



Dumfries and Galloway Council
Education, Skills and Community Wellbeing

Proposal Document: August 2026

Review of Education Provision
Dalry Secondary School

Proposal for the closure of Dalry Secondary School

Summary Proposal

Dumfries and Galloway Council is proposing, subject to the outcome of the statutory consultation process, to discontinue education provision at Dalry Secondary School and to realign its catchment area to Castle Douglas High School.

It is proposed that education provision at Dalry Secondary School be discontinued with effect from 2 July 2027.

Reasons for this proposal

This is considered to be the most appropriate option to address the reasons for the proposal, which are:

- Dalry Secondary School's pupil roll for academic year 2025/26 was 13, resulting in increasing difficulty in delivering a broad and balanced curriculum (the number of enrolled pupils has since reduced to 8 for session 2026/27).
- The majority of pupils residing within the Dalry Secondary School catchment area choose to attend an alternative secondary school.
- There is no evidence that the number of catchment pupils will rise, with regional demographics showing a continuing decline and an expected 18% reduction in the 0–15 population over the next 10 years.
- Like many rural Councils, Dumfries and Galloway Council has been experiencing increasing challenges in recruiting staff, including at Dalry Secondary School.
- At the Full Council meeting on 28 March 2024, Members agreed that Dalry Secondary School should not be temporarily closed (formally known as mothballed) and that S1–S4 provision should continue until at least the end of 2025.

This document has been issued by Dumfries and Galloway Council's Education, Skills and Community Wellbeing Directorate in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 and the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. It has been prepared by the Education, Skills and Community Wellbeing Directorate with input from other Council Directorates.

Publication Information

The proposal paper will be available, free of charge, at:

- Dalry Secondary School, Dalry;
- Castle Douglas High School, Castle Douglas; and
- Dumfries and Galloway Council Headquarters, Dumfries.

And published on Dumfries and Galloway Council's website:

<https://www.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk/council-elections/have-your-say/consultations-engagements>

Copies of this paper are also available on request from:

Letter to: Statutory Consultation – Dalry Secondary School
Dumfries and Galloway Council
Militia House
109/111 English Street
DG1 2HR

Email to: statutoryconsultation@dumgal.gov.uk

To request this information in a more accessible format or alternative language, please contact the postal or email address listed above.

Formal notice of the Proposal and relevant information will be given and be made available to the consultees listed as follows:

- a) the Parent Council or Combined Parent Council of any affected school,
- b) the parents of the pupils at any affected school,
- c) the parents of any children expected by the education authority to attend any affected school within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper,
- d) the pupils at any affected school (in so far as the education authority considers them to be of a suitable age and maturity),
- e) the staff (teaching and other) at any affected school,
- f) any trade union which appears to the education authority to be representative of the persons mentioned in sub-paragraph (e),
- g) the community council (if any),
- h) the community planning partnership (within the meaning of section 4(5) of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015) for the area of the local authority in which any affected school is situated,
- (ha) any other community planning partnership that the education authority considers relevant,]
- i) any other education authority that the education authority considers relevant,
- j) any other users of any affected school that the education authority considers relevant.

1.0 Introduction

Dalry Secondary School has experienced a sustained decline in pupil numbers over a number of years. The school roll stood at 13 pupils in academic year 2025/26 and has reduced further to 8 enrolled pupils for August 2026. In addition, a significant proportion of secondary-aged young people residing within the catchment area choose to attend alternative secondary schools, further reducing uptake of local provision.

Projected demographic trends indicate a continued reduction in the number of school-aged children in both the Glenkens, New Galloway and across Dumfries and Galloway, with little evidence that the number of pupils attending Dalry Secondary School is likely to increase significantly in future years. These factors, alongside increasing challenges in recruiting and retaining staff within rural schools, have prompted Dumfries and Galloway Council to consider the long-term sustainability of S1 to S4 secondary education provision at Dalry Secondary School.

As required under Section 12A of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, Dumfries and Galloway Council undertook a programme of preliminary requirements prior to formulating this proposal. The purpose of this work was to identify the reasons for considering a rural school closure proposal, explore any reasonable alternatives, and assess the educational, community and travel implications associated with each option.

As part of this process, Council officers undertook a series of early engagement meetings with communities served by Dalry Secondary School between January and February 2026. These meetings took place at Balmaclellan Village Hall, Kells Primary School, Carsphairn Village Hall and Dalry Secondary School. Attendees were provided with information on the current position of the school, the challenges associated with maintaining provision, and a range of potential options for the future. Participants were invited to comment on these options and to suggest any other reasonable alternatives they felt should be considered by the Council.

To ensure wider community participation, an online survey was made available between 16 February and 27 March 2026. The survey enabled parents, carers, staff, pupils, community representatives and other stakeholders to provide feedback on the options under consideration and to identify any alternative approaches they wished the Council to examine. Feedback received through both the engagement meetings and the survey informed the Council's assessment of reasonable alternatives and its consideration of the potential impacts of any future proposal.

In addition to community engagement, specific pupil engagement activities were undertaken with children and young people from across the Dalry Secondary School catchment area. Engagement took place within Kells Primary School, Dalry Primary School, Dalry Secondary School, Kirkcudbright Academy and Castle Douglas High School to ensure pupils living in the catchment area had an opportunity to express their views in familiar learning environments. The views gathered formed part of the statutory preliminary requirements process.

The findings from the preliminary requirements process, including consideration of reasonable alternatives, educational impact, community impact and travel implications, were presented to the Education, Skills and Community Wellbeing Committee on 30 June 2026. Following consideration of the evidence, Members agreed that the preliminary requirements had been satisfied and approved the commencement of a statutory consultation on the proposal to discontinue S1 to S4 education provision at Dalry Secondary School.

The statutory process for the closure of a rural school is set out within the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, as amended. The legislation establishes a presumption against the closure of rural schools and places a duty on education authorities to demonstrate that closure is the most appropriate response to the identified concerns after reasonable alternatives have been fully considered. This proposal paper has therefore been prepared following completion of the preliminary requirements process and should be read alongside the Preliminary Requirements Report as seen in Appendix 2.

In addition, the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 provides communities with the ability to seek ownership or management of public assets through the Community Asset Transfer process. Should the proposal ultimately be implemented, local community organisations may wish to consider whether the school building could support alternative community uses in the future.

Councils, as Education Authorities, have a statutory duty under the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 to secure adequate and efficient provision of school education throughout their area for both current and future generations of learners. This duty is reflected in the Dumfries and Galloway Council Plan 2023–2028 and the Council's commitment to ensuring that educational provision remains sustainable, inclusive and responsive to the needs of local communities.

Dumfries and Galloway Council has also had regard to the Scottish Government's Building Better Schools strategy, which promotes a school estate that is fit for purpose, well maintained and accessible to local communities. A key element of the strategy is the use of School Estate Management Plans to support the effective management of school buildings and to identify long-term priorities for investment and change. The strategy recognises that strategic changes to school provision, including the rationalisation of schools where this is necessary to ensure sustainability, should be considered as part of local authorities' wider planning for the future of education and public assets.

Dumfries and Galloway Council aims to improve education and learning opportunities to help all children, young people, and citizens fulfil their potential. This begins with pre-school, continues through school, and progresses into further or higher education or transition into work. Dumfries and Galloway Council works with partners to create and promote lifelong learning opportunities so that everyone in the region can live a meaningful and fulfilling life and contribute to their community. The strategic outcomes of Dumfries and Galloway Council include:

- Places of learning are inclusive, sustainable and meet the needs of local communities.
- We get it right for every child.
- Children, young people and adults transition successfully through all life stages.
- Young people and adults succeed in what they want to achieve.
- Participation in creativity and play is part of early and lifelong learning experiences.
- Local people can build their skills and confidence.

2.0 Proposal

It is proposed that S1 to S4 secondary education provision at Dalry Secondary School be discontinued with effect from 2 July 2027, and that its catchment area be realigned to Castle Douglas High School.

Maps illustrating the current and proposed catchment area for the Dalry Secondary School are detailed below in Figures 1 and 2.

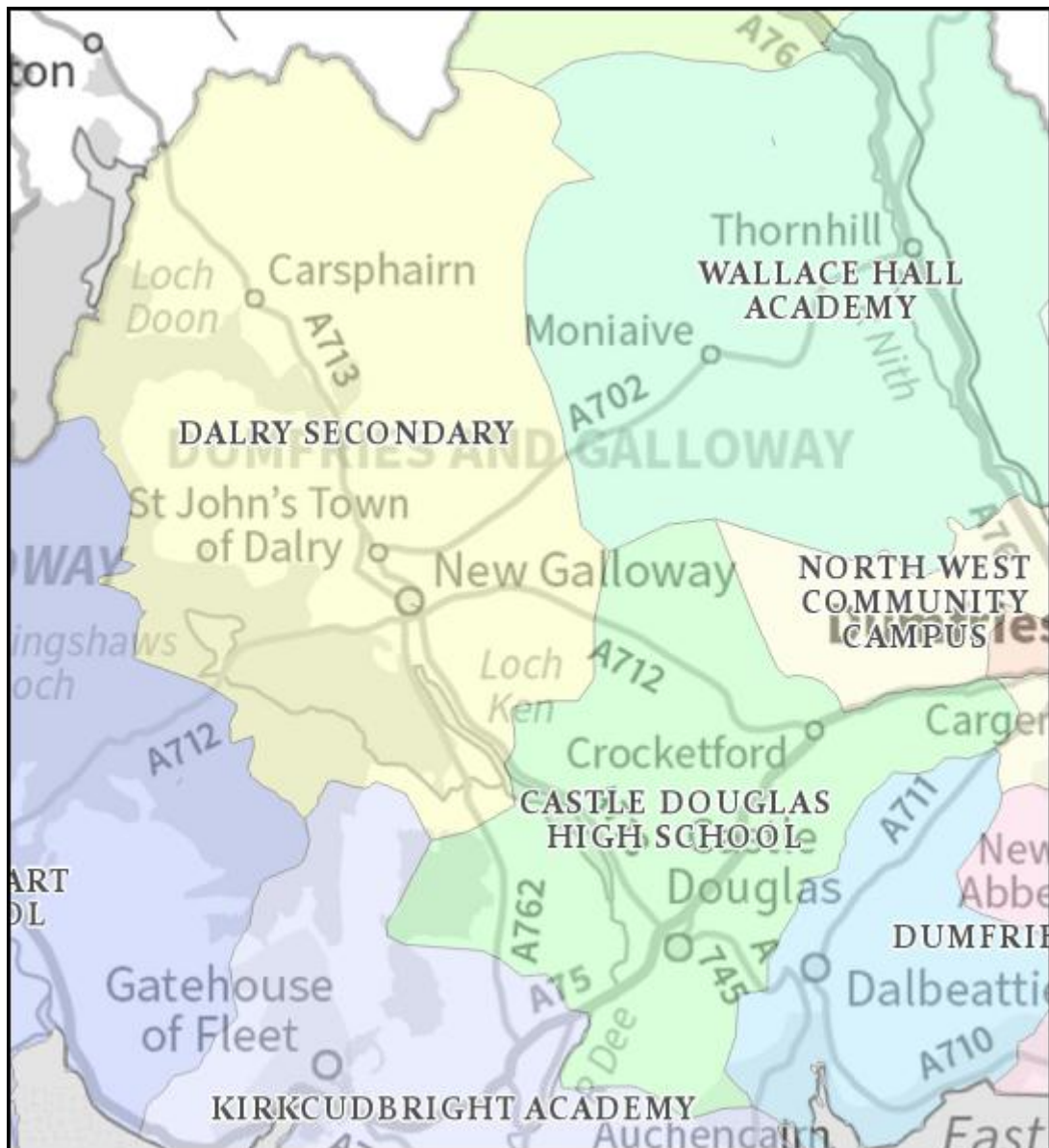


Figure 1: Current catchment areas of Dalry Secondary School and Castle Douglas High School

