



## **Proposal Paper**

### **Relocation of Walker Road School**

**And**

### **Alteration of Existing Catchment Areas for Walker Road School and Tullos School**

Statutory Consultation Period

**Monday 5 December 2022 to Tuesday 31 January 2023 (inclusive)**

The schools affected by these proposals are:

**Walker Road School  
Tullos School**

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# 1. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

## *What is this document about?*

- 1.1 This document explains some changes which are being proposed by Aberdeen City Council, which would affect Walker Road School and Tullos School. The Council is proposing to move Walker Road School from its current building, to the new school and community hub building which has been constructed at Tullos Circle in Torry, Aberdeen. This change would take effect from August 2023.
- 1.2 In addition, some changes to the school catchment areas for Walker Road School and Tullos School are being proposed, so that it is clear which school children can attend.
- 1.3 Before a decision is taken on whether to make any changes, the Council wishes to hear the views of pupils, parents, staff and other stakeholders who may be affected by the changes.
- 1.4 A public consultation has therefore been launched, so that members of the public can give their views about the proposed changes, before a decision is taken on whether the changes should go ahead.
- 1.5 The public consultation will be open from Monday 5 December 2022 until Tuesday 31 January 2023, and views and comments about the proposals can be submitted at any time during this period.
- 1.6 You can submit your views online, using the Council's consultation hub, which can be accessed from <https://consultation.aberdeencity.gov.uk>. You can also send your comments by email, to: [schoolestate@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:schoolestate@aberdeencity.gov.uk)
- 1.7 A public consultation meeting will be held on Wednesday 18 January 2023, from 7.00pm to 8.00pm at Walker Road School. The meeting is open to anyone who wishes to ask questions of Council officers and/or express their views about the proposals.
- 1.8 All of the comments and views received during the consultation period will be summarised and included in a final consultation report, which will be submitted to the Council's Education and Children's Services Committee at its meeting on 21 March 2023. Members of the Committee will consider all of the comments submitted before making a decision on whether the proposed changes should go ahead.
- 1.9 The full details of the proposals, including maps to show the proposed changes to the school catchment areas, are provided in the sections below.

## 2. LIST OF CONSULTEES

### *Who has been asked to comment on these proposals?*

Notice of the consultation and a copy of this Proposal Document will be provided to:

- The Parent Councils of the affected schools
- The parents of the pupils at the affected schools
- The parents of children expected to attend an affected school within 2 years of the date of publication of this Proposal Document
- The pupils at the affected schools
- The teaching and support staff at the affected schools
- The trade unions representatives of the above staff
- The Community Councils for the areas affected
- The constituency MSPs
- Regional MSPs for the area
- The Constituency MPs
- Community Planning Partnership Board
- Chief Education Officer, Aberdeen City Council

A copy of this Proposal Document is available on the Aberdeen City Council website at [www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/schoolsconsultations](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/schoolsconsultations).

The document is available in alternative formats or in translated form for readers whose first language is not English. Please apply to Corporate Landlord, Marischal College, Broad Street, Aberdeen, AB10 1AB, by telephone on 01224 045101; or by e-mail: [schoolestate@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:schoolestate@aberdeencity.gov.uk)

## 3. BACKGROUND

### *Why are these changes being proposed?*

- 3.1 Aberdeen City Council has created a School Estate Plan, which was approved by the Council's Education Operational Delivery Committee in September 2022. This sets out the actions that the Council wishes to take to develop the school estate over the next ten years and beyond.
- 3.2 Aberdeen City Council's vision is for our buildings and grounds to be used to deliver highly effective learning experiences and to support pupil, staff and community wellbeing. Across Aberdeen City, we will make the best use of our facilities to support the learning needs of all. As a result, our facilities will help to ensure each and every learner has the opportunity to attain and achieve a wide range of qualifications and develop the skills for life, learning and work.
- 3.3 We want to make sure that the school estate can provide:
- sufficient capacity to meet current and future demand for school places;
  - safe, nurturing and inclusive environments for all;
  - stimulating and inspiring learning environments which encourage curiosity and a commitment to lifelong learning;

- flexible and adaptable spaces which can respond to the changing needs of pupils and communities;
  - buildings which are environmentally and economically sustainable;
  - appropriate multi-agency spaces to support close partnership working.
- 3.4 To achieve this vision we need to make some changes to parts of our school estate, and when proposing changes to the way our schools are organised, it is important that we gather the views of the pupils, parents, staff and other stakeholders who may be affected, before a decision is taken on whether to make any changes.
- 3.5 This document sets out some proposed changes which would affect Walker Road School and Tullos School, and it explains how members of the public can share their views about the proposals.

