

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Report by HMIE addressing educational aspects of the proposal by Falkirk Council to establish primary stage additional support needs (ASN) provision at Carrongrange High School to create an all-through 5-18 ASN Campus, and permanently discontinue existing ASN provision at Kinnaird and Maddiston Primary Schools.

June 2026

1. Introduction

1.1 This report from HMIE has been prepared by His Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HM Inspectors) in accordance with the terms of the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#) ("the 2010 Act"). The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of a proposal by Falkirk Council to establish primary stage additional support needs (ASN) provision at Carrongrange High School to create an all-through 5-18 ASN Campus, and permanently discontinue existing ASN provision at Kinnaird and Maddiston Primary Schools. Section 2 of the report sets out brief details of the consultation process. Section 3 of the report sets out HM Inspectors' consideration of the educational aspects of the proposal, including significant views expressed by consultees. Section 4 summarises HM Inspectors' view. Upon receipt of this report, the Act requires the council to consider it alongside any relevant considerations the council received and then prepare its consultation report. The council's consultation report should include this report and must contain an explanation of how, in finalising the proposal, it has reviewed the initial proposal, including a summary of points raised during the consultation process and the council's response to them. The council has to publish its consultation report at least three weeks before it takes its final decision. With all proposals the council needs to follow all statutory obligations set out in the 2010 Act. Where a council is proposing to close a school, there are specific additional obligations. These include notifying Ministers within six working days of making its final decision and explaining to consultees the opportunity they have to make representations to Ministers.

1.2 HM Inspectors considered:

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

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

- attendance at the public meeting held on 19 May 2026 and two online meetings on 20 and 25 May 2026 in connection with the council's proposals;
- consideration of all relevant documentation provided by the council in relation to the proposal, specifically the educational benefits statement and related consultation documents, written and oral submissions from parents and others; and
- visits to the sites of Carrongrange High School, Kinnaird Primary School (PS), Thistle Wing Annexe, Maddiston PS Timezone and Moray PS, including discussion with relevant consultees.

2. Consultation process

2.1 Falkirk Council undertook the consultation on its proposal(s) with reference to the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#).

2.2 The public consultation ran from 27 April to 12 June 2026. The council published the proposal paper and an easy read version on its website and in council offices. It also provided copies by email or letter to relevant stakeholders including parents and carers at each school directly affected by the proposal. The council held a public meeting on 19 May 2026 and two online meetings on 20 and 25 May 2026. Across the three meetings there were 26 attendances. Stakeholders asked a range of questions and sought clarification on key aspects of the proposal. These included the design and layout of the proposed site, the loss of greenspace at Moray PS and questions about traffic management and transport to school. Stakeholders also asked about transition arrangements and ongoing community engagement.

2.3 The council received 66 responses to its online survey and a further seven written responses to its consultation. The majority of respondents to the online survey thought the proposal was clear. Of those who responded, 38% thought the proposal would have a positive impact, and 59% thought the proposal would have a negative impact. Positive responses were overwhelmingly centred on the belief that a purpose-built 5–18 ASN campus was likely to have a strong positive educational impact, particularly for pupils with complex additional support needs. Of those that expressed a negative view, most of these responses were from Moray PS who are concerned about the loss of outdoor learning and play space at the school. Overall, responses indicated strong support for the strategic aims of the proposal, with concerns being raised about increased traffic, parking pressures and community impact. Stakeholders would like clarity on aspects such as mitigation measures and transition arrangements.

2.4 The council held discussions with children, young people, parents, and staff in Carrongrange High School, Maddiston PS Timezone, and Kinnaird PS Thistle Wing and Thistle Wing Annexe. In addition, the council held focus groups and separate discussions with professional partners and parent representatives from Moray PS. There is broad support for a single campus model, with staff and parents highlighting issues with the current accommodation across the range of provision. Children and young people were supported to express views about what they liked and disliked using adapted approaches such as visuals, voice notes and talking mats. This included what they would like to see in a new school building such as access to hydrotherapy, soft play, quiet spaces and interactive outdoor equipment. They expressed that familiar staff, routine, visuals, social stories and visits could help with their transition.

3. Educational aspects of proposal

3.1 HM Inspectors agree that there are potential educational benefits to the proposal. The council outlines several educational benefits for children and young people with profound, severe and complex needs that it expects the proposal will deliver. These include the creation of a coherent 5–18 curriculum pathway, improved continuity of learning, reduced transition points, enhanced access to specialist facilities and services and improved preparation for adulthood. The council believes that consolidating existing ASN provisions into a single 5–18 campus at Carrongrange High School will provide additional capacity and enhance the consistency of learning and teaching. It will bring staff together from multiple ASN provisions to strengthen

professional learning. The campus could enable strengthened multi-agency working, greater access to specialist resources and a more coherent learning journey with reduced transitions. The council outlines the new environment will provide modern, accessible facilities that supports highly personalised learning, improved consistency of provision and enhanced collaboration across sectors. HM Inspectors agree this could support improved wellbeing, engagement and outcomes for children and young people with complex additional support needs.

