

TRIGGER HAPPY: THE TROUBLING TREND OF PRIMARY
SCHOOL CLOSURES IN GLASGOW CITY SCHOOLS

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MAY 2010

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TRIGGER HAPPY: THE TROUBLING TREND OF PRIMARY SCHOOL CLOSURES IN GLASGOW CITY SCHOOLS

Joshua F. Koch

Abstract: This paper examines the continuing trend of school closures in Glasgow, Scotland. Particular attention will be paid to Stonedyke Primary School, which Glasgow City Council was proposing to close at the time of this research. Current statistical data and research is used to better examine the current crisis Stonedyke Primary faces. Furthermore, this paper examines past research on school closures in Scotland and Worldwide, to determine what possible solutions may be available to Stonedyke and future Scottish schools .

INTRODUCTION

A threatening wave of closures has put many Scottish primary schools throughout the country at risk. Scotland has approximately 2,128 primary schools with 35% of them occupied by less than one hundred pupils (Scottish Government, 2009). As with many countries with small rural communities, these small schools form the majority of primary schools in the major local authorities (Wilson, 2008). This is not to be unexpected, with a country whose two cities, Edinburgh & Glasgow, account for more than one-fifth of the population.

Yet Scotland, like many countries around the world, is facing a decline in enrollment in schools throughout the country. It is estimated that from 2004 to 2024 there will be a 13% decline in pupil enrollment (Georghiou, 2006). While England has faced similar issues for much of the 1980's and 1990's, this has become a relatively new area for policy concern in Scotland, but one that has spurred heated and controversial discussion. It wasn't until 2001, that the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) asked the Scottish Executive for a review of legislation regarding school closures (Georghiou, 2006). In a study conducted in 2006, 35% of the 100 small schools sampled, had declining roles. (Wilson, 2008). It is not surprising then, that since 2001 Scotland has closed 143 primary schools. It is estimated that pupil enrollment will continue to fall until 2011. (Scottish Government, 2009).

There is understandably a great concern for the changing demographics throughout Scotland. Yet both in Scotland and around the world there has been a troubling trend to close and consolidate smaller schools in order to make way for "bigger and better facilities."

This paper shall focus in particular on the closures in the Glasgow area. Glasgow alone accounts for more than 37% of Scotland's school closures since 2001 (Scottish Government, 2009). Glasgow City Council recently proposed that two primary schools be closed in the coming months. This paper shall focus on Stonedyke Primary School, one of the schools facing closure at the time of this research. In the following sections, this paper will examine the Council's logic behind closing the school, whether there are any flaws in the current proposal and whether the rationale is consistent with present research. As this problem with small school consolidation is not limited to Scotland, this paper shall also examine countries that have experienced similar issues, and outline recommendations that Scotland, and particularly Glasgow City Council, should consider as an alternative to school closures.

STONEDYKE PROPOSAL

Stonedyke Primary was constructed in 1953 and is currently rated as a Class C¹ school with an occupancy of 280. Its current role as of October 2009 was 132 with the average class size being approximately 22 pupils. Cloan Nursery School is

¹ Glasgow City Council defines Class C as "Poor- Showing major elemental defects that could be repaired."

also located within the Stonedyke building and is currently functioning at full capacity with 63 children attending in the morning and afternoon sessions. (Glasgow City, 2009).

Unfortunately, roles at the primary school have been steadily declining and current data from the council suggests that this trend will continue until 2013. In its proposal the council has recommended that Stonedyke Primary School be closed by October 2010 and that students be transferred to Langfaulds and Camstradden Primary Schools, both of which are Class A² rated schools (Glasgow City, 2009). While Langfauld’s also has declining roles, the council believes that the shift from a Class C facility (Stonedyke) to a Class A facility (Langfaulds) is more appropriate.

As with most school closures, there is a strong community opposition to the closing of Stonedyke Primary. According to results from a consultation survey distributed by Bill Kidd MSP (Appendix A), over 70% of respondents opposed the closing. Moreover, only 50% of the respondents have/had children that attend Stonedyke, which indicates a high level of community value in the primary school. The community impact of closing local schools will be discussed later in this paper.

PROPOSAL FLAWS

Glasgow City Council’s concerns are legitimate as declining roles are a serious problem during a time in which the economy and population are so variable. Despite this fact, this researcher is troubled in several aspects of the proposal concerning: declining roles, academic challenges, community impact and economic rationale. These issues will be a outlined in the following subsections.

Declining Roles

One of the biggest fears in any school system is the prospect of declining roles. Such an event is the rationale behind closing Stonedyke Primary.

Unfortunately, this problem has been exasperated by the release of the proposal and Stonedyke has seen a significant loss of pupils (Stonedyke Primary School, personal communication, 19 April 2010). According to the Glasgow City Council Education Director, Maureen McKenna, declining roles are largely due to demographics and parents having less children. Yet the Council does not tally how many children are inside a catchment area compared with how many children attend the corresponding local school (Appendix B). It is impossible to know therefore, whether parents sending their children elsewhere is a contributing factor to declining enrollment. Despite this fact the Director stated that this had little impact.

