3R’s schools) in cost per pupil?

Why have you missed out the perimeter fence in your map of Glashieburn but not at Middleton Park? It makes the playground at Glashieburn look much bigger than it actually is. Is there any possibility of buying the ground behind the playground?

You state on page 51 that “there was some support at the informal consultation for amalgamating two or three of the primary schools on Jesmond Drive into a single new school.” Can you tell me if that support in fact was for a new school with a new building? What support has there been to amalgamate in the existing Glashieburn building?

You say there are potential health benefits if there is an increase in the number of children walking further. If families from the far side of the catchment area walked there and back to school and also to nursery for some that would be over 3 hours of walking every day. How practical is that and do you think more families who currently walk might then drive?

Using your bizarre logic on equality of provision on page 52, would educating all the children in Aberdeen in the same school improve equality of provision across Aberdeen?

What do you mean when you say there will be more widespread and flexible learning spaces in the combined school than in the two schools currently? Are you incorporating Tardis technology?

Where will the nursery toilets go?

How will you fit 60 nursery children into what is essentially two teaching areas and a kitchen and thoroughfare?

The loss of the internal courtyards will have a great impact on the outdoor learning facilities. How do you propose to make up for this loss?

3 of your 6 activity areas are essentially corridors. One will be the library. So again we ask, where are the more widespread and flexible areas?

With the amalgamated school limited to 16 class rooms how will you achieve Aberdeen City Council’s aim of making all P1-3 classes 18 or under?

A section of the playground is being fenced off in the October holidays for an exclusive nursery outdoor space. While this is brilliant and necessary for the nursery it will further decrease the outside space available for the primary children. How do you propose to address the insufficient outdoor space for 460 pupils?

If large schools are so great, why have so many new build schools in Aberdeen been designed for a capacity under 300?

You assured us that all our questions would be answered in the public consultation period and I thank you for a prompt response, having waited for this since February.

2/10/2013

One further point very much related to my email of last night relates to outdoor space and your comparison with Cults and Kingswells.

I have looked at the size of the Glashieburn site per the Scottish Govn website and extracted information on the size of the externals in comparison with all ACC school capacities. It's really disappointing to note that for a school in the suburbs (as is Cults and Kingswells) that we don't even have significant space outside. One of the main reasons people live outwith the city centre is to have space in their gardens and surrounding areas and at school. Thus encouraging children to enjoy the outdoors in a safe environment and to keep themselves fit and healthy. With the exception of city centre schools, which no-one would expect to have significant school grounds, Burst Primary is the worst school for outside space per pupil at capacity and has significantly less space than both Cults and Kingswells. Where is the parity here and where exactly is the educational benefit to our children of squeezing a further 200 kids into this tiny space.

Not only are we the lowest space per pupil internally - this also extends to external space also - a double blow for our children.

This is another area which needs serious consideration now and to be honest should have been looked at in advance of this proposal being put to committee in February.

Have any of the council officers talked to the children who attend these schools to hear their views ??

The children are the most important part of this & their views should be taken into account.

In response to your email to me earlier today regarding outside space.

If playtime and lunch breaks are staggered surely that ia going to disrupt the neighbouring classes, classes beside cloakrooms on exiting and entering. What is the proposals when its too wet and the kids have to stay in. Far too many distractions

Having attended the consultation on Tuesday 1 October 2013, I would like to express my extreme frustration and disappointment with the above proposal of closing Glashieburn and Middleton Park primary schools to establish an amalgamated school within the existing Glashieburn building.

SAFETY

The Glashieburn building in my opinion is in NO WAY fit for purpose to hold an extra 200 children safely. Classrooms will be in corridors with no real free space for other activities. As for the playground, I cannot see how it would be safe to have an additional 200 pupils in this area.

EDUCATION

Larger class numbers with fewer/no quiet areas will have a huge impact on the education of our children. It was mentioned by the panel at the consultation that there wouldn't be so much need for separate areas for computer activity based learning as the plan would be to maximise resources, for example; computer tablets could be used in the main classroom. This is absolutely ridiculous, children need to be able to concentrate without heavy background noise for various school activities.

NURSERY

Having a child of preschool age, I am troubled with the thought that if the proposal were to go ahead, there would insufficient availability of nursery spaces to accommodate all children to be given the opportunity of two years at nursery.

TRAFFIC

There is no area to safely park at Glashieburn School for drop off/pick up. I can only think that having an extra 200 pupils attending the Glashieburn site would be a major safety issue with regards traffic. This proposal seems to be an issue of cost cutting and doesn't seem to take into account that this will have a huge detrimental effect on children's education which should be of utmost importance!

