



Falkirk Council
Children's Services

Email: educ.consultation@falkirk.gov.uk
Telephone: 01324 506600
Date: 16th September 2024

For the attention of:

- Parents and carers of all primary and nursery age pupils living in the catchment areas of Blackness and Grange Primary Schools
- Blackness and Grange Primary School Parent Councils
- School staff and trade unions at both schools
- Blackness and Bo'ness Community Councils
- Blackness Community Hall Management Committee
- All other households in the Blackness Primary School catchment area
- Elected Members of Falkirk Council
- MSPs for the area
- The constituency MP
- West Lothian Council
- The Community Planning Partnership

Dear Sir/ Madam

Statutory Consultation notice – Proposal to close Blackness Primary School and rezone the catchment area to Grange Primary School

Falkirk Council is consulting on a proposal to close Blackness Primary School and rezone its catchment area to Grange Primary School.

This notice provides a summary of the proposal: it is a requirement for you to be notified of the consultation as a consultee, in accordance with Schedule 2 Section 1 of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended. A full copy of the Proposal Document is also attached to this notice.

Falkirk Council is conducting a public consultation from **Monday 16th September to Friday 8th November 2024**. During this period, you will be able to make representation to Falkirk Council in respect of the proposal.

It is important that everyone we are consulting tells us what they think about the proposal. Please read this notice and summary and then consider the contents of the proposal document. You can then tell us what you think of the proposal by making written representation and/or by attending the public or online meeting. This notice and summary tell you how to do that.

Director: Jon Reid

Falkirk Community Stadium
4 Stadium Way
Falkirk
FK2 9EE
01324 506600

director.childrenservices@falkirk.gov.uk
www.falkirk.gov.uk

We will consult by:

- Providing a Notice of the consultation and a summary of the proposal to the relevant consultees (this is that Notice and summary).
- Publication of the Proposal Document
- Placing an advert in the local press advertising the consultation
- Placing information on our website – <https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/council-democracy/consultations-surveys>
- Putting information on our consultation hub <https://participateplus.falkirk.gov.uk>
- Holding a public meeting to explain the proposal
- Holding an online public meeting to explain the proposal
- Asking all consultees to tell us what they think of the proposal

A full copy of the proposal document is available:

- On our website at <https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/council-democracy/consultations-surveys>
- By written request, free of charge, to educ.consultation@falkirk.gov.uk or Falkirk Council, Children's Service, Suite 1A, Falkirk Community Stadium, 4 Stadium Way, Grangemouth, FK2 9EE
- In printed form free of charge at Blackness Primary School, Grange Primary School and Bo'ness Library

The Proposal

Falkirk Council is proposing that:

- Provision of a school at Blackness Primary School be permanently discontinued with effect from 27 June 2025, or as soon as possible thereafter;
- The pupils of Blackness Primary School catchment area permanently receive their education at Grange Primary School, from 30 June 2025 or as soon as possible thereafter;
- The delineated catchment area of Grange Primary School be permanently extended to include the whole delineated catchment area of Blackness Primary School from 30 June 2025; and
- All non-catchment Placing Request pupils currently enrolled at Blackness Primary School will be automatically enrolled at their catchment primary school if they live in the Falkirk Council area. Pupils living out with the Falkirk Council area will require a placing request to transfer to another Falkirk Council school

Reasons for this Proposal

This is being proposed for the following reasons:

- The current catchment school roll is 10 pupils and has remained at or below this level since 2018;
- The catchment roll is projected to rise to 13 in 2027/28 and then start to decline;

- The mothballing proposal previously considered in 2022 was opposed by parents. Statutory guidance advises that where this is the case, a statutory consultation process on closure is most appropriate.

Falkirk Council, as an Education Authority is required to secure adequate and efficient provision of school education (Section 1 of the Education Act 1980); and to endeavour to secure improvement in the quality of school education in schools that are managed by them (Section 3 of the Standards in Scotland's Schools Act 2000). This is reflected in the [Falkirk Council Plan 2021-2030 priority: "Promoting opportunities and educational attainment and reducing inequalities"](#)

Alternatives to the Proposal

A range of possible alternative options to permanent closure are set out in the proposal paper. Those are:

- Option 1 - Open nursery provision in Blackness Primary School
- Option 2 - Increase occupancy through rezoning and extending the catchment area of Blackness Primary School
- Option 3 - Reallocate available capacity in Blackness Primary School for other purposes
- Option 4 - Mothball Blackness Primary School
- Option 5 - To keep Blackness Primary School open

After assessment of these options, the Council does not consider that those alternatives included in the proposal document are reasonable alternatives to the closure of Blackness Primary School. You can make written representations on the proposal and on the alternatives that are included within the proposal paper. If you consider there are other alternatives to the proposal you can include those in your representations on the proposal.