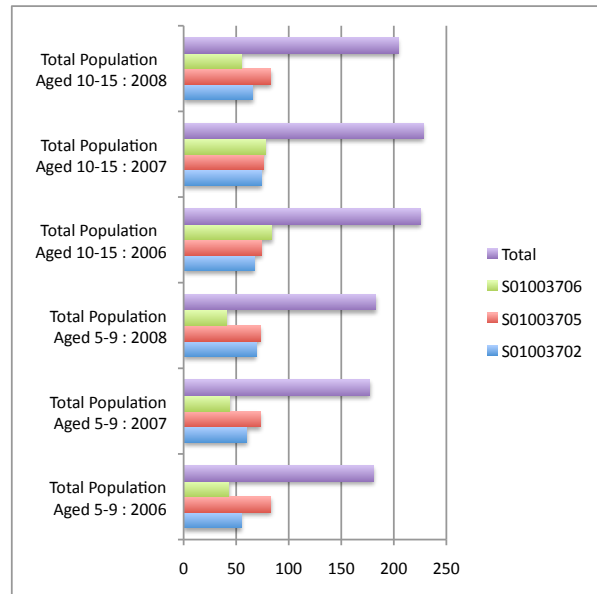


Figure 1. Population of zone grouped by calendar year & age.

In verifying whether declining enrollment was solely due to demographics, this researcher determined what zones the catchment area of Stonedyke overlapped. In doing so, it was possible to calculate a rough estimate of children inside the catchment area. A map of the zoning data and catchment area can be found in Appendix C. According to the Glasgow City

² Glasgow City Council defines Class A as “Good- Performing well and operating efficiently.”

Council's zoning data, Stonedyke Primary roughly encompasses datazones 3705, 3706, 3702 and part of 3703. The datazones were then crosschecked with statistical data provided by Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics to gather population estimates of primary school children within the Stonedyke catchment area from 2006-2008.

As shown by Figure 1 above, there is an alarmingly high number of children inside the Stonedyke catchment area that have not been accounted for. For example, in 2008 Stonedyke reported a role of 140 pupils but the statistical data estimates that there were 180 children alone from the 5-9 age group. That doesn't include the 10-12 year olds in the 10-15 age group which estimates a further 204 children. Furthermore these numbers don't even account for children from zone 3703 that this researcher omitted to balance out human error.

These findings pose an important question, where are all of these children going? While declining roles in part may be due to demographics, parents sending their children elsewhere certainly plays a larger role than previously thought. It is the hope of this researcher that the Council will take these findings into account when addressing further calculations of declining roles.

Academic Challenges

The Scottish Government is committed to reducing class sizes throughout Scotland. The average class size at Stonedyke Primary is 22 pupils, yet the Director for Education has admitted that this number will most likely rise as current Stonedyke students are consolidated into both Langfaulds and Camstradden.

Kearns, Lewis, McCreanor and Witten (2009) stated in their research that "[small] schools can develop an intimate knowledge of their children and their backgrounds, inspire enhanced teacher commitments and take advantage of strong community participation and responsibility" (p. 133). Often times these small schools outperform students in larger schools. Students

who attended small schools in poverty ridden areas in Chicago had higher grade point averages and better reading scores than their peers in larger schools (Schmidt, Murray & Nguyen, 2007). Some research in Sweden even suggests that students in smaller schools seem to be more stable and have a positive attitude towards school (Aberg-Bengtsson, 1996). This is somewhat troubling considering the estimated consolidated pupil projections for 2010 are 160 for Langfaulds (32% increase from Stonedyke) and 277 for Camstradden (130% increase from Stonedyke) (Glasgow City 2009).

Additionally, research conducted in California and replicated in West Virginia indicates that pupils at Stonedyke are at a greater risk academically after a consolidation. This 1996 study examined whether there was a relationship between school size and achievement for students of different socioeconomic statuses. Both the original and replicated study showed that larger schools affected affluent students in a positive way and impoverished students in a negative way. In fact, the magnitude of negative effect on impoverished students was twice as large as the positive effect on affluent ones (Howley, 1996).

In determining whether Stonedyke pupils would be at risk to this type of negative effect, the percentage of income deprived families within the Stonedyke catchment area was examined. Using the three major zones that were obtained earlier in this paper, it was possible to calculate a rough estimate of income deprived families by using the Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics data.

As illustrated in Figure 2 below, the percentage of income deprived families from 2008 in the catchment area was above 50% in all of the three major zones. This is well above the average for Glasgow City which was only 29%.

These results indicate that with an increase in school size, Stonedyke pupils will be at greater risk for achievement decline than students from other areas of Glasgow. This is especially true of pupils who will attend Camstradden which will

have over double the number of pupils currently attending Stonedyke.

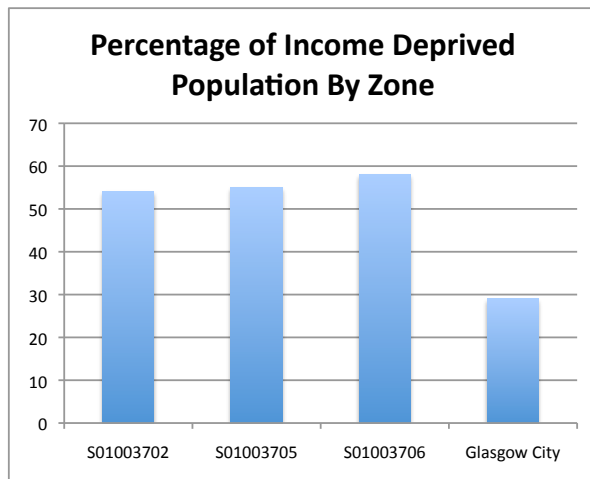


Figure 2. Percentage of income deprived population in the Stonedyke catchment area as of 2008.

