

CONSULTATION REPORT

REPORT ON THE CONSULTATION RELATING TO THE PROPOSAL TO PERMANENTLY CLOSE LIMERIGG PRIMARY SCHOOL

7 August 2026

This document has been issued by Falkirk Council in accordance with the
Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

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1. THE PROPOSAL

Falkirk Council is proposing, subject to the outcome of the statutory consultation process, that:

- **provision of a school at Limerigg Primary School be permanently discontinued with effect from 22 December 2026, or as soon as possible thereafter;**
- **pupils who reside in the Limerigg Primary School area to continue and permanently receive their education at Slamannan Primary School; and**
- **the delineated catchment area of Slamannan Primary School be permanently extended to include the whole delineated catchment area of Limerigg Primary School.**

The Proposal Paper referred to implementation from August 2026. The statutory consultation and decision-making timetable mean implementation is now proposed from 22 December 2026, or as soon as possible thereafter.

2. REASONS FOR THIS PROPOSAL

The Schools (Consultation) Scotland Act 2010 states that education authorities must identify the reasons for formulating a proposal to close a rural school. This proposal was formulated for the following reasons:

- i. Limerigg Primary School has been formally mothballed for nearly 7 years with no pupils in attendance since August 2019.
- ii. The catchment demand for places in Limerigg Primary School continues to be assessed to be low and is not predicted to rise.
- iii. The Council is experiencing a general decline in pupil numbers, making re-opening impractical.
- iv. Whilst the school is mothballed, the building is deteriorating with limited budgets for repairs, maintenance and capital investment. The current annual cost of mothballing Limerigg Primary School is £24,480.
- v. There are no imminent house building proposals in the catchment area of Limerigg Primary School that would affect current projections. Planning permission in principle was granted for a proposal for up to 90 houses in Limerigg village in 2019, but the proposal has not developed further in the intervening 7 years and there is no indication currently that it is likely to proceed in the foreseeable future. If it does proceed at a future date, and Limerigg PS has permanently closed, then Slamannan Primary School will have sufficient capacity to absorb the additional primary pupils that will arise.

On **26 March 2019**, the Education Executive agreed that Limerigg Primary School would be mothballed from August 2019 due to falling catchment demand for places.

On **26 January 2021**, the Education, Children and Young People Executive was informed that the school remained mothballed, with no plans to re-open it beyond August 2021 due to continued low projected demand. At this meeting, it was agreed to progress to a formal statutory consultation on a proposal to permanently close Limerigg Primary School.

The findings from this statutory consultation were reported to the Education, Children & Young People Committee on **1 June 2021**, which approved the recommendation to close the school permanently and submit the statutory notification to Scottish Ministers, in accordance with the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*.

On **26 July 2021**, Scottish Ministers reviewed Falkirk Council's proposal and determined that there were grounds for a call-in under section 17(2)(a) of the 2010 Act.

The **School Closures Review Panel** subsequently reviewed the case and, on **24 September 2021**, concluded that Falkirk Council had not fully met its obligations under the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*. As a result, the closure was not approved, and the Council was required to undertake the following steps before making any updated decision:

- Fully comply with the preliminary requirements set out in section 12A of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*, including proper consideration of any reasonable alternatives to closure.
- If closure was still considered the most appropriate course of action, prepare a fresh proposal paper in full compliance with section 13 of the 2010 Act.
- Undertake a fresh statutory consultation process with all relevant consultees.

Education Services have recently undertaken preliminary community engagement in line with section 12A of the Act, including public meetings and a community survey.

Following this, a decision was taken to undertake a statutory consultation on a proposal to permanently close Limerigg Primary School and to permanently extend the catchment area of Slamannan Primary School to include the existing catchment area of Limerigg primary school.

3. INTRODUCTION

This consultation report has been prepared in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

The purpose of this report is to:

- Provide a record of the total number of written representations made during the statutory consultation period;
- Provide a summary of the written representations;
- Provide a summary of oral representations made at the Public Meeting held on 11 March 2026 at Slamannan Primary School.
- Provide a statement of Education Services response to those written and oral representations;
- Provide the full text of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) report and a statement of Education Services response to this report;
- State how Education Services reviewed the above proposal with regard to the representations received during the statutory consultation period and the report from HMIE;
- Provide details of any omission from, or inaccuracy in, the Proposal Paper and state how Education Services acted upon it;
- Explain the opportunity that may arise to make representation to the Scottish Ministers in connection with Section 15(4) of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

4. BACKGROUND

The principal purpose of the 2010 Act is to provide strong, accountable statutory consultation practices and procedures that local authorities must apply to their handling of all proposals for school closures and other major changes to schools. These consultation processes are expected to be robust, open, transparent and fair, and seen to be so. They are also expected to be consistent across Scotland.

The 2010 Act makes special arrangements in relation to rural schools and establishes a presumption against the closure of rural schools. The result of this is that education authorities must have special regard before formalising a proposal to close a rural school and in consulting on and reaching a decision as to whether to implement a rural school closure proposal.

These duties are outlined in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 and the accompanying Statutory Guidance.

The term "rural" is applied to schools as follows:

- Very Remote rural - areas with a population of less than 3,000 people, and with a drive time of over 60 minutes to a settlement of 10,000 or more

- Remote Rural - areas with a population of less than 3,000 people, and with a drive time of over 30 minutes but less than or equal to 60 minutes to a settlement of 10,000 or more
- Accessible rural - areas with a population of less than 3,000 people, and within a drive time of 30 minutes to a settlement of 10,000 or more

Limerigg Primary School is defined as “accessible rural” which means it is within 30 mins drive to a settlement of 10,000 people. Both Falkirk and Cumbernauld town centres are around a 20-minute drive from Limerigg Primary School.

On 19 February 2026 the Council’s Executive (including Education) agreed to commence statutory consultation on a proposal to permanently close Limerigg Primary School in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

School roll projections continue to indicate low demand for places within Limerigg Primary School catchment. The number of primary-aged children residing within the catchment has fallen from 26 in session 2018/19 to 11 in session 2025/26. Community Health Index (CHI) data supplied by Forth Valley Health Board indicates that fewer than five children residing within the catchment area are expected to enrol in Primary 1 over the next three years, with no significant increase in pupil numbers projected in the foreseeable future.

Table 1: Number of Primary-Aged Children Residing in the Limerigg Primary School Catchment Area

Session	School Roll	Number of catchment children	Projections
2018/19	5	26	
2019/20	Mothballed	27	
2020/21		26	
2021/22		26	
2022/23		25	
2023/24		23	
2024/25		17	
2025/26		11	
2026/27			7
2027/28			Less than 5
2028/29			Less than 5
2029/30			Less than 5

Source SEEMIS and NHS CHI data

Education Services published a Proposal Paper on 20 February 2026 (Appendix 1), including an Educational Benefits Statement, financial information and an explanation of the reasons for the proposal; alternatives to the proposal and the authority’s assessment of these and the reasons why the

authority considers the implementation of the proposal the most appropriate response to the reasons for the proposal.

Educational benefits of this proposal were set out in section 8 of the Proposal Paper.

By highlighting the benefits of Slamannan Primary School in the Educational Benefits Statement, Education Services is not implying that many of these benefits did not already exist in Limerigg Primary School before it was mothballed. The benefits are being considered when looking at the proposal in terms of what can be provided in the rezoned catchment of Slamannan Primary School.

5. CONSULTATION PROCESS

The Proposal Paper was published on 20 February 2026 on the Falkirk Council website.

A copy of this document was provided to:

- Parents and carers of all primary and nursery age pupils who reside in the catchment area of each affected school (Limerigg and Slamannan Primary Schools)
- Slamannan Primary School Parent Council
- Pupils at Slamannan Primary School
- School staff and trade unions at Slamannan Primary School
- All other households in the Limerigg Primary School catchment area (so that the views of the overall community can also be considered during the consultation because this is a proposal to close a rural school)

(there is no active Community Council in this area)

A copy of this document was also available on request, free of charge, from:

- Education Services, Suite 1A, Falkirk Community Stadium, 4 Stadium Way, Falkirk, FK2 9EE
- Slamannan Primary School, Bank Street, Slamannan, FK1 3EZ
- All Hubs and Libraries across Falkirk

The document was also available on request in alternative formats or in translated form for readers whose first language is not English.

A Notice of Consultation was emailed to the consultees listed above (and posted to the “other households in the Limerigg Primary School catchment area”) on 20 February 2026 (Appendix 2). This provided details of how to access the Proposal Paper and Educational Benefits Statement; how to submit responses via Falkirk Council website and in writing; and the date of the public meeting.

The Notice of Consultation, the Proposal Document and the Public Meeting were advertised on the Council's Participate+ platform, in the local newspaper (the Falkirk Herald) and supported by local targeted digital advertisement through Facebook.

The consultation was undertaken between 23 February and 24 April 2026 and extended beyond six calendar weeks to ensure the statutory requirement for 30 school days consultation was met.

The online survey allowed members of the public to review the consultation documents and submit their responses online.

A public meeting took place at Slamannan Primary School 11 March 2026 at 6.30pm.

The Headteacher of Slamannan Primary School engaged with pupils through their class teacher to collate their responses to the proposal.

This Consultation Report contains Falkirk Council's response to the issues raised regarding the proposal during the consultation exercise. It will be published on Falkirk Council's website for a period of no less than 3 weeks prior to the final consideration of the proposal at Executive (including Education) on 17 September 2026.

6. PUPIL ENGAGEMENT

Pupils' views are a significant part of the consultation process. There follows a summary of comments made by pupils attending Slamannan Primary School, including pupils' resident within the former Limerigg catchment area.

A survey invited pupils to comment on how they feel at Slamannan Primary School, what they enjoy about school, how they travel, whether they agree with the proposal to close Limerigg Primary School, and what they feel would be an appropriate future use for the Limerigg school building.

A total of 38 responses were received from pupils in Primary 5 to Primary 7. Most respondents live in the Slamannan area (84%), with a smaller number from Limerigg (8%) and other surrounding areas (8%).

In summary:

- Most pupils feel happy and supported at Slamannan Primary School.
- Friends and teachers are central to pupils' positive experiences.
- Pupils expressed a range of views on the proposed closure of Limerigg Primary School.
- There is strong support for the building to be re-used for community focused purposes, particularly a community centre or outdoor learning facility.
- Pupils demonstrate awareness of local service gaps and community needs.

OVERALL FEELINGS ABOUT SCHOOL

71% of pupils are either very happy or happy at Slamannan, 21% not sure/in the middle and 8% were not happy or very unhappy.

Positive responses were commonly linked to:

- Strong friendships
- Supportive and caring teachers
- Enjoyment of lessons, particularly PE, maths, and art

Less positive feelings were typically brief and were usually connected to:

- Missing friends
- General uncertainty rather than specific problems

WHAT PUPILS VALUE MOST ABOUT SCHOOL

When asked what they like most about their school, several consistent themes emerged:

Friends and Relationships - this was the most frequently mentioned factor. Pupils consistently highlighted:

- Seeing and playing with friends
- Feeling included
- Being treated kindly by peers
- Teachers and Support

School Staff - many pupils spoke very positively about staff, noting:

- Kindness and helpfulness of teachers
- Feeling supported when learning
- Teachers helping pupils feel safe and listened to

Some pupils named specific teachers, reflecting strong personal connections.

Learning and Activities - pupils frequently mentioned:

- PE and outdoor activities
- Maths and art
- Clubs and structured play

A small number also highlighted inclusive practices and support for pupils with additional needs, indicating an awareness of equality and care within the school.

VIEWS ON THE CLOSURE OF LIMERIGG PRIMARY SCHOOL

Pupil views on the proposed closure were mixed, broadly falling into three groups.

Pupils in support of the closure proposal - several pupils said “Yes”, agreeing with the closure proposal. These responses were often brief and matter-of-fact, suggesting:

- Acceptance of attending Slamannan Primary School
- A focus on alternative uses for the building
- A belief that the building could serve the wider community

Some pupils supported closure provided the building was reused productively.

Pupils not in support of the closure proposal - a small number said “No”, disagreeing with the closure proposal. Opposition was generally linked to:

- Emotional attachment to school buildings
- Desire to keep local facilities open
- Wider concerns about loss of community resources

A few comments showed strong feeling, including frustration about facilities or local services more generally.

Pupils who were uncertain - a large proportion of pupils selected “I don’t know”. This demonstrates:

- Uncertainty about what closure means in practice
- Limited understanding of decision-making processes
- Difficulty forming a strong opinion on a complex issue

SUGGESTED FUTURE USES FOR THE LIMERIGG BUILDING

Pupils engaged strongly with the question about future use of the Limerigg building. Suggestions were largely realistic and community-focused. The most common suggestions were:

- Community centre
- Outdoor and Learning-Based Uses
- Shops and Local Services
- Sports and Activity Uses

See Appendix 3 for the full detail of pupil responses.

7. RESPONSES TO THE CONSULTATION EXERCISE

7.1 Summary of Email Responses

One email response was received. Key themes are set out below:

- Concerns about site security: Issues were raised regarding the risk of unauthorised access, anti-social behaviour, and potential vandalism if the school premises were to be vacated.
- Suggested mitigation measures: The installation of gates or barriers to control access was proposed, with a view to improving security while maintaining community use of outdoor spaces.
- Infrastructure and servicing concerns: Specific concerns were highlighted regarding the maintenance and future management of a septic tank located within the school grounds, which serves neighbouring properties.
- Value of the building to the community: The respondent noted the importance of the school as part of the area's local heritage and expressed concern about it falling into disuse.
- Suggested future use: It was proposed that the building could be repurposed for community benefit, such as a facility supporting sensory needs.

Email responses can be found in Appendix 8.

7.2 Summary of Oral Representations made at the Public Meetings

One local resident attended the public meeting on Wednesday 11th March and raised several points during the meeting:

- Viability of the School - the local resident commented that the school was "*not viable*" as a continuing facility.
- Potential Sale of the Building - It was asked what happens to the building once it is no longer a school.
- Clarification was sought on land ownership of the school grounds.
- Condition of the Septic Tank - Concerns were raised regarding the septic tank, which is shared with a neighbour and has been overflowing, causing significant disruption.
- Security and Anti-Social Behaviour – concerns were raised about security, particularly relating to the open car park attracting young people, loud music, fishermen, and late-night visits. It was requested that a gate be installed to prevent unauthorised parking. The concern relates to the car park entrance on the left-hand side, noting that access is via a shared drive and that summer activity from wild swimmers increases pressure.
- Community Reflections - the local resident noted that while they could not dispute the findings in the Council's proposal paper, it was "*sad to see a lovely building go to waste.*" They also reflected on historic issues at Black Loch, where a privately-operated outdoor activity centre suffered repeated vandalism culminating in the destruction of the clubhouse.

The Public Meeting Minutes can be found in Appendix 4 along with the presentation slides in Appendix 5.

7.3 Summary of representation made through the online survey

4 people responded to the survey, recording themselves as 2 residents living in the Limerigg Primary School Catchment area, 1 parent/carer of a pupil living in the catchment area of Limerigg Primary School and 1 young person. The online survey responses can be found in Appendix 6.

Table 2: Total number of responses by type of respondent

	Number	%
A resident living in the Limerigg Primary School catchment area	2	50%
Parent/Carer of pupils living in the catchment of Limerigg Primary School	1	25%
Young Person	1	25%
Total	4	100%

7.4 Number of respondents in favour of the proposal, or not

Respondents were asked if they agreed with proposal. 1 (25%) respondent was in favour of the proposal and 3 (75%) were not.

Table 3: Do you agree with the proposal?

	No	Yes	Total
A resident living in the Limerigg Primary School catchment area	1	1	2
Parent/Carer of pupils living in the catchment of Limerigg Primary School	1		1
Young Person	1		1
Total	3	1	4
	75%	25%	100%

7.5 Summary of respondents in favour of the proposal, or not

One resident was in favour of the proposal. The individual response suggested the school be utilised for the community.

“The school could be getting used for other benefits to the community” (Local Resident)

3 responses were not in favour of the proposal. The reasons for not supporting the proposal included:

- The school is an important community asset.
- Limerigg already lacks local amenities.
- Closure would further damage the village’s sense of place.

- Families already face necessary travel for basic services.
- Extra travel for schooling would increase costs and hardship.
- Closure would lead to greater isolation and reduced quality of life.
- The school provides local jobs beyond teaching roles.
- The rural setting offers unique outdoor learning opportunities.
- Former pupils have a history of strong educational outcomes.
- If closed, the site should remain in council use for community and educational benefit.