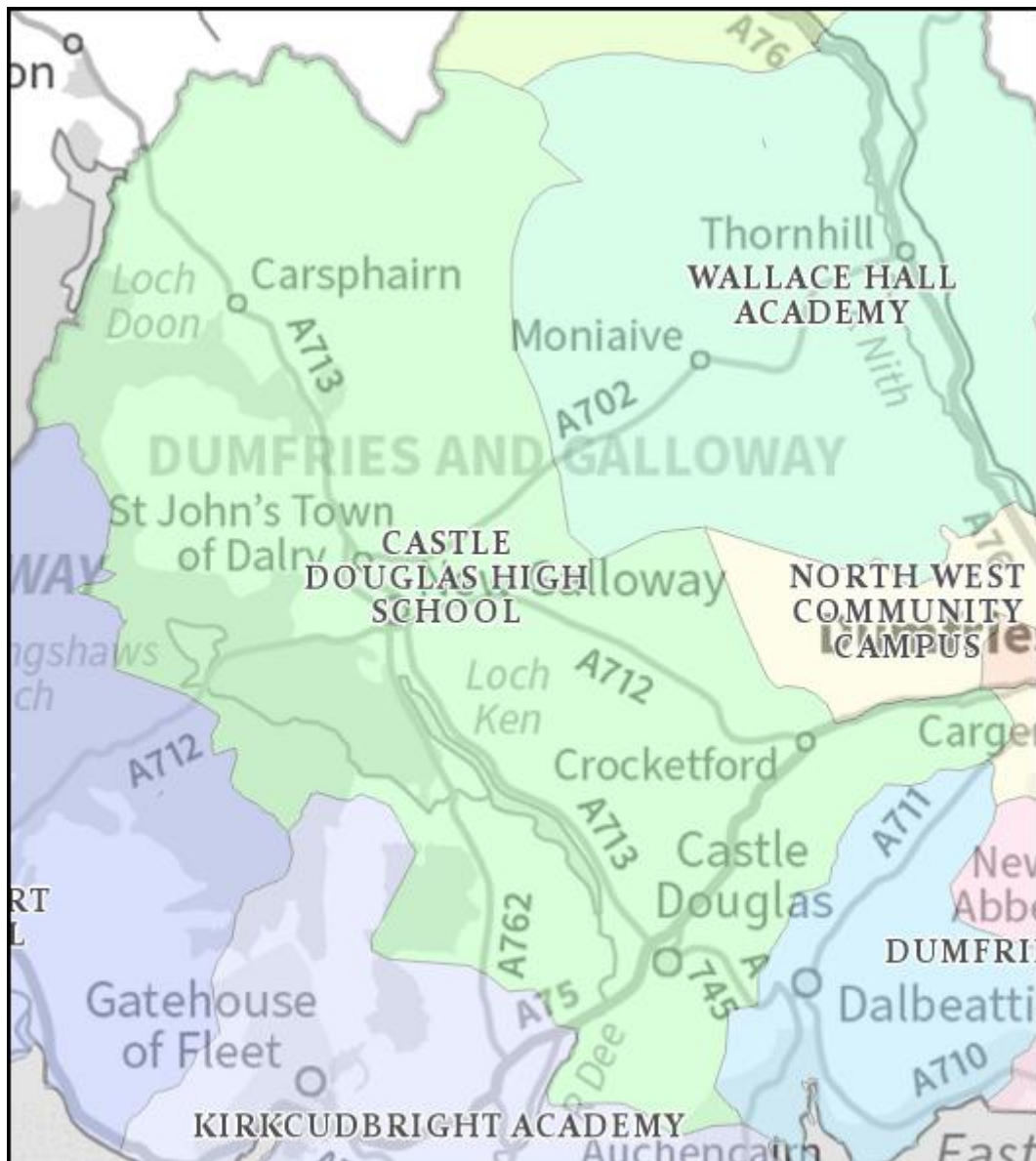


Figure 2: Proposed new catchment area of Castle Douglas High School

2.1 Reasons for this Proposal

This is considered to be the most appropriate option to address the reasons for the proposal, which are:

- Dalry Secondary School's pupil roll for academic year 2025/26 was 13, resulting in increasing difficulty in delivering a broad and balanced curriculum (the number of enrolled pupils has since reduced to 8 for session 2026/27).
- The majority of pupils residing within the Dalry Secondary School catchment area choose to attend an alternative secondary school.
- There is no evidence that the number of catchment pupils will rise, with regional demographics showing a continuing decline and an expected 18% reduction in the 0–15 population over the next 10 years.

- Like many rural Councils, Dumfries and Galloway Council has been experiencing increasing challenges in recruiting staff, including at Dalry Secondary School.
- At the Full Council meeting on 28 March 2024, Members agreed that Dalry Secondary School should not be temporarily closed (formally known as 'mothballed') and that S1–S4 provision should continue until at least the end of 2025.

In considering the future of Dalry Secondary School, Dumfries and Galloway Council has taken a range of steps over a number of years to address the underlying challenges identified, particularly in relation to declining pupil numbers, curriculum delivery, staffing and long-term sustainability.

The current model of provision has been maintained on a year by year basis, including the continued availability of S1-S4 secondary education as well as the decision of Full Council in March 2024 not to mothball the school when pupil numbers were critically low. This has allowed pupils to continue to be educated within their local community and has supported continuity for families. However, with a pupil roll of 8 secondary pupils enrolled for 2026/27, increasingly complex and irregular arrangements have been required to sustain delivery.

Teaching arrangements at Dalry Secondary School have been adapted to reflect the very small cohort size, including the use of composite classes spanning multiple year groups. While this approach enables the continued delivery of secondary education within the local area, it presents a number of recognised challenges, including limitations on curriculum breadth, difficulties in providing age and stage appropriate groupings, and reduced opportunities for peer interaction. Such arrangements are not typical of mainstream secondary school practice. In very small cohorts, it has not always been possible to achieve a full breadth of subjects or to avoid situations where pupils are working within extremely static groupings.

To support curriculum delivery, staffing models have been aligned closely to pupil numbers, with a staffing complement to enable continued delivery at a local level. While this approach allows education provision to continue locally, it is not considered to represent a preferred or sustainable long-term model for delivering a full secondary curriculum, particularly within the Broad General Education. Delivering a Senior Phase curriculum (S4) also requires ongoing annual adjustment depending on pupil numbers, staffing availability and subject choice, which creates uncertainty and limits long-term planning, continuity and pupil progression.

The Council has continued to support the school as part of a co-located campus model, with Dalry Nursery, Primary School and Secondary School operating on the same site. Dalry Primary School and Dalry Secondary School are each led by their own specialist Headteacher, reflecting the distinct leadership, curriculum and management requirements of each sector. Dalry Secondary School currently operates within a shared management arrangement with Castle Douglas High School, under a single Headteacher, while an additional Nursery Manager is responsible for early learning and childcare provision.

The co-located model allows for sharing of staff expertise and promotes continuity across stages, including opportunities for secondary staff to contribute to primary learning where appropriate, and for primary staff to support aspects of the Broad General Education. It also supports smoother transition between stages and strengthens relationships across the campus. While this provides strong professional leadership, clear accountability and supports high-quality educational oversight across all stages, it also equates to high management costs for the local authority when considered alongside the small number of pupils on site.

In terms of access and inclusion, school transport has continued to be provided in line with Council policy, ensuring that eligible pupils are supported to attend Dalry Secondary School. However, the ongoing movement of pupils from the catchment area to other secondary schools indicates that the current model is not being widely taken up by families, further contributing to the challenges associated with sustaining viable provision at the school.

Financially, maintaining secondary provision for a very small number of pupils results in a significantly higher cost per pupil than in larger schools. While the Council remains committed to supporting rural education, this level of expenditure presents challenges in terms of achieving best value and the equitable use of resources across the wider school estate.

It is recognised by both the Council and school stakeholders that these measures do not resolve the fundamental challenges associated with maintaining a viable and sustainable model of statutory secondary education at Dalry Secondary School.

On balance, and having considered the available evidence, the Council considers that closure represents the most appropriate response to the reasons for the proposal. It provides a sustainable solution for delivering high quality statutory secondary education, while ensuring that resources are used effectively and in a way that best supports the long-term educational interests of pupils in both the Glenkens and across Dumfries and Galloway.

2.2 Additional Considerations

In addition to the main reasons outlined above, the following considerations have also informed the proposal to discontinue education provision at Dalry Secondary School:

- The educational benefits, as set out in Section 8, for current and future pupils residing within the Dalry Secondary School catchment area.
- Education authorities have a statutory duty under Section 1 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 to secure adequate and efficient provision of school education within their area.
- Local authorities also have a statutory duty, introduced through the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003, to make arrangements to secure Best Value in the delivery of services.
- On 30 November 2023, Elected Members approved the 10 School Model Principles as the basis for developing a sustainable school estate. These principles seek to support high-quality learning environments, ensure the effective use of resources, and balance the educational needs of children and

young people with the views and aspirations of local communities. Further information on the School Model Principles is provided within the Preliminary Requirements Report as seen in the Appendix.