It is important to also note that this researcher was told by the Director for Education that the Council had examined student's academic and social impacts post consolidation. Unfortunately, when reports and research was requested from the council pertaining to this matter, they indicated no such materials were available.

Cultural Impact

Williams (as cited in Kearns et al. 2009) describes education as "a social process through which culture is expressed, struggled over, and transformed" (p. 131). School closures threaten this cultural aspect in communities and as discussed earlier in this paper, the Stonedyke community is very much opposed to the primary school closure. This is what Bryant and Grady referred to as the principle of centripetalism, the tendency of various social and economic forces to centralize. In the report it states, "The removal of [a] school means it can no longer add to the forces of centripetalism. The consolidated school may have a regional impact, but its role in the particular community will be diminished" (as cited in Salant & Waller 1998, p. 7). This community value is clearly illustrated in the consultation survey by Bill Kidd MSP (Appendix

A), which reported that 67% of respondents believed Stondyke to be an important community asset. Many respondents commented on how they enjoyed attending social events and participating in the school activities. This is what Rynolds (as cited in Salant & Waller, 1998) refers to as collective identity. Parents often feel involved in the school because there is a sense of attachment.

This sense of attachment often goes unnoticed until the school is threatened by closure. In a study conducted in New Zealand where 75 schools were closed from 2000-2005, researchers studied this concept of community attachment by interviewing community members (Kearns et al. 2009). Despite their location, their concerns for their school are global. Many parents believed that the community integration was fueled by the school and they favored its small size because of the accessibility to educators and staff. Like parents and community members at Stonedyke, these parents felt disappointed and betrayed by their education department. Some stated they would be reluctant to get involved with the larger school for fear of not making an impact like they could at the smaller school (Kearns et al. 2009). It can be inferred that this concept of centripetalism discussed earlier is hard to reestablish once a school is closed. This will most likely lead to less community involvement, poorer parent-teacher interaction and an overall lack of collective identity.

Economic Rationale

When proposing school closure many councils and districts highlight the cost associated in maintaining smaller schools. Schools that are not at full capacity are often viewed as a waste of council funds. Yet often school closures do not save money, they simply redistribute funds (Witham, 1997). Contrary to popular belief, smaller schools tend to be more cost effective than larger schools on a per-capita student basis. The reason behind this is quite simple. Smaller schools tend to have higher graduation rates which eliminates the need to "recycle student dropouts" (Schmidt et al. 2007, p. 61). Larger schools also have to deal with crime and

vandalism that occurs minimally in smaller schools. Additionally, many school consolidations lead to increased travel expenses due to the need to bus students who live far away.

The Director for Education has said that it is not clear if closing Stonedyke will save money. The council should consider some of the above mentioned factors to ensure that funds are not lost in this transition.

DISCUSSION

It is quite clear that although the current proposal demonstrates one solution in dealing with declining enrollment, it fails to address several pressing issues.

While declining enrollment is occurring throughout the country, the council did not account for the large number of students that are attending school outside the catchment area. It will be important for the council to examine why some parents do not feel that Stonedyke is suitable for their children. In doing so, the council may learn about improvements that could be made to Stonedyke which would convince parents to send their children to the primary school. Additionally, this is an area that the council should begin accounting for. There is evidently a lack of information on how many children who live within a catchment area are attending schools inside that area. This new data may help the council in addressing future declining role issues.

Secondly, it is startling that no reports have been compiled to examine the impact that consolidation has on students' academic and social wellbeing. Pure observation is not a supplement to research and it is highly recommended that the council compile a report on the next school transition. As discussed earlier, smaller schools tend to be better at educating impoverished children than larger schools. The council should be wary, when consolidating schools in areas such as Stonedyke which are at much higher risk for this type of negative effect. If there is no alternative to closing a school, the council should ensure that these "at risk" students

are monitored in the initial months of the transition.

The majority of comments received in response to the consultation survey (Appendix A), were concerning the community impact the school closure would have. Only half of these respondents actually had children that have ever attended Stonedyke and it is concerning that the council seeks to remove a facility that is evidently viewed as much more than a school. Furthermore, there is a great possibility that the community will not be engaged at Langfaulds or Camstradden, which would not only harm the community but also the educational value of those schools. The council must realize that local schools, are often the support structure in a community and without their presence, that sense of community perishes.

It is beneficial that the council acknowledges that closing Stonedyke primary may not save any money. Yet if this is not the reason to propose the closure what is? Although the primary school is in much poorer condition than a building such as Langfaulds. It outperforms it in other areas such as reading where pupils at Stonedyke performed 16% higher in the June 2009 assessment than their peers at Langfaulds (Appendix D). While it is tempting to scrap old buildings for newer ones, the council should place greater interest in academic achievement instead of bricks and mortar.

A POTENTIAL SOLUTION

While there is no definite or perfect solution to declining roles, school closures are often not the best option. The choice of where to send ones child to school is an important right for any parent. Some councils and districts around the globe have solved declining enrollment by only allowing children to attend the school within their catchment area. This solves the issue of parents sending their children elsewhere for fear of the local school, not providing a good education. Yet this method is often criticized for locking less wealthy areas into poorer education.

The following example is based on a a school in Pennsylvania that attempted to reorganize its primary school structure in place of closing schools. This reorganization equalized class sizes and also reduced the need for four classrooms in the district (Piatt, 1975).