This is in relation to the section -

b.Vary the delineated (catchment) area of Middleton Park, Brimmond School and Bucksburn Academy

The Education, Sport & Culture Committee agreed to consult on the rezoning of part of Middleton Park area to Grandholm. This is to accommodate children from a residential development identified within the Aberdeen Local Development Plan. Initially that would include sending those children to Danestone prior to a school being built. The Parent Council identified that this rezoning consultation should be considered at the same time as the proposed amalgamation as the two proposals are intrinsically linked .Aberdeen City Council identify the new housing as the only need to change the school estate in this area. So why we must ask is the consultation to vary to Brimmond and Bucksburn Schools which is not following the instructions of the committee. If the intention is to send those children to Danestone then the proposed consultation should be to Danestone to allow parents at that primary school to have a say on the proposal. As there is no mention of Danestone Primary in the consultation proposal title and local press why should they read further as it appears that their schools are unaffected!!

If the proposal is approved every parent from that new development would HAVE to apply for Brimmond as well as what local schools there may be left. Could Brimmond cope? Who knows the answers are not within the consultation document. Is Danestone the answer for the new houses? As a trunk road with the volume and current speed of traffic that uses that road (without 500 more houses) can the safety of EVERY nursery and primary pupil be guaranteed to cross the road safely. There was an accident at the pedestrian crossing at the next roundabout along the parkway just a few days ago so surely traffic lights cannot be the answer.

It must be highlighted that whilst we are aware that there are pre-application discussions and consultation regarding the grandholm development there is no extant planning permission – either Planning in Principle or Full Planning. Indeed the application is not even submitted to the Local Planning Authority for their consideration. Although the area is zoned for housing in the local plan delivery of that site is subject to many other policies and material considerations including the local infrastructure. The vast majority of the development depends entirely on the deliverability of additional infrastructure outwith the developers control such as the Western Peripheral Route and the 3rd Don crossing. Both likely to be several years away from completion and neither started. There is no guarantee of Planning being granted for a single house on those fields as every resident in Bridge of Don knows the perils of the Parkway or Ellon Road at rush hour. As was demonstrated only last week a minor bump and chaos ensues for the hours. There will likely be objectors to a scheme for the initial 500 houses without major investment in infrastructure which the Council is likely to have to fund the upfront costs recouping these pro-rata over the next few years. Money that could be spent on existing children’s education. There will be no new school within that development without more houses and the developer has no control over the infrastructure that is essential to that future expansion.

Rezoning to Brimmond is farcical to say the least and makes no sense, rezoning to Danestone would be dangerous due to the trunk road that is the Parkway. Maintaining the current zone prior to Planning being in place for a new school will allow parental choice. There is space adjacent to Middleton Park which could be utilised to accommodate children via an extension to the current buildings as required and longer term once a new school is guaranteed within Grandholm utilised to the benefit of this part of Aberdeen with a school in the centre of any new zone. Rezoning to Brimmond has been suggested with the sole purpose of closing Middleton Park.

This part of the proposal is flawed in the detail.

I cannot believe that merging the pupils from these two schools into a "new" school, new only in name, on the Glashieburn school site will be of educational benefit to the children. For instance, the external and internal space per pupil is being greatly reduced which will have a detrimental effect on the quality of education staff can provide. Children should not have to "play" sardines in their classrooms or in external areas.

I write as a grandparent of children at these schools. This proposal cannot be allowed to go ahead and ruin the education and future prospects for my family.

I am writing to follow up on a particular point you made to my question last night re spending and timetabling the alterations to the interior of the Glashieburn building.

Your proposal for the closure of our schools highlighted that there would be no significant spend required on the Glashieburn building in order to accommodate the revised capacity of 460. However the significance of this value was never revealed. After questioning Derek at one of the meetings his response to my clarification email afterwards was that ACC had a plan of expenditure for GB being the £90k to bring the elements of building condition graded at C up to a B rating.

The proposal also details that in order to get the school up to a 3rs standard expenditure of £2.5m would be required. However, again per email via Derek, ACC have no intention of spending £2.5 million on Glashieburn because it would already be at building condition B rating. So my question is why include the £2.5million figure when there is never any intention to spend this level? The same goes for the Middleton Park £1m figure - I guess there is no intention to spend this value either in the period to 2020? The proposal implies that there is a commitment to spend but there is NO intention to spend at GB and I suspect the same at MP - this is contradictory and deceitful.

However, on Thursday you provided us with two example layout changes for the school. These plans do suggest that you are now suggesting that the £90k spend on roofing, ceilings and car park (areas which need to be brought up to B condition) will be exceeded dramatically. This surely changes your initial comment that expenditure will not be significant? However, as you mentioned last night, there has been no costings of these alterations as they are just ideas. Even without any detailed building experience but some experience given my husband is a tradesman - this type of alteration is significant and will require a good deal of planning ahead of the summer holidays and throughout the holidays. I have already expressed my deep concerns on all of this in a previous email.