“If it is decided that the school must close, it should remain with Falkirk Council to run with consideration given to how its unique and special location could benefit the local and wider community of the Falkirk area and beyond so school children and adults can enjoy the idyllic surroundings and the Black Loch for educational and recreational purposes.”, (A resident living in the Limerigg Primary School catchment area)

One response was made regarding how the proposal will affect you. This response is summarised as bellow:

- Family home is adjacent to the school grounds.
- Property relies on access rights through the school playground.
- Household uses and pays for a septic tank located within the school boundary.
- Concerns that site maintenance is inadequate
- Visible overgrown vegetation indicates lack of upkeep.
- Isolated location makes the site vulnerable to vandalism or crime.

7.6 Summary of responses about reasonable alternatives considered

The Proposal Paper identified alternative options to the proposal. Each of these have been further reviewed and assessed considering consultation responses. Respondents were asked to consider the alternative options and suggest any alternative which the local authority should consider.

- Strong support for the building to be retained as a community asset.
- Interest from Community Asset Transfer in using the building as a wellbeing therapy centre, including small animals and counselling.
- Proposal includes community uses such as cafés and seasonal activities.
- Agreement with previous alternative use suggestions.
- If the school closes, it should remain under Falkirk Council ownership.
- The site could support educational and recreational use for both children and adults.
- The natural setting and Black Loch are seen as key assets.
- Any alternative use must limit traffic and parking to protect nearby residents.

“Community Asset Transfer - interested to open a Wellbeing therapy centre with small animals / counselling sessions within this space, also allowing the

community to use the space for cafes, seasonal activities and much more.”, (A resident living in the Limerigg Primary School catchment area)

“Feel that the school should be used as a community asset so much it could be used for”, (Parent/Carer of pupils living in the catchment of Limerigg Primary School)

“Agreement with all above suggestions and additionally, if it is decided that the school must close, it should remain with Falkirk Council to run with consideration given to how its unique and special location could benefit the local and wider community of the Falkirk area and beyond so school children and adults can enjoy the idyllic surroundings and the Black Loch for educational and recreational purposes. However, consideration must be given to limit the amount of vehicular traffic and parking so it does not negatively impact immediate residents,” (A resident living in the Limerigg Primary School catchment area)

7.7 Summary of responses about the community impact

Responses indicated largely negative views on the potential community impact if the proposal were to proceed. Many respondents emphasised the importance of the school as one of the few remaining community assets in Limerigg, highlighting concerns that its closure would further reduce already limited local amenities and erode the village’s sense of identity.

Several comments reflected that the school plays a broader role beyond education, contributing to community cohesion, local employment, and opportunities for social interaction. Respondents noted that its loss would compound previous closures of facilities such as the shop, church, and other local resources, increasing reliance on travel and potentially contributing to isolation.

A recurring theme was that, if closure were to go ahead, the building should be retained for community use. Suggestions included repurposing the site as a community hub, wellbeing centre, or shared space for activities and services, with the aim of maintaining a focal point for the village.

Concerns were also raised about the potential negative effects of leaving the building unused, particularly given its rural and relatively isolated location, with references to risks such as deterioration, neglect, or antisocial behaviour if no future use is secured.

“Limerigg has next to no amenities... Permanently closing the primary school further destroys the unique sense of place that this rural village exhibits...”, (A resident living in the Limerigg Primary School catchment area)

“The school could be getting used for other benefits to the community.”, (A resident living in the Limerigg Primary School catchment area)

“The school needs to be kept as a community asset.”, (Parent/Carer of pupils living in the catchment of Limerigg Primary School)

8. EDUCATION SERVICES RESPONSE TO THE MAIN ISSUES RAISED

Questions and statements received through the representations made during the consultation period fell into the following main themes:

- (a) School viability and educational provision
- (b) Site security and anti-social behaviour
- (c) Infrastructure and servicing (including septic tank)
- (d) Impact on the community
- (e) Travel, accessibility and rurality
- (f) Future use of the school building and site
- (g) Property, access and neighbouring impacts

(a) School viability and educational provision

Issues raised: It was stated that the school is no longer viable as a continuing educational facility, although some respondents highlighted the value of its rural setting, educational outcomes, and role as a local employer.

Response: Education Services acknowledge the positive contribution Limerigg Primary School made to generations of pupils and recognises the unique educational opportunities provided by its rural setting. The proposal does not seek to diminish the quality of education previously delivered at the school.

The proposal has been brought forward because Limerigg Primary School has been mothballed since 2019, there has been no recovery in pupil numbers and there is no evidence that future catchment demand will increase to a sustainable level. These factors, together with the deteriorating condition of the building and the significant investment required to return it to operational use, mean that reopening the school is not considered a reasonable or sustainable option.

As detailed within the Educational Benefits Statement, pupils currently attending Slamannan Primary School benefit from access to a wider peer group, broader curricular opportunities and enhanced support services. Education Services therefore remains satisfied that permanent closure represents the most appropriate response to the reasons for the proposal.

(b) Site security and anti-social behaviour

Issues Raised: Concerns were raised about the risk of unauthorised access, anti-social behaviour, and vandalism if the school were to close. Specific issues included use of the car park, late-night activity, and increased seasonal pressures (e.g. visitors to Black Loch). The installation of gates or barriers was suggested.

Response: Education Services recognise the concerns raised regarding the future security of the site should the proposal be implemented. Similar issues were discussed during the public meeting, particularly in relation to unauthorised vehicle access and the potential for anti-social behaviour.

Should the proposal proceed, responsibility for the management of the property would transfer through the Council's established asset management processes. Further security measures would be considered as part of arrangements for managing the site while decisions regarding its future are progressed. Any operational decisions regarding site security, including the installation of gates or other physical measures, would be considered separately from this proposal.

(c) Infrastructure and servicing (including septic tank)

Issues Raised: Neighbours of the school raised concern regarding the septic tank located within the school grounds, which is shared with neighbouring properties. Issues included maintenance, reported overflow, and uncertainty regarding future responsibility.

Response: Education Services acknowledge the concerns raised regarding the shared septic tank and the ongoing servicing arrangements associated with neighbouring properties.

Following the concerns being raised, the Council arranged for a drainage survey to be undertaken. This identified a collapse within the drainage system located within the school grounds. Repairs to the damaged section have been completed. A resurvey will be undertaken to identify any further issues. In addition, the vegetation surrounding the septic tank has been cleared to improve access for inspection and maintenance.

Whilst these concerns have been fully considered, they relate to the operational management of the property rather than the educational merits of the proposal and do not alter the reasons for bringing forward the proposal.

(d) Impact on the community

Issues Raised: Respondents highlighted that the school was an important community asset and that its permanent closure would contribute to a loss of local amenities, increased isolation, and a reduced sense of place.

Response: Education Services recognises the importance of Limerigg Primary School within the history and identity of the local community and acknowledges the strength of feeling expressed regarding the gradual loss of village amenities.

These matters were carefully considered during the preliminary community engagement and again throughout the statutory consultation.

The proposal paper recognises that the school has an important place within the community and that its closure may be viewed as symbolic of wider changes affecting Limerigg.

However, the school has been mothballed since 2019 and pupils have attended Slamannan Primary School throughout that period. Education Services considers that permanent closure would formalise the existing educational arrangements rather than introduce a new change to educational provision. Whilst recognising the community concerns, Education Services remains satisfied that the proposal represents the most appropriate educational response to the reasons for the proposal.

(e) Travel, accessibility and rurality

Issue Raised: A concern was raised that closure would result in additional travel for families who already face limited access to services, leading to increased costs, inconvenience, and potential hardship.

Response: Education Services recognises the concerns expressed regarding travel and accessibility for families living in a rural community.

Travel arrangements have been in place since the school was mothballed in 2019, with eligible pupils receiving free home-to-school transport to Slamannan Primary School in accordance with the Transport Policy. The bus journey is approximately five minutes and is considered reasonable when compared with travel arrangements experienced by pupils across the Falkirk Council area.

The proposal also considered the wider rural factors required under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, including the effect on the local community and travel arrangements. Having reviewed these matters, Education Services remains satisfied that the existing transport arrangements are appropriate and do not outweigh the educational and operational reasons supporting the proposal.

(f) Future use of the school building and site

Issues Raised: There was strong support for retaining the building as a community asset. Suggestions included community use, a wellbeing or therapy centre, café space, educational and recreational use linked to Black Loch, and continued Council ownership. It was also asked what would happen to the building if it closes.

Response: Education Services welcomes the range of constructive suggestions received regarding the future use of the building and recognises the strong desire within the community to see the property continue to benefit residents.

Should the proposal be approved, the property would become surplus to the operational requirements of Education Services and would be considered

through the Council's established asset management processes. Assuming the property becomes surplus to the Council's wider operational requirements, it would be eligible for consideration through the Council's Community Asset Transfer process before any alternative options are progressed.

The views expressed during the consultation regarding possible future uses of the building will be shared with the relevant Council services overseeing community asset transfer and community engagement.

(g) Property, access and neighbouring impacts

Issues Raised: Concerns were raised by a neighbouring resident regarding property access rights through the school grounds, reliance on shared infrastructure, maintenance of the site (including overgrown vegetation), and the site's vulnerability due to its isolated location.

Response: Education Services acknowledges the concerns raised by neighbouring residents regarding access arrangements, shared infrastructure and the ongoing maintenance of the site.

These matters relate to property ownership, maintenance responsibilities and operational management rather than the educational merits of the proposal. Existing legal rights and responsibilities associated with neighbouring properties would not be affected by the educational decision itself and would continue to be managed through the appropriate Council services.

Whilst these issues have been noted, Education Services is satisfied that they do not alter the reasons for bringing forward the proposal or the educational case supporting permanent closure.

9. HMIE REPORT

In line with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, a report was provided by HMIE Inspector's on the educational aspects of the Proposal to close Limerigg Primary School. This report is attached as Appendix 7.

In preparing this report, HM Inspectors undertook the following activities:

- attendance at the public meeting held on 11th March in connection with the council's proposals;
- consideration of all relevant documentation provided by the council in relation to the proposal, specifically the educational benefits statement and related consultation documents, written and oral submissions from parents and others; and
- visits to Slamannan Primary School and Falkirk High School, including discussion with relevant consultees.

The HMIE report is attached in full at Appendix 7.

The report findings can be summarised as follows:

- (a) HM Inspectors agree that the Council has demonstrated clear educational benefits associated with the proposal. Children benefit from learning and socialising within a larger peer group at Slamannan Primary School, including increased opportunities for collaboration, enhanced social and emotional development, and access to leadership opportunities. HM Inspectors consider there to be sufficient educational merit in the proposal to close Limerigg Primary School.
- (b) HM Inspectors note that most stakeholders who engaged directly with the inspection process were supportive of the proposal and recognised the benefits of the current arrangements. Children report positive experiences at Slamannan Primary School and feel settled, benefitting from a broader range of interactions and opportunities. Whilst some members of the wider community do not support closure, there is a view that the school building should be retained for community use.
- (c) HM Inspectors highlight that Limerigg Primary School has experienced a sustained decline in pupil numbers and has been mothballed since 2019. There is no evidence to suggest that the catchment population will increase sufficiently to support long-term viability. HM Inspectors agree that the Council has appropriately considered reasonable alternatives to closure and that these would not provide educational benefit.
- (d) HM Inspectors noted that, whilst children are settled at Slamannan Primary School and benefit from the current arrangements, a few children from the Limerigg catchment area expressed disappointment that Limerigg Primary School may not reopen and felt they would benefit from more active ways to travel to school. HM Inspectors highlighted this as a view expressed directly by children during the inspection process.

Education Services notes that the findings of HMIE are consistent with the educational benefits identified within the Proposal Paper.

9.1 Falkirk Council's Response to HMIE's Report

Falkirk Council welcomes the report from HMIE and accepts its findings. The authority response to the findings contained within the HMIE Report is as follows:

- (a) *HM Inspectors agree that the Council has demonstrated clear educational benefits associated with the proposal. Children benefit from learning and socialising within a larger peer group at Slamannan Primary School, including increased opportunities for collaboration, enhanced social and emotional development, and access to leadership opportunities. HM Inspectors consider there to be sufficient educational merit in the proposal to close Limerigg Primary School.*

Response: Education Services welcomes the recognition by HMIE that there are clear educational benefits associated with the proposal. Education Services agrees that pupils are benefiting from the wider range of learning experiences, increased opportunities for collaboration within a larger peer group, and enhanced leadership opportunities available at Slamannan Primary School. These experiences support improved social and emotional development, strengthen interpersonal skills and better prepare children for transition to secondary education. Education Services therefore remains of the view that the educational case for permanent closure is justified.

- (b) *HM Inspectors note that the majority of stakeholders who engaged directly with the inspection process were supportive of the proposal and recognised the benefits of the current arrangements. Children report positive experiences at Slamannan Primary School and feel settled, benefitting from a broader range of interactions and opportunities. Whilst some members of the wider community do not support closure, there is a view that the school building should be retained for community use.*

Response: Education Services welcomes the findings that stakeholders who engaged directly with the inspection process were generally supportive of the proposal and recognised the benefits of current arrangements. It is noted that children report positive learning experiences at Slamannan Primary School and that they feel settled and supported. Education Services acknowledges the views expressed by members of the local community regarding the future use of the Limerigg Primary School building and recognises the importance of continued engagement on this matter. The authority considers that the educational arrangements for pupils are working well and are supported by those directly involved in children's learning.

- (c) *HM Inspectors highlight that Limerigg Primary School has experienced a sustained decline in pupil numbers and has been mothballed since 2019. There is no evidence to suggest that the catchment population will increase sufficiently to support long-term viability. HM Inspectors agree that the Council has appropriately considered reasonable alternatives to closure and that these would not provide educational benefit.*

Response: Education Services acknowledges HM Inspectors' conclusion that the sustained decline in pupil numbers and the extended period of mothballing demonstrate that Limerigg Primary School is no longer viable as an operational school. There is no evidence to indicate that future demand within the catchment will increase to a sustainable level. Education Services agrees that all reasonable alternatives to closure have been appropriately considered and that none would provide comparable or improved educational outcomes. The Council therefore remains satisfied that permanent closure represents the most appropriate and sustainable response.

- (d) *HM Inspectors noted that, whilst children are settled at Slamannan Primary School and benefit from the current arrangements, a few children from the Limerigg catchment area expressed disappointment that Limerigg Primary School may not reopen and felt they would benefit from more active ways to travel to school.*

Response: Education Services acknowledges the views expressed by a small number of children regarding opportunities for active travel. The Council recognises the benefits that walking, cycling and other forms of active travel can have for health and wellbeing. However, educational transport arrangements have been in place since the school was mothballed in 2019 and eligible pupils currently receive free home-to-school transport to Slamannan Primary School. Education Services notes that most pupils reported positive experiences at Slamannan Primary School and are settled within the school community. Whilst opportunities for active travel may be more limited because of the current arrangements, Education Services remains satisfied that the educational benefits associated with attendance at Slamannan Primary School outweigh this factor.

10. RURAL SCHOOLS – COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 9(1) OF THE SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010

Following receipt of HMIE Inspectors report, education officers carried out a further review of the proposal having regard to representations received during the consultation period.

Education Services has reviewed the proposal and each of the reasonable alternatives to it as set out in the Proposal Paper which identified 4 main options:

- Option 1 – Re-open Limerigg Primary School.
- Option 2 – Re-open Limerigg Primary School with Increased occupancy through rezoning and extending the catchment area
- Option 3 – Re-open Limerigg Primary School with available capacity used for early years provision or for other purposes.
- Option 4 – Continue with the mothballing of Limerigg Primary School.

These options have been further reviewed and assessed below considering consultation responses.

In reviewing each option, Education Services has considered the written and oral representations received during the statutory consultation, together with the findings of HM Inspectors report. The following sections explain whether any evidence arising from the consultation has altered the Council's assessment of the reasonable alternatives previously considered.

Option 1 – Re-open Limerigg Primary School

Re-opening the school would restore local educational provision; however, very low projected pupil numbers, high operating and capital costs, and the availability of nearby provision at Slamannan Primary School mean that this option is not considered reasonable or sustainable.

Respondents highlighted the unique rural setting of the school and the educational opportunities associated with its location. However, evidence continues to demonstrate insufficient demand for places to support the long-term sustainability of the school, and pupils are currently benefiting from the educational opportunities available at Slamannan Primary School.

Re-opening the school would reduce travel requirements for local pupils and could allow active travel for some children living within the village. However, pupils currently attending Slamannan Primary School may lose entitlement to free school transport should families choose to remain there, and staff would continue to travel to the rural location.

