

Closure of Kinneff School Statutory Consultation

Online Survey Summary

The statutory consultation period regarding the closure of Kinneff School ran between 12 January 2026 to 6 March 2026. During the consultation period all addresses within the Kinneff School catchment area, Bervie School and Catterline School parents/carers, local community councils and all identified stakeholders were invited to participate in an online survey to express their views regarding the proposal.

The survey provided an overview of the proposal, public meeting information and accompanying maps. The proposal is to discontinue education at Kinneff School which is currently mothballed (temporary closed) and to re-assign its catchment to either Bervie School or Catterline School. It was made clear that the survey would be open until 4pm on Friday 6 March 2026.

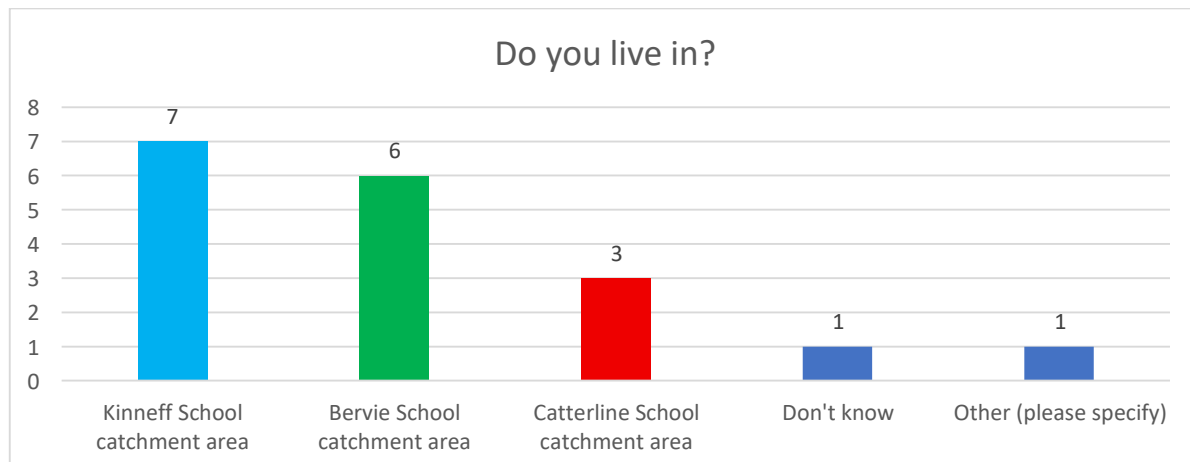
Stakeholders could also send in their comments on the proposal via email or post and paper copies of the survey were available at the public meeting or upon request. No paper copies were completed.

A total of 18 participants completed the survey, all responses have been analysed and have been detailed below.

Q. Do you live in?

Chart A below shows which school catchment the participant resides. The majority, seven (39%) participants reside within the Kinneff School catchment area, six (33%) participants live within the Bervie School catchment area and three (17%) participants live within the Catterline School catchment area. There was one participant which stated they do not know and one participant who stated other however later commented that they live within the Laurencekirk cluster of schools.

