

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Report by HMIE addressing educational aspects of the proposal by Perth and Kinross Council to permanently establish a new Intensive Support Provision in Community School of Auchterarder for pupils with additional support needs with effect from August 2026.

January 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 Perth and Kinross Council to permanently establish a new Intensive Support Provision (ISP) in Community School of Auchterarder for pupils with additional support needs with effect from August 2026. Section 2 of the report sets out brief details of the consultation process. Section 3 of the report sets out HM Inspectors' consideration of the educational aspects of the proposal, including significant views expressed by consultees. Section 4 summarises HM Inspectors' view. Upon receipt of this report, the Act requires the council to consider it alongside any relevant considerations the council received and then prepare its consultation report. The council's consultation report should include this report and must contain an explanation of how, in finalising the proposal, it has reviewed the initial proposal, including a summary of points raised during the consultation process and the council's response to them. The council has to publish its consultation report at least three weeks before it takes its final decision. With all proposals the council needs to follow all statutory obligations set out in the 2010 Act.

1.2 HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for children and young people of the schools; 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 18 November 2025 in connection with the council's proposals;
- consideration of all relevant documentation provided by the council in relation to the proposal, specifically the educational benefits statement and related consultation documents, written and oral submissions from parents and others; and
- visits to the sites of Community School of Auchterarder, Aberuthven Primary School, Blackford Primary School and Dunning Primary School including discussion with relevant consultees.

2. Consultation process

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

2.2 The consultation ran from 5 November to 19 December 2025. A public meeting attended by 17 parents and members of the public was held at the Community School of Auchterarder on

18 November 2025. The council received 13 responses to the public consultation with just over half in favour of the proposal. In addition, the council received seven emails from staff and parents. Almost all of these responses expressed support for the proposal in principle. They also raised some concerns about the location of the ISP and the impact it may have on the school overall. The council held a staff meeting on 18 November 2025, which was attended by 36 people. They also consulted with children and young people about the proposal through focus groups.

3. Educational aspects of proposal

3.1 The council believes there are potential educational benefits for young people with additional support needs should the proposal go ahead. They feel that establishing the ISP in the Community School of Auchterarder will provide an appropriate learning environment for children and young people with additional support needs. They think that it will enhance learning experiences and outcomes by providing a broad curricular programme encompassing the Broad General Education and Senior Phase. They also believe that a bright, stimulating and safe environment will better meet the needs of young people, supporting them to achieve their potential. HM Inspectors agree that there are potential educational benefits in relation to the learning and teaching environment and young peoples' learning experiences. The establishment of the ISP in Auchterarder should ensure that young people with multiple and complex needs can be educated within their local community, negating the need to travel long distances.

3.2 Almost all stakeholders who met with HM Inspectors agree with the proposal. Parents, staff, children and young people all see the potential educational benefits of establishing an ISP in Auchterarder and HM Inspectors agree with this view. The majority of stakeholders agree that providing a high quality learning environment for those with multiple and complex needs should better meet their needs. Parents and staff agree with the council that, in the longer term, it should also help children and young people reach their potential. Having the ISP based in Auchterarder was viewed as important by almost all children and young people who met with HMI Inspectors. They think that young people with multiple and complex needs should not be traveling long distances to get to school.

3.3 Whilst almost all stakeholders agree with the proposal in principle, parents and staff, particularly in the Community School of Auchterarder, expressed concern about the practical arrangements. Several parents and staff have concerns about the ISP being based on the first floor. They believe it would be more advantageous to be located on the ground floor, allowing better access to outdoor space. They also have questions about staffing in the ISP and feel the council need to be clearer about the actual ratio of staff to children and young people. These issues were also raised in the responses received by the council in response to the public consultation. The issue of access to the Community School of Auchterarder is also a concern for staff and parents. Several are worried about parking and drop-off arrangements. HM Inspectors agree with stakeholders that the location of the ISP, staffing arrangements and access to the Community School of Auchterarder needs further clarification by the council.

4. Summary

HM Inspectors agree that there are potential educational benefits to the council's proposal to establish an ISP in the Community School of Auchterarder. Whilst the proposal is welcomed by almost all stakeholders, there are a range of concerns that the council needs to address should it be approved. The council should continue to engage with parents and staff of those schools impacted by the proposal to allay any fears they may have regarding the location and operation of the ISP. This includes the location of the ISP, staffing arrangements and access to outdoor spaces for learning. They should also consider how the current parking and drop-off arrangements at the Community School of Auchterarder could be improved to ensure that children and young people are safe.

HM Inspectors
January 2026