Consultation responses recognised the importance of Limerigg Primary School to the local community and highlighted the value of its rural setting, educational outcomes and contribution to community identity.

Respondents also acknowledged, however, that pupil numbers remain extremely low and that reopening the school would be difficult to justify.

In summary, Education Services is of the view that no additional evidence was presented during the consultation to demonstrate that re-opening the school would provide a sustainable educational or financial solution.

Option 2 - Re-open Limerigg Primary School with Increased occupancy through rezoning and extending the catchment area.

This option would involve extending the catchment area to increase pupil numbers. However, there are no realistic opportunities to rezone neighbouring communities without adversely affecting other rural schools. In addition, parts of the surrounding area fall within the boundary of North Lanarkshire Council and cross authority rezoning would introduce additional complexity and would not be within the sole control of Falkirk Council. Such a proposal would be disruptive to existing school communities and would undermine the sustainability of nearby schools. Overall, it is not considered a realistic or deliverable alternative.

Re-opening the school through rezoning could strengthen the sustainability of the Limerigg community and restore a local school. However, it would significantly alter existing school arrangements for neighbouring communities and could adversely affect the viability of other rural schools. Preliminary engagement identified no practical support for this option.

Whilst some pupils could experience shorter travel distances, others would be required to travel further and families choosing to remain at their existing school could lose entitlement to free school transport. Existing transport arrangements would also require significant revision.

Some respondents referred to alternative models that might increase the viability of the school. Education Services has considered these representations; however, no evidence was presented during either the preliminary engagement or statutory consultation to demonstrate that rezoning neighbouring catchments would be practical, sustainable or supported by affected communities.

Education Services therefore concludes that the consultation has not identified any new evidence which changes the assessment of this option.

Option 3 - Re-open Limerigg Primary School with available capacity used for early years provision or for other purposes.

This option would involve re-opening the school to provide early years (nursery) provision. However, evidence indicates very low pre-school numbers in the catchment (fewer than 5 children), alongside the availability of established nursery provision at Slamannan Primary School. Significant capital investment would also be required to adapt the building to meet current standards. As such, this option is not considered viable or sustainable.

While re-opening the building for nursery provision could increase community use and provide a local facility, there is no established demand for such provision locally. Historically, nursery provision for children living in the Limerigg catchment has been accessed at Slamannan Primary School, and there is no expectation that this would return to Limerigg.

Travel patterns would remain largely unchanged for most families, as nursery-age children have historically travelled to Slamannan to access early years provision. Any benefit would be limited to a very small number of families who could access provision locally.

In summary, Education Services has considered these representations; and concludes that no additional evidence was presented to demonstrate sufficient demand to support a sustainable nursery provision or to alter the assessment that this option would not be educationally or financially viable.

Option 4 – Continue with the mothballing of Limerigg Primary School.

This option would continue the current mothballed status of the school. However, the school has already been mothballed since 2019, with no recovery in pupil numbers and no evidence that demand will increase.

Statutory Guidance indicates that mothballing should be a temporary arrangement; therefore, continued mothballing is not considered appropriate.

Consultation responses expressed frustration regarding the continued mothballing of the school and the deterioration of the building, with many respondents indicating that they wished to see the property brought back into active use rather than remain vacant. Continued mothballing would not provide an active community asset or address these concerns.

There would be no change to existing travel arrangements. Pupils would continue to attend Slamannan Primary School using the transport arrangements already established since 2019.

Consultation responses did not identify continued mothballing as a preferred long-term solution. Whilst respondents wished to see the building retained for community benefit, continued mothballing was not a sustainable long-term option.

Education Services therefore concludes that no evidence has emerged which changes the assessment that continued mothballing would not represent an appropriate or sustainable response.

11. REVIEW OF THE PROPOSAL INCLUDING AN EXPLANATION OF COMPLIANCE WITH SECTIONS 11A, 12, 12 A AND 13 OF THE SCHOOL (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 WHEN CARRYING OUT THE REVIEW

When reviewing the proposal, Education Services confirms that it is satisfied that implementation of the proposal is the most appropriate response to the reasons for formulating the proposal identified by the authority under section 12A (2) (a).

Education Services, in the Consultation Proposal Document (Appendix 1), clearly identified the reasons for formulating the proposal. It also detailed the alternatives that were considered prior to formulating the proposal. Education Services has identified that the representations made during the consultation period have not provided any options which are reasonable alternatives to the closure of Limerigg Primary School.

Education Services has reviewed the Educational Benefits Statement that was prepared (see Section 8 of the Proposal Paper at Appendix 1). The review has concluded that the educational benefits; and effects as identified therein are still valid, and that there are positive educational benefits that have arisen from the mothballing of Limerigg Primary School, and that these will continue should education provision at Limerigg Primary School be permanently discontinued.

The consultation feedback received has not led Education Services to reconsider the Educational Benefits Statement. It is recognised, however,

that by highlighting the benefits of Slamannan Primary School, Education Services is not implying that similar positive features did not previously exist at Limerigg Primary School. These benefits are considered in the context of the current proposal and the educational provision that would be delivered at Slamannan Primary School for pupils from the Limerigg catchment area, noting that Limerigg Primary School has been mothballed since 2019 and is no longer operating as a school.

In carrying out this review, Education Services has had regard to the preliminary requirements under section 12A, including consideration of reasonable alternatives to closure; has reviewed all consultation representations in accordance with sections 11A and 13; and has given special regard to the factors set out in section 12 relating to community impact, school travel and rural sustainability.

Education Services has considered whether the consultation responses provide evidence that any reasonable alternatives would better address the reasons for formulating the proposal. In undertaking this review, Education Services has also considered whether any new evidence has emerged during the consultation period which would reasonably lead to the authority to formulate the proposal differently. Education Services is satisfied that no such evidence has emerged and that the proposal continues to represent the most appropriate response to the reasons identified under section 12A(2) (a).

Education Services remains of the view that implementation of the closure proposal is the most appropriate response to the reasons for the proposal. In line with the principles outlined in the proposal paper, the permanent closure of Limerigg Primary School and associated rezoning of the catchment area to Slamannan Primary School represents the only viable way to provide sustainable primary education for the Limerigg community.

Education Services is satisfied that the matters identified by the School Closure Review Panel in September 2021 have now been addressed through the preliminary engagement process, consideration of reasonable alternatives and the fresh statutory consultation undertaken in accordance with sections 12A and 13 of the 2010 Act.

Education Services has special regard to the following factors mentioned in section 12 (3).

- (b) the likely effect on the local community in consequence of the proposal (if implemented)
- (c) the likely effect caused by any different travelling arrangements that may be required in consequence of the proposal (if implemented).

Education Services has considered section 12 (4), 'the effect on the community is to be assessed by reference (in particular) to –

- (a) 'the sustainability of the community'

Education Services has carefully considered the representations received regarding the role of Limerigg Primary School within the local community and the potential impact of permanent closure on community sustainability. Consultees highlighted concerns regarding the continued loss of local amenities, the importance of the school to the identity of Limerigg and the potential effect that closure may have on the long-term attractiveness of the village as a place to live.

Education Services acknowledges these concerns. However, Limerigg Primary School has been mothballed since August 2019 and has not operated as an educational establishment during that period. Pupils residing within the catchment area have attended Slamannan Primary School since 2019 and the proposal therefore formalises existing educational arrangements rather than removing a currently operating school from the community.

Education Services has also had regard to the availability of community facilities within the area. Whilst the school building itself is not currently used for community purposes, the village continues to benefit from the Limerigg Community Hall, which is operated through a Community Asset Transfer arrangement. Consultees also identified a number of potential future community uses for the school building. Should the proposal be approved, these views will be made available to the Council services responsible for asset management and Community Asset Transfer processes.

Having considered the consultation responses, pupil roll data, existing educational arrangements and the factors set out in section 12 of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, Education Services remains satisfied that permanent closure of Limerigg Primary School would not have a significant adverse effect on the sustainability of the community and represents the most appropriate response to the reasons for formulating the proposal.

(b) 'the availability of the school's premises and its other facilities for use by the community'.

Limerigg Primary School has been mothballed since 2019 and is not currently used by the community. Education Services recognises that consultees viewed the building as having potential future community value and expressed strong support for retaining it as a community asset. Suggestions included community facilities, wellbeing services, outdoor learning opportunities and other uses linked to the Black Loch.

However, permanent closure of the school would not prevent future community use of the building. Should the proposal be approved, the property would become surplus to the operational requirements of Education Services. Assuming it subsequently becomes surplus to the requirements of the Council as a whole, the property would be considered

through the Council's asset management processes, including eligibility for consideration through the Community Asset Transfer process.

Education Services notes the significant interest expressed during the consultation regarding future community use of the building and these views will be made available to the relevant Council services as part of any future consideration of the site.

Education Services has considered section 12 (5), for the purpose of subsection 3 (c)

- (a) the effect caused by such travelling arrangements includes (in particular) –
 - (i) that on the school's pupils and staff and any other users of the school's facilities,
 - (ii) any environmental impact,
- (b) the travelling arrangements are those to and from the school of (and for) the school's pupils and staff and any other users of the school's facilities.

Education Services has considered the transport arrangements for pupils attending Slamannan Primary School in place of Limerigg Primary School. Since the school was mothballed in 2019, eligible pupils have received free home-to-school transport to Slamannan Primary School in accordance with Council policy. The arrangements have operated successfully throughout this period, and no evidence has emerged to suggest that pupils from the Limerigg catchment area have experienced educational disadvantage because of the travel arrangements.

The journey between Limerigg and Slamannan Primary School is approximately 2 miles and takes around five minutes by bus or car. Education Services considers that both the distance travelled and journey times are reasonable and comparable with those experienced by other pupils across Falkirk. Free school transport will continue to be provided in accordance with Council policy for eligible pupils.

The transport costs associated with pupils travelling from the Limerigg catchment area to Slamannan Primary School are reflected within the financial information contained in the proposal document in Appendix 1. Whilst the continued transport of pupils has a small environmental impact, Education Services considers that this impact is proportionate given the short travel distance involved and does not outweigh the educational and operational reasons supporting the proposal

Education Services has carefully considered all representations received during the statutory consultation period. Education Services has reviewed the proposal considering the report from HMIE and is satisfied that the findings support the educational case for the proposal. The report

identifies clear educational benefits associated with current arrangements and does not identify any educational matters which would warrant reconsideration of the proposal. The consultation identified a range of views regarding the value of a small rural school, community identity, travel arrangements, the future use of the building and neighbouring property matters. These issues have been fully considered and are reflected throughout this report.

Having reviewed the proposal considering these representations and the report from HMIE Inspectors, Education Services is satisfied that no new evidence has emerged that would alter the reasons for formulating the proposal or demonstrate that a reasonable alternative would better meet those reasons. In undertaking this review, Education Services has also considered whether any new evidence emerged during the consultation period that would reasonably have led the authority to formulate the proposal differently. Education Services is satisfied that no such evidence has emerged.

Education Services considers that, in reflecting on the written and oral representations made and in reviewing the proposal considering those representations, in light of the report from HMIE and in terms of section 12, 12A and 13, it is appropriate to implement the proposal.

In view of the above Education Services recommends that approval be given to the proposal that:

- **provision of a school at Limerigg Primary School be permanently discontinued with effect from 22 December 2026, or as soon as possible thereafter;**
- **pupils who reside in the Limerigg Primary School catchment area to continue and permanently receive their education at Slamannan Primary School; and**
- **the delineated catchment area of Slamannan Primary School be permanently extended to include the whole delineated catchment area of Limerigg Primary School.**

12. ALLEGED OMISSIONS OR INACCURACIES

Section 10(3) of the 2010 Act places a requirement on Falkirk Council to provide details of any inaccuracy or omission in the Proposal Paper which has either been identified by Education Services or raised by consultees. This provision also requires Education Services to provide a statement on the action taken in respect of the inaccuracy or omission, or if no action was taken, to state that fact and why.

During the statutory consultation, there were no areas identified by the authority as being inaccurate or omitted from the Proposal Paper.

13. FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF THIS REPORT

In accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, this Consultation Report will be published for a period of at least three weeks, from 7 August 2026 to 31 August 2026, before Falkirk Council reaches a final decision on the proposal on 17 September 2026.

During this period, interested parties may consider the contents of the Consultation Report and may submit comments on its accuracy or any omissions from the report for the consideration of Elected Members prior to the Council reaching a final decision on the proposal.

The Council will take account of the information contained within this Consultation Report, together with any comments received on the report during the publication period, when determining whether to implement the proposal.

Comments on this Consultation Report should be submitted to educ.consultation@falkirk.gov.uk by 10:00am on Monday 31 August 2026.

14. OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE REPRESENTATIONS TO THE SCOTTISH MINISTERS

If Falkirk Council decides to implement the proposal, in whole or in part, the decision in so far as it relates to the closure of Limerigg Primary School will be notified to the Scottish Ministers. The Council will notify the Scottish Ministers of the decision and provide them with a copy of the Consultation Proposal Document, this Consultation Report and the notice published under section 11A (3) of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, within 6 days of the decision becoming final.

Falkirk Council would also be required to publish a notice on its website of the decision to implement the proposal and why it has been satisfied that closure is the most appropriate response to the reasons for formulating the proposal.

The Scottish Ministers will have an 8-week period from the date of the Council's decision to decide if they will call-in any closure decision made by Falkirk Council. This 8-week timeframe would consist of an initial 3 weeks from the date of decision, during which representation can be made to the Ministers, and a further 5 weeks for the Scottish Ministers to decide whether to issue a call-in notice. During this period Falkirk Council will not proceed to implement any closure decision.

Appendix 1: Proposal Document



THIS IS A CONSULTATIVE DOCUMENT

Proposal Paper

That, subject to the outcome of this proposal:

- **Provision of a school at Limerigg Primary School be permanently discontinued with effect from August 2026, or as soon as possible thereafter;**
- **That the pupils of Limerigg Primary School catchment area permanently receive their education at Slamannan Primary School, from August 2026 or as soon as possible thereafter; and**
- **That the delineated catchment area of Slamannan Primary School be permanently extended to include the whole delineated catchment area of Limerigg Primary School from August 2026.**

This document has been issued by Falkirk Council for proposal in terms of The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

1. REASONS FOR FORMULATING THIS PROPOSAL

The Schools (Consultation) Scotland Act 2010 states that education authorities must identify the reasons for formulating a proposal to close a rural school. This proposal was formulated for the following reasons:

- i. Limerigg Primary Schools has been formally mothballed for approaching 7 years with no pupils in attendance since August 2019.
- ii. The catchment demand for places in Limerigg Primary School continues to be assessed to be low and is not predicted to rise.
- iii. The Council is experiencing declining pupil numbers, making re-opening impractical.
- iv. Whilst the school is mothballed, the building is deteriorating with limited budgets for repairs, maintenance and capital investment. The current annual cost of mothballing Limerigg Primary School is £24,480.
- v. There are no imminent house building proposals in the catchment area of Limerigg Primary School that would affect current projections. Planning permission in principle was granted for a proposal for up to 90 houses in Limerigg village in 2019, but the proposal has not developed further in the intervening 7 years and there is no indication currently that it is likely to proceed in the foreseeable future. If it does proceed at a future date, and Limerigg PS has permanently closed, then Slamannan Primary School will have sufficient capacity to absorb the additional primary pupils that arise

On **26 March 2019**, the Education Executive agreed that Limerigg Primary School would be mothballed from August 2019 due to falling catchment demand for places.

On **26 January 2021**, the Education, Children and Young People Executive was informed that the school remained mothballed, with no plans to re-open it beyond August 2021 due to continued low projected demand. At this meeting, it was agreed to progress to a formal statutory consultation on a proposal to permanently close Limerigg Primary School. The findings from this statutory consultation were reported to the Education, Children & Young People Committee on **1 June 2021**, which approved the recommendation to close the school permanently and submit the statutory notification to Scottish Ministers, in accordance with the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*.

On **26 July 2021**, Scottish Ministers reviewed Falkirk Council's proposal and determined that there were grounds for a call-in under section 17(2)(a) of the 2010 Act.

The **School Closures Review Panel** subsequently reviewed the case and, on **24 September 2021**, concluded that Falkirk Council had not fully met its obligations under the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*. As a result, the closure was not approved, and the Council was required to undertake the following steps before making any updated decision:

- Fully comply with the preliminary requirements set out in section 12A of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, including proper consideration of any reasonable alternatives to closure.
- If closure was still considered the most appropriate course of action, prepare a fresh proposal paper in full compliance with section 13 of the 2010 Act.
- Undertake a fresh statutory consultation process with all relevant consultees.