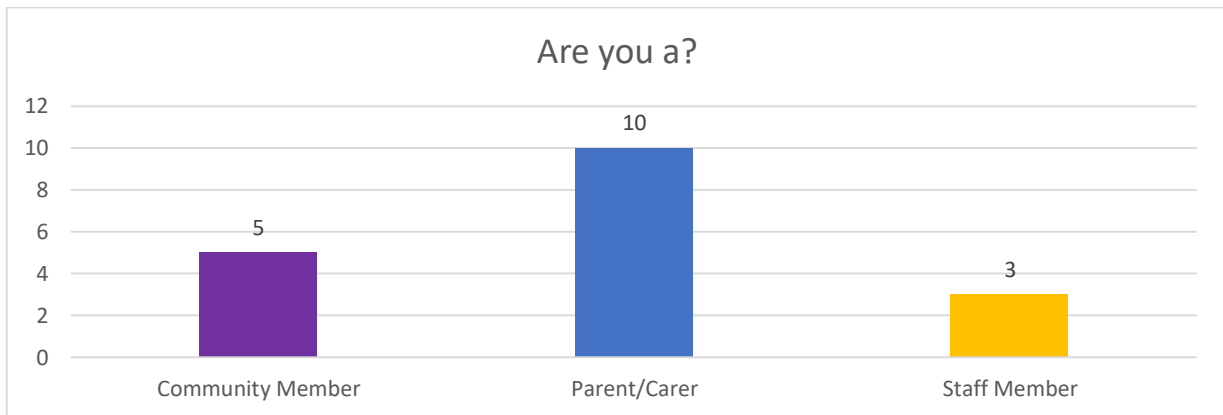
Chart A



Q. Are you a?

Chart B below shows that the majority, 10 (55%) participants are parents/carers, five (28%) participants are community members and three (17%) participants are staff members. There was also the option of selecting pupil, local elected member and other however there was no participants who selected these options.

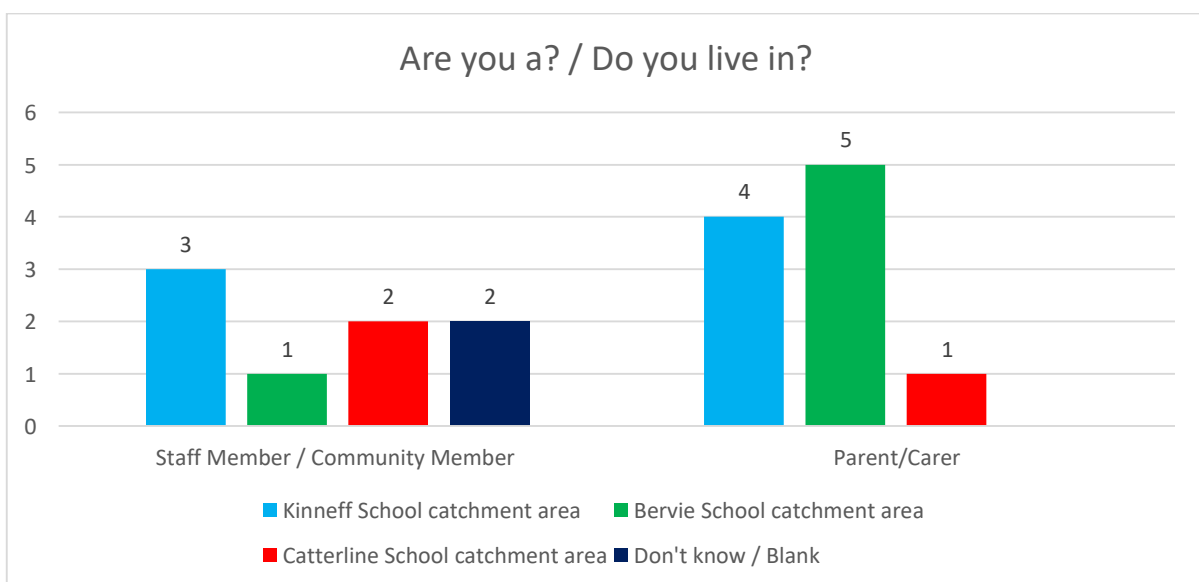
Chart B



Of those who are parent/carers, five reside within the Bervie School catchment area, four within the Kinneff School catchment area and one participant resides within the Catterline School catchment area.

Of those who are either staff members or community members, three reside within the Kinneff School catchment area, two reside within the Catterline School catchment area, one participant resides within the Bervie catchment area and two selected either don't know or left the question blank.

Chart C

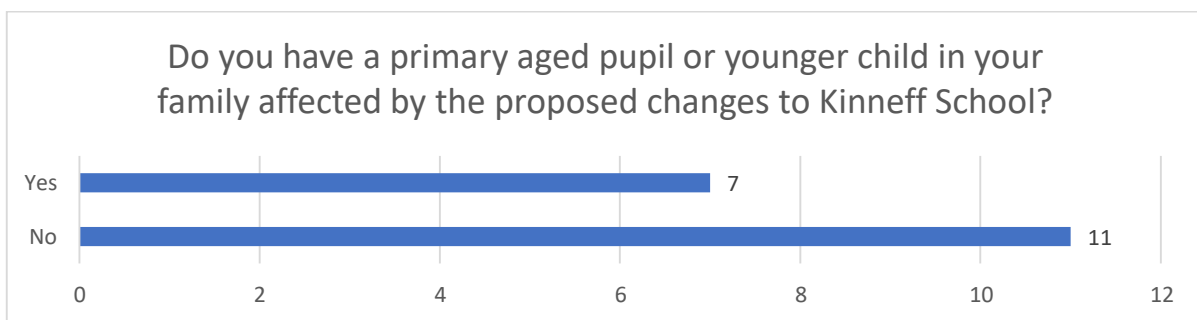


Q. Do you have a primary aged pupil or younger child in your family affected by the proposed changes to Kinneff School?

Chart D below shows that the majority, 11 (61%) participants indicated they did not have children while 7 participants stated yes (39%) they do have primary aged pupils effected by the proposal.

