



Moray Council

Cullen Catchment Area Secondary School Rezoning Consultation

Comments / Enquiries Received

1 February – 17 March 2017

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Please note that content within is unedited (except for the removal of personal data)

Correspondence

Sent: 22 February 2017 10:35

Subject: Re zoning of secondary catchment

Dear Sir,

Following the consultation by Moray Council regarding the rezoning of Secondary catchment areas in particular those that concern Cullen Primary School pupils. I would like to express how glad I would be personally as a mother of four who live in the Deskford area if the change of boundary was implemented. I have neices and nephews who have or are currently at Buckie High and would like the opportunity to send my children along with their peer's to the same, with provision of school transport. I do understand that we live outside the two miles from Cullen required for collection by bus but are still within the catchment area.we appreciate you giving us the opportunity to have our say and would fully agree with the change proposed.

Regards

Sent: 08 March 2017 13:57

Subject: Cullen Catchment Area Secondary School Rezoning 2017

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing on behalf of Deskford Community Association with regard to the consultation on the proposal to rezone the secondary school catchment area for pupils attending Cullen Primary School - a subject discussed at the recent committee meeting of Deskford Community Association. Members of the Association and its committee include the parents of children directly affected by the rezoning issues. All primary school aged children living in Deskford currently attend Cullen Primary School and then move onto Keith Grammar School. It is usually the case that one or two pupils each year complete the transition to Keith Grammar School while the rest of their contemporaries move to Buckie High School, a situation that can understandably lead to a range of problems - including isolation - for those children. We believe that moving to Buckie High School along with their peers would be far more beneficial to the children from our community.

In our view a move to the same secondary school for all children from Cullen Primary will lead to very positive outcomes. Both schools will be able to concentrate on working more closely together in order to ensure a smooth transition process for *all* pupils; it will help to establish and build upon the inter school channels of communication particularly with regard to the curriculum, issues relating to individual pupils, staff development opportunities and opportunities for parental involvement and community cohesion.

We wholeheartedly support this proposal and trust that you will take these views into account as part of the consultation process. We look forward to a positive outcome for the children living in Deskford and for all pupil attending Cullen Primary School.

Yours sincerely,
Secretary
Deskford Community Association

9th March 2017

To whom it may concern,

I write regarding the consultation on the proposal to rezone the secondary school catchment area for pupils attending Cullen Primary School. I am a parent of two children who are directly affected by the proposal and wish to give my view.

I feel that the proposal to move the boundary line between Buckie High School and Keith Grammar School catchment areas would be extremely beneficial for the few pupils it would affect. Cullen Primary school is part of Buckie High School ASG (Associated Schools Group) and has a close partnership in many areas –

- Schools in the ASG agree to similar curriculum development and practice. This ensures that learners transitioning to secondary school begin together from a more equal baseline. I feel it is extremely important for children to progress naturally in their learning, without the need for ‘catching up’ or ‘starting from scratch’. Absence of curriculum continuity would be detrimental to learning, confidence and self-esteem.
- I think the transition process from Cullen to Buckie is far better than from Cullen to Keith. The pupils moving to Keith only get a couple days visit to experience life in Keith Grammar whereas pupils moving to Buckie have visits from Buckie guidance staff, talks from previous pupils, many days in Buckie High and the chance to attend a P7 drop-in club where the children play games and sports, try crafts and activities and most importantly, they meet and mix with children who will become their classmates.
- The children of Cullen Primary have the chance to make friends with future classmates through ASG partnership opportunities such as cricket, rugby, cross-country and orienteering tournaments; library and Euro quizzes; science and music festivals. Quite often the ASG schools will share buses to attend these events, further strengthening the educational and social bond.

On a more personal note, I believe that the proposal to move the boundary will support greater wellbeing for our children. I was recently involved in a discussion with children from another school about school values and aims, and although learning was high on their list, ‘seeing their friends’ was the top priority for the children. They said it helped them to be ‘happy, be included and feel better about themselves’.