The Education, Sports and Culture committee will surely need all of this information in order to make an informed decision? and to assess cost benefit overall?

You have also included costing projections within the proposal showing that on merging the schools, there will be a cost saving if approx £200k pa or less than £8 per child per week. I asked for back up to these figures nearly 3 weeks ago and cannot understand why the back up hasn't been made available. Surely these figures were built up on consideration of all the costs associated for the building/salaries, etc as of now and also what costs will be lost on merger? Why are these figures not instantly available? If my colleagues at work asked me for back up to forecasts I could give them the information instantly - because I keep back up?

Surely the committee may ask the same question?

Obviously from the proposal document itself, the reason behind this proposed closure/merger is due to a review of the school estate and to ensure that the estate is efficient/sufficiently managed - I understand this, so let's see all the back up and the committee should have all the information too.

However, on top of all that ACC need to prove educational benefit for ALL of our children. I must say that the proposal does nothing to convince me of any benefits. Section 7 of the proposal is packed full of educational jargon that could apply to any school but it has no bearing on what you are proposing to do at our school. No examples are given specifically and absolutely no evidence is provided to any of the assumptions.

Your comment made last night - "we're damned if we do and damned if we don't" actually highlighted your thoughts that ACC really didn't want to provide evidence/information - this will just create more questions and more work. We all need to remember that this is a consultation process but very little information was provided at the outset upon which to consult. Once you realised interested

stakeholders weren't going to roll over and just accept the proposal, then you conceded to the fact that you needed to give us some plans/ evidence of what the school might actually look like and maybe do a bit more leg work on how the school could operate with all these kids inside. All this work and you still haven't any proof of educational benefit for ALL children. Consulting does mean that different stakeholders will have different opinions and won't agree with what is proposed - that's where you have to listen and come up with different solutions. This is what we are doing to your suggested plans but you don't seem happy about this. This is our children's future that's at stake here and we certainly will do everything required to speak up for them in this process. Please don't see this as anything other than looking after our children's interests.

I am a parent of a Middleton Park Nursery pupil and I am extremely concerned about the plans to close Middleton Park Primary School and merge it with Glashieburn Primary School at the current Glashieburn site.

I understand that the council are looking to cut costs across the city, but to do it in this way seems to be extremely short-sighted and negligent.

I really struggle to see how these plans could in any way benefit any child, parent or teacher at either Middleton Park or Glashieburn Primary School. The truth of the matter is, if these plans go ahead it will result in a major disadvantage to all parties concerned, especially the children involved, who are supposed to be our priority.

Neither Middleton Park Primary or Glashieburn Primary are currently at capacity, however the intake for both schools remains stable and continuous, and if the schools were merged together the combined numbers are just too much for the current Glashieburn building, even with some of the very minor (and inadequate) adjustments suggested by the Council to date.

If the current schools are amalgamated, the new Glashieburn school will be at bursting point almost immediately. As a parent I am extremely concerned about a number of factors:

- The amalgamated school will be extremely tight for space with children being taught in classrooms that are not fit for purpose. The report states that there will be 'educational benefits for current and future pupils being educated at an amalgamated school'. I am really struggling to find even one educational benefit of children being taught in a school that will be cramped and over capacity. To disrupt the learning of children who are currently happy, performing well and are settled in their schools to move them to another school where the conditions will be poorer, makes no sense at all.
- The report also states that the amalgamated school will provide a better learning environment for children and teachers. Again, I am really struggling to comprehend this statement. How can it possibly be argued that the environment at a 'burst school' would be better for children or teachers - children would be learning in cramped conditions, classrooms that are not fit for purpose and teachers would be under additional strain to teach in these conditions. The report appears to make no sense at all - it sounds like findings from a report carried out on two very different schools and not Middleton Park and Glashieburn.
- I have one son who currently attends Middleton Park Nursery and another son who will be due to start Middleton Park Nursery in October 2014 and Middleton Park School in August 2016. Will my 2 children end up attending different schools as a result of this merger and re-zoning? This is not a reasonable situation to force upon parents in the community.

