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**Review of Education Provision**

**RELOCATION OF COMPLEX ADDITIONAL SUPPORT  
NEEDS PROVISION FROM STORNOWAY PRIMARY  
CAMPUS TO SANDWICKHILL LEARNING CENTRE AND  
REDESIGN OF COMPLEX ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS  
PROVISION IN LEWIS AND HARRIS**

**CONSULTATION REPORT  
MAY 2012**

Roinn an Fhoghlaim is Seirbheisean Chloinne

**COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR**  
**Education and Children's Services Department**

**Review of Education Provision**

**Relocation of Complex Additional Support Needs Provision from Stornoway Primary Campus to Sandwichhill Learning Centre and Redesign of Complex Additional Support Needs Provision in Lewis and Harris**

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# **Review of Education Provision for Relocation of Complex Additional Support Needs Provision from Stornoway Primary Campus to Sandwickhill Learning Centre and Redesign of Complex Additional Support Needs Provision in Lewis and Harris Consultation Report**

## **Report by the Director of Education and Children's Services**

### **CONSIDER THE PROPOSAL THAT :**

- **Education provision for pupils with Complex Additional Support Needs (ASN) be discontinued at Stornoway Primary campus with effect from 29 June 2012.**
- **Pupils with complex additional support needs be assumed to be educated within their local mainstream school or at the enhanced provision within Sgoil nan Loch (Primary) and The Nicolson Institute (Secondary).**
- **Pupils with complex additional support needs be enrolled in their local mainstream school and have access, on a full or part time basis, to the Sandwickhill Learning Centre.**

### **BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The Comhairle, at its Meeting on 15 December 2011, authorised the Director of Education and Children's Services to proceed to undertake the necessary statutory consultation with parents, staff, pupils and other interested parties affected by the proposal regarding the proposed Relocation of Complex Additional Support Needs Provision from Stornoway Primary Campus to Sandwickhill Learning Centre and Redesign of Complex Additional Support Needs Provision in Lewis and Harris as required by the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.
- 1.2 This decision relates to the implementation of the Strategy for the Future Provision for pupils with complex ASN in the Western Isles.
- 1.3 Comhairle nan Eilean Siar aims to allocate resources in a way which will secure the best possible educational experience for pupils in the Western Isles. Implicit in this key objective is the effective deployment of resources in order to secure continuous improvement in educational achievement and attainment, and to provide better facilities in the most viable settings.
- 1.4 The Director of Education and Children's Services commissioned Prof Donnie M Macleod from the Centre for Inclusion and Equity to undertake a review of provision for children and young people whose additional support needs might be described as severe and complex. Prof Macleod undertook extensive consultation with all stakeholders and submitted a report and action plan for change which was considered by Comhairle nan Eilean Siar in December 2011.
- 1.5 The problems relating to the existing Severe and Complex Education Provision within the Western Isles can be briefly stated:
  - a) The services are fragmented and Children and Young People are being supported based on a system of categorisation of need rather than their additional support needs.
  - b) The services provided are not coordinated in a manner consistent with Getting it Right for Every Child by all the services available in Education.
  - c) Management structures are not clear to parents and decision pathways are not applied consistently.

- d) Existing provision in Stornoway, Sgoil nan Loch and Sgoil Lionacleit does not meet, individually or in partnerships, all the needs of children and young people in terms of accommodation, facilities or transport.
- e) Current services need to be integrated and expanded to include pre-school inputs, enhanced parent support and equitable access to resources such as outdoor education, sport, recreational activities, specialist services, respite provision, after-school clubs etc.

1.6 The Comhairle has, in these circumstances, a duty to:

- each Child and Young Person with additional support needs and for whose school education the Authority is responsible to make adequate and efficient provision for such additional support as is required by that child or young person and;
- make appropriate arrangements for keeping under consideration the additional support needs of, and the adequacy of the additional support provided, for each child and young person.

## **THE CONSULTATION PROCESS**

2.1 The current requirements for consulting on the proposed Relocation of Complex Additional Support Needs Provision from Stornoway Primary Campus to Sandwickhill Learning Centre and Redesign of Complex Additional Support Needs Provision in Lewis and Harris are set out in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

- A proposal document was issued as a result of a decision approved by the Comhairle as detailed in Appendix A. A copy of this document was issued free of charge to the consultees as listed in the Proposal Document and was also published on the Comhairle website.
- An advert was placed in local newspapers on 23 February 2012 and the consultation ran thereafter for a period of 32 school days until 20 April 2012.
- A public meeting was held on 21 March 2012.
- Pupils and staff were also consulted separately.
- HMle involvement included being sent a copy of the proposal document and their visiting the affected schools and meeting with parents, pupils and staff. They also received a copy of all written representations. They then prepared a report on the educational aspects of the proposal (Appendix D).
- This Consultation Report is the Comhairle's response to issues raised during the consultation period, including a response to identified inaccuracies in the consultation information.
- This Consultation Report will be published at least three weeks before a final decision is taken by the Comhairle on the proposal.

### **Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment**

2.2 An Initial Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment (Appendix C), in line with statutory legislation, was undertaken in relation to the proposal for the School. There were no discriminatory or detrimental consequences identified in relation to the proposal being implemented. Therefore a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required.

## **CONSULTATION MEETINGS**

3.1 Consultation meetings were held as follows:

- Public meeting at Stornoway Primary School on 21 March 2012.
- Meetings with staff at both Sandwick School and Stornoway Primary Special Class.

## **OMISSIONS AND INACCURACIES**

4.1 Within the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 there is guidance on how errors or omissions should be addressed. No errors or omissions were identified.

## REPRESENTATIONS

5.1 The written representations received during the consultation period are detailed below.

Representations from:	Number
• Written response on behalf of parents of Stornoway Primary Special Class pupils	1
• Individuals written responses	1
• Staff Professional Associations - EIS	1
• NHS Western Isles	1
• Church of Scotland representative on Education and Children's Services Committee	1
• CNES Member	1
• Individuals written response signed by 3	1
<b>Total:</b>	<b>7</b>

## SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS AND COMHAIRLE RESPONSES

6.1 This section details the relevant points raised at public meetings and in the written submissions. A note of the public meeting is included as Appendix B. A copy of all written representations will be published as part of the Report to Comhairle Members.

6.2 The responses to the issues raised are detailed below.

<b>THE NICOLSON INSTITUTE BUILDING</b>
<p><b>ISSUE:</b> Accommodation at the new Nicolson Institute in relation to its location, health and safety and outdoor play.</p> <p><b>RESPONSE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The new Nicolson Institute is DDA compliant, fully accessible and meets all health and safety requirements.</li> <li>• The Support for Learning accommodation is at the centre of the school with good access to a range of support services. All toilet and intimate care resources have been designed to meet the full range of needs, and fire evacuation plans and personal evacuation plans, where necessary, will be developed accordingly.</li> <li>• Proposals are currently being developed for the inclusion of an enhanced outdoor play area to meet the needs of the pupils as part of the overall design of facilities at the new Nicolson Institute.</li> </ul>

<b>CONSULTATION</b>
<p><b>ISSUE:</b> A number of issues were raised by NHS Western Isles relating to the consultation, assessment of children, adaptations and information to parents from Health Services staff.</p> <p><b>RESPONSE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health colleagues have had a long involvement with the majority of children and did participate in the consultation exercise.</li> <li>• In all instances where children were assessed for inclusion at The Nicolson Institute, this was done through appropriate meetings and the advice and professional expertise of Health Professionals was sought in relation to some aspects of the physical provision in the new school building. All children currently have aids, adaptations and equipment as recommended by health and if pupils transfer or have additional support needs at anytime, these will be appropriately addressed through assessments and review meetings.</li> </ul>

- Some parents have, for a considerable period of time, wanted their children to transfer to the new Nicolson Institute on the basis of inclusion and participation, and in a provision directly managed by the school and integrated within a mainstream setting as much as possible. On this basis, the new Nicolson Institute has enhanced accommodation for teaching and support services, and good access to all parts of the school.
- Sgoil nan Loch was our P1 - S2 provision and, on this basis, transfer to The Nicolson Institute was always anticipated, and the change to a more integrated provision directly managed by the school is being recommended. It is important to remember that the original provision for complex Additional Support Needs for Primary and Secondary children was located on the campus of Stornoway Primary School and provided support to a broader range of need. The proposed model of provision has been developed in consultation with parents in order to improve levels of inclusion within mainstream and provide more peer-appropriate provision.
- Due to the demands of parents and the planned development of the new Nicolson Institute, transfer of children from Sgoil nan Loch to secondary provision at the Nicolson Institute did not occur earlier. This now means that children of all ages between P1 and S6 could be placed in either provision.

#### **RANGE OF NEEDS TO BE PROVIDED FOR THE PROPOSED**

**ISSUE:** Some concerns were raised regarding the proposal to extend the range of needs provided for at the proposed Sandwick Learning Centre and its accessibility to pupils.

#### **RESPONSE:**

- In recent years, more children with a broader range of needs have been integrated and included within the mainstream education setting. A relatively small number of children are now educated outwith mainstream education on a full-time basis.
- Those children with the most complex difficulties frequently have similar needs; varying degrees of learning difficulties, medical conditions, emotional difficulties, behaviour difficulties and social difficulties. Many factors give rise to these difficulties and Education and Children's Services has to respond to these flexibly and with the maximum degree of resources and skilled personnel in a supportive environment. A high quality service must be characterised by flexibility and a capacity to respond to the changing needs and circumstances of individual children and young people in a variety of contexts. The proposed arrangements provide for flexible access to mainstream and off-campus provision on the basis of individual need while, at the same time providing outreach support to mainstream schools in order to enhance and secure inclusion.
- As a consequence, Education and Children's Services have developed a range of provision and resources to meet pupil needs.
- Historically, adolescents with significant behaviour difficulties were accommodated in the Alternative Curriculum Education project. However, the success of this work resulted in a review of the provision and it was replaced with the Extended Learning Resource. This provides a more universal resource across the Islands, supporting a wider range of needs on a targeted basis from primary to post-school, and, in some cases, pre-school education.
- All young people referred are appropriately assessed, all activities are risk assessed, and staff have significant experience and training.
- Consequently, the proposal recommends the integration of resources but allows for the educational inputs to reflect the needs of the individual and ensure an appropriate balance between school, learning centre and community education.

- The proposed provision at Sandwick Learning Centre is in a central location and will operate no operate no differently to the present model with children travelling from various rural locations in Lewis.
- It is not intended to provide a segregated pre-school provision. The pre-school facility will be kept as resource appropriate for some of the children some of the time.