- Dumfries and Galloway Council currently has in excess of 5262 (39%) spaces within its current secondary school estate (as of September census 2025). It must be acknowledged that the costs-per-pupil in under-occupied schools are excessively high and that underutilised schools are expensive to maintain and operate.

3.0 Preliminary Requirements

In accordance with Section 12A of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act, Dumfries and Galloway Council is required to satisfy specific preliminary requirements before proposing the closure of a rural school. These requirements uphold the presumption against closure and ensure that any proposal is only brought forward following careful consideration of alternatives and meaningful engagement with the affected community.

Dalry Secondary School is classified as a remote rural school with an enrolment of only 8 pupils for the 2026/27 academic year. In line with statutory guidance, Dumfries and Galloway Council undertook a structured engagement process to explore the future of the school and assess whether closure was the most appropriate response.

Dumfries and Galloway Council identified the reasons for this proposal, including:

- Dalry Secondary School's pupil roll for academic year 2025/26 was 13, resulting in increasing difficulty in delivering a broad and balanced curriculum (the number of enrolled pupils has since reduced to 8 for session 2026/27).
- The majority of pupils residing within the Dalry Secondary School catchment area choose to attend an alternative secondary school.
- There is no evidence that the number of catchment pupils will rise, with regional demographics showing a continuing decline and an expected 18% reduction in the 0–15 population over the next 10 years.
- Like many rural Councils, Dumfries and Galloway Council has been experiencing increasing challenges in recruiting staff, including at Dalry Secondary School.
- At the Full Council meeting on 28 March 2024, Members agreed that Dalry Secondary School should not be temporarily closed (formally known as mothballed) and that S1–S4 provision should continue until at least the end of 2025.

Through community engagement, including four early engagement meetings, pupil engagement activities and an online stakeholder survey, Dumfries and Galloway Council considered reasonable alternatives to closure and assessed the likely educational benefits, community impact and travel implications of each option. Stakeholders were invited to comment on the alternatives identified by the Council and to suggest any additional reasonable alternatives they wished to be considered.

In line with the requirements of Section 12A of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, only those alternatives to closure that were considered reasonable and

capable of addressing the reasons for the proposal were taken forward for detailed assessment in the report. Each of those options was then evaluated to determine its likely educational impact on current and future pupils.

Continuing to operate Dalry Secondary School with a very small school roll would present ongoing challenges in delivering a broad and balanced curriculum, sustaining subject choice and providing opportunities for age-appropriate peer interaction. Alternative options were considered and appraised against the identified reasons for the proposal. Educational benefits associated with attendance at a larger secondary school were also assessed, including access to a wider curriculum, broader subject choice, increased opportunities for social interaction and a greater range of extracurricular activities. These considerations were evaluated alongside the Council's statutory duties under the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 and the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000.

Dumfries and Galloway Council also considered the likely impact on the wider community. While closure would result in the loss of local secondary education provision within Dalry, respondents highlighted both the importance of the school to the local community and the need to ensure sustainable educational provision in the future. Feedback received through the engagement process was considered as part of the Council's assessment of community impact.

Travel arrangements were reviewed as part of the preliminary requirements process. The potential impact of revised transport arrangements and journey times was assessed for all reasonable alternatives considered. While implementation of the proposal to end S1 to S4 provision would result in some pupils travelling further to access secondary education, these impacts were considered manageable and capable of being mitigated through the provision of school transport in accordance with Dumfries and Galloway Council's School Transport Policy.

Having satisfied the preliminary requirements and assessed all relevant factors, Dumfries and Galloway Council concluded that closure of Dalry Secondary School represented the most appropriate response to the reasons for the proposal. This recommendation was subsequently presented to the Education, Skills and Community Wellbeing Committee on 30 June 2026, where Members agreed to commence the Statutory Consultation process in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

3.1 Alternatives to the Proposal

In accordance with Section 12A(2) of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, an education authority proposing to close a rural school must consider whether there are any reasonable alternatives capable of addressing the reasons for the proposal.

As part of the preliminary requirements process, stakeholders were invited to consider alternative options for the future of Dalry Secondary School through a series of engagement events and an online survey. Five options were initially presented by Council officers for consideration, with a further six suggestions put forward by stakeholders. These included a range of proposals relating to alternative educational

models, management arrangements, specialist provision, vocational learning and community-led approaches.

Following a review of all alternatives initially considered, options were assessed against the reasons for the proposal and the requirements of the Act. Where proposals represented variations or combinations of similar approaches, they were grouped together under the most relevant option. The following were identified as the reasonable alternatives to closure in accordance with the act:

- Status Quo – No change to the current arrangements at Dalry Secondary School.
- Temporary Closure (previously known as 'Mothballing') – Closure for up to three years with the expectation that pupil numbers may increase sufficiently to allow reopening.
- Nursery to S4 Provision – A single management structure responsible for Nursery, Primary and Secondary education at Dalry.

A number of additional stakeholder-generated proposals were also considered. These included alternative management models, specialist educational provision, vocational and post-16 learning opportunities, and community-led education initiatives. However, these options were not considered to represent reasonable alternatives to closure with regard to the act, either because they did not address the underlying reasons for the proposal or would require significant additional changes beyond the scope of the current proposal being considered e.g., proposals to close other schools.

4.0 School Roll/Changing Demographics

Demographic trends and pupil numbers were key considerations in the Preliminary Requirements process, as detailed in Section 3.5 to 3.7 of Appendix 2. These factors have informed Dumfries and Galloway Council's assessment of the long-term sustainability of Dalry Secondary School.

The Council-held data presented below is drawn from the annual pupil census, conducted each September. Historical school roll figures reflect past census data, while future projections are based on NHS birth data and local development forecasts.

These projections are estimates based on the best information available at the time of writing and should not be regarded as definitive future enrolment figures. It is important to note that school rolls may fluctuate throughout the year as families move into or out of the catchment area and as parents/carers exercise their right to submit placing requests. Consequently, the enrolment figures quoted in this, and related reports are accurate only at the time of writing and may change thereafter.

4.1 Demographics of Dumfries and Galloway

Scotland's population is projected to age. The number of people aged 75 and over is projected to increase by 300,700 over the 25 years to mid-2049. Meanwhile, the number of children (aged 0 to 15) and young adults (aged 16 to 29) are both projected to fall over the same period, by 165,900 and 157,500 respectively. These projections

are lower than the last set of projections for Scotland. (Source: National Records of Scotland).

Dumfries and Galloway is also experiencing a significant and sustained fall in pupil numbers. The Council holds electronic records of school rolls back to academic year 1975/76. The total Dumfries and Galloway Secondary School Roll since 1975 is displayed on the graph below:

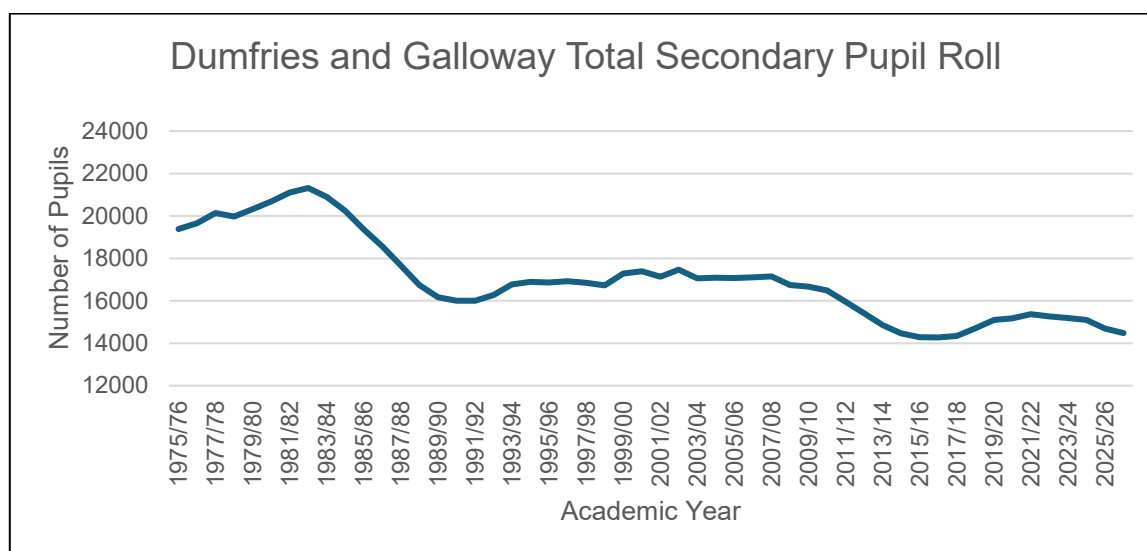


Figure 3: Dumfries and Galloway Total Secondary Pupil Roll

The historical school roll for Dalry Secondary School from 1975 to present is displayed in the graph below:

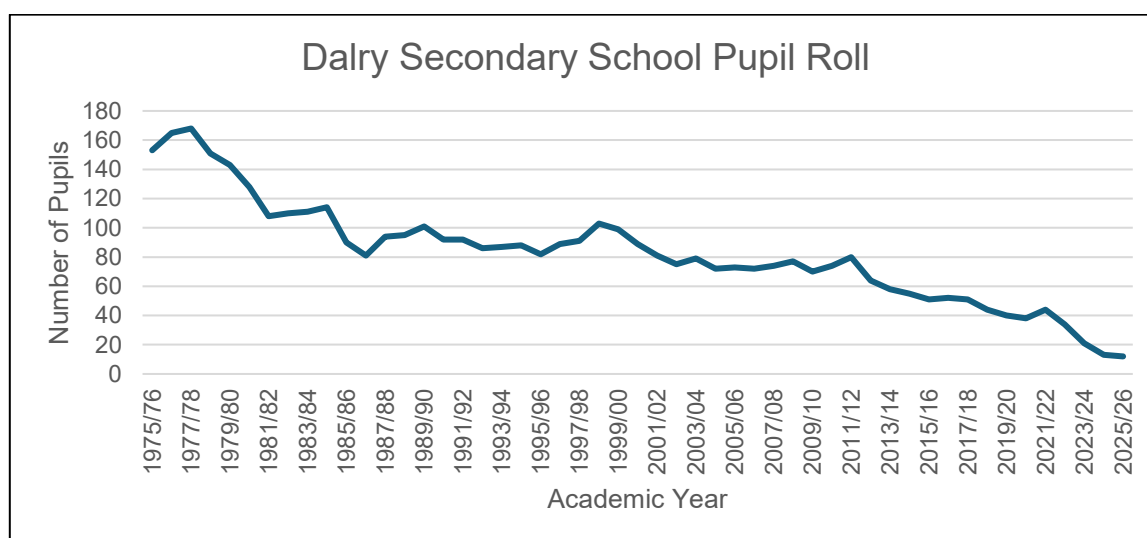


Figure 4: Dalry Secondary Historic Pupil Roll

4.2 School Roll

The pupil roll of Dalry Secondary School for the last 5 years is displayed in the table below:

Academic Year	Total
2021/22	44
2022/23	34
2023/24	21
2024/25	13
2025/26	13
2026/27	8

Figure 5: Dalry Secondary School Pupil Roll

With a final school roll of 12 pupils last session (having fallen from 13 as of April 2026), the school was operating with a utilisation rate of 5% at the end of academic year 2025/26 (school capacity = 248). If all current catchment pupils were to attend Dalry Secondary School, the utilisation of the school would have been 18% (based on 46 pupils in 2025/26).