Education Services have recently undertaken preliminary community engagement in line with section 12A of the Act, including public meetings and a community survey.

A decision has now been taken to undertake a statutory consultation on a proposal to permanently close Limerigg Primary School and to permanently extend the catchment area of Slamannan Primary School to include the existing catchment area of Limerigg primary school.

2. LIMERIGG AND THE LOCAL AREA

Limerigg is a small village 8 miles to the south of Falkirk. It lies 2 miles south of Slamannan, 4 miles south-west of Avonbridge and 3½ miles north-east of Caldercruix.

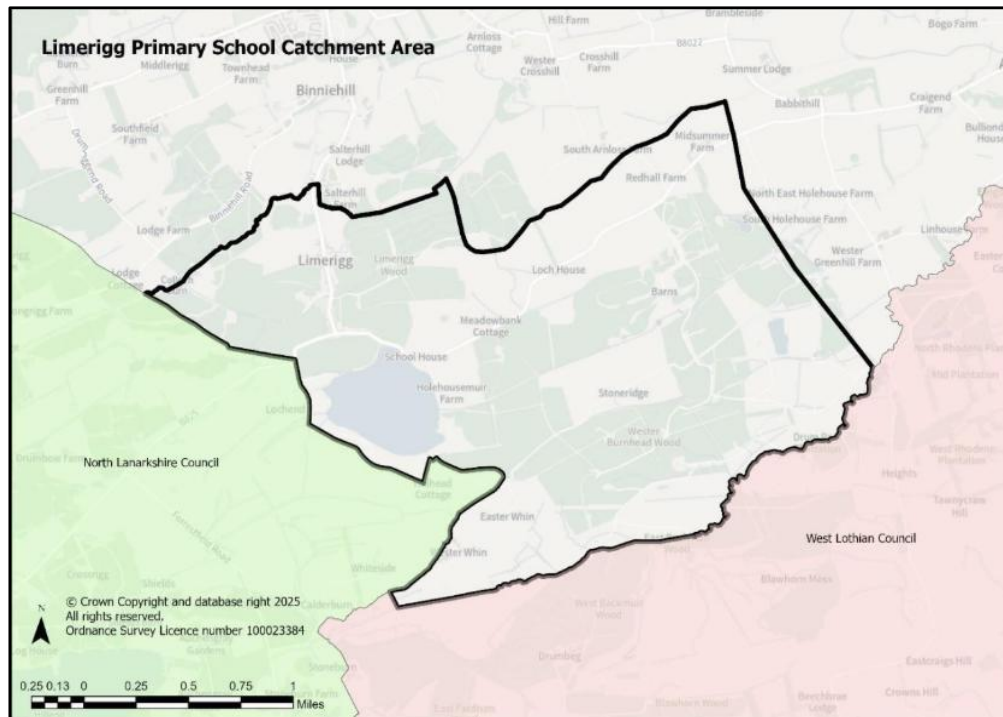
To the south and west is the boundary of North Lanarkshire and West Lothian Councils.

Settlement profiles provide basic information for the towns and villages in the Falkirk Council area. The latest settlement profile for Limerigg is available [here](#).

Planning permission in principle was granted for a proposal for up to 90 houses in Limerigg village in 2019. The proposal has not developed further in the intervening 7 years and there is no indication currently that it is likely to proceed in the foreseeable future. If it does proceed at a future date, then Slamannan Primary School will have sufficient capacity to absorb the additional primary pupils that would arise.

3. LIMERIGG PRIMARY SCHOOL

Limerigg Primary School is a non-denominational, rural school situated outside the village of Limerigg. It is approximately 120 years old. The catchment area comprises the village itself and the surrounding farms and isolated dwellings (see map below).



The [Scottish Government Rural School List](#) Scottish Government Rural School List classifies Limerigg Primary School as an “accessible rural” school (areas with a population of less than 3,000 people, and within a drive time of less than 30 minutes to a settlement of 10,000 or more). Falkirk is 8 miles away.

The [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#) Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 makes special arrangements in relation to rural schools and establishes a presumption against closure of rural schools. The result of this is education authorities must have special regard to several factors before formalising a proposal to close a rural school and in consulting on and reaching a decision whether to implement a rural school closure proposal.

These duties are outlined in [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#) Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 and the accompanying [Statutory Guidance](#).

As Limerigg Primary School is a rural school, when formulating this proposal, the Council is required to:

- i. Identify the reasons for formulating the proposal; and
- ii. Consider whether there are any reasonable alternatives to the proposal as a response to those reasons.

In addition, in the proposal the Council must also give special regard to:

- i. The likely effect on the local community in consequence of the proposal (if implemented), and
- ii. The likely effect caused by any different traveling arrangements that may be required in consequence of the proposal (if implemented).

The school structure, when last open in June 2019, had 5 pupils in one composite class across stages Primary 2 to Primary 6.

The school has a capacity of 50 pupils and the last recorded school roll in school session 2018/19 was 5 pupils.

Throughout Scotland, core facts are gathered and published on school buildings. The definition and assessment categorisations are set by the Scottish Government. When last open in 2019, the condition and suitability ratings for Limerigg Primary School were:

- Condition – **B**, Satisfactory - Performing adequately but showing minor deterioration.
- Suitability – **C**, Poor – Showing major problems and/or not operating optimally (the school buildings and grounds impede the delivery of activities that are needed for children and communities in the school).

Although the school has been kept windproof, watertight and secure, it has been unoccupied since 2019, and its condition has deteriorated.

4. STEPS TAKEN TO ADDRESS THE REASONS FOR THIS PROPOSAL

The original mothballing of the school in 2019 followed a consultation with the local/school community. It was decided that the school should be mothballed due to extremely low pupil numbers, but pupil demand would be monitored annually to determine whether the school became viable for reopening.

Following a review of the mothballing in 2021, a decision was taken to proceed to a statutory consultation on a proposal to permanently close the school. Following this consultation, the Education, Children and Young People Executive agreed to a permanent closure, however Scottish Ministers referred the decision to the Schools Closure Review Panel who

did not approve the closure decision because the Council had not fully complied with the preliminary requirements set out in Section 12A of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, including proper consideration of any reasonable alternatives to closure.

Following this decision, there have been a further 4 years where the school has remained mothballed and opportunity for pupil numbers to recover. This has not happened, and as outlined above, primary and pre-school numbers in the local area have shown a marked decline.

Following the annual review of mothballing in 2025, it was decided to carry out a preliminary engagement with the community to discuss the reasonable alternatives to closure and consider whether to come forward with a proposal to permanently close the school.

Before bringing this proposal to a statutory consultation, a preliminary engagement was undertaken with the Limerigg community. Letters were sent out by post to all addresses in the Limerigg Primary School catchment area. In addition, letters were sent by email to all parent/carers of primary aged pupils in the same area, the Slamannan Primary School Parent Council and the Limerigg Community Hall Committee.

These letters outlined the reasons why the closure proposal is being considered and invited views on:

- a) The likely effect on the local community if the school were to close permanently.
- b) The likely effect of differing travelling arrangements for children and families in the Limerigg catchment.
- c) The likely effect on children's education if the school were to be closed permanently.

The letter also asked the community to consider each of the following and suggest any other viable options.

- a) Re-open Limerigg Primary School.
- b) Re-open Limerigg Primary School with increased occupancy through rezoning and extending the catchment area.
- c) Permanent Closure.
- d) Continued mothballing of Limerigg Primary School.

Consultees were invited to complete an online response form on Participate Plus or write directly to Education Services with a response. They were also invited to a public meeting held at Slamannan Primary School on 22 September 2025. The informal consultation period was from 12 September to 10 October 2025.

Each option was appraised, taking account of the community feedback; financial assessment; pupil roll implications; assessment of rural factors and

due regard to community impact and travel arrangements; and educational benefits.

There were 9 responses to the survey, and 3 members of the community attended the public meeting at Slamannan Primary School. The key findings from this engagement are detailed in Section 9.

5. REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

In arriving at the proposal set out within this Proposal Paper, the Council has considered alternative options for the future of Limerigg Primary School:

- Option 1 – Re-open Limerigg Primary School.
- Option 2 – Re-open Limerigg Primary School with Increased occupancy through rezoning and extending the catchment area
- Option 3 – Re-open Limerigg Primary School with available capacity used for early years provision or for other purposes.
- Option 4 – Continue with the mothballing of Limerigg Primary School.

In considering the options below, account was taken of the fact there is a presumption against closure of a rural school. As part of the options appraisal, the “rural school factors” specified the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#) Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 have been given special regard.

These are the likely:

- Education benefits.
- Effect on the local community.
- Effect on travel arrangements.

6. ASSESSMENT OF ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

Option 1 – Re-open Limerigg Primary School

Summary - The low projected uptake, cost of returning Limerigg Primary School to operational use, and availability of nearby alternative provision in Slamannan means this is not considered to be a reasonable alternative option.

ASSESSMENT ON RURAL FACTORS

Effect on the Local Community

The reopening of the school would enable the premises to be used by the community however the community has a well-supported village hall, which is the main focus for most of the community activities. The presence of a school may make the area a more attractive place to live, therefore encourage

families with school aged children or pre-school aged children to move to the area.

If the school were to reopen as an educational establishment there would be an economic impact with respect to the considerable expenditure needed to bring the building up to an acceptable standard. There would also be costs relating to staffing, and ongoing maintenance. The reopening of the school and the potential relocation of families may have a positive effect on the wider economy of the community.

Effect on travel arrangements

The travel distance from Limerigg to Slamannan Primary School is 2 miles via the B8022. Travel time is approximately 5 minutes (Source: Google Maps). The travel arrangements have been in place since August 2019. If Limerigg Primary School was to reopen there could be a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of pupils who are able to walk or cycle to school. There are currently 6 catchment children from Limerigg attending Slamannan Primary School, and these pupils are transported to school by taxi. Travel time is 510 minutes each way and currently costs £13,300 per annum.

Staff would travel to the school by cars it is unlikely they will live locally. There may be a positive environmental impact as the use of vehicles to transport pupils may decrease, but the school is ½ mile from the village, so there were a number of pupils driven to school when it was open.

Further to this, the pupils currently attending Slamannan Primary School from the Limerigg Primary School catchment area would lose their entitlement to transport in line with the Falkirk Council school transport policy. This would have a significant impact of those families particularly if their preference was to remain at Slamannan Primary School.

Effect on education benefits

The Educational benefits associated with Limerigg pupils accessing Slamannan Primary School, balanced against them attending the much smaller Limerigg Primary School are detailed in the Education Benefits Statement in section 8. This concludes that there would not be a net education benefit for pupils if Limerigg Primary School were to re-open.

Option 2 - Re-open Limerigg Primary School with increased occupancy through rezoning and extending the catchment area.

Summary – There are no viable or sensible options for increasing the catchment area of Limerigg Primary School. Any proposal to do so would be disruptive to families living in the Upper Braes area and likely to face opposition. Only 2 other rural communities are reasonably close and adjacent to the Limerigg Primary School catchment area, Slamannan and Avonbridge. Both have their own rural schools which are at low occupancy levels and any reduction in numbers at these schools to boost the Limerigg pupil numbers would affect their own viability.

ASSESSMENT OF RURAL FACTORS

Effect on the local community

This is hard to assess due to there being no viable options, but if there were it would certainly disrupt other nearby rural communities if the Limerigg Primary School catchment is extended and would undermine the viability of other rural schools in those areas.

Effect on travel arrangements

Any such proposal would require the transport of pupils from other areas where they can currently walk to school.

Effect on education benefits

As for option 1 regarding Limerigg catchment pupils, there would be no net education benefit expected. This would also be the case for pupils rezoned from other rural villages in the nearby area, and the viability of other rural schools would be undermined in the process.

Option 3 Re-open Limerigg Primary School with available capacity used for early years provision or other purposes.

Summary – The location of Limerigg Primary School at the southern extremity of the Falkirk Council area, the space availability within the school and the nearby early years provision in Slamannan means this is not considered a reasonable option.

ASSESSMENT OF RURAL FACTORS

Effect on the local community

The addition of Early Years provision would neither be viable or practical in this small building. Major capital investment would be needed to carry out the necessary alterations, and this could not be justified based on current pre-school numbers in the community (less than 5 according to data provided by Forth Valley Health Board). Even when Limerigg Primary School was open pre-mothballing, early years provision for the village was based in Slamannan, 2 miles away, so there is no community expectation that it should be provided more locally.

Effect on travel arrangements

Option 1 details this with regard to the re-opening of Limerigg Primary school. Regarding early years provision, this has never been available in Limerigg, and pre-school children have always been taken to Slamannan by their parents to access this.

Effect on education benefits

As for Option 1 regarding primary pupils. The pre-school numbers are so small that early year's provision is not viable in Limerigg. If it was considered, there would be no net education benefit to the handful of pupils attending compared with the larger provision that can be offered in Slamannan.

Option 4 - Continue with the mothballing of Limerigg Primary School

Summary - Mothballing the school in anticipation of increased pupil numbers is not considered a reasonable alternative. The school has now been mothballed for over 6 years and the primary age population in Limerigg catchment area has more the halved in that time. There is no evidence that numbers will recover to ensure a sustainable demand for places at the school. The Statutory Guidance for the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended, in relation to mothballing states “The maximum length of its duration is likely to depend on the location of the school and the desirability of maintaining capacity to re-open a school there, but it is unlikely that it should exceed 3 years in areas that are not very remote.”

ASSESSMENT OF RURAL FACTORS

Effect on the local community

During the preliminary engagement with the community, there was no support for continuing to mothball the school.

Effect on travel arrangements

Limerigg primary age children would continue to be provided with free school transport to Slamannan Primary School. There would be no change here.

Effect on education benefits

The education benefits from continued mothballing do not differ from those attributed to permanent closure. This is fully explored in the Education Benefits Statement in Section 8.

CONCLUSION FROM THE OPTIONS ASSESSED

Assessment of the 4 alternative options considered, taking special regard to the rural school considerations, demonstrates that the permanent closure of Limerigg Primary School, with the pupils instead attending Slamannan Primary School, is the only reasonable alternative in response to the unsustainable school roll and represents the best value for educational purposes. The following sections now consider that option in more depth.

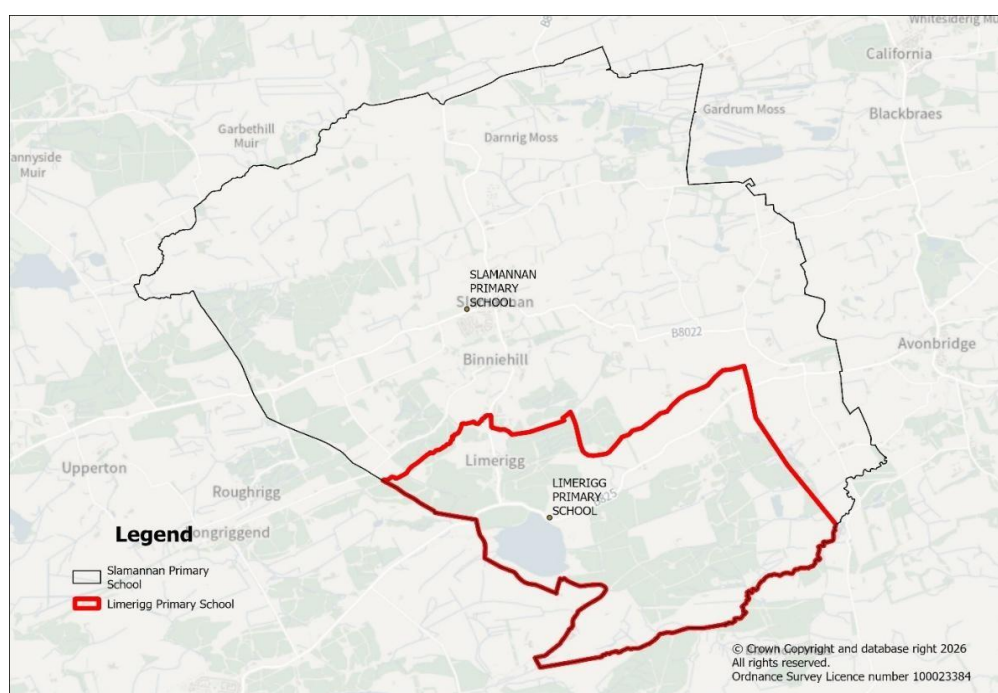
7. SLAMANNAN PRIMARY SCHOOL

[Slamannan Primary School](#) is located immediately north of the current catchment area for Limerigg Primary School, approximately 2 miles between the two schools. Slamannan Primary School is part of the catchment for Falkirk High School. Denominational pupils are secondary educated at St. Mungo's High School.