#### **BUILDING ACCOMMODATION AT SANDWICK**

**ISSUE:** Concerns were expressed in relation to the short timetable proposed for transfer and whether it would be possible to complete any necessary building works, purchase and install any specialist equipment and ensure compliance with all health and safety requirements.

**RESPONSE:**

- It is accepted that the timescale is short and that it will be challenging to have the building works completed before the August 2012 transfer date. Parents of the children in the provision at the Stornoway Primary School campus are eager to move to the Sandwickhill provision in August 2012. Parents of the children at Sgoil nan Loch are positive about the transfer of their children to The Nicolson Institute but are concerned in relation to the transition period. On this basis it is agreed that transfer will only take place when the accommodation is appropriate, meets the children's needs, and is secure and compliant with all health, safety and fire regulations. Transition to The Nicolson Institute will take place at a time determined by the current transition programme and the ability of the children to cope with the demands of the new setting.
- All specialist equipment is portable and will transfer with the children. Staff transferring with the children have the appropriate training and experience.

#### **MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE**

**ISSUE:** Some concerns were expressed regarding the management structure and the relationship with mainstream provision and the mainstream school Head Teacher.

**RESPONSE:**

- Many children and young people are registered in their local school while they receive part of or all of their education in external provision managed by the Local Authority.
- Most parents have responded positively to the quality of education provided in Extended Learning and have enjoyed good relationships with their teacher, Head Teacher of the local school or Resource Manager.
- Currently, approximately 1000 young people in the Western Isles are supported through school and resource services by a multi-disciplinary team working together through systems of staged intervention, action planning and reviewing. These work very effectively.
- The Nicolson Institute is our biggest school with over 1000 pupils. A number of young people are on shared placement and supported through the Pupil Support Team, School Action Team and Community Action Team.
- It is proposed to appoint an Authority Additional Support Needs Manager/Coordinator to support the Head of Service and provide direct line management to the Sandwick Resource Centre PT for complex Additional Support Needs.



- In relation to other provision, it reflects current practice and is in line with the recommendation of the independent Report proposed by Professor Donnie M Macleod from the Centre for Inclusion and Equity, as commissioned by Comhairle nan Eilean Siar:
  - Mainstream school with support
  - Mainstream school with enhanced support but under the Direct Management of the Head Teacher and with a greater emphasis on Inclusion and the role of the class teacher.
- This is, in fact, what has been sought by some parents and staff and is now being proposed. In this regard it is important to remember that The Nicolson Institute always had complex Additional Support Needs provision which was resourced and managed by the Local Authority. This proposal is recommending that the future resource be integrated within the school and under the direct management of the Head Teacher.
- A suggestion to integrate complex Additional Support Needs resources under the direct management of the Head Teacher of The Nicolson Institute could be considered in consultation with the Head Teacher and other services such as Extended Learning and Early Years.

<b>INCLUSION</b>
<p><b>ISSUE:</b> A number of issues were raised in relation to the terms used, and their meanings or implications, in the report on Inclusion, mainstreaming, training and segregation.</p> <p><b>RESPONSE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education at Stornoway Primary School and Sgoil nan Loch is not fully inclusive. Children attending specialist provision at these schools are not included in all activities with their peer group, or in mainstream classes; they participate in some activities or classes at their school, or in other schools in their community.</li> <li>• More children with greater needs are spending more time with their peers in activities and in classes than they used to, and it is the Comhairle's aspiration to promote this wherever possible. However, it is clear that some needs, some children and some parents do not wish fully inclusive provision but seek for access to a continuum of resources on a flexible basis and in response to the needs of their children.</li> <li>• The current proposal reflects this aspiration and provides parents, young people, and those who support them, with the opportunity to tailor educational provision to the individual needs of the child or young person and their family, not only in terms of location, but also in terms of the curriculum.</li> </ul>

<b>TRANSITION TIMESCALES &amp; PLANNING</b>
<p><b>ISSUE:</b> Staff and parents of pupils at Sgoil nan Loch were concerned regarding transition timescales and planning.</p> <p><b>RESPONSE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupil transfer from Sgoil nan Loch to The Nicolson Institute has for some time been the subject of discussion and of detailed planning.</li> <li>• The current transition plan is comprehensive and has the support of staff and parents. The pupils are coping well with the experience and the evidence to date suggests they are adjusting well to the larger secondary environment. Clearly, transition is important, and the length of time this process takes will vary from child to child. Consequently, we are committed to ensuring children and young people will transfer when they are able to do so, and when all relevant staff and resources are in place.</li> </ul>



- The Principal Teacher of Support for Learning in The Nicolson Institute is well qualified and very experienced in understanding and meeting the needs of young people with additional support needs. Staff have been identified and work will take place to allow transition between the existing provision and The Nicolson Institute, with appropriate inputs from existing staff in relation to training.
- Programmes of work are in place for all young people. Students from the Special Class at Stornoway Primary School have a current programme of visits to Sandwick in place.
- Coordinated Support Plan (CSP) reviews for all children will be undertaken prior to transfer and will take full account of transition planning to meet the needs of each child or young person.

#### NICOLSON INSTITUTE STAFFING AND RESOURCES

**ISSUES:** Nicolson Institute staff had a number of concerns in relation to educational provision and staffing, including the experience of staff, the timescale for transition, timetabling, curriculum, and impact on Support for Learning.

#### RESPONSE

- Complex additional support needs provision has been provided at The Nicolson Institute historically, and the school and the Principal Teacher of Learning Support are aware of the needs of the young people. Educational programmes of work have already been developed and a comprehensive transition timetable is in place. The Principal Teacher of Learning Support is well qualified to support staff and supervise programmes of work. Staff assigned to work in The Nicolson Institute are well qualified and experienced in the area of additional support needs. It is recognised that transition time is limited. However, the final decision to transfer will be made on the basis that staff are in place and prepared, programmes of work are well planned, and the Principal Teacher of Learning Support has the necessary additional resources in place to support the young people, e.g. teacher, auxiliary staff and education programme.

#### CONDUCT OF MEETING

**ISSUE:** Some issues were raised with regard to the conduct of the meeting.

#### RESPONSE:

- The chair of the meeting did not prevent those present from responding, and all questions that were asked were given a response. The chair advised a parent that specific questions in relation to their child should be discussed with appropriate staff from the Department. Parents of pupils who attend the provision at Stornoway Primary School requested the chair to read out a statement on their behalf and a parent from this group was present at the meeting. A wide range of questions were asked and responses were provided by the chair, Professor Donnie M Macleod and a representative from the Education and Children's Services Department. Education staff were consulted separately and had the opportunity to raise matters of concern in staff meetings/consultations and through their trade union, which they did.

## HMIe REPORT

- 7.1 In line with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, a report was provided by HM Inspectorate on the educational aspects of the proposed Relocation of Complex Additional Support Needs Provision from Stornoway Primary Campus to Sandwickhill Learning Centre and Redesign of Complex Additional Support Needs Provision in Lewis and Harris. This report is attached as Appendix D.
- 7.2 HMI identified a number of areas of concern including the following.

<p><b>ISSUE:</b> Transition Planning.</p> <p><b>RESPONSE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All children have planned transition programmes in place and will have their individual circumstances reviewed prior to the end of the session.</li> <li>• Transfer to new provision will only occur if pupils are assessed to be able to cope with the demands of the receiving provision.</li> </ul>
<p><b>ISSUE:</b> Short timescales.</p> <p><b>RESPONSE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is recognised that the timescales for building work and transition planning is short. However, parents at the Stornoway Primary provision are eager to transfer to the Sandwickhill Learning Centre resource in August 2012. In order to achieve this the programme of building improvements and service transfer will be phased over 12 months.</li> <li>• Parents of pupils at Sgoil nan Loch are currently working with staff on a transition programme. The Nicolson Institute is on schedule for opening in August 2012 with appropriate accommodation in place to meet the needs of these children which will be an improvement on that available at Sgoil nan Loch.</li> </ul>
<p><b>ISSUE:</b> Management Structure</p> <p><b>RESPONSE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All children will be on the register of their mainstream school. Pupils attending Sgoil nan Loch enhanced resource or The Nicolson Institute will be managed by the Headteacher of these schools.</li> </ul>

## SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION WITH STAFF

- 8.1 All teaching and non teaching staff were invited to attend consultations regarding the Comhairle's proposals. The staff made the following observations which they wished to be recorded.

<p><b>Consultation with Nicolson Institute Staff - Main issues raised by staff</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff wanted reassurance that additional staff, appropriate to the levels of needs of the children, would be in place prior to transfer.</li> <li>• Staff asked that all staff working with the children who would be transferred had the opportunity to participate in the transition programme.</li> <li>• Staff were anxious in regard to the commissioning of the new building and transition timescales.</li> <li>• Staff were keen to see draft timetables for the students in order to assess the wider implication for mainstream provision.</li> <li>• Staff were concerned that increased numbers of ASN placements and staff changes reduced their capacity without additional resourcing.</li> <li>• Staff felt that more work needed to be done to secure the commitment of subject departments and mainstream staff.</li> <li>• Staff asked that consideration be given to The Nicolson Institute having direct management responsibility for the Sandwickhill complex ASN provision.</li> </ul>
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**Consultation with Stornoway Primary Severe and Complex Provision Staff - Main issues raised by staff**

- Staff felt that there should be a continuum of provision allowing for the greatest flexibility in meeting children’s needs.
- Staff felt that serious consideration should be given to parents’ views when placement decisions were being made.
- Staff felt that Sandwickhill provided improved resources and that transition activities should be put in place as soon as possible.
- Staff wanted reassurance that they would be deployed as a staff group with the children.
- Staff welcomed the opportunity for increased mainstream integration.
- Staff requested they be kept informed of progress and changes.
- Staff welcomed the addition of respite and the potential for after school activities.

**RESPONSE:**

- All issues raised by staff are addressed within the responses within this report.

