

## **Responses to Statutory Consultation on Glashieburn and Middleton Park**

**Aug – Oct 2013** (Part 3 5 Oct >>)

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.

**05/10/13**

Just another e-mail of objection to the closure plans of Middleton Park School.

I attended the last consultation meeting last week and once again the councillors could not answer all the parents question. A lot of the responses were along the lines that the school staff would deal with classes etc but if there's not adequate space then what can they do??

No firm and assuring responses were given and once again my concerns are that you will be compromising the quality of education from a high performing school as Middleton Park and creating pupil nos overload.

It also became clear at the meeting the council could have pursued other recommendations instead of merging the schools, why didnt these go to consultation? I would strongly urge the council to look into alternative plans as opposed to closing Middleton Park school.

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As a Grandparent of 2 children who attend Middleton Park and a Bridge of Don resident I feel the need to express how extremely concerned I am about the proposed merger of the above schools.

I cannot see where any educational benefits are from squeezing all these children into one school where the space they have will be absolute minimal. I can only see this being detrimental to their education.

I would ask that you carefully consider the negative effects that this could have on our future generations and therefore urge you to throw out these proposals.

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Please advise space per office in the town house and Marshall college and how many share these spaces for a comparable space per person to the space that is to be provided within the proposed new school in the existing Glashieburn site.

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As a parent of two children currently attending Middleton Park Primary and Nursery School I am writing to express my deep concerns regarding the proposed closure of Middleton Park and

Glashieburn Schools and the amalgamation of both schools within the existing Glashieburn building and campus.

I would like to point out that the public consultation document which was made public on August 26th 2013 has such a poor standard due to multiple grammatical mistakes, omitted words, poor mapping representation, miscalculations, etc, (the list is long !!!), that it gave me no faith into the proposal !

Not only that but none of the education benefit statements given in the report show an improvement for the education of my children.

I understand that Aberdeen City Council has a duty *to manage its school estate in a manner that is sustainable, efficient and maximise value for money* as per page 10 of the document, but surely this shouldn't be to the detriment of the education and safety of our children.

It should also be equal across all the school estate within Aberdeen city. But this proposal is certainly not showing any equality in the provision of education for our children as they would be amalgamated into an existing building which, according to the document would only require minor works which could be completed over the summer holiday period in 2014 as stated page 23 in the document. This contradicts what is stated page 12 where it says that Aberdeen City Council is committed to improving the learning environments for all pupils by : - ensuring Aberdeen's pupils and teachers have school buildings fit for the 21st century.

This leads me to mention the condition and suitability evaluations of the two schools, carried out in the summer 2013 when the same evaluations had been done prior to the release of the first consultation document in February 2012. It was confirmed though at the second public consultation meeting that these surveys are normally carried out every 18 months. In the February 2012 report, Glashieburn School's suitability report was rated as 'C' which according to page 16 of the document means poor – showing major problems and/or not operating optimally. The school buildings and grounds impede the delivery of activities that are needed for children and communities in the school. However as stated in the report page 33, a moderated suitability survey of Glashieburn School was undertaken during August 2013 to assess the suitability of the building and the associated areas for the delivery of the Curriculum for Excellence'. The school suitability was rated then as 'B' – 'Satisfactory, performing well but with minor problems (the school buildings and grounds generally support the delivery of services to children and communities)'. I would like to ask how in such a short time between each survey and without any known work or alterations done to the school buildings and grounds, can Aberdeen City Council explain the change in the suitability rating for Glashieburn School ? I was also wondering how the amalgamation of the two schools is justified given that it states in the details of the suitability report included on the Aberdeen City Council website that regarding learning and teaching spaces : many spaces are unsuitable for some of the functions/activities that are conducted within them on a regular basis, spaces are often located at an inconvenient distance from each other and there is no disabled access to all curriculum areas. Some areas are off campus, many spaces are uncomfortable for users, with conditions which may inhibit or distract from learning and teaching, there are significant unsafe aspects to some areas and security is incomplete.

Regarding the internal social spaces, it states internal social spaces exist but are limited in number and range, they are concentrated in area of the school and tend to be crowded at break times.

Regarding the external social spaces, it states that external social spaces exist but are limited in number and range, they are concentrated in one area of the school and tend to be crowded at break times. While generally safe and reasonably risk-free, the perimeter fencing is not entirely secure.

All these statements have been concluded through a survey carried out in August 2013 with obviously not in mind the new capacity figure of 460 decided by Aberdeen City Council !!!! All these statements are showing to me and hopefully to you that amalgamating both schools is a serious mistake as there is clearly not enough space for all the children !

Furthermore, Middleton Park School's suitability report was rated as 'B' – Satisfactory in both surveys, so could you explain to me what is the educational benefit for our children to be moved to a cramped building where the delivery of the Curriculum for Excellence could be impeded due to the increase in pupils' number ?

On the subject of the Curriculum for Excellence, it is stated in the document page 13 and 14 that local authorities are expected to provide an efficient and suitable education for the children and young people within their area' and that 'there are a number of underlying expectations within the new curriculum including an increased level of active learning, which means pupils are not passively 'taught at' and this will include physical activity, practical work, cooperative learning, to name a few. Could you tell me how all our children will be taught the new Curriculum for excellence when they'll be cramped in a building, giving them very little space either internally or externally ? Will the two gym halls in Glashieburn School be big enough to accommodate the increase number of pupils for physical activity ? How are whole school assemblies and whole school concerts be conducted and where in the amalgamated school ?

Also as stated page 14, all these elements mean that 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, surely increasing the roll of Glashieburn School would make it even more difficult to implement the new curriculum ?

Middleton Park is a very homely school, where all the staff know all the children and where all the children know all the staff. If both schools were to merge, the 'new amalgamated school' would be far bigger where it would be impossible for all the staff to know all the children. Both schools have always had and still do excellent attainment levels, I feel that by merging the two schools, we run the risk of decreasing the attainment levels. The class sizes will be bigger than the ones we have currently in Middleton Park which would result in the teachers having less time to spend per pupil. Also there hasn't been any composite classes at Middleton Park in the last two years, this would certainly not be possible would the schools merge !

Transition is another worrying factor, on page 14 of the document, it is recognised that transitions can be a challenging time both for children and for staff as the transfer of prior learning is not always easy to achieve, I would like to know how the transition for the current pupils in Middleton Park pre-school nursery to primary one will actually take place if the proposal was to go through ? At the moment, pupils in our nursery are already participating in activities in the primary school, they take part in the whole school assemblies, they are using the gym hall at least once a week for physical activities, they have been experiencing cross-learning with primary one and primary four classes. They are getting to know the teachers, support staff, etc., if the proposed amalgamation was to go through how would transitions be organised between both schools ? Would the children be expected to walk from Middleton Park to Glashieburn School ? How long would that take ? This would surely be to the detriment of valuable teaching times and it would be very disruptive, unsettling and unsafe for the children, especially at such a young age ! Furthermore they are pre-schoolers in both morning and afternoon nurseries, surely the nursery staff would not be expected to walk to Glashieburn School both in the morning and afternoon to establish transition times for the pre-schoolers ? This is not only the case for nursery children but for all the children in primary ! This shows this hasn't been thought through at all which doesn't reassure me at all about the whole process and proposal !

Other points should have been included into this document:

On page 56, it is stated that there will be greater range of more flexible areas where the available space can be used for investigative work and active learning, however no plans with teaching areas

for the 'new amalgamated school' is included in the document to show reassurance to parents as to how and where the children will be taught and how the space will be used for such an increased roll ! It was only during the last meeting of the public consultation, on Tuesday 1st October that examples of plans with teaching areas were circulated and showed to the parents, a bit late knowing that the consultation period finishes on 11th October ! Was this deliberate ? The officers couldn't give us any information on timescale to complete any work or costs involved. It does states page 47 that with minor re-configuration, this (the capacity at Glashieburn School) can be increased to accommodate the additional pupils and this can be achieved by implementing a number of alternative options which will be identified and these shared with parents/carers and staff if the proposal progresses. Again these alternative options should have been included into this document in the first place so that it gave parents clear views of how the proposal would come into place !

Pupils' safety hasn't been mentioned either. It is stated page 52 of the document that a review of safe routes to school will be carried out, prior to any final recommendation on the proposal being made. This, in my view, should have been carried out and included into this document to give parents confidence that their children would be safe to go to school. From primary 4 onwards in Middleton Park, most pupils are walking to school as there are a lot of safe routes to get to the school, this wouldn't be the case any longer if the proposal was to go ahead as the routes to Glashieburn School would not be as safe due to major roads to cross and the distances would be a lot longer for a lot of children who are currently in the Middleton Park catchment area.

Page 75, it is stated that owing to the increase in pupil numbers, assessments should be undertaken along Jesmond Drive for adequacy of existing crossing points. There is limited space beside Glashieburn School for pick up/drop off and this would require further attention. Amalgamation and increased travel to school distances for some pupils are likely to result in an increased number of cars accessing a primary drop off and collect pupils. A risk assessment of the local pick up and drop off is suggested in light of additional cars accessing the school. More parents would have to take their cars to drop off and pick up their children from school but as there isn't any drop off/pick up area currently at Glashieburn School, the traffic would be chaotic, more than it is now and more accidents could happen !

All these assessments should have been carried out and results reported in this document to give parents reassurance and faith in the proposal !

Regarding the capacity and rolls for both schools, I cannot understand why all along the report, the figures given for the schools' rolls do not include the nursery rolls. Can you explain the reason behind this ? The children in nursery are part of the School and should be included into the overall roll of each school ! Could it be to hide the fact that it would show the parents that the 'new amalgamated school' would be over capacity from its opening even with a revised capacity figure for up to 460 pupils as a result of internal reconfiguration as stated page 68 in the document ? The overall school rolls are only mentioned in the appendix 1 regarding an initial assessment of school travel for a merged Glashieburn and Middleton Park Schools, however I must state that the figures used in that assessment are from 2010-2011, therefore they are not current figures ! Is that again deliberate ?

To continue on the subject of the assessment mentioned above which was written by an independent traffic officer, as mentioned in one of the public consultation meeting, all the datas provided are miscalculated. Page 72 of the document, it is stated that they are working on the basis that the average walking pace with children is 25 minutes per miles and yet in the tables page 73, the average walking times to both schools compared to the average walking distance to both schools doesn't add up ! For instance, they say in the table page 73 that the average walk distance to Glashieburn from Middleton Crescent and Middleton Circle is 1.0 miles, and the average walking time from Middleton Crescent and Middleton Circle to Glashieburn is 17 minutes. Shouldn't it be 25 minutes taken that the average walking pace with children is 25 minutes per miles ???? All of the examples included in table

2.2 of average walking times for pupils travelling from Middleton Park Catchment to both schools are incorrect ! How can this study give any faith into not only this independent assessment but also into the whole proposal ?

Finally it is stated page 51 that opportunities were also provided during informal consultation, for staff and separately for other interested persons to obtain information about the options and to ask questions about each potential site for the proposed school... There was significant support for maintaining the status quo, i.e retention of Glashieburn and Middleton park schools as separate establishments. There was also support expressed for the temporary accommodation of pupils from the early phases of the Grandhome development at Middleton Park, rather than at Danestone as proposed. Several stakeholders acknowledged the need for the Council to effectively manage the available resources and there was some support for amalgamating two or three of the primary schools on Jesmond drive into a single new school. Reading this made me think that, although during every single public meetings we have been assured by all the officers that all our views and concerns are being listened to and taken into account, the Council has already made up their minds and the whole process is just flawed ! There was significant support to keep both our school as they are, but yet the Council proposed to close them and amalgamate them into an existing building ! Some supported the idea of amalgamating two or three schools into a single new school, yet the proposal is to amalgamate both our schools into a single existing building !

I would like to conclude this letter by saying that I found it very hard to accept the Council proposal to close Glashieburn and Middleton Park Schools and to establish an amalgamated school within the existing Glashieburn building and campus.

Although I am not against change, I would like this change to be fair, well thought, correctly assessed and above all beneficial to the education of our children. Sadly all this is not reflected into this public consultation document and gives me no reassurance into the whole proposal ! This proposal is supposed to be a long-term plan, nevertheless it is a fact that both schools have been built in the 1970s so their lifespan will be coming to an end in the near future, wouldn't be more economical to leave both schools as they are just now until a new and better site is found for a whole new school to be built ?

I hope that Aberdeen City Council WILL take all our views into account this time and not go ahead with this proposal !

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I urge Aberdeen City Council not to close Middleton Park Primary School and not to create an amalgamated school within the existing Glashieburn building. This will be detrimental to our children's education. Our children will receive no educational benefit from this whatsoever. There are many examples of this, some of which are provided below.

The proposals mean that you will be cramming the children from both schools into an existing building, which isn't fit for purpose. This merger is in conflict with the Transformation Programme Objectives, as stated on Page 12, Section 2.3 of the Consultation Document. Wake up Aberdeen City Council, what are you doing to our children? The Glashieburn building is not fit for purpose! The suitability rating is a C, which mysteriously has been changed to a B!!!!???? No improvements have been made to the building, within that time, so how can this be justified? The council is not modernising service delivery for this proposed merger and is not investing in accommodation and they are not ensuring that pupils receive the maximum benefit to their education.

Referring to P.11, a supposed benefit is '...greater flexibility to deploy...significant pool of resources...' How can this be true when in fact there will be less resources available in the merged school at the existing building of Glashieburn? The Middleton Park students will be moved over to the existing Glashieburn school building – there will be no new building. To accommodate all of the children, the

existing Computer room at Glashieburn will be decreased dramatically. The classrooms will be spilling out on to the corridor, the library will even be in the corridor! So, clearly there will be less room for pupils, computers, library and therefore less room for education! How are children supposed to concentrate and not get distracted by the busy people traffic coming and going through the corridor (there is only one corridor in Glashieburn school), when children will be forced to do their work in the corridor. So clearly, there will be a decrease and drain on resources. At the final consultation meeting, 2nd Oct, the panel stated that most walls will be knocked down to make it open plan – this will make it even worse! You might as well make the whole school one big room! As a parent, I am very worried at this suggestion by the Council!

Transition from Nursery to P1 will be severely disrupted. Page 11 of the Public Consultation Document states that one of the benefits will be an 'improvement in transitions between nursery and primary...' However, this is clearly not the case as it will cause an adverse effect on the transitions that pupils make from nursery to primary 1.

For example, my child, currently at pre-school nursery (Middleton Park), will be going to Primary 1 in August 2014. He has built positive relationships with teachers, pupils alike and is familiar with the environment at Middleton Park School. He would thrive in P1 because of this familiarity and working closely on a regular basis with the current primary class (current transition at Middleton Park Primary has already started to take place!).

But, if the proposals were to go ahead, this transition from nursery (at Middleton Park) to Primary 1 (at a merged Middleton Park/Glashieburn) will be severely disrupted. All that hard work of building up slowly and preparing the little ones for Primary 1 will have gone out of the window, and it's them that will suffer. This will also be in conflict with 'Curriculum for Excellence,' as mentioned in Section 2.5.1, page 14, which stresses the importance of transitioning from nursery to P1. How is Aberdeen City Council proposing to carry out this transition if the merger goes ahead – the earliest that the final decision will be made is March 2014. This leaves only 3 months to carry out transition work and it is also not practical to make 4 year olds walk backwards and forwards from Middleton Park to Glashieburn Primary everyday for 3 months! I'm disgusted at the proposals, because this clearly is NOT an educational benefit! The proposals are simply to save money, and that's the bottom line and nothing else matters!

P.11 of the document talks about '...enhanced opportunities for staff...' The staff numbers will in fact decrease, for example, you can't employ 2 head teachers, 2 janitors and provide funding for all PSA's currently at both schools – this clearly does not mean more opportunities for staff, rather a threat to their jobs! The class sizes will be at bursting point, as there won't be enough space for extra classes. This will put more strain on teachers and as a result our children's education will suffer.

Another supposed benefit of the merger, as stated on P.11 'Larger schools with more staff...greater opportunities for pupil participation in languages, sports...' This is in fact a contradiction because first of all it won't be a larger school, because the existing building at Glashieburn will be used. Rather, what they mean is that it will be a small school with large numbers of pupils all tightly packed into the school, all competing for space, so in fact less room for sport and less room for computers to learn languages etc, so less opportunities for pupils!

Section 2.2 also talks about building 4 new schools in the proposed Grandholme Estate! Why are so many schools being built for one area (may I add that the proposed estate is not that far from Middleton Park Primary!)? Our children are being forgotten about – they want to take our well established and excellent performing school away and squeeze them into an existing building, so they can force the contractors to build a new school for the proposed Grandholme development – with 4 brand new schools! This will have no benefit to our children whatsoever!! Rather a detriment to their

education. I would therefore urge you to compare on a like-for-like scale, the amalgamated school with one of these proposed 3R schools planned for the new Grandholme Estate! Look at the difference in space (indoor and outdoor)!

I would also like to add that the council are proposing to place the children from the first phase of the Grandholme development to Danestone Primary and Brimmond Primary. These children would have to cross a very busy trunk road (has 50mph speed limit!!!!), on 2 sides of the roundabout, to get to school. Would you want your children crossing such a road to get to school? Also these schools already have large waiting lists for pupils trying to get into the Nursery, for example. So some children from the 1st phase of the Grandholme Development won't even get a space, placing unnecessary strain on these schools.

If the merger goes ahead there will be major safety issues. There is nowhere to park at Glashieburn site – cars will cause congestion and accidents, unsafe for children crossing at roads. For children living further away, simple things like walking to school will be a thing of the past. I am also worried about Fire Safety, cramming all the children into the school, where they will already be on top of each other – imagine what could happen in the event of a fire, everyone trying to get out of the building (with 1 corridor!).

Section 2.2, talks about the need for change. We are not opposed to change but this merger means going back 30 years, it is not looking at the future! Middleton Park was originally built because Glashieburn was over-capacity and now Aberdeen City Council is proposing to go back to that situation, where the proposed merger at the existing Glashieburn building would mean over-capacity again! Middleton Park would be knocked down, houses built on the site, more families moving into the area – so where would these children go? The Glashieburn merger would already be overcapacity and tight for space.

The roll at Middleton Park will not decrease as you claim in your document - birth rates are increasing and more people are moving into this area. There are classes at Middleton Park with 30 pupils, and are at bursting point now so how can you say that the number of children will decrease, if anything they are increasing. In fact, at the consultation meeting of 2nd Oct, one panel member stated that if you left Middleton Park as it is, pupil numbers would be over-capacity! Also, in your document, P.13 Graph1, shows that the actual and projected number of pupils from 2012-2020, is dramatically increasing in their thousands! You are contradicting yourselves here. Squeezing all the children into the Glashieburn site is not sustainable either. For example, compare the proposed merger with Braehead Primary - fit for the 21st century, the amount of space the children have at the latter school is huge with modern resources and facilities. Yet our children seem to have been forgotten about. Where's the justification in this?