Both these utilisation rates are significantly below the desired occupancy levels as described in School Model Principle 7 of the Council's Learning Estate Strategy 2026-31 where schools should have an occupancy rate where possible greater than 60% utilisation of the capacity of the school and ideally should be operating at 80%.

4.3 Pupil Enrolments

There are 8 children that are currently enrolled in Dalry Secondary School for the next school year 2026/27 (7 boys and 1 girl). The breakdown of pupils per year group is displayed in the table below:

Year	Total Pupils
S1	3
S2	5
S3	0*
S4	0*

Figure 6: Pupil Enrolments for 2026/27

** Enrolment at both S3 and S4 stages remains open.*

Based on a total school capacity of 248 pupils, the enrolments for 2026/27 represents an operational utilisation rate of approximately 3% and posits Dalry Secondary School as the smallest secondary school in Scotland (Source: Scottish Government).

In considering pupil enrolments, the Council is required under section 1 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 to secure adequate and efficient provision of school education across its area. The current pattern of enrolment, including the potential absence of enrolled pupils in the S3 and S4 stages for the upcoming academic year, highlights the challenges associated with maintaining efficient mainstream secondary education provision on the Dalry Secondary School site.

4.4 Projected Roll

Wider demographic data indicates a continuing decline in the school-aged population across Dumfries and Galloway, with local forecasts suggesting that pupil numbers within the catchment area are unlikely to increase significantly over the medium to long term. The projected roll reflects the low pupil numbers attending the school or living in the catchment area alongside limited catchment uptake and projected demographic trends. Future school rolls will also continue to be influenced by parental choice.

As of the last pupil census (September 2025), there were 44 secondary-aged children residing within the Dalry Secondary School catchment area, of whom 12 were attending Dalry Secondary School at the end of the school year. The census roll of 13 pupils included two pupils attending the school from out-with the catchment area.

The pupil roll forecast for Dalry Secondary School, based on enrolment data as of April 2026, is shown below. An adjusted forecast based on current patterns of catchment uptake has also been included.

Dalry	Year	S1	S2	S3	S4	Total	Adjusted roll
	2025/26	5	1	1	5	12	
	2026/27	3	5	0	0	8	
	2027/28	11	3	5	0	19	8
	2028/29	8	11	3	5	27	12

Figure 7: Dalry Secondary Pupil Roll Forecast

4.5 Catchment Pupils

The following table sets out the forecast number of secondary-aged pupils residing within the current Dalry catchment area over the period 2026/27 to 2032/33.

Academic Year	Secondary Aged Pupils Living In Dalry Catchment Area
2026/27	44
2027/28	44
2028/29	44
2029/30	45
2030/31	36
2031/32	36
2032/33	38

Figure 8: Catchment Pupil Forecast

4.6 Housing Development

The current Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2) for Dumfries and Galloway, published in 2019, provides the planning framework for guiding the future use and development of land in towns, villages, and rural areas. It outlines where development, including regeneration, should and should not occur.

The three main settlements within the Dalry Secondary School catchment are St John's Town of Dalry, Carsphairn and New Galloway, all of which are identified in LDP2 as Local Centres within the Stewartry. The plan identifies housing sites within each settlement and assigns an indicative capacity for future development. However, it is important to note that allocated sites do not represent houses that have already been built; they indicate only that residential development is supported in principle. As a result, actual housing growth is more accurately assessed using build-out rates, which show how many homes have been completed over time.

To inform this assessment, information on recent housing delivery within the Dalry Secondary School catchment has been drawn from Building Standards completion data up to 31 March 2025. Over the last five-year period, a total of five new housing units have been completed across the catchment. This includes one unit in 2021, three units in 2023 (two in St John's Town of Dalry and one in New Galloway), and one unit in 2025, with no completions recorded in 2022 or 2024. None of these completions have taken place on sites allocated for housing within LDP2. At present, site NGA.H2 in New Galloway is the only allocated site with planning permission, where consent has been granted for two units (planning reference 23/0609/FUL). This level of completed and committed housing development indicates limited recent growth within the catchment area.

Dumfries and Galloway Council will support housing development proposals in villages, subject to other policies in the plan, where:

- The number of units proposed relates to the scale and size of the existing village;
- It does not, on its own or in combination with other developments in the housing market area, undermine the overall objective of the spatial strategy;
- It relates to the layout, density, and design of the character and form of the existing village;
- It would not lead to ribbon development; and
- The proposal would not result in the loss of open space identified in the Open Space Supplementary Guidance.

Any future development within the Dalry Secondary School catchment area (as seen in Appendix 2) would need to comply with the criteria outlined above.

5.0 Teacher Numbers

Teacher numbers have remained relatively stable at the national level, with a 1% decrease in the number of teachers across Scotland between 2021 and 2025. In Dumfries and Galloway, however, there has been a 2% reduction in the full-time equivalent (FTE) number of teachers between 2021 and 2025.

The wider challenges facing education provision in Scotland, particularly in relation to demographic change, declining pupil numbers and the sustainability of maintaining school provision, have been highlighted by the Institute for Fiscal Studies:

"Policymakers in Scotland face a number of major challenges. As a result of demographic change, the number of pupils is declining over the long run, which might

make some schools uneconomical in the future. These trends appear even more challenging in rural and island areas. Recently, the Scottish Government has been seeking to maintain teacher numbers. In the long run, however, it might become increasingly expensive, and even unsustainable, to maintain teacher and school numbers as they are. At the same time, policymakers face challenges from rising levels of additional needs, new teachers struggling to find jobs, recruitment shortfalls for secondary teachers, and over-recruitment of primary teachers." (Source: Institute for Fiscal Studies)

If the proposal to close Dalry Secondary School is progressed, there would be no negative impact on staffing levels at Castle Douglas High School and current secondary teachers at Dalry Secondary School would be re-deployed following established Council policies.

6.0 Condition and Suitability of the Building

Information relating to the Extent, Condition, Sufficiency and Suitability of the school estate is reported by Dumfries and Galloway Council to the Scottish Government on an annual basis - this is known as the Core Facts Return. Suitability is a measure of whether a school building and its grounds are fit for the purpose of delivering the education curriculum. The suitability survey of Dalry Secondary School was carried out in March 2021, and the school was graded as B (the school buildings and grounds generally support the delivery of services to children and communities).

Condition is concerned with the current state of the fabric of the school and with safety and security, it is undertaken by external surveyors impartial to Dumfries and Galloway Council and follows scoring methodology defined by Scottish Government for all schools. Dalry Secondary School was assessed in April 2020 and the overall condition rating for the property was B - Satisfactory (performing adequately but showing minor deterioration) (Scottish Government).

7.0 Factors for Rural School Closures

The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 makes special provisions for rural schools, establishing a procedural presumption against closure. This requires education authorities to follow a more detailed set of procedures when formulating, consulting on, and deciding whether to implement a rural school closure proposal.

Dalry Secondary School is classified as a remote rural school. Under the terms of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, Dumfries and Galloway Council is required to assess the likely effects of closure in relation to the following three statutory factors:

- The likely educational benefits;
- The likely effect on the local community (assessed in accordance with Section 12(4)); and
- The likely effects of different travel arrangements (assessed in accordance with Section 12(5)).

These factors are addressed in further detail in Sections 8 to 10 of this Proposal Paper.

8.0 Educational Benefits Statement

8.1 Assessment of likely educational benefits for pupils

Should this proposal be implemented, the Council believes that there will be considerable educational benefits for pupils living in the Dalry Secondary School catchment area. These centre around:

- Learning and teaching;
- Educational outcomes;
- Experiences and opportunities; and
- The environment for learning.

Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) recognises the unique communities and contexts in which all our schools sit. It recognises the professionalism of Headteachers and their teams and allows them the flexibility to design a coherent curriculum that develops the knowledge, skills and attributes that their young people need to adapt, think critically and flourish in an ever-changing global society. Individual Headteachers and schools are empowered to design and provide an enriched curriculum that is flexible, adaptable and responsive to the diverse needs of individual learners and one which reflects the uniqueness of their local community and their context.

Dalry Secondary School is a remote rural school (Source: Scottish Government). There are two catchment primary schools, Dalry Primary School and Kells Primary School. Dalry Primary School is co-located on the same campus as Dalry Secondary School, whilst Kells Primary School is 3.2 miles away (Source: Google Maps). At the end of P7, children are typically expected to transition to their catchment secondary school. However, Dumfries and Galloway Council must tell parents of their right to choose a different school, and the council has a duty to grant such a request wherever possible. (Source: Scottish Government). Castle Douglas High School is 16.9 miles away from Dalry Secondary School, with the next nearest secondary schools in Dumfries and Galloway being Wallace Hall Academy located 21 miles away, and Kirkcudbright Academy located 24 miles away (Source: Google Maps).

Since 2016, Dalry Secondary School has had a shared management arrangement with Castle Douglas High School. The Headteacher and 3FTE (Full Time Equivalent) Depute Headteachers lead and manage both schools, with one Depute Headteacher designated as the lead for Dalry Secondary School. S4 pupils who wish to continue their post 16 education routinely transfer to Castle Douglas High School, their partnership school.

Children from the Dalry Secondary School catchment area, attending Castle Douglas High School benefit from a curriculum design which supports their rural location and the skills and attributes to meet their individual needs and rural context. Under their partnership Headteacher, both schools work together on improvement priorities, and the young people are supported to transition to the partnership High School for post 16 education.