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6
G1	3	3	1	8	5	2
G2	9	3	6	8	9	5
G3	4	4	9	6	6	3
G4	1	5	5	10	7	3
G5	10	10	2	5	2	2
G6	4	9	4	3	9	11
	23	33	23	37	38	21

Table 1. Number of pupils in each grade in a given school.

The table above represents a hypothetical situation in which there are six local schools near each other, each of which have six grades. The total number of pupils at each school are shown in bold at the bottom of the table. Numbers of pupils were kept small for the sake of the example and were picked randomly using a computer program. Piatt (1975) suggests that the six schools be reorganized such that each school covers only three grades. The table in the next column shows the new structure.

As can be seen by Table 2, each primary school now holds only three grades. Parents would now have the option of selecting three locations to send their child (S1/S2, S3/S4 and S5/S6). In this way, it helps to stabilize pupil numbers while still offering a level of choice. It is important to note that pupil numbers that were very low such as the original School Six with 21 pupils and School One with 23 pupils, now hold 34 and 26 respectively. Also, some grades originally held low pupil numbers from one to three children.

This is no longer the case in our reorganized structure.

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6
G1	6		9		7	
G2	12		14		14	
G3	8		15		9	
G4		6		15		10
G5		20		7		4
G6		12		7		20
	26	38	38	28	30	34

Table 2. Reorganized primary school structure.

Clearly this illustration is limited by the scope of the example, but it is a method that has and could be applied to prevent school closures. It is highly recommended that Glasgow City Council examine other means such as a reorganized primary school structure that may save “at risk” schools.

CONCLUSION

Scotland and other countries around the globe are facing declining roles in their school systems. With so many smalls schools, Scotland is especially vulnerable to the prospect of school closure. While this may be beneficial in some circumstances this researcher believes there are other alternatives that Glasgow City Council should try before closing the doors at Stonedyke Primary.

First, the council should examine some of the proposal flaws outlined in this paper and subsequently investigate other methods that similar schools have used in place of school closure. This would not only salvage a good academic institution but also maintain the community bonds that are formed around this school and save Stonedyke pupils from potential negative academic impacts of a larger school.

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Bill Kidd MSP

*Working for the
People of Glasgow*

**APPENDIX A****Response to Glasgow City Council Consultation on the Proposed Closure of Stonedyke Primary School from Bill Kidd MSP****Introduction**

The Glasgow city Council has proposed the closure of Stonedyke Primary School and the reallocation of its catchment areas to Langfaulds Primary School and Camstradden Primary School. If approved the proposal would come into effect from October 2010.

After being contacted by a number of constituents about these proposals, I decided to undertake a survey of local residents to gauge opinion on the matter. The survey shows that community members have a strong opposition to the current proposal, regardless if they have had children at the school or not. They have expressed a variety of concerns about the proposals and also how important the school is to the community.

This document outlines the results of the survey and contains comments from concerned parents and community members.

I object to the current proposal and ask that the Glasgow City Council take these findings into account before making their final decision. I urge the council to consider other options that will allow the school to remain open, as it is a vital component of the community.

Survey Details

The survey was distributed by my office to households in the Stonedyke catchment area.

The survey asked four questions and also provided space for additional comments. A copy of the survey and accompanying letter is included as appendix A.

The responses to each question are detailed below, as well as a selection of comments which reflect some of the main themes and issues raised.

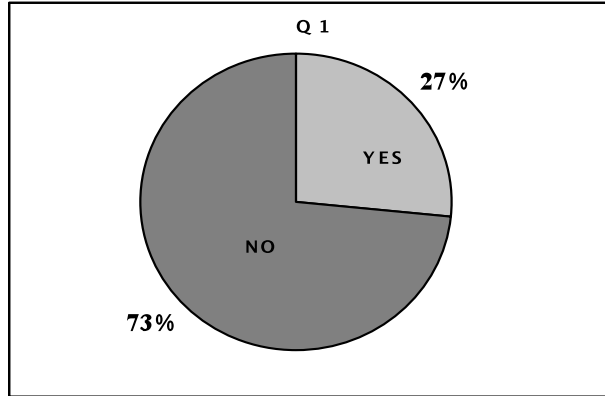
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Parliamentary Office
Rm. M. 5.08, The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP
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APPENDIX A (continued)

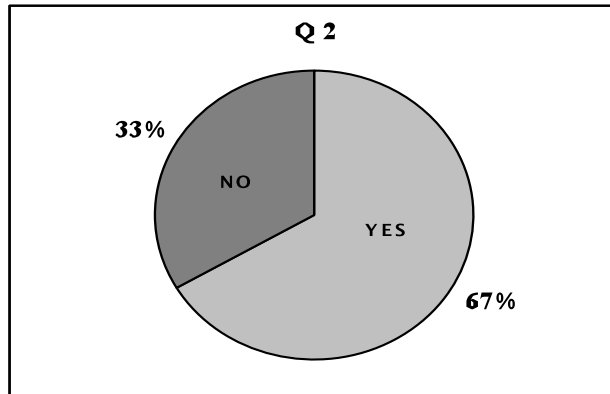
Q1 - Do you agree with proposals to close Stonedyke Primary School and reallocate the catchment area between Langfaulds and Camstradden Primary Schools?

Nearly three out of four respondents oppose closing Stonedyke Primary. The results clearly indicate that the community members are not in favour of the current Council proposal.



Q2 - Do you believe that Stonedyke Primary School represents an important community asset?

