

ABERDEEN GRAMMAR SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL

c/o 87 Cairnfield Place,
Midstocket,
Aberdeen
AB15 5LX

1st October 2010

Mrs. Annette Bruton,
Director of Education, Culture & Sport,
Aberdeen City Council,
5th Floor,
St. Nicholas House,
Broad Street,
ABERDEEN
AB10 1AR

Dear Mrs. Bruton,

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ON LEARNING ESTATE STRATEGY (SECONDARY SCHOOL PROVISION)

The Parent Council of Aberdeen Grammar School welcomes the opportunity to contribute to Aberdeen City Council's engagement exercise on the Learning Estate Strategy to rezone the secondary schools in the city. Following discussions within the AGS Parent Council and the wider stakeholder group, we would like to offer the following points for consideration in formulating a way forward for the school that ensures the best outcome for both existing pupils and any potential new pupils of the school.

- 1) The cost per pupil per year at AGS is £4356, the lowest of all the city's secondary schools.
(http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/web/files/SchoolsColleges/scc_secondary_cost_per_pupil0708.pdf)
- 2) The attainment levels at standard grade, higher and advanced higher grades are among the highest of the city's secondary schools.
- 3) Occupancy at AGS is above 90%, one of the highest in the city, (see section 4 of [http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/web/files/SchoolsColleges/Stakeholder Engagement Document.pdf](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/web/files/SchoolsColleges/Stakeholder_Engagement_Document.pdf))

However, approximately 27% of pupils are from outside of the current zone, suggesting perhaps that there is some room to expand the catchment area.

http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/web/files/SchoolsColleges/scc_Zoned_Pupils_May_2010.pdf

4) High occupancy, high attainment and low cost are underpinned by the school providing the full breadth of the curriculum at standard grade, higher and advanced higher levels.

5) We believe any plan to rezone any part of the current zone away from the school will cause undue and unnecessary disruption to peer group progression from primary to secondary school and through secondary school years.

6) The school has a socially diverse catchment area, seen as one of the school's strengths. Any additions to the catchment area should strive to not unduly disturb the current distribution of social diversity which seems to deliver high attainment at low cost.

7) We believe the school should be a central part of its local community, and any changes to the catchment area should allow pupils and families to feel a strong connection to the school through its geographical and social make-up.

8) We do not consider ourselves competent to comment on the various city-wide plans laid forth in

[http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/web/files/SchoolsColleges/Stakeholder Engagement Document.pdf](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/web/files/SchoolsColleges/Stakeholder_Engagement_Document.pdf)

However, as a parent council, we would be unlikely raise any significant objections to the model presented as "Map 4" in Section 4 where it is stated that:

"Aberdeen Grammar School (Zone 5)

Some variation in Zone by taking in some of Harlaw Academy Zone and some of St Machar Academy Zone."

as long as we were satisfied that such an expansion of the current zone was consistent with our point 6 (above) and that adequate staff, equipment, and capital provision was made to allow the school to accommodate any expansion in the school roll.

9) Whilst large schools have potential to deliver educational diversity at low cost, we would not wish to see the size of the school roll expand beyond 1200 pupils since this would likely create new sets of educational and cost concerns.

Yours sincerely,

For and on behalf of Aberdeen Grammar School Parent Council



Alasdair M. Stevenson
Chair