

**Date** 09 June 2021

**Your ref**

**Our ref** S&LL/LF/JR

Dear Parent or Carer,

### **New Primary School at Canaan Lane: Opening Arrangements**

I am writing with details of the opening arrangements for the new primary school currently being constructed on Canaan Lane.

On 4 February 2016 a meeting of the City of Edinburgh Council approved that a new primary school and nursery should be built on the site of the former Oaklands Care Home on Canaan Lane. The proposals for the new school included catchment changes affecting Bruntsfield Primary School, James Gillespie's Primary School and South Morningside Primary School. Full details of the new school including a catchment map and the statutory consultation paper can be found on the Council website:

[www.edinburgh.gov.uk/new-education-buildings/new-south-edinburgh-primary-school-canaan-lane](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/new-education-buildings/new-south-edinburgh-primary-school-canaan-lane)

Despite the many obstacles posed by the COVID pandemic, good progress continues to be made on site by the construction company and we are now able to confirm the new school will open in August 2022 for P1 and nursery pupils only. We will appoint a Head Teacher for the new school in January 2022 to ensure the school is ready to welcome pupils in August 2022.

Details of the arrangements for the opening of the new school and nursery have been published on the Council's website at the above link and have been included as an appendix to this letter.

A summary of the key points is provided below:

#### **Summary of Key Points**

- P1 enrolment for August 2022 will begin in November 2021, in line with all P1 enrolment across the city;
- P1 pupils in the new school's catchment area wishing to attend the same school as a sibling will be prioritised through the out of catchment placing request process - but a place is not guaranteed;
- The Head Teacher for new school will be appointed in January 2022;
- The new school will open in August 2022 for P1 and nursery pupils only;

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- South Morningside PS Nursery class staff and pupils will relocate to Canaan Lane when the new building is available and will become part of the new nursery in August 2022 or before if the opportunity arises;
- Further details of how to register for new places at the new nursery at Canaan Lane will be made available in August 2021;
- No P2-P7 places will be available in the new school in the 2022/23 session;
- The new school's P1 classes and South Morningside's P1 and P2 classes will share the new school building while Deanbank House is refurbished during 2022/23 session;
- Deanbank House will provide accommodation for South Morningside Primary School from August 2023 until whole school roll can transfer to Comiston Road site.

Between now and the end of August 2021 we are also going to be engaging with families who have children in the existing schools and nurseries and the wider community in relation to choosing a name for the new school and further details about this process will be circulated soon.

If you would like to ask any questions or seek clarification on any of the points in this letter you can email us at: [www.edinburgh.gov.uk/southedinburghschools](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/southedinburghschools)

Kind regards



**Lorna French**

**Acting Head of Schools and Lifelong Learning**

cc Lynn Paterson, Senior Education Manager

Crawford McGhie, Senior Manager – Estates and Operational Support

## **APPENDIX - New Primary School at Canaan Lane: Opening Arrangements**

### **Nursery**

South Morningside Primary School's nursery classes will move to the new facility at Canaan Lane at an appropriate time following completion of the new building and will become part of the new school nursery by August 2022 or before if the opportunity arises. As part of this process, staff from South Morningside Primary School's nursery classes will relocate to the new nursery at Canaan Lane. All continuing nursery pupils who would otherwise have returned to the South Morningside nursery following the summer break will instead be offered a place at the new nursery at Canaan Lane from August 2022. These 'returning' pupils will maintain the hours they would have had at South Morningside and will not be required to register for the new nursery.

Further details of how to register for new places at the new nursery at Canaan Lane will be made available in August 2021

### **Primary 1**

The catchment changes approved by Council at its meeting on 4 February 2016 will apply to all P1 pupils registering for the new term in August 2022. If you live in the catchment area of the new school at the time P1 registrations open in November 2021 then the new school will be your child's catchment school. Registration will be online, and the application will identify the new school as your catchment school.

If you would like your child to attend a school other than their catchment school, then you must make an out of catchment placing request. Out of catchment placing requests to a school already attended by a sibling will be prioritised but a place cannot be guaranteed. Further information on why a sibling guarantee cannot be offered is provided later in this letter.

For the 2022/23 school year, P1 pupils in the new school will share their new building with P1 and P2 pupils from South Morningside Primary School who will be decanted from South Morningside Primary School's infant annexe. This arrangement will be in place to allow significant refurbishment works to take place at Deanbank House.

Once they have been appointed in January 2022 the Head Teacher of the new school will work closely with the Head Teacher of South Morningside Primary School to develop a plan for how the schools will work together in the same building.

Accommodation sharing arrangements may also be necessary in future years and this requirement will continue to be monitored by both Head Teachers and Council officers on a regular basis.

### **Primary 2 – Primary 7**

There will be no classes created for P2-P7 pupils in the new school in the 2022/23 session. Accordingly, transfer to the new school for any stage other than P1 will not be possible.

The new school will build from the P1 intake in August 2022 so that a new stage is added each year. The ability to create classes at upper stages in the new school will be regularly monitored in future years.

### **South Morningside Primary School Infant Annexe / Deanbank House**

Deanbank House currently operates as South Morningside Primary School's Infant Annexe, accommodating all of its P1 and P2 pupils. In August 2022 South Morningside

Primary School's infant classes will move into the new school building to allow Deanbank House to be fully refurbished.

In the longer-term, Deanbank House will become part of the new school's accommodation. However, when it reopens in August 2023 following its refurbishment, Deanbank House will continue to provide classroom accommodation for South Morningside Primary School. This will remain the case until all South Morningside Primary School's classes may be accommodated on its main site at Comiston Road.

### **No Sibling Guarantee**

The Council will always offer a sibling guarantee where it is possible to do so as we recognise the complexities associated with having children at separate schools. Unfortunately, in this case, it is not possible to offer a guarantee as to do so may undermine the rationale for the catchment change in the first place.

The timescales over which South Morningside Primary School will transfer to a single site at Comiston Road will be dependent on the impact the new school has on South Morningside Primary School's P1 intakes. If the catchment change is unable to reduce the P1 intakes to South Morningside Primary School sufficiently then the school will continue to require more accommodation than its Comiston Road site can provide. Even small numbers of additional P1 pupils can generate the need for an additional class either in the year they first attend or in later stages.

The new school will require the classroom space at Deanbank House in the long-term. Accordingly, delaying South Morningside Primary School's transfer to a single site at Comiston Road would potentially create accommodation pressures on the new school site.

We cannot say with certainty what the P1 intakes will be in 2022 or beyond. We do know that there is not much scope for flexibility. For this reason, no sibling guarantee was proposed as part of the consultation in 2016 and the Council approved the recommendations in the Outcomes Report which made clear that no sibling guarantee could be offered.

Accordingly, while we cannot guarantee that P1 pupils applying for a place in the school their siblings attend will be successful, we will do what we can to prioritise and approve those applications. We will also work directly with any family with siblings at separate schools to try and mitigate the impact this might have.

### **Next Steps**

We will ensure that parents are kept up to date with the latest information about the school either via newsletters or by updating the New south Edinburgh primary school webpage: [www.edinburgh.gov.uk/new-education-buildings/new-south-edinburgh-primary-school-canaan-lane](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/new-education-buildings/new-south-edinburgh-primary-school-canaan-lane)