Of the seven participants who live within the Kinneff School catchment area, there are less than five which have pupils who will be affected by the proposed changes to Kinneff School.

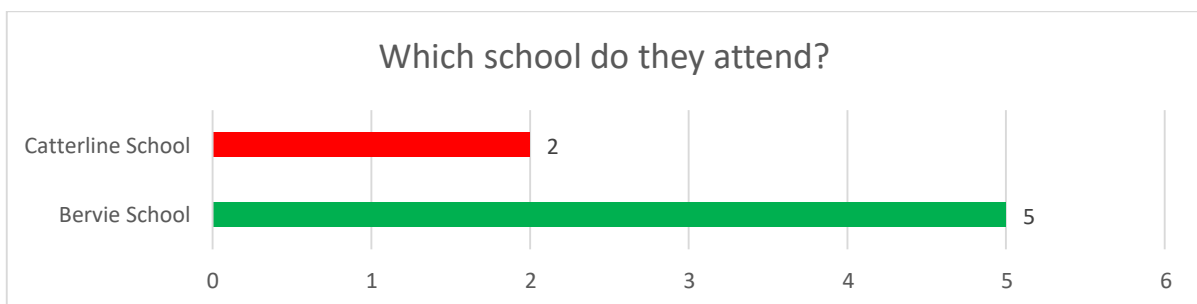
Chart D



Q. Which school do they attend?

Further analysis shows that of the 7 participants that indicated they have a child(ren) affected by the change, five (71%) participants stated that they have a primary aged or younger child attending Bervie School and two participants stated they have a primary aged pupil attending Catterline School. Chart E shows the results.

Chart E



Options for Kinneff School Catchment Area

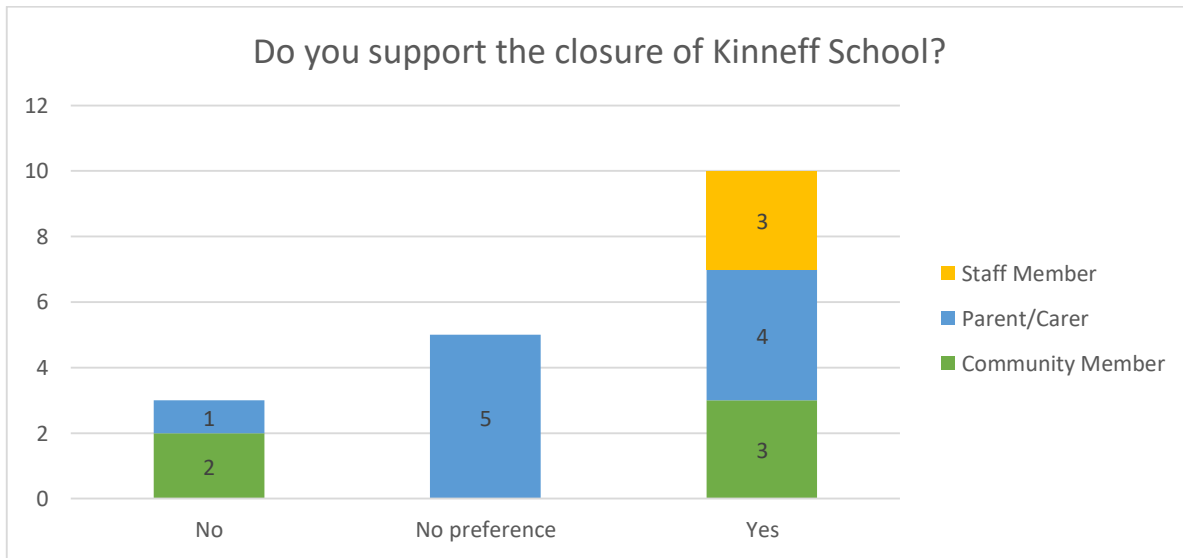
The following two options are being considered for Kinneff School.