## 4. THE PROPOSALS

### *What are the proposed changes?*

Aberdeen City Council is proposing:

- **To relocate the existing Walker Road School to a new primary school building at Tullos Circle, Aberdeen, with effect from 1 August 2023, or as soon as possible thereafter**

Further:

- **To alter the school catchment area for Walker Road School, so that all houses which are north of Balnagask Road and west of Mansfield Road are permanently included within the Walker Road School catchment area, with effect from 1 August 2023**

Further:

- **To alter the school catchment area for Tullos School, so that all houses which are north of Balnagask Road and east of Mansfield Road, and the area of land to the north and east of St Fittick's Road, are permanently included within the Tullos School catchment area, with effect from 1 August 2023**

- 4.1 The Council is proposing to relocate the current Walker Road School to the new school building which is currently under construction on the site of the former Torry Academy, at Tullos Circle, Aberdeen.
- 4.2 When the decision was taken in early 2017 to build a new primary school and community hub at Tullos Circle, it was thought that planned new housing development in the area would lead to the need for a third primary school to serve the community of Torry, and so the new building was planned to operate alongside the existing Walker Road School and Tullos School, as a separate primary school and community hub.
- 4.3 The Council regularly carries out a school roll forecasting exercise, to predict future changes in pupil numbers at each of the schools in the city, and to help ensure that schools will have enough space to accommodate the numbers of pupils expected to be living within

their catchment areas in future years. The latest school roll forecast indicates that there will no longer be a need for three primary schools in Torry, and that two schools will be sufficient for the number of pupils expected to be living in Torry for the foreseeable future.

- 4.4 This means that there is an opportunity for Walker Road School to benefit from the modern facilities offered by the new school building, by moving the school to the new site. The Victorian design and layout of the existing Walker Road School building present challenges for effective modern curriculum delivery, and space for outdoor learning is also very limited. Relocating to the new site would remove these challenges, as the new school building would provide a fit for purpose learning environment which would support effective curriculum delivery.
- 4.5 School places in Aberdeen City are allocated according to catchment areas, commonly referred to as 'zones'. Children whose home address falls within the Walker Road School catchment area, are entitled to attend Walker Road School, and children who live within the Tullos School catchment area are entitled to a place at Tullos School.
- 4.6 To prepare for the opening of a third primary school in Torry, changes were made in 2020 to the school catchment areas for Walker Road School and Tullos School, and a new catchment area was created, so that it would be clear which children in Torry would be entitled to attend the new school when it opened. Temporary arrangements were then put in place for children living within this new catchment area, to attend either Walker Road School or Tullos School, until the new school was open. The current catchment areas and the temporary arrangements currently in place are shown in Map A, at Appendix 1 of this document (see below).
- 4.7 If the proposal to move Walker Road School to the new building, instead of opening a new third primary school, is accepted, there will be no longer be a need for the separate catchment area which was created in 2020. It is therefore also proposed that further changes are made to the primary school catchment areas in Torry, so that the recently created catchment area is removed, and all areas of Torry remain permanently within the catchment areas for either Walker Road School or Tullos School. The proposed revised catchment areas for the two schools are shown in Map B, at Appendix 1 below.
- 4.8 The new school building is expected to be completed in 2023, and so it is proposed that Walker Road School should relocate to the new building in time for the start of the new school session in August 2023, or as soon as possible after that.

## 5. THE AFFECTED SCHOOLS

### *How would the changes affect each of the schools involved?*

#### **Walker Road School**

- 5.1 The table below shows the estimated numbers of pupils expected to be attending Walker Road School in the future, based on the most recently available school roll forecast.

| Year                          | 2023       | 2024       | 2025       | 2026       | 2027       | 2028       |
|-------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| <i>Forecast Pupil Numbers</i> | <b>308</b> | <b>302</b> | <b>304</b> | <b>315</b> | <b>297</b> | <b>290</b> |

- 5.2 As shown in the maps at Appendix 1 below, it is proposed that the school catchment areas in Torry are changed, so that part of the catchment area created in 2020 for the new school

building, covering the area north of Balnagask Road and west of Mansfield Road, is moved back to the Walker Road School catchment area.