The above clearly demonstrates the fact that the proposed merger is clearly a cost-cutting exercise, a short-term money saving option for Aberdeen City Council, with no educational benefit. They are obviously not looking at the long-term and the adverse effects this will have on our children's future, who ARE also the future of Scotland!

7/10/2013

I have now been a resident in the suburb of Bridge of Don for forty years and in that time have witnessed and experienced many of the decisions which have been taken on behalf of the area which have resulted in the good people of this community having to live with lack of foresight and subsequent ill effects on the area.

None strikes me as so lacking in forethought as the proposed decision to close Middleton Park school and amalgamate it with Glashieburn.

I know both of these schools very well as in my capacity as a University Teaching Fellow in the School of Education, I have visited them both on numerous occasions.

The documentation is heavily biased to developer's needs and is giving no thought to the heart of this issue –the children.

Middleton Park is not a small school and under the superb leadership of Mrs Watson is a well integrated community with a clear vision for its pupils, staff and parents confidently addressing the demands and values of the Curriculum for Excellence in a healthy environment allowing space to develop both an indoor and outdoor education.

All ages of children meet, work and play together developing a true sense of cooperation and community – what a valuable lesson for adulthood! This cannot be achieved in an amalgamated school which will host so many children that staff cannot possibly get to know them all, interval and lunchtime will have to be staggered and undoubtedly factions will develop as full integration is impossible. It has been indicated that a bigger school will offer greater curricular diversity. Does that mean that the children who are in smaller schools are getting an inferior education? In my vast experience I can categorically say that is not the case and in many situations the reverse is true. It is well documented that it takes a primary generation of children to see a new fully integrated school emerge – why should the children who are in this situation be subjected to these issues which are outwith their innocent control? Neither community of children deserve this situation and we must serve them well. Surely it must not be that in the future these children/adults must reflect on the lack of foresight of their forefathers?

It beggars belief that in the state of the infrastructure of Bridge of Don the proposals will not only impact on the roads and all the attached safety and environmental health issues, the loss of the beautiful surrounding fields and the increased population that the council cannot see that history is yet again repeating itself in this suburb. When will lessons be learned?

Please for the sake of the children and their valuable contribution to the community to which they belong

STOP LISTEN and THINK !

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Thank you for your email. Does this also mean that no fire evaluation has been completed for this roll figure ? If it has been please provide details in your reply.

Kind regards

Sent from my iPhone

On 7 Oct 2013, at 11:56, wrote:

*Good afternoon,*

*460 would be the proposed capacity of the amalgamated school should the proposal be taken forward.*

*Clearly it would be formally re-evaluated on completion of internal re-configuration.*

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I am writing to express my concern regarding the possible closure of Middleton Park School in Aberdeen. I currently have one child in primary one and a further two children who will be starting the nursery and school over the next couple of years. My daughter has settled in very well at the school and I think it would be a big disruption for her to move schools at this young age.

I have a few concerns:

- I live a five minute walk from the school where we dont have to cross any busy roads, we can actually walk down the back way to Middleton Park where it is pedestrians only so it is really safe for all children.



- If she was moved to Glashieburn school we would have to cross the extremely busy Jesmond Drive, and even although there is a pedestrian crossing outside the school I believe there have been accidents here before.

- I believe the council promote walking to school for children which we do most days as it is so close but if we were relocated to Glashieburn it would be too far to walk especially in the morning with three young children to get out the door!

- This then poses the problem of safe parking at the school, at Middleton Park we can park in Asda which provides plenty of space but at Glashieburn we would have to park in residential streets around the school. I have been in the area at school time in the morning and it is an absolute nightmare.

- I am lead to believe by the 'education or burst' group that if the merger goes ahead it would make Glashieburn the most densely populated school in the city. This must be detrimental to the learning of our children, how can there be enough space to add another eight classes to an existing school? I believe the floor plan calculations for space per child include - gym hall, canteen, library and the base. If these areas all need to be used for the extra classes how will the children do gym, have lunch etc?

- I believe a school can only be closed if it is to the benefit of the children, as pointed out at one of the consultation meetings the only benefit the panel put forward was more CPD for teachers. This would be beneficial to the children in a round about way but if that is the best the council can come up with then it is shocking - closing a school so that teachers can do more CPD?!

- My last point is that Middleton Park is a high attaining school which receives excellent inspection results and I believe Glashieburn is not so high attaining - I would rather my child/ren were at the better school.

Middleton Park is a lovely school and nursery, the teachers are all so friendly as are the children. When my daughter started primary one it was such a smooth transition for her as the systems in place to welcome the children and to allow them to adapt to the new environment were excellent. I cannot think of any single benefit to the children of closing the school, on the contrary I think it would be detrimental to their learning which is the most important thing. The only benefit is for the council to save money, I think they should go back to the drawing board, carry out their research more thoroughly and find a better suggestion.

As one parent pointed out at one of the meetings - the council and education are always striving for excellence and closing a perfectly brilliant school and cramming the children into another school which is not so high attaining is not really excellent, is it? The panel declined to comment on that which speaks for itself I think.

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08/10/13

Myself and my three children moved here.

They are in primary 5/3 and 1 respectively and Glashieburn was the only school which could provide a space for all three children.

We have been extremely impressed by the positive ethos and sense of community that the school creates. All of the staff are enthusiastic and committed and the children are polite and well behaved.

The Thursday 'team time' activity is a unique idea which means that children from all classes/age groups are enabled to work together and since it is on a 2 week rotation, they will have been taught

by every teacher in the school over a year, which obviously facilitates the annual change of class teacher. The school have a buddy system which eases the nursery to primary 1 transition.

In terms of education, we have found this far superior to their previous school. Glashieburn follows a programme of active literacy and numeracy. All of my children have really benefitted from this and I see remarkable success in their academic progress.

It has recently come to light that my daughter has been abused and has suffered a great deal of emotional distress in conjunction with this. Glashieburn have been immensely supportive, allowing my daughter to work within the SEN base and working in conjunction with psychologists/ psychiatrists to facilitate her return to the classroom.

The SEN base is such a valuable resource for both the children who work full time within it and those who attend on a part time basis.

For many children (including my daughter), it has taken 9 months to be able to attend school comfortably in the SEN base and even the slightest change can be a huge setback, so relocation of the base would be very traumatic for them.

If the council were considering, new building with educational benefits for the students (akin to Braehead primary). I am sure people would feel more positively about a possible merge.

Of course, there will be staff cuts/changes too I would imagine. Mrs Winton is an admirable head teacher who is a source of inspiration for both her team and the children.

I have xxxxxxxx xxxxxxxx and can only walk a very short distance with a walking aid. Consequently, I need to use the car park to drop off my children. The amount of traffic from 'burst primary' would be incomprehensible. At the moment, all of the residential roads surrounding the school are nose to tail at pick-up/drop off times.

I do not feel that we should change the status quo when it is obviously working.

Glashieburn is a happy school with a strong sense of community and evident academic progress. Please let it continue to operate in its current capacity.

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It is with disgust that I email at such a late hour to highlight the ridiculous position we find ourselves in. The more research that is done on on the proposal the more evident it becomes that the whole process has been unnecessary, both in the council costs and also the costs of parents dedicating time to researching what is frankly a foolhardy plan. The true cost to our wider community and society will never be known but has been excessive.

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I am writing with grave concern over the moving of Middleton Park School into the Glashieburn Building. I have looked at your plan and it is NOT ACCEPTABLE the proposals you have made in terms of education and health and safety. There is no room and the areas you have suggested could be classrooms will make it very cramp. We are talking about hundreds of pupils to be squished into the existing Glashieburn building.

I have two kids going to the Glashieburn School and I am very worry about their education if this proposal going ahead.

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I can see that there are no direct answers to my queries at the moment as the ground work has not been completed and I look forward to seeing the detailed information in due course including the plan of works.

I'm aware that the bulk of the maintenance of school estate is undertaken during the summer holidays, however, you must appreciate our concerns given that the works per the proposed plans do appear to be major works and can they be completed in 6 weeks. My point is that there is no space for the children to be housed if any works over-run and we just want to be sure that this will not happen.

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In my view, the case for the educational benefit of the proposed merger has simply not been made. Whilst the consultation documents repeatedly assert that educational benefits will follow from the merger, the evidence offered in support of these assertions has proven wholly unpersuasive where it exists at all. The essential claim that a larger school simply as such will automatically afford educational gains is entirely unconvincing. No improvement of staff/student ratios is envisaged; neither do the plans for modification of the existing Glashieburn estate involve any significant improvements to the quality of the buildings, facilities and grounds, nor do they imagine any meaningful expansion of the same. I have to say that I have often found it difficult not to adjudge a good many of the arguments and claims advanced in favour of the merger by the proposal to be disingenuous.

Two credible alternatives seem at hand. The first is simply to make certain discrete modifications to the boundaries of the current catchments with a view to redistributing student numbers across Glashieburn, Middleton Park, and Forehill Primary Schools as well as the anticipated new primary schools integrated into the plans for the new 'Grandholme' development west of Whitestripes Road. Viable and balanced enrolments could be readily attained in this way while ensuring greater flexibility to adapt to the hard-to-predict demographic developments of coming years. The second alternative is to undertake a 'private/public partnership' project (like that which in recent years delivered the new Braehead Primary School) to deliver a new and efficient building, appropriately scaled for the demands to be placed upon it, and so fully fit-for-purpose. Compared with these obvious alternatives, the current proposal seems as unimaginative as it does impracticable.

My distinct hope is that the Aberdeen Council will abandon the current proposal as untenable and unlikely to deliver any educational benefit to the students whose education is at issue here.

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After reading your Proposal Document in full and attending two of the Public Meetings, I would be grateful if you could consider the following questions:

#### Grandhome deception

Explain why the education of our children has to be severely affected by forcing through a merger, when it has been admitted by the Committee at meeting that a simple rezoning of all Bridge of Don schools would be sufficient to meet current needs until the Grandhome development is ready for their own purpose built schools, as provided by the developer (though we have seen such guarantees broken previously).

Can you also answer, hand on heart, that the Proposal as stands, is simply a method of forcing a developer into building a new school at an earlier stage, by cramming two current school roles into a building, which, as the document states, is not fit for purpose in the modern age with regards to providing an education to our children, in line with the Curriculum as it stands in 2013.

The 3R's schools provide the new high watermark with regards to the facilities and space available for the education of our children. To effectively put forward a proposal which would be a huge retrograde step to the 1980's with regards to facilities is, to me, shameful.

#### Treating Customers Fairly

This is seen as a key deliverable in business today. You cannot be seen to take steps or decisions which will be to the benefit of one "customer", but to the detriment of another. I am in no way

To me, this is exactly what you are proposing. You propose to cause harm to the educational benefit that our children currently enjoy, by attending two well run and well above average performing schools, by cramming them into a space not fit for purpose, all to ensure that the children who, on moving in with their families to the new Grandhome Estate, will be provided with 3R's schools. You are quite clearly robbing Peter to pay Paul.

To this end, can you please confirm if TCF, or something of a similar nature, has to be seen to be adhered to when proposals are being considered. It would seem quite ironic that the Government, through its regulators quite rightly push regulations on to Companies to ensure they look after their customer base, whereas areas of Government would not have to take similar steps when making decisions.

#### 3R's schools

As both Glashieburn and Middleton Park seem to provide what I'd expect you as a Committee would like to see replicated across all Aberdeen's primary school estates – good educational attainment levels by the pupils at a cost well below the City average - to allow us to see a comparison, can you please provide data as to the costs per pupil of running a 3R's school, as this was not contained within the document.

To me it seems like madness to even consider looking at two schools which your own figures show to be good for the City when comparing with other areas within Scotland.

As a Committee you had seven months to prepare and submit a document, which, if prepared properly, could have taken the parents with you in your arguments. Instead, you have misled us, used inaccurate data to get across your arguments, provided ineffective responses at public meetings and most importantly of all, shown little thought for the provision of a good ongoing primary education for our children, the very children that, in the future will be expected to be the city's decision makers for shaping the city's future prosperity.

I hope that you can consider my points when coming to your decision, and come to the conclusion that the proposal, as it stands, will provide no educational benefit to the children, which, I'm sure you will agree should be uppermost in everyone's thoughts when such decisions are to be made. My 7 year old daughter loves her school, I would hate to see that change.

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I am writing to you as a very worried parent of two children who attend Glashieburn with my youngest pre-school nursery and my eldest P3. I am not against change nor am i against merging but i am against merging with the Glashieburn site in its current condition and size.

The teacher car park is at capacity every day as it is. There is no safe drop off/pick up area at the moment without the extra traffic that will come into the area as most parents will be forced to drive to school as the walk will be too long. Local people will be affected by this.

My main concern is the lack of internal/external space these poor children will be expected to learn in. I feel no better about my concerns after attending two of the consultation meetings. We will lose ICT room, library and music room. Lunch will be spread over three sittings in order to accommodate the extra children and the equipment that will need to come with them. This is NOT an educational benefit to these children.

Aberdeen city council have produced a seventy five page document on their proposal to merge these two schools with only one educational benefit "more widespread and flexible learning spaces" no matter how many times they repeat this statement there is NO educational benefit to these children.

Is there a financial gain to the council if Middleton Park was to close? Also what is the plan for the Middleton Park site if the crazy plan was to go ahead? Is there to be more houses built on the site? bringing more children into the area. ACC have already granted planning permission for seven thousand houses in this area.

To sum up, what this council is planning will be detrimental to a whole generation of children. It is a money saving non educational crazy idea that could be resolved by rezoning areas not closing a school.

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09/10/13

I attended the last public consultation and was shocked at the amount of factual discrepancy in the proposed merger and what the members of the board were actually saying . My boys both attended also and spoke at the end . Even at 6 my younger son has been worried about the impact of having so much room will have on his education and also 'fun ' time outside . I have now seen the factual evidence of how much room our children would actually have if the schools merge , and am absolutely appalled !!! Surely this should not have been left to parent councils to reveal these statistics ! Again this shows how the proposal has absolutely nothing to do with educational benefit for our children and is financially driven , full stop !

How can anyone , given these facts now say that this will be of benefit to our kids ? Why did the council not look at re zoning areas in the first place , which would be the easiest and most sensible option for the area , and our children . Surely there is no one of any level of intelligence that can see any pros for continuing with the proposal . If you can't re zone then build us a new , bigger school , like Greenbrae , where the children have lots of space , up to date technology and , as a teacher who works there told me , is a pleasure to teach in due to the amount of space the children have to learn in .

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I have now received a more formal response from our Health and Safety colleague in response to your query about a Fire Risk Assessment.

'The current fire risk assessments for both schools in their current form are sufficient. There would be no point in attempting to review the assessment until detailed plans of the new layout and the location of fire exits and numbers involved etc. are available. Glashieburn is due a review around June next year, however if there is going to be a reconfiguration while the work is undertaken this will have to be taken

into consideration. There are no problems in carrying out the fire risk assessment, if you keep me informed of any progress arrangements can be made at short notice.'

I hope this reassures you as to the process.

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Having just looked at space per pupil table I am disgusted at the mere 6.5m<sup>2</sup> per pupil. Considering that the BRAND NEW school at braehead has over 20m<sup>2</sup>.

Lets throw this idea out that we will fit or agree to give us a new school that benefits ALL the pupils and staff.

Ps. My daughter hates any reference to sardines and this is exactly what you are classing them as!

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I am extremely concerned about the proposed closure of Middleton Park School and pupils being shoe-horned into the existing Glashiburn school building, which has extremely limited space both internally and externally.

From your own figures ( <http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=53376&slD=23620> ) tabulating internal space per pupil, the proposed merged school (burst primary) will have the least internal space per pupil across the whole of Aberdeen, based on the most up-to-date figures (and projections to 2020 and likely beyond).

How can this possibly be of educational benefit to our children, who will no longer have computer/library space or quiet areas/flexible teaching spaces. To make things worse they would also have a very small playing area outside the school for 460 kids.

Please do not compromise our children's education by allowing the proposed closure of Middleton Park and merger of Glashiburn and Middleton Park pupils.

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Thank you for your email. As I stated in my previous I saw it on the internet and since you cannot find which is fine I thank you for your assistance.

I can assure you it has been done I have evidence of that.

Thank you for taking the time to reply and I thank you for your time last night.

Could you please answer my question we did not have time to get back to last night. Which was how will this in particular benefit the children in relation to educational regarding - literacy, numeracy and another benefit for delivering the curriculum for excellence.

Also my final statement of the delivery of consistency I spoke of both space within educational establishment and how the curriculum is delivered as a result of this ? Please advise if you believe this is fairly being delivered to all children across aberdeen city?

A comparison of braehead primary and the proposed new school would suffice even just a comparison of space per child, resources available within both and external space.

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Could you perhaps clarify something else for me, I am of the understanding that yourself and ms Gorman are both of a teaching back ground.? Which is obviously valuable to your department. Can I assume that neither of you have taught children using the current framework - curriculum for excellence ?

I can't see anywhere in the consultation document any evidence of how the framework fits in with this proposal ? Surely this should be top priority when evaluating the space and how this will be used ? Yet there is nothing at all I can see.

I do not mean to come across in a patronising tone at all I just am looking for clarification/ justification for the evaluation in relation to this,

Many thanks

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I wish to object to the proposed school merger of Middleton Park and Glashiburn Schools in the highest of terms.

I fail to see how any adequate accommodation of curriculum could be brought to benefit the children in a merger but rather see a detriment to their education. An education of sufficient standard is obligatory if these children are to have any change in a highly competitive world be developed.

The public consultation was fictitious with unfounded statistics and wrongly scaled maps. The report failed to mention practicalities of how to implement a better curriculum with what no eyes upon this earth can any person see how this would work in a merger.

The prosped merger will have the smallest amount of space per pupil at 6.6m<sup>2</sup> per pupil. This is over 10% less then the current two school spaces. Schools aren't Sardine cans, they are there to give pupils the one chance they have to make their life.

For all these reasons and more I ask for the merger not to go ahead and create a Burst School.

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Until now, at all the public meetings and at meetings with the staff of the two schools, those in authority were adamant that the "m<sup>2</sup> per pupil GIFA/Roll" of floor-space would NOT be the least, i.e. the most cramped in an Aberdeen City Primary School.

Finally an admission contrary to what has been said as above that the combined Middleton Park and Glashieburn school will be the most cramped at 6.6 m<sup>2</sup> compared to currently:

Middleton Park: 7.5 m<sup>2</sup> and Glashieburn: 11.3 m<sup>2</sup>

Once again we have been given incorrect information!