- Option 1 - Close Kinneff School and merge with Bervie School
- Option 2 - Close Kinneff School and merge with Catterline School

Q. Do you support the closure of Kinneff School?

The majority, 10 (55%) participants stated yes, they do support the closure of Kinneff School, 5 (28%) stated they had no preference and 3 (17%) stated no, they do not support the closure of the school. Chart F below shows the breakdown of the votes and if the participants are a parent/carer, community member or staff member.

Chart F



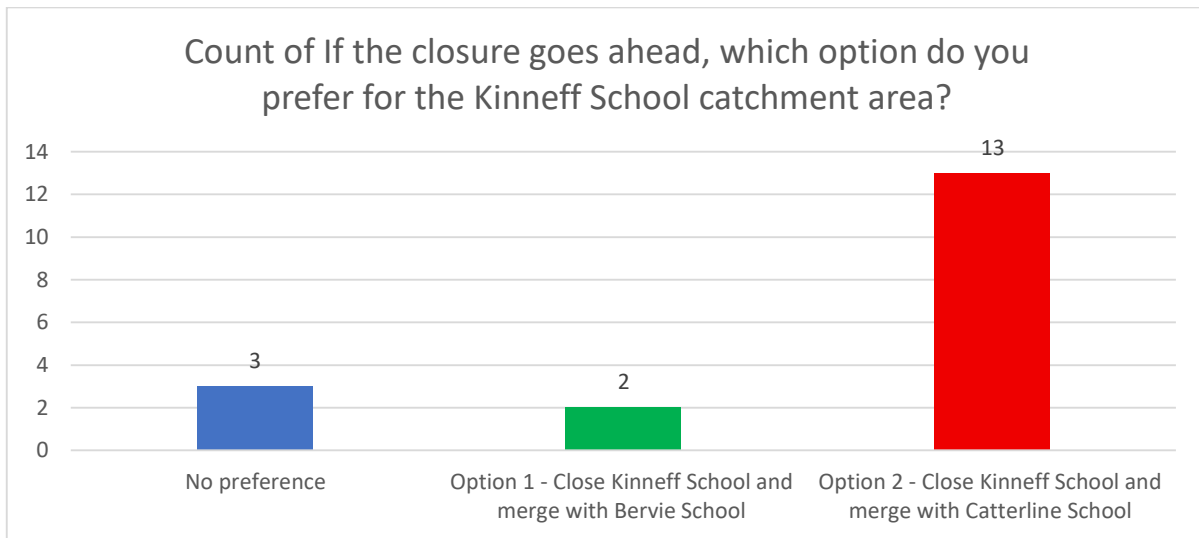
Q. If the closure goes ahead, which option do you prefer for the Kinneff School catchment area?

Chart G below shows that the majority, 13 (72%) participants chose option 2 – Close Kinneff School and merge with Catterline School, three (17%) participants chose the no preference option and two participants chose option 1 – Close Kinneff School and merge with Bervie School.

Of the 13 participants who stated they prefer the option to merge with Catterline School, these were from parents/carers of all schools affected, staff members and community members of Kinneff and Bervie.

Of the seven participants who live within the Kinneff School catchment area, the majority, four 4 (57%) participants chose option 2 – merge with Catterline School, two (28%) participants chose option 1 – merge with Bervie School and one chose no preference.