The social and emotional state of our children impacts greatly on their ability to learn and develop skills for life. To allow the Deskford children the chance to go to Buckie High School with their friends and peers would continue the achievements, strengths and skills built up during their time in Cullen Primary - confidence, self-awareness, motivation and values, to name a few.

I also believe ‘country’ children generally feel more isolated than ‘town’ children who have greater opportunity to mix with friends out with school. Sending a country child, *alone*, into unfamiliar territory would surely intensify this feeling and present setbacks.

Over 35 years ago, I experienced the exact same transition of moving from Cullen Primary School to Keith Grammar School. I clearly remember how hard it was and think this rezoning proposal is well over due.

I have read the proposal paper, attended school and public meeting regarding the proposal, and wish to state that I fully support the Cullen Catchment Area Secondary School Rezoning Proposal.

Regards,

Social Media

No correspondence received

Survey Monkey Comments

- On behalf of KGSPC, I'd like to state that we are opposed to this proposal as it will have a detrimental effect on the Keith Grammar School roll. Subsequently, in real terms, this could reduce the number of teaching staff employed at KGS which could then have a detrimental effect on the education of all pupils who attend KGS. Here are our alternative suggestions: 1.) Continue with present split zoning arrangements, 2.) Primary School pupils, who live in the current KGS catchment area, but who attend, or in the near future are likely to attend, Cullen Primary to be provided with a placement in a primary school associated with KGS. 3.) All Cullen pupils being zoned to KGS.
- I am a parent of 3 children in the affected area proposed for rezoning. I believe the boundary line should be amended to allow all Cullen Primary School pupils to be zoned for Buckie High School
- None, very happy with the proposal and have understood the information given as I still have a child attending Keith Grammar

Stakeholder Responses

Buckie High School

Buckie High School head teacher undertook a consultation process with the following stakeholders:

- Pupils
- Staff

There were no concerns or comments raised.

Keith Grammar School

Keith Grammar School head teacher undertook a consultation process with the following stakeholders:

- Pupils
- Staff

The following concerns/comments were raised:

- Feeling that areas affected had more in common with KGS catchment than BHS around rural/land-based employment and heritage.
- Increased likelihood of these remaining children choosing to go to Buckie and having to incur travel costs leaving those unable to afford this disadvantaged
- Impact of loss of numbers from already low roll on ability to deliver curriculum due to loss of funding/staff numbers
- Impact on remaining Cullen pupils zoned to Keith even greater than that deemed to be sufficient reason for considering change.
- Pupils who would have been affected – former Cullen pupils
- Leaving smaller split zone means those still coming to KGS even more adversely affected
- Increased likelihood of these remaining children choosing to go to Buckie reducing KGS numbers even further and possibly reducing staffing and subjects offered affecting all KGS pupils
- Deskford/Berryhillock areas have more in common with Drummuir/Mulben/Grange than areas around Buckie concerning rural background and planned careers.
- Prefer to leave alone or move boundary closer to Cullen meaning larger proportion come to Keith or if really needed change all of Cullen to BHS.

Pupil Council comments 'in favour':

- Less people at KGS – smaller classes and queues
- Less travel arrangements/cost for the council and people paying taxes

Pupil Council comments 'against'

- Less people in school so less people to go forward for teams
- Small classes aren't always good – e.g. discussions
- Less money for school as less pupils
- Buckie is already a big school – why do they need more pupils?
- Should be up to pupils/parents to choose either
- Why would you want to change it anyway – is it needed – why bothering?
- Would understand if Keith was over-populated but it isn't. Is Buckie/Buckie High not big enough?
- Why does the boundary not move the other way (more people to Keith)? Why away from Keith?

All were unanimous that the status quo should remain.

Cullen Primary School

Cullen Primary School head teacher undertook a consultation process with the following stakeholders:

- Pupils
- Staff

The following concerns/comments were raised:

Head teacher response:

I write with regard to the proposed re-zoning of the Secondary Catchment Area for Cullen Primary School.