- With a son who is due to start nursery next year, I am also concerned that there will be a lack of nursery spaces available as a result of all available floor space in the school being used up to accommodate a number of children greater than the schools realistic capacity.
- What does happen when there really is no more space for children at the amalgamated school? Will we be forced to travel much further afield that we should be to take our children to primary school. What about families who do not own/have access to a car? How are they expected to take their children to a school which is not within a reasonable walking distance, in all manner of weather conditions?
- There will not be enough space in the 2 gymnasiums at Glashieburn for the children to have the required amount of PE. These halls are required to be used not only for PE, but also for lunches, assemblies, drama and other classes. This point also leads on to the concerns regarding how so many children in a restricted space will be able to have lunch within 'lunchtime'.
- The outdoor space at Middleton Park is greater and of better quality than the outdoor space at Glashieburn. There is no benefit to the children of Middleton Park to move them to an over-crowded school where the outdoor space is much more limited.
- The congestion that will be caused by the increased number of parents taking a greatly increased number of children to school by car (as it will be too far for many children to walk - please remember the younger ones especially, do have little legs) causes great concern for the safety of the children. This is already a very busy road, especially in the morning, where there is a huge amount of traffic. The increase in the traffic, along with the fact that there really is nowhere for parents to park, has to be addressed.

I have attended meetings where I have listened to the views put forward by the Council and also the answers given by them to questions from many concerned members of the community (not just parents of children at Middleton Park and Glashieburn - this is an issue which is affecting the whole community and of which the whole community feels very strongly about) and I really feel that the responses given by the councillors were inadequate and did nothing to quash any of my concerns. At one meeting we were told by the council that it is notoriously difficult to predict future intakes over coming years. The intake for Middleton Park over the last few years has been higher than predicted in 2008. If the same situation arises again, and if Middleton Park and Glashieburn are merged, there simply will not be enough room for all the children zoned for the area. We will then be faced with more unsettlement, rezoning and the possibility of families having to take different children to different schools which simply is not practical, possible or fair. Neither is the disruption of moving children from one school to another because initial plans have not been thought through. It also looks very much like the figures in the consultation document have been 'worked' to suit this proposal and have been amended during the process.

We were also told that leaving Middleton Park and Glashieburn schools as they are and 'doing nothing was not an option' due to the new Grandholm development. There are many, many questions surrounding this area of the proposal, and the answers given to the questions raised to date are illogical. To keep it brief, we were told that Middleton Park would be over capacity by 2020 due to an increase in intake from the houses in the new Grandholm development, however we were also told that there will be three primary schools build on the Grandholm development over the coming years. I understand that all three primary schools would not be build immediately, but surely building one would stop the intake for Middleton Park rising to the point that the school would be over capacity by 2020. I am aware that there is a requirement for developers to ensure there is adequate schooling facilities for the houses being built in the development, so I struggle to understand why this is effecting the zoning of Middleton Park and in turn the proposal to merge Middleton Park and Glashieburn

Primary schools. If it is the proposed Grandholm development that is causing the council to destroy two very good schools where children are happy and performing well, I really think that the plans for the development need to be looked at in greater detail and amended accordingly. At the end of the day, why should families who are already living in the area and sending their children to their local school, be penalised to make way for people who do not currently live in the area in houses which do not even exist yet? I would also like to know if there is the opportunity to oppose the Grandholm development?

This really is not fair on our children - their rights are being suppressed unfairly. I would also like to question who is responsible for this as it appears to be the very people who are employed to look after the rights of our children and put their educational and social needs first?

I was given a leaflet when my son started nursery. The leaflet is titled 'Getting It Right For Every Child Aberdeen'. Inside the leaflet states that 'GITFEC' is a national approach to supporting and working with all children and young people in Scotland. The aim of the policy is to ensure that every child gets the best possible start in life. These plans put forward by Aberdeen City Council are a complete contradiction of this policy. There is no argument that can be made to say that amalgamating Middleton Park and Glashieburn will be giving children in this area the best possible start in life.

There are so many areas of this proposal which are really just absurd and cause a huge amount of concern. What also worries me is that the proposal has made it this far - I feel that there must be someone pushing this through in the background as there really is no justifiable argument for this amalgamation to go ahead. The truth of the matter is that it will destroy two perfectly good schools which are currently performing well, for no other reason than cost cutting. Our children's rights are being ignored and pushed aside unfairly. There is no question that they will be the ones who will end up suffering.

There is NO benefit to anyone affected by this situation!

Thank. You for your email. It is not about liking or disliking change it is about assessing the impact of change and how a strategy can be put in place for everyone one to work with so that there is clear vision for this to be done for the children and staff.

I would refute your statement that the educational director is competent please read the consultation act and the legislation and it is clear EHRIA should be done at the start if the consultation and be part of the educational benefit statement, if what has been produced by the officers is normal practice does not mean this is the correct it means legislation is being breached by ACC not only for this consultation but previous too. Which clearly needs to be addressed by ACC.

Don't take my word for it ask brimmond or walker Road primary schools who are now high and dry and not without problems as a result.

3/10/2013

I attended the consultation meeting this week and found it very interesting.