Chart G

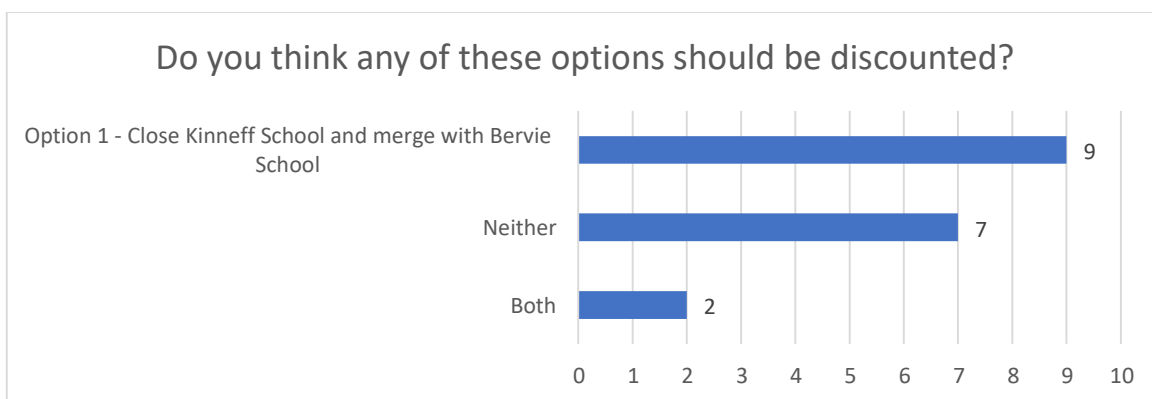


Q. Do you think any of these options should be discounted?

Chart H below shows of the 18 participants who took part in the survey, the majority, nine (50%) think that option 1 – Close Kinneff School and merge with Bervie School should be discounted. There were seven, (39%) participants think that neither should be discounted and two (11%) participants think both should be discounted.

Of the seven participants who live within the Kinneff School catchment area, it was equal amount of participants who selected to discount option 1 – merge with Bervie School and discount neither. One participant stated to discount both options. There were no participants who voted to discount option 2 – merge with Catterline School.

Chart H



Participants were given the opportunity to state their reasons why they think the options(s) they have chosen should be discontinued.

Of the 18 participants who completed the survey, 11 chose to leave their views and comments, four of which reside within the Kinneff School catchment area. All comments are listed below are categorised on what they chose to discount:

Discount option 1 – Close Kinneff School and merge with Bervie School:

- For the pupils currently at Catterline, from Kinneff this would be hugely disruptive to their learning and wellbeing when they have now adjusted to life at Catterline. A rural community is well catered by rural schools.
- Kinneff and Catterline school already share a headteacher and some of the children in the Kinneff school catchment area already attend Catterline school. The two schools have always had a relationship with a joint football team etc.
- Kinneff and Catterline schools have always enjoyed a close relationship and shared a Head Teacher for a number of years before Kinneff was mothballed.
- Bervie seems already overcrowded. The classrooms are small. The social needs are high. It is not a good idea to expand the Bervie School catchment area.
- Catterline is also a rural school with excellent facilities. Many of the rural families in this area know each other. This is also the same community council area. Bervie school is not as close.
- There are historical connections between the rural communities of Catterline and Kinneff, which I feel would benefit from being maintained and supported. I feel rural communities are unique and the ethos of smaller rural schools' support this. The 'Catterline Community Benefit Society' has active members from the Kinneff community as well as Catterline, and recent initiatives (including the Catterline Summer Festival and the Burns Supper) have been keenly supported by both communities. Joint ventures in securing funding for initiatives such as the addition of floral features to both areas, have further strengthened bonds between the communities. Community groups, with members from both Kinneff and Catterline, such as the SWRI and Community Council, meet at Catterline School and Catterline Community Church. With the mothballing of Kinneff School, all 8 children and their families chose to attend Catterline School rather than Bervie School, which supports the idea that rural families favour smaller schools, which are the heart of the community. A large percentage of Kinneff families had already placed their children at Catterline School through Placing Requests. The schools worked very closely together with a joint head, and many activities included both Catterline and Kinneff children, such as the residential trip for senior pupils and theatre trips. In addition to core education, Catterline School provides a number of clubs and events throughout the year, which are extremely well attended by both communities, such as Catkins Football Club, the Scripture Union Lunchtime Club and Parent Group events. These examples demonstrate the connections between Kinneff and Catterline communities, and I feel if Kinneff pupils were zoned to Bervie School, the communities may become divided.
- I think that the Kinneff Catchment area should be merged with the Catterline School Catchment area. There are existing relationships between the schools, such as the School Football team, Catkins, which has been run for pupils of both schools for a good number of years. When there was a joint headteacher at Kinneff school and Catterline School, there were many joint events which pupils from both schools took part in, such as educational visits, visiting theatre performances and residential trips.
- I think it is important to continue to bond the people of Catterline and Kinneff as one community and I think merging with Catterline would support this well. I think the school has a pivotal role in this. Since the children moved to Catterline School from Kinneff

School, we are finding that the two villages are growing closer with people from Kinneff now joining in with events in Catterline and people from Catterline joining events on Kinneff. The forming of the Catterline Community Benefits' Society now has people from Kinneff volunteering alongside the existing Catterline members.