Before Limerigg Primary School was mothballed, Slamannan Primary School already had a shared management arrangement with Limerigg Primary School which meant both schools were managed by a single Headteacher.

Slamannan Primary School provides non-denominational primary education to Primary 1 – 7 pupils. The school has an Enhanced Provision setting. There is a nursery provision at Slamannan Primary School which can accommodate a maximum of 56 children when fully staffed.

The catchment area for Slamannan Primary School adjoins the catchment areas for Limerigg, Avonbridge, California, Shieldhill and Comely Park Primary Schools. The map below shows the Slamannan and Limerigg Primary School catchment areas.



Slamannan Primary School has a capacity for 237 primary pupils. The pupil roll is currently 107 pupils (2025/26 school census) and the occupancy based on this is 45%.

The school structure currently operates (session 2025/26) with 5 primary classes, comprising a straight Primary 1 class and composite classes across all other year stages.

Throughout Scotland, core facts are gathered and published on school buildings. The definition and assessment categorisations are set by the Scottish Government. The current condition and suitability ratings for Slamannan Primary School are:

- Condition – **B**, Satisfactory - Performing adequately but showing minor deterioration.
- Suitability – **A**, Good – Performing well and operating effectively.

8. EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS STATEMENT

This educational benefits statement is written from the perspective of benefits, should the proposal for permanent closure be implemented. This statement is focussed on the educational benefits for pupils attending Slamannan Primary School.

Assessment of likely educational benefits on pupils

Falkirk Council has a responsibility to ensure that education for school pupils is delivered in a quality school environment that sustains and improves their experiences and outcomes. The educational benefits associated with this proposal relate to:

- Learning and teaching.
- Meeting learners needs.
- Broadening the range of opportunities.
- The environment for learning including curriculum.

Whilst recognising the high quality of education provision that was offered at Limerigg Primary School, the Council considers that the small, multi-stage cohort, taught by a single teacher, would benefit more from the wider range and breadth of learning experiences available to them at Slamannan Primary School.

The multi-stage, single class environment means that there is a high probability of pupils not having peers at the same year stage, and this can remain the case for their entire primary education. Such a composition means that these pupils do not benefit routinely from learning in collaborative groups with age and stage peers. Pupils may be taught by the same teacher throughout their primary career and whilst this can provide consistency, it can limit their opportunity to develop relationships and confidence with a wide range of adults prior to transitioning to a secondary school which requires interactions and relationship building with a far wider range of adults. At Slamannan Primary School children benefit more from working with a wider range of their peer group. This allows them to build and develop stronger and wider peer relationships with the group of children, including those with whom they will transition to the local secondary school.

Limerigg School operated under a shared headship arrangement with Slamannan Primary School. Therefore, transition for pupils during the period of mothballing has been seamless and consistent. The Head Teacher of Slamannan Primary School and the wider management team are now dedicated to one school, within one building at all times. This supports consistent application of curriculum delivery and other policies aimed to support high-quality educational experiences for pupils.

Notably, the educational benefits arising from the proposal for pupils transferring from a smaller school such as Limerigg Primary School to a

larger school such as Slamannan Primary School are assessed by the Education Service to include i-iv below.

Learning and Teaching

The curriculum includes a broad range of experiences which are planned for children and young people through their education, to help every child and young person to develop knowledge, skills and attributes for success in learning, life and work. Learning is planned across a wide range of contexts, allowing children to learn independently, alongside peers and as part of a whole class experience where relevant. Whilst recognising the increased opportunities for individualised learning in a small class or school setting, opportunities are more limited across all contexts, providing opportunities to build the necessary skills and experiences. Collaborative learning opportunities in a small school setting often rely on children from all stages of a primary school working together who often are at very different stages of maturity and development. This is not conducive to providing the appropriate challenge and interaction required to extend learning.

In Slamannan Primary School, children are encouraged to be eager and active participants who are engaged, resilient and highly motivated during their learning. Children know that their views are sought, valued and acted upon. Although this can be said for all schools, including small schools like Limerigg, due to the greater number of staff and pupils in Slamannan Primary School, learners' experiences are broader and can be adapted to support interests of cohorts and groups more readily. In a small school, pupils may have individual interests, varied due to the small numbers at similar ages or stages, making it more difficult to plan activities and contextual learning that may engage and motivate all in a meaningful way. Arising from the benefit of having a higher number of staff who possess a range of expertise amongst them, pupils have access to a wider range of skillsets and areas of expertise.

In Slamannan Primary School children are encouraged to be part of a wider social context in which they can build relationships with different groups and individuals, develop social skills, meet challenges and exercise responsibilities as members of a social group. They can interact and socialise with groups of children, take part in team activities and move with a wide range of peers to secondary school. Whilst attending Limerigg, these opportunities for pupils were promoted and planned for. Whilst pupils were provided with opportunities to exercise responsibilities and engage with others to develop social skills, the context of a small school diminished or limited these opportunities and pupils had very limited opportunities to interact with different peers or groups across their time in school.

The differing physical learning environments offered at Slamannan encourages high levels of achievement across a range of disciplines and provides opportunities for pupils to apply their learning in a wide range of contexts, which is essential for achievement of curriculum levels. Over the last five years, Slamannan Primary School has consistently delivered positive

attainment outcomes for pupils and compares well with authority average and neighbourhood group average.

At Slamannan Primary School, children embrace school values and regularly participate in a wide range of personal achievement opportunities. There is a sense of community and belonging within year groups, which is recognised and celebrated at regular assemblies and class celebrations. Whilst a sense of community is strong and relationships are easily developed and nurtured within a small school setting, opportunities are limited to develop these across similar ages and stages and pupils at the earliest and latest stages of primary school rely on each other for the opportunity to engage and interact with others.

Like all schools, Slamannan Primary School is aspirational for the children and delivers various opportunities which allows pupils to demonstrate the four capacities and develop skills for life. Children are regularly involved in leading and organising various family and community events linked to their learning experiences:

- Active learner groups promote UNCRC through events, assemblies, and community links.
- Pupil Leadership Team have well established roles in P6 and P7 as part of the school's Pupil Leadership systems.
- Buddies and playground leaders organise shared activities, promoting inclusion.
- Pupil-led Sports Council supports events such as the annual Sports Week and a wide variety of sporting events across the year.

Meeting learners needs

Slamannan Primary School provides a nurturing environment for all pupils based on a rights-respecting ethos, rooted in the UNCRC principles and core educational values of: Self-belief, Trust, Kindness and Respect. Through the GIRFEC model, the school maintains a relentless focus on removing barriers and ensuring every child can make the best possible progress in their learning and achievement.

Through the Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) practice model, meeting the needs of every child continues to be a priority. Teachers carefully plan and assess to ensure each child has the opportunity to reach their potential. Pupil tracking combines professional dialogue, classroom observations, learning discussions, assessments, and pupil work.

The approach at Slamannan to the delivery of enhanced learning support ensures that children who need more focused help feel included, supported and are successful in school. The nurturing spaces in the school are used flexibly to support a wide range of pupils' individual needs. The school has an Enhanced Provision class supporting learners who require an enhanced level of support across all stages.

Through a rigorous approach to professional learning for staff and engagement in Local Authority training, Slamannan Primary School work with their wider school staff team to target particular needs of children and cohorts across the school, supporting their inclusive approach to learning and engagement. This approach to building expertise across the team can be difficult for a small school due to the small number of staff and time available to engage in professional learning.

Slamannan Primary School offers a wide and diverse programme of extracurricular activities that support pupils to develop positive attitudes to their physical health. Through offering a wide range of sporting opportunities the school is working towards the School Sport Award.

Children's voices also inform the setting of improvement priorities, regularly shaping wellbeing indicator reflections and targeted support. Children's views are important and are sought and valued to identify priorities. Wellbeing indicator reflections are reviewed regularly for positive Health and Wellbeing choices and supports are in place to address needs where identified. Slamannan Primary School has planned meetings and discussions with parents. These discussions between home and school improve parental engagement whilst focussing on next steps for learning. Where appropriate, interventions are put in place, while working effectively with other agencies and parents to ensure the needs of each child are met.

Broadening the range of opportunities

Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) promotes the development of knowledge, skills and attributes that children need to be successful, confident, responsible and effective in their learning, their life, and, in their future.

The development of a broad range of skills is central to children's happiness and success. These skills should be developed across all curriculum areas and are embedded into the Curriculum for Excellence Experiences and Outcomes, requiring teachers to plan opportunities to develop them in a variety of ways, including engagement in active learning, interdisciplinary tasks and to experience learning in practical contexts. A critical part of all of this is learning in collaborative and cooperative situations with peers and age and stage appropriate groups opportunities provided in a larger school context can deliver this in a more natural and progressive way, contributing to the acquisition of skills and knowledge to prepare pupils for transition across the primary stages, into secondary school and post school.

Children at Slamannan Primary School are offered a range of active, planned experiences which help them develop the knowledge and understanding, skills, capabilities and attributes which they need for their mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing both now and in the future.

This is in line with their entitlement to a broad general education.

Across Slamannan Primary School children engage well with learning and contribute effectively to age and stage appropriate lessons. Staff promote positive relationships at all levels, the impact of this being that children enjoy good relationships with their peers. This is supported by the school's relationships agreement. They also have opportunities to support each other in their learning through cooperative and collaborative peer experiences.

There is a well-structured transition between Slamannan Primary School and Falkirk High School, underpinned by a shared cluster vision, values, and aims. This strong partnership affords staff from both schools working together at key points in the school year to ensure a consistent approach to learning. The transition programme extends significantly beyond standard induction days, across the school year, with groups of peers. As these interactions take place well before the formal transition visits, learners become well acquainted with the secondary school staff and the building, supporting them to feel confident, secure, and ready for the next stage of their education. Whilst transition arrangements from Limerigg to Falkirk High School were well established and considered the needs of all individual pupils moving from primary to secondary, opportunities for a peer group to transition together and support each other were extremely limited. In any small school, pupils can often transition as the only pupil. Secondary schools are a much larger context and when pupils move, work takes place between primary and secondary to ensure the pupils attend classes with known peers. This is often not possible from a small school where there may only be one pupil which can lead to increased anxiety and apprehension at the start of a significant change in a school career.

Environment for learning including curriculum

Slamannan Primary School is well-equipped and supported. The building is well maintained, and its attractive, rural setting provides a welcoming environment for children.

The facilities of Slamannan include an expansive outdoor space enhanced with fixed play structures as well as dedicated football and basketball playing areas.

There is a strong focus on meeting individual needs through the Enhanced Provision and other areas which are equipped to support pupils with a broad range of learning needs. The family space offers a place for families to engage in meetings with a range of professionals and school staff.

Slamannan Primary School includes an on-site nursery class provision for up to 56 children aged between 0 – 5 years old, bringing advantages to children across the school. The nursery is fully integrated into the life of the school and the wider learning journey. Operating under a shared vision, values, and aims, staff across the nursery and Early Level plan and work together to ensure high-quality experiences. This collaborative approach supports a seamless transition to Primary 1 at Slamannan.

Assessment of likely educational benefits on any children who would (in the future but for implementation) be likely to become pupils of the school.

Existing and future pupils:

Children who may live in this catchment area in the future will benefit from the broad range of educational opportunities which are presented through this proposal, as detailed in i-iv above.

There would be positive educational benefits associated with this proposal. There are increased opportunities for delivering the totality of the curriculum and increasing the use of active pedagogies. Whilst the benefits of learning in a small school environment are recognised, there is a greater requirement to significantly differentiate learning in order to ensure it is appropriate, engaging and can meet the needs of all pupils, ensuring that experiences are relevant for all ages and stages, providing appropriate support and challenge for all.

The proposal extends the peer group for all pupils, present and future.

Pupils who would otherwise have attended Limerigg Primary School have more shared experiences and opportunity for friendships. This will enhance their confidence and make the transition to secondary easier. Larger year groups make the delivery of specialist services more viable and provide enhanced opportunities for educational excursions and community engagement to enhance the curriculum offer.

Assessment of likely educational benefits on the pupils of any other schools in the Council area:

The cost per pupil of operating Limerigg Primary School should it reopen is £42,848 which is high compared with £7,447 (source Local Government benchmarking Framework (LGBF) 2024-25) for Falkirk Primary Schools, due to the low number of pupils attending. The national comparator from the LGBF is £7,615. The reduction in school operating costs that would be achieved by the permanent closure of Limerigg Primary School as opposed to its re-opening means that this is a saving to the Council. There are no other significant impacts from this proposal on other pupils in the authority or who attend other schools, in either a positive or a negative way.

Consideration of how to minimise or avoid any adverse effects that may arise from the implementation of this proposal:

The main adverse effect from this proposal would be the length of the journey to school for children who live in the Limerigg Primary School catchment area. Funded school transport would continue to be provided for pupils should this proposal be implemented. However, this extended journey time of 5-10 minutes is still within reasonable journey time for home to school transport.

Summary of educational benefits statement:

There are a range of educational benefits for pupils if this proposal was to be implemented, as summarised in the paragraphs i-iv above.

The extension of the catchment of Slamannan Primary School to include that of Limerigg Primary School offers significant benefits to pupils across four key areas: learning and teaching, meeting learners' needs, broadening opportunities, and improving the learning environment. Slamannan Primary School provides a wider peer group, diverse curriculum, specialist staff expertise, and strong transition links to secondary education. Pupils gain access to enriched social interactions, extracurricular activities, and flexible nurturing spaces. The school's facilities, including outdoor play areas, specialist hubs, and integrated nursery provision, further strengthen learning continuity. While the main adverse effect is longer travel time, funded transport mitigates this.

Overall, the proposal ensures improved attainment, broader experiences, and stronger community engagement, delivering a more inclusive and aspirational education for current and future pupils.

9. DETAILED ANALYSIS OF THE PROPOSAL

This section provides a more detailed assessment of the proposal which is assessed to be the only reasonable response to the unsustainable school roll. It considers the "rural school factors" of community impact and impact on travel arrangements, as well as the Educational Benefits Statement above.

SPECIAL REGARD TO THE LIKELY EFFECT ON THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Community Impact – Loss of the school

The previous statutory consultation on the proposal to permanently close the school in 2021 saw responses from the Community Council, 2 primary school parents and 5 staff at the affected schools, and 2 other local residents. All respondents supported the proposal apart from the 2 other local residents who did not.

Parents and staff who responded were in agreement that there were educational benefits for the pupils who had been attending the larger Slamannan Primary School since mothballing. The local residents who did not support the proposal expressed concern over the decline of services and amenities in the village and uncertainty over the future use of the school building/site.

Further preliminary engagement was undertaken with the community in October 2025 to further explore the proposal before it was brought forward to a statutory consultation. The key findings from this were:

- There was recognition that pupil numbers are currently very low and that re-opening the school may not be viable without change.
- Some respondents expressed support for alternative models, such as rezoning or shared-use arrangements, as a means of increasing viability.
- It was acknowledged that there would be limited immediate educational impact, as pupils are already attending other schools. However, concerns were raised about wider social and longer-term effects, including the perception that permanent closure could discourage families from moving into the area and negatively affect community sustainability.
- Re-opening was viewed by some as a potential catalyst for population growth and social regeneration.
- Travel and accessibility were identified as ongoing concerns, with increased travel distances viewed as costly and inconvenient for families. Respondents also highlighted the lack of safe walking routes and continued reliance on transport.
- Respondents expressed a strong emotional attachment to the school as a long-standing focal point of village life, with concern that permanent closure would erode community spirit and sense of place.
- The unique educational and environmental value of Limerigg Primary School was highlighted, particularly its setting beside the loch and surrounding forestry, which was seen as offering significant opportunities for outdoor, ecological and wellbeing-focused learning. Some respondents expressed concern that children are missing out on these nature-based and experiential opportunities.
- There was strong consensus that the building should not remain empty, with frustration expressed about continued mothballing and deterioration of the property.
- There was interest in the school building being re-opened or repurposed as part of community renewal, with suggestions for mixed or flexible educational and community uses rather than permanent closure. Ideas included use as an outdoor education centre, community hub, heritage or crafts training space, tourism base and wellbeing activities. Respondents encouraged the Council to work with local groups and explore potential funding opportunities.

In conclusion, many of those who responded to the online survey and attended the public meeting found it regrettable that the village school, that pupils could walk to, and with its unique location and teaching opportunities, had closed due to low pupil numbers and felt that this would discourage families from moving into the village.