- 5.3 There is already a temporary arrangement in place for any children living in this area to attend Walker Road School, and these children are included in the above forecast pupil numbers. This means that the proposed permanent changes to the school catchment areas would have no impact on any existing pupils, as they are already entitled to attend Walker Road School, and there would be no change to the above forecast pupil numbers for the school.
- 5.4 The existing Walker Road School building has space for a maximum 434 pupils, and the new school building at Tullos Circle will also have capacity for 434 pupils, so if the proposal to relocate the school to the new building is accepted, there would be no impact on the space available at the school.
- 5.5 The nursery at the existing Walker Road School has space for 60 children. The new school building at Tullos Circle includes a nursery with capacity for up to 100 children, so if the move to the new building goes ahead, there would be additional space at the school for early learning and childcare provision in the future.
- 5.6 It is acknowledged that if the proposed move to the new building at Tullos Circle is to go ahead, then the name of the school may need to be reviewed, given that the school would no longer be located at Walker Road. Keeping the Walker Road name may cause some confusion in the future, for anyone who is trying to find the school for the first time. If the proposed move to the new building is agreed, then Council officers would work closely with the school to gather the views of pupils, staff and the wider school community, on what the school should be called in the future.

### **Tullos School**

- 5.7 The table below shows the estimated numbers of pupils expected to be attending Tullos School in the future, based on the most recently available school roll forecast.

| <i>Year</i>                   | 2023       | 2024       | 2025       | 2026       | 2027       | 2028       |
|-------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| <i>Forecast Pupil Numbers</i> | <b>367</b> | <b>386</b> | <b>385</b> | <b>380</b> | <b>366</b> | <b>324</b> |

- 5.8 The pupil capacity of Tullos School is **367**. The forecast indicates that pupil numbers may be slightly higher than this capacity between 2024 and 2026, and if this happens, then temporary arrangements will be put in place as required to ensure there is enough space available to accommodate all pupils at the school. From 2027, pupil numbers are expected to begin to fall again.
- 5.9 As shown in the maps within Appendix 1 of this document (below), it is proposed that the school catchment areas in Torry are changed, so that part of the catchment area created in 2020 for the new school building, covering the area north of Balnagask Road and east of Mansfield Road, and also the area which is north and east of St Fittick's Road, are instead moved back to the Tullos School catchment area.
- 5.10 There is already a temporary arrangement in place for any children living in these areas to attend Tullos School, and these children are included in the above forecast pupil numbers. This means that the proposed permanent changes to the school catchment areas would have no impact on any existing pupils, as they are already entitled to attend Tullos School, and there would be no change to the above forecast pupil numbers for the school.

## 6. EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS

### *How would the proposed changes benefit pupils?*

6.1 The above proposals would realise the following educational benefits for the affected schools:

- Pupils at Walker Road School would benefit from a purpose-built school for both primary and early learning and childcare. This would provide a much-improved environment for the delivery of Curriculum for Excellence, resulting in improved outcomes for learners. A new build school would offer spaces in which practitioners could plan for and deliver a wide and flexible range of learning opportunities, including greater opportunities to participate in outdoor learning which has well documented benefits to both learning outcomes and the wellbeing of children and young people.
- There would be increased outdoor space and enhanced facilities for staff, pupils, parents and the local community.
- Walker Road pupils would benefit from the improved early learning and childcare facilities on site, in particular the purpose built ELC facilities with provision for freeflow to the outdoor learning environment. This would provide our youngest learners with opportunities to lead their own learning which are not currently available to them.
- The new school would provide an optimum learning environment for all children while the improved facilities within the building would enable the school to make use of a variety of spaces and approaches to support children who require a greater level of personalisation to meet their additional support needs.
- An improved learning environment is likely to raise staff and pupil morale and improved facilities for parents/carers will enable staff to further develop parental engagement with their children's learning and involvement in the life and work of the school. This would benefit the whole school community and result in better outcomes for learners.
- Improved outdoor learning spaces, compared to the current provision which has very limited outdoor space. The new site would provide improved access to enhanced outdoor play spaces and PE facilities to promote health, fitness and wellbeing, as well as better opportunities for outdoor curricular learning and social interaction, leading to improved mental health.
- The proposed changes to school catchment areas would provide clarity on the future arrangements for school enrolment at Walker Road School and Tullos School, which would help remove any anxiety for parents and pupils in securing a school placement and therefore support the health and wellbeing of children and families.



## 7. THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

### *How will the consultation work and how can I submit my views?*

#### **The Proposal Paper**

- 7.1 A copy of this proposal paper and other information about this consultation can be accessed from: [www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/schoolsconsultations](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/schoolsconsultations)
- 7.2 A copy of this document will also be available for public viewing during the period of consultation in the following buildings:

Marischal College  
Central Library  
Torry Library  
Walker Road School  
Tullos School

#### **Public Meeting**

- 7.3 A public meeting to discuss the proposals will take place on:  
Wednesday 18 January 2023, from 7.00pm to 8.00pm at Walker Road School.