Castle Douglas High School resides in the town of Castle Douglas. The campus incorporates its own nurture and support base and will have a designated learning support base with capital investment programmed for the future. The secondary school has a Headteacher supported by a leadership team of Depute Headteachers, Principal Teachers and School Support Manager. They are well placed to ensure pace, challenge and progression through a consistent, well-planned curriculum and approach to learning and teaching. The cross-sectoral working of the Castle Douglas and Glenkens cluster supports the learning of all children and young people, and the curriculum is responsive to their geographical, cultural and social contexts.

Castle Douglas High School was inspected by HMIE, and the report was published in March 2019. Dalry Secondary School was subsequently inspected a year later, and the report was published in March 2020. The gradings (on a 6 point scale, where 6 is 'excellent' and 1 is 'unsatisfactory') were as follows:

	QI 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	QI 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement
Castle Douglas High School	4 - 'good'	4 - 'good'
Dalry Secondary School	4 - 'good'	3 - 'satisfactory'

Figure 9: Castle Douglas High School HMIE Gradings (2020)

Pupils from Dalry Secondary School who join Castle Douglas High School, their partnership school, in S5 or, by parental choice, at any point from S1, are benefitting from learning with and alongside a greater number of peers of the same age and stage as themselves. These larger numbers allow pupils to benefit from increased friendship groups and to develop their social skills through building relationships.

These relationships help them to become 'Confident Individuals' and Responsible Citizens' by allowing them to overcome challenges and exercise responsibilities as a member of a larger social group, within a supportive educational environment. They can work as part of a team, take part in team activities, exercise their responsibilities and have their voice heard on a range of school-based committees. Castle Douglas High School currently holds a Bronze award for UNICEF UK Rights Respecting Schools, as does Dalry Secondary School.

8.2 Learning and Teaching

The following focuses on learning and teaching and the curriculum at Castle Douglas High School. Children from the Dalry Secondary School catchment area currently attend both Dalry Secondary School and Castle Douglas High School through parental choice. Castle Douglas High School would be the future receiving school for pupils currently living within the Dalry Secondary School catchment area.

The curriculum at Castle Douglas High School includes a broad range of planned experiences that allow all young people to develop the knowledge, skills and attributes

to become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

In Castle Douglas High School, young people are encouraged to lead their learning and be active participants who are highly motivated, enthusiastic and engaged in their learning and the life of the school. The views of young people are actively sought and acted upon. Pupils play a genuine part in school improvement and change. Learning in the BGE is planned within the four contexts of learning - curriculum areas and subjects, interdisciplinary learning, the ethos and life of the school and opportunities for personal achievement. This planning supports young people to achieve their full potential, whilst providing them with a wide range of experiences and opportunities.

Within Castle Douglas High School children benefit from being part of a social context in which they can build relationships, develop resilience and skills for life, learning and work. They can collaborate with a larger peer group in a variety of situations and learning activities, which allow them to exercise responsibility. They are provided with opportunities to work as part of a team and to represent their school at local, regional and national events.

Pupils are taught in their year groups at Castle Douglas High School and are divided between practical and non-practical class groups. In S3, pupils are able to personalise their curriculum through a guided and supported approach, ensuring they complete up to at least third level across all curriculum areas. In S4, S5 and S6, pupils have the opportunity to choose from over one hundred option choices. Alongside the traditional offering of National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses, young people also have access to College Academy, SRUC courses and virtual Advanced Highers. Castle Douglas High School works innovatively with partners to provide a range of courses that are appropriate to the rural community. Due to the very small numbers at Dalry Secondary School, all pupils are often taught in one composite BGE group.

The principles of Curriculum for Excellence acknowledge the unique contexts in which all our schools sit and allows Headteachers and their teams the flexibility to design a coherent curriculum that meets the needs of their learners and communities. Headteachers and their teams are empowered to exercise their professionalism and autonomy to create an innovative curriculum within the broader guidance of CfE. The Headteacher of Castle Douglas High School and Dalry Secondary School supports their staff through an annual Professional Review and Development process. This in turn leads into professional development opportunities which support effective school improvement and pupil outcomes.

The school teams work together to support and challenge their professional thinking. Both secondary schools sit within the Castle Douglas and Glenkens cluster, alongside eight primary schools. The cluster arrangements provide an opportunity for staff to plan and work together on improvement priorities with stage partners, across stages and indeed sectors. They support effective moderation and positively affect learning and teaching, effective transitions, pupil progression pathways and positive, sustained destinations.

Castle Douglas High School has achieved their Bronze Rights Respecting Schools accreditation and are working towards their Silver award. They have committed to a

Children's Rights based approach and engaged all stakeholders in planning what this will look like within their context. The focus of bronze is to develop children's understanding of their rights and to plan the journey towards silver accreditation.

Castle Douglas High School made pupil voice a key priority, the aim of which is to ensure that pupils feel empowered to shape sustained change and improvement in their school. In 2025/2026 the joint school improvement plan for Castle Douglas and Dalry focused on improving the quality of teaching, planning, tracking and monitoring; attendance and a positive school culture; and raising attainment and achievement. Throughout the improvement plan, the voice of children, young people and the school community is sought and acted upon.

For session 2026/2027, the key improvement priorities for Castle Douglas High School and Dalry Secondary School are improving learning experiences to ensure they are appropriately challenging, engaging and well-matched to learners' needs; improving health and wellbeing to create an environment where young people are more able to engage in learning, build resilience and achieve success; and raising attainment to improve outcomes and remove barriers. As a partnership, the staff from the two schools work closely together to achieve these. This close working supports the transition of pupils from Dalry Secondary School to Castle Douglas High School at the end of S4. Pupils have the support of a management team they already know well and therefore have the support of trusted adults in both schools.

Castle Douglas High School will also benefit from future investment in a dedicated Learning Centre and autism provision on the school campus. The planned provision will provide enhanced learning environments and specialist support for children and young people with additional support needs, further strengthening the school's inclusive provision and its capacity to meet a diverse range of learner needs within their local community, including those living in the Dalry Secondary School catchment area. Young people requiring additional support for learning, including those with autism, would benefit from access to a broader range of specialist staff, support services and facilities than can reasonably be provided within a very small secondary school setting.

8.3 Educational Outcomes

Teachers at Castle Douglas High School plan, assess and track pupil progress to ensure that every child has the challenge, support and opportunity to reach their full potential. Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) in both schools is a key priority for the whole staff team. Professional discussions, classroom observations, peer collaboration, learning conversations, moderation and careful tracking of attainment progress as well as wellbeing and wider achievement ensures appropriate interventions and support can be harnessed when a child needs it. This support, alongside close working with parents and carers, helps to ensure the needs of every young person are met.

At the end of S3, pupils are assessed in Reading, Writing, Listening and Talking and Numeracy. Across Scotland, approximately 90% of pupils are expected to achieve level 3, and approximately 68% of pupils are expected to achieve level 4. The data for the past three years at Castle Douglas High School is shown below. Please note that

no data is available for Dalry Secondary School due to the very small number of pupils in the S3 year group.

Level 3	2024	2025	2026
Reading	77%	91%	91%
Writing	82%	92%	92%
Listening and Talking	65%	90%	90%
Numeracy	94%	88%	93%

Level 4	2024	2025	2026
Reading	45%	54%	78%
Writing	36%	57%	78%
Listening and Talking	30%	52%	78%
Numeracy	64%	72%	80%

Figure 10: Castle Douglas Level 3 and Level 4 Attainment Data

In S4, S5 and S6, young people have the opportunity to complete national qualifications. There is no separate data for S4 for Dalry Secondary School due to the very small number of pupils, however, the S5 and S6 data includes young people from Dalry Secondary School who transfer to Castle Douglas High School at the end of S4 (or before). In S4, 66% of young people achieved 5 or more level 4 qualifications, whilst 37% achieved 5 or more level 5 qualifications. In S5, over 40% of young people achieved at least 3 Higher (level 6) qualifications. In S6, 33% of pupils achieved at least 3 Advanced Higher (level 7) qualifications. The attainment outcomes demonstrate the hard work and commitment of the whole school community to achieve positive outcomes for young people. Included within this data are hugely positive individual stories.

Rights Respecting Schools and Pupil Voice have been a key focus at Castle Douglas High School. This focused approach has supported the development of positive relationships across the whole school community. The larger number of staff and parent/carer body, alongside a greater number of community partners, naturally gives the school an increased breadth of talent, interests and opportunities to harness and share. This applies across the school in terms of the wider curriculum opportunities afforded to young people, as well as the enhancement by staff individual expertise, such as playing for a wide variety of school sports teams competing at local, regional and national level.

For example, young people from the school compete in the UCI World Pump Track Championship, Dumfries and Galloway Netball, Football and Rugby at all levels for boys and girls, regional athletics, Judo, Highland dancing, Ice Hockey, Disability Sport Athletics and Gymnastics. Pupils participate in STEM (Science, technology, engineering and maths) challenges, trips and visits and Expressive Arts, where many pupils across the school can participate in school shows and group musical performances. For example, some pupils performed on stage at Youth Beatz and the Moniaive Festival, and many pupils were involved in the highly successful school shows such as Matilda and School of Rock. Pupils represent the school at the Scottish Young Musicians competition. Young people also enjoy the opportunity to engage with

the Youth Philanthropy Initiative where they can work as part of a team to win £3000 for their chosen local charity.

Examples of further extra-curricular activities at Castle Douglas High School include:

- Welcoming Hands BSL group
- The D Word Programme
- Mentors in Violence Prevention
- Events band (for musicians of all abilities)
- Junior and Senior Christmas Dances
- Burns Night celebrations
- Halloween Disco
- Music Makers
- Think Dairy event
- Study support sessions for young people taking exams
- Ski and cultural exchange trips in Europe

Examples of further lunchtime activities for pupils at Castle Douglas High School include:

- Games Club
- Guitar Club
- Music Tech / song writing club
- Netball
- Percussion group
- Dungeons and Dragons club
- Model rocket club
- Keyboard club
- Chess club
- Orchestra
- Racket sports club
- Football
- Library activities

8.4 Learner Experiences – Broadening the Range of Opportunities

Young people at Castle Douglas High School are afforded a wide range of planned activities and experiences which allow them to develop their knowledge, skills, understanding and attributes. These in turn, support their physical, social and emotional wellbeing for both now and in the future. This, combined with strong community links, allows young people to develop skills for learning life and work and supports positive learning pathways.