The results indicate that the community values Stonedyke not only as a facility for learning but also as a vital component of their community. While other schools may replace Stonedyke as an educational facility, they will not be able to replace it as a community facility. Several respondents commented that they have enjoyed attending school functions and events. Should the school close, elderly community members may not be able to commute to the new locations to participate in similar events..

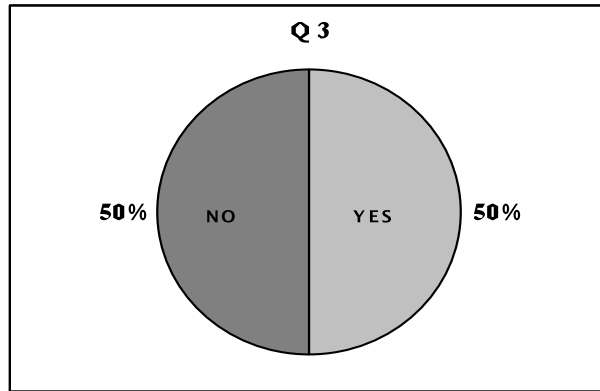


Bill Kidd MSP
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 People of Glasgow*

APPENDIX A (continued)

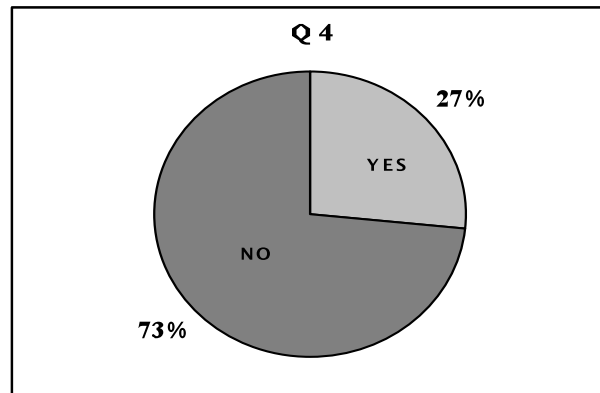
Do any members of your immediate family or household currently attend Stonedyke Primary School, have done so in the past or would be likely to in the future if the school remains open?

Of the respondents, only half have had children ever attend Stonedyke. This clearly indicates that the opposition of the Council’s proposal comes from both parents of school children and regular community members. These results further supplement question two’s data that the community as a whole benefits from the school facilities.



Q4 - Would the closure of Stonedyke School cause any difficulty to your immediate family or household?

While many respondents indicated that the closure would not have an effect on their immediate household, it is important to note that half of the respondents currently do not have children attending the school which could affect the resulting data. In addition many of the 27% who do believe this would cause difficulty to their family left additional comments. Many of them were working parents who would not be able to drive their children to the new school.



Bill Kidd MSP

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APPENDIX A (continued)**Additional Comments**

Space was also provided for respondents to leave additional comments. The vast majority of responses opposed the proposal.

The majority of these comments were concerns regarding:

- The safety of children who had to walk longer distances to the new schools
- The community attachment to the school including the loss of social events that occur there
- The complications for working mothers who will not be able to transport their children to the new schools
- The emotional consequences that may occur as a result of children changing schools i.e.; making new friends, bullying, new teachers
- The antisocial behaviour that may occur when the school closes down

Addition Points for Consideration

Some parents also expressed concern in maintaining small class sizes. The Scottish Government is committed to reducing class sizes throughout Scotland. With students from Stonedyke moving to already occupied schools, it is likely that class sizes will increase. This is concerning not only because this goes against the Government's current objective but also because students will not be accustomed to the larger class sizes and the sudden change may negatively impact their educational performance.

Perhaps the largest concern from parents has been in regard to transportation. Many working parents have said they will not be able to drive their children to school should Stonedyke close. Other parents are concerned for the safety of their children walking longer distances if their child cannot receive public transport. One grandparent commented that she looks after her grandchildren who attend Stonedyke and worries that if they get assigned to different schools, she wouldn't be on time to pick them all up.

Community members are also very saddened to hear that this school may be closing. Many of them don't have children that attend the school but they view it as an important component of their community. There were numerous comments on how families enjoyed going to school social events and how great the youth clubs were at the school. Closing the school will not only take the education farther away but the community involvement as well.

Bill Kidd MSP

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APPENDIX A (continued)

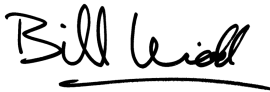
The Council should investigate other options for Stonedyke that would keep the school open. While declining school roles are definitely a concern, the council should investigate if families are sending their children outside the Drumchapel area to other schools. If this is the case the council should be focussing on why parents feel that Stonedyke is not sufficient.

Additionally the council may want to consider changes they could make internally such as upgrading the school over time in sections. This would help the financial strain of the education budget and would also prevent the loss of a fine academic institution.

Conclusion

Stonedyke is a centre for learning and community involvement. The majority of residents that responded to this survey, of which only half of these respondents have had children who attend Stonedyke, are opposed to seeing it closed down. I urge the council to consider the data in this document and look into alternative options that would allow Stonedyke to remain open.

Bill Kidd MSP



Bill Kidd MSP*Working for the
People of Glasgow***APPENDIX A (continued)****SAMPLE SURVEY AND LETTER**

February 2010

Dear.....

**CONSTITUENT SURVEY ON PROPOSED CLOSURE OF STONEDYKE PRIMARY
SCHOOL, DRUMCHAPEL**

I have been contacted by a number of constituents regarding Glasgow City Council's proposal to close Stonedyke Primary School and reallocate its catchment area between Langfaulds and Camstradden Primary Schools.