A **public meeting** has been arranged:

- Blackness Primary School/Community Hall on Tuesday 1st October 2024 at 6:30pm.
- Online meeting option on Thursday 10 October 2024 at 6.30pm. The link to join the meeting online will be published on <https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/council-democracy/consultations-surveys/>

These meetings are open to all interested parties. At the meetings, council officers will give a presentation of the proposal, answer questions on it and record the oral representations of anyone who attends.

Representations to the Proposal

This summary and the Proposal Document advise how you can make representation to this consultation process. You are invited to have your say on this proposal. The Council is seeking your representations to be made on the following:

- The proposal;
- Alternatives to the proposal as listed above; and
- Suggestions of other alternatives.

You can attend either public meeting and/ or you can make written representations.

- On-line: <https://participateplus.falkirk.gov.uk>
- By email to: educ.consultation@falkirk.gov.uk.
- By Letter to: Blackness Primary School Consultation, Falkirk Council Children's Services, Suite 1A, Falkirk Community Stadium, 4 Stadium Way, Falkirk, FK2 9EE

Respondents should state the capacity in which they are expressing their views and agree to their statement/comments being published as part of the Statutory Consultation process and published in the final Consultation Report (all other personal information will be redacted).

Falkirk Council is seeking your views on the proposal during the consultation period, it does not assume that the proposal will go ahead. All points raised during the consultation period will be included in the final consultation paper before finally being presented to Elected Members where a decision will be taken as to the outcome of this process.

What to do now

- Please read the full proposal document attached.
- You are invited to attend either of the public meetings which will be held at Blackness Primary School/Community Hall on Tuesday 1st October 2024 at 6.30pm or the online meeting option will also be held for anyone who wants to attend on Thursday 10 October 2024 at 6.30pm. The link to join the meeting online will be published on <https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/council-democracy/consultations-surveys/>.
- All responses must be made online, or in writing by Friday 8th November 2024.

After the consultation period

When the proposal document is published, a copy will also be sent to Education Scotland by the Education Authority. Education Scotland will also receive a copy of any relevant written representations received by the Authority from any person during the consultation period or, if Education Scotland agree, a summary of them. Education Scotland will further receive a summary of any oral representations made to the Local Authority at the public meeting which will be held and, as available (and so far, as otherwise practicable), a copy of any other relevant documentation.

Education Scotland will then prepare a report on the educational aspects of the proposal not later than 3 weeks after the Authority has sent them all representations and documents mentioned above. For the avoidance of doubt, the 3-week period will not start until after the consultation period has ended. In preparing their report, Education Scotland may enter the affected schools and make such reasonable enquiries of such people they consider appropriate and may make such reasonable enquiries as they consider appropriate.

Falkirk Council – the Education Authority will review the proposal having regard to the Education Scotland Report, written representations that it has received, and oral representations made to it by any person at the public meeting. It will then prepare a consultation report. This report will be published in electronic and printed formats. It will be available from the Council website and from Children’s Services, Suite 1A, Falkirk Community Stadium, 4 Stadium Way, Falkirk, FK2 9EE free of charge. Anyone who made written representations to the Authority during the consultation period will also be informed about the report.

The report will include:

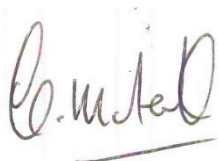
- A record of the total number of written representations made to the Authority during the consultation period.
- A summary of the written representations.
- A summary of the oral representations made at the public meeting.
- The Authority’s response to the Education Scotland Report as well as any written or oral representations it has received, together with a copy of the Education Scotland Report and any other relevant information, including detail of any alleged inaccuracies and how these have been handled; and
- A statement explaining how the Authority complied with the requirement to review the proposal in light of the Education Scotland Report and representations (both written and oral) that it received.

The consultation report will be published and available for further consideration for a period of at least 3 weeks.

This report together with any other relevant documentation, will be considered by the Executive (Education) of Falkirk Council, who will come to a decision about whether to implement the proposal.

If the proposal goes ahead, any children from Blackness Primary School catchment area would be educated at Grange Primary School.

Yours faithfully,



Kenneth McNeill
Children’s Services Resources Manager