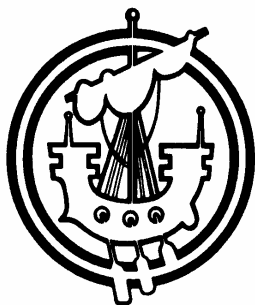
**CONCLUSION**

- 9.1 The consultation process was robust and provided an opportunity for all stakeholders to identify key issues of concern. These issues have been fully considered and the Comhairle’s response detailed in sections 5, 6, 7 and 8 above.
- 9.2 The Standards in Schools (Scotland) Act 2000 requires local authorities “to secure that the education is directed to the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of the child or young person to their fullest potential”. (Para 2.1)
- 9.3 HMle visited Stornoway Primary School, Sgoil nan Loch and The Nicolson Institute to speak to parents, pupils and staff. They attended the public meeting on 10 June 2010 and had the opportunity to review in detail the proposal document and all written responses.
- 9.4 In summary, the HMle Report recognises -
- “The proposal from Comhairle nan Eilean Siar to discontinue provision at Stornoway Primary School campus and transfer children and young people to Sandwickhill Learning Centre with effect from August 2012, offers some educational benefits to the children directly affected. These include better teaching areas, spacious play areas and specialist support on site. Young people at Sgoil nan Loch school and Stornoway Primary School Campus who transfer to The Nicolson Institute are likely to benefit from better opportunities to learn and engage in social activities with others of similar age and stage....”*
- However, it identifies a number of significant issues that required to be resolved.
- All co-ordinated support plans (CSPs) should be reviewed.
  - The new facilities should be completed in time for the start of the next school session.
- 9.5 The Education and Children’s Services Department is committed to ensuring all CSPs are reviewed prior to the transfer of young people to the new school provision and that the new facilities are adequate for their needs.
- 9.6 The Director of Education and Children’s Services, on reviewing all of the submissions, the HMle report, and the Equality Impact Assessment (Appendix C) recommends that the current provision at Stornoway primary Special Class be relocated to Sandwickhill Learning Centre.
- 9.7 Pupils, parents and staff at Stornoway Primary Special Class would have access to better facilities and the opportunity to transfer to The Nicolson Institute on a full time or shared placement basis according to their needs. Pupils from Sgoil nan Loch Special Class would have a more appropriate school resource that is peer appropriate.
- 9.8 It is recognised that there are a number of challenges which if addressed should not prevent the transfer of pupils as recommended.

## RECOMMENDATION

10.1 It is proposed that:

- a) the Education provision for pupils with Complex Additional Support Needs be discontinued at Stornoway Primary campus with effect from 29 June 2012;
- b) Pupils with complex additional support needs be assumed to be educated within their local mainstream school or enhanced provision within Sgoil na Loch (Primary) and The Nicolson Institute (Secondary); and
- c) that pupils with complex additional support needs be enrolled in their local mainstream school and have access, as their needs require and on the basis of individual review, to full or part time provision at the Sandwichhill Learning Centre.



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**Education and Children's Services Department**

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**Education Provision**  
**PROPOSAL DOCUMENT – FEBRUARY 2012**

**Review of Education Provision**

**RELOCATION OF COMPLEX ADDITIONAL SUPPORT  
NEEDS PROVISION FROM STORNOWAY PRIMARY  
CAMPUS TO SANDWICKHILL LEARNING CENTRE AND  
REDESIGN OF COMPLEX ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS  
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**Roinn an Fhoghlaim is Seirbheisean Chloinne**

**COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR**  
**Education and Children’s Services Department**

**Review of Education Provision – February 2012**

**Relocation of Complex Additional Support Needs Provision from Stornoway Primary  
Campus to Sandwickhill Learning Centre and Redesign of Complex Additional  
Support Needs Provision in Lewis and Harris**

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**Appendices:**

1. Consultees

# Review of Education Provision: February 2012

## Relocation of Complex Additional Support Needs Provision from Stornoway Primary Campus to Sandwickhill Learning Centre and Redesign of Complex Additional Support Needs Provision in Lewis and Harris

### Report by the Director of Education and Children's Services

#### PROPOSAL

##### It is proposed that:

- **Education provision for pupils with Complex Additional Support Needs be discontinued at Stornoway Primary campus with effect from 29 June 2012.**
- **Pupils with complex additional support needs be assumed to be educated within their local mainstream school or at the enhanced provision within Sgoil nan Loch (Primary) and The Nicolson Institute (Secondary).**
- **Pupils with complex additional support needs be enrolled in their local mainstream school and have access, on a full or part time basis, to the Sandwickhill Learning Centre.**

#### INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Comhairle nan Eilean Siar aims to allocate resources in a way which will secure the best possible educational experience for pupils in the Western Isles. Implicit in this key objective is the effective deployment of resources in order to secure continuous improvement in educational achievement and attainment, and to provide better facilities in the most viable settings.
- 1.2 The Director of Education and Children's Services commissioned Prof Donnie M Macleod from the Centre for Inclusion and Equity to undertake a review of children and young people whose additional support needs might be described as severe and complex. Prof Macleod undertook extensive consultation with all stakeholders and submitted a report and action plan for change which was considered by Comhairle nan Eilean Siar in December 2011.
- 1.3 The Comhairle, at its Meeting on 15 December 2011, agreed to proceed to statutory consultation on the proposed relocation of educational provision for children with severe and complex needs from the campus of Stornoway Primary School to the premises currently occupied by Sandwickhill School. The Comhairle authorised the Director of Education and Children's Services to consult with parents, staff, pupils and other interested parties affected by the proposal regarding the relocation of severe and complex provision on the campus of Stornoway Primary School as required by the Schools (Consultation)(Scotland) Act 2010.
- 1.4 This document relates to a proposal to relocate the Severe and Complex Provision on the campus of Stornoway Primary School with effect from 29 June 2012 on the basis that the provision be transferred to the Sandwickhill Learning Centre with effect from 13 August 2012.

#### CONSULTATIVE PROCESS - SUMMARY OF PROCESS FOR THIS PROPOSAL DOCUMENT

##### Consideration by the Education and Children's Services Committee

- 2.1 This Proposal Document has been issued as a result of a decision approved by the Comhairle. This is to seek views on the proposal in this paper.



**Proposal Document issued to consultees and published on Comhairle Web-site**

- 2.2 A copy of this document will be issued free of charge to the consultees listed at appendix A, and it will also be published on the Comhairle website: [www.cne-siar.gov.uk](http://www.cne-siar.gov.uk)

**Publication of advertisement in local newspapers**

- 2.3 An advertisement will be placed in the Stornoway Gazette and the West Highland Free Press. In addition, there will be announcements related to the Consultation process on the local radio station, Isles FM and Radio nan Gaidheal.

**Length of Consultation period**

- 2.4 An advertisement will be placed in local newspapers on Thursday, 23 February 2012. The consultation will thereafter run until close of business on 20 April 2010, which includes a period of 32 school days.

**Public meeting**

- 2.5 A public meeting will be held on 21 March 2012, the details of which are given in paragraph 3.3 of this Document.

**Involvement of HMle**

- 2.6 When the Proposal Document is published, a copy will also be sent to HMle by the Comhairle. HMle will also receive a copy of any relevant written representations that are received by the Comhairle from any person during the consultation period or, if HMle agree, a summary of them. HMle will further receive a summary of any oral representation made to the Comhairle at the public meeting that will be held and, as available (and so far as otherwise practicable), a copy of any other relevant documentation. HMle will then prepare a report on the educational aspects of the proposal not later than 11 May 2012 after the Comhairle has sent them all representations and documents as mentioned above. In preparing their report, HMle may visit the affected schools and make such reasonable enquiries of such people there, as they consider appropriate, and may make such reasonable enquiries of such other people as they consider appropriate.

**Preparation of Consultation Report**

- 2.7 The Comhairle will review the proposal having regard to the HMle 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 and will be advertised in local newspapers. It will be available on the Comhairle web-site and from Comhairle Headquarters, as well as at the affected schools, free of charge. Anyone who has made written representations 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 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 HMle Report as well as any written or oral representations it has received, together with a copy of the HMle Report and any other relevant information, including details of any alleged inaccuracies and how these have been handled. The Report will also contain a statement explaining how it complied with the requirement to review the proposal in light of the HMle Report and representations (both written and oral) that it received. The Consultation Report will be published at least 3 weeks prior to the Comhairle making a decision.

**Decision**

- 2.8 This Consultation Report together with any other relevant documentation will be considered by the Education and Children's Services Committee who will make a recommendation. This recommendation will then be subject to the approval of the Comhairle.

**Note on Corrections**

- 2.9 If any inaccuracy or omission is discovered in this Proposal Document either by the Comhairle or any person, the Comhairle will determine if relevant information has been omitted or, if there has been an inaccuracy. The Comhairle will then take appropriate action which may include the issue of a correction or the reissuing of the Proposal paper or the revision of the timescale for the consultation period if appropriate. In that event, relevant consultees and HMle will be advised.

## PUBLIC MEETING

- 3.1 A Public Meeting will be held to discuss the proposal. Anyone wishing to attend the public meeting is invited to do so. The meeting will be convened by the Comhairle and will be addressed by representatives of the Education and Children's Services Department and other senior officers of the Comhairle.
- 3.2 The meeting will be an opportunity to:
- Hear more about the proposal
  - Ask questions about the proposal
  - Have the views of all stakeholders recorded so that they can be taken into account as part of the Proposal process.
- 3.3 Arrangements for the meeting are as follows:
- **Venue: Stornoway Primary School**
  - **Date: Wednesday, 21 March 2012**
  - **Time: 7.30pm – 9.30pm**
- 3.4 A note will be taken at the meeting of questions and views. This note will be published on the Comhairle web-site, and a copy will be made available on request. The meeting will also be recorded.
- 3.5 The Comhairle will also take into consideration any written or electronic submissions on the proposal, which may be submitted to [schoolconsultations@cne-siar.gov.uk](mailto:schoolconsultations@cne-siar.gov.uk) or to the **Chief Executive at the Comhairle Offices, Sandwick Road, Stornoway HS1 2BW, to arrive not later than 5.00pm on Friday, 20 April 2012.**

## GENERAL BACKGROUND TO THE NEED FOR A REVIEW OF COMPLEX ASN PROVISION

- 4.1 The Comhairle is charged to provide its statutory services as effectively and efficiently as possible. It is therefore necessary to be strategic in the delivery of education to ensure Best Value.
- 4.2 The Education system in Scotland is designed to support every child and young person to realise their potential. The following legislation is designed to ensure that Local Authorities make appropriate provision:
- **The Education (Scotland) Act 1980** - This Act entitles every child of school age to an adequate and efficient education suitable to their age, aptitude and ability.
  - **Standards in Scotland Schools etc. Act 2000** - Ensures that when an Education Authorities provides school education to a child or young person, then that Authority shall provide education which is directed to the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of the child or young person to their fullest potential. This Act also provides every child of school age the right to be educated alongside their peers in a mainstream school unless there is a good reason for not doing so.
  - **Additional Support for Learning (Scotland) Act 2004** - This Act as amended, provides children and young people with the right to have any additional support needs identified and met in order for them to benefit from school education.
- 4.3 The legislative framework in Scotland is underpinned by the rights for children and young people enshrined within the **United Nations Convention on the Right of the Child 1989**:
- All rights apply to children (Article 2)
  - The principal that in all actions concerning children the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration (Article 3)
  - The right to life, survival and development (Article 6) and
  - That children's views must be taken into account in decision making (Article 12).

