

**EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING DIRECTORATE**



**FEBRUARY 2024**

**CONSULTATION REPORT**

**(Administrative) Closure of Hayshead Nursery and St Thomas Nursery Classes from  
August 2024**

This document has been issued by Angus Council for consultation in terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

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1. Report by Education Scotland

## 1. Purpose of the Consultation Report

In 2023 an opportunity was identified to rationalise the management structure for the two early learning and childcare (ELC) settings based at the Abbey View Campus in Arbroath. Under the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 (hereafter, "the 2010 Act") it was determined that a statutory consultation was required to ensure stakeholders were given the opportunity to express their views on the proposal.

The following pages of the Consultation Report have been prepared with regard to Section 9 of the 2010 Act.

The purpose of this report is to advise stakeholders of the outcome of the consultation exercise and provide a further opportunity for comment.

This Consultation Report will be available for inspection without charge from:

- The Engage Angus online engagement platform;
- Angus House, Forfar (Council Headquarters);
- Bruce House, Arbroath;
- Abbey View Campus Office (which serves both Hayshead and St Thomas Primary Schools).

If you require this report in another format, please contact [ELLTeam@angus.gov.uk](mailto:ELLTeam@angus.gov.uk)

The publication of the Consultation Report will be advertised on the Angus Council website and on social media platforms.

Relevant consultees will be informed directly of the publication of the report.

All interested parties are invited to read the report and, if required, make Angus Council aware of final issues or opinions regarding the decision. Feedback should be provided to the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning by email ([ELLTeam@angus.gov.uk](mailto:ELLTeam@angus.gov.uk)) or post at the following address:

Angus House  
Orchardbank Business Park  
Sylvie Way  
Forfar  
DD8 1AN

## 2. Background to the Consultation Report

In June 2023, members of the Children and Learning Committee (now known as Family, Education and Justice Committee) gave approval for the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning to formally consult on the closure of Hayshead and St Thomas nursery classes. [Report 160/23](#) refers.

A [Proposal Paper](#) was published on Monday 30 October 2023, using the Engage Angus consultation platform. Copies of the Proposal Paper were also accessible from other community locations including Angus House in Forfar, Bruce House in Arbroath and the Abbey View Campus Office.

The consultation period ran for a total of 32 school days, from 30 October 2023 to 15 December 2023.

In accordance with Section 6 of the 2010 Act, statutory and non-statutory stakeholders were formally notified of the consultation. A list of the consultees is available on Page 5. The Proposal Paper was made available for download via an electronic link in notification letters and social media messages; by means of a web address on public notices and press releases. Consultees were invited to give their views via a survey or in writing to the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning. A summary of the written representations is available from Page 6 onwards.

A staff consultation meeting was held on Wednesday 08 November 2023 at the Abbey View Campus. A summary of the oral representations is available from Page 8 onwards.

In accordance with Section 7 of the 2010 Act, one public meeting was held at the Abbey View Campus on Wednesday 08 November 2023. Advance notice of the date, time and place of the meeting was shared with the relevant consultees and HM Inspectors. There were no public attendees at this meeting. An HM Inspector attended the meeting in an observation capacity.

In accordance with Section 5 of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, no omissions or inaccuracies were reported during the consultation period.

In accordance with Section 8 of the 2010 Act, a summary of all relevant written responses and oral representations was sent to Education Scotland on 19 January 2024. It is noted that this date is approximately one month after the end of the consultation and was specifically arranged to accommodate officer availability. Angus Council received a copy of Education Scotland's report on 01 February 2024. A summary of the report is included on Page 10, and the full report is available at Appendix 1.

It is the Council's duty to review the proposal taking account of the feedback received from stakeholders during the consultation period, including the report from Education Scotland. Our response to the feedback received is detailed in the section 4.

This consultation report will be published at least three weeks before formal consideration by Family, Education and Justice Committee on 26 March 2024.

### 3. List of Consultees notified

The following people / groups were notified of the consultation: –

<b>Consultee</b>	<b>Notification Method</b>	<b>Proposal Document</b>
The parents/carers of any children attending Hayshead or St Thomas early learning and childcare (ELC) provision.	Email issued	Electronic link provided
The Parent Council of Hayshead Primary School. (Currently no Parent Council at St Thomas)	Email issued	Electronic link provided
The parents of any children expected by the education authority to attend any affected school within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper.	* See below	
Members of staff at Hayshead or St Thomas ELC.	Email issued	Electronic link provided
Trade Union Representatives	Email issued	Electronic link provided
Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE).	Email issued	Electronic link provided
Royal Burgh of Arbroath Community Council	Email issued	Electronic link provided
The Diocese of Dunkeld	Email issued	Electronic link provided
Angus Council Councillors;	Email issued	Electronic link provided
The constituency MSP	Email issued	Electronic link provided
The constituency MP	Email issued	Electronic link provided

\* There are no catchment areas associated with Angus Council ELC provision. As such, the Council does not hold accurate information about children who may attend ELC settings in future years. To address this, the consultation was publicised widely using active social media channels and the website.