Discount neither options:

- Kinneff has long had ties with Catterline School, which makes it a logical choice for merging catchment areas. Catterline is also closer for the majority of the area.

Discount both options:

- I think the building should still be a school for the children who need it.
- For the small numbers affected, families should have the opportunity to choose the individual best education option for them.

Participants were given the opportunity to leave their comments on the proposal for the permanent closure of Kinneff School.

There was a total of 12 participants who left comments relevant to the consultation, five of which were from residents living within the Kinneff School catchment area. Some comments have been redacted to comply with GDPR.

- The school is too small to be viable and it is unlikely ever to have enough pupils to justify reopening. Money and resources can be better spent by applying them to other local schools - Bervie, Catterline, Gourdon, etc
- I agree with the closure of the school but suggest that it is used as an enhanced provision school for children with additional needs who are currently in the coastal primary schools and unable to get a place at Carronhill in Stonehaven due to it being at capacity.
- Close the school to mainstream kids but use the building for the children with additional needs who are not coping in schools. Carronhill in Stonehaven isn't big enough and this empty building could be better used to support the children south of Stonehaven who have additional needs.
- It was a decision made by the parents and carers using the school, whom made the best decision for their children. It is a reasonable cost-effective solution for the council to mothball it for the time being.
- I agree that with a roll of 8 pupils, it is in best interests for the pupils' social development to attend a larger school. The pupils from Kinneff School have settled very well at Catterline School, with established bonds between the two schools and communities, and transition activities, supporting this. The Kinneff pupils and their parents were already familiar with Catterline School due to these links.
- There were excellent transition opportunities provided, the children have settled well at Catterline School.
- The children have settled well into Catterline School. There was good support given by the Learning Estates' Team to be proactive in ensuring a smooth transition. I do think money can be better spent than on the cost of reopening the school which will have deteriorated badly whilst sitting unoccupied.

Kinneff School catchment area residents:

- Though sad, its closure provides a boost to numbers at Catterline and makes the school more sustainable and have greater social opportunities for children from both schools. Small schools provide an alternative learning environment which some children require to thrive. Its closure is a loss for these such pupils when class sizes are being maximised across the cluster and additional support provision is not sufficient to negate this. It maintains the community spirit of the rural community it serves. The inequity in terms of transport provision for children attending the same school, living on the same street, requires addressing as a matter of urgency.
- It is a shame to see what was a lovely school close, but if there is no enrolment, economically it should close.
- Been a long time coming, should have happened years ago.
- Rural communities are losing young families as councils are closing down small rural school. Property values are impacted by the loss of vital amenities such as a local school. There are documented indicators that clearly show the benefit of small classes for the social/emotional wellbeing of children. The closure of our wee rural school is a travesty on so many levels. If the school is closed we would respectfully appeal to the council to please allow us to use the available equipment and resources in our Kinneff Community hall and Kinneff community park. That way we can repurpose and use items for the greater good of our wider community. It is important that we ensure the public best interests in all regards.
- Resources could be better deployed if numbers aren't sufficient for class sizes.

Conclusion

On conclusion of the online survey, there were 18 participants took part, the majority of which, 7 (39%) reside within the Kinneff School catchment area. There were also 6 (33%) participants who reside within the Bervie School catchment area and there were three (17%) which reside within the Catterline School catchment area. These were a range of parents/carers from each of the school catchments affected, staff members and community members of Bervie and Kinneff.

The majority of participants support the closure of Kinneff School and preferred the option 2 to close Kinneff School and merge with Catterline School.

This is reinforced by the majority of the Kinneff School catchment residents also supporting the closure of Kinneff School and preference of the option to merge with Catterline School. However, in contrast, of the less than five parent/carers which have pupils that could be affected by the proposal, the majority have no preference of the closure of Kinneff School and the preferred option is to merge with Bervie School.

When asked for views on options that should be discounted, many felt that option 1 to close Kinneff School and merge with Bervie School should be ruled out. Comments also showed a stronger preference for merging with Catterline School opposed to Bervie School, citing the close historical and current links between the two communities and the greater distance to Bervie School.

Learning Estates Team
Education & Children's Services
March 2026