- 4.4 In addition to these duties and rights the Scottish Government has provided a policy framework to enable Local Authorities to meet these obligations:
- **Curriculum for Excellence** is a curriculum for all and provides a framework for school education across Scotland ensuring every child or young person is entitled to be a successful learner, confident individual, responsible citizen and an effective contributor, wherever their learning is taking place
  - The **Getting it Right for every Child** aims to improve the life chances of all children by ensuring that they are safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included

- 4.5 Legislation, rights and policy frameworks relevant to this proposal are applicable to all children and young people from birth to 18 years.

#### **Additional Support Needs**

- 4.6 Additional Support Needs is a broad term used within the legislation, policy and guidance to apply to children or young people who, for whatever reason, require additional support, long or short term in order to help them make the most of their school education and to be included fully in their learning. Children or young people may require support for a variety of reasons and may include those who:

- Have motor or sensory impairments
- Have significant health conditions
- Are being bullied
- Are particularly able or talented
- Have experienced a bereavement
- Are interrupted learners
- Have a learning disability
- Are looked after by a Local Authority
- Have a learning difficulty, such as dyslexia
- Are living with parents who are abusing substances
- Are living with parents who have a mental health problem
- Have English as an additional language
- Are not attending school regularly
- Have emotional or social difficulties
- Are on the Child Protection register
- Are young carers.

#### **Complex Additional Support Needs**

- 4.7 The spectrum of additional support needs ranges from those which are long term, profound and complex to those which are short term and may be quickly met. Consequently, complex additional support needs may arise from any number of factors relating to the learning environment, family circumstances, disability, health needs and social and emotional factors of an individual.

#### **Provision In The Western Isles**

- 4.8 The Western Isles historically adopted a model of segregated provision for children and young people with Severe and Complex learning difficulties. Separate classes for young people with moderate - mild learning difficulties were provided in primary school. In addition some children were supported in an integrated setting within school with a number of young people referred to mainland residential provision. The provision was largely built on a system of categorisation of needs with a range of integration experiences inclusive of social, physical and learning.

- 4.9 In more recent years provision for children with complex additional support needs has been provided on three sites (Stornoway Primary, Sgoil nan Loch and Sgoil Lionacleit). Initially the provision in the Lewis and Harris area was split by age although this is not now the case.

- 4.10 Children and Young People with complex additional support needs (social, emotional and behavioural) have had access to extended learning resources based in rented property in Stornoway town centre (Harbour View) and Inaclete Road workshop. Initially, extended learning was largely used as an alternative to mainland residential provision on a full time basis with a strong vocational emphasis. This has changed considerably in recent years and the provision provides in-reach, out-reach education and works with children in primary and secondary education with some elements of support extending into the post-school sector. In addition to core educational inputs respite provision is provided locally and on the mainland. For some young people mainland residential provision is still required.

- 4.11 The problems relating to the existing Severe and Complex Education Provision within the Western Isles can be briefly stated:
- f) The services are fragmented and Children and Young People are being supported based on a system of categorisation of need rather than their additional support needs.
  - g) The services provided are not coordinated in a manner consistent with Getting it Right for Every Child by all the services available in Education.
  - h) Management structures are not clear to parents and decision pathways are not applied consistently.
  - i) Existing provision in Stornoway, Sgoil nan Loch and Sgoil Lionacleit does not meet, individually or in partnerships, all the needs of children and young people in terms of accommodation, facilities or transport.
  - j) Current services need to be integrated and expanded to include pre-school inputs, enhanced parent support and equitable access to resources such as outdoor education, sport, recreational activities, specialist services, respite provision, after-school clubs etc.

- 4.12 The Comhairle has, in these circumstances, a duty to:
- each Child and Young Person with additional support needs and for whose school education the Authority is responsible to make adequate and efficient provision for such additional support as is required by that child or young person and;
  - make appropriate arrangements for keeping under consideration the additional support needs of, and the adequacy of the additional support provided, for each child and young person.

- 4.13 In relation to **Curriculum for Excellence**, Building the Curriculum 3 provides the following guidelines relating to ASN:

“For children who need additional support for their learning, this may involve interpretation of the curriculum in ways which address their particular needs and enable them to achieve to the highest levels of which they are capable. This may include planning for enrichment of learning within a particular level, rather than applying pressure to progress to a new level of cognitive development where this is inappropriate. Enrichment of learning through exploration of different contexts may, in some circumstances, also be an effective way of meeting very able pupils’ needs at some point. All Children and Young People should experience personalisation and choice within the curriculum, including identifying and planning for opportunities for personal achievement in a range of different contexts.”

- 4.14 All establishments will work with a range of providers to address the needs of all Children and Young People and provide motivating and challenging opportunities, particularly for those who may require more choices and more chances.

#### **Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)**

- 4.15 GIRFEC assessment and planning procedures aim to ensure:
- A common coordinated framework across all agencies that supports delivery of appropriate, proportionate and timely help to all children as they need it.
  - Streamlined systems and processes, and efficient and effective delivery of services focused on the needs of the child.
  - A common understanding and shared language across all agencies.
  - More joined up policy development.

#### **Early Years Framework**

- 4.16 The Early Years Framework underpins these aspirations by improving the ability of services to prevent crisis - intervene early with appropriate and effective support.

#### **Staged Intervention**

- 4.17 All Authorities in Scotland including the Western Isles have in place Staged Intervention models ensuring that provision is seen to progress in stages from universal services through single agency plans and multi-agency plans. However, a major weakness in the model is that provision can be viewed as linear. Consequently, a more appropriate model for young people with complex ASN may be the Integrated Care Pathway. In this model Pathways are designed to reduce variation in practice and allow the same quality of care to be delivered to Children and Young People across multi-disciplinary and multi-agency teams and in different education and care settings.

- 4.18 In order to address these challenges and redesign our service provision and service delivery, Education and Children's Services Department commissioned Professor Donnie M Macleod from the Centre for Inclusion and Equity to undertake a review of educational provision in the Western Isles for children and young people whose additional and support needs might be described as complex. On the basis of this report an action plan (Appendix 2) has been developed following extensive discussion with parents and was approved for implementation by the Comhairle in February 2012.

## COMHAIRLE ASPIRATIONS

- 5.1 In order to address the requirements for pupils with complex additional support needs throughout the Western Isles the Comhairle proposes to make the following changes to service provision for complex additional support needs.
- The Education and Children's Services Department will use existing policies for Inclusion, Additional Support Needs (ASN) and Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) in order to meet the needs of all children and young people with additional support needs. Further guidance will be developed and incorporated within the existing ASN Handbook.
  - The approach adopted will not seek to categorise children and young people by virtue of their disability, and match them to specific and separate resources. Rather, children and young peoples' needs will be identified and resources matched as appropriate. In this context, complex needs will largely encompass all those children designated as Stage 4 within the local authority Staged Assessment and Intervention process. This would include those with learning, developmental, social and emotional and behavioural needs.
- 5.2 In order to respond to need on this basis, resources would require to be available across Learning Community Areas 1, 2, 3 and 4, (Broadbay, Ness and Westside, Lochs and Uig and Harris) and Area 5 (Uists and Barra).
- 5.3 The presumption for all children and young people in the Western Isles is, and will remain, that they will be included in their local catchment school, primary or secondary, with a range of supports put in place consistent with the Authority's Additional Support Needs Audit.
- 5.4 A primary school has been identified in Area 5 and in Areas 1-4 to provide enhanced resources in support of inclusion for those children and young people whose needs cannot be fully or most effectively met through normal mainstream support arrangements. Currently, this is Sgoil nan Loch for Learning Community Areas 1, 2, 3 and 4 and Balivanich for Learning Community Area 5. In addition to access to mainstream opportunities, these enhanced resources will provide access to a dedicated teaching area, time-out facilities and access to appropriate accommodation for a range of therapies. The resource will also include a disabled toilet and changing area. Teaching and support staff in Sgoil nan Loch will be reassigned to the enhanced provision in the school. Additional resources will be allocated to The Nicolson Institute and staff at the complex ASN provision at Stornoway Primary School will be allocated to the Sandwickhill Learning Centre and / or allocated to mainstream schools on an inreach outreach basis as required.
- 5.5 The Coordinated Support Plans (CSPs) of all young people not currently in mainstream school will be reviewed in order to determine the most appropriate provision, for the academic session 2012/13 at the latest.
- 5.6 An area resource base will remain in Lionacleit and in the Stornoway area. The area-based learning resource will provide specialist provision for particular individuals who would not be able to sustain mainstream inclusion or placement in the enhanced mainstream provision. This resource will provide a full education provision and will seek to engage with the students' local catchment school where appropriate. This provision in the Stornoway area would be better resourced if it were transferred from its current location in Stornoway Primary School to accommodation within Sandwickhill Learning Centre. In addition to the core educational provision, it is proposed to identify an Independent Living Resource that could provide a more flexible respite, residential and crisis care resource to support young people with the most complex needs. In Lewis and Harris it is proposed to secure the Back Care Unit for this purpose. In Uist and Barra, Rowantree has been identified as an extended learning resource.
- 5.7 On an emergency basis, the Independent Living Resource will provide short-term respite managed by Action for Children and staffed by Action for Children and Comhairle staff. These resources, together with services currently being developed by the Fostering and Adoption Team, will significantly enhance current provision and provide a diversion for some mainland referrals.



- 5.8 In order to resource provision for our most vulnerable young people, it is proposed to transfer the Lewis and Harris Extended Learning Resource and Early Years and Early Intervention services to Sandwickhill Learning Centre, and thereby ensure that children with the most complex needs have access to a more integrated service, providing, as far as possible, wrap-around care.
- 5.9 The revised GIRFEC policy and procedures, together with the ASN Handbook and transition guidance, will clearly specify key responsibilities for:
- identifying needs
  - integrated assessment and planning
  - implementation and ongoing monitoring and evaluation
  - partnership working.
- 5.10 The main focus will be on ensuring that needs are properly assessed, action plans clearly developed and monitored, and resources matched to the needs of children and families. All of this will take place within appropriate timescales and in compliance with best practice, as determined by ASN and GIRFEC guidance.