It was acknowledged, however, that little had changed since the mothballing decision in 2019 and those who responded understood the reasons why the school was no longer viable and had remained closed. The appetite for reopening the school was generally tempered with a pragmatic understanding that this would be difficult to justify, practically and financially.

Regardless of that there was clear frustration expressed at the continued mothballing and deterioration of the school building. It was strongly felt by many that responded that options should be explored to bring the building back into use to benefit the community.

The number of pupils living in the catchment area of Limerigg Primary School has more than halved since 2019 from 26 to 11 and is not expected to increase significantly in the near future. When there were 26 primary aged pupils living in the catchment area, only 5 were attending the school.

There are no concerns over the capacity at Slamannan Primary School which is currently at 45% occupancy even with pupils attending from the Limerigg catchment area. If the proposed housing development does proceed in Limerigg, there will be sufficient capacity at Slamannan Primary School to accommodate any pupils arising.

The Council believes that the sustainability of Limerigg village community will not be affected. Pupils will attend a school only 2 miles away from their village.

Prior to mothballing, Limerigg Primary School and Slamannan Primary School had been jointly managed for several years allowing a strong integration of the educational approach in both schools. As such, pupils at Limerigg were already part of a larger, sustainable school community through the leadership team already shared with Slamannan Primary School, and this has only been solidified since the mothballing of Limerigg Primary School. There are no indications that this has affected the sustainability of the village community.

There will be no impact on the use of shops, services and facilities in the wider community by residents of the Limerigg community because of the permanent closure of Limerigg Primary School.

Community Impact – Use of the Building

Limerigg Primary School is the only Council facility currently situated in Limerigg.

The Limerigg Community Hall was owned and run by Falkirk Council until 2024 when it was the subject of a Community Asset Transfer to the Limerigg Action Group, a registered charity that now manages the facility.

Prior to mothballing in 2019, the Limerigg community made no real use of the school building for community activities. Therefore, if the proposal is accepted, no impact is anticipated that would adversely affect the sustainability of the Limerigg village community. All children would continue to live in the Limerigg village community and will attend a school only 2 miles away.

The Limerigg community requires to travel to access most services due to a lack of amenities with the village. Travel by car is convenient but public transport is more limited.

What will happen to the school building?

Once the building becomes empty, it would be deemed surplus to Education Services operational requirements and the Council's Asset Management Team would then consider what future options there are for the property, which could include potential sale. However, it is important that all community views are considered prior to this happening, and we would welcome your views on possible future uses for this building, should the school close permanently.

10. LIKELY EFFECT CAUSED BY DIFFERENT TRAVELLING ARRANGEMENTS

As Limerigg Primary School is a rural school, special regard is paid to the rural school factors. These were considered throughout the assessment of the options in section 6.

The travel distance from Limerigg Primary School to Slamannan Primary Schools is approximately 2 miles with an approximate travel time of 5 minutes by car. Most primary age children live in Limerigg village which is closer to Slamannan. There is a suitable walking routes for pupils from the village to Limerigg Primary School, but pupils living in farms and isolated dwellings outside the village would be offered to school transport due to the lack of safe and available walking routes in the country lanes around the Limerigg catchment area.

Pupils in the Limerigg Primary School catchment area attending Slamannan Primary School receive free school transport to and from school and will continue to do so should the proposal be accepted. If Limerigg Primary School was permanently closed, all children living in the Limerigg catchment area will be transported by the Council to Slamannan Primary School. This would take approximately 5 minutes by taxi/school bus each way. This duration of journey is not uncommon for pupils travelling on school transport and taking this proposal forward would not adversely affect the current pupils concerned or future pupils. This arrangement has been in place since August 2019 when the mothballing took effect.

Travelling for primary school education is not uncommon in Falkirk because of the geography of the area.

The current pupils attending Slamannan Primary School from Limerigg travel by taxi at a cost of £13,300 per annum.

Staff working in Falkirk schools regularly travel throughout the area to and from work. The distance of 2 miles is a relatively short distance to travel between schools. It is therefore considered that there is very limited impact on staff travelling arrangements whether the school were to re-open or be

permanently closed. There is unlikely to be any environmental impact arising from the arrangements staff make to get to school.

There are no other users of the school premises or facilities that would be affected in relation to transport arrangements.

The community already requires travelling to access other services such as GP and Dental Surgeries, shops and Post Offices in Slamannan, Caldercruix or Falkirk.

11. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Falkirk Council does not consider that there will be any significant adverse environmental effects because of this proposal. There will be a small environmental impact of continuing to transport the Limerigg catchment pupils to Slamannan Primary School and extending their daily travel to school by 2 miles each way.

If the proposal is approved, it will have a positive impact on the Council's energy and climate change ambitions, as less energy will be required across the learning estate, than if the school were to re-open.

12. EFFECTS ON STAFF AND SCHOOL MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Where necessary, any aspect of the implementation of this proposal that impacts on staff will result in consultation with the relevant trade unions and the individuals concerned. Given the school has been mothballed since 2019, any initial overstaffing transferring to Slamannan Primary School will have been resolved by realigning our staffing resource across the service through our annual staffing exercise.

13. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The full financial considerations are detailed in Appendix 1.

This information gives details on the estimated cost if Limerigg Primary School were still an occupied and operational establishment, the figures are based on financial year 2018/19 as this was the last full year the school was fully occupied.

As Limerigg Primary School is currently mothballed, the cost for the mothballing is £24,480 per year. Should the school be reopened, occupied and operational, the running costs per year are estimated at £214,244 (based on 2018/19 costs inflated to 2025/26 equivalent).

The cost per pupil of operating Limerigg Primary School should it reopen is £42,848 based on the school roll of 5 (census roll academic year 2018/19).

This is high compared with £7,447 (source Local Government benchmarking Framework (LGBF) 2024-25) for Falkirk Primary Schools due to the low

number of pupils attending. The national comparator from the LGBF is £7,615.

Column 2 of Table 1 shows the projected annual running costs of Limerigg Primary School whilst Column 3 shows the additional impact on Slamannan Primary School as the receiving school. The annual recurring savings (or costs) are shown in Column 4.

Slamannan Primary School is detailed as the receiving school, due to the current temporary catchment arrangements. Additional transport costs to Slamannan Primary School are £13,300 per annum based on the current pupils in attendance, assuming the proposal was implemented.

Table 1, School Costs. There are no figures included for column 3 as the receiving school did not require additional staffing to accommodate the additional pupils from Limerigg Primary School. During the initial temporary arrangements all staff transferred to Slamannan Primary School and any over staffing has been modelled out with staff redeployed as part of the subsequent annual staffing exercises.

Table 1, Building Costs. There are no figures included for column 3 as the receiving school did not require additional resource to accommodate the additional pupils from Limerigg Primary School.

Table 1, School Operational Costs. The cost of learning materials and catering followed the pupils to the receiving school.

Table 1, Transport Costs. Depending on the outcome and implementation of the proposal there are additional transport costs to Slamannan Primary School, these currently total £13,300 per annum based on the current pupils attending Slamannan Primary School from Limerigg.

Table 3 details the annual running costs during mothballing of Limerigg Primary School and these are £24,480 per year, which would constitute an immediate saving on closure. If the school were to be formally closed, this would allow the Council to take steps towards selling the school to a third party or transferring ownership to the local community.

The capital one-off cost to properly modernise and bring the property to an acceptable standard to re-open Limerigg Primary School would be approximately £900,000.

Any savings remaining from the proposed option to permanently close Limerigg Primary School will be allocated towards bridging the Council's budget gap as set out in the Revenue Budget 2025/26 and Financial Strategy. Further information is available on the Council website: [Falkirk Council Budget and Finances for 2025-2026](#) Falkirk Council Budget and Finances for 2025-2026 The annual revenue budget is built reflecting cost drivers such as the number of schools, buildings, staff and pupils. Therefore, if Limerigg Primary School did not re-open and were to be

permanently closed then future years' budgets would not require any allowance for staffing Limerigg Primary School and there would be reduced property costs (and possibly no costs should the building be declared surplus to the Council's requirements). Any per capita budgets relating to individual pupils would continue to be budgeted against the school that these pupils would attend following the permanent closure of Limerigg Primary School.

It is envisaged that subject to community asset transfer considerations, the existing Limerigg Primary School building/site would be declared surplus to the requirements of Falkirk Council. This would minimise the financial risks associated with vacant buildings.

A capital receipt would be forthcoming if the building was sold, or income could be generated through a lease.

Combining pupils from both catchment areas in one school maximises use of the learning estate and represents good asset management.

14. CONCLUSION

It is proposed that a statutory consultation exercise takes place on a proposal to permanently close Limerigg Primary School. As a result, pupils would be permanently zoned to Slamannan Primary School with the catchment area of Limerigg Primary School rezoned to Slamannan Primary School.

The number of pupils living in the catchment area of Limerigg Primary School has more than halved since 2019 from 26 to 11 and is not expected to increase significantly in the near future. When there were 26 primary aged pupils living in the catchment area, only 5 were attending the school.

Slamannan Primary School can accommodate all current and projected pupils from the combined catchment areas. A higher occupancy level maximises the use of the learning estate and represents good asset management.

Planning permission in principle was granted for a proposal for up to 90 houses in Limerigg village in 2019. The proposal has not developed further in the intervening 7 years and there is no indication currently that it is likely to proceed in the foreseeable future. If it does proceed at a future date, then Slamannan Primary School will have sufficient capacity to absorb the additional primary pupils that would arise.

Travel distance from Limerigg to Slamannan Primary School is not excessive and is considerably less distance than pupils travel when they transitioned from Limerigg Primary School to Falkirk High School.

Members of the Limerigg community are already travelling to access other services such as GP and Dental Surgeries, shops and Post Offices and so it appears to be an accepted part of life within the village community.

The only option which is assessed to be a reasonable response to address the issue of unsustainable school roll is to consider closing Limerigg Primary School. Special regard has been given to the rural school factors and the assessment of these are considered in section 6 and throughout this proposal paper.

It is therefore recommended that the most appropriate response to the issues identified is that a statutory consultation exercise takes place on the proposal to close the school. If the proposal is agreed, pupils from Limerigg remain at Slamannan Primary School. The delineated catchment area of Slamannan Primary School would be permanently extended to include the Limerigg Primary School catchment.

15. RESPONDING TO THE PROPOSAL

This Proposal Paper has been issued as a result of a decision on 19 February 2026 of the Executive (including Education) of Falkirk Council. This is to seek views on the proposals and alternatives set out in this paper. This report is available here:

- www.participateplus.falkirk.gov.uk/

A formal consultation in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 is required for any proposal to permanently close a school. This consultation is fully in accordance with the requirements of this legislation.

A copy of this Proposal Paper is available on the Falkirk Council website:

- www.falkirk.gov.uk/limerigg-primary-consultation

A link to the electronic version of this document will be provided by letter to:

- Parents and carers of all primary and nursery age pupils living in the catchment area of each affected school (Limerigg and Slamannan Primary Schools).
- Slamannan Primary School Parent Council.
- School staff and trade unions at Slamannan Primary School.
- Community groups/organisations.
- All other households in the Limerigg Primary School catchment area (so that the views of the overall community can also be considered during the consultation because this is a proposal to close a rural school).
- North Lanarkshire and West Lothian Council (as Limerigg Primary School catchment runs adjacent to both).

A copy of this document is also available from:

- Education Services, Suite 1A, Falkirk Community Stadium, 4 Stadium Way, Falkirk, FK2 9EE
- Slamannan Primary School, Bank Street, Falkirk FK1 3EZ

This document is available in alternative formats or in translated form for readers whose first language is not English. Please apply to Education Services, Suite 1A, Falkirk Community Stadium, 4 Stadium Way, Falkirk, FK2 9EE by telephone on 01324 506600 or by email educ.consultation@falkirk.gov.uk

LENGTH OF CONSULTATION PERIOD

The consultation will take place between Monday 23 February and Friday 24 April 2026.

PUBLIC MEETING

There will be 1 public meeting held at Slamannan Primary School on 11 March 2026 at 6.30pm. This meeting will be an opportunity for interested parties to:

- Hear about the proposal.
- Ask question about the proposal.
- Have their views recorded so that they can be taken into account as part of the consultation process.

A note will be taken at the meeting of questions and views. This note will be published in the consultation report which will be available on the Council website.

HOW TO RESPOND TO THE PROPOSAL

Interested parties are invited to respond on the proposals or any alternative proposals:

- Online: <https://participateplus.falkirk.gov.uk> Participate Plus
- By email: educ.consultation@falkirk.gov.uk
- In writing: Limerigg Primary School Closure Consultation
Education Services, Suite 1A
Falkirk Community Stadium
4 Stadium Way
Falkirk, FK2 9EE

All responses should be provided by Friday 24 April 2026.

CONSULTATION WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Pupils will be consulted about the proposal in school and further information about this will be provided to parent/carers.

FOLLOWING THE CONSULTATION

HMIE – When the proposal document is published, a copy will also be sent to HMIE by the Education Authority. HMIE will also receive a copy of any relevant written representations received by the authority from any person during the consultation period or, if HMIE agree, a summary of them.

HMIE will further receive a summary of any oral representations made to the Local Authority at the public meeting which will be held and, as available (and so far, as otherwise practicable), a copy of any other relevant documentation.

HMIE will then prepare a report on the educational aspects of the proposal not later than 3 weeks after the authority has sent them all representations and documents mentioned above. For the avoidance of doubt, the 3-week period will not start until after the consultation period has ended. In preparing their report, HMIE may enter the affected schools and make such reasonable enquiries of such people they consider appropriate and may make such reasonable enquiries as they consider appropriate.

Falkirk Council – the education authority will review the proposal having regard to the HMIE report, written representations that it has received, and oral representations made to it by any person at the public meeting. It will then prepare a consultation report. This report will be published in electronic and printed formats. It will be available from the Council website and from Education Services, Suite 1A, Falkirk Community Stadium, 4 Stadium Way, Falkirk, FK2 9EE free of charge. Anyone who made written representations to the authority during the consultation period will also be informed about the report.

The report will include:

- A record of the total number of written representations made to the Authority during the consultation period.
- A summary of the written representations.
- A summary of the oral representations made at the public meeting.
- The authority's response to the HMIE report as well as any written or oral representations it has received, together with a copy of the HMIE report and any other relevant information, including detail of any alleged inaccuracies and how these have been handled; and
- A statement explaining how the authority complied with the requirement to review the proposal in light of the HMIE report and representations (both written and oral) that it received.

The consultation report will be published and available for further consideration for a period of at least 3 weeks.

This report together with any other relevant documentation, will be considered by the Executive (including Education) of Falkirk Council, who will come to a decision about whether to implement the proposal.

NOTE ON CORRECTIONS

If any inaccuracy or omission is discovered in this proposal document, either by the Council or any person, the Council must investigate and decide what, if any, action is required.

If relevant information has been omitted or there has been an inaccuracy, the Council will then take appropriate action, which may include the issue of a correction notice, the publishing of a corrected Proposal Paper or the revision of the timescale for the consultation period, if appropriate. In that event, relevant consultees and HMIE will be advised. The authority must inform the person who made the allegation and what action it has taken.

SCOTTISH MINISTERS CALL IN

If the education authority makes a final decision to implement the closure proposal, it will need to notify the Scottish Ministers of that decision and provide them with a copy of the proposal document and the consultation report. This must be done within 6 working days of that decision.

The education authority must also publish on its website the fact that it has notified Scottish Ministers of its decision and of the period during which consultees can make representation to Ministers. For rural schools, the education authority must also give notice of the reasons why the Council is satisfied that the closure is the most appropriate response to the reasons for bringing forward the proposal. The Scottish Ministers have an 8-week period from the date of that final decision to decide if they will call-in the proposal. Within the first 3 weeks of that 8-week period, the Scottish Ministers will take account of any relevant representations made to them by any person. Until the outcome of the 8-week call-in process is known, the authority cannot proceed to implement the proposal.

If Scottish Ministers decide to call in a closure proposal, they must refer it to the Convener of the School Closure Review Panels for determination by a School Closure Review Panel. The authority may not implement the proposal (wholly or partly) unless the Panel has granted consent to it (with or without conditions) and either the period for making an appeal to the Sheriff has expired or, if an appeal has been made, it has either been abandoned or the Sheriff has confirmed the Panel's decision.

The School Closure Review Panel may refuse to consent to the proposal, refuse consent and remit the proposal back to the authority or grant their consent to the proposal subject to conditions or unconditionally.