Work is carefully planned across all sectors through the Castle Douglas and Dalry Cluster to ensure smooth curricular and pastoral transition. Cluster working has afforded opportunities for clear transition planning and events, which in turn provides further opportunities for pupils to make new connections and to ensure appropriate support at each step of their educational journey. Both Dalry Secondary School and

Castle Douglas High School are in the same cluster, so transition opportunities between the primary and associated secondary schools are already well established. Young people at Castle Douglas High School are provided with a variety of experiences that develop their self-management, social intelligence and innovation skills.

Across the school, young people are becoming successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens. They are engaged in their learning and contribute well during lessons and wider school activities. Positive relationships at all levels are evident within the ethos of the school. Children enjoy good relationships with their peers and feel supported when things are not going well. Pupils feel that they are listened to and that they have an active voice that can enact change.

Castle Douglas High School works closely with Skills Development Scotland and Developing the Young Workforce to ensure all young people receive appropriate help, advice and support when they are planning their next steps into work, college, university or training.

Positive destinations in 2025 for Castle Douglas High school pupils included:

- 4th year – 14% left for employment (typically rural), 7% college and 75% stayed on.
- 5th year – 20% left for employment, 20% left for higher / further education and 54% stayed on
- 6th year – 16% left for employment, 68% left for further or higher education

The school is proud of its rural context and community. Young people in the senior phase also have the opportunity to study the following courses as part of their curriculum:

- Modern Agriculture
- Rural Skills
- Environmental Science (including Peatlands)
- Animal Care and Veterinary Terminology (with SRUC)

8.5 Environment for Learning

Castle Douglas High School is situated in the town of Castle Douglas. The school was built in 1958, with various additions and modifications over the years. It provides a well-equipped environment for children and young people to learn. The school has its own Multi Use Games Arena (MUGA), as well as a range of specialist facilities including teaching kitchens for Home Economics, science laboratories, technical workshops, music rooms, a library and sports facilities. The building also includes facilities for pupils and visitors with additional access needs. In addition, Castle Douglas High School is scheduled to benefit from future investment in a dedicated learning support base, which would further enhance the school's inclusive learning environment and its capacity to meet a diverse range of additional support needs, including those children living in the current Dalry Secondary catchment area.

Young people attending Castle Douglas High School from the Dalry Secondary School catchment area can maintain links with children who live in their own village and surrounding area, whilst also developing friendships across the wider Castle Douglas and Dalry catchments. These relationships extend throughout and beyond the school day through involvement in lunchtime activities, after-school clubs and community events across the Stewartry and beyond. The positive relationships developed can support and enhance both learning and wellbeing.

Were the closure of Dalry Secondary School to be implemented, there would be a wide range of educational benefits for pupils living in the current Dalry Secondary School catchment area, as identified above. These benefits would include access to a broader curriculum, a wider range of high-quality learning experiences, enhanced opportunities for social interaction and collaboration with peers, and greater opportunities to develop self-management, social intelligence and innovation skills.

Pupils would benefit from a learning environment that offers a broad range of specialist facilities, extensive extra-curricular opportunities and potential future investment in additional support provision. Castle Douglas High School would also provide opportunities to participate in a wider range of pupil groups, committees and community partnerships, engage in interdisciplinary learning across stages, and access a greater breadth of subject choices and pathways in the Senior Phase.

8.6 Assessment of likely educational benefits on other users of the school's facilities - Implications for staff

Should this proposal be implemented the Council does not envisage any adverse effects from the proposal in respect of staffing. Should any arise, these would be dealt with in line with Council policy.

The benefits for staff from Dalry Secondary School would be the inclusion as part of a larger team. They would have colleagues to work alongside share professional ideas, support and challenge. Effective collaboration of staff can support moderation, better meet pupil needs, enhance professional development and improve learning and teaching. Staff can feel more supported when they are working as part of a larger team and professional learning community within the same school.

No significant educational impacts are anticipated for other current users of school facilities as a result of the proposal. The future use of school accommodation would be considered separately by the Council and is addressed further within the Community Impact section of this Proposal Paper.

8.7 Educational benefits for any future children who would be likely to enrol at Dalry Secondary School (but for implementation)

Children who may live in the Dalry Secondary School catchment area in the future will benefit from the wide range of educational experiences and opportunities outlined above. Through the proposal, the roll of Castle Douglas High School could increase, depending on parental choice of receiving school. This in turn would support a wider range of social interactions, extra-curricular activities, clubs and committees, and greater diversity in its pupil body. At present, Castle Douglas High School can easily

accommodate all secondary aged children in the current Dalry Secondary School catchment area if they all chose to attend.

Pupils who would have otherwise attended Dalry Secondary School, would benefit from the improved educational experience as outlined above. They would also benefit from daily interactions with a large number of peers and wider range of shared experiences and opportunities for friendships. This in turn will support a successful transition into positive and sustained destinations, such as employment, training, college or university, and provide greater opportunity to develop and sustain friendships.

8.8 Educational benefits likely for pupils in any other school in the Local Authority.

The Council considers that the principal educational benefits associated with this proposal relate to current and future pupils residing within the Dalry Secondary School catchment area, as outlined in the previous sections. The proposal is not expected to result in any significant educational disbenefits for pupils attending other schools within Dumfries and Galloway.

Castle Douglas High School has sufficient capacity within its existing accommodation and staffing structure to accommodate all pupils from the Dalry Secondary School catchment area. As a result, the proposal is not expected to adversely affect the learning experience, curriculum offer or access to opportunities for pupils currently attending Castle Douglas High School.

More broadly, the proposal would support the Council's ongoing responsibility to secure adequate and efficient provision of school education across Dumfries and Galloway. While any wider educational benefits for pupils attending other schools would be indirect in nature, the proposal would contribute towards the sustainable use of educational resources across the school estate and support the Council's ability to continue investing in learning and teaching, school facilities and support services across the region.

8.9 Placing Requests

In line with the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, the proposal for the closure of Dalry Secondary School would not affect the rights of parents and carers to request that their child attend a school of their choice, rather than the designated school in whose catchment area the family lives.

8.10 Consideration of how to minimise or avoid any adverse effects that may arise from the implementation of this proposal

Throughout the preliminary requirements phase, one of the main concerns arising from parents and carers was the distance pupils from Dalry Secondary School catchment area would have to travel to attend school in Castle Douglas. The travel distance from Dalry Secondary School to Castle Douglas High School is 16.9 miles via the A713 (Source: Google Maps). S5 and S6 pupils who attend Castle Douglas High School and live within the Dalry Secondary School catchment area already travel this route

each day, as do a significant proportion of S1 to S4 pupils who choose to attend Castle Douglas High School through parental choice. While implementation of the proposal would result in longer journeys for some pupils currently attending Dalry Secondary School, school transport would continue to be provided in accordance with Council policy.

8.11 Educational Benefits Summary

In considering the likely educational benefits of the proposal, the Council has taken account of the projected roll of Dalry Secondary School, which is confirmed to be 8 pupils for session 2026/2027, with no enrolled pupils in S3 and S4 at the time of writing. Projections indicate that, whilst secondary-aged children will continue to reside within the catchment area, there is limited evidence that the number of pupils attending Dalry Secondary School would increase significantly over the next three years.

The Council recognises that implementation of the proposal would result in increased travel times for some pupils currently attending Dalry Secondary School. However, the majority of secondary-aged pupils residing within the Dalry Secondary School catchment area already attend Castle Douglas High School, or other secondary schools located further away, through parental choice and undertake these journeys each school day. Within this context, attendance at Castle Douglas High School would provide young people with access to a broader curriculum, larger peer groups, enhanced opportunities for collaborative learning and social interaction, and a wider range of experiences and opportunities that support learning, achievement and wellbeing.

The Council therefore considers that the proposal would result in overall positive educational benefits for current and future pupils residing within the Dalry Secondary School catchment area. Should the proposal be implemented, the Council would monitor the educational outcomes of pupils transferring to Castle Douglas High School through existing quality assurance arrangements, including attainment, achievement, attendance, wellbeing and pupil voice measures.

9.0 Community Impact

The potential closure of Dalry Secondary School would result in the permanent removal of local secondary educational provision from the town, with pupils transferring to Castle Douglas High School. While the school has historically served as a local facility for secondary education, demographic trends and parental choice have led to a significant decline in its utilisation, making continued operation increasingly unsustainable.

Community engagement during the preliminary requirements phase revealed a wide range of views regarding the potential impact of closure on the local community. While some stakeholders considered that closure would provide access to broader educational opportunities within a larger secondary school in Castle Douglas, many expressed concern about the loss of local secondary education provision and the potential implications for the long-term sustainability of the area (see Appendix 2).

A recurring theme throughout both the in-person engagement events and online survey during the preliminary requirements phase was the importance of Dalry Secondary School as a community asset. Stakeholders frequently described the school as an important focal point for community life, supporting local identity, social connections and the attractiveness of the area for families. Concerns were raised that the loss of local secondary provision could influence decisions about where families choose to live and work and could contribute to wider challenges associated with population retention in rural communities.

At the same time, community feedback recognised the challenges facing the school, including declining pupil numbers, limited catchment uptake and the difficulties associated with maintaining a broad and balanced curriculum for a very small number of pupils. Some respondents considered that these factors presented significant concerns regarding the long-term sustainability of the current model of provision.

Dalry Secondary School serves a large and geographically dispersed rural catchment encompassing a number of communities including but not limited to Balmaclellan, Carsphairn and New Galloway. The school therefore plays a role not only as an educational establishment but also as part of the wider network of public services and community infrastructure within the area. The potential loss of local secondary education provision may have negative implications for community confidence, perceptions of service sustainability and the future attractiveness of the area for families with school-aged children.

However, it is important to note that Dalry Nursery and Dalry Primary School would continue to operate on the existing site should this proposal be implemented. As a result, educational provision would continue to be available locally for children from nursery age through to Primary 7. The school site would also retain both its educational role within the community and its function as a physical focal point for the town. Currently, the primary and secondary schools share facilities, specifically the dining hall and kitchen, which are located within the secondary section of the building.