## **CONSULTATION PROPOSAL**

- 6.1 It is proposed that:
- Education provision for pupils with Complex Additional Support Needs be discontinued at Stornoway Primary campus with effect from 29 June 2012.
  - Pupils with complex additional support needs be assumed to be educated within their local mainstream school or enhanced provision within Sgoil na Loch (Primary) and The Nicolson Institute (Secondary).
  - That pupils with complex additional support needs be enrolled in their local mainstream school and have access, on a full or part time basis, to the Sandwickhill Learning Centre.

## **EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS STATEMENT**

### **Affected Schools**

- 7.1 Stornoway Primary School's severe and complex provision is housed in a single storey detached facility on the school campus. It has a roll of 5 pupils. In addition 2 pupils of secondary age are provided education in a classroom within Sgoil nan Loch P1 – S2 school.
- 7.2 The Nicolson Institute had provision for one young person up to August 2011. In addition to this provision a significant number of young people with complex ASN are educated within Extended Learning provision in shared placements with mainstream schools. This is provided in rented property in Stornoway at Harbour View and workshop provision at Inaclate Road, Stornoway.
- 7.3 All these provisions have access to, on a shared basis with the mainstream schools, playground and PE facilities and the range of other resources normally provided in mainstream educational provision.
- 7.4 Accommodation at Sandwickhill Learning Centre will be in addition to mainstream provision and will give access to:
- classroom teaching areas equal to or better than at their local provision;
  - more space and access to a more favourable working area for teaching art, physical activities;
  - enhanced pre-school facilities and parent support facilities;
  - greater play areas;
  - more integrated setting with greater flexibility; and
  - improved parking and access.

### **Learning Environment**

- 7.4 Pupils with complex additional support needs who may need specialist off-site inputs will benefit from the improved learning environment of the Sandwickhill Learning Centre. These include better teaching areas, access to secure space, spacious play areas, dedicated games hall, general purpose room, canteen facilities. The broader range of needs and increased staffing will give a wider range of expertise in support of Learning and Teaching, After School Clubs and specialist input. Staff will benefit from being part of a larger multi-disciplinary team and pupils will have access to greater consistency and continuity of inputs.

### **Capacity**

- 7.5 The Sandwickhill Learning Centre will provide a resource for all schools and in addition to in-reach support it will provide enhanced outreach support to mainstream provision and the enhanced facilities that will be available in Sgoil nan Loch and The Nicolson Institute.

### **Likely Effect on the Local Community**

- 7.6 The revised policy for pupils with Complex Additional Support Needs will promote inclusion. The continuum of provision will be extended and greater choice available to parents, children and young people. On this basis it is considered to have no negative effect on the local community.

### **Staffing**

- 7.7 All staff will continue to work in this specialist area and will be deployed to the needs of its young people.

### **Summary**

- 7.8 The change in policy and procedure for meeting the needs of pupils with complex ASN will reinforce the presumption of mainstream provision while ensuring that where a child or young person needs educational, social or behaviour support which can not be provided within the mainstream setting they will have access to a specialist or enhanced facility on a flexible basis.

## **CONSIDERATION OF FACTORS AFFECTING RURAL SCHOOLS**

- 8.1 In terms of Section 12 of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, Stornoway Primary School, and Sgoil nan Loch (complex additional support needs) are Very Remote Rural Schools. Consequently special regard has been given to the following factors in the preparation of this document.

- **Viable Alternatives to Transfers**

**Young people remain in current provision:** In this model young people in Stornoway remain in segregated provision which is severely limited in terms of physical space, play areas and access to a broader range of needs and resources. Young people at Sgoil nan Loch remain in a segregated and partially integrated primary setting without access to their age appropriate peer group.

**Enhance current provision by extending the range of opportunities:** All young people will have the option of mainstream, enhanced mainstream, shared placement, specialist placement dependent on their individual needs in particular circumstances at any point in time.

- **Likely Effects on the Local Community**

Unlikely to have any effect on the basis that the proposal seeks to increase resources. Staff will move with the children dependent on the placement provision for each individual child or young person.

- **Likely Effect Caused by any Different Travelling Arrangements that may be required in Consequence of the Proposal**

None. Change in location is minimal.

## **CONCLUSION**

- 9.1 Based on pupil needs and the Comhairle's presumption of mainstream education, the proposal seeks to provide an enhanced range of resources and to ensure that the Comhairle meets its legal obligation to provide an educational experience for young people that meets their needs.



## **APPENDIX 1 CONSULTEES**

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The consultation will be open to all relevant stakeholders. The groups that will be specifically consulted are:

- Parents of pupils in affected schools
- Pupils of any affected school
- Staff (teaching and other) of any affected school
- Parent Councils
- Parents of children who may attend affected schools within two years of any proposal being published
- Trade Unions
- Outer Hebrides Community Planning Partnership
- Bord na Gaidhlig.

Staff and pupils will be consulted separately.



## COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR

### Statutory Consultation – Relocation of Complex Additional Support Needs Provision from Stornoway Primary Campus to Sandwickhill Learning Centre and Redesign of Complex Additional Support Needs Provision in Lewis and Harris

#### NOTES OF PUBLIC MEETING HELD ON 21 MARCH 2012

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##### **Morag Munro, Chairperson**

Good Evening, Ladies and Gentlemen, thank you for coming to this Consultation Meeting. The purpose of tonight's meeting is to seek your views on the Proposal regarding the Relocation of Complex Additional Support Needs Provision from Stornoway Primary Campus to Sandwickhill Learning Centre and Redesign of Complex Additional Support Needs Provision in Lewis and Harris.

I am Morag Munro, Chair of Education and Children's Services Committee. With me tonight are Bernard Chisholm, Head of Children's Services and Resources, Miss Lesley Macdonald, Head of Executive Office. We are very fortunate also to have Professor Donnie Macleod of the Centre for Inclusion and Equity. The Comhairle commissioned the Professor to look into the best way of providing a service to pupils with severe and complex needs and this proposal is based on his findings.

Following this, the Comhairle decided in December 2011 to go out to Consultation.

I emphasise that this is a Consultation Meeting. We are here to listen to your views. All the views expressed here tonight, all the written submissions plus the HMIe report will be included in a Consultation Report which will go before the Education and Children's Services Committee and full Council in June for a decision.

First of all I will ask Lesley Macdonald to take us through the procedures, then I will ask Bernard Chisholm to take us through the Proposal Document. After that I will open the meeting out to yourselves for comments and questions. Does everyone have copy of the Proposal Document?  
Miss Macdonald.

##### **Lesley Macdonald, Head of Executive Office**

Thank you Chairman. Can I first of all say, can everyone hear me? Can you hear me now?

I am quite softly spoken to begin with and I have a bit of a sore throat tonight, so apologies for that. This is a new procedure that is being followed. The procedure has been introduced by the Schools Consultation (Scotland) Act of this year which is also known as the Rural Schools Legislation. That point is relevant because although the Act sets out the procedure that must be followed to carry out a number of proposals in relation to a school, including closing that school, it has special provisions which must be taken into account when a school is a rural school and for the purposes of that Act Stornoway Primary School, and Sgoil nan Loch (complex additional support needs) are Very Remote Rural Schools and the proposal document before you and of which we have plenty of extra copies if someone hasn't brought theirs, details how we have taken those factors into account.

Tonight's meeting is part of the first stage of the formal process, the Comhairle having made the decision to go out to consult and prepare this proposal document. The law requires that we allow 30 school days for responses to be submitted to this proposal document. In the case of this proposal we are allowing 32 school days until, that's from 25 February to 20 April. After that all representations together with various other documents will be sent to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education. That is a new stage in the process and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education will then produce a document in relation to the educational aspects of the proposal. In producing that document they may visit the school and may speak to whoever they think is necessary. Following that the Council must prepare what is then called a Consultation Report which will take into account and establish clearly how it responds to the statement produced by HMIE in relation to the educational aspects of the proposal as well as picking up any themes and providing responses to any issues raised in the consultation responses. That document will be publicly available and will be available at least three weeks before the Council makes a decision on the proposal and it is hoped that, that decision will be the subject of Report to Education and Children's Services Committee which makes a recommendation to Full Council on 21 June 2012. There is then a six week period where there may be ministerial call in of whatever decision the Council has made and in the first three weeks of that six weeks the Scottish Ministers will take account of any relevant representations that are made to them by any person. Paragraph 2.10 details how we would deal with any inaccuracy that came to our notice during the consultation.

The main purpose of tonight's meeting is to explain a bit more about the proposal, to hear what you have to say and to respond to such questions as we can in the course of the evening. If there are any other questions which cannot be answered tonight, I would hope to summarise those at the end of the evening and we will undertake to come back with responses to any unanswered questions just as quickly as we can. There is another relatively new piece of legislation that also impacts and that is the Equalities Act and I can confirm that an Equalities Impact Assessment will be carried out in relation to this proposal which will also feed into the decision making process.

Finally, I think, we will seek to acknowledge any representation that we receive within three working days. In the event that you put in a representation and haven't received an acknowledgment within three working days I would ask that you get in touch with me and I will make sure that it hasn't gone astray and track it down because it is very important that we get your representations and take account of those representations both to make them available to HMIE but also to respond to them in the preparation of the Consultation report. The deadline for representations is 5.00pm on 20 April 2012 there is a special email address which is detailed in the Report. I think it is schoolconsultations@the-council.org or you can also write an old fashioned letter to the Chief Executive, Malcolm Burr to arrive by the same date. I am happy to take any questions as the procedure, Chair.

### **John Nicolson**

**Q:** The Comhairle has a policy of providing new modern state of the art schools. Where does this proposal fit in with the vision? If school is in such a condition that is to be closed; why is there a proposal to relocate severe and complex provision to it?

**A:** It fits well with Comhairle's strategy. There is a proposal to carry out c£300K of works to ensure fit for proposed purpose and DDA compliant.

Sandwick School was not closed due to it being in a bad condition or due to the poor condition of the building. The decision to close Sandwick was based on a broader review of Educational provision and was decided on the basis of Educational effectiveness.

### **Barbara Hill**

**Q:** I am concerned that Shaun is due to leave Sgoil nan Loch and there has been no transition. It is a bit rushed, he has not been in the new school and there will be new staff.

**A:** All pupils at Sgoil nan Loch have had multi-disciplinary assessments, where their needs have been assessed, and they are individually considered appropriate for transfer to the Nicolson Institute. The class teacher has comprehensive transition plans in place and students are working through this programme very well. The recommendation has the support of parents and all steps will be taken to ensure that students are made familiar with new staff as soon as possible. The Department will work with children and parents in relation to changes to routine.