It is my understanding that such proposals would come into effect from October 2010, or shortly thereafter. Children currently due to attend Stonedyke Primary School after October 2010 would enrol at either Langfaulds Primary School or Camstradden Primary School in accordance with amended catchment areas published by Glasgow City Council. The Council is currently undertaking a statutory consultation on this proposal, which closes on Thursday 1st April 2010. A public consultation meeting is also scheduled to take place on 16th March at 7pm at Stonedyke Primary School, which I would of course encourage all to attend. Further details are available from the Council's website at: <http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/en/Residents/GoingtoSchool/educationstatestrategyproposals.htm>.

As an MSP for the Glasgow region, I am keen to respond to the Council's consultation by accurately reflecting the views of my constituents in the area. I would therefore be grateful if you could take a few moments to complete and return the overleaf survey by **Wednesday 24th March 2010**, per the below instructions, to enable me put together a response and ensure that your views are known to the Council.

If you would like any further information, or if I can be of any more assistance on this or any other matter, please do not hesitate to contact me on the details below.

No stamp is needed to reply.

Yours sincerely,

Bill Kidd
MSP for the Glasgow region (SNP)

Bill Kidd MSP*Working for the
People of Glasgow***APPENDIX A (continued)****CONSTITUENT SURVEY ON PROPOSED CLOSURE OF STONEDYKE PRIMARY SCHOOL, DRUMCHAPEL**

Glasgow City Council has proposed the closure of Stonedyke Primary School and the reallocation of its catchment area between Langfaulds and Camstradden Primary Schools. Full details of the proposals are available from the Council.

Please take a few moments to complete the questionnaire and return in the enclosed envelope as soon as possible by **Wednesday 24th March 2010**.

Question	Yes	No
Do you agree with proposals to close Stonedyke Primary School and reallocate the catchment area between Langfaulds and Camstradden Primary Schools?		
Do you believe that Stonedyke Primary School represents an important community asset? If yes, please provide further details below.		
Do any members of your immediate family or household currently attend Stonedyke Primary School, have done so in the past or would be likely to in the future if the school remains open?		
Would the closure of Stonedyke Primary School cause any difficulty to your immediate family or household? If yes, please give examples below.		

Do you have any other comments on the proposals?

APPENDIX B**INSTITUTE OF GOVERNANCE
UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH**

SUMMARY DOCUMENT

Chisholm House
Edinburgh, UK EH1 1LZ
0 (756) 418-5904
EMAIL: J.Koch@sms.ed.ac.uk

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: May 11, 2010
TO:
FROM: Josh Koch
RE: Meeting With Maureen McKenna

Introduction

This brief provides an overall summary of the meeting that took place with Maureen McKenna, Director of Education for Glasgow, on 22 March 2010.

Background

Stoneydyke Primary is likely to close this summer, due to declining school roles. The Glasgow City Council has sent out a consultation report that will end on April 1st.

As part of a report that will examine the school closings in Glasgow, a meeting was scheduled with Maureen McKenna to obtain a better understanding of school closures from the Council's perspective. The meeting lasted approximately 30 minutes in which the Director for Education was asked various questions relating to the Stonedyke Primary closure.

Key Points

The following points provide a general summary of the exchange that took place during the meeting:

- In response to being asked why Stonedyke Primary is closing:
 - o The Director stated that it was due to declining roles.

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- In response to being asked what the causes of these declining roles were:
 - The Director stated that it was largely due to demographics and that parents were having less children.
- In response to being asked how Stonedyke's quality of education compared to Langfaulds':
 - The Director stated that Stonedyke was a very good school and that it was hard to compare the two.
- In response to being asked how safety will be maintained if the children have to walk:
 - The Director stated that the area has been mapped out for safety concerns and if there is a risk to some children, they will be provided public transportation.
- In response to being asked how the number of students in the catchment area compares to the roll of Stonedyke:
 - The Director stated that those numbers are not tallied by the Council.
- In response to being asked if class sizes will increase with this transition:
 - The Director stated that it was difficult to predict but the most likely outcome is that they will increase. She added that she did not believe this would lessen the quality of education.
- In response to being asked how the public has responded to the consultation:
 - The Director stated that the consultation will not be examined until April 1st but that there seemed to be less opposition from the public and more of an understanding in regards to closing Stonedyke.
- In response to being asked how much money will be saved by the closure:
 - The Director stated that they really can't tell but added that it made more sense financially to move students to a better quality school than to keep them at Stonedyke and pay to upgrade the quality D school.
- In response to being asked why Langfaulds isn't closing as well since they have declining roles like Stonedyke:
 - The Director stated that Langfaulds is a better quality school and it made more sense to move students from Stonedyke to Langfaulds (upgrade) than to move students from Langfaulds to Stonedyke (downgrade).
- In response to being asked how the education results at Stonedyke compares to Langfaulds:
 - The Director stated that it was fairly equal.
- In response to being asked if the final decision has already been made:
 - The Director stated that it had not. She added that there have been cases where they have kept schools open when there was large public opposition and good input/recommendations from the community on how to keep the school open.
- In response to being asked how many jobs will be lost as a result of the transition:
 - The Director stated that none would be lost. The staff would be relocated to other schools.
- In response to being asked if any research has been done to see how students have transitioned (academically and socially) in past school closures:

APPENDIX B (continued)

- The Director stated that this has been studied and that students have adjusted well in the past.
- In response to being asked how the teachers have responded to the proposed school closure:
 - The Director stated that teachers were attached to their school but they were content that they would still have a job. She added that they were welcome to submit their opinions to the consultation report.
- In response to being asked how the Head Teacher has responded to the proposed school closure:
 - The Director stated that she has met with her personally to discuss the Head Teacher's personal future. She added that the Head Teacher had strong feelings for her school.

