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Head of Care and Learning
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Our Ref: IJ/
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Dear Catherine

I write further to my letter of 21 January 2022, in which I acknowledged your response to the recent public consultation on the proposed closure of Roy Bridge Primary School.

Normally, Highland Council does not respond in full to representations made during public consultations exercises until after the consultation has been completed. At that point all of the representations are reviewed, along with the assessment made by Education Scotland, and a report issued with the Highland Council's views on the matters raised. This is in line with the requirements of the legislation that applies to School Statutory Consultations. Those who responded to the initial exercise in writing are invited to submit further representations during a 3-week period leading up to the Committee meeting that makes the decision on the Proposal, and these and the original responses are put before the elected councillors of the Education Committee who will be taking the final decision. All of the comments I make below are therefore subject to the views that will be taken in due course by elected councillors.

I appreciate though, that your representation suggests an alternative to closure, based around the idea that Roy Bridge Primary might become a school offering Gaelic Medium Education, and that such a proposal might require time to be further developed. I write therefore, to provide further advice, without prejudicing any future consideration of the issue by the Education Committee.

Currently, there are less than five children from the Roy Bridge PS catchment attending Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Loch Abar, (we do not normally provide details of children when numbers are less than five). Based purely on the current numbers of pupils, and their ages, it would not be viable to offer GME in Roy Bridge Primary School.

Statutory Guidance on Gaelic Education has been published by Bòrd na Gàidhlig, which lays down a process by which parents can request an assessment of the need for Gaelic medium primary education (GMPE) in their local area. Given the current numbers from Roy Bridge attending Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Loch Abar, it may be that an



assessment of the level of demand from pre-school children would be an alternative way of pursuing the suggestion of GME at Roy Bridge. The link below contains more information.

[Making a request for Gaelic Medium Primary Education in your local area | Gaelic medium education | The Highland Council](#)

Bòrd na Gàidhlig and Comann nam Pàrant (Naiseanta) might be further sources of advice.

Lastly, I would highlight that a proposal to turn Roy Bridge Primary School into a school offering only GME would still necessitate a statutory consultation on closing Roy Bridge PS to English Medium pupils.

I hope you find the above helpful.

Yours sincerely

Ian Jackson
Education Officer

cc. Don Esson, Area Education Manager
Emily Brown, Head Teacher, Spean Bridge and Invergarry Primary Schools
Lena Walker, Gaelic Education Manager
Pamela Adamson, Education Scotland