I cant understand why the proposal is for next August when the projected 'problem' does not come into effect until 2020. Rather than base decisions on 'notoriously difficult to project' figures, why not wait until actual figures are available? The council should know, based on the current Bridge of Don population, how many children will be attending school in the next 4 years – if we look at 2017, and

then reassess actual figures in two years time – does that not make more sense than basing such a massive decision on subjective data? Use fact not projection?

Our children are happy in their current environments and there was testament to this from former pupils at the meeting this week. I do not understand why the panel/council are looking to change something that has proven good results. Our children deserve the best and the current environment in both schools does this. Why change it to squash them all into one building which brings inherent learning limitations?

In my household, we pay income tax x2, car tax x2, national insurance x2, and council tax – both me and my husband work full time and contribute to society – we deserve to give our children the best at school.

I am writing as a parent of a child at Glashieburn Primary & a child due to start at Glashieburn Nursery.

I have read the consultation document & attended some of the public consultation meetings. My understanding was that in order for the proposed merger to go ahead there has to be Educational Benefit?

I can not see any educational benefit in this proposal at all. In fact from what I can see this will have a detrimental effect of my children's education!

I am not anti change nor am I against the two schools merging (in an appropriate building) but to squash all the children into a school that is not big enough and will leave them with very little space is not an acceptable solution. Both these schools are achieving great results so why risk changing this?

I understand that the proposed development in Grandholm will cause an issue with pupil rolls but why should the children at Glashieburn & Middleton Park suffer as a result of a new development that will eventually have a new purpose built school?

I urge you not to let this proposal go ahead and to look at other options.

I was at the meeting this week and a question was asked – what is your margin of error on the projections? This wasn't really answered. Have the panel done sensitivity analysis on the projections and considered the implications on best case and worst case?

My concern is that the projections are too low and that there will be no room at the school for my youngest child in 3 years time.

As mentioned in the meeting, the council were out by 33% just a few years ago with regard to Middleton Park projections.

I have had no response from Mr Lengs secretary regarding the request I made for the EHRIA report that was done in 2008/2009. I have contacted the Equality and human rights department regarding this also but have not had any response from them at all.

I am unsure whom else I should contact to locate this document within Aberdeen City Council. Since your department conduct and submits these report perhaps you can point me in the direction of the relevant department. Although I would like it for our meeting on Monday with yourselves and our Parent Council.

I would like the above if possible for Monda and also an answer to as many as possible questions I have already asked. My Idea in asking for this is that we can use our time as productively as possible as it will be limited.

I understand that at the last Consultation meeting on 1 October, it was suggested that in the absence of an ICT suite Handheld devices would be provided.

Prior to this consultation happening the PTA offered to buy the school I pads for use by the pupils, however, they were informed by the head teacher that it wasn't possible due to the lack of IT infrastructure. The day prior to the PTA meeting someone from the council had been in regarding this and they had said wireless was not possible.

So not only no ICT suite, no hand held devices either – what have our children done to deserve this treatment.....

I strongly object to the proposed merger plan proposed by ACC, namely "To close Glashieburn and Middleton Park Schools and to establish a new amalgamated school within the existing Glashieburn building and campus."

Reason(s) for objection:

Best summarised by making reference to campaign website <http://www.schoolsreview.info/home.html> which in my opinion clearly destroys the ACC consultation document (proposal & justification) and presents all the evidence necessary for rejecting it.

My own personal position:

A house in Bridge of Don was chosen for our family home with long term view of sending my young 14 month daughter to Middleton Primary School.

Should this proposal take effect, there will be no hesitation of moving to another location within ACC or Aberdeenshire, as I have no intention of allowing my child's education to suffer from ACC poor decision making.

[4/10/2013](#)

I have been trying to obtain the 2008/2009 EHRIA document now for 2 weeks. I have contacted yourselves, David Lengs secretary as he is the one who signed the report and also ACC equality and human rights department and still do not have a copy of this public document which was previously on the internet approx. 2 weeks ago and now is no longer accessible.

Should I not be In receipt of this by 3pm this afternoon I feel I have no alternative but to contact the human rights care commission who will be able to assist me.

I would again like to raise my concerns but this time as a mum of a child who currently attends Glashieburn nursery. My son, who is in his preschool year, attends morning nursery which currently has a roll of 40 children. The cloakroom area is cramped and the children have to have snack in different areas due to the volume of kids in there. Given the draft plans you have shown us, how can you justify cramming 60 children into a smaller area which won't have the space for a kitchen. Where will their wet area go? There are no toilets in the proposed set up, which I am aware you have highlighted, however I don't see how you can achieve installing toilets in this already cramped area without the loss of another quiet/music room. I'm sure teachers will become very fed up with 3 & 4 year olds continually going back and forth through their classroom to the toilet. This is just another

example of the councils terribly thought out plans and clearly proves that the children will not fit in "BURST PRIMARY"!