- Ministers have a power to call in a closure decision, but only where it appears to Ministers that the Council has failed in a significant regard to comply with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act's requirements or, in coming to its decision, has failed to take proper account of a 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.

- During the first 3 weeks of this period, anyone is able to make representations to Ministers on whether the decision should be called in.
- During the call-in period, the Council may not proceed further, in whole or part, with the proposed closure. Ministers may come to a decision sooner than 8 weeks (but not before the 3 weeks for representations to be made to them has elapsed).
- The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act, as amended, gives Ministers and School Closure Review Panels the right to call on advice from HMIE in relation to a proposal at the call-in or determination stage.

This consultation is being conducted having regard to the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

APPENDIX 1 - FINANCIAL IMPACT OF PROPOSED CLOSURE

TABLE 1 Current Revenue Costs

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4
Expenditure Category	Costs for full financial year (projected annual based on financial year (2018/19))	Additional financial impact on receiving school [Slamannan PS]	Annual recurring savings (column 2 minus column 3)
COSTS			
<i>Employee Costs:</i>			
Teaching staff	£128,842	£0	£128,842
Support staff	£31,550	£0	£31,550
Teaching staff training	£0	£0	£0
Support staff training	£0	£0	£0
Supply costs	£0	£0	£0
<i>Building Costs:</i>			
Property insurance	£2,960	£0	£2,960
Non-domestic rates	£9,700	£0	£9,700
Water & sewerage	£1,644	£0	£1,644
Energy costs	£10,705	£0	£10,705
Cleaning	£10,705	£0	£10,705
Repairs & maintenance	£848	£0	£848
Grounds maintenance	£324	£0	£324
Facilities management	£1,800	£0	£1,800
Other	£1,544	£0	£1,544
<i>Operational costs:</i>			
Learning materials	£2,643	£2,643	£0
Catering	£9,841	£9,841	£0
Other (inc. licences)	£767	£0	£767
<i>Transport costs:</i>			
Home to school	£0	£13,300	-£13,300
Staff travel	£371	£0	£371
COSTS SUB-TOTAL	£214,244	£25,784	£188,460
INCOME			
Sale of meals	£0	£0	£0
Lets	£0	£0	£0
Other	£0	£0	£0
INCOME SUB-TOTAL	£0	£0	£0
TOTAL COSTS MINUS INCOME FOR SCHOOL	£214,244	£25,784	£188,460

UNIT COST PER PUPIL PER YEAR	£42,848.80		
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(5 pupils in 2018/19)

All Costs shown in Tables 1 are based on Financial Year 2018/19 when the school was last open, apart from Home to School transport costs in Column 3 which are based on current costs (2025/26). Inflation has been applied to 2018/19 costs to provide a best estimate of the current costs if the school were not mothballed

Table 2 represents the capital costs associated with bringing the school back into operational use.

TABLE 2 Capital Costs

	School proposed for closure	Receiving school
Capital Life Cycle cost (3 years from 2026/27 to 2028/29)	£900,000	
Third party contributions to capital costs		

The costs in Table 3 are based on Financial Year 2025/26. This is the current cost for keeping the school mothballed. It shows the annual running cost that can be expected prior to disposal.

TABLE 3: Annual Property costs incurred until disposal.

Property insurance	£2,960
Non-domestic rates	£9,700
Water & sewerage charges	£310
Energy costs	£5,500
Cleaning	
Security costs	
Repairs & maintenance	£5,440
Grounds maintenance	£570
Facilities management	
Other	
TOTAL ANNUAL COST UNTIL DISPOSAL	£24,480

TABLE 4 Non-recurring Revenue costs

TOTAL NON-RECURRING REVENUE COSTS	£188,460
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See Table 1 for how this is calculated

TABLE 5 Impact on GAE

GAE IMPACT	£15,000
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GAE is the Grant Aided Expenditure for small schools covered by Scottish Government funding that would be lost if the school is closed. This figure is based on the 2018/19 school roll of 5 pupils.

**TABLE 6 Non-recurring Revenue costs
minus the impact of GAE**

NET REVENUE COSTS (INC. IMPACT ON GAE)	£173,460
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Appendix 2: Consultation Notice (COPY)

Enquiries to: **Forward Planning Team**
Email: **educ.consultation@falkirk.gov.uk**

Date: 23rd February 2026

For the attention of:

- Parents and carers of all primary and nursery age pupils living in the catchment areas of Limerigg and Slamannan Primary Schools
- Slamannan Primary School Parent Council
- Falkirk High School Parent Council
- Staff at Slamannan Primary School
- Recognised trade unions (UNISON, GMB, UNITE, EIS, SSTA, AHDS, SLS)
- All households in the Limerigg Primary School catchment area
- Falkirk Community Planning Partnership Members/Organisations
- Local Elected Members of Falkirk Council
- MSPs for the area
- The constituency MP
- West Lothian Council
- North Lanarkshire Council

Dear Sir/Madam

Statutory Consultation Notice – Proposal to permanently close Limerigg Primary School and permanently rezone the catchment area to Slamannan Primary School

Further to the preliminary engagement carried out with the local community, Falkirk Council Education Services is now commencing a formal statutory consultation on a proposal to permanently close Limerigg Primary School.

This Consultation Notice provides a summary of the proposal: it is a requirement for you to be notified of the consultation as a consultee, in accordance with Schedule 2 Section 1 of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended. A full copy of the Proposal Document is available at: www.falkirk.gov.uk/limerigg-primary-consultation

Falkirk Council is conducting a public consultation from **Monday 23rd February to Friday 24th April 2026**. During this period, you will be able to make representation to Falkirk Council in respect of the proposal.

It is important that everyone we are consulting tells us what they think about the proposal. Please read this notice and then consider the contents of the proposal document. You can then tell us what you think of the proposal by making written representation and/or by attending the public meeting. This notice and summary tell you how to do that.

We will consult by:

- Providing a Notice of the consultation and a summary of the proposal to the relevant consultees (this is that Notice and summary).
- Publication of the Proposal document
- Placing an advert in the local press advertising the consultation
- Placing information on our website – www.falkirk.gov.uk/limerigg-primary-consultation
- Putting information on our consultation hub <https://participateplus.falkirk.gov.uk>
- Holding a public meeting to explain the proposal
- Asking all consultees to tell us what they think of the proposal and its impact on them.

A full copy of the proposal document is available:

- On our website at www.falkirk.gov.uk/limerigg-primary-consultation
- By written request to educ.consultation@falkirk.gov.uk or Falkirk Council, Education Services, Suite 1A, Falkirk Community Stadium, 4 Stadium Way, Grangemouth, FK2 9EE
- In printed form free of charge at Slamannan Primary School, Falkirk Council Hubs and Libraries.

The Proposal

Falkirk Council is proposing that:

- That provision of a school at Limerigg Primary School be permanently discontinued with effect from August 2026 or as soon as possible thereafter;
- That primary age pupils in the Limerigg Primary School catchment area permanently receive their education at Slamannan Primary School from August 2026 or as soon as possible thereafter; and
- That the delineated catchment area of Slamannan Primary School be permanently extended to include the whole delineated catchment area of Limerigg Primary School from August 2026 or as soon as possible thereafter.

Reasons for this Proposal

This is being proposed for the following reasons:

- i. Limerigg Primary School has been formally mothballed for approaching 7 years with no pupils in attendance since August 2019.
- ii. The catchment demand for places in Limerigg Primary School continues to be assessed to be low and is not predicted to rise.
- iii. The Council is experiencing declining pupil numbers, making re-opening impractical.

- iv. Whilst the school is mothballed, the building is deteriorating with limited budgets for repairs, maintenance and capital investment. The current annual cost of mothballing Limerigg Primary School is £24,480.
- v. There are no imminent house building proposals in the catchment area of Limerigg Primary School that would affect current projections. Planning permission in principle was granted for a proposal for up to 90 houses in Limerigg village in 2019, but the proposal has not developed further in the intervening 7 years and there is no indication currently that it is likely to proceed in the foreseeable future. If it does proceed at a future date, and Limerigg Primary School has permanently closed, then Slamannan Primary School will have sufficient capacity to absorb the additional primary pupils that arise

Falkirk Council, as an Education Authority is required to secure adequate and efficient provision of school education (Section 1 of the Education Act 1980); and to endeavour to secure improvement in the quality of school education in schools that are managed by them (Section 3 of the Standards in Scotland's Schools Act 2000). This is reflected in the Falkirk Council Plan 2022-2027 priority: "Promoting opportunities and educational attainment and reducing inequalities"

Alternatives to the Proposal

A range of possible alternative options to permanent closure are set out in the proposal paper. These are:

- Re-open Limerigg Primary School.
- Re-open Limerigg Primary School with increased occupancy through rezoning and extending the catchment area.
- Re-open Limerigg Primary School with available capacity used for early years provision or for other purposes.
- Continue with the mothballing of Limerigg Primary School.

After assessment of these options, the Council **does not consider that those alternatives included in the proposal document are reasonable alternatives to the closure of Limerigg Primary School**. You can make written representations on the proposal and on the alternatives that are included within the proposal paper. If you consider there are other alternatives to the proposal you can include those in your representations on the proposal.

A **public meeting** has been arranged:

Slamannan Primary School, Bank Street, Slamannan, FK1 3EZ on 11th March 2026 at 18:30

This meeting is open to all interested parties. At the meeting, council officers will give a presentation of the proposal, answer questions on it and record the oral representations of anyone who attends.

Representations to the Proposal

This consultation notice and the proposal document advise how you can make representation to this consultation process. You are invited to have your say on this proposal. The Council is seeking your views on:

- The likely effect on the local community if the school were to be closed permanently;
- The likely effect of different travelling arrangements for children and families in the Limerigg catchment;
- The likely effect on children's education if the school were to be closed permanently.
- The alternatives to the proposal considered; and
- Suggestions of other alternatives.

You can attend the public meeting and/or you can make written representations.

- On-line: <https://participateplus.falkirk.gov.uk>
- By email to: educ.consultation@falkirk.gov.uk.
- By Letter to: Limerigg Primary School Consultation, Falkirk Council Education Services, Suite 1A, Falkirk Community Stadium, 4 Stadium Way, Falkirk, FK2 9EE

Respondents should state the capacity in which they are expressing their views and agree to their statement/comments being published as part of the Statutory Consultation process and published in the final Consultation Report (all other personal information will be redacted).

Falkirk Council is seeking your views on the proposal during the consultation period, it does not assume that the proposal will go ahead. All points raised during the consultation period will be included in the final Consultation Report before being presented to Elected Members where a decision will be taken as to the outcome of this process.

What to do now

- Please read the full proposal document
- You are invited to attend the public meeting which will be held at Slamannan Primary School, Bank Street, Slamannan, FK1 3EZ on 11th March 2026 at 18:30
- All responses must be made online, or in writing by Friday 24th April 2026

After the consultation period

When the proposal document is published, a copy will also be sent to HMIE by the Education Authority. HMIE will also receive a copy of any relevant written representations received by the Authority from any person during the consultation period or, if HMIE agree, a summary of them. HMIE will further receive a summary of any oral representations made to the Local Authority at the public meeting which will

be held and, as available (and so far, as otherwise practicable), a copy of any other relevant documentation.

HMIE will then prepare a report on the educational aspects of the proposal not later than 3 weeks after the Authority has sent them all representations and documents mentioned above. For the avoidance of doubt, the 3-week period will not start until after the consultation period has ended. In preparing their report, HMIE may enter the affected schools and make such reasonable enquiries of such people they consider appropriate and may make such reasonable enquiries as they consider appropriate.

Falkirk Council – the Education Authority will review the proposal having regard to the HMIE Report, written representations that it has received, and oral representations made to it by any person at the public meeting. It will then prepare a Consultation Report. This report will be published in electronic and printed formats. It will be available from the Council website and from Education Services, Suite 1A, Falkirk Community Stadium, 4 Stadium Way, Falkirk, FK2 9EE free of charge. Anyone who made written representations to the Authority during the consultation period will also be informed about the report.

The consultation report will be published and available for further consideration for a period of at least 3 weeks. This report together with any other relevant documentation, will be considered by the Executive (including Education) of Falkirk Council in September 2026, who will come to a decision about whether to implement the proposal.

Yours sincerely

Kenny McNeill
Strategic Service Manager (Education)

Appendix 3: Responses from Pupils

Question: What do you like about Slamannan Primary School?

1. "Friends ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
2. "The teachers ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
3. "My friend", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
4. "The people", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
5. "one and only queen Miss A", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
6. "The art lessons", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
7. "My friends", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
8. "The clubs and teachers", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
9. "Playing with friend and learning new things", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
10. "That there is fun thing and they very good at helping people ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
11. "We play football and get to play outside with my pals ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
12. "The teacher", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
13. "Art and my friends ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
14. "Miss A and chicken curry's ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
15. "It's has football and basketball and play with your friends ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
16. "I like many things I like playing with my friends playing with p1s learning doing art ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
17. "I like that all the teachers are very nice and will help u in anyway possible also all of the pupils are. very nice and won't be mean to you ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
18. "Seeing my teacher and my friends ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
19. "Seeing my friends and teachers ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
20. "The maths", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
21. "My friends and teachers but not work", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
22. "Maths", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)

23. "Slamannan lets everyone in no matter what", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
24. "That you learn something new and teachers can be a bit bossy", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
25. "Seeing my friends", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
26. "I like how my friends are there and there is very very nice staff and friends and you get delicious lunches ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
27. "I get breakfast in the morning and there is very nice staff and kids", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
28. "Pe", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
29. "I like Maths And good friends ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
30. "Enjoy pe and to make friends ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
31. "The teachers Are kind and helping. The school is very good for mentally disabled children.", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
32. "Nothing ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
33. "The great education and teachers and the cool activities.", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
34. "PE", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
35. "Seeing my besties ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
36. "How we have math and how lots of new people the teachers are very nice ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)

What would be a good use for the Limerigg school building?

37. "Shop", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
38. "Nothing ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
39. "Church", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
40. "OUTDOOR LEARNING CENTER", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
41. "A community centre", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
42. "Community centre", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
43. "Maybe another fisher place since the black loch is next to it and because some of the buildings at the black loch are all burnt and smashed up ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
44. "A park with a field", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)

45. "Outdoor learning centre ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
46. "A outdoor centre ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
47. "U can make it a church or a food pantry ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
48. "Community centre", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
49. "A shop so people that stay Limerigg can get supplies for there house and a indoor football pitch ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
50. "New school ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
51. "Outdoor learning activities ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
52. "Community centre ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
53. "They need more supplies and a trolley with toys", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
54. "Outdoor learning activities", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
55. "Maybe a community centre or for some sort of clubs ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
56. "A Community centre ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
57. "A community centre", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
58. "Tesco", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
59. "Church ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
60. "Ice cream shop", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
61. "A gym", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
62. "Possibly a fast food place cause we haven't had any food shops in a decade or a school again ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
63. "More people to come", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
64. "Shop for people to get food", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
65. "Shop for people that don't need to take taxis and buses so they don't need to waste of money", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
66. "Night class", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
67. "Club for children ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
68. "To make a new club for children ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
69. "The community centre has closed down so Maybe a new Community centre or youth club ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
70. "Uhhh is a shoop good ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
71. "I believe a good use for the building would be for storage. and possibly a proper football pitch!", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)

72. "PE", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
73. "More play stuff in the out to play area ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)
74. "You could try and make it a history school so people can see it and how it looks before for school trips for Slamannan primary school ", (Slamannan Primary School Pupil)

Appendix 4: Public Meeting Minutes

Public Meeting

Date: 11 March 2026

Location: Slamannan Primary School

Purpose: Statutory public meeting held as part of the formal consultation process under the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* regarding the proposed closure of Limerigg Primary School.

Attendance

Council Officers

Deborah Davidson (DD) – Head of Education

Kenny McNeill (KM) – Strategic Service Manager

Richard Teed (RT) – Senior Forward Planning Officer

Siobhan Couttie (SC) – Forward Planning Officer

Robert Hynd – HMIE Inspectorate (Observer)

Consultees

One Local Resident (LR)

Introduction

Council officers opened the meeting, outlining the purpose of the statutory consultation and confirming that the discussion would be minuted and included in the Council's Consultation Report, in line with the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*.

Questions & Council Responses

Viability of the School

LR commented that the school was “*not viable*” as a continuing facility.

Potential Sale of the Building

Question 1: LR asked what happens to the building once it is no longer a school.

Answer: RT confirmed that if no community organisation came forward with a Community Asset Transfer (CAT) request, the building would be placed on the open market and remain marketed until sold.