**Q:** Ideally there should be 12 months to stage a transition for a child like mine.

**A:** There is no fixed time for transition. However, the more time there is, the more effective we would hope to make any transition. Staff and parents have been supportive of the plans for transfer to the Nicolson Institute, and the new school has been appropriately resourced to meet the needs of all children recommended for placement.

Children at Sgoil nan Loch transfer to the Nicolson had been agreed during the last year.

### **Lindsay Hutchison**

**Q:** I have a question for Donnie; I wondered how he feels about the length of the transition and the group not having that time.

**A:** Where children are in stable provision, placement transitions should be made early and in the case of children at Sgoil nan Loch, it has been for a long time their aspiration that their children would transfer to the Nicolson institute at the end of S2 at Sgoil nan Loch. The new build at the Nicolson institute has been fully adapted to support this transition and support is being put in place to facilitate transition.

The fact that the new secondary school will open in August does not, in itself, mean that children will be moved on that date. It will be important that the time allowed and arrangements made to support transition will take due account of the specific needs of each child or young person so that the process and provision achieves maximum benefit for the child or young person. Transition arrangements, as I understand it, will also take due account of national guidance.

### **Neil Galbraith**

**Q:** I am one of the religious representatives on the Education and Children's Services Committee. I understand that inclusion means to integrate children in to mainstream, I don't understand why we are taking them out. I understand that the Head Teacher of the receiving school manages the care of the children. I am confused as to how they can do this if the children are off site.

**A:** Inclusion can operate at a number of levels, from physical, to locational, to curriculum. The assumption is that all children attend their local mainstream school. However, historically, this has not been the case in the Western Isles, and children, while co-located on the campus, have not necessarily been integrated within the mainstream primary or associated secondary.

All of the children with Complex Additional Support Needs will be registered in their local school, and through assessment and shared planning, will enjoy a shared timetable with an aspiration for increased mainstream inclusion over time.

It is the recommendation of this report that all children remain on the roll of their local school and that Head Teachers will work with staff in the authority provision to assess and manage the level of integration with their local school, classroom, peers and community. Shared placements currently exist with Extended Learning, with significant success. Sandwick would, in fact, be a learning resource that provides for shared placements of young people in a similar way to that which is currently provided within Extended Learning, but with the potential – we believe – for better resources, greater integration of support services, and enhanced expectation for shared placements with the receiving school. (Child's Action Plan will link to Head Teacher)

The Headteacher or designated manager from the child or young person's mainstream school would attend and be involved in all reviews and planning and the child's entitlement to the presumption of mainstream would remain the starting point in all planning.

**Q:** From reading the document, my understanding was a relocation of the severe and complex from Stornoway Primary School to Sandwickhill Learning Centre.

**A:** Severe and Complex Provision is recommended to transfer from Stornoway Primary to Sandwickhill Learning Centre. However, all children with Complex Additional Support Needs have been considered by their multi-disciplinary teams, and parents. A range of decisions are being made, reflecting their individual needs.

**Q:** How does that work if you move them even further away?

**A:** Sandwick is physically an improvement on that which is currently available and will provide for a wider range of services to parents who have children with Complex Additional Needs. However, we will increase the level of integration as we have done over recent years, and in fact, we anticipate improved shared placements for children.

The fact that children with severe and complex needs have been located on the campus of Stornoway Primary has not meant that they have experienced inclusion. In fact the opposite is true and to achieve any experience of inclusion the children had to be taken by bus to Laxdale School.

**Q:** The parents of children come first.

**A:** No, it is not the views of parents that come first, although they provide a critical view and we must work with them. The recommendations for educational placement must put the needs of the child first, and always operate from a presumption of mainstream education.

**Q:** What is being relocated?

**A:** Educational provision for complex additional support needs on the Stornoway Primary campus is being relocated so Sandwickhill.

**Q:** Did you say the staff of children in the primary will move to Sandwick with the children.

**A:** Yes.

**Q:** Will children moving from Sgoil na Loch to the Nicolson have the staff moving with them?

**A:** No. Educational provision at Sgoil nan Loch will continue under the management of the Head Teacher as an enhanced resource to mainstream education. The provision will be for primary children and the staff working there will remain.

**Q:** Is it essential that children transfer in June? Can this be delayed?

**A:** It has been an aspiration for some time, by parents and others, that children of secondary age in Sgoil nan Loch would move to the secondary provision in the Nicolson institute, particularly as, from June, secondary provision at Sgoil nan Loch will move to The Nicolson Institute at that time. The Nicolson Institute has been fully equipped, and transition meetings have agreed that this is the most appropriate provision for young people. Historically this has been put in place for a number of young people. However, staff are currently working through a comprehensive transition programme to which children are responding well, and it is anticipated that, as we work through this programme towards the summer, much can be done to ensure an effective transfer. However, if it is in the best interest of the children, I am sure that, in consultation with the Head Teacher at Sgoil nan Loch, and with others involved, the transfer period can be amended

### **John Nicolson**

**Q:** Why are we having this discussion if it is viable for my son to stay in Sgoil Nan Loch? I feel that for my son to remain at Sgoil nan Loch is a viable alternative to transfer.

**A:** We are having this discussion because parents at Sgoil nan Loch provision have sought for some time that their children transfer to the Nicolson Institute as the secondary school for their children.

### **Lily McKie**

I am very happy with proposed Sandwickhill provision, I need my child to be safe. Some of us are happy for our children to be in this type of provision  
Cllr Morag Munro was requested to read a statement from the parents of Stornoway Primary Special Class. (see attached, app A)

### **Emelin Collier**

**Q:** It sounds like you are attempting to meet the needs of the child. Can you outline the pathway a child may take through the system?

**A:** Children, as at present, would be assessed prior to entry to school with the assumption that their needs would be met in the mainstream classroom of their local school, with appropriate levels of support. Where the needs of the child can not be met in the local school, Learning Community Areas will have an enhanced resource in designated schools providing additional teaching and auxiliary input. If this resource is deemed unable to meet the children's needs, then there will be an opportunity for off-site provision, designed to meet Complex Additional Support Needs at the Sandwickhill Learning Resource Centre. All children would remain on the roll of their local school, and a shared placement would be agreed if possible. A parent forum is being established as part of the revised policy, and Professor Donnie Macleod has been commissioned to facilitate this group over the first year.

The Parents' Forum will have a number of very important functions. It will provide a focus for a much needed support network for the parents of children with additional support needs: parents who are often more isolated because of the nature and level of demand that they have to deal with day to day. It will also act as a means by which parents will be able to communicate their needs, concerns, aspirations, suggestions etc to the authority and comment on ongoing development. Thirdly it will provide a focus for the authority to consult with and take advice from the parents of these children and young people. The intention is to establish this Forum with immediate effect. At a time of change and development the Parents Forum will make a very important contribution.

Secondary education will be managed within the Nicolson Institute by the Principal Teacher of Learning Support. Resources are available in the school, and an appropriate level of inclusion and mainstream participation will be assessed on an individual child basis. It has been considered that, at this time, it is in the interest of some children and parents, to have a range of provision available, which provides flexibility in meeting needs. Health professionals have been appropriately involved in all transition and planning meetings for children. The physical resources at the Nicolson Institute have had contribution in their design from relevant health professionals.

### **Catherine Smith**

**Q:** I agree with Mr Galbraith it looks like segregation. It says that children would be there on a full or part time basis. It would be traumatic to have some children in mainstream. Every now and then you have children that cannot be included but we don't want to send them to a school that has already closed. Why don't you work on making inclusion work here at Stornoway Primary? When I worked in pre-school we tried to include children but sometimes the parents did not want the children included. The Nicolson had 5 children; almost main line to hospital could not possibly be included in a school. They were very adequately provided for here (Stornoway Primary); please do not send them to Sandwick.

### **Charlie Nicolson**

**Q:** Looking at the enhancement of ASN, afterschool living and independent living. I am in agreement with that. Also enhancement of integrated services into mainstream. Is there a parent support group to work together to support each other and is there an opportunity for individual parents to meet to discuss their concerns?

**A:** A parent support group is being set up and will be facilitated over the first year by Professor Macleod and individual parents can discuss any concerns with the local authority and any member of their child's multi disciplinary team.

**Q:** Is the time now to set up the parent's forum? There will be a number of questions. Should we get that up and running now?

**A:** The intention is to set this up with immediate effect.

### **Lindsay Hutchison**

**Q:** Can you clarify the secondary provision? Is there an intention that there will be a safe provision within the Nicolson and within Sandwick? What will be the purpose of having both?

**A:** All provision provided by the Local Authority we consider to be safe. The Nicolson and Stornoway primary campus have always provided provision for children with complex additional support needs. The Nicolson provision will continue but, where it is considered in the best interests of the child that a resource placement would be better, then there will be flexibility for a continuum of support and provision type.

**Q:** If parents of Stornoway Primary are the only ones in support of the provision, is this meeting their needs or the children?

**A:** Children at Stornoway Primary as in Sgoil nan Loch have the support of professionals and their decision, supported by parents is to transfer to Sandwickhill with the opportunity of shared placements with the Nicolson Institute.



High quality provision will always be characterised by arrangements which offer the flexibility needed to meet the changing needs of the child or young person. Within the context of the child's entitlement to the presumption of mainstream, every review must raise and address the question as to whether the current provision is in the best interests of the holistic development of the child or young person. Accessing and working towards full participation in mainstream must be explicit in reviewing the progress of and provision made for any child or young person accessing the provision at Sandwick. The authority must also have provision in place that anticipates the needs of children in the future. There are possibly other children, not currently in Sgoil nan Loch or Stornoway Primary, for whom provision might be enhanced by access to provision off-campus on a shared placement or short-term basis.

**Bernard Chisholm**

**From:** Kevin Paterson [kippertshirt@btinternet.com]  
**Sent:** 20 March 2012 10:45  
**To:** Bernard Chisholm  
**Subject:** Consultation event 21st March

Mr. Chisholm, we would like to express our total support for the use of Sandwich School as a Learning Centre.

Statement to be read out:

The provision of special needs education in the Western Isles has always been very good but has suffered from splintered provision across a number of sites. A centralised point where all services can be delivered ( Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy, Behavioural and Educational psychology) is a necessity from the stand point of good service delivery / good practice and from a value for money perspective.

From our visit to the Sandwich site we are convinced that not only will this meet the needs of children in the system but also allow for future planning for services that may be needed in the future. An integrated site that allows children to be "at school" in their community will we believe allow the children the flexibility of being able to dip in and out of supported learning as and when needed. This will also allow parents and carers the opportunity to take a more active part in the learning process and empower them in the choices they have over service provision.

We would like to tell the meeting that we believe this plan for a Learning Centre is the best news parents of children with Special Educational Needs could have had, whether those needs are temporary or permanent.