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I find it difficult to comprehend the that those in authority are constantly suggesting that the children from the new "Grandhome" estate will take Middleton Park school above capacity from 2018 to 2020.

The consultation document states that the children from this new estate will be temporarily schooled at Danestone school, until the first new school within the Grandhome estate opens at which time those temporarily at Danestone would go to the new school. I realise that part the new Grandhome estate is currently within the Middleton Park school zone, but even so, if the children from the first phase who are to temporarily schooled at Danestone were to go to Middleton Park there would be plenty of space for them there, until the first new school within the Grandhome estate opens. I do not believe that when the first new school open there, those from this new estate going Middleton Park would not be decanted there! This being the case there is not a problem regarding over capacity at Middleton Park

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Well, well, well, at last!! It's high time you started to tell some truth when it comes to this ridiculous proposal. So you can now count. I commend you for that at least. A whole document is based on utter nonsense. You exaggerate the figures when it suits and you reduce the figures when it suits to make your plan look like it works.

I have no confidence in any of you. Cutting, pasting and lying your way through a document which is supposed to be the way forward for a better education for my 2 children. An insult to my children is what it is. You can not and with any hope will not have this proposal accepted.

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At all the public meetings the council have advised the public that with the exception of the head teacher's post at the amalgamated school:

From the consultation documnet:

Section 4.2 , "Staff from the two existing schools will have the opportunity to work within the new school."

Section 7.7, "Staff will transfer to the amalgamated school, the Head Teacher post will be recruited openly, as per existing council policies."

At a meeting with Middleton Park staff on Monday 7th October, the coucil officials when asked about the staff transferring to the amagamated school were advised that not all "Support Staff" would be transferred although they did not elaborate on this.

Who will not be transferring, contrary to the consulation document?

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I read with dismay the proposal to amalgamate Glashieburn and Middleton Park schools. As a retired teacher I look back to a time not so many years ago when I found myself teaching a class in a totally unsuitable area of an open plan school in the Bridge of Don due to over crowding. The class had to cope with a constant stream of both pupils and visitors passing through the area in order to get from one part of the school to another. It did not effect their progress but was far from ideal. Amalgamating these two schools would appear to be a step back in time and not for the better.

The influx of so many extra pupils would also put a strain on the management of gym times and school lunches. When you have so many children to feed within a short period of time the only way this can be done is by staggering lunches which works but takes time, more time than you have in an hour. The only way this can be done is by cutting into teaching time.



Physical Education activities can take place in a teaching area with P6 and P7 but there is always the danger of a child falling or banging into a piece of furniture, especially corners of tables. Younger children need much more room otherwise accidents are bound to happen. Organizing a PE rota for so many classes in the halls would be very difficult, even with two halls you still have the problem of school lunches to take into the equation. Again a backward step.

There is also the problem of traffic control. Many people drop off and pick up their children by car, causing traffic problems in nearby streets, this would be exacerbated with the influx of yet more pupils.

Much more thought needs to go into this proposal before anything is decided.

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I have serious concerns regarding the financial planning from ACC regarding this merger.

As I look around the estates within both school's catchment areas I see houses built in the late 70's early 80's. Housing estates tend to have a 40 year cycle, yes there will be some movement, families come and go within that time but it will be a trickle, but you hit that 40 years when there is a mass exodus. I walked round my estate and discussed with friends in surrounding ones the percentage of 50, 60 and 70 year olds and it would be approx 90% of the population.

In approx. 10- 12 years time that mass turnaround will happen. I personally will choose not to be here in to my seventies, preferring a nice apartment / bungalow with minimal gardening. Will buyers, who based on the one or two changing hands at moment will be young families, choose our estates over the brand spanking new houses planned for the surrounding areas. I say yes, based on basic personal economics. New builds you need to put down a 20% deposit, existing buildings you need only 5 or 10% deposit based on your credit rating. With a 3 bed semi now fetching close to a quarter of a million we are speaking about £50000 deposit versus worst scenario £25000 deposit. Most young families will be in the £25k deposit bracket so yes our houses will sell.

My questions 1) have these economics been considered. 2) should the above happen as I believe it will, where are these children going to be schooled as the merged school on the Glashieburn site will then be bursting at the seams. 3) what is the differential to keeping both schools open awaiting this to happen as opposed to purchasing a site and building another school within catchment area in 10 years time?

I would like to see detailed figures on this before any decision is made.

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As a parent of two children at Glashieburn school I am extremely shocked to hear about the proposed school merger with Middleton Park.

My first concern is how will the influx of so many extra pupils to the school benefit my children's education in any way. Classes are already overcrowded and the influx of more pupils will mean that a number of areas of my children's education potentially jeopardised. I am not willing for the council to provide a second rate education for my children to cut costs.

To make the argument that the schools merger is going to benefit my children in any way seems extremely misleading. Bridge of Don is one of the biggest suburbs in Scotland and requires more resources to be allocated to education, not less. Having physical education for example moved to classrooms and corridors as well as some classrooms which are not fit for purpose makes no sense and is not an improvement to any school.

Alot more thought needs to go into this proposal as i am not willing to stand by and let the council jeopardise my children's futures.

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I write this to convey my disgust at the proposed amalgamation of Glashieburn and Middleton Park and which would appear to be a step back in time and not a step forward.

The influx of so many extra pupils would surely put a strain on the management of gym and lunch times. With so many extra children to feed within a short period of time surely the only way this can be done is by staggering lunches which would undoubtedly take time, more time than you have in an hour, and would therefore cut into teaching time.

There is also increased safety concerns. Many people drop off and pick up their children by car, causing traffic problems in nearby streets. Living on a nearby street and having two children currently at Glashieburn I fear for their safety going to and from school.

I do not believe there is any educational benefit shown for the children and do not want my children's education jeopardised as part of a council merely trying to save money and cut corners in the process.

This proposal is shocking and needs far more thought.

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I am a parent with 2 children currently at Middleton Park. Both of my children have so far had a fantastic education within this lovely school, which is situated within our community. My children along with their friends have a great sense of pride in their school and it would be a tragedy to close this well performing school.

I have attended the public consultation meetings and listened to the council officers, but they have not given me any reassurance that this will be a positive change for any of the children involved.

Continuing professional development of staff is not an educational benefit that is worthy of all the upset that my children will endure should their school close. Surely there should be clear and proven benefits for all the children. I have read through the consultation document and I am really struggling to see where the educational benefit is for cramming all the children into the Glashieburn site. As far as I can see this is purely a cost saving exercise.

When I look through the consultation document in detail I notice a mistake in the section on the pupil population of Middleton Park. The document states that there are currently two Primary 6 classes and no Primary 7 class at all. This type of information is misleading for anyone that has no knowledge of our school as they will immediately think that no Primary 7 class exists. I would have thought that such an important document would have been properly proof read prior to being issued for public consultation. If there are mistakes as simple as this within the document, I have no confidence in the rest of the figures that are detailed.

I would like to ask why it has taken the council officers months to produce a document that clearly looks like it has been cut and pasted from another. The duration of this process has had a detrimental effect on Middleton Park as I know of at least 2 sets of parents that decided not to start their children at Middleton Park this summer as they thought it would be closing. How many other families have chosen to enrol their children in other primary schools in the area as they did not wish to tackle the disruption that could ensue if their primary school were to close? We will never know the answer, but I would suggest that the delays we have had to endure have undoubtedly swayed families in their decisions on where to educate their children in the bridge of don.

It is clearly obvious that all these children will not fit into the Glashieburn site unless they are crammed into areas that are currently being used as corridors, library and ICT spaces. Children need to have adequate space and limited disruptions to be able to concentrate and learn. Sitting in a corridor will not offer either of these and can only be detrimental to their education.

My children currently walk to and from school. Moving them down to the Glashieburn site will turn a 5 minute walk into a ½ hour walk which will in reality turn into a car journey for my children. The residents in the surrounding area of Glashieburn currently complain about the disruption that the school drop offs and pick-ups cause them. There is no designated drop off zone or parent parking for Glashieburn and none proposed. I am sure that I will not be the only additional Middleton Park parent that will be adding to the congestion for the residents surrounding Glashieburn, should this ridiculous proposal go ahead.

How will the Glashieburn kitchen areas and dining halls cope with the additional children that will need to be processed at a lunchtime? I understand that there are already 2 lunch sittings at Glashieburn, so how many more sittings will be required once the Middleton Park children descend upon them? Charlie Penman did not give any re-assurance on this issue when he presented at the consultation meeting on Tuesday 1st of October 2013. He advised that Kingswells Primary manages to accommodate their large pupil numbers without any issues at a lunchtime. However, the fundamental flaw here is that Kingswells Primary has fewer pupils in a larger building, so not a like for like comparison!

My children currently have 3 sessions of physical education totalling 2 hours per week. With the games halls being used for lunches, assemblies, school open days, religious performances etc... can you demonstrate (ie a timetable) of exactly how my children will still receive their 2 hours of physical education every week? Council officers stated at one of the consultation meetings that children could use the external areas to carry out physical education. I hardly feel this is a realistic option with the changeable and sometimes very inclement weather that Aberdeen experiences.

Why is it that the council officers are the only people that see any benefits in creating a school that will be bursting at the seams? I am not opposed to change and would welcome an amalgamation with Glashieburn if it were a new purpose built school which had the same space and learning opportunities as Braehead Primary. As this is not an option for us under this proposal, then I do not wish my children to be uprooted and crushed into a "make do" primary.

Middleton Park Primary school produces well educated and conscientious individuals, please leave it alone to continue to do so!

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I have friends with children who attend these schools and was disgusted and shocked to hear about the plans to amalgamate these schools as they seem to put the children who attend both at many disadvantages. It seems that this school will not have enough internal space, that the flexible learning space will be reduced, the nursery space will be severely reduced despite an increase in children and that the ability to have outdoor activities will be lowered due to the playing field space being very small. There is evidence that this is detrimental to health and wellbeing and that there is increased bullying in schools with limited outdoor space. In addition, it seems likely that there will be a much higher pupil to teacher ration which will definitely reduce the time the teacher can spend with each pupil. There does not appear to be any clear educational advantage to the merger. In my opinion the plans seem to propose a decreased standard of education and therefore I would like to add my name to others that are opposing the proposal.

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As a pupil of middleton park primary school I am in primary 7 (which apparently does not exist according to the consultation document) I would like to ask a question about your great idea to save money by closing our school.

•Please provide me with a list of specific educational pupil benefits.

Me and my freinds made this video. Type in the Middleton Park Crew on you tube

SAVE OUR SCHOOL!!!

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The council have admitted that figures in the proposal which relate to internal space per pupil were incorrect. Many other errors and anomalies in the proposal have been highlighted throughout the consultation process. Is it not now time for the council to admit the proposal to merger the two schools is flawed and that it should be thrown out?

If this does not happen the education of pupils in the amalgamated school will not be of the same high standard as in the current schools. This is not acceptable for either the current pupils or the new intakes in the years to come.

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further question has anyone who has contributed to the production of the proposal worked with the current framework ?

Children no longer sit at desks all day to be taught as you or I were in schools. It implemented using a child led approach. Which means the children lead the way in what they learn. I am no expert on the curriculum for excellence my knowledge of this comes from attending curriculum evenings hosted by the school and what I have further read to enhance my knowledge as a parent so I can give the best contribution to my children's education. This is not a criticism of teaching staff it is only an observation that some older teaching staff are struggling with the change in framework as it has been huge and they have spent a long time using the previous framework.

When I asked my daughter of her P1 experiences, she is now is p6 and stated that my son who went into p1 this term is spoilt as he gets to move around and doesn't have to sit at a desk all day. I am fully aware that this is a child's perception but it speaks volumes about the change in the framework delivered then and what is now being used now, as it was not in place when she was in p1.

Like I have already said I am no expert I only try to broaden my knowledge so I can assist my children and make the best contribution to my children's education and I will be honest they are teaching me more than I them.

I am really struggling to see how the curriculum can be delivered with such space restrictions and given that the Scottish government is trying to reduce class sizes although I have not looked in to this in much depth I am pretty certain this is to deliver the curriculum better. In all the education scotland information i have read it entirely relates to the curriculum there is very little about CPD and continually says we are striving for excellence in line with the title curriculum for excellence. There I feel this should be in the educational benefit statement as yes there may be benefits in collaborate teaching but what is gained will be of little use with out evaluating all other elements too.

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Thank you for your email. As I stated in my previous I saw it on the internet and since you cannot find which is fine I thank you for your assistance.

I can assure you it has been done I have evidence of that.

Thank you for taking the time to reply and I thank you for your time last night.

Could you please answer my question we did not have time to get back to last night. Which was how will this in particular benefit the children in relation to educational regarding - literacy, numeracy and another benefit for delivering the curriculum for excellence.

Also my final statement of the delivery of consistency I spoke of both space within educational establishment and how the curriculum is delivered as a result of this ? Please advise if you believe this is fairly being delivered to all children across aberdeen city?

A comparison of braehead primary and the proposed new school would suffice even just a comparison of space per child, resources available within both and external space.

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10/10/13

I have serious concerns about the proposal to amalgamate Glashieburn and Middleton Park and put them into the current Glashieburn building.

There are too many pupils to fit into such a small space, and then expect the teachers to teach in the Curriculum for Excellence Framework. Gone are the days where children are expected to sit at a desk and stay there and instead the children should be constantly busy working in groups and completing active lessons. There is not enough room as Glashieburn exists at the moment for the teachers to be able to do this competently. Where is the room for activities to be set up to enhance learning and so that learning can be done through play?

I also don't understand how being a bigger school proves educational benefit. In empirical studies it has been shown that this is not the case.

It also does not seem that there will be more flexibility for learners as stated in the educational benefit, as there will not be the same flexibility as is currently offered due to a lack of space. This means that teachers and learners will be much more restricted in the kind of activities that they can partake in.

I am also very concerned that there is a proposal to move the base pupils. Although this may not seem 'significant' any change that these pupils have to make will be very significant. I would also like to ask whether where they are going to be is going to be somewhere that is quiet, and not a shared space, as this would also be problematic for these children.

If the school need to be merged I would urge you to put them into a new building that has room to fit all of the pupils in, as this is my biggest concern, is the lack of space.

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I am writing to you as I am deeply concerned by your proposal to merge Glashieburn and Middleton Park Primary Schools into the existing Glashieburn building.

My God Daughter, and her elder brother, attend Middleton Park and although I no longer live in Aberdeen I spent several years there completing my training and I am familiar with both of these schools.

I would have to say that the standard of the consultation document is very disappointing. It would appear that basic facts, such as school roles, are inaccurate. Please can you tell me why these inaccuracies have not been rectified?

I am also lead to believe that the suitability rating of the Glashieburn building was revised upwards shortly before the consultation process began, despite no significant work being undertaken. Please can you tell on what basis this revision has been made?

My greatest concern, however, is that there does not appear to sufficient space within the existing Glashieburn building to satisfactorily accommodate the existing school role (let alone any possible future increase). I remain unconvinced that legal requirements for space are being met, let alone achieving any aspirations for learning excellence. Please can you offer some fresh justification for how this proposal offers any educational benefit to current and future pupils?

I would urge you to reconsider your proposal and at the very least accommodate the merged school in a new building. Having been in Braehead Primary School recently I can see that Aberdeen Council is still capable of providing excellent buildings to support pupils learning. Please can you reassure me that pupils of Middleton Park and Glashieburn will continue to receive their education in an equally suitable building?

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I wish to express my disappointment and deep concerns regarding the proposed closure of Middleton Park and Glashieburn Schools and the amalgamation of both schools within the existing Glashieburn site.

I have read the public consultation document that was made public on August 26th 2013 and feel that the document and proposals for the schools have been poorly thought out and that many of the arguments for the educational benefit are at best no different to the existing offerings and at worst may actually represent a degradation in the quality of education currently being offered to our children. In addition, there are a number of mistakes in the report and instances where the facts appear to conflict against each other such as walking times to school from within the various catchment areas, which undermines the credibility of the report.

I realise that Aberdeen City Council has a duty to manage its school estate in a manner that is sustainable, efficient and maximise value for money but that it also has to take social aspects into consideration, however I'm not convinced that this proposal is doing that.

The report talks to the suitability and condition of the schools and it is clear from the various surveys that Glashieburn has received a poorer rating than Middleton Park and despite the report stating that Aberdeen City is committed to providing school buildings fit for the 21st Century, it is clear that work would be required to upgrade Glashieburn to a suitable status. Also, between surveys, the suitability of Glashieburn was elevated between February 2012 and August 2013 despite no significant changes being made to the school. If the survey requirements were changed, I'd like to ask why a second survey didn't materially change the Middleton Park in an equal manner? This doesn't appear to make sense and makes it hard to see that the surveys were conducted in a fair and equal manner.

The report does propose alterations on Glashieburn School in the Summer of 2014, but given the timeframe over the Summer holidays and the availability of workmen in the holiday period, it suggests that any alterations can only be minor and that there is likely to be a serious overrun of any work, which would have a harmful effect on returning pupils and if there were any overrun, how can our children's education be delivered to an adequate standard given the increased number of pupils in the school?

As well as the building suitability, a lot of weight should be given to the general school environment and space available to the pupils as it has long been proven that this has a significant effect on the wellbeing to the pupils and the effect on the receptiveness of pupils to learning this can have. There is currently little space outwith the classrooms at Glashieburn, without dramatically increasing the number of pupils in the school. What is the educational benefit for our children to be moved into a

crammed building where the delivery of the Curriculum for Excellence could be impeded due to the increase in pupil number ?

Middleton Park is a very homely school, where all the staff know all the children and where all the children know each other and all the staff. This I feel is particularly important and gives the whole school a sense of community, which is very significant in this day and age when social values are being eroded. If both schools were to merge, the 'new amalgamated school' would be far bigger and this sense of community would most likely be lost. Both schools have always had and still do have excellent attainment levels and I feel that by merging the two schools, these attainment levels will suffer dramatically due to the larger class sizes and the amount of time that teachers can allocate to pupils on an individual basis.

I have seen the projected numbers, but they do not seem to make allowance for the nursery children, so what provision is there for these as they are not counted in the roll in the report and is a significant number of children and would most likely mean the roll would be over 500, which is way over the capacity for any 'amalgamated school'.

Also, as a parent who myself underwent transition whilst at school, I can categorically state that any transition has a huge and long lasting effect on both the pupils and staff. The quality of education suffers, the morale of the teachers both before, during and after transition is detrimental to both their health and the quality of education that they can deliver and this should not be dismissed lightly. In my case, it essentially meant a whole year of my education was impacted so I would like to highlight this and make you aware that we are not talking about just a few weeks of change. If the benefits of the change were to be demonstrated to vastly improve the quality of life and education of the pupils, then there may be an argument for it, but to change for changes sake and merely to provide a degradation across all areas of our children's lives does not make sense.