I have listened to the many conversations and consultations involving the pupils, parents and staff of Cullen Primary School on the proposal. To their credit, it was clear during the informal consultation that parents who were not directly affected by the proposal, did not wish to be giving an opinion if this were different from the views of those directly affected. As the consultation has become more formal, it has evident that all of the families affected wish the proposal to go ahead and as a school this is the general consensus.

I helped support the Chair Person of the School Council at a joint meeting of the council with the children from the Deskford area who would be directly affected. I was most impressed by their thinking which clearly articulated a positive reaction to the proposal. This group jointly made comments and confirmed some of the evidence I have gathered as well as putting forward ideas which were not considered by parents.

In particular, I should like to highlight the following:-

- By P7, the children are in well-established friendship groups and children wish to transfer to secondary education supported by these or at the very least know that there were a number of people they knew going to the same school. Most children have been together since the age of three and going to nursery.
- The children have a fairly good knowledge of the geographical location of Buckie High School as already they go to the swimming pool and have had several events held at the location e.g. concerts in the Highfield Hall, library visits, Basketball Tournament and other sporting events.
- There is a well-established transition programme for Buckie High School which has been compared by the children to a more limited plan for Keith Grammar School. This includes a drop-in at Buckie Community High School which operates from January of the transfer year and a clear set of three well-structured induction days. They also get several visits from Guidance Staff and former pupils sharing information.
- The children perceive the road to be safer to Buckie especially in the winter time as the higher terrain and narrow road can be tricky going to Keith. Fortunately, the occasions of school closure are few, but potentially, they are greater for Keith than Buckie. There is a lot of traffic in both towns but the children say they feel safer going to Buckie. The distance of travel would certainly be less. There is also public transport operating from Cullen to Buckie which would also support after school pick up when children attend after-school activities.
- The curricular transitions for pupils are more in line with Buckie High School as Cullen participates in the joint CPD and other developments for staff e.g. 1+2, Numeracy and Literacy.

- The children have clearly articulated their views about this proposal and I am in no doubt their preference is Buckie.
- For later in their education careers, at the present time, I believe the course options are greater at Buckie than Keith, probably due to the fact it is a larger school.
- Whilst it has never been an issue, it is not possible for me, as HT, to attend meetings for both Keith and Buckie ASG and as a result I only attend the Buckie one now. This has changed over the years. Initially I attended a few at Keith and was well informed by the group but over the years, this has reduced considerably in line with the reduced number of children transferring to Keith.

Pupil response:

The School Council and the children from the Deskford area would like you to consider their thoughts.

- There would be more of our friends going to Buckie Community High School and so we would know people and what they like to do.
- We have a better knowledge of Buckie and getting around rather than Keith Grammar School (places as well as school).
- We have a better knowledge of the building in Buckie because we already go to swimming lessons at Buckie pool.
- P7s get to go to a drop-in at Buckie Community High School to help with getting to know people.
- There are good visits to Buckie High School for P7-S1

We also think that:-

- Roads safer in Buckie. There's a lot of traffic in both but feel Buckie is safer.
- In winter, Keith is up higher and it gets icy and the roads are icy.
- There are places to wait for parents if they are late in Buckie High School.
- P7s already know the information about learning because they have heard about it at drop-ins and visits to the school.
- There are lots of trips offered at Buckie High School eg going to Barcelona.
- Induction days are longer at Buckie High School.
- Children know people already at Buckie High School and they might help them.

All the P7s are going to Buckie High School this year and last because some people have chosen to go there. Here are some quotes from the children who live in the area where there could be a change.

xxxx – “I have one brother who went to Keith but he is leaving. I have another who will help me at Buckie High School”.

xxxx – “I am really shy and I wouldn't want to go along to Keith Grammar School”.

xxxx –“There’s not a down side to going to Buckie Community High School”

“I just want to go to Buckie High School”.

We have most confidence in Buckie and everyone would like to go there.