Kevin and Kim Paterson  
North Lochs  
Parent of Joshua Paterson.

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20/03/2012



## **Equality and Diversity**

### **Initial Impact Assessment Toolkit**

#### **Relocation of Complex Additional Support Needs Provision**

**2012**

Title of policy	Relocation of Severe and Complex Provision from Stornoway Primary Campus to Sandwickhill Learning Centre
Department/Section	Education and Children's Services
Lead Officer	Bernard Chisholm
Date of Initial Assessment	15 May 2012

Is this a new or existing policy? (please tick as appropriate)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>New</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Existing</b>	√
What is the purpose of the proposed policy (or changes to be made to the policy)?	To provide better facilities for the pupils with severe and complex needs who are currently being educated on the Stornoway Primary Campus. Sandwick School will be appropriately adapted and renamed Sandwickhill Learning Centre. The provision of this Learning Centre will assist the 'Redesign of Complex and Additional Support Needs Provision' in Lewis and Harris and will assist the authority in achieving the policy of 'Getting it Right for Every Child'.			
Who is affected by the policy or who is intended to benefit from the proposed policy and how?	The pupils currently educated in the Stornoway Primary Campus Severe and Complex provision and their parents. If the provision is re-located, pupils will have better facilities on a secure campus including outside space. The addition of the Sandwickhill Learning Centre will provide a high quality service which will be flexible and have the capacity to respond to the changing needs and circumstance of children. The proposed arrangements will provide flexible access to mainstream and off-campus provision on the basis of individual need and provide support to mainstream schools to enhance and secure inclusion.			
How have you, or will you, put the policy into practice, and who is or will be responsible for delivering it?	The Head of Children's Services and Resources will implement the re- location and staff currently employed at the Stornoway Primary provision will deliver it.			
What consultation has been carried out?	There is a requirement under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 to undertake statutory consultation with parents, staff, pupils and other interested parties affected by the proposal regarding moving of the Severe and Complex provision from the Stornoway Primary Complex to the Sandwickhill Learning Centre. A copy of the consultation report is available on request			

## Identified Impacts

<b>Age</b> – Could the policy have a differential impact due to age?	Yes
What evidence do you have for that decision?	The introduction of a specialist learning centre within the authority area will have a positive impact for all young people of school age with severe and complex learning requirements. An increased range of provision will be established and children placed according to individual needs.
<b>Disability</b> - Could the policy have a differential impact due to disability?	Yes
What evidence do you have for that decision?	The introduction of a specialist learning centre will have positive impact on children with disabilities who will benefit from their needs being identified and resources matched as appropriate within the learning centre rather than trying to categorise children by their disability and match them to specific and separate resources. It is recognised that the transition to a new learning environment may be difficult some children and the length of time the transition process takes will vary from child to child, however a comprehensive transition plan is in place and the authority are committed to ensuring that the transfer will take place when the child is ready to do so and when all relevant staff, resources and equipment are in place to meet the needs of the child.
<b>Gender</b> - Could the policy have a differential impact due to gender?	No
What evidence do you have for that decision?	No differential impact due to gender.
<b>Race</b> - Could the policy have a differential impact due to race?	No
What evidence do you have for that decision?	No differential impact due to race.
<b>Religion or belief</b> - Could the policy have a differential impact due to religion of belief?	No
What evidence do you have for that decision?	No differential impact due to religion or belief.
<b>Sexual orientation</b> - Could the policy have a differential impact due to sexual orientation?	No
What evidence do you have for that decision?	No differential impact due to sexual orientation.
Are there any other groups whom the policy may have a differential impact on?	No
What evidence do you have for that decision?	Provision is designed to extend the resources currently available for vulnerable pupils.

there in our knowledge?		None			
in place to monitor and review for any potential future impacts?		Annual			
upon your initial screening:  Is there potential for:	No	Yes	To some extent	On what grounds?	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Unlawful discrimination? ✓</li> <li>2. People to be treated differently/unfairly? ✓</li> <li>3. Certain groups to be disadvantaged? ✓</li> <li>4. Community relations to be damaged? ✓</li> </ul> <p>And to what extent? (e.g. numbers of people affected/extent of negative impact)</p>	Carry out a Full Impact Assessment	Carry out a Full Impact Assessment	Age	
					Disability
					Gender
					Race/Ethnicity
					Religion/Belief
					Sexuality
					Other
Where the anticipated adverse effect is minor, can you identify any means to minimise the impact? (If yes and measures can be put in place to minimise impact, a full EQIA may not be required).  Please specify how:		Some parents have concerns regarding transition timelines and proposals of a separate provision from mainstream. In order to address these concerns a Parent Forum has been established and reviews will be undertaken of all children before the end June 2012.			

Initial Impact Assessment completed and a full EQIA is required:

Signed: .....

Date: .....

***If no further Impact Assessment is required, please sign below.***

This policy/function will have no impact on people from any of the equality groups and an EQIA is not required.	<p><b>Signed:</b></p> <p><b>Position: Head of Children's Services and Resources</b></p> <p><b>Date: 15 May 2012</b></p>
Authorisation by Head of Service or Director.	<p><b>Signed:</b></p> <p><b>Position: Director of Education and Children's Services</b></p> <p><b>Date: 15 May 2012</b></p>
Date of next review:	

## APPENDIX D

## CONSULTATION PROPOSAL BY COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR

**REPORT BY HM INSPECTORS, EDUCATION SCOTLAND, ADDRESSING EDUCATIONAL ASPECTS OF THE PROPOSAL TO RELOCATE COMPLEX ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS PROVISION FROM STORNOWAY PRIMARY CAMPUS TO SANDWICKHILL LEARNING CENTRE AND REDESIGN COMPLEX ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS PROVISION IN LEWIS AND HARRIS.****Introduction**

1.1 Comhairle nan Eilean Siar proposes to relocate educational provision for children with complex additional support needs from the campus of Stornoway Primary School to the premises currently occupied by Sandwickhill School with effect from 13 August 2012. From 13 August 2012, children and young people with complex additional support needs currently attending the enhanced provision within Sgoil nan Loch and the Stornoway Primary School Campus would be assumed to be educated within their local mainstream school or at the enhanced provision within Sgoil nan Loch (Primary) and The Nicolson Institute (Secondary). Such children and young people may have access on a full or part-time basis to the Sandwickhill Learning Centre. To resource provision for vulnerable children and young people in Lewis and Harris, including those with social, emotional and behavioural needs, the Comhairle also proposes to transfer the Extended Learning Resource and Early Years and Early Intervention services to Sandwickhill Learning Centre.

1.2 The report from Education Scotland is required under the terms of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*. It has been prepared by HM Inspectors in accordance with the terms of the Act.

1.3 HM Inspectors undertook the following activities in considering the educational aspects of the proposal:

- a review of notes taken at the public meeting held on 21 March 2012 in connection with the Comhairle proposals;
- consideration of all relevant documentation provided by the Comhairle in relation to the proposal, specifically the educational benefits statement and related consultation documents, the review of provision for children and young people with severe and complex additional support needs across the authority prepared by Professor Donnie MacLeod and written and oral submissions from parents and others;
- consideration of further information on all schools affected; and
- visits to Sgoil nan Loch, the enhanced provision at Stornoway Primary School and The Nicolson Institute, including discussion with relevant consultees.

1.4 HMI Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for children currently attending the enhanced provisions, for any other users of the school building, for children likely to become pupils and for other children and young people in the Comhairle's area;
  - any other likely effects of the proposal;
  - how the Comhairle intends to minimise or avoid any adverse effects that may arise from the proposal; and
  - the educational benefits which the Comhairle believes will result from implementation of the proposal, and the Comhairle reasons for coming to these beliefs.



## 2. Consultation process

2.1 Comhairle nan Eilean Siar undertook the initial consultation on its proposals with reference to the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*. The proposal took into account the work of Professor Donnie MacLeod who was commissioned by the Comhairle to conduct a review of educational provision for children and young people with complex additional support needs. The review took place between October 2010 and March 2011. The review involved extensive consultation with stakeholders.

2.2 Due to the nature of their complex additional support needs, children and young people at the enhanced provisions in Sgoil nan Loch and Stornoway Primary School were unable to express their views on the proposal to HM Inspectors. However, their parents and staff who knew them well advocated on their behalf.

2.3 Parents of children and young people currently attending Sgoil nan Loch and others who wished their child to attend The Nicolson Institute on completing primary education were pleased with the quality of their children's learning experiences and care. They felt that the move to a purpose-built facility within the new Nicolson Institute, if well managed, would offer their children a more age-appropriate curriculum and opportunities to learn alongside their mainstream peers. All parents were deeply concerned at the short timeline for transition to the new facility. Although preparation for an assumed move to The Nicolson Institute was underway, a multi-agency review of their children's co-ordinated support plans to determine the most appropriate provision for academic session 2012/2013 had still to be arranged. Neither they nor their children could visit the new facility because building work was not due to be completed until close to the date of transfer. Parents were equally anxious that staff responsible for their children's learning and care in the new secondary provision should be appropriately trained and have the opportunity to get to know their children before transferring to secondary school.

2.4 Most parents of children and young people attending the enhanced provision at Stornoway Primary School supported the proposal to provide their children with an improved learning environment and facilities. They were concerned that plans of the new provision were not available. All parents strongly expressed their opposition to the timeline for transferring their children to a new provision and thought that the proposal gave insufficient time to put in place effective transition arrangements. Parents were not fully aware of the options available to their children at the secondary stage. They did not know which secondary school their children would attend in the next school session and assumed that their children would automatically transfer to Sandwickhill Learning Centre. They were concerned about different travel arrangements and wanted their children to have opportunities to visit the centre and become familiar with the new location. A few parents felt that the Sandwick Learning Centre may offer a more secure learning environment for their children.

2.5 Staff at Sgoil nan Loch recognised potential educational and social benefits of the proposal for those children affected by the proposal. They had begun to put in place links with some staff who would be helping to support their children at The Nicolson Institute. All staff were very anxious about the timeline for preparing children for The Nicolson Institute. They wanted to know how and when decisions would be made about where young people would be placed in August 2012. They were keen to ensure that their young people were included in the life and work of the secondary school. All staff were concerned that the purpose built provision at the Nicolson Institute would not be ready to receive young people at the time of opening in August. They had been informed that the safe outdoor area would not be completed until January 2013. All staff were unhappy at the location of the enhanced support base at The Nicolson Institute on the first floor of the building, excluding the possibility of an adjoining outdoor area.