The Council also recognises that the future use of the secondary school accommodation would be an important consideration should the proposal be implemented. The closure of secondary education provision would provide greater certainty regarding the future of the building and could create opportunities for alternative community use, subject to any future Council requirements and the provisions of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

Overall, the impact on the community is likely to be mixed. While closure would result in the loss of local secondary education provision and may have a negative effect on community perceptions of long-term sustainability, educational provision would continue through Dalry Nursery and Primary School, and opportunities may arise to explore alternative uses of the secondary school accommodation for the benefit of the wider community.

10.0 The likely effect caused by any different travel arrangements

If Dalry Secondary School is formally closed and its catchment area permanently realigned to Castle Douglas High School, there will be significant changes to travel

arrangements for some pupils residing within the catchment area currently attending the school. Castle Douglas High School is located approximately 16.9 miles from Dalry Secondary School and, under Dumfries and Galloway Council's School Transport Policy, most, if not all, pupils living in the Dalry catchment area would be eligible for free school transport to Castle Douglas High School, including those who already choose to attend there through parental choice.

Journey times would vary across the catchment area due to the rural geography and the dispersed nature of its population. While pupils residing in and around Dalry village would travel approximately 16.9 miles to Castle Douglas High School, pupils living in the more northerly parts of the catchment area, including Carsphairn and surrounding rural communities, would be required to travel greater distances. Actual journey times would be influenced by factors such as individual pick-up locations, transport routing, road conditions and seasonal weather. Consequently, pupils living to the north of Dalry would experience a notable increase in daily travel time compared with current arrangements.

It should also be recognised that the majority of secondary-aged pupils residing within the Dalry Secondary School catchment area already attend Castle Douglas High School, or other secondary schools located further from their home, through parental choice. In this context, whilst implementation of the proposal would result in increased journey times for pupils currently attending Dalry Secondary School, many catchment pupils already experience similar or longer journeys as part of their existing travel arrangements.

For families without access to private transport, reliance on Council-provided school transport would become an increasingly important part of daily routines. There may, however, be opportunities to review and optimise transport routes and vehicle occupancy to improve efficiency, ensure safe travel arrangements and manage costs. While implementation of the proposal could result in an increase in transport expenditure due to longer journeys, dispersed pupils and increased transport demand, these costs may be partially offset through route optimisation and by the savings associated with the closure of Dalry Secondary School.

Overall, while closure of Dalry Secondary School would result in increased travel distances and journey times for some pupils, these would require careful management to remain within the travel thresholds set out in the Council's School Model Principles, as informed through public consultation, which identify 45 minutes as the maximum ordinarily acceptable one-way journey time for most secondary-aged pupils. The provision of school transport would help mitigate barriers to accessing education and support continuity of learning at Castle Douglas High School. It is nevertheless recognised that some pupils currently attending Dalry Secondary School would experience longer daily journeys than at present.

11.0 Financial Impact

In line with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, a financial analysis is provided in Appendix 1, outlining the estimated costs associated with maintaining Dalry Secondary School as a fully operational and occupied facility. These figures are based on the 2024/25 financial year.

Column 2 of Table 1 at Appendix 1 shows the projected annual running costs of Dalry Secondary School (based on actual spend in 2024/25) whilst Column 3 shows the additional impact on Castle Douglas High School as the receiving school. Column 3 is intentionally blank because the proposed receiving school (Castle Douglas High School) will be able to accommodate the additional pupils from Dalry Secondary School were it to close within its existing staffing allocation, and no additional teaching FTE or associated staffing costs were projected at the receiving school.

In the 2024/25 academic year, the cost per pupil at Dalry Secondary School is estimated to be £42,604.37, based on a school roll of 13 pupils. This figure is based on an indicative operational cost for that year of £553,857, reflecting the financial implications to the Council of maintaining a secondary school with very low pupil numbers.

There are no figures included for column 3 of Table 1 as the receiving school does not require any additional staffing or accommodation for the incoming pupils from Dalry Secondary School can be accommodated in existing capacity of the school. Any staffing surplus has been accounted for, with staff redeployed in line with Dumfries and Galloway Council's policies and included as part of the annual workforce planning exercise. Property insurance and rates are also set at zero throughout the financial template, as all Dumfries and Galloway Council properties are insured under a collective policy.

The total rateable value for Dalry Primary School, Nursery and Dalry Secondary School is £42,000. Based on an assessment undertaken by the Assessor for Dumfries and Galloway Council, the rateable value has been apportioned between the two elements of the building, with £14,217 attributed to the primary school and £27,783 attributed to the secondary school. This apportionment does not affect the current rates; reassessment is due on the whole building on the 1 April 2029 at which point the building will be revalued.

Transport costs include pupils attending both Dalry Secondary School and Dalry Primary School and cannot be easily separated, as pupils from both establishments currently share transport arrangements. Cleaning costs have been disaggregated and the figure shown is an approximate value for the secondary school alone. Staff travel costs are also included and primarily relate to travel undertaken by staff based at Castle Douglas High School to support the delivery of education at Dalry Secondary School.

As highlighted in Section 10, implementation of the proposal may result in an increase in transport costs, as all pupils entitled to school transport under Dumfries and Galloway Council's School Transport Policy would continue to require provision. However, any increase in transport expenditure may be partially offset through the optimisation of existing transport routes and vehicle occupancy, together with the savings associated with no longer operating and maintaining secondary education provision at Dalry Secondary School. Overall, the financial impact of transport is expected to be considered alongside the wider operational savings arising from the proposal.

The financial impact of closing Dalry Secondary School has been assessed across key areas including operational costs, staffing, transport, and funding. Analysis of 2024/25 data highlights high per-pupil costs due to a declining school roll, indicating that continued operation is not financially sustainable. While some costs, particularly transport and cleaning costs cannot be fully realised as they are estimates based on the spend across both the primary and secondary school, early evidence suggests that closure will result in net savings to the Council. The estimated annual recurring saving is £423,483.00 (estimated annual recurring savings minus GAE reduction) if the school were to close based on 2024/25 operational costs. Dumfries and Galloway Council may see a small reduction in Grant Aided Expenditure (GAE).

Overall, the proposal supports a cost-effective and sustainable approach to the delivery of education, consistent with Dumfries and Galloway Council policy and the Council's statutory duty under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003 to secure Best Value in the delivery of services.

12.0 Impact Assessment

As part of the preliminary requirements process, summary impact assessments were undertaken for all reasonable alternatives considered, including closure. These assessments considered the potential impacts of each option across a range of areas, including protected characteristics, children's rights, health and wellbeing, poverty, economic and social sustainability, and environmental sustainability. The summary impact assessments are included within the Preliminary Requirements Report at Appendix 2.

In addition, Dumfries and Galloway Council will undertake an impact assessment and Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) during the consultation process in respect of this proposal, to ensure that due regard is given to whether the decisions we make are likely to impact on different groups of people across the region. The result of the impact assessment will highlight any barriers or discrimination that might affect the communities of Dalry Secondary School, ensuring we meet our statutory duties under the Equality Act including the Fairer Scotland Duty.

13.0 Preliminary Requirements

Prior to formulating a rural school closure proposal under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, the Education Authority must satisfy the preliminary requirements set out in Section 12A of the 2010 Act. Dumfries and Galloway Council has previously identified its reasons for formulating a possible proposal, has considered whether there were any reasonable alternatives to the possible proposal as a response to those reasons, and has assessed each of the options in accordance with Section 12A(2)(c) of the 2010 Act. After considering a paper addressing these preliminary requirements on 30 June 2026, Members of the Education, Skills and Community Wellbeing Committee agreed to the commencement of the Statutory Consultation process for the closure of Dalry Secondary School in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

No decision will be taken by Dumfries and Galloway Council on the proposal contained in this paper until after the end of the consultation period. Education, Skills and

Community Wellbeing Committee will then receive the consultation report and will reach a view on the proposal.

14.0 Consultees

A summary of this document will be issued free of charge to all of the consultees listed at page 3 of this document whose email address is available and will also be published on Dumfries and Galloway Council's website: www.dumgal.gov.uk/consultations (Appendix 3).

15.0 Consultation Period

As part of the consultation process, the Local Authority must publish the proposal paper, advertise it, and notify Education Scotland and all relevant consultees, as prescribed by Schedule 2 of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended, inviting them to make representations on the proposal. The consultation period will be a minimum of six weeks to include at least 30 days of term time and will run from 27 August 2026 to 9 October 2026 (by 5 PM).

16.0 Public Meeting

A public meeting will be held on Monday 7 September 2026 at Dalry Secondary School. Any person wishing to attend and participate in the meeting is welcome to do so. The meeting will be convened by the Education, Skills and Community Wellbeing Directorate. Council Officers will outline the reasons for the proposal and provide an opportunity for consultees and other stakeholders to ask questions and make representations on the proposal.

A record of the meeting will be taken and the views expressed will be summarised, shared and considered as part of the statutory consultation process.

17.0 Responses to the Proposal

Representations may be made on the following;

- the proposal;
- reasonable alternatives to the proposal as listed above in section 3.1; and
- suggestions of other reasonable alternatives not listed above that address the reasons for the proposal.

Dumfries and Galloway Council will consider all representations, and these should be received no later than 5.00pm on Friday 9 October 2026 by one of the methods detailed below:

Online Survey: <https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/kWgvbcLg1d>



Letter to: Statutory Consultation – Dalry Secondary School
Dumfries and Galloway Council
Militia House
109/111 English Street
DG1 2HR

Email to: statutoryconsultation@dumgal.gov.uk

Respondents are required to clearly state the capacity in which they are expressing their views and agree to their name and any statement/comments being published as part of the Statutory Consultation process and published in the final Consultation Report (all other personal information will be redacted).

18.0 Meetings with Pupils and Staff

Council Officers will arrange to discuss proposals with pupils who are considered to be of suitable age and maturity and staff in the affected schools. A record of questions, responses, and views will be taken, and this will be published in the Consultation Report.

19.0 Involvement of Education Scotland (HMIE)

Dumfries and Galloway Council will provide Education Scotland with the Proposal Paper, written representations received during the consultation process, a summary of oral representations made at the public meeting, and any other relevant documentation. Education Scotland will prepare a report on the proposal within a maximum period of three weeks, commencing from the date on which it receives the Proposal Paper and all other relevant consultation documentation.

Education Scotland's (HMIE) report will consider the educational aspects of the proposal, including the Educational Benefits Statement, representations received by the Council, and any relevant representations made directly to Education Scotland. Education Scotland will then prepare a report on the educational merits of the proposal and submit this to Dumfries and Galloway Council.