Another area which is particularly important is that of pupil's safety. The report states that a review of the safe routes to school will be carried out, prior to any final recommendation on the proposal being made. This ought to have been carried out before now and included in the document to give parents assurances that their children would be safe to go to school. A number of older pupils walk to school and the additional distance or change in walking route to Glashieburn School means that the distances to school are further or that they are more unsafe due to pupils have to walk alongside the busy road between the two schools for those children who are currently in the Middleton Park catchment area. What provision have the council made for improving crossing points, walkways and lighting etc in view of this? Any merger has a knock on effect that extends beyond just the school building themselves.

Whilst walking to school should be the preferred option, there is no escape from the fact that in this day and age and the busy lives that people have, that a number of children are dropped off at school and there is bound to be an increased amount of traffic around the Glashieburn area and a full risk assessment of this would need to be conducted as the possibility of congestion, traffic accidents and harm to children is likely to occur. For some parents, struggling to make ends meet and having to already manage their work/life balance, the car is the only option unless their children's wellbeing and homelife is not to suffer, so I would urge you to take this into consideration.

Finally, I would also like to question how realistic the projected roll numbers are given the amount of development currently going on in the area. When I look around my immediate area, I see a large number of people coming into the area in both new and existing homes and that a lot of these new people have young children and infants with them and I see that there are not equivalent numbers of older children, so it feels like there is likely to be an exponential increase in demand rather than a steady increase in numbers. This would suggest that both schools if left as they are could be over capacity in a much shorter timeframe than any projections currently show. How is the 'demand planning' for school rolls undertaken and what contingent plans are in place if there was to be a sudden unexpected demand?

At previous consultations, there was significant support for maintaining the status with Glashieburn and Middleton Park Schools as separate establishments and there was some support for amalgamating two or three of the primary schools on Jesmond Drive into a single new school. I think

that ultimately this has to be the way forwards and the basis of any long-term plan for the area, but feel that the 'stop-gap' amalgamation of schools is ill thought out and only a temporary solution at best at our children's expense.  
Therefore I ask that Aberdeen City Council take our views into account and do not go ahead with this proposal!

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Please please please do not close Middleton Park school as it is the best school with the best teachers. My mum and both my uncles went to this school and so does my brother. My grandma works here. We all want the school to stay open. My brother and me do not want to be squeezed into Glashieburn school.  
Please do not close this brilliant school.

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Please please please do not close Middleton Park nursery and school as it is the best nursery with the best teachers. My mum and both my uncles went to this school and so does my sister. My grandma works here as well. We all want the school to stay open. My sister and me do not want to be squeezed into Glashieburn school.  
Please do not close my nursery.

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I write with major concerns about the Council's proposal to close Glashieburn and Middleton Park Schools and to merge them into a "new" amalgamated school on the existing Glashieburn campus.

1.  
The proposal document is not fit for purpose. It is largely cut and pasted from the merger of Torry and Kincorth Academies. In particular the crucial Educational Benefit Statement is extremely similar. It does not consider all the children involved and has no factual backup. Despite errors and misleading information being pointed out, these have not been corrected.
2.  
The consultation has not been fit for purpose. None of the key questions were addressed during the consultation period. Amongst other things, there are no firm plans demonstrating how the children will satisfactorily fit. Furthermore no consideration has been made to the vulnerable children in the base. In essence I have not been provided with the facts needed to consult on.
3.  
The proposed amalgamated school would not be fit for purpose. The Council's own figures show it would be the most cramped school in Aberdeen. The space in the building and playground would be completely inadequate for the number of children involved.
4.  
No educational benefit has been (or can be) proven. Section 3 of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 states this is critical in any plan to close a school.
5.  
The proposal has no rational justification. There can be no explanation as to why the Grandhome development should mean a need to change. It simply needs rezoned as is already planned.



6.

This proposal is against Aberdeen City Council's own policies. "It is the Council's vision to provide accommodation equivalent to the 3Rs schools for all our pupils" (Review of Aberdeen City Council School Estate Engagement Document). This plan is absolutely not in keeping with this vision.

7.

The proposal is very obviously a disguised effort at cost cutting. This is wrong, especially as our schools cost well below the Aberdeen average per pupil.

8.

The proposal has no support. There has been no support at all for it in the community. Instead, there has been massive support for the campaign to retain the two schools and secure a 25-year plan that is of benefit to our children and future children.

"It is the Council's vision to provide accommodation equivalent to the 3Rs schools for all our pupils." I urge that the current proposal is dropped immediately and a true 25 year plan in keeping with this vision is pursued.

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With reference to the above I wish to share with you my main concern at the schools merging at Glashieburn.

I live in Jesmond Avenue at the end near to Glashieburn School and as a Registered Childminder I am so concerned about the effect the merger will have on the amount of extra traffic that this will generate. Every morning and after-school time this area is already a terrible road for myself and my minded children to cross. I hate to think how worse it will get if there is more traffic. More cars will make this more dangerous. It would be a accident waiting to happen.

Years ago before there was a nursery at Middleton Park there were 3 nursery classes at Glashieburn and we were driven mad with people parking regularly over our driveway. I really couldn't face this happening again. We would ask parents/carers to move so my husband could get car out to get to his work and we would be faced with abuse. Often cars would be parked across our drive after school times and we couldn't get our car up our driveway.

I do hope you have seriously taken this issue into consideration.

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It is with great concern I email you, my eight year old attends Middleton park primary which has shown both her and I great support. My child had delayed development, hyper mobility joints, and looks like she is dyslexic too among other things.....to cut to the chase I see no benefit to my child's education by cramming these two schools into one..... Could you explain what she will gain from this move. Also I have real worries about the busy road and the crossing. Can you ensure that she will get the support she is getting by the teaching staff now and that she will be safe beside a busy road that at school times are made more so and you propose adding to that? So far I have not heard anything that shows The children's education or well being has even been considered never mind been put first!

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I am a parent of two children of the existing Middleton Park Primary School catchment area and as such very interested in the current proposal to close Middleton Park and Glashieburn schools. I am in no way anti change but I have reviewed the public consultation document concerned and now find myself compelled to write to you in order to convey my concerns.

Firstly I am deeply concerned about the overall quality of the document. I find it poorly put together with contradictory information which becomes evident after even the most cursory of glances (p37 "of the 156 pupils attending Middleton Park School in 2013, 74% were 'in-zone' and 36% were 'out of zone'.) As an example. This document is a driver for change which will directly affect the future of my children and as such I feel it should be prepared with appropriate care.

I am concerned also about standards. The current standard of education at both schools is measurably good. Aberdeen council clearly understand Standards and the requirements and recommendations of Education Scotland. This is evident with the excellent facilities which the council has delivered in other areas of Aberdeen. I now find that the same council is making a proposal for change where the driver is projected future figures that mean in three years the existing schools may be full. I'm struggling with the argument for change given it has been discussed and declared by representatives of Aberdeen Council that projected figures are notoriously unreliable. That and particularly when the figure that is absolutely sure is that of occupancy of an amalgamated school will be far and above the recommended roll for the space available. A double standard then? One that is acceptable for Bridge of Don and another that is in keeping with Education Scotland and the rest of Aberdeen?

I'm concerned that the proposal is not fully thought through, if the proposal goes ahead solutions to issues need to be found in a very short space of time, my expectation would be a fully considered proposal with solutions to ensure the facility at the very least will meet the most basic educational requirements on the day of opening. There is nothing within the document which in any way leaves me confident that this would be the case, the apparent lack of care in which it has been presented leaves me extremely doubtful such an amalgamation would be successful.

Presented with the document as it currently is and from my attendance at the consultation meetings I cannot understand how any reasonably minded parent would lie down to a proposal whose end game is to have their kids effectively doing their lessons in the lobby!!

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I am so concerned about this proposal on a number of levels. First and foremost the impact that it will have on our childrens educational learning, development and emotional wellbeing. I fail to see how reducing the space a child has to learn in will produce good results as children require a variety of methods to learn from and don't just sit at desks all day like years gone by. Also what emotional impact will there be when there are more children in already space restricted cloakrooms, dinner halls and gym halls? Especially for the children in the younger years who are adjusting to starting school in the first place! What will happen to the teaching staff? We have 2 great schools with fantastic teachers and with a teaching shortage will any of our existing staff want to teach in a school near to capacity where their teaching methods may be compromised due to space restrictions! Or will they simply move on to other schools with smaller class sizes and more space to exercise their various teaching methods? Where would that leave our children? Then there is the lack of parking or no parking at the school other than spaces for the teaching staff and school taxis. This leaves the surrounding residential streets to cope with parents parking in the morning as they try to find a space before they go to work. It is unrealistic to expect middleton park parents to walk to glashieburn. Many are dropping off on the way to work, many with younger children would find the walk to far for little ones and in poor weather the parking would be chaos as people try to get as close as possible to the school gates. I have concerns about everyones road safety. As a resident on jesmond avenue cars

often travel at speed down the street towards Jesmond Road where the school is. Finally why are we closing two fantastic schools and putting all the children on the Glashieburn school site when there are so many new houses being built? Is re-zoning not a viable option? This proposal doesn't make sense!

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As a resident of Bridge of Don I would like to make my views known on this proposal.

Very many others have outlined clearly the multitude of problems with this proposal. I would like to concentrate on the deeply flawed proposal document, the ludicrously inconsistent and incomplete consultation process and the utter failure of Officers to supply convincing answers to the vast majority of questions put to them.

The whole purpose of Consultation is to provide those purportedly 'being consulted' with full and factual information backed up by credible statistics on which they can then come to any conclusions. If, in the course of this process, they have relevant questions these should be answered factually and speedily. Unfortunately none of the above can be said to apply to the current 'consultation!' The proposal document is riddled with errors, inconsistencies and misinformation. One must ask how much of this is down to sheer incompetence and how much to a deliberate intention to mislead?

Given that the basic information was so completely unfit for purpose then the entire consultation exercise must also be seen as such. Added to which, the inability of Officers to answer many questions at the various meetings, or to declare that a multitude of very worrying issues would be dealt with by the new management of the school (ie after the deed has been done) gives rise to a complete lack of confidence in the entire team responsible for this exercise. For instance, it is horrifying that fire safety issues will only be looked at AFTER the plans have been approved and any 'remedial' work carried out! Surely this has to be addressed before any decisions are taken. What will happen if, after the work is completed, the school is deemed unsafe for so many pupils?

This entire proposal has been an utter fiasco from the outset and, if it weren't for the fact that so many youngsters stand to have their education blighted for a number of years to come, it could be the plot for some Whitehall farce. Our young people deserve so very much more from our elected representatives!

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I refer to your proposal to close Middleton Park & Glashieburn Primary Schools and open a school for all of the children from both of the schools on the existing Glashieburn Site. I am horrified with your proposal to close two high attaining schools in the Bridge of Don area. I would like to ask you why you feel you need to close these schools?

At the consultation meetings I have seen your forecasts which showed that Middleton Park will become over capacity by the year 2020. As I was involved in the fight to keep Middleton Park open in 2008 and know that the predictions that were given then were totally wrong, how can we trust or believe the forecasts that have been given now? What has been done to ensure more accurate forecasts than in 2008?

There are two new development areas proposed in Bridge of Don, one at Dubford and one at Whitestripes (Grandholm). Until these new developments have built their "own schools" does it not make more sense to keep Middleton Park and Glashieburn Schools open so we can accommodate all the new children coming to the area? If your forecasts are right Middleton Park will not become over capacity until 2020 therefore to me the practical solution would be to keep the school open to allow the children from the new Grandholm development to attend Middleton Park then re-evaluate the situation again before 2020. It may be that the Grandholm Development have built their own school by

then hence no reason to close Middleton Park. Also by keeping Glashieburn open this would allow the new children from the Dubford development to attend instead of having to be zoned to Scotstown which is not even on a bus route!

Over the last 10 years I have helped in Middleton Park Primary school with various activities and I cannot imagine how teachers, support staff and of course most importantly the children could operate normal schooling in a cramped school. If this proposal goes ahead the Burst Primary would have the smallest area per pupil of any school in Aberdeen. Can you honestly say this is fair to the Bridge of Don children to be squeezed into a school where other areas of Aberdeen are getting brand new schools with lots more space?

At the moment my children walk to and fro school. If they were to move to the Burst Primary at the Glashieburn site they would no longer be able to walk. At the moment there is no parking at Glashieburn apart from on street parking at the surrounding residential areas. The residents of these areas already complain about Glashieburn parents parking outside their houses. Can you tell me if there would be alterations made to the Glashieburn site to allow a drop off area for parents/carers driving their children to school?

I cannot comprehend the decision to close a high attaining school and cannot see any educational benefit to this proposal. My eldest daughter just achieved 8 credit level standard grades and I truly believe that her primary education at Middleton Park attributed to her obtaining these excellent grades. I want my other two children to have the same educational grounding at Middleton Park Primary as their elder sister.

I would ask that you please re-consider this proposal as it is not fair that the children of Bridge of Don are being treated as guinea pigs. I feel this proposal is ludicrous and has not been properly thought through!

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I am writing to object to the proposal to close Middleton Park Primary School.

I disagree very strongly with this idea.

My nephews attend Middleton Park, one in the school and one in the nursery. At the moment, their parents walk them to school and back. As the nursery times are different to the school times this can mean three or more trips there and back each day.

There will not be time for them to walk the further distance to Glashieburn. This will mean more car journeys, which will be detrimental to the environment and to the health of the children.

There will be other Middleton parents in the same situation. This will undoubtedly lead to dangerous congestion outside Glashieburn, a site which is clearly not equipped to cope with the numbers proposed to attend there.

I've seen the figures which prove that the pupils in the amalgamated school would have the lowest amount of space per head of any school in Aberdeen.

To propose to decrease their space available, compared to what they have now, is a backwards step. Children need space to grow and to explore, and they need to be able to learn and concentrate in a quiet calm environment. If every available space in a school building is constantly in use the environment will be noisy and disruptive.

I do not believe there will be any benefit to the children from these plans, and I would urge you to reconsider them.

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I am writing with grave concern over the moving of Middleton Park school into the Glashieburn building.

I have looked at your plan and it is NOT ACCEPTABLE the proposals you have made. There is no room and the areas you have suggested could be classrooms will make it very cramped.

My particular concern is the LIBRARY area. At the moment I help voluntarily in the library and helped set it up the way it is now. I have counted a minimum of 20 shelving units each 1 meter long filled with books.

There is absolutely no way that the books, the shelves, the desk and of course having room for the children to view and select the books, will fit in the tiny space which is about a quarter of the size, that is your plan.. Sometime there is two classes at the same time could be about 30 children and the area you have selected has a flow of traffic of children going towards the gym, the dinner hall and the computer room. I don't think you have thought this through practically.

For health and safety reasons this area is not acceptable it is far too small and cramped and if there was a fire there will be a jam up of children--NOT GOOD. The area you have suggested is nothing more than a corridor.

In this day and age of computers and video games keeping the children interested in books is a hard job at the best of times and for the children coming to the library is exciting and makes books interesting. Many parents don't have time to go to the public libraries these days, so this could be the children's only chance of selecting books.

I SUGGEST THEREFORE THAT YOU CLOSE MIDDLETON PARK DOWN AND REZONE THE CHILDREN AND SPREAD THEM ABOUT. IT IS A SHAME FOR THE CHILDREN BUT THEY WILL SEE EACH OTHER AGAIN WHEN THEY ARE AT THE ACADEMY. I KNOW SOME OF THE CHILDREN THAT GO THERE ARE FROM DANESTONE AND THOSE THAT STAY IN THE MIDDLETON HOUSES COULD GO TO FOREHILL SCHOOL. WHY SPOIL A GOOD SCHOOL LIKE GLASHIEBURN BY MAKING IT TO CRAMP.

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I feel that the proposal to close both Middleton Park and Glashieburn schools should be retracted.

As an ex-pupil of Middleton Park, I can easily recall the fantastic opportunities that the school presented me with. Middleton Park school is a very high attaining school which does its very best for the pupils there. Growing up I can vividly remember being taught in a safe and helpful environment with the highest standard of teachers all the way through the school. I have recently attained 8 credit passes in my standard grade exams and feel that my education at Middleton Park stood me in good stead for this and provided me with the mental attitude required for me to work hard and do well.

If the proposal did go ahead and the schools were amalgamated I believe that the education of the children would be compromised and feel that no child's learning should suffer due to a decision made

by our council. I fail to see how squeezing too many children into a school is benefiting them at all. After all should the children not come first?

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I am writing to you to express my major concerns your proposal to close Glashieburn and Middleton Park Schools and to merge them into the existing Glashieburn Building.

The proposal has no educational benefit to any of the children involved. I cannot see any proof of benefit for our children, all there are statements with nothing backing them up. Going by the facts alone this proposal is in fact detrimental to our children's education.

Not enough space – The new merged school will give our kids one of the schools with the least amount of space per pupil in Aberdeen.

Not sustainable – How can the this merged school be sustainable when the on the first day it is nearly at capacity?

Outside space – This seems to be a major issue as far as I can see as with inside space our kids would have very little outside space per pupil.

Justification for the closure is all centred round new Grandhome development but there does not seem to be enough facts on the development available in the document.

When will the houses be complete? When will the schools be built? How big will the schools be? No one seems to think this is a good idea apart from our council? Everyone else is against this proposal, surely that tells the council something?

I am not opposed to change if there was an offer of a new purpose built school on the table or a proposal which was of educational benefit for our children (and could be proven by facts) I would be very willing to agree but the current proposal is neither.

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I'm writing to you to express my grave concerns over the proposed merger between Glashieburn and Middleton Park Primary Schools. Glashieburn at the present moment is in no position to house the pupils from both schools without having a severely detrimental effect on the children involved in the move.

From an educational point of view, with the merger, Glashieburn will lose its ICT room, library and music room too. These are BASIC necessities for a child's development in modern Britain, and in no way at all can their loss be seen as an 'Educational Benefit', which is how the A.C.C. are describing the undeniable lack of internal space available. To add to this further, the Gym Hall will now be tied up with 3 separate sittings for meal times meaning that the recommended 2 hours per week Physical Education would not be practically possible as there's not enough time in the days to provide each class with their quota. We have heard that the children could be expected to complete their P.E in their classrooms but to what curriculum would this follow? Would climbing over tables and chairs be classed as gymnastics?

