

ANGUS COUNCIL
EDUCATION COMMITTEE
5 MARCH 2002
AMENDMENTS TO SCHOOL CAPACITIES
REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

ABSTRACT

This report recommends consultation on amended notional capacities of a small number of schools.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Education Committee:

- a notes and endorses in principle the proposed amendments to school capacities outlined in the body of this report;
- b authorises me formally to seek the views of the School Board (if a Board is established) and Head Teacher on the proposed amended notional capacity of each of the schools named in this report;
- c instructs me to report back on the outcome of these consultations in due course
- d reaffirms delegation to the Director of Education to operate school enrolments in accordance with the requirements of current legislation and specifically to operate a system of retaining a small number of reserved places (no more than 2 per year group in any primary school and no more than 6 per year group in any secondary school) in any school which may be in danger of experiencing overcrowding, all in accordance with the existing legislation.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Reference is made to the meeting of the Education Committee of 21 January 1997 when school capacities and intake limits for all Angus primary and secondary schools were last approved.
- 2.2 Since then, some improvements/alternations have taken place to a number of these schools, and it would therefore be appropriate to update the proposed notional capacity of each such school, after appropriate consultation.

3 ISSUES IN INDIVIDUAL SCHOOLS

3.1 Secondary Schools – Webster’s High School

Since 1997, the only major alterations which have taken place to secondary schools have related specifically to Webster’s High School. The recently completed (December 2001) extension to Webster’s High School was undertaken as part of a joint project which saw the construction of a brand new Southmuir Primary School on the

same site. The nett effect on classroom accommodation for Webster's High School should now allow each incoming S1 year group to be split into eight practical groups and five non-practical groups which in turn would only be possible were a maximum of 160 pupils in any one S1 year group to be enrolled.

Members may wish to note that the roll of Webster's High School has been gradually reducing since 1998 as the undernoted table demonstrates:

Year (September Census)	1998	1999	2000	2001
Roll	773	761	741	721

The current (September 2001 Census) roll profile of the school is:

Year Group	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	Total
Roll	125	117	133	140	113	93	721

If the new intake limit were to be set at 160 pupils (as opposed to the current notional maximum intake of 140 pupils) then the school capacity could be expressed as follows:

Year Group	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5*	S6*	Total
Capacity	160	160	160	160	128	96	864

* Assumes 80% staying on rate from S4 to S5 and 75% staying on rate from S5 to S6

(Note – smaller year groups in some years mean that it may be possible to accommodate S1 intakes of more than 160 pupils in other years should this prove necessary)

3.2 Primary Schools

3.2.1 *Inverbrothock Primary School*

Recent alterations mean that Inverbrothock could now function as a 14 class primary school with an intake limit of 60 pupils and a notional capacity of 444 primary pupils (6 classes of 30 (P1 to P3) and 8 classes of 33 (P3 to P7)).

3.2.2 *Ladyloan Primary School*

Recent alterations mean that Ladyloan could now function as a 14 class primary school with an intake limit of 60 pupils and a notional capacity of 444 primary pupils.

3.2.3 *Maisondieu Primary School*

Work currently being undertaken to improve Maisondieu Primary School is being carried out in the expectation that temporary accommodation which remains in use will shortly no longer be required. Once the current school improvements

have been completed and the existing temporary accommodation has been removed, the intake limit of Maisondieu Primary School should be set at 60 pupils with the school capacity set at 444 pupils.

3.2.4 *Southmuir Primary School*

As noted above, a brand new Southmuir Primary School was completed in December 2001. The design of the building enables its capacity to be amended in the future should there be any major further increase of population in the Southmuir delineated area. In the context of the school's current operating arrangements, the notional intake limit should continue to be set at 46 pupils and the capacity at 335 primary pupils.

3.2.5 *Dun Primary School*

When school capacities were last considered by the Education Committee in January 1997, the capacity of Dun Primary School was set at 50 primary pupils. This capacity was intended to reflect the fact that the school could operate with two separate classes, each with a maximum of 25 pupils. At the time, no representations were made suggesting that this capacity was inappropriate, but subsequent discussions with the Head Teacher and with the parental community suggest that perhaps the current school buildings would have difficulty in coping with as many as 50 pupils. To some extent, this discussion is academic as the school roll has never risen anywhere near the 50 pupil mark since 1997. However, it would be possible to treat Dun in the same way as a small number of other similar sized primary schools are being treated, and to set its capacity at 42 pupils (which is the equivalent maximum roll band which presently entitles a school to two teachers), and to set the intake limit accordingly at 6 pupils.

4 FACILITY TO RETAIN PLACES IN OVERCROWDED SCHOOLS IN ANTICIPATION OF NEW PUPILS MOVING INTO THE DELINEATED AREAS OF THESE SCHOOLS

The 1996 Education (Scotland) Act amended the original placing request legislation (made in 1981) by enabling an education authority (under certain circumstances) to hold some places in reserve in some schools in order to minimise the likelihood of local children being unable to attend their local school. Detailed implications of this change in legislation were reported to the Education Committee at its meeting on 21 January 1997 (Article 6 of the note of the meeting refers).

The 1996 legislation did not allow these new provisions to be applied to any primary school within two miles of another primary school (nor to any secondary school within 3 miles of another secondary school). The amended provisions within the 1996 Act, therefore, only applied at the time to some of the Council's schools.

The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act 2000 has now further extended the facility to reserve places to all primary and secondary schools (Section 44 of the 2000 Act refers).

When Angus Council first responded to the 1996 legislation, the Education Committee agreed to reserve precisely two places per stage in each primary school for which this was a legitimate approach, and between 4 and 7 places per stage for each secondary school. In the event, this facility has not had to be used other than very rarely. Nonetheless, it exists and it may be necessary at some stage in the future to make use of it. In these circumstances, it is proposed that the Education Committee should confirm:

- a that a maximum of two places per year group may be reserved in any primary school which is liable otherwise to experience overcrowding;
- b that a maximum of six places per year group may be reserved in any secondary school which is liable otherwise to experience overcrowding.

5 HUMAN RIGHTS

- 5.1 There are no Human Rights implications arising as a direct result of approving the recommendations contained in this report.

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 In accordance with the Standing Orders of the Council, this report has been the subject of consultation with the Chief Executive, the Director of Finance and the Director of Law & Administration.
- 6.2 In addition, it is proposed that consultation should now take place with the School Board (if one has been established) and the Head Teacher of each of the schools mentioned in the body of this report, in order to seek their views on the proposed amendments to capacity and intake limit.

Jim Anderson
Director of Education

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

JAA/CJ