

**PROPOSAL TO CLOSE BURDIEHOUSE PRIMARY SCHOOL
Affecting Gracemount and Gilmerton Primary Schools and
Catchment Changes for Gracemount High School and Liberton High
School**

SUMMARY PAPER

The City of Edinburgh Council is consulting on proposals to close Burdiehouse Primary School and its associated nursery class.

This paper provides a summary of the proposals for Burdiehouse Primary. A more detailed consultation paper is available – please see the contact details at the end of this paper for more information.

Why is the Council considering school closures?

In order to ensure that the Children and Families Department estate provides best value for money, we must ensure that the number of school places is matched as efficiently as possible to school catchment numbers. The growing financial pressures on the Department's budget at a time of financial constraint with significant cuts expected in public expenditure makes it imperative that maximum value for money is obtained from the school estate and that any over-provision of school places is minimised

Edinburgh saw a fall of 6,000 pupils between 1997 and 2007: 19% of its primary school roll. As Government funding for schools is linked to the number of pupils, this means there has been a substantial relative fall in the level of central funding for education in Edinburgh. The Council has a duty to make best use of its resources by matching the number of school places to catchment numbers as closely as possible. There are around 8,600 spare places in the primary school estate which need to be addressed to ensure resources are spent where they can be most effective – on learning and teaching. The City's primary age population is expected to rise in forthcoming years, but this rise will not be uniform across the City. These proposals take account of the projected population increase.

The Council has a duty to ensure resources are targeted in the most efficient and effective way; this is not achieved by running significantly under-occupied schools. The Department has undertaken a review of the school estate to identify where excess school places could be removed and, as a result, is consulting on proposals for the closure of Burdiehouse Primary School.

The Council believes it is better to have fewer, better resourced schools than to spread resources more thinly across more buildings. Larger schools have the capacity to deliver:

- Additional staffing
- Greater flexibility in the deployment of staff to meet learning needs.
- Staff with wider expertise offering a range of learning and teaching approaches.
- Increased and wider opportunities for peer interaction amongst children.

- Flexibility in grouping children for learning and teaching.
- More appropriately-focused professional development opportunities for staff.
- Increased opportunities for sharing effective practice across a greater number of staff.
- More collaborative planning time for colleagues and other groups of staff.
- Extended and strengthened Parent Council.
- Increased options to develop leadership capacity in staff, and
- More expertise to support and challenge school improvement through larger senior management teams.

The proposal

- Burdiehouse Primary School and its associated nursery class should close in July 2010.
- All pupils would be offered places at Gracemount Primary School.
- It is estimated that the roll at Gracemount would increase by up to 127 pupils, creating a new roll of 478 pupils in 18 classes.
- Works would be undertaken at Gracemount to create a new nursery to replace the nursery places currently provided at Burdiehouse.
- The new nursery would release two additional classrooms at Gracemount for the primary school.
- Some pupils may choose to attend Gilmerton Primary School under the proposed new catchment areas.
- Catchment changes would apply to the primary schools and Gracemount and Liberton High Schools, described below.

Why Burdiehouse?

- The school has a low roll – 125 pupils at the start of the 2008/09 session.
- The school has an occupancy rate of just 41%, among the lowest in the City, with 181 spare places.
- The school roll has fallen by 14% over the last 5 years.
- Only 107 (40%) of the catchment population attend their local school, with 60% choosing other schools.
- The cost per pupil in 2008/09 was £6,076, 64% above the City average.
- Overall educational attainment is better at the proposed receiving schools.

Why Gracemount & Gilmerton?

- Gracemount and Gilmerton are the only two neighbouring schools to Burdiehouse.
- Gracemount has a large amount of spare capacity which is sufficient to accommodate the Burdiehouse roll.
- Gilmerton is well placed to accommodate parts of the Burdiehouse catchment i.e. The Murrays.
- There are already significant flows of pupils to these schools from Burdiehouse (84 to Gracemount and 13 to Gilmerton).

What catchment changes will there be?

- Gracemount Primary School catchment area would be extended to incorporate the north western part of Burdiehouse catchment.
- Gilmerton Primary School catchment area would be extended to incorporate the south eastern part of Burdiehouse catchment.
- Gracemount catchment would become very large under this proposal, so some of the existing Gracemount catchment would also be transferred to Gilmerton.

- Some of the Gracemount High School catchment area would move into Liberton High School catchment (affecting an area where 143 pupils currently live). This would only affect new pupils starting at the school – pupils already at the high schools would not be expected to move.

What road safety measures are needed?

- A new pedestrian crossing at Lasswade Road would be installed to reflect the Murrays being in the Gilmerton catchment area.

When would this happen?

- It is proposed that Burdiehouse Primary School and its associated nursery class would close in July 2010 at the end of the 2009/10 session.
- The primary catchment changes would be implemented for the August 2010 start of session, secondary school changes will depend on a decision from the Scottish Ministers.

What would happen to the school site?

- The Burdiehouse building would be demolished and the site of the building marketed for redevelopment.
- The open space surrounding the school would be retained for community use.
- It is proposed, subject to a council decision, that any funding raised from selling the site would be reinvested into upgrading Children and Families buildings.

Where can I get more information or comment on the proposals?