## 4. Outcome of Consultation Activity

### Summary of Written Representations

#### Online Survey

A total of 19 responses were received to the online survey. A breakdown of the responses by stakeholder group is detailed in the table below:

Stakeholder Group	Percentage of Responses
Parent / carer of a child currently attending Hayshead Nursery	10.5% (2)
Parent / carer of a child currently attending St Thomas Nursery	5.3% (1)
Parent / carer of a child who may attend St Thomas Nursery in future	5.3% (1)
Parent / carer of a child who may attend Hayshead Nursery in future	0%
Member of staff at Hayshead Nursery	10.5% (2)
Member of staff at St Thomas Nursery	15.8% (3)
Other member of Angus Council staff	15.8% (3)
Member of the community (inc Community Council)	15.8% (3)
Member of religious community	21.1% (4)
Political representative (Elected Member, MP, MSP)	0%
Trade Union Representative	0%

The overall response rate is low when compared to the number of stakeholders notified about the consultation. The size of the largest groups is as follows:

Stakeholder Group	Number of Contacts
Parent / carer of a child currently attending Hayshead Nursery	95 families
Parent / carer of a child currently attending St Thomas Nursery	13 families
Member of staff at Hayshead Nursery	26
Member of staff at St Thomas Nursery	5

10 respondents (52.6%) did not agree with the proposal, 6 respondents (31.6%) did agree with the proposal and 3 respondents (15.8%) did not know.

### *Email Representations*

Two written responses were received, one supporting the proposal and one from a trade union representative expressing a preference for maintaining current arrangements.

### *Themes From Representations*

A total of 18 respondents chose to provide a comment in response to the survey. A further two comments were received by email. An analysis of the themes arising from all the written representations is as follows:

#### *Benefits identified:*

- Increased safety with one door entry.
- Formalisation of what is already in place in terms of systems and processes.
- Shared use of whole ELC space for all children.
- Joint management structure.
- No segregation due to religion.

#### *Concerns Raised and Angus Council Responses:*

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Angus Council Response to Written Representations</b>
<b>Loss of Faith emphasis</b>	ELCs are non- denominational. Links will continue to be made with children through transition work where families intend to send their child to St Thomas R.C. Primary School.  It is not possible to return to having 2 separate nurseries in different buildings.
<b>Capacity of the setting</b>	This is not linked to the consultation. The combined maximum capacity for the two existing settings is 100 children, with staffing currently allocated to accommodate 96. If the proposal is agreed, the total capacity will remain at 100.
<b>Transition for children</b>	The management team within ELC and the schools will work closely together to support high quality transitions across the year. In addition, Angus Council have worked with Head Teachers and Early Years Managers to develop new transition guidance which will support this.
<b>Concern around Abbey View not being linked to a specific</b>	If the proposal is approved, managers will work with the parents and practitioners to create a shared vision, values and aims that meet all children's needs

<b>school</b>	based on a clear curriculum rationale for the setting.
<b>Career-Long Professional Learning (CLPL) for the setting</b>	The current position is two teams which work together in one setting with two line managers, two CLPL plans, two vision, values and aims and different managers for CP, ASN support etc. As one ELC setting this would be streamlined and give clarity to staff, parents, children and all stakeholders.
<b>Budget</b>	If the proposal is approved, this will be managed by the ELC manager.
<b>Access to facilities within the building including staff rooms, meeting spaces and outdoor areas</b>	If the proposal is approved, the ELC manager will work with the Head Teachers and arrange timetabled access to facilities as required.  The ELC will also have access to wider greenspace on campus e.g. the forest.
<b>Staff room accommodation</b>	If the proposal is approved, this will be considered as part of the operational planning for the setting.

## Summary of Oral Representations

### *Public Meeting*

There were no attendees at the public meeting.

### *Staff Meeting*

The staff meeting held on 08 November 2023 and was attended by 18 Hayshead Nursery staff, 3 St Thomas Nursery Staff, the Head Teachers for both settings, the Depute Head Teacher from Hayshead Primary School, 3 senior managers from the central ELC team and a trade union representative.