During this answer the Director seemed more agitated or resistant to completely answer the question. This perhaps indicates that the Head Teacher has a strong opposition to the school closure.
- In response to being asked if the thoughts of the children have been considered in the school closure:
 - The Director stated that the children's opinions are considered and that they too are welcome to submit their opinions to the consultation report.

Discussion

It is evident that the Glasgow City Council believes it is doing the right thing by closing Stonedyke (both educationally and financially). Despite this fact, several points raise room for concern:

Increase in Class Size - The Director admitted that class sizes will most likely increase when Stonedyke students start to attend Langfaulds. This would be going against the Scottish Government's current goal to keep class sizes small.

Catchment Area Tally - In the course of the interview it became evident that the Council did not know how many non-Stonedyke students (students that went elsewhere) were in the catchment area. The Director claimed that this didn't contribute to the declining roles. It is concerning that the council is making this claim when they don't have figures to back it up.

Staff Opinions - The Director's responses indicated that staff had strong attachments to the school and opposed having it shut down. While she said that staff could contribute to the consultation report, staff may feel that their job would be in jeopardy if they spoke against the Council.

Transition Research - The Director said that the council has done research on how past students have transitioned (academically and emotionally). While the Director indicated that the children transitioned well, it would be interesting to see the research on this issue.

APPENDIX B (continued)**Conclusion**

Based on the meeting with Maureen McKenna further research should be conducted to better address the concerns listed above. Collection of staff opinions in an anonymous fashion may help to obtain more valid responses/opinions. Furthermore the Council research on past school closure transitions should be obtained. It is unclear how the total number of students in the catchment area (both Stonedyke and other) could be calculated, but this would help explain if the declining roles are due to more than just demographics.

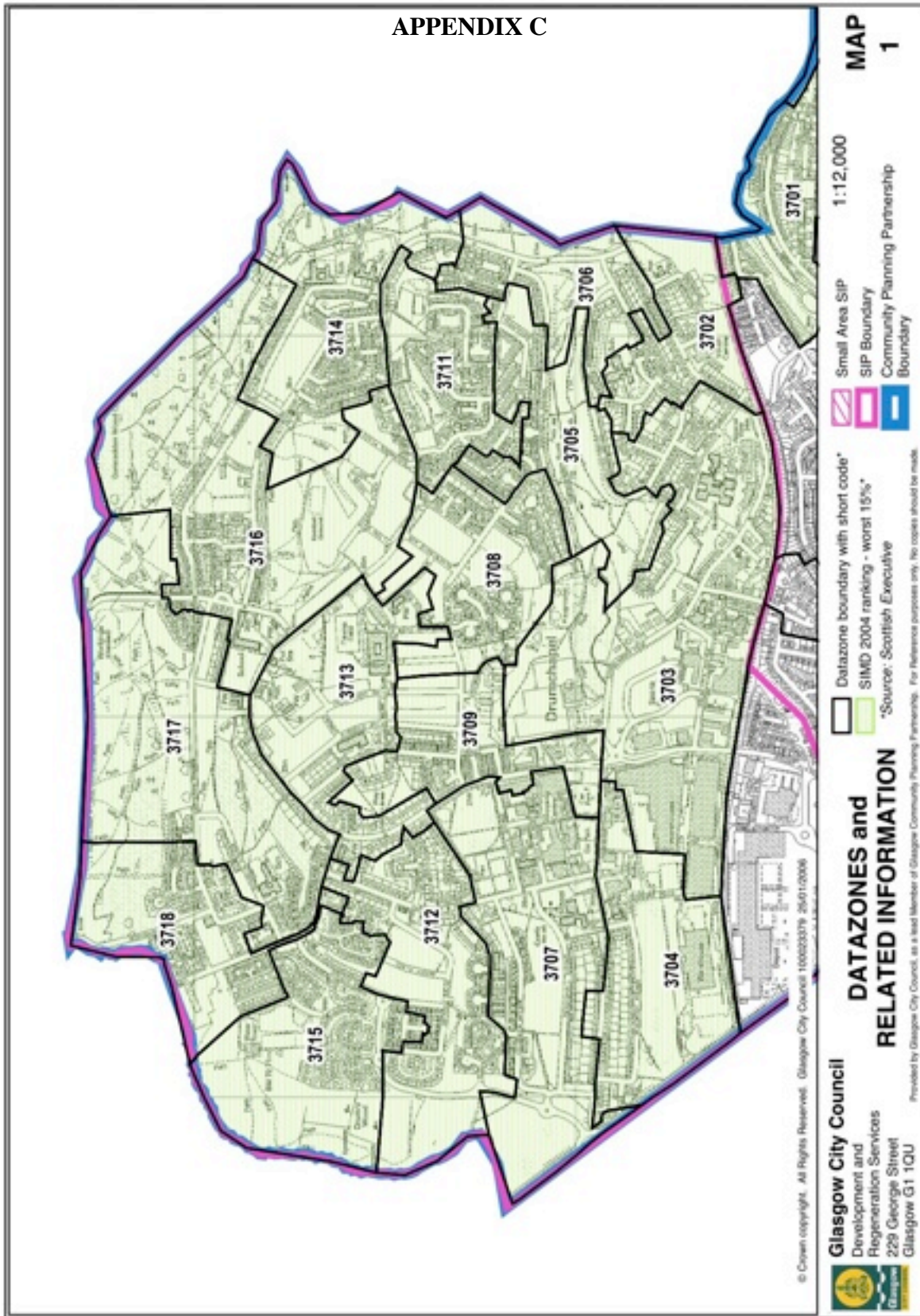


Figure C 1. Datazones of Drumchapel area provided by Glasgow City Council.