Land Ownership Complications

KM explained that a strip of land incorporated into the site was gifted to the school and legal checks will be carried out on the land deeds to investigate any complications.

He referenced previous issues arising during the Blackness Primary School closure process, where historic land gifting arrangements required legal checks.

LR requested further details, and KM agreed to email this information to the neighbour.

Condition of the Septic Tank

Question 2: LR raised concerns regarding the septic tank, which is shared with a neighbour and has been overflowing, causing significant disruption.

KM confirmed that arrangements would be made for the issue to be inspected.

Security and Anti-Social Behaviour

Question 3: LR reported concerns about security, particularly relating to the open car park attracting young people, loud music, fishermen, and late-night visits. LR requested that a gate be installed to prevent unauthorised parking.

KM advised that the Council has installed gates at other former school sites and that this measure could be considered for Limerigg Primary School, including providing neighbouring residents with keys if required.

LR clarified that the concern relates to the car park entrance on the left-hand side, noting that access is via a shared drive and that summer activity from wild swimmers increases pressure.

Community Reflections

LR noted that while they could not dispute the findings in the Council's proposal paper, it was *"sad to see a lovely building go to waste."*

LR also commented on historic issues at Black Loch, where a privately-operated outdoor activity centre suffered repeated vandalism culminating in the destruction of the clubhouse.

Meeting Close

Officers thanked the attendee for their participation and confirmed that consultation remains open for written representations until the published closing date.

Consultation on the Permanent Closure of Limerigg Primary School



Agenda

- | | |
|---------|--|
| 6.30 pm | Welcome and Introduction
<i>Deborah Davidson (Head of Education)</i> |
| 6.35 pm | Background to the Proposal
<i>Richard Teed (Senior Forward Planning Officer)</i> |
| 6.40 pm | Educational Benefits Arising from the Proposed Closure
<i>Deborah Davidson (Head of Education)</i> |
| 6.45 pm | Financial & Property Considerations
<i>Richard Teed (Senior Forward Planning Officer)</i> |
| 6.50 pm | Next Steps in the Consultation Process
<i>Richard Teed (Senior Forward Planning Officer)</i> |
| 6.55 pm | Questions & Answers |
| 7:30 pm | Closing Remarks
<i>Deborah Davidson (Head of Education)</i> |



Background to the proposal

- **School Session 2018/19** – Following a steady decline in previous years, the school roll dropped to 5 pupils with no indications that demand would increase to previous levels in the foreseeable future.
- **June 2019** – Limerigg Primary School was mothballed with a temporary rezoning of the catchment area to Slamannan Primary School. This decision was taken following consultation with the parents and staff at the affected schools
- **2021** – Following a statutory consultation, the Education Executive Committee agreed to permanently close Limerigg Primary School. This decision was referred back to the Council by the Scottish Government's School Closure Review Panel for the Authority to more fully consider the alternatives to closure before a closure decision could be taken.
- **Autumn 2025** – Following another 4 years, during which pupil numbers did not recover but continued to decline, the alternatives to closure were fully explored during a preliminary engagement with the local community and school staff.
- **February 2026** – Executive Committee agreed to undertake a statutory consultation on the proposal to permanently close Limerigg Primary School



Background to the proposal

- **Catchment Pupils:** There are currently 11 primary-age pupils living in the Limerigg Primary School catchment area, down from 26 primary-age pupils in 2018/19 when the school was last open. 6 of these 11 pupils currently attend Slamannan Primary School.
- **Pupil Demand** – Only 5 pupils were attending Limerigg Primary School in 2018/19. We would expect a similar or smaller number to attend from the current primary cohort if the school re-opens.
- **Roll Projections** – No significant change in pupil numbers is projected going forward. A maximum of 3 new primary 1 enrolments can be expected in the next 4 years based on Health Board data
- **Slamannan Primary School** – Current Roll of 107 pupils with a capacity for 237, the school is operating at 45% occupancy. There is plenty of capacity going forward to accommodate Limerigg pupils



Alternatives to Closure

- **Keep the school open**

Not considered a viable option due to low projected uptake, cost of returning the school to operational use and availability of nearby alternative provision at Slamannan Primary School.

- **Catchment rezoning**

No viable options. Any proposal would disrupt communities in the Upper Braes (Slamannan and Avonbridge) that are currently within walking distance to their current primary school.

- **Open Nursery provision**

Not considered a reasonable option due to The location of Limerigg Primary School at the southern extremity of the Falkirk Council area, the space availability within the school and the nearby early years provision in Slamannan

- **Continue with the mothballing of the school**

Not considered viable. The school has been mothballed for over 6 years with no indication that pupil numbers will recover. Mothballing should only be considered as a temporary measure.



Educational Benefits

More diverse learning experience	Wider range of skillsets & experience amongst staff	Collaborative & cooperative learning with peers	Enhanced Learning Support
On-site nursery	Learning & Teaching	Broadening Range of Opportunities	Outdoor areas with play and sport facilities
Same “age and stage” cohorts	Meeting Learners Needs	Environment for Learning	Team activities
Larger peer groups	Building relationships for transition to secondary	Wider social group and opportunities	Wide range of family & community events



Financial & Property Considerations

- **Costs of Mothballing:**

The building is deteriorating while empty and currently costs **£24,480** per year to maintain.

- **Estimated Running Costs:**

If the school were to re-open with 5 pupils, it is estimated that the current annual operating costs would be **£214,244** or **£42,848 per pupil**, compared with the Falkirk average cost per pupil of **£7,447 (2024/25)**

- **Capital Expenditure:**

It is estimated that it would cost circa **£900,000** to repair, upgrade and modernise the building if it were to re-open

- **Future Use:**

If the proposed closure goes ahead then the school will become an asset surplus to requirements and the Council will consider and consult with the Community on future use.



Next Steps in Consultation Process

- Consultation Closes on 24th April
- Education Scotland report back to Council on 18th May
- Consultation Report Published on website by end of May (all respondents notified)
- Council Decision on Proposal on September 17th
- If proposed closure is agreed, then this will be notified to Scottish Ministers and publicised on website
- 8-week period during which decision can be “called-in” by Ministers and potentially referred to School Closure Review Panel for further consideration



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS



Appendix 6: Online Survey Responses

If you support the proposal, what are your reasons:

1. "The school could be getting used for other benefits to the community ", (*A resident living in the Limerigg Primary School catchment area*)

If you do not support the proposal, what are your reasons:

2. "Should be a community asset to keep within the community", (*Parent/Carer of pupils living in the catchment of Limerigg Primary School*)
3. "Limerigg has next to no amenities - Thanks only to the village residents' association has there been any community activity and resources in the form of the upgraded play park and by taking over responsibility to manage the village hall in order for it to survive.

Permanently closing the primary school further destroys the unique sense of place that this rural village exhibits and adds to the closure of a list of other amenities previously enjoyed by residents, including the Post Office/Village Shop, Church, Pub and Community Garden (located adjacent to the school playground).

The consultation document states that residents are accepting of having to travel in order to access shops, GPs, and other amenities, and that suggests they should be the same in relation to the education of their children. The reality is that people have simply no choice, other than having to travel by car or by the limited bus service in order to access the most straightforward of everyday amenities. It is either absorb the costs and inconvenience and possible hardship, or remain isolated, or yield to a restricted quality of life.

The consultation document mentions that teachers would probably need to travel to Limerigg to work at the Primary. However, there should be a wider recognition that in order to run a school there are more professions required and previously the school has been one of the few forms of local employment to local people including school helpers, secretaries, dinner servers, cleaners,

and visiting specialist teachers.

The rural location of Limerigg Primary offered children unique opportunities to study and appreciate nature.

The school pupils' attainment levels were historically impressive with many doing well at secondary, moving into Higher and Further Education and securing professional jobs.

If it is decided that the school must close, it should remain with Falkirk Council to run with consideration given to how its unique and special location could benefit the local and wider community of the Falkirk area and beyond so school children and adults can enjoy the idyllic surroundings and the Black Loch for educational and recreational purposes.

", *(A resident living in the Limerigg Primary School catchment area)*

How will the proposal affect you?

4. "Family home adjacent to school grounds, and has access rites via school playground and uses and pays for septic tank within school boundary. Although the consultation states the site is being maintained, there's visible evidence of robust and fast growing vegetation, and because of its isolated location, it is vulnerable to criminality.", *(A resident living in the Limerigg Primary School catchment area)*

Do you have any comments on these or any suggestions for other alternatives to closure that should be considered?

5. "Feel that the school should be used as a community asset so much it could be used for ", *(Parent/Carer of pupils living in the catchment of Limerigg Primary School)*
6. "Agreement with all above suggestions and additionally, if it is decided that the school must close, it should remain with Falkirk Council to run with

consideration given to how its unique and special location could benefit the local and wider community of the Falkirk area and beyond so school children and adults can enjoy the idyllic surroundings and the Black Loch for educational and recreational purposes. However, consideration must be given to limit the amount of vehicular traffic and parking so it does not negatively impact immediate residents.", (*A resident living in the Limerigg Primary School catchment area*)

Do you have any further comments on the proposal?

7. "The school need to kept as a community asset", (Parent/Carer of pupils living in the catchment of Limerigg Primary School)

Appendix 7: HMIE Inspectors Report



Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

**Report by HMIE addressing educational aspects of the
proposal by Falkirk Council to permanently close Limerigg
Primary School and realign its catchment to Slamannan
Primary School.**

April 2026

Introduction

1.1 This report from HMIE has been prepared by His Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HM Inspectors) in accordance with the terms of the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#) ("the 2010 Act"). The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of a proposal by Falkirk Council to permanently close Limerigg Primary School and realign its catchment area to Slamannan Primary School. Section 2 of the report sets out brief details of the consultation process. Section 3 of the report sets out HM Inspectors' consideration of the educational aspects of the proposal, including significant views expressed by consultees. Section 4 summarises HM Inspectors' view. Upon receipt of this report, the Act requires the council to consider it alongside any relevant considerations the council received and then prepare its consultation report. The council's consultation report should include this report and must contain an explanation of how, in finalising the proposal, it has reviewed the initial proposal, including a summary of points raised during the consultation process and the council's response to them. The council has to publish its consultation report at least three weeks before it takes its final decision. With all proposals the council needs to follow all statutory obligations set out in the 2010 Act. Where a council is proposing to close a school, there are specific additional obligations. These include notifying Ministers within six working days of making its final decision and explaining to consultees the opportunity they have to make representations to Ministers. There are special provisions that apply to close a rural school.

1.2 HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for children of the schools; any other users; children likely to become pupils within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper; and other children in the council area;
- any other likely effects of the proposal;
- how the council intends to minimise or avoid any adverse effects that may arise from the proposal; and
- the educational benefits the council believes will result from implementation of the proposal, and the council's reasons for coming to these beliefs.

1.3 In preparing this report, HM Inspectors undertook the following activities:

- attendance at the public meeting held on 11 March 2026 in connection with the council's proposals;
- consideration of all relevant documentation provided by the council in relation to the proposal, specifically the educational benefits statement and related consultation documents, written and oral submissions from parents and others; and

- visits to the site of Limerigg Primary School and Slamannan Primary School, including discussion with relevant consultees.

1.4 As the proposal, if implemented, will lead to the closure of a rural school, HM Inspectors also took account of the council's consideration of any reasonable alternatives to closure of Limerigg Primary School the likely effect on the local community and the likely effect of any different travelling arrangements of the proposed closure.

Consultation process

2.1 Falkirk Council undertook the consultation on its proposal(s) with reference to the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#).

2.2 The public consultation ran from 23 February to 24 April 2026. Copies of the proposal were made available to stakeholders and on the council website. The council held a public meeting on 11 March 2026, which was attended by one member of the public. The council received four responses to its online consultation and one email response. Of the responses to the online consultation, one agreed with the proposal and three disagreed. Stakeholders raised concerns about the management of a septic tank, which is shared with nearby housing, site security and anti-social behaviour. Clarity was also sought about land ownership, which was gifted to the school. Whist saddened by the school's closure, a few stakeholders are concerned about the future use of the building and expressed it should be retained for community benefit.

2.3 Falkirk Council consulted children currently attending Slamannan Primary School. Children expressed mixed views on whether the school should close. Children were asked to share their views on the future use of the school building. Suggestions included a community centre, outdoor centre or a shop.

Educational aspects of proposal

3.1 Falkirk Council mothballed Limerigg Primary School in August 2019. The school roll declined for a prolonged period of time and dropped to five children during session 2018-2019. Since then, children who would have attended the school have been reallocated to the catchment area of Slamannan Primary School.

3.2 In 2021, Falkirk Council undertook a statutory consultation and the Education, Children and Young People Executive agreed to the permanent closure of the school. Scottish Ministers referred this decision to the School Closures Review Panel. The Panel concluded that the council had not fully complied with the preliminary requirements set out in Section 12A of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. As a result, the closure was not approved. The council was required to reconsider alternatives and undertake a fresh statutory

consultation. Falkirk Council have since undertaken a preliminary community engagement under section 12A of the Act.

3.3 As the primary aged population in the catchment area has not increased, nor is there evidence that it will increase in the future, the council now proposes again to permanently close Limerigg Primary School. The catchment area of Slamannan Primary School would be changed to permanently reflect this.

3.4 The council has outlined several educational benefits within the proposal in relation to learning and teaching, educational outcomes, experiences and opportunities, and the environment for learning. HM Inspectors believe that the council has demonstrated the educational benefits successfully within the proposal. HM Inspectors agree there is sufficient merit to consider the permanent closure of the school.

3.5 Almost all stakeholders who spoke with HM Inspectors were in favour of closing Limerigg Primary School. All staff recognise the potential benefits of the proposal. Staff talk positively about approaches to meeting learners' needs. Children benefit from collaborative learning with peers of the same age and stage. They believe this supports social and emotional development and better prepares them for transition to secondary school. All children agree that they are settled in their current school and benefit from positive learning experiences to develop social and interpersonal skills by working with a larger group of peers. They benefit from taking leadership roles, which are more accessible in a larger school context. A few children from Limerigg catchment area are sad that Limerigg Primary School may not reopen. They feel they would benefit from more active ways to travel to school.

3.6 As the proposal, if implemented, will lead to the closure of a rural school, HM Inspectors also took account of the council's consideration of the factors to which it should have special regard. The council has continued to monitor the pupil roll and engage with the school community. There are sound reasons to consider the long-term viability of the school. The council has consulted and considered reasonable alternatives to the closure of the school, including the reopening of the school, increasing the occupancy by rezoning and extending the catchment area and making available capacity for early years provision. There is consensus across stakeholders who met with HM Inspectors that these options are not viable and would not result in educational benefits to children. Travelling arrangements for children will continue with free transport provided for the relatively short distance of around two miles.

3.7 Whilst most members of the community who engaged with the consultation process do not agree that the school should close, they believe that the building should be retained for community benefit. They want to ensure the building does not fall into further disrepair. The council should continue to engage with local residents to address the concerns in relation to the shared septic tank, security and anti-social behaviour.

Summary

HM Inspectors agree that there are clear educational benefits of closing Limerigg Primary School and for children to continue their education at Slamannan Primary School. Children benefit from positive learning experiences at the school. They benefit from learning and socialising with a larger peer group and enjoy the leadership opportunities available in Slamannan Primary School. Whilst most members of the community who engaged with the consultation process do not agree that school should close, they believe the building should be used for community benefit. Should the proposal go ahead, the council should continue to communicate with the local community to address their concerns and explore plans for the future use of the school building.

HM Inspectors
April 2026

On behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education in Scotland

Appendix 8: Letters Received

Email 1

Good Afternoon,

I attended last night's meeting regarding the potential closure of Limerigg School.

I appreciated the opportunity to raise my concerns directly with the Falkirk Council representatives, who were welcoming and helpful throughout.

As a local resident living in the Old School House next to the site, my husband and I are particularly concerned about the risk of unauthorised access to the school car park if the premises are vacated.

Given the proximity to the Black Loch and the history of vandalism in that area, we feel similar issues could arise within the school grounds.

During the meeting, we discussed the option of installing a gate or barrier to prevent vehicle access, with the possibility of us holding a key so the area can be secured at night. This would still allow access to the playground and community garden via the main school gates.

Our property and our neighbours also rely on the septic tank located within the school car park. We are concerned about how these services will be managed should the school close, particularly given the current condition of the tank, which would benefit from inspection by Falkirk Council.

We feel it would be a significant loss to see such an important part of local history fall into disuse. Given the rural setting, we would welcome the building being brought back into productive use and believe it could be well suited to a sensory needs school or centre.

Local resident