The other aspect I would like to point out is that my older child is at Glashieburn due to the ASN unit and we live out of zone. I want my younger son to go to Glashieburn with his brother as it is a fantastic school with a brilliant ethos. You have stated that out of zone will not be eligible for a place, so can you tell me how I am supposed to be in 2 places at once when my elder child gets dropped off at our house and I have to be at Forehill collecting my younger son, when clearly if they both went to Glashieburn I could collect them both at the same time?! I know of at least 2 other parents who are in the same position as our family so how do you propose to correct this?

Clearly this is a money saving exercise!

Dear chief executive

I do apologise I perhaps I have not made it clear it is EHRIA that was conducted in 2008/2009 fir the proposed merge of Glashieburn school and Middleton park primary schools. Which was conducted by Mr David Leng. I have made this clear in all my other correspondence.

As a member of the Middleton Park Primary School parent forum, I am dismayed to find that Aberdeen City Council officers are, once again, proposing to close Middleton Park Primary School. This time the proposal is also to close Glashieburn Primary School and establish an amalgamated school within the existing Glashieburn building and campus. Having spent some time reviewing the public consultation document and attending various consultation meetings I feel that there are a number of problems with the proposals. In my opinion, the statements, graphs and tables shown in the consultation document are misleading and have been manipulated for the purpose of the officers' proposals. I have outlined my main concerns below.

REZONING

The proposal document indicates that there is a need for change due to the proposed development of housing on the Grandhome estate currently zoned for Middleton Park Primary School. If the Grandhome development goes ahead there will be "provision of up to three new primary schools" (proposal document, section 2.2, page 11). Before building commences it is proposed the Grandhome portion of the Middleton Park catchment area will be rezoned to Brimmond Primary School as there is "possibly only one child affected" (per Derek Samson, consultation meeting, 01.10.13). Once building commences, but before the first new school is built, it is proposed that the children in the Grandhome development will be rezoned to Danestone Primary School. I agree with the rezoning of these children to Danestone Primary however am unsure why the rezoning to Danestone Primary would not done in the first instance instead of rezoning twice. As no building work has actually started (and, indeed, no planning permission granted yet) for the new housing development at Grandhome, then it is unlikely that there will be many, if any, children from that development going to Danestone Primary in the 2014/15 school session. The detailed proposals indicate, in section 3.1.1 (page 18), that the delivery of the first new school in the Grandhome development is "likely to be August, 2016". The rezoning of pupils from Grandhome to Danestone is therefore probably going to be very short term and only going to affect the 2015/16 school session.

EXISTING CAPACITY AND PROJECTED SCHOOL ROLLS

Graph 4, page 38 of the proposal indicates the roll of Middleton Park School if the Grandhome development is rezoned away from Middleton Park. In my view, the figures used to compose this graph are incorrect as the capacity, shown in red, of 240 includes the demountable units. This was the main contentious issue when Middleton Park School faced closure back in 2008. The

demountable units are out-with their lifespan, did not go through the formal planning process on installation and, as per section 7.12 (page 63) of the proposal, are “not in a good state of repair”. The nature of demountable units is that they are put in place as the roll increases and removed as the roll falls. These should therefore not be taken into consideration in Middleton Park School’s capacity figures.

The capacity within the main building at Middleton Park School is 198 which is the figure which should have been used in graph 4, page 38 and would then indicate that the projected roll in the year 2020 would not be vastly under capacity. The statement on page 38 of “over 70 spaces and an occupancy rate of 70% by 2020” is therefore, in my mind, incorrect.

Section 2.2 (page 11) states that “there is more than sufficient capacity at Glashieburn to accommodate the pupils from Middleton Park”. I consider this to be erroneous as the current Glashieburn capacity is 420 (page 47) and the combined roll for 2014/15 is 429 (table 10, page 47), excluding the additional 100 nursery pupils who would also attend the school. Nine pupils over the capacity figure in the first year alone does not indicate “more than sufficient capacity”. Even, as the officers’ projections show, by the year 2020 the Glashieburn roll only drops by 11 pupils and the Middleton Park only drops by 10 pupils. An overall decrease of only 21 pupils (less than two-thirds of a class size) could still not justify the statement that the merged school had “more than sufficient capacity”.

Furthermore, these projections are just estimates and, given parental choice on school placement, some parents from the Grandhome development may choose to place their children at Middleton Park. Also, table 7 (page 45) indicates 60 new housing completions for the Glashieburn area in 2014/15 which may have a considerable impact on increasing the roll at Glashieburn.