APPENDIX C (continued)

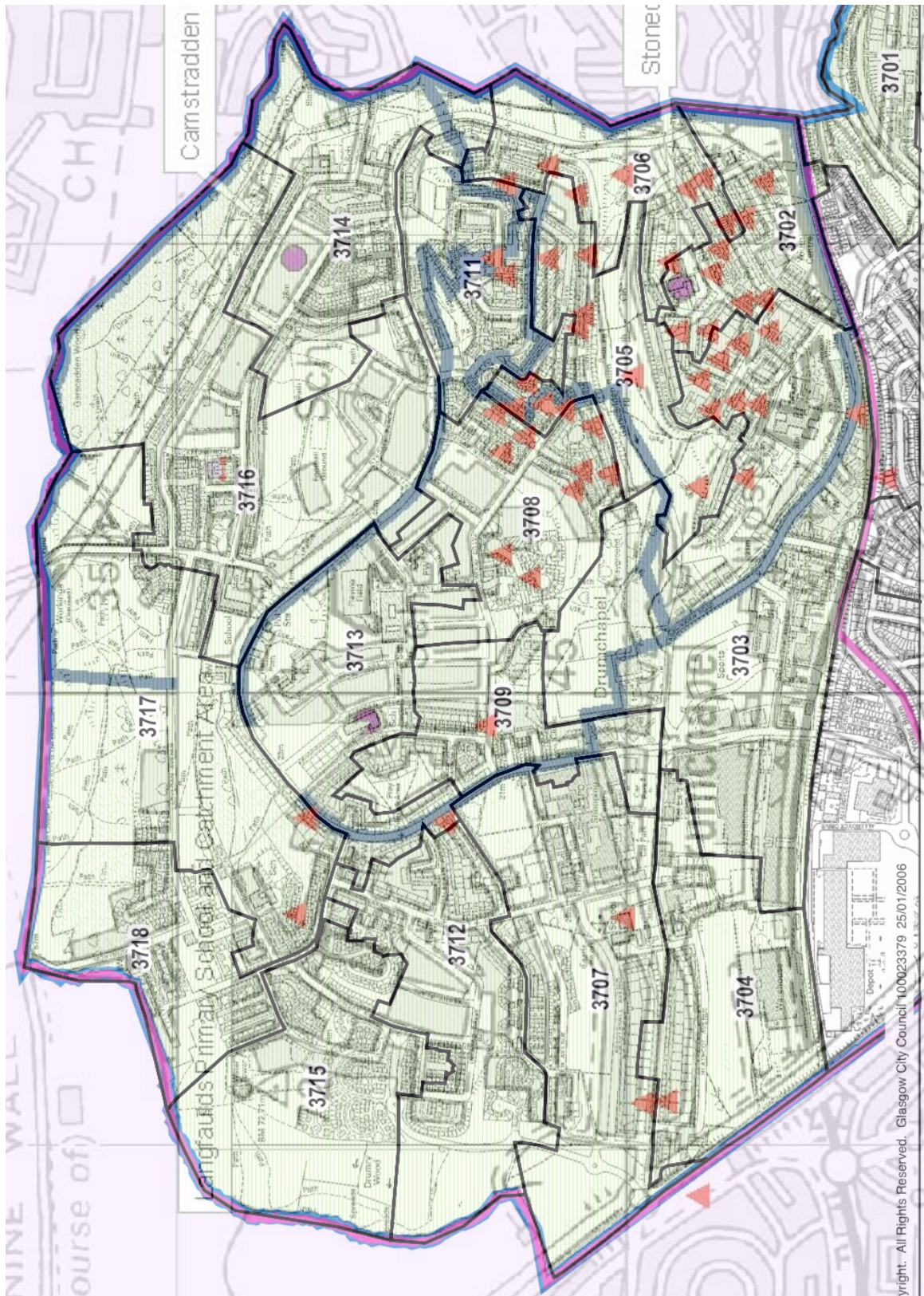


Figure C 2. Datazones of Drumchapel area with the catchment area overlaid on prior image.

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Data Zone	Total Population Aged 5-9 : 2006	Total Population Aged 5-9 : 2007	Total Population Aged 5-9 : 2008	Total Population Aged 10-15 : 2006	Total Population Aged 10-15 : 2007	Total Population Aged 10-15 : 2008
S01003702	55	60	69	67	74	66
S01003705	83	73	73	74	76	83
S01003706	43	44	41	84	78	55
Total	181	177	183	225	228	204

Table C1. Population of zone grouped by calendar year & age

Data Zone	% Income Deprived
S01003702	54
S01003705	55
S01003706	58
Glasgow City	29

Table C2. Percentage of income deprived families from Stonedyke Catchment Area and Glasgow City.

APPENDIX D

Subject	Stonedyeke	Langfaulds
Maths	79	81
Reading	79	63
Writing	70	67

Figure D1. June 2008 Assessment scores for Stonedyke and Langfaulds primary schools.