Attendees received a short presentation about the proposal and were offered the opportunity to ask questions. The key themes arising from the meeting were:

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Angus Council Response to Oral Representations</b>
<b>In Angus there are two stand-alone ELC settings in Carnoustie and Forfar, is it the intention that Abbey view</b>	Yes. However, as the centre is within the Abbey View campus, this proposal will offer opportunities for transition that are not available in the two



<b>ELCC be run in a similar manner?</b>	standalone settings.
<b>Expected impact on staffing</b>	<p>If approved, the proposal will result in a reduction in staffing of 0.6FTE. School leadership roles may also need to be job-sized.</p> <p>If the proposal is approved, Angus Council's "Managing Workforce Change" processes will be followed. This will provide an opportunity for consultation with any affected staff and trade union representatives.</p>
<b>Expectations regarding 2 year-old spaces.</b>	If the proposal is approved, there are no current plans to offer places for two year-olds. This position may be reviewed in future in response to national direction.
<b>ASN Resourced Spaces</b>	If the proposal is approved, there will remain 6 resourced spaces per year, allocated through the projections process. The setting will be staffed accordingly.
<b>Emotional impact on staff</b>	The change to one new setting, Abbey View, has an emotional impact on staff members, particularly where staff have worked in St Thomas or Hayshead for a significant period. This was acknowledged by Managers and staff will be supported through the transition process, if the proposal is approved.
<b>Admission processes</b>	If the proposal is approved, a range of logistics including this will be planned for. This will be done in consultation with the current leadership team.
<b>Access to facilities within the building including staff rooms, meeting spaces and outdoor areas</b>	Staff and children will continue to have access to spaces across the Abbey View campus, including staff room and meeting room space and access to the gym hall. It will be important that all staff, children and families consider the campus as a single shared space to support the needs of all children who attend

One further question was asked in relation to participation in industrial action. This has not been included here as it is not directly relevant to the consultation process.

## Summary of Report from Education Scotland

HM Inspectors agree with the education benefits outlined by Angus Council in this proposal. The new nursery and new management structure with one staff team has the potential to improve the overall delivery of the early years curriculum with better use of the space and resources. Children will benefit from enhanced opportunities to play and learn together. This can be achieved without disruption to the current cohort of children attending both nursery classes. If implemented, the council should ensure that important relationships between parents and nursery staff are maintained. Children should continue to be well supported in their transitions through strong relationships between the primary schools and nursery staff. Parents of St Thomas' Nursery wish to maintain the link their children have with St Thomas' Primary School for religious activities. The council should consider further engagement with staff and parents from St Thomas' Nursery Class and Primary School to implement this within the new setting.

### *Angus Council Response*

We are very grateful to all individuals and stakeholder groups who have taken the time to respond to the survey having carefully thought through the proposed changes to the provision and implications of this.

In planning for the future, it will be important for Angus Council to plan for the implementation of the changes. If the proposal is approved, we will prepare for this in term 4 in collaboration with the relevant stakeholders. In response to the feedback received so far, our high-level plan is as follows:

- *Appoint the manager for the ELC- to lead the setting and arrange transitions/ links with schools and liaison where relevant for Child Protection and Additional Support Needs.*
- *Agree operational arrangements with schools and building managers.*
- *Set Devolved School Management Budget and allocate clerical hours in line with the current Local Authority ELC stand-alone settings.*
- *Plan for children to engage in religious observance with St Thomas through the transition programme.*
- *Provide opportunities for staff and parents from Hayshead and St Thomas to engage and give their views on the plans.*
- *Confirm space for staff to ensure their wellbeing including: the staff base, lunch space and office arrangements.*

## 5. Review of Proposals and Next Steps

In accordance with Section 9 (1) of the 2010 Act, all written and oral representations received during the consultation, and the report by HM Inspectors, have been carefully reviewed. Responses have been provided to feedback arising from written and oral representations. One alternative option was identified in the written representations, reflecting a preference to return to two standalone school communities. This is not a viable option and the decision to bring Hayshead and St Thomas school communities together in a single campus was made following an earlier statutory consultation. No specific amendments to the proposal have been suggested. The feedback received during the consultation will inform the implementation plan if the proposal is approved. It is the view of officers that the original proposal remains the most appropriate solution.

The Family, Education and Justice Committee will consider the proposal and the outcome of the consultation on 26 March 2024.

As this proposal relates to the closure of a school or stage, if the decision of the Committee is to approve the proposal, Angus Council must then notify Scottish Ministers within six working days after taking its decision to implement a closure proposal. When doing so, a copy of the Proposal Paper and Consultation Report will be provided to Scottish Ministers. In accordance with Section 15(2) and 2(A) of the 2010 Act, Angus Council must also publish on its website the fact it has notified Scottish Ministers of this decision and the period in which consultees have the opportunity to make representations to Ministers asking for the proposal to be called in. Ministers have the power to call in proposals, but only where it appears to Ministers that the council has failed in significant regard to comply with the Act's requirements or, in coming to its decision, has failed to take account of material consideration relevant to the proposal. Ministers have up to 8 weeks from the date of the council's decision to decide whether or not to issue a call-in notice.

In accordance with Section 10 (4) of the 2010 Act, anyone wishing to make representations to the Scottish Ministers should do so within the first 3 weeks of the 8 week call in period by emailing [schoolclosure@gov.scot](mailto:schoolclosure@gov.scot)

or by letter

Scottish Government  
School Infrastructure Unit  
2A (South) Victoria Quay  
Edinburgh  
EH6 6QQ