2.6 Staff who worked at the enhanced provision at Stornoway Primary School Campus were positive about the proposal to move the enhanced provision on the Stornoway campus to Sandwickhill. They thought that Sandwickhill Learning Centre would offer access to a secure space for children and young people, better teaching areas, a dedicated games hall and other facilities which they do not currently have at Stornoway Primary School Campus. All staff were concerned at the timeline for transfer given the complex needs of their pupils. They were concerned that no plans of the proposed learning centre were available. All staff were unhappy that they had few opportunities to visit and become familiar with the new centre because it is currently occupied. Staff wanted reassurance that children and young people who will be attending Sandwickhill will not become isolated from their mainstream peers. They wished their pupils to have appropriate transport to enable them to access their local community and a named school regularly. Plans for such arrangements were not in place.

2.7 The headteacher and all support for learning staff at The Nicolson Institute warmly welcomed the proposal to include in their school community, children and young people with complex additional support needs. They thought that the new enhanced provision within The Nicolson Institute would offer young people a wider range of age-appropriate contexts for learning. All staff had significant concerns about the timeline for preparing young people to transfer to The Nicolson Institute. They were particularly uneasy that the move was being proposed in the same week that the new school was to be opened in August 2012. A few were not confident in their ability to meet the needs of young people with severe and complex additional support needs and wished to have reassurance from the Comhairle that staff would receive appropriate specialist training. Staff strongly expressed the view that allocation of places at the school and planning for all young people should be based on a proper review of their co-ordinated support plan involving appropriate agencies.

### 3. Educational aspects of the proposal

3.1 The principle on which the proposal is based has some clear educational benefits. The Comhairle plans to develop a more coherent framework of provision and support to meet the needs of children and young people with complex additional support needs based on meaningful inclusion. Section 15 of *The Standards in Scotland's Schools Act 2000* presumes that the education of all pupils will normally be provided in a mainstream school, unless exceptional circumstances apply. The Act states that 'all children have a right to an education aimed at developing their personality, talents, mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential'. Current services are fragmented and lines of management are not clear to parents. Accommodation at both Sgoil nan Loch and Stornoway Primary School Campus is not age appropriate or fit for purpose and children at Stornoway Primary School Campus have limited opportunities to engage with their mainstream peers. In addition, families do not have sufficient access to respite services and pre-school support. Relationships between staff, parents and children in all of the current provisions are very positive. Parents expressed confidence in teachers and appreciation of the quality of learning experiences provided to their children.

3.2 Young people of secondary age who currently attend the enhanced provisions at Sgoil nan Loch and Stornoway Primary School Campus are likely to benefit from more age-appropriate contexts in which to learn. The enhanced provision at The Nicolson Institute plans to offer a purpose built facility with opportunities for contact with their mainstream peers. Young people would no longer wait until the end of S2 before transferring to secondary school. The headteacher of Sgoil nan Loch would have overall responsibility for managing provision for primary aged children and The Nicolson Institute would have overall responsibility for managing the provision which would support a more integrated approach to their education and care. However, the proposal is not clear about who will be responsible for managing on site services at Sandwickhill Learning Centre.

3.3 The timeline for transferring children and young people is unrealistic and is a significant concern given their vulnerability and also uncertainty about the facilities in both Sandwickhill and The Nicolson Institute. *The (Education) Additional Support for Learning (Scotland) Act 2004* recognises that young people with complex additional support needs require carefully planned transitions beginning at least 12 months prior to transfer. Planning for transfer needs to involve key healthcare professionals and others. Given the time remaining until the planned transfer, staff, parents and healthcare professionals indicated that they had not been left with sufficient time to prepare young people appropriately. Staff are concerned that they are unable to properly carry out a risk assessment of a facility which they can not currently access. The training needs of staff need to be fully assessed, involving health care professionals, and met. Professor Donnie MacLeod stated in his review that 'for these young people, knowing what is going to happen and careful introduction and management of new experiences in new contexts is fundamental to success'.

3.4 The location of the provision on the first floor of The Nicolson Institute and not on the ground floor presents challenges in safely evacuating young people. It also excludes the possibility of direct access to an adjoining outdoor area which is particularly helpful to young people with autism and challenging behaviour. This could limit access to The Nicolson Institute provision for children with mobility issues. Some health professionals were concerned that this reason alone could lead to such children being placed in Sandwickhill Learning Centre.

3.5 The schools estates survey (2007) conducted on behalf of the Comhairle by the Institute of Public Finance, assessed Sandwickhill Primary School building as 'poor'. The school building will be occupied until the end of June 2012 with only a short time to make the necessary adaptations for a diverse range of professionals and learners of various ages and with a range of needs. Learners would include those with complex additional support needs, social emotional and behavioural needs and children who may need early intervention services. Building work will include ensuring that the building is compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. Healthcare professionals indicated that the design and provision of certain

equipment must be determined by the needs of individual young people. Such essential equipment and resources need to be incorporated into the plans for adapting Sandwickhill Learning Centre. Healthcare staff were of the view that they did not have sufficient notice of the proposal and, in their opinion, there was too little time to prepare Sandwickhill Learning Centre for these necessary adaptations. Transition reviews, including a review of children's co-ordinated support plans had not yet taken place for children transferring from the Stornoway Primary School Campus. For all children transferring to new provisions, families did not yet have clarity about which child will attend which facility or the criteria for admission.

3.6 The proposal states that all children and young people with complex additional support needs will be included in their local school. They will remain on the roll of that school as the responsibility of the headteacher. The proposal also states, however, that the resource at Sandwickhill Learning Centre will 'provide a full education provision for particular individuals who would not be able to sustain mainstream inclusion or placement in the enhanced mainstream provision'. This has led to confusion among parents and other respondents about the purpose of Sandwickhill Learning Centre. A significant number of parents regarded it as a 'freestanding' special school, managed off site. Parents and staff fear that children and young people attending the centre may become disconnected from the learning community and have fewer opportunities to learn within their own community. Parents require clearer information about the purpose of Sandwickhill Learning Centre and its role as part of an integrated, flexible system of provision for children with additional support needs. In line with Curriculum for Excellence, it is important to ensure that opportunities for young people to experience the wider community and challenge the boundaries of what they can cope with are not lost.

3.7 While the enhanced provisions would not have any impact on pupils of other schools in the area, the roll at The Nicolson Institute may be affected by any subsequent changes as a result of other school consultation proposals. Further consideration requires to be given to the possible transfer into the school of other young people with additional support needs and the implications for staffing and resources.

3.8 The additional distance for children and young people with complex needs moving from Stornoway Primary School Campus to Sandwickhill or The Nicolson Institute involves an extra five minutes of travel. The Comhairle is reviewing the transport needs of children and young people including travel within the school day. Staff will need to consider carefully the availability of additional transport for children and young people who may have shared placements between their school and Sandwickhill. They need to allow sufficient flexibility for this and for those children and young people attending Sandwickhill to access the local community.

3.9 The Comhairle indicated that the proposal will not be detrimental to the local community and will have no impact on local activities. Over recent years, there have been no formal requests to use the Stornoway Primary School enhanced provision by the community other than for school events and meetings. This proposal would therefore be unlikely to be detrimental to other users who would no longer have access to the buildings and facilities.

## 4. Summary

4.1 The proposal from Comhairle nan Eilean Siar to discontinue provision at Stornoway Primary School Campus and transfer children and young people to Sandwickhill Learning Centre with effect from August 2012, offers some educational benefits to the children directly affected. These include better teaching areas, spacious play areas and specialist support on site. Young people at Sgoil nan Loch and Stornoway Primary School Campus who transfer to The Nicolson Institute are likely to benefit from better opportunities to learn and engage in social activities with others of similar age and stage. However, there are a number of significant issues which the Comhairle needs to resolve in order to ensure that the needs of children and young people are met effectively.

4.2 In line with *The (Education) Additional Support for Learning (Scotland) Act 2004*, the timeline for completion of the consultation gives insufficient time for the Comhairle to put in place necessary transitional arrangements. This will involve reviewing young people's coordinated support plans with health professionals and others, agreeing with parents and health professionals which facility will best meet children and young people's needs and carefully preparing parents, children and young people for the new provisions they will attend at least 12 months prior to transfer.

4.3 The Comhairle needs to ensure that the necessary arrangements are planned and implemented in good time for children and young people to be well supported in their learning and wellbeing during the time of transition. In taking forward the proposal, the Comhairle needs to have regard to the statutory guidance on school transitions relating to the *Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004* as set out in *Supporting children's learning: code of practice 2010 (revised edition)*. In its proposal, the Comhairle has recognised that allocation of places at the new provisions and planning for all young people should be

based on a proper review of their coordinated support plan involving appropriate agencies. This process had already begun for a small number of young people. In particular, parents need to have clarity about the criteria for admission to the new provisions and the purpose and functions of each provision.

4.4 A particular concern is uncertainty about whether the new facilities for pupils will be completed in time for the start of the next school session and whether they will be fit for purpose. While plans for the enhanced provision at The Nicolson Institute were available at the time of consultation, plans were not yet available for Sandwickhill Learning Centre. Further consideration needs to be given to who will manage Sandwick Learning Centre on site and how the environment and resources in the Learning Centre will support the diverse needs of a wide range of learners including pre-school children and those with social, emotional and behavioural needs.

4.5 This proposal is intended to contribute to the Comhairle's efforts in securing best value in relation to services such as occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, behavioural and educational psychology services. These are currently distributed across a number of sites. The Comhairle's plans to have a centralised point at Sandwickhill would support integration of services and allow early intervention and access for in reach and outreach support. As a result of the proposal, the Comhairle may be able to make more efficient use of such resources to the benefit of children and young people throughout the area. However, this requires more detailed analysis and efficiency gains would be set against the cost of adapting the Sandwickhill Primary School building to a suitable standard to accommodate the needs of a diverse range of learners.

4.6 In relation to the concerns raised, HM Inspectors are not confident that the proposal to relocate complex additional support needs provision from Stornoway Primary School Campus to Sandwickhill Learning Centre and redesign complex additional support needs provision in Lewis and Harris would ensure educational benefits for children and young people. The Comhairle needs to provide sufficient time for appropriate transition and effective communication with parents, professionals, staff and children to alleviate their concerns. The Comhairle needs to ensure that it has fully explored the viability of alternatives, including those suggested by parents, health professionals, members of the local community and staff. These include delaying the transfer of children and young people to the new provisions until the buildings are fit for purpose, staff are appropriately trained and young people have had enough time to prepare for the transfer based on a proper review of their coordinated support plan involving appropriate agencies.

**HM Inspectors**  
**Education Scotland**  
May 2012