The external space available is an equally worrying factor. At present the staff car-park is at/over capacity on a daily basis and will obviously be insufficient with the merger and extra staff incoming. Where will the staff park, where will the extra delivery trucks park and where will the extra refuse bins be located, as with double the kids comes double the mess? Where will the parents park when dropping off their children? It is to be expected that lots of parents will HAVE to drive their children to school, as they will now be located too far away from Glashieburn to walk the distance, especially those in say P1-P2. As it is difficult finding a space now to drop off my own children, how bad will it be when the schools merge. It will be a congested nightmare for parents and local residents alike and will very likely cause disruption to the local bus services too.

I also worry for the future of Middleton Park, what is to become of this building once it closes its doors? We have been told that it will be utilised as a council building/offices and if that doesn't work out it will be razed to the ground and utilised in different means. The money isn't there to demolish this building and erect something/anything new in its place, according to the council's budget and cost-cutting ways. Therefore, reading between the lines, I can foresee houses being built here within 5 years of the school closure and I suspect this is an intention of the council also to cash in on the

property value of the land. More houses in this area isn't what we need so I hope the council can be taken on their word as to the future purpose of Middleton Park.

Finally, i would just like to say how disappointed I am in the council for proposing the merger in the first place. The numbers they have been quoting at the meetings didn't add up in the beginning and they certainly won't come right by the end. This is merely a money saving exercise at the expense of innocent children trying to gain the decent education they deserve. Shame on you Aberdeen City Council.

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we write with major concerns about the Council's proposal to close Middleton Park and Glashieburn Schools and to merge them into a "new" amalgamated school on the existing Glashieburn campus.

We have attended several consultation meetings over recent weeks and even at this late stage in the consultation period, the Council has completely failed in convincing us that our P2 child will benefit in any way whatsoever by moving her to the amalgamated school.

No credible evidence has been provided by the Council that suggests the children will have enough floor space within the building. The amalgamated school will be one of the largest with the least amount of internal space per pupil in the whole city - this in itself does not provide educational benefit, in fact it will be detrimental to the education of the children of both schools, which will undoubtedly lead to frustration for the children and will, in our opinion, result in real changes in their performance. The outdoor space is also inadequate for the number of children involved in this amalgamation. It is also very evident that the children in the base have not been taken into consideration in our opinion, these children are vulnerable and the huge increase in pupil numbers, noise levels and disruption will have a major impact on them.

At this time Middleton Park and Glashieburn are very good performing schools and this has been proved to ourselves by the fantastic progress our child has made in her very short time at the school. At the last public consultation a few pupils (both former and present) attended the meeting, asked questions and gave their opinions. These pupils were confident enough to stand up in what would have been an intimidating environment and ask intelligent questions and also in some cases they replied with supplementary statements. These children were a credit to the teachers at these 2 schools and they were clear examples of true educational benefit.

The Council has admitted the reason for this amalgamation is purely because of the new Grandholme development. Why should the education our our children suffer because of this new estate when re-zoning will solve any problem? This is a proposal clearly driven by the need to cut costs.

This proposal needs to prove educational benefit to the Committee, but instead has been shown to be flawed, with its ideas and figures used to try and prove that Middleton Park will be overcrowded and needs to be closed (the figure of 0.25 children per Grandholme household used to accommodate these children in Danestone Primary somehow changes to 0.35 per household when trying to prove that Middleton Park will be overcrowded - why it this?). This proposal and the Council have failed to show any educational benefit needed for Committee approval and it clearly has no support in the Bridge of Don community.

We strongly urge this ridiculous proposal to be rejected.

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I would like to raise my severe concerns about the proposed closure of Middleton Park primary school following the Nursery / Primary school estate review. The decision appears to have been taken purely on a cost cutting basis with very little consideration for the needs of the children.

Moving the children to Glashieburn primary will result in the school being at maximum capacity. The amount of space per pupil will be significantly reduced. It is not enough to state that it is still above the legal minimum. The truth is that the space per pupil will be significantly lower than it currently is and there will be an impact on the education of the children.

At the very least if a new purpose built building was being proposed for the merged primary schools then it would be possible to see some positives but the current proposal only has negatives.

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Firstly can I offer my thanks for the recent consultation meetings and the information supplied, and also for this opportunity to voice my thoughts.

Unfortunately that's is probably where my praise will end !

At this point I really should also point out that I am a parent of a couple Middleton Park Children, but also add that I was very open minded about the plans you had put forward.

That was until I read some more of the information and heard some of the discussions & facts at these recent meetings.

Obviously by now everyone should be aware that the two schools are high attaining, low cost per pupil, schools that are both said to be in "satisfactory" condition.

My main concerns when considering the options are for both the safety (obviously) and the level of education for my children.

Having read your Public Consolation Document, I am struggling to see any tangible points on the educational benefits.

The main benefits you state all point to the fact that a bigger school is a better school !

No facts, no history of improvements in other big, or amalgamated schools, only the hope that "the best elements of the existing schools will be carried through to the amalgamated school".

But what if it the worst elements of both schools remain ?

All through your "Educational Benefits Statement" there are regular statements of "are likely to", "we believe", "should", etc.

And then add "there is limited research evidence to ... link the size of a school to performance and outcomes for learners."

These statements do not fill me with confidence that my children's education will benefit in any way.

There is an obvious issue of pupil numbers versus the size of school, and how you can practically fit the required numbers of classes and sizes into the school.

And the fact that this will indeed be the most crowded school in Aberdeen (by some way) !

But I am sure you will have these details & comments from many others.

Having been at the recent meeting at Oldmachar School (1st October), I have some information that really does puzzle me, and I hope you can respond with some details or clarification.

The main reason for this amalgamated school is that using "projected pupil numbers Middleton Park will exceed capacity by 2018, due to the proposed housing development at Grandhome Estate"

But as pointed out at meeting, not only do we know that your projected estimates tend to be not too reliable (see below) this is also based on the Grandhome Estate providing 0.35 children per household (when the successful building application estimate this figure at only 0.25)



But I digress from my main point.

My clarification relates to the comments that under the new plan, pupils from the first phase of the Grandhome Estate will be accommodated at Danestone until a new school is built.

Therefore with Middleton Park not seeing this significant increase, you have predicted that the school role will begin to drop in 2018.

Forgive me if I do not rely too much on your figures but as I remember when this similar scenario was suggested in 2008, your projected forecast would now have had Middleton Park with a school role decreasing from 156 in 2008 to 138 in 2010. (when actually it remained the same over these years and has now increased to around 180)

So my query is, if things are currently acceptable, with two very good performing, suitable schools, why is the status quo not suitable ?

(when there is no concerns or issues until around 2018, and by then there will also be some information and experience of both the Grandhome Estate and the plans for new schools)

I would welcome your thoughts and comments.

In conclusion, my concerns relate to my Daughters education and the feeling that there is no significant facts or details that the proposed school amalgamation will give any educational benefits. In fact when we consider the numbers and the school size, my feeling is that it may well have a detrimental effect.

A little off topic but having recently attended the Northern Star Business Awards (that I know some Councillors did), the amount of pride in the city from our top achievers and businesses should also be worth considering when we contemplate any such proposals.

These are our next stars and NOTHING should be done that could in anyway lessen their potential.

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I am a local Bridge of Don resident with no direct connection to either Glashieburn or Middleton Park Schools, however I have a number of concerns about the proposed amalgamation of these schools on the Glashieburn site.

1. Falling roll - How much long term research has been carried out? In the past year, 3 houses have been sold in my street, and in each case a family with young children have moved in.
2. Traffic / Parking - Traffic is already very busy on Jesmond Drive. Where will parents park to drop off their children and what impact will that have on the flow of traffic on Jesmond Drive?
3. Playground Space - At lunchtimes it's great to see children playing in the playground areas when driving past. In the current climate, with childhood obesity a major issue, how can effective outdoor play be continued when there are twice as many children vying for space in the playground?
4. Equality - I have friends and colleagues with children in new build primaries in Aberdeen. I feel this is extremely unfair on children in the proposed merged school as the standard of facilities is far inferior to those in the 3Rs schools.

It appears that the children of Bridge of Don are being forgotten about in this consultation document.

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**11/10/13**

we are deeply concerned by the proposals put forward by Aberdeen City Council to merge the school with Glashieburn. After reading the consultation document and attending the subsequent meetings, the Council Officers and the Director of Education appear oblivious to the concerns of parents, the vast majority (not a minority as your consultation document suggests) of who are against this proposal for quite obvious reasons such as those outlined below.

## Internal Space

We cannot understand how all of the proposal can tie in with Education Scotland's Curriculum For Excellence which has been established to provide a coherent, more flexible and enriched curriculum from ages 3 to 18. The proposed amalgamated school at Glashieburn will have the lowest available internal space per pupil in Aberdeen city schools based on current capacities and a roll of 429 (as per the consultation document). The Council's own figures have an internal space for each pupil at 6.6 m<sup>2</sup> in the amalgamated school, but in reality this figure must be lower as the total internal space has to accommodate children in nursery and the ASN base. There are currently a total of 100 nursery places between the two schools, with 60 in the morning and 40 in the afternoon which would mean the total number of children in the school at one time being just over 500 which includes the 14 spaces available for the ASN base (It is also worth noting that the Scottish Government is currently proposing to increase nursery hours from 400 to 600 per year which will place additional strain & resource on all schools). The amalgamated school will need to accommodate a number of additional classes and it will be very challenging to say the least when trying to create an efficient floor plan if this is at all possible.

It appears very convenient that the Council at this point proposes to increase the capacity at the amalgamated school to 460 from 420 in an attempt to show that the roll of 429 will be actually be under the revised capacity of 460. The Council have suggested courtyards could be converted which seems a desperate measure in an attempt to fit all the children into the school. One of the purposes of courtyards is to provide natural light where there is none or very little and again it is something else the school could potentially lose along with its use of outdoor space for learning. Another suggestion is that some internal walls are knocked down, but this in itself is unlikely to generate more internal space and will instead lead to more noise circulating through the school meaning more disruption to the teachers and pupils. Current classroom space available for other types of flexible learning e.g. science will be lost which will provide fewer learning opportunities therefore disadvantaging pupils.

We also note that Braehead School, one of the new schools built in the area, is only at 60% capacity according to the recent school review and currently enjoys internal space of 20.5m<sup>2</sup> per pupil. Pity the 500+ children from Middleton Park and Glashieburn who wouldn't even have a third of this space if the proposal goes ahead. It would be a ludicrous situation where the two schools, which aren't even a mile apart, could have such a huge gulf in terms of roll versus capacity, the available internal space for each child and the subsequent quality of education. This kind of planning would have all the hallmarks of mismanagement if the proposals were to go through. Where there is currently low internal space within some schools, such as Kingswells, this has come about through a natural process, whereas the Council is deliberately creating the most congested school in Aberdeen via the proposed amalgamation.

## Disruption

We must question how the teachers and pupils will cope with the noise and disruption in such a tightly compacted school which will only be made worse if existing walls are taken down. Surely this is not beneficial to effective learning. We also understand there is an ASN base at Glashieburn and we doubt how a much busier and noisier school environment could be conducive for the children who require additional support.

We also can't see how lunchtimes will work with all 429 pupils in an over capacitated school without greatly staggering lunchtimes. My children don't have enough time to eat their lunch as it is and are only given a certain amount of time in which to have their lunch. How much worse would it be in the amalgamated school?

We are also worried about how well the children from both schools would integrate and fear an "us and them" mentality at the proposed new school where bullying could become a problem. Middleton Park pupils are being moved to Glashieburn which is a school they are unfamiliar with, but for Glashieburn pupils it will still be their school albeit with a different name and uniform. We are aware that there were integration problems when Upper Westfield and Balgowrie Schools were amalgamated.

Also, according to a Council official, physical education can be done in classrooms which is an interesting viewpoint given that it's the 21st century. One can only imagine the disruption caused by such activity, even running on the spot as there obviously isn't going to be a lot of room.

#### Grandhome Development & School Roll

One of the factors driving the proposal is the new housing development at Grandhome. We are unsure why the schools need to be merged because of Grandhome which is supposed to be a self-containing development. We don't see why the children who are already resident in the area should suffer as a result of a development which doesn't even have planning permission yet. The Council have suggested that Middleton Park will have the second lowest roll if the merger does not proceed. We are unsure why this should now become a problem as the capacity at Middleton Park is more than adequate and better than other schools in the area. Middleton Park also uses outside cabins for teaching so it's not as though the school has a large amount of unused space due to a lack of children. We could understand a requirement to amalgamate Middleton Park or rezone if the roll was below 50% capacity. We don't see what the problem is here unless the Council is targeting financial savings rather than the quality of education provided to the children. We are also sceptical of the roll forecasts used by the Council as those used back in 2008 ended up being inaccurate.

#### Suitability

Another issue to consider is that the Council have advised that only minor reconfiguration to Glashieburn is required even though it was rated C in terms of suitability during the school review undertaken by the Council (which has been fudged to become a B in the consultation document if excluding mechanical and electrical. Why can't it just be stated as a C as that is what it is). The Council plans to move 168 pupils along with additional nursery children into the amalgamated school, but yet only spend a small amount of money on minor reconfiguration, when in reality a new school would be required for a proposal such as this or at least an extension onto Glashieburn along with a reasonable degree of refurbishment. According to the consultation document, 2.5 million pounds is required to be spent on Glashieburn to bring it up to the necessary standard of 3R schools, but that money will only be spent over a long period of time, even though it would be desperately needed for an amalgamated school given the below average/poor condition that Glashieburn is in.

The consultation document states a number of Transformation Programme Objectives but in our opinion the amalgamated school will meet none of these. As an example we fail to see how the amalgamated school building will be fit for education in the 21st century.

#### Parking & Safety

The amalgamated school will also bring increased traffic flow due to the fact that Glashieburn is at the periphery of the proposed catchment area, but it was never intended to be built to accommodate pupils from Middleton Park. There are inadequate parking areas available as Glashieburn is situated on a busy road (which will only get busier due to very large number of new homes that are proposed to be built over the next few years). It will not be as safe for the pupils at the amalgamated school. According to the consultation document, parents will still be able to park at the local Asda car park opposite Middleton Park and then walk down to Glashieburn which is a bizarre statement to make.

#### Educational Benefits

As far as we can see there are no educational benefits, and in line with the opinion of the majority of parents, we strongly believe the proposed merger will be detrimental to the education of pupils at both schools. The educational benefits put forward by the council appear to be very weak. For example, the consultation document mentions that bigger schools with larger numbers of children and teachers are more conducive to better education. We fail to see how this can work because 1) The class sizes will be larger to ensure all the children can fit into the school 2) A number of existing classes where there is only 20-25 children (an ideal size for teaching and learning) will likely need to be reconfigured creating some composite classes which is far from ideal 3) The pupils and teachers will reside in cramped conditions meaning that any alleged benefit will be extremely difficult or impossible to implement 4) It's not a bigger school as such, it's an existing building with capacity for 420 pupils with additional pupils being squeezed in 5) According to the consultation document, there will be a greater

range of flexible areas for learning. Where are those going to be? The amalgamated school is losing such areas because there will be too many pupils.

If "bigger schools" are so advantageous, it would appear there's a lot more work for the Council to do as other smaller schools will need to merge given the so called educational benefits of more pupils, teachers etc. Teachers at smaller schools must therefore be at a disadvantage as they are losing out on the substantial benefits and advantages of being a part of a larger professional community.

#### Summary

Given how poorly set out this proposal is, it must surely be financially driven rather than any desire to better educate our children. If it was solely down to education, surely the Council could come up with a better proposal than this. We are not against change per se, but this proposal is just reckless, ill thought out and would create the most cramped school in Aberdeen. The proposed merged school will be over capacity no matter how much the Council tries to distort the figures and will provide no educational benefit whatsoever. The only way we can see how this would benefit the children is if a new school was being built but it's not something the Council can currently afford.

We believe all the pupils at both schools should have sufficient space in which to learn and be educated and that the teachers themselves should have adequate conditions in which to teach the children. The proposed amalgamated school will provide neither of these things and certainly won't be a school fit for the 21st century or one that meets the Curriculum For Excellence. Our children's education is at stake here and we strongly urge the Council not to press ahead with the proposed amalgamation to ensure the pupils at both schools continue to receive a high quality of education which is what they deserve.rrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrr

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Following the Committee decision to proceed to public consultation we have tried on many occasions to work with education officers. We discussed the majority of the evidence contained within this document back in February and were assured if no educational benefit could be demonstrated the process would halt. And yet not a single benefit for the children of this area has been demonstrated within the consultation proposal. Parents such as myself, cannot sit by and let our children's education suffer to accommodate the council's desire to save money and close one of the schools on Jesmond drive. This energy could have been used to foster ideas and work together to deliver a truly innovative change bringing educational benefit to the children and benefit to the wider school estate and community. The proposal was fundamentally flawed from the start. An education fit for the 21st century cannot be provided within less than 7m2 per child internally and a miniscule amount of playing fields each! On behalf of my two daughters who are excelling at Middleton Park I must strongly object and urge you to rethink the proposals for our school and let our teachers continue the amazing work.

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I reject the proposals.

They are not a 25-year plan. They are a short-term plan, designed to provide clarity for the Grandhome Estate developer to ensure they build a primary school early in a development.

Pick any part of the proposal and there's a problem with it. I choose to focus on:

- The Need for Change
- Rolls
- Educational Benefit

#### The Need for Change

The consultation document claims the Middleton Park roll will exceed capacity by 2018 due to the development at Grandhome Estate, so it is necessary to close Middleton Park and rezone Grandhome Estate to Brimmond. Why is it necessary to do both? The logical course of action is simply to rezone and leave Middleton Park alone. It is a logical non-sequitur to claim that a rezoning is necessary and Middleton Park must close. There is no need for change.

## Rolls

The claim that Middleton Park will exceed capacity by 2018 is based on a number of assumptions, like 0.35 pupils/household in the Grandhome Estate. Strangely, the council has agreed 0.25 pupils/household with the Grandhome developer. Although neither figure may be borne out in the end, it makes no sense to apply one number if Grandhome is zoned to Middleton Park and another number if zoned to Brimmond. But the intention is that Grandhome children will attend Danestone Primary and that's where the 0.25 pupils/household comes from. Sorry, I forgot to mention that earlier. Are you confused yet? You should be.

The consultation document also claims that Middleton Park's roll will fall without Grandhome in its catchment area. The roll forecast shows a decrease of 9 pupils, from 178 to 169 between 2018 and 2020. This is exactly where the forecast is most uncertain, as these children have not yet been born. There is also no comment on forecast uncertainty in the document. The roll forecast would have to have an uncertainty less than 4 pupils, or 2%, at the 95% confidence level, for a drop in roll of 9 pupils to even begin to be considered statistically significant. It is hard to believe the roll forecast is as accurate as this. After all, the 2007 forecast used during the last consultation attempt to close Middleton Park underestimated the school roll in 2012 by 46 pupils, a whopping 34%.