GLASHIEBURN SCHOOL LAYOUT/PLANS/SPACE

A major concern which is apparent on reviewing the proposal is the lack of space within Glashieburn School and grounds for the 529 primary and nursery children who would begin the 2014/15 school year there should the proposal go ahead.

Council officers have drawn up a variety of plans suggesting how these children would fit in the school however there does not appear to much allowance for cloakroom space and corridors leading to individual teaching spaces, toilets and exits, let alone the space for each class to have a whiteboard area, free floor space for storytelling and group discussion, book corner/quiet area, role/creative play area, ICT area and wet area which they currently have and which would surely be necessary in order to effectively deliver the Curriculum for Excellence.

As stated on page 56 of the proposal “there will be a greater range of more flexible areas” and that enhanced facilities will be available however it is difficult to imagine this given the reduced space per pupil.

Moreover, the external grounds at Glashieburn are very small for accommodating so many children thus limiting the space the children would have to exercise at break and lunchtimes. Site map 5.1.9 (page 28) is deceptive in that the school boundaries are not shown hence making the external playground area appear larger than it really is. With the national initiative ‘Active Schools’ aiming to improve health through fitness it seems absurd that there will be insufficient space for the children at the amalgamated school to run around safely in the playground.

The issue of staggered lunchtimes has been broached during several of the consultation meetings as not all of the children would fit into the dining hall at once. It was also proposed that both gym halls could be used to seat the children at lunchtime. One of the problems with this is that there is only one store for the dining room seating shown in the officers’ plans which would either cause a logistical problem for getting the seating to the second gym hall or would mean an additional storage facility nearer to the second gym hall taking up valuable space.

Since the consultation proposal was drawn up, the council officers are now suggesting that more invasive work could be done on the Glashieburn building to create more usable areas. This however would involve a large degree of building work which is extremely unlikely to be condensed into the 6 week time period between the children finishing the 2013/14 school year and commencing for the

2014/15 session. Allowances would also have to be made for the time it would take teaching staff to plan and arrange new classroom and store configurations.

VACANT BUILDING

If the proposal to close Middleton Park School goes ahead, in the current financial climate the school building is likely to lie vacant for a considerable period of time, as is the case with the former Balgownie School building. A vacant building is of great concern to local residents with the issues of security and vandalism particularly worrying.

EDUCATIONAL BENEFIT?

Section 7 of the proposal gives an educational benefit statement. The educational benefits stated mainly arise from the size of the school in terms of number of pupils and are only valid if the size of the school in terms of space is also in line with that currently being provided in the new build 3Rs schools. If the merger were to go ahead, the amalgamated school would have the lowest gross internal surface area per pupil of any primary school in Aberdeen by a considerable margin. The economies of scale benefits stated in the proposal would only actually be of benefit to the pupils if the area of the school building and grounds was also increased proportionately.

The educational benefit statement in the proposal is just that, a statement, and does not appear to be substantiated with research.

SUMMARY

It is my belief that closing Middleton Park and Glashieburn schools and establishing and amalgamated school within the existing Glashieburn building would be of educational detriment to the pupils. The amalgamation of the two schools may be a viable option if, and when, the time arises that the Council has funds available to build a new school which is of good condition and suitability and where there is a decent amount of space for the pupils to successfully undertake the Curriculum for Excellence.

I feel that rezoning the Grandhome development to Danestone School until such time as the first new school is built would be far more beneficial for all the children concerned and would be a simpler option addressing the need for change.

I strongly object to the proposed merger plan proposed by ACC, namely "To close Glashieburn and Middleton Park Schools and to establish a new amalgamated school within the existing Glashieburn building and campus."

Reason(s) for objection:

Best summarised by making reference to campaign website <http://www.schoolsreview.info/home.html> which in my opinion clearly destroys the ACC consultation document (proposal & justification) and presents all the evidence necessary for rejecting it.

My own personal position:

A house in Bridge of Don was chosen for our family home with long term view of sending my young 14 month daughter to Middleton Primary School. This plan has thrown our future plans into disarray. Should this proposal take effect, there will be no hesitation of moving to another location within ACC or Aberdeenshire, as I have no intention of allowing my child's education to suffer from ACC poor decision making. If the plan is a ploy to compel the house-builder of the planned new development at Grandholm to build a new school for the additional influx of children, then this should be accelerated – without any initial interference in current youngsters education.