3.2 HM Inspectors met with a range of stakeholders, including children, young people, parents and staff. Overall, stakeholders expressed strong support to the proposed provision. Parents and staff highlighted the limitations of the current accommodation. They agree that the purpose-built accommodation could better support children and young people with a range of profound, severe and complex needs. This will reduce the current need for modular classrooms at Carrongrange High School. The existing primary ASN provision is split across three sites, with Timezone utilising temporary accommodation at Moray PS. HM Inspectors agree that the single campus could provide a purpose-built learning environment better able to meet the educational and wellbeing needs of children and young people.

3.3 The majority of parents and staff would like clarity on the management structure. They would like reassurance that the staffing would be regularly reviewed to ensure it continues to meet the changing needs of children and young people attending the provision. Staff who met with HM Inspectors are positive about engaging in professional learning. They feel strongly that there should be early and ongoing collaboration between staff teams to allow them to build positive and meaningful relationships. This would enable them to be fully prepared to meet the diverse range of needs as different cohorts of children and young people come together from separate provisions. They expressed the importance of developing a shared ethos to support consistency across the existing provisions. HM Inspectors agree that ongoing collaboration and communication could support staff integration and provide further clarity on future operation planning.

3.4 A few staff and parents highlight that the current primary ASN units are smaller, which allows strong relationships with staff and pupils within the mainstream setting. However, they are concerned that this could reduce inclusion opportunities. In its proposal, the council acknowledges the need for enhanced opportunities for inclusion through individualised planning, mainstream partnerships and community engagement. HM Inspectors agree it will be important for the council to continue to ensure, where appropriate, inclusion opportunities are tailored to individual learner needs and circumstances within the new setting.

3.5 All stakeholders who met with HM Inspectors highlighted the importance on their continued involvement in the design of the new accommodation. Staff expressed that the learning environment both inside and outside should be appropriate, accessible and tailored for the diverse needs of learners, including a suitable digital infrastructure. They highlighted the need for adequate and flexible classroom design with specialist facilities to support the moving and handling of children and young people. This should include space for the storage of specialist equipment. All stakeholders feel it is important that the new accommodation should include spaces to support the life skills of children and young people. A few stakeholders feel that the access to shared spaces such as pool and hydrotherapy pool may become restricted. It will be important for the council to consider how best it will ensure equity of access to this provision. A few staff raised concerns about the dignity of children in outdoor spaces. HM Inspectors agree that the council should continue to involve stakeholders in the design phase and incorporate staff feedback. This

will help to ensure that the ASN classes and other resources meet sufficiently the range and complexity of needs.

3.6 All stakeholders who met with HM Inspectors express the need for strong transition planning for children and young people. They acknowledge that the construction will cause disruption, which may lead to an increase in dysregulation. Young people are worried this may lead to an increase in the amount of time that they could be restricted to their classrooms. It will be important there is regular communication to keep children and young people well informed as the development progresses. As these changes are likely to take effect from January 2029, a few staff are concerned that this may be a difficult time to start transitions as children often experience dysregulation at this time. HM Inspectors agree that the council should continue with plans to develop a staged and individualised transition arrangements to support fully the needs of all children and young people.

3.7 Parents from Moray PS who met with HM Inspectors support the principle of a 5-18 ASN campus. However, they are concerned about the loss of its playing field and outdoor learning provision. They questioned the rationale for site selection and the accuracy of this space being underused. They are concerned how this will impact on children's wellbeing and would like reassurance on the adequacy of proposed alternatives. They too would like to be consulted on the final design of the new accommodation. HM Inspectors agree that the council should continue its ongoing engagement with parent representatives from Moray PS.

4. Summary

HM Inspectors agree that the proposal presents potential educational benefits, including improved continuity, enhanced specialist provision and opportunities for greater multi-agency collaboration within a purpose-built 5-18 ASN campus. Overall, there was significant support for the educational rationale and recognition of its potential to improve outcomes, wellbeing and learning experiences for children and young people with additional support needs. Stakeholders recognised the potential for improved continuity of learning, reduced transitions, enhanced access to specialist facilities and therapies, stronger multi-agency working, and increased capacity to meet future demand. Stakeholders highlighted the limitations of current accommodation. Stakeholders also sought reassurance regarding transition arrangements, future staffing structures and ongoing involvement in the design process. HM Inspectors also note the council's plans for careful and individualised transition planning and sustained communication to minimise disruption. The council should continue to address concerns raised by stakeholders including those from Moray PS regarding the loss of outdoor space and its potential impact on wellbeing.

HM Inspectors
June 2026

On behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education in Scotland