## Educational Benefit

There are many pages dedicated in the report to the supposed Educational Benefit of amalgamating Middleton Park and Glashieburn. These could be condensed into a few short phrases:

- bigger schools are better;
- but there is limited evidence to support this.

Why, therefore, are we having to waste time even thinking about this ridiculous idea, if there is limited evidence? After all, the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 requires the proposal to demonstrate Educational Benefit.

I am not against change. Had the proposal simply been for rezoning Grandhome it could have had my support. Had the proposal involved merging Middleton Park and Glashieburn in a modern, spacious, 3Rs school, fit for A Curriculum for Excellence and truly representing a 25-year plan it could have had my support.

But it does not. Instead, the consultation document represents a short-term plan, designed to jam one local school full, and provide clarity for the Grandhome Estate developer to ensure they build a primary school early in a development. It says so in section 8.5 of the consultation document.

All this would be at the expense of the children of Middleton Park and Glashieburn, who would be attending the most cramped school in the city. Even the council officers accept this.

For these reasons, I reject these proposals.

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I have met no one who thinks this proposal is a good idea. I have met hundreds of people who think it should not go ahead. I have studied the public consultation document and read relevant educational research and news. I have attended three out of four of the public consultation meetings. I have spent hours too numerous to count of time that would have been sleep, family and leisure time in helping to counter this ludicrous proposal with sense and in helping do the officers' jobs for them. Many of us have. Many of us have babies as well as children whose educational experience would be diminished if this was allowed to go ahead. I have yet to come across anything which causes me any doubt about whether Burst Primary would be of benefit to the children. To deliberately create the school with the least floor area per pupil in Aberdeen and a completely inadequate playground for the

number of children proposed, with larger classes and less staff overall is of no benefit, only detriment, and there is no support for this.

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I am very concerned and hope that these closures do not go ahead. There is not enough room at Glashieburn School to cope with the numbers of pupils who currently attend the school, and if more pupils were to join the school it would have a detrimental effect on our children's education. the congestion on Jesmond drive will be chaotic if more pupils attended. the space inside and outside school will not be big enough for the number of pupils proposed to be attending. the idea of the children participating in gym in their classrooms is completely ridiculous! Having staggered lunches is very unfair for the children as some children will have to wait longer from their breakfast / playtime until they get their lunch, this will not help the children to concentrate. What is going to happen to the nursery? this is a major concern for my husband and I as our youngest son will be due to attend nursery next year.

I feel if the school closure goes ahead this will not be in the best interest for our children who are the future for our local area and the country.

Please save our schools!!!!

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Please see attached link to Middleton Park Primary School website.

[www.middletonpark.aberdeen.sch.uk](http://www.middletonpark.aberdeen.sch.uk)

Under the live learning section you will be able to view all the wonderful work carried out at Middleton Park.

To close this school where such great work is being done with the children, and where there is such a great sense of community, would be an absolute disgrace. The children will not have the same opportunities in a school where there is clearly not enough space to accommodate all the children and carry out such valuable work.

At the moment both Middleton Park and Glashieburn primaries are performing well because of the opportunities the children are given at the school. There is absolutely no way the same opportunities will be available to them in a merged school which will be at bursting point from day one.

There clearly is no educational benefit to the children at all if these two great schools are to be merged

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Admitting you were wrong does not make you weak but will show us (the people who voted you into these positions) that we made the right decision.

Please do not penalise our children because of pride. It is not too late. Not all change is good.

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I am a parent of a pupil in Glashieburn school and I am writing to express my concerns regarding the proposal to amalgamate Glashieburn and Middleton Park schools on the Glashieburn site.

I have a number of concerns regarding this proposal which I will elaborate on below:

#### Space Issues

My main concern will be the lack of space if the two schools are merged within the Glashieburn site. I attended the final public consultation meeting where we were presented with a number of possibilities

for the configuration of internal space but, in my opinion, even with the inclusion of the courtyard areas into the main school building, this will still provide a very tightly packed learning environment for our children.

I am aware that previously, in the 'boom' years of the Bridge of Don, Glashieburn had a much higher role than it does now but may I suggest that the way children learn is much different now. There is much more in the way of active learning, promoted by Curriculum for Excellence, and a mix of silent, quiet tasks and group working where noise is permitted due to discussion. This would not suit the number of children proposed to be attending Glashieburn if the proposal was to go ahead.

Within the 'educational benefit' statement on the proposal, "flexible learning areas" are mentioned 4 times within the Learner's Experiences section (7.3). I fail to see how, with 16 classes, any areas can be classed as flexible. To me, flexibility goes hand in hand with spontaneity and if the teacher wishes to go and do a noisy or group activity to enhance the learning, space will not be available for this as it currently is as the 'flexible' spaces will have to be very heavily timetabled in order to accommodate so many classes.

As far as I could see from the proposed configurations shown at the public meeting, these 'flexible areas' will also be nothing more than corridor spaces which then raise other issues regarding safe evacuation from the building during fire drills or incidents.

The lack of outdoor space is also an issue - the playground is barely big enough, in my opinion, for the children as it is, particularly in rainy weather, when they are not allowed on the grass! Space to play football or other games is at a premium at the moment so I dread to think what it would be like with another 160 children!

As far as space goes, our children would be getting a very raw deal compared to other provision across the city and therefore this proposal is not fair for our children.

#### Physical Education

Under current Scottish Government proposals, each child in Scotland should be entitled to 2 hours of QUALITY physical education each week. I fail to see how adding more children to Glashieburn would enable the 'new' school to meet these targets. Outside space is not an option for at least 4 months of the year due to cold and muddy playground space so all would have to be planned for indoors. The 2 gym halls are used for assembly and lunches as well as other things during school time I am sure, so I fail to see how this Scottish Government target can be met. Underactive and overweight children are an issue all over Scotland and again the children of our area would get a raw deal in comparison, particularly to the wonderful facilities provided by new schools such as Braehead.

#### Nursery Provision

It is important, in my view, that children are able to attend the nursery which feeds in to their primary school. With the proposal of 100 nursery spaces, I am sure this will more than meet the demand but again my concerns for nursery are to do with lack of space. I cannot comment on the space provided currently within Middleton Park but when my daughter attended Glashieburn nursery I was blown away by the amount of space they had to play and learn. Choices such as 'shall we have water or sand' or 'tidy up boys and girls because we need the puzzle table for snack' were not an issue as lots of choice and all activities could be offered due to abundance of space. Again, referring to the proposed plans for internal space, the nursery has a number of places it could move to, none of which offer the current level of space.

I am aware that something needs to be done to address the issues of school places across the city but do not feel that this proposal is best for any of our children. I attended public meetings regarding a similar proposal in 2008. I hope the Council currently sitting have the sense to do the same as was done then and dismiss these proposals as of no educational benefit to our children. At the end of the day, it is the children who matter. The educational benefits do not stack up for me so please re-consider.

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We are parents of a child who attends Middleton Park Primary. She has been welcomed, initially via phased induction from a separate nursery, by a well staffed/managed school which offers diversity of personal and shared educational experience, based within a thriving and healthy local community. Our daughter remains happy and enthused at school and attains currently at the highest levels possible for her age. We are unsettled and extremely concerned at the consultation proposal and see no need or merit in its existence for our child.

>There has been no legitimate need or requirement for change evidenced to us. The Grandholme estate development has been illegitimately linked to the closure of Middleton Park and Glashieburn within the proposal.

>The proposed merged "school" would be immediately compromised in terms of facilities and space, inside and out, and potentially the quality of educational experience, by the numbers of pupils combined with children who have Additional Support needs and nursery placements. The trauma, disruption in any transition would be protracted and damaging to all children. There are likely to be insurmountable daily challenges on an ongoing basis for children and staff who have to continually sacrifice and make do with overcrowding within a school which already appears to require substantial investment to meet base standards.

>Nothing has been evidenced in terms of educational benefit. CPD for teaching staff, which has been mentioned, is a requirement for every individual teacher, regardless of school. It is demeaning to the professional commitment of staff, and the needs of our children, to use enhanced CPD opportunities as an educational benefit. This is extremely weak as an example. No evidence provided. Others will challenge with counter evidence to suggest detriment.

>The proposed merger creates practical concerns and dangers in terms of people/traffic congestion around the merged entity with associated risk. Most parents utilise a range of informal and formal arrangements to support their children's school attendance. These arrangements are, for many, well established and form part of a clear routine, often counterbalanced by the demands and established arrangements at work across the City and beyond. All of these arrangements would be disrupted, some would need to be completely restructured.

>The consultation paper has been exposed as a shambolic window dressing exercise. Elements of text appear to have been plagiarised from another document pertaining to proposals for separate secondary schools. The validity of figures, projections, and graphic representations throughout the document have been found to be critically flawed by others who are better qualified to comment than I, who will capably challenge in writing. The consultation process has been undermined by basic errors and assumption - an indictment upon the authority - an something which does not build trust or a sense of transparency.

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With respect to the above consultation I wish to register my views. I understand that the closure of Middleton Park can only go ahead if there is shown to be an educational benefit. There is nothing in the consultation documents which I have seen which indicates a quantifiable educational benefit.



Notwithstanding this, I would not be opposed to a bigger school per se provided that there is sufficient space for the pupils. From the information which has been made available however it appears that the space available to pupils in Glashieburn will be greatly restricted. It is not clear where the figures for potential capacity of Glashieburn have been obtained but I suspect that these are old figures based on educational services from many years ago. I think that it is obvious that with the Curriculum for Excellence, pupils now have educational aspirations which require more than simply access to a single classroom e.g. areas in which computer work and library work can be carried out. Such a drastic reduction in pupil space at Glashieburn must be detrimental to pupils and would detract from any possible educational benefit (of which I remain to be convinced). Cramped conditions are not beneficial in any way to a pupil's education. I would urge you therefore to reject the proposed closure of Middleton Park unless additional buildings are made available at Glashieburn.

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I am writing to you with regards to the proposal to close Middleton Park and Glashieburn Primary School and to amalgamate both schools on the existing Glashieburn site. As we are now approaching the end of the public consultation process I feel I must express my sadness that we are, once again, deliberating the existence of two very active and high achieving schools within Aberdeen City.

I have two children, xxxx who completed his primary education at Middleton Park and is now in first year at Oldmachar Academy and xxxxxxx, who is in primary two at Middleton Park.

My concerns with the amalgamation are that held by all the parents, carers and other stake holders affected and are as follows:

- There is no educational benefit to our children, in fact it will be detrimental to their future learning
- Lack of internal space per child
- Loss of outdoor space/ facilities
- Meal time arrangements
- Inadequate toilet facilities
- Affect on the Additional Support Needs base
- Affect on the nursery areas
- The buildings lifespan - this is not a long term solution
- Why is such emphasis put on development of land at Grandholm? This is supposed to be a self-sufficient village
- Sale of land (Middleton Park site) - most likely for housing. Where will these children go to school?
- There is no mention of the land behind MP sports field. It has not been built on to date because of access issues i.e. through the school site
- The impact on younger siblings - are parents really expected to transport their children to separate primary schools?
- Traffic congestion and safety concerns

Bridge of Don is a strong community with many families and we will continue to oppose this proposal. This is not a long term solution, possibly a new build school is what's needed. I ask that you, as members elected to serve the people of the City, seriously reconsider this plan, work with us to decide what is the best way forward for the education of our children and give them the opportunities and facilities they should be allowed in the 21st Century.

Hoping we can work together with this matter and all other future plans and developments throughout our City.

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I would like to strongly oppose the closure of Middleton Park, my daughter has attended this school for the past 5 years and I think this school is very good. If the closure was to build a new school I would support this, but not to close a perfectly good school to then put all the pupils to a school that is lower in standards than Middleton Park. There must be other areas where the council can save money.

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I have followed this campaign with some interest and have not commented until now when I feel compelled to add to the significant and justified campaign being organised by education or burst. This whole proposal is clearly not designed with the education of children at the centre. Surely this is the biggest priority? Motivation for financial or any other reason is not justified. Safety of our children is also one of the most important considerations and this does not seem to figure at all in the ridiculous proposals. I trust the whole matter will be seriously reconsidered at the earliest opportunity.

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Im Deeply saddened that you are trying to close middleton park. Please ask yourself if it was your kids and you got this joke proposal im sure you would be the same as 100% of parents. We are all against this. Why should our childrens education suffer for MONEY put our childrens education first!! We bought our house so our children could go to middleton park as its such a good school! Also my children can walk indepdently to school that will not be the case if they change school. We will be using car. Have u even thought of the chaos each morning for residents and traffic. This proposal is a joke u are shoe horning our children into a school at lesser quality and no room. For your own greed. How sad our children need to suffer. Not only are you trying to close our school but my 1 yr olds cresse too. Why exactly do we pay taxes when our children's education will suffer.. Extremely angry and upset middleton park parent of two children at the school.

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I would like to note that I believe this consultation process has not been fit for purpose. None of the key questions were addressed during the consultation period. Very few of the parents questions were answered satisfactorily and there are no firm plans demonstrating how the children will fit so their education with not be adversely affected.

In fact not only has this gone unanswered but a specific question to yourselves from myself about internal space has not been responded to and we are now on the final day. How can that be a fair consultation?

I feel the whole consultation has not been handled seriously nor indeed professionally which begs the question was/where are the educational benefits for our children, it certainly appears to this point they have not been a real consideration!

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I have no doubt that you shall accommodate any legal requirements (ie appropriate Toilet and Cloakroom provisions) however I feel that this should have been worked out accurately prior to pressing ahead with the proposal to merge the two schools. It seems like the decision has been made first and the Council will make it work - rather than the correct way (in my opinion) of carrying out an in depth study to ensure that this was, without any doubt, the best option for the children of both schools. The whole process seems cack-handed.

My main concern relates to the Educational Benefit to my children. I refer to the Public Consultation Document - Chapter 7 and have the following questions

- 1) Clause 7.1 is jargon only and defines no actual Educational Benefit
- 2) Clause 7.2 states that 'Additional benefits will result from having a larger staff'. The statement again is misleading as no actual benefit is mentioned. I agree there will probably be a larger staff however there will be substantially more children and unless all teachers from both Glashieburn and

Middleton Park keep their jobs then the actual teacher / child ratio shall be worse than the current situation.

3) Clause 7.3 - There shall be less flexible learning spaces than what is on offer currently as most of the available space shall be turned into more classrooms

4) Clause 7.4 - refer to my comments on larger staff numbers in Clause 7.2.

5) Clause 7.5 - refer to my comments on larger staff numbers in Clause 7.2. I sound like a stuck record but this seems to be the recurring theme running through the document.

6) Clause 7.6 - Your statement that 'Staff, Parents and Pupils work very effectively in both schools' caught my eye. If its not broke why fix it ?

7) Clause 7.7 - No educational benefit to my children detailed in this paragraph, only jargon again.

8) Clause 7.8 - What is wrong with our schools current Ethos ? and how can you say with any certainty that Burst Primary's Ethos will be better ?

9) Clause 7.9 - Here we go again with a larger staff !!!!! This clause also speaks about a larger school with enhanced facilities - however the school will be the same size with more pupils therefore obviously making it a smaller school space wise.

10) Clause 7.11 - no staff that I have spoke with feel there shall be substantial benefits to them.

11) Clause 7.13 - the new school will be built 2015-16 yet Middleton Park wont exceed capacity until 2018. If the new school is built two years earlier then i don't see the problem. I don't think a school full to the brim has sufficient capacity as claimed - what happens if there is an influx of families in the next few years ?

12) Clause 7.15 - there appears to have been very little research carried out on this proposal.

13) Clause 7.16 - My conclusion is that NO educational benefit has been demonstrated

I doubt any of my concerns shall be taken on board however I have a right to express my opinion. I feel that the whole process has been a sham and that the decision was taken long before any real due process was carried out on whether this was actually the best option.

The public meetings are only attended by the councillors as they have a duty to be there. Half the time they look bored, or irritated that we the parents would dare stand up for our children.

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I read in the Evening Express today that Aberdeen City Council's top priority next year is education with almost £5 million more to be spent.

May I suggest that you use some of this money to retain Middleton Park and Glashieburn schools, which are already very good value for money. Lowering the standard of provision for children in some areas of the city while raising it for others is not something to brag about, particularly when the schools planned for closure are already well below average in cost per pupil.

This is not about those who are able to shout, shouting loudest and getting most. We already receive less and are not demanding more, just not the loss of our great schools for the most cramped school

in Aberdeen with less overall staff and all the other problems elsewhere detailed for you in this consultation process.

Will you listen?

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We are now at the end of the consultation. I have spent more time on this project of what can only be described as badly planned and certainly not followed to guideline. The explanation for this was lack of funding by officers but is not correct whatever the reason for this.

I still have very few answers to my questions due to the fact that we have really been given nothing to consult on. The last 6 weeks had not been consultation as there was only one option.

I feel as others do that Glashieburn staff are under a huge amount of pressure and stress which is not a Critical comment it is an observation. Prior to this proposal we were a happy school with happy staff and parents which is not the case at the moment and this is not their fault at all I would be the same if I didn't have job security and so many uncertainties around the children and school is unfair to say the least to all parties involved.

My family has certainly suffered as a result if you review the Glashieburn parent council submission there are months worth of work I could not tell you exactly how many man hours we have put into producing this although I cannot claim it as all my work I could not have done this without my colleagues in the associated parent councils and education or burst who too have made a huge contribution also. It has necessitated us taking time off work and lots of late nights and week end meetings but we believe it is a worthy cause and that is our job as the parent council to represent the wider parent forum. Please refer to Education or burst submission as well as the Glashieburn and Middleton park parent council submission document for my opinion /views. I agree with all content.

I note today in an Evening express article that aberdeen city council are providing more money for education and while I think that is a great idea I really don't know how you can improve much within burst primary if it goes ahead the space will still be the same and it hasn't yet even been worked out where the library or ict or even the some if the essentials - toilets!

My suggestion is we stop this nonsense NOW and Aberdeen City council spends less money on AECC and more on building a school that is fit for purpose for all concerned parties. Instead of wasting it this needs to be thought out all over again, like Ross Thomson said we need to make sure we get this absolutely right for the children and future school estate . The current plan for burst primary will leave insufficient space to deliver the curriculum for excellence which should be the top priority in these plans but is NOT. If this goes ahead this will not deliver a consistent education for children across Aberdeen city.

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I have two kids at Middleton Park School. They are very happy with their school, the closure of the school will have negative effects on their education. We are very worried about future of our kids with this proposal.