Could you provide me with the following information please? Save us all an FOI!
A friend has forwarded an email to me from the school estates team. It says

The total amount of outdoor play space will not change but more pupils will be in the schools if they are amalgamated. The space available will still meet school estate guidelines and the City Council will be exploring options to improve the quality and variety of outdoor spaces to ensure that pupils are adequately stimulated and engaged through both formal outdoor learning and informal play. Please can you provide me with the school estate guidelines on outdoor space referred to in this document and also provide me with the options you have explored for the outside space. And also, please can you let me know the number of children on the waiting lists for nursery spaces at all five of our ASG nurseries.

In regards to the above proposal I am horrified the council can consider this good and beneficial for the children when clearly its a money saving exercise, a means to push a developer to build new schools eventually and most likely a huge bonus for the person who pushes it through!

My concerns:

Distance - I live in Middleton Terrace so the furthest periphery of the catchment area to that side, making it at least a half hour walk with a toddler in a buggy and a 5 year old due to start P1. Surely it makes more sense to build the new school mid catchment area for fairness to everyone. Is it indeed that the land Middleton Park sits on is worth a lot of money if sold to the highest bidding developer, causing further congestion on Jesmond Drive and even more children to cramb in.

Whilst I agree that many more parents should walk if able as I do, you could not answer any parking issues other than use Asda? That still entails a walk for some who are unable. My main concern again that you refused to respond to travel in winter / wet weather. Your council colleagues in the roads dept rarely clear the pavements and roads in the housing estates making it impossible to go out with a buggy. Then you have the risk of falls on ice/snow. Then in rain if we put our children in waterproof suits will there be sufficient cloakrooms for these to drip dry, causing puddles, to potentially cause accidents? Health and safety I would suppose has not factored in your plans.

Classroom plans unclear, where are you going to fit these all in, flexible learning spaces you say, corridors?

Gym halls already double up as canteen, im reliably told by a parent of a Glashieburn pupil the catering services struggle with the current pupil numbers, how will they cope doubled? Children have the right to a choice and a healthy meal. then there is the setting up and clean up after meal times, taking the gym out of use for a period of time. Gym in classrooms was your answer, classrooms on open plan, I ask you really? HEALTH and SAFETY comes to mind again!

Outside space will be severely compromised with the volume of children. You want to move the nursery. Will there be a guaranteed fenced off outdoor space for them? Infact where will they be put, and will you promise as you claim to keep the existing amount of spaces that both schools have together?

The Scottish Commissioner for Children and Young people is calling for better, more hygienic toilet facilities, and I believe its 1 per 20 age 5+ and 1 per 10 <5s. Can you deliver this? I have heard rumours toilets will be removed to allow space in the nursery. So essentially you are encouraging health issues with children having to hold things in, causing constipation and urine infections, yes I am a health care professional!

Then I hear you have no plans for computer rooms, so I assume you will fit several computers into your flexible learning spaces. Oh no, you stated at a meeting, these are not needed as they can use tablets! MP has 4 or 5 i'm aware of paid for by fundraising. If Glashieburn have similar number that's 1 between approx. 50 children, but you will excuse my sums if they are wrong, like your own throughout the consultation document!

Are parents in a tough economic time going to be expected to provide an ipad of particular spec at the cost of £300+ as I cannot imagine that any of the education committee will offer their pay rises back to pay for these!

Well I could continue but imagine you have stopped reading by now and added this to the number of other correspondence you have received.

BAD IDEA, NOT THOUGHT THROUGH WITH ANY CARE AND ATTENTION.

I raise my objection to the proposed amalgamation of Glashieburn and Middleton Park schools for a number of reasons:

- The two schools are two of the best performing primary schools in Aberdeen, and merging them together will put them near the bottom of the table.
- The amalgamation will see overcrowded and cramped conditions in the school, as the current Glashieburn site tends to be small at the present. Adding another school into this one will not be good conditions for the children and teachers etc. The merger will also see little room for children to play outside, which could see different break and lunchtimes for pupils, which will not be good for the children.
- There is a real concern about the children travelling to school, as many will have to walk along the busy Jesmond Drive and attempt to cross the road. Also, at the present time there is little room for parents to park at Glashieburn, the merger will only make this situation worse. While Middleton Park parents can park at Asda, this will not be the case if a merger takes place. There will also be no room for staff at the school to park their cars.
- As Glashieburn has a base for children with learning disabilities, the merger will have negative effect on the children, as it will disrupt their learning.
- Bridge of Don is one of Europe's largest suburbs, with more and more housing developments currently being developed, or in the pipeline. This proves that Bridge of Don will need more schools, so merging two together will not solve this

I would encourage the council to take these reasons on board and listen to the overwhelming majority of the public who are against these proposals. The council has said that education is its main priority, merging these two schools together certainly is contrary to this statement. This merger will do nothing but cause unsettlement for the children, parents and teachers, the council should be investing money into its current school estate instead of merging or closing them.