A copy of the full consultation paper is available on the Council's website www.edinburgh.gov.uk/cfpropertyreview; from the affected schools or on request by telephoning 0131 529 2108. During the consultation process, two public meetings will also be held where you can find out more about the proposals and express your views to representatives of the Council.

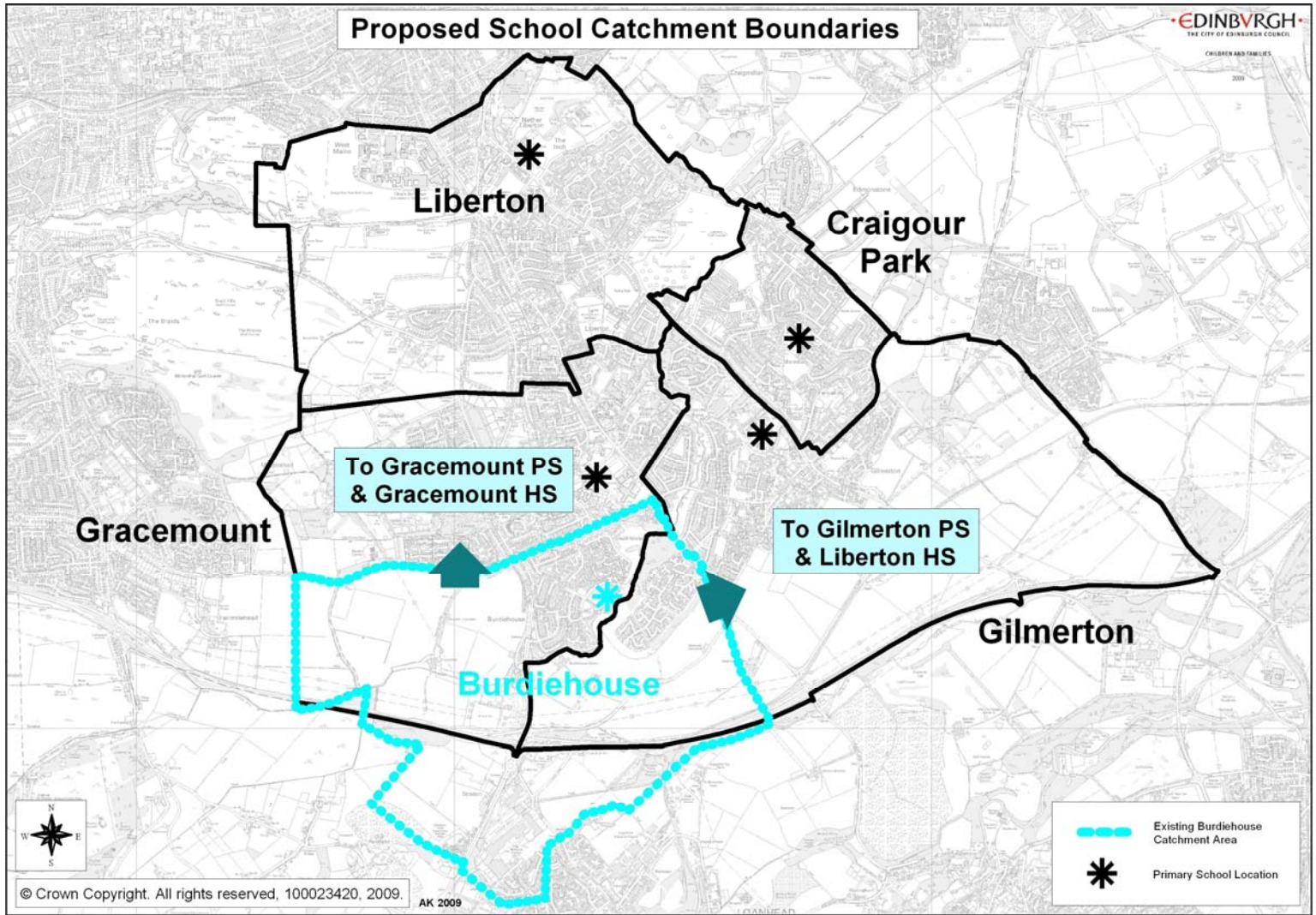
Venue	Date	Time
Burdiehouse Primary School	Monday, 5 October 2009	7 pm – 9 pm
Gracemount High School	Thursday, 8 October 2009	7 pm – 9 pm

If you require free childcare or a translator at the public meetings, please telephone 0131 529 2108 no later than 28 September 2009.

You can send your comments by email to cf.propertyreview@edinburgh.gov.uk or in writing to Gillian Tee, Director of Children and Families, City of Edinburgh Council, 1/2 Waverley Court, Edinburgh EH8 8BG. All comments must be received by close of business on **Friday 16 October 2009**.

When will a decision be taken on whether or proceed with the proposed closure?

Following the statutory consultation period, officers will consider all the points that have been raised in writing or at the public meetings and will make a final recommendation to Councillors. This report will be considered at the Council Meeting on 17 December 2009 when the final decision will be taken.



Gillian Tee
Director of Children and Families



HAPPY TO TRANSLATE

ترجمہ کے لئے حاضر آسان/پہلے سے آسان/انুবাদ کرنا
بمساعدة توفير الترجمة MOZEMY PRZETŁUMACZYĆ 很乐意翻译

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