#### **Submitting Your Views**

- 7.4 Any members of the public can respond to the consultation online, using the Council's Consultation Hub: <https://consultation.aberdeencity.gov.uk/>

Alternatively, comments can be submitted by sending an email to:

[schoolestate@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:schoolestate@aberdeencity.gov.uk)

Or by writing to:

Walker Road School Consultation, Resources, Corporate Landlord, Aberdeen City Council, Business Hub 10, Second Floor South, Marischal College, Broad Street, ABERDEEN AB10 1AB

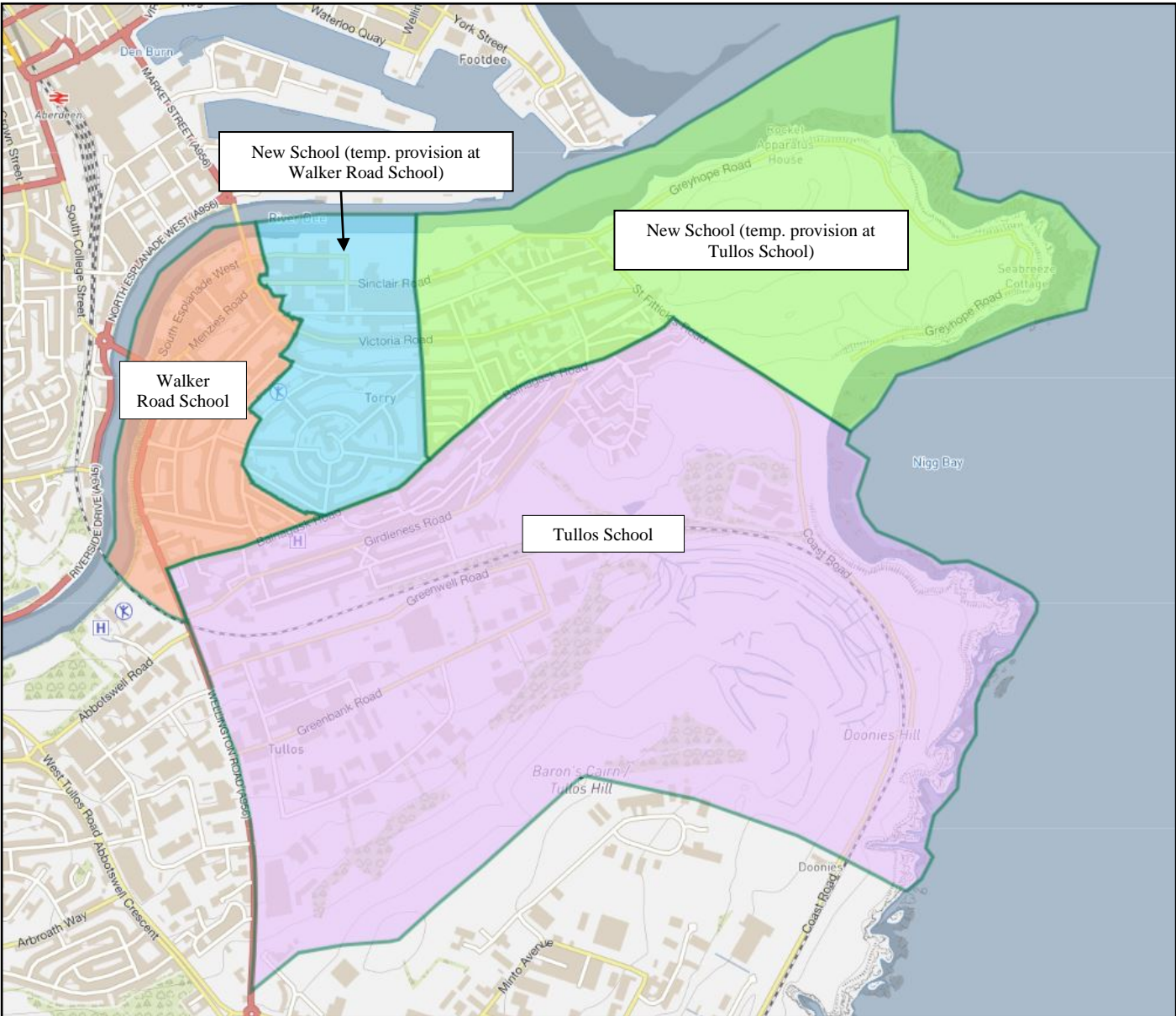
All responses must be submitted by Tuesday 31 January 2022.

#### **Reporting the Outcome of the Consultation**

- 7.5 A summary of all comments received during the consultation will be published on the council website at [www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/schoolsconsultations](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/schoolsconsultations)
- 7.6 A report on the consultation will be delivered to the Education and Children's Services Committee at its meeting on 21 March 2023. This will provide information to enable Members to make a final decision on the proposals.

Appendix 1

Map A: Current Catchment Areas for Primary Schools in Torry



Map B: Proposed catchment areas for Primary Schools in Torry