Please review the proposal. I will be happy to help the school financialy if required.

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I have xxxx children, xxx of whom currently attend Middleton Park.

We have been delighted with the school from our first encounter with it. The children are happy going to school; Eager to go; Settled and content. They are bright children doing well academically. The school has consistently challenged them and ensured they are in groups of peers (sometimes from the year above) who are working at the same level. Mrs McCardie was the headteacher for our children's first years in the school and we valued her experience and excellent leadership. We were

eager to meet her replacement and have been delighted with everything about Mrs Watson. She has quickly established what are the strengths in the school and started to build on them. She has also brought new ideas, vision and passion and is doing a fantastic job of leading her team of staff to implement these. We must also mention Mrs Young. Her steadfastness, constant desire to strive for excellence and care for all the children make her an outstanding deputy head. Your document says an amalgamated school could have a new and better ethos. We don't need one. The ethos of Middleton Park is spot on. Closure and amalgamation would not provide us with better leadership, vision and community than we have now.

Please do not close our school.

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I wish to lodge my concerns regarding the merger of Middleton Park and Glashieburn Primary Schools. As we are all aware Bridge of Don is by far the biggest catchment area in Aberdeen. The fact that the council should consider merging two schools in this area is beyond belief.

Firstly I can see no educational benefit from this merger and can also see pupils at the new proposed school being neglected as the bigger the school, the less consideration pupils get as individuals. If this merger does go ahead the merged school will have the lowest amount of space per child of any primary school in Aberdeen.

Secondly there is an increased danger to young kids in the area having to travel further to reach the new proposed school. Traffic is already at a high premium around this area and I can only see that increasing as pupils have to travel further. This will also increase the number of cars being used around the school opening/closing time if pupils are travelling further and will therefore increase the danger of those walking around the Jesmond Drive area.

As far as I can see both schools are currently performing above and beyond the criteria set for them and to merge them together may jeopardise the already outstanding work being carried out by both pupils and teaching staff.

I have heard no opinions amongst those in the catchment area favouring this proposal and several people voicing their displeasure at the proposed merger. I really do hope common sense prevails and that the council can focus their time on other cost saving strategies that are clearly more evident and reasonable than this which clearly shows a complete lack of thought and consideration for those living in this area

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Bridge of Don Sports Club, I wish to put forward the feelings of the committee regarding the closures and merger of Middleton Park and Glashieburn Primary Schools.

As a club we rely on the use of Educational Premises for indoor training within the gym halls. Such lets are at a premium and are very hard to obtain. Closing Middleton Park school will take away another gym hall that is used by various organisations and clubs. The gym hall/s at Glashieburn are already heavily used so where are the existing lets at Middleton Park going to go to?

On behalf of all at Bridge of Don Sports Club, read the facts on the education or burst web-site and take heed of what all of the parents and others associated with both of these schools already know. This proposed merger is ridiculous and of no educational benefit to the pupils at both schools. It would appear that this proposed closure of Middleton Park school is for financial benefit and not for educational benefit.

See sense and kick out this proposal.

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After reading the article in the Evening Express today titled 'Education a Number One Priority In Budget Plan' I felt I had to send an email praising this decision.

Willie Young stated the following "ACC would be judged on how it tackles education" & "every child deserves a good education".

I could not agree more with these statements & am now looking forward to the council meeting in January re our schools merging. With statements like these there is only one discussion you can come to at this meeting, throw the proposals out & leave our two schools as they are.

---

I read with interest in the evening express today that for ACC "Every child deserves a good education - it's our number one priority, it's how we will be judged"

Yet. ACC will create the third largest roll of a school in Aberdeen in a school with the least space for pupil.

I am acknowledging that this is my last opportunity to engage in this process.

Over and over again I am being told that education plans are for the educational benefit of ALL Aberdeen city children. And that we must look at the city as a whole.

I find this very insulting to children in the bridge of don. Parents are not looking to be better than other areas but On a par. EQUAL. Or at least close - not BOTTOM

Please do tell me where equality lies in shoving my kids into an overcrowded school on an ill thought out plan.

Please tell me what I should tell my children when they ask me why they will not be able to do the same activities as other areas of the city.

Why they have a ridiculously small library. No ict space. Storage space or room to play and learn outside.

Where is the equality of provision?

The whole process is entirely unsettling for the kids involved.

We have engaged in the process and now we wait until January 30. A long time away. And passing the deadline for applying for nursery and primary applications. More uncertainly obviously going to have an affect on school rolls.

I wish to express my utter disgust in this consultation.

\*the substandard consultation document littered with errors and lies

\* the continued scramble to find desperate ways to make all kids fit

\* the blank canvas consultation on school estate last nov that had an educaton officer tell parents that one of our schools must close.

\* belittling the amazing work these schools do in the document is scandalous.

And now. The consultation is closing. I as a parent must wait. I do hope EVERY comment and question is read and answered fully.

And that eyes are opened to how awful and short sighted these plans really are.

I am standing up for education in the bridge of don. For EQUALITY.

"If it ain't broke. Don't fix it"

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Further to my comments I have already provided in relation to the proposed amalgamation I have just viewed the latest article in the Evening Express of today 11th October 2013, headline states EDUCATION IS ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL'S TOP PRIORITY - I beg to differ - amalgamation of Middleton Park and Glashieburn does not suggest top priority to me .....

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I am outraged yet AGAIN to read in the evening express at the councils plans to spend 4 million pounds on Education!!!!!! Where is this being spent? Because it's not in any of our children's education at Middleton Park or Glashieburn!!

This is completely ridiculous when our schools are being squeezed in to one existing school!!!! Why shut our school and give our children an extremely bad sized school and be shoe horned in to one, when schools are apparently getting 4 million! This is disgusting to hear!

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the future of my kids is so important to me and I'm sure they couldn't get what they need from school if the two schools going to be merged.

Now I am quite happy with the size of the Glashieburn school, outside area, equipments, the services that we get from the office, the privet time that I could share my children concerns with their teachers.....

But they all going to be changed if the two schools merged in the available site of the Glashieburn.

Every child in school need:

- a safe and nice area with enough equipment and staff during the class time to be happy and learn what they expect to learn, not just squashed in the tiny space with the name of classroom.
- enough space during the breaks to enjoy themself outside, and it is not even safe with too many children running all around, specially for the little ones.
- clean and quiet place and enough time to enjoy the lunch time, not a busy, noisy and defiantly dirty place with every body in rush and so many unfinished lunches.
- I think going to the toilets even will be a problem.

If the schools going to be merged, it is not what we expect for the primary school for our children, specially for the first steps, and defiantly we are going to moved from the area just because of the school.

And sure both of our children going to missed all the friends, teachers, and their own school.

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The Evening Express today quotes Cllr Young as saying "Every child deserves a good education – it's our number one priority".

If this proposal goes ahead there is no doubt that every child who currently attends Middleton Park School or Glashieburn School and every child who will attend these schools in the future WILL NOT get the good education they deserve. For the following reasons;

- There is not enough space to teach A Curriculum for Excellence. The building is made of concrete. You cannot make more space without extending which there isn't room for.
- The outdoor space is unbelievably inadequate. I want my children to love the outdoors and love learning in it. They can't do that at Burst Primary. I want my children to be fit and enjoy activity and exercise. They need space for football games, skipping, races, tig and tag.
- The teachers will spend all their time preparing for and managing larger classes. They will become discouraged. Through no fault of their own they won't be inspiring teachers.
- There is no evidence that the transition has been thought through. The children will be unsettled, upset and set back in their learning. When and how will the building works happen? When will a Headteacher be appointed? When will you decide what time the proposed school will start? If education is your number one priority you will not close and merge our schools.

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I wish to participate in the democratic process and express my opinions on the proposed amalgamation of Middleton Park and Glashieburn Primary Schools. I hope there has been a high level of response in offering input from a variety of informed angles.

I assume I share the view of our council and the parents of these two schools that the education of our children is of the utmost importance. There are lots of deserving ways in which finite funds can be distributed. Reducing school funding is an emotive subject, guaranteed to stir opinion but there are very practical and pragmatic reasons that education and healthcare hold positions of special importance.

Education is not just as an investment for the future but like childhood is an outcome to be valued on its own merits. These can be the most important and potentially happy and carefree years of all our lives.

The educational value of our schools, of learning life skills, how to play, how to work hard when things get tough, when to accommodate, when to be single minded and how to love learning, is of irreplaceable significance.

I feel this means that the structure and provision of our education system should of course take into account our increasingly limited funds and accommodate ideas for future urban design but should hold education itself as it's guiding principle.

As a local GP and lifelong Bridge of Don resident, I feel that the proposed merger of these two well performing schools means that this principle is being compromised. I believe it will be only to the detriment of these children.

Having attended the public consultations, it was clear that there is literally no support for this merger from anyone out with council officialdom. Some may rightly scrutinise this and reply that of course no one wants to see schools closed. There was, however, enthusiastic community backing for the closure of my own primary school, Upper Westfield, when clearly the new Braehead Primary was a superb improvement and offered pupils something far better: the opportunity to maximise their potential.

The crucial principle of educational benefit has yet to be established. The onus is on those proposing the closure/merger to provide us with information on how this is to be achieved.

The consultation document details the benefits of larger schools in achieving the targets of Curriculum for Excellence. This seems to make perfect sense in terms of economy of scale, speciality teacher provision and space.



It does, however, seem to be harder to explain how this will be achieved with the new schools projected roll having some of the lowest areas of space per pupil in Aberdeen. Cramped corridors, congested playgrounds and little breathing space for those children who can find schooling a challenging experience,

This is hardly what was offered to the children of Braehead.

It will be increasingly difficult to even approach the standards of Curriculum for Excellence which relies on flexible learning styles, scope for expression and a dynamic learning environment.

Glashieburn and Middleton Park are both staffed by teachers and assistants aiming for the best in the Curriculum for Excellence. They both are integrated in their community. There is willing parental involvement at everything from discos to trips and the pupils are well known to residents of Charlie Devine Court.

These excellent schools draw families to the area. We know that young families move to the suburbs for affordable housing, gardens, accessibility, safety, amenities and education: places in which to raise their families. Losing two excellent schools and replacing them with an inferior one is a powerful disincentive to relocation.

I appreciate it is exciting for the Town Planners to work with developers in an area like Grandhome to plan a new self contained community. Although I think it is fallacy to suggest anyone would look to cocoon themselves in a self contained community a quarter of a mile from an existing one, it is a rare opportunity for urban planners to be part of that type of clean slate. It is so uncommon on that scale in a major city. It must be a fresh and exciting challenge.

I'm afraid life isn't always that simple.

This is not a clean slate. It is a mature, vibrant community chosen home of now several generations of families. This project seems to be putting the needs of a hypothetical community that does not yet exist, and will not appear fully for around ten years, ahead of those people who already live there. What an awful loss of contact with reality. The Middleton Park and Glashieburn children cannot become collateral damage in a game of fantasy village planning.

As councillors and representatives, you have a very hard job. You have on our behalf tough decisions to make and your work is often unappreciated.

When I try to look at my own life I sometimes question if I have achieved what I hoped, have I been true to myself, have I maintained the vision and individuality of an auteur or have I learned too much to compromise the principles of my youth for transient success or career progression. It can be hard to evaluate such a thing but I often wonder what the youthful me of seventeen or eighteen would say if scrutinising my life. I hope when you look at how far you have come in politics now you have reached positions of power and responsibility that you can try and imagine what your youthful self would say about where you are right now and how he or she would look on your action on this school closure....would it make comfortable viewing?

Thank you for taking the time to read my submission.

These schools should not either close or merge.  
To do so would be an irredeemable error.

---

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Thank you for taking the time to read my submission.

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To do so would be an irredeemable error.

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I am xxxxxxxx and I am 7 years old and my sister xxxxxxxx is 4, we have lots of concerns and scared about the Council's proposal to close Glashieburn and Middleton Park Schools and to merge them into a "new" amalgamated school on the existing Glashieburn campus.

1. The proposal document is not fit for purpose. It is largely cut and pasted from the merger of Torry and Kincorth Academies. In particular the crucial Educational Benefit Statement is extremely similar. It does not consider all the children involved and has no factual backup. Despite errors and misleading information being pointed out, these have not been corrected.

2. The consultation has not been fit for purpose. None of the key questions were addressed during the consultation period. Amongst other things, there are no firm plans demonstrating how the children will satisfactorily fit. Furthermore no consideration has been made to the vulnerable children in the base. In essence I have not been provided with the facts needed to consult on.

3. The proposed amalgamated school would not be fit for purpose. The Council's own figures show it would be the most cramped school in Aberdeen. The space in the building and playground would be completely inadequate for the number of children involved.

4. No educational benefit has been (or can be) proven. Section 3 of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 states this is critical in any plan to close a school.

5. The proposal has no rational justification. There can be no explanation as to why the Grandhome development should mean a need to change. It simply needs rezoned as is already planned.

6. This proposal is against Aberdeen City Council's own policies. "It is the Council's vision to provide accommodation equivalent to the 3Rs schools for all our pupils" (Review of Aberdeen City Council School Estate Engagement Document). This plan is absolutely not in keeping with this vision.

7. The proposal is very obviously a disguised effort at cost cutting. This is wrong, especially as our schools cost well below the Aberdeen average per pupil.

8. The proposal has no support. There has been no support at all for it in the community. Instead, there has been massive support for the campaign to retain the two schools and secure a 25-year plan that is of benefit to our children and future children.

“It is the Council’s vision to provide accommodation equivalent to the 3Rs schools for all our pupils.” I urge that the current proposal is dropped immediately and a true 25 year plan in keeping with this vision is pursued.

Please leave our school alone, we love it the way it is. I don't want to be stuck squashed and lots of people will fight and get picked on

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In recent years the capacities of the schools in Oldmachar ASG have been considered and re-evaluated to consider the space required to implement A Curriculum for Excellence to a high standard. The school buildings are essentially the same design and layout. So I question why Forehill’s capacity was reduced by 13%  
Danestone’s capacity was reduced by 20%  
Glashieburn’s capacity was reduced by 20%  
Middleton Park’s capacity was ONLY REDUCED BY 5%  
I do not believe Middleton Park School has a huge spare capacity. I believe its stated capacity is hugely misleading.

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It is very clear there has been a huge response from our community in this consultation process. I have heard it said that this is only because the parent councils and campaign group have been so organised.  
I refute this. We have brought it to people's attention but it is only because they are concerned and angry about this proposal that they have taken the time to write a submission.  
If there weren't such serious concerns, and the proposal wasn't so flawed people wouldn't have engaged.  
It has also been said to me that "you shouldn't get what you want just because you shout the loudest". I would like to make it clear, we're not asking for more than any other area of Aberdeen or asking to be given special treatment. We're asking you not to take things away from us and put us in a worse situation than the rest of Aberdeen.

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I read in today’s local Aberdeen Paper, The Evening Express that:

“Education top priority as Aberdeen City Council reveals budget plan, Nearly £5 million more to be spent on education”. Well let’s hope that some of this is going to fund the continued success of the extremely highly attaining Middleton Park Primary School and Nursery rather than closing it and amalgamating it with Glashieburn Primary and Nursery.

Could it be that the proposed closure of Middleton Park has nothing to do with the education of the pupils but rather will go some way to funding this £5m spend on education next year!

It’s also ironic that this £5m budget will be used among other things to provide “More cash for pupil support assistants”. My wife is a PSA at Middleton Park and over the past five year has seen her hours cut again and again. On top of this none of the “support” staff had had a wage rise over the

same period. The amount of work the PSA's do is incredible and the wages they get is a pittance. I the words of the teaching staff "we could not survive without the PSA's"

So use some of the £5M to keep Middleton Park as it is but as stated provide additional PSA resource as all the teachers have to bid for PSA time and the lack of this does affect the pupils education.

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I am a mum of two children in Glashieburn school, XXXXXXXX, the future of my kids is so important to me and I'm sure they couldn't get what they need from school if the two schools going to be merged.

Now I am quite happy with the size of the Glashieburn school, outside area, equipments, the services that we get from the office, the privet time that I could share my children concerns with their teachers.....

But they all going to be changed if the two schools merged in the available site of the Glashieburn.

Every child in school need:

- a safe and nice area with enough equipment and staff during the class time to be happy and learn what they expect to learn, not just squashed in the tiny space with the name of classroom.
- enough space during the breaks to enjoy themself outside, and it is not even safe with too many children running all around, specially for the little ones.
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- I think going to the toilets even will be a problem.

If the schools going to be merged, it is not what we expect for the primary school for our children, specially for the first steps, and defiantly we are going to moved from the area just because of the school.

And sure both of our children going to missed all the friends, teachers, and their own school.

---

I have been a pupil at Middleton Park Primary since nursery and I'm now in P7. I have loved the fact that I know ALL the children in the school and their names and who their brothers and sisters are. My little sister, xxxxx, is in Px and I would love her to continue through to P7 at Middleton Park School. I love how the teachers have taught us the school curriculum but also teach us how to be good citizens and it helps that they know us all so well because of the size of the school. Our parent council is fab and gives us lots of extra activities, discos and trips.

Please don't break up our fantastic school!!!!

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I am emailing to express my great concerns at the proposal to close Middleton Park Primary and Glashieburn Primary and to create a new school within the current Glashieburn buildings.

I am a parent with 2 children currently at Middleton Park. Both of my children have so far had a fantastic education within this lovely school, which is situated within our community. My children along with their friends have a great sense of pride in their school and it would be a tragedy to close this well performing school.

I have attended the public consultation meetings and listened to the council officers, but they have not given me any reassurance that this will be a positive change for any of the children involved.

Continuing professional development of staff is not an educational benefit that is worthy of all the upset that my children will endure should their school close. Surely there should be clear defined and proven benefits for all the children. I have read through the consultation document and cannot

identify any educational benefits in cramming all the children into the Glashieburn site. As far as I can see this is purely a cost saving exercise.

When I look through the consultation document in detail I notice a mistake in the section on the pupil population of Middleton Park. The document states that there are currently two Primary 6 classes and no Primary 7 class at all. This type of information is misleading for anyone that has no knowledge of our school as they will immediately think that no Primary 7 class exists. I would have thought that such an important document would have been properly proof read prior to being issued for public consultation. If there are mistakes as simple as this within the document, I have no confidence in the rest of the figures that are detailed.

I would also like to ask why it has taken the council officers months to produce a document that clearly looks like a cut and pasted from another. The duration of this process has had a detrimental effect on Middleton Park as I know of at least 2 sets of parents that decided not to start their children at Middleton Park this summer as they thought it would be closing. I can't help but think this was a conscious decision by the council officers to create unrest within the school. How many other families have chosen to enrol their children in other primary schools in the area as they did not wish to tackle the disruption that could ensue if their primary school were to close? We will never know the answer, but I would suggest that the delays we have had to endure have undoubtedly swayed families in their decisions on where to educate their children in the bridge of don.

It is clearly obvious that all these children will not fit into the Glashieburn site unless they are crammed into areas that are currently being used as corridors, library and ICT spaces. Children need to have adequate space and limited disruptions to be able to concentrate and learn. Sitting in a corridor will not offer either of these and can only be detrimental to their education.

My children currently walk to and from school. Moving them down to the Glashieburn site will turn a 5 minute walk into a ½ hour walk which will in reality turn into a car journey for my children. The residents in the surrounding area of Glashieburn currently complain about the disruption that the school drop offs and pick-ups cause them. There is no designated drop off zone or parent parking for Glashieburn and none proposed. I am sure that I will not be the only additional Middleton Park parent that will be adding to the congestion for the residents surrounding Glashieburn, should this ridiculous proposal go ahead.

How will the Glashieburn kitchen areas and dining halls cope with the additional children that will need to be processed at a lunchtime? I understand that there are already 2 lunch sittings at Glashieburn, so how many more sittings will be required once the Middleton Park children descend upon them? Charlie Penman did not give any re-assurance on this issue when he presented at the consultation meeting on Tuesday 1st of October 2013. He advised that Kingswells Primary manages to accommodate their large pupil numbers without any issues at a lunchtime. However, the fundamental flaw here is that Kingswells Primary has fewer pupils in a larger building, so not a like for like comparison!

My children currently have 3 sessions of physical education totalling 2 hours per week. With the games halls being used for lunches, assemblies, school open days, religious performances etc... can you demonstrate (ie a timetable) of exactly how my children will still receive their 2 hours of physical education every week? Council officers stated at one of the consultation meetings that children could use the external areas to carry out physical education. I hardly feel this is a realistic option with the changeable and sometimes very inclement weather that Aberdeen experiences.

Why is it that the council officers are the only people that see any benefits in creating a school that will be bursting at the seams? I am not opposed to change and would welcome an amalgamation with Glashieburn if it were a new purpose built school which had the same space and learning opportunities as Braehead Primary. As this is not an option for us under this proposal, then I do not wish my children to be uprooted and crushed into a "make do" primary.

Middleton Park Primary school produces well educated and conscientious individuals, please leave it alone to continue to do so!

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To whom it may concern:

My response to Evening Express article on the extra 4 million funding, and education being top priority.

Quite agree, but closing schools is not always the best answer. My children go to Glashieburn Primary and are very happy, thriving in their environment and learning well. If Glashieburn and Middleton Park schools were to merge, the quality of education is almost definitely going to suffer. There is simply NO room for them all to fit, not enough school hours to have adequate gym time for all classes, and three lunch time sittings! Space per pupil would be lowest in Aberdeen, come on Aberdeen City Council, see sense and stop this ludicrous idea.

To add to this response, will our two schools see any of this money? Why should our children be deprived of a decent education. Very very frustrated at the latest announcement, especially given our circumstance!!

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If education is your top priority. Why cant you leave my daughters school alone. Its fine as it is! Please dont squash more kids in. Her education is my top priority!

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I see in the EE today that Education is the council's TOP PRIORITY. So reject this proposal to close middleton Park and invest in the school estate in Bridge of Don. Both schools need investment and the money would be welcome. Don't try and cram us all into one building held together with sticky tape. Education is a top priority and therefore allow the teachers the facilities to educate do not reduce the levels further than they are at present!!!!

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Middleton Park School school continues to attract, grow and attain high standards. The teaching staff and head teacher deliver an excellent all round education with the resources they have. Due to the size of the school they know all the pupils well and cater for their individual needs. Why destroy something that delivers the standards desired by the Education dept?

The only driver we can see for this merger is a cost cutting exercise and unfortunately this means our children's progress is going to be held back in order to meet budgets. As stated in your consultation document, there is no research to support that bigger is better in education.

The consultation meeting I attended seemed to focus on the building more than our educational concerns and when these were raised I don't believe a satisfactory response was given. I thought educational attainment levels would be most important to Gayle Gorman, it didn't appear to be the case.

Using the Braehead Primary model, why when merging Balgownie with Upper Westfield did they achieve a fantastic learning environment and improved education standards as a result. Instead our children are going to be moved into an already tired school with no structural improvements and the smallest square footage per child that you can get away with - is this right?

Middleton Park's results in the past have attracted new families to the area and was held up as one of the best schools in the city and there seems to be no recognition by the council that they are losing something worth saving!

This seems to be a knee jerk reaction to achieve budgets rather than improve our children's education.

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During the autumn and winter months glashieburn kids are to stay off the playingfield at the back of playground. I feel the existing play ground will not cope with an additional 170 kids running around the tarmac area. This will lead to accidents and injuries. This a concern to me.

This tarmac area is also in need to resurfacing as the condition is not good at present.

If the middleton park school is closed, i expect the ground will be used for additional housing. These children will be zoned for burst primary. How will a school which is already over it's original capacity be able to accept more children?

I feel the ACC proposal is an appalling suggestion which does not give our children any educational bennefit. Our kids deserve better!!

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I have just read in tonight's evening express that education is a top priority for aberdeen city council! Clearly this doesn't extend to the children of the additional support needs unit at glashieburn! As the impact that amalgamating the schools will have on their education is criminal!

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It was my understanding that the proposed amalgamation of Middleton Park and Glashieburn Primary school was not going to have any effect on the education of my child. I am therefore very disappointed that after reading the consultation document and attending consultation meetings I can see absololutely no educational benefit whatsoever.

It appears this is a money saving excersise as there is no evidence that the childrens education has been made the priority, no firm plans how all the children will fit in the amalgamated school and the school will not be fit for purpose.

It is extremely worrying how a proposal as ludicrous as this has got to this stage, it is very clear that the children's education is not Aberdeen City Council's main concern.

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When we met with officers in February of this year we were promised an above minimum. We made it clear that we would stand for our children's education and were encouraged to do so by the officers and committee convenor. that there was no need for change. Despite this discussion and our request to delay the consultation on the closure of these schools until the plans for Grandhome were further developed and the roll changes were established as there has been a very poor track record on what can only be described as the dark art of roll forecasting. The process has continued relentlessly forcing confrontation and anger where we had hoped for a collaborative process that could have started before the statutory period. We were continually referred to as colleagues but have been made to feel very much the opposite as a group of well educated parents with an interest and skills to contribute to the process as we do in the School itself. A several stages of the process we have been forced to proverbially shout or formally complain in order to be listened to, which has needlessly taken up officers and parents time and energy. This energy could have been used to foster ideas and work together to deliver a truly innovative change bringing educational benefit to the children and benefit to the wider school estate and community.

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We don't think Burst Primary is a good idea! Please reconsider!

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Education should be a top priority all of the time, regardless of funding issues... Primary and Secondary schools in the Basque Country in Spain have limitless funding for school children. Why? Because children are treated as individuals and are not seen as liabilities and excuses for 'lack of funding'...and the kids have fresh food every day for lunch, again regardless of cost.

...and overcrowding? Max 20 in a class in Spain. You have shoved 31 kids in my sons class.

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I can't help but think of the following analogy.

I could fit the dog into the cat's bed , but would that be of benefit to the dog or the cat for that matter. It's a bit of a squeeze. Surely the dog would be better in a dogs bed, or perhaps these are flexible sleeping areas. Perhaps the need for change of the dog's bed and forcing the dog into the cat's bed is the duck pond that is being built next door. But before the duck pond can be built does the cat's bed need removed.

This analogy makes as much as the current proposal.

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1700 hours yesterday saw the end of the supposed second "consultation" period regarding Aberdeen City Council's proposed merger of Glashieburn and Middleton Park Primary Schools. As no-one is prepared to engage with me about the valid questions I have about how my disabled daughter would be affected by such a merger (as well as her classmates in the additional support needs base that is already located in Glashieburn) and her other (unaffected by any disability) school friends, I have thus far been disqualified from and unable to participate in this statutory legal process, therefore, I consider the process to be fatally flawed and as such I am lodging a complaint as per the attached PDF named 20131011 ACC Complaint. The other 4 PDFs contain vital background information to prove the validity of my complaint.

This hotch potch proposal should be binned at the first instance and instead, Aberdeen City Council should appoint independent auditors to look into ALL aspects of the parts that everyone has (or has not, as the case may be) played. This shameful episode has clearly illustrated why Aberdeen has stagnated (and thus effectively declined) in the 30 years I have contributed to the City coffers and why the likes of Dundee is blazing a trail of "Discovery" (again) with a clear and wonderful vision of where it wants to be.

There are plenty up here who need to take a long hard look at themselves and if they are not up to doing their jobs they should step aside. Democracy in action? You're having a laugh!

Kindest regards



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**11/10/13**

The following email text was submitted from **220 individual** email accounts.

I write with major concerns about the Council's proposal to close Glashieburn and Middleton Park Schools and to merge them into a "new" amalgamated school on the existing Glashieburn campus.

1. The proposal document is not fit for purpose. It is largely cut and pasted from the merger of Torry and Kincorth Academies. In particular the crucial Educational Benefit Statement is extremely similar. It does not consider all the children involved and has no factual backup. Despite errors and misleading information being pointed out, these have not been corrected.

2. The consultation has not been fit for purpose. None of the key questions were addressed during the consultation period. Amongst other things, there are no firm plans demonstrating how the children will satisfactorily fit. Furthermore no consideration has been made to the vulnerable children in the base. In essence I have not been provided with the facts needed to consult on.

3. The proposed amalgamated school would not be fit for purpose. The Council's own figures show it would be the most cramped school in Aberdeen. The space in the building and playground would be completely inadequate for the number of children involved.

4. No educational benefit has been (or can be) proven. Section 3 of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 states this is critical in any plan to close a school.

5. The proposal has no rational justification. There can be no explanation as to why the Grandhome development should mean a need to change. It simply needs rezoned as is already planned.

6. This proposal is against Aberdeen City Council's own policies. "It is the Council's vision to provide accommodation equivalent to the 3Rs schools for all our pupils" (Review of Aberdeen City Council School Estate Engagement Document). This plan is absolutely not in keeping with this vision.

7. The proposal is very obviously a disguised effort at cost cutting. This is wrong, especially as our schools cost well below the Aberdeen average per pupil.

8. The proposal has no support. There has been no support at all for it in the community. Instead, there has been massive support for the campaign to retain the two schools and secure a 25-year plan that is of benefit to our children and future children.

"It is the Council's vision to provide accommodation equivalent to the 3Rs schools for all our pupils." I urge that the current proposal is dropped immediately and a true 25 year plan in keeping with this vision is pursued.

## **SUBMISSION IN RELATION TO PROPOSALS FOR MIDDLETON PARK/GLASHIEBURN SCHOOLS**

Please find below my submission in relation to the above proposals, which has been informed by contact with campaign groups, constituents, and my own views having attended public meetings and read the documents which the Council has produced in support of its proposals.

The delay in proceeding to the consultation phase has been a cause of great anxiety, uncertainty and anger among the parents of the two schools. The Council made the decision to consult in February, but the consultation process did not begin for another six and a half months. One would have considered that this length of time would have allowed the Council to develop a stronger case than the one which has been presented.

### **BURST PRIMARY**

The facts have been laid bare on repeated occasion that the school will have a dramatically low ratio of floor space per pupil when compared to other schools across the city.

Prior to the consultation the Council listed the capacity of Glashieburn as being 420 pupils. In the consultation document that figure has suddenly, and without any real detailed explanation, become 460. There is a school of thought that suggests this may have been influenced by the realisation that the newly merged school would almost immediately reach and breach a capacity of 420.

I do not consider that there is a case for moving this number of pupils into a merged school, creating what would be a cramped environment, and undermining the supposed benefits of having 'more flexible learning spaces' available to pupils. The likelihood based on the plans drawn up by the Council thus far, and responded to by Education or Burst, seems to indicate the opposite.

### **OUTDOOR SPACE**

A critical element of education is the ability to utilise outdoor space where possible, both for playtimes and also as part of curriculum delivery. The Glashieburn site has a very small outdoor area available for either of these purposes, and the large number of pupils is not going to be well accommodated by the reduced area for outdoor play and learning.

### **THE MOVABLE FEAST OF INTERNAL LAYOUT**

At repeated public meetings the concerns of parents regarding internal layout was raised with the authority, and was met with repeated assurances that the layout could be changed in a number of different ways. At the final public meeting, as parents outlined the failings of each proposed layout, they were again assured that

the layout could change. Implying that there would be new plans produced after the meeting, and without the opportunity for parents to respond and have an input.

This demonstrates the difference between a merged school where a new-build is offered, and parents can feel involved in the process of looking at the layout of the school, and merging into an existing building where there is limited flexibility as the footprint of the school is pre-determined.

I am very concerned that the goalposts could be moved following the closure of the consultation, and it strikes me that the Council's inability to come up with a coherent plan for the school in the six months from February demonstrates further that this is not a suitable proposal.

### **SUITABILITY RATING**

The papers which went before councillors in February showed Middleton Park as rating B for both condition and suitability, with Glashieburn rating B for condition and C for suitability.

By the time the consultation documents were issued, Glashieburn's rating for suitability had been upgraded to B. E-mails obtained via Freedom of Information indicate that the suitability was checked in August/September 2012, and that there had been no additional work carried out in the intervening twelve months. This raises the question as to how exactly Glashieburn's suitability rating managed to improve over such a short space of time with no significant investment.

This question was raised during the public meetings, and to my mind no satisfactory answer has been forthcoming to date.

### **ASN BASE**

One of the most powerful arguments being put forward by parents is the impact of the proposals on children in the ASN base. Parents gave strong evidence at the public meetings that an increase in the numbers of children attending the school, with corresponding increase in noise, reduction in physical space across school, and the corresponding reductions to the size of the ASN base required to accommodate the additional learning spaces for pupils, would detrimentally impact upon the wellbeing of children within the base.

Undoubtedly there will be a range of needs represented within the base, and different children will react differently to changes of routine and sensory stimuli, but what is clear is that the parents, who understand the needs of their children, are unanimous in their view that the proposals will detrimentally impact upon the children in the base.

## **EDUCATIONAL BENEFIT**

The educational benefit statement is remarkably similar to that of the proposals for Bramble Brae and Quarryhill, which in turn is remarkably similar to that of the proposals for Torry and Kincorth Academies. Indeed there are whole sections and conclusions which are word for word the same.

While it could be argued that there are 'generic' benefits which the Council would argue accrue to any merger proposal, the Educational Benefit statement is in no way tailored to the actual experience of the pupils who will attend the new school, and how they will benefit as a direct result of the decision to create the merged school.

It is rather disappointing that the proposal is essentially treated as a generic exercise, and even more disappointing is the virtual absence of identifiable educational benefit beyond assertions that greater CPD for teachers will be delivered.

The question could surely be posed as to why it is necessary to merge schools in order to achieve this outcome, when many schools could, and I dare say do, collaborate across the ASGs and across the city itself to share best practice.

It seems an inherently weak conclusion to the document which in itself fails to address the impacts being outlined by the parents in their submissions to the authority.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Council has failed to demonstrate how the establishment of Burst Primary will deliver educational benefit.

The consultation document alters the capacity and suitability rating for Glashieburn without any real explanation, and the implication has been made that the proposal could yet alter post-consultation which would be an extraordinary approach to take.

Parents are clear that the impacts upon children in the ASN base would be detrimental, and the Council has not satisfied these concerns, indeed the document makes scant mention of this important element.

Overall the proposal does not stand as one worthy of support, and I hope that the recommendation to committee will be not to proceed with this proposal any further.

Sandy Stuart SNP  
Cllr for Bridge of Don  
Town House  
Broad Street  
ABERDEEN  
AB10 1FY

(01224) 346610

Thursday, 10 October 2013

Dear Gail Gorman

I write to you regarding the amalgamation of Middleton Park and Glashieburn primaries. Having attended 3 of the 4 consultation meetings plus others I am not convinced that educational benefit is at the forefront of the proposed amalgamation. I fail to see how cramming children into what will be the smallest square meter per pupil in the city will be of educational benefit. The possibility of class disruption is very real.

The safety aspect of the Middleton Park pupils must also be taken into consideration as they will have to walk approx. half a mile further. This can have a detrimental effect on young children especially when the weather is inclement. If parents decide to drive their children to school then parking at Glashieburn is difficult and Jesmond Drive is an extremely busy road. This compounds the problem.

We also need to consider the amount of playground area needed for both sets of pupils. There is very little at Glashieburn currently and with the addition of more children it will be inadequate.

Apart from the issues I have highlighted I would like to emphasise that the parents have organised themselves into a group: Burst Primary and they have a string of issues they would like addressed.

At the end of the day the educational benefit should be proved and I fail to see that it has.

Cc Derek Samson



Our Ref. MJ  
Your Ref.  
Contact Muriel Jaffrey  
Email mjaffrey@aberdeencity.gov.uk  
Date 9 October 2013



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Aberdeen.

Dear Mr. Samson,

**Proposed Merger of Middleton Park and Glashieburn Schools**  
**Glashieburn Site**

I am writing in support of the Parents of both schools regarding this proposed merger which they have named "Burst Primary". In my opinion if this goes ahead, the current Glashieburn building will indeed be "bursting at the seams". Very worried and concerned parents cannot accept that all the additional children can fit comfortably into the space even with interior building changes. There are Base children and two nurseries to be accommodated as well. The playground cannot be extended and will be totally inadequate for the number of children. It is in the legislation that children should be playing outside. They will be cramped in classrooms and cramped outside too. Car parking will be a nightmare. There is no problem with parking at Middleton Park currently but there is at Glashieburn!!

Parents taking their children by car to Middleton Park, park in ASDA directly across the road from the school and the children cross Jesmond Drive at the pedestrian crossing. It is a very different story at Glashieburn and this will only be made worse.

Parents of both schools keep asking me about capacity at the new Braehead School. This is a 3 Rs state of the art school with ample room both inside and out for children to learn and thrive. When I questioned you yesterday at the School Estates meeting regarding current capacity at Braehead School and you told me 50% I could not believe it !! A brand new school with loads of space and you are proposing the above merger where the exact opposite is the case.

To sum up, I feel that we will not be giving our children adequate educational facilities, and I don't think "Burst Primary" is conducive to learning nor good for children's health. To quote from the 7 year old pupil who was allowed to speak at the public meeting "I am frightened I will get squashed" is appropriate.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Muriel Jaffrey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small flourish at the end.

Baillie Muriel Jaffrey