



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

**TUESDAY 16 MARCH 2021
VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE FACILITIES**

Committee Members Present:

Councillor F Dugdale (Convener)
Councillor S Akhtar
Councillor J Findlay
Councillor A Forrest
Councillor N Gilbert
Miss G Gillan, EIS
Councillor J Henderson
Councillor W Innes
Councillor S Kempson
Councillor P McLennan
Rev G Sheridan

Council Officials Present:

Ms L Brown, Executive Director of Education and Children's Services
Ms F Brown, Principal Officer
Ms J Holland, Senior Solicitor
Mr R Parker, Service Manager – Education (Strategy and Operations)
Ms P Smith, Principal Officer (Information and Research)

Clerk:

Ms J Totney, Team Manager – Democratic and Licensing

Apologies:

Councillor J Goodfellow
Councillor C Hoy
Ms E Malcolm
Councillor J Williamson

Declarations of Interest:

None

Prior to the commencement of business, the Clerk advised that the meeting was being held remotely, in accordance with the Scottish Government's guidance on physical distancing; that the meeting would be recorded and live streamed; and that it would be made available via the Council's website as a webcast, in order to allow public access to the democratic process in East Lothian. She stated that the Council is the data controller under the Data Protection Act 2018; that data collected as part of the recording would be retained in accordance with the Council's policy on record retention; and that the webcast of the meeting would be publicly available for up to six months from the date of the meeting.

The Clerk recorded attendance of Committee Members by roll call.

Councillor Dugdale, Convener of the Education Committee, opened the meeting by thanking Councillor Akhtar for her dedication and focused hard work as Convener of the Education Committee during the previous nine years.

1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE ON 11 NOVEMBER 2020 FOR APPROVAL

The minutes of the Education Committee meeting held on 11 November 2020 were approved, subject to including the wording “all school staff” at item 2, paragraph 3.

2. RESERVING PLACES IN SCHOOLS FOR CATCHMENT PUPILS WHO MOVE INTO THE CATCHMENT AREA DURING THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2021/22

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Education and Children’s Services seeking approval to reserve places for incoming catchment pupils at the schools detailed in 2.1 of the report, for session 2021/22. The report also sought to obtain delegated authority to deal with any future changes should the number of pupils requiring a place at the school significantly increase or decrease.

Fiona Brown, Principal Officer, outlined the salient points and purpose of the report.

In response to a question from Councillor Gilbert in relation to the flexibility at Longniddry Primary school, in respect of the demand on places created by new home building, Ms F Brown explained that the capacity and reserved places were considered adequate, but could be revisited if required.

Councillor Kempson mentioned that there is a similar potential situation at East Linton Primary school, given the increase in the building of new homes. Ms F Brown commented that the school would be able to accommodate all families who move into the area.

Councillor Akhtar raised the same issue in relation to Knox Academy Secondary school, Haddington, and again Ms F Brown provided information to indicate that no capacity issues were anticipated in relation to S1 pupils.

Councillor Findlay asked if a similar exercise is taking place in relation to nursery school places to which Ms F Brown explained that legislation doesn’t cover nursery provision and that places cannot therefore be held in reserve. She also informed members that there is no catchment area for the 1140 hours offering in order to provide parents with a flexible approach to childcare and early learning.

Councillor Akhtar commented that Haddington is a great place to live and as it is experiencing significant house building it is important to manage school places for families moving into the area. She thanked all school staff in the Haddington and Lammermuir Ward for the successful return to school yesterday, and extended her thanks to include Trade Unions and all other staff involved.

Councillor Dugdale, Convener of the Education Committee, also commented on the growth in East Lothian and the importance of having local catchment places available for families.

Decision

Following a roll call vote, the committee unanimously agreed to:

- i. hold in reserve places for incoming catchment pupils for session 2021/22 as outlined in the report
- ii. delegate any changes to the number of places held in reserve to the Head of Education in consultation with the Education Convener, should the number of pupils requiring a place at the school significantly increase or decrease.

3. ROLL CAPPING IN EAST LOTHIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS – SESSION 2021/22

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Education and Children's Services seeking agreement for a maximum intake level in S1-S4 for session 2021/22 in the schools listed in the report. The report also sought to obtain delegated authority for any future changes that might be required.

Ms F Brown summarised the content and format of the report, highlighted the key background information, and explained the benefits of roll capping. She pointed out the links to the previous report and drew members' attention to the increase in the number of S1 pupils at North Berwick High School, which is now 188. She also advised that the roll cap at Know Academy, Haddington, has increased to take account of the significant number of new homes and the expected number of pupils requiring places at this school.

Councillor Henderson enquired if it was possible to quantify the impacts of private education across schools. Ms F Brown reported that the number of pupils applying to independent schools seems to have reduced and that statistics would be available in May 2021.

Councillor Akhtar stated that parent and carers in Haddington and Lammermuir Ward would be reassured by the increase across all year groups at Knox Academy and she undertook to communicate the increases to Parent Councils. She thanked Officers for the report and the work carried out to pull all the figures together.

Councillor Dugdale, Convener of the Education committee, added her thanks to all staff involved in producing the report and responding to the increased growth in East Lothian.

Decision

Following a roll call vote the committee unanimously agreed to:

- i. a maximum intake level in S1-S4 for session 2021/22 in the schools, as listed in the report at section 2.1

- ii. delegate any changes to the maximum intake level in S1 – S4 to the Head of Education in consultation with the Education Convener, should the number of pupils requiring a place at the school significantly increase or decrease.

Signed

Councillor Fiona Dugdale
Convener of the Education Committee