20.0 Consultation Report and Time for Further Consideration

After receiving Education Scotland's report, Dumfries and Galloway Council will then prepare and publish a Consultation Report in accordance with Sections 9, 10, and 13 of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2011. Following consideration of the Consultation Report and Education Scotland's report, Members of the Education, Skills and Community Wellbeing Committee will make a decision at a future Committee meeting on whether to implement the proposal. The decision will be made a minimum of three weeks after publication of the Consultation Report.

If the Education, Skills and Community Wellbeing Committee makes a closure decision, Dumfries and Galloway Council shall notify the Scottish Ministers within six working days of that decision and publish the fact that the Scottish Ministers have been notified, and that representations can be made to them. The Education Authority would also be required to publish a notice on its website of the decision to implement the proposal and explain why it is satisfied that closure is the most appropriate response to the reasons for formulating the proposal.

21.0 Explanation of Approach

The proposal is advanced within the context of all applicable legislation. Amongst other duties, education authorities are required to secure adequate and efficient provision of school education (Section 1 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980) and to endeavour to secure improvement in the quality of school education in schools that are managed by them (Section 3 of the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000).

22.0 Designation of Rural Schools

Dalry Secondary School is classified as a 'remote rural' school within the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, (Source: Scottish Government). In formulating this proposal, Dumfries and Galloway Council has had regard to the provisions of the Act, including the additional requirements applicable to rural school closure proposals. These considerations are detailed within the Preliminary Requirements Report (Appendix 2) and include an assessment of projected future school rolls, reasonable alternatives to closure, the likely effect of closure on the local community, and the likely effects of any different travel arrangements.

23.0 Call-in of Closure Proposal and Determination of Case

The Scottish Ministers will have a maximum of eight weeks to call in any closure decision made by Dumfries and Galloway Council in certain circumstances. This eight-week timeframe would consist of an initial three weeks from the date of decision, during which representations can be made to the ministers, and a further five weeks for the Scottish Ministers to decide whether to issue a call in notice. During this period the Education Authority will not proceed to implement any closure decision.

If the Scottish Ministers call in a closure proposal, it is referred to the Convener of the School Closure Review Panels. The Convener must constitute a School Closure Review Panel within seven days for determination. The Education Authority may not

implement a closure decision in whole or in part until the Panel has made its determination. It will usually issue a decision within eight weeks of the Panel being constituted.

If the School Closure Review Panel refuses to consent to the closure decision, or following publication of the Consultation Report Dumfries and Galloway Council decides not to implement the closure proposal, a further closure proposal cannot be published in relation to the school for five years, unless there is a significant change in the school's circumstances.

24.0 Grounds for Call-In

The Scottish Ministers may issue a call-in notice where it appears to the Scottish Ministers that Dumfries and Galloway Council may have failed:

- (a) in a significant regard to comply with the requirements imposed on it by (or under) the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended so far as they are relevant in relation to the closure proposal, or
- (b) to take proper account of a material consideration relevant to its decision to implement the proposal.

During the eight week period, the education authority may not proceed to implement the proposed closure, unless Ministers have informed the authority that they do not intend to call in the proposal. However, such a decision will not be before the three week period for representations to be made to them has elapsed.

25.0 Conclusion

Dumfries and Galloway Council is proposing, subject to the outcome of the statutory consultation process, to discontinue education provision at Dalry Secondary School, and to realign its catchment area to Castle Douglas High School.

It is proposed that education provision at Dalry Secondary School be discontinued with effect from 2 July 2027.

It has been assessed that the proposal is the most appropriate means of addressing the underlying reasons for formulating it, which are:

- Dalry Secondary School's pupil roll for academic year 2025/26 was 13, resulting in increasing difficulty in delivering a broad and balanced curriculum (the number of enrolled pupils has since reduced to 8 for session 2026/27).
- The majority of pupils residing within the Dalry Secondary School catchment area choose to attend an alternative secondary school.
- There is no evidence that the number of catchment pupils will rise, with regional demographics showing a continuing decline and an expected 18% reduction in the 0–15 population over the next 10 years.
- Like many rural Councils, Dumfries and Galloway Council has been experiencing increasing challenges in recruiting staff, including at Dalry Secondary School.

- At the Full Council meeting on 28 March 2024, Members agreed that Dalry Secondary School should not be temporarily closed (formally known as 'mothballed') and that S1–S4 provision should continue until at least the end of 2025.

In addition to the main reasons outlined above, the following considerations have also informed the proposal to discontinue education provision at Dalry Secondary School:

- The educational benefits, as set out in Section 8, for current and future pupils residing within the Dalry Secondary School catchment area.
- Education authorities have a statutory duty under Section 1 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 to secure adequate and efficient provision of school education within their area.
- Local authorities also have a statutory duty, introduced through the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003, to make arrangements to secure Best Value in the delivery of services.
- On 30 November 2023, Elected Members approved the 10 School Model Principles as the basis for developing a sustainable school estate. These principles seek to support high-quality learning environments, ensure the effective use of resources, and balance the educational needs of children and young people with the views and aspirations of local communities. Further information on the School Model Principles is provided within the Preliminary Requirements Report at Appendix 2.
- Dumfries and Galloway Council currently has in excess of 5262 (39%) spaces within its current secondary school estate (as of September census 2025). It must be acknowledged that the costs-per-pupil in under-occupied schools are excessively high and that underutilised schools are expensive to maintain and operate.

Financial Template

Table 1	Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4
Row 1	Current revenue costs for school proposed for closure			
Row 2	Name of School	Costs for full financial year (projected annual costs) 2024/2025	Additional financial impact on receiving school [Castle Douglas High School]	Annual recurring savings (column 2 minus column 3)
Row 3	DALRY SECONDARY SCHOOL			
Row 4	School costs			
Row 5	Employee costs - note 1			
Row 6	teaching staff	351415.1	-	351415.1
Row 7	support staff	30715.11	-	30715.11
Row 8	teaching staff training (CPD etc)	-	-	-
Row 9	support staff training	-	-	-
Row 10	Supply costs - note 2			
Row 11				
Row 12	Building costs:			
Row 13	property insurance	-	-	-
Row 14	non domestic rates	21289.5	-	-
Row 15	water & sewerage charges	6000	-	6000
Row 16	energy costs	23123.61	-	23123.61
Row 17	cleaning (contract or inhouse)	9000	-	9000
Row 18	building repair & maintenance	4.9	-	4.9
Row 19	grounds maintenance	9763.73	-	-
Row 20	facilities management costs - note 6	5948.7	-	-
Row 21	revenue costs arising from capital		-	-
Row 22	other	216.94	-	-
Row 23				
Row 24	School operational costs:			
Row 25	learning materials	18645.24	-	18645.24
Row 26	catering (contract or inhouse)		-	-
Row 27	SQA costs	3649	-	3649
Row 28	other school operational costs (e.g. licences)	169.5	-	169.5
Row 29				
Row 30	Transport costs: note 3			
Row 31	home to school	71405	-	-
Row 32	other pupil transport costs	-	-	-
Row 33	staff travel	2510.53	-	2510.53
Row 34	SCHOOL COSTS SUB-TOTAL	£553,857	-	£445,233
Row 35				
Row 36	Income:			
Row 37	Sale of meals	-	-	-
Row 38	Lets	-	-	-
Row 39	External care provider	-	-	-
Row 40	Other	-	-	-
Row 41	SCHOOL INCOME SUB-TOTAL	£0		
Row 42				
Row 43	TOTAL COSTS MINUS INCOME FOR SCHOOL	£553,857		£445,233
Row 44				
	UNIT COST PER PUPIL PER YEAR	£42,604.37		

Table 2	Column 5	Column 6	Column 7
Capital costs		School proposed for closure	Receiving school
Capital Life Cycle cost - note 7			
Third party contributions to capital costs			

Table 3	Annual Property costs incurred (moth-balling) until disposal
property insurance	
non domestic rates	
water & sewerage charges	
energy costs	
cleaning (contract or inhouse)	
security costs	
building repair & maintenance	
grounds maintenance	
facilities management costs	
other	
TOTAL ANNUAL COST UNTIL DISPOSAL	

Table 4	Non-recurring revenue costs
TOTAL NON-RECURRING REVENUE COSTS	

Table 5	Impact on GAE - note 5
GAE IMPACT	£ 21,750.00

Notes

1. The total costs incurred for teaching staff (row 5) and support staff (row 6) are required to be included. Column 2 should include the current costs for a full financial year for the school proposed for closure, and column 3 should include the *additional* cost to the receiving school as a result of staff transferring.

For teaching staff, this should include regular teachers, itinerant teachers, learning support teaching staff and special education (ASN) staff.

Itinerant teaching staff includes central support services such as English as additional language support, hearing, visually impaired services, educational psychology services.

For support staff, this should include classroom assistants, administration staff and janitorial staff.

For all staff the costs entered should include salary, NI and pension costs.

If the school proposed for closure has less than 3 staff members, then the cumulative staff costs only should be given in row 5 (for both teaching and support staff), so as to avoid possible disclosure of individual salaries.

Training costs should be identified separately in rows 7 and 8.

2. Supply costs to cover teaching and support staff. This may be held in a central budget, be devolved or shared across the budgets.

3. 'Home to school' pupil transport costs should include those school transport costs incurred in accordance with Council policy. 'Other pupil transport costs' will cover costs incurred for the transport of pupils for activities such as swimming etc

4. Row 30 of column 3 should include the additional transport costs related to the increased home to school transport arrangements that are put in place in accordance with Council policy. This figure is therefore likely to be considerably higher than current costs.

5. This table is to capture the impact on the revenue support grant as a result of changes to GAE. Impact on GAE should consider the issues covered in the GAE section of the guidance document that accompany this template.

6. Facilities management costs will include costs related to caretaking, janitorial and security.

7. The capital costs for the receiving school should be taken across the life cycle of the school in line with the life expectancy of that school. The capital costs for the school proposed for closure should be taken across the same life cycle period.

Statutory Consultation – Dalry Secondary School
Dumfries and Galloway Council
Militia House
109/111 English Street
DG1 2HR

E-mail: statutoryconsultation@dumgal.gov.uk

Thursday 27 August 2026

Dear Consultee,

Review of Education Provision Notice and Summary of Proposal for closing Dalry Secondary School, Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended.

Dumfries and Galloway Council is consulting on the proposal to close Dalry Secondary School. This notice provides a summary of the proposal; it is a requirement for you to be notified of the consultation as a consultee, in accordance with Schedule 2 Section 1 of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

Dumfries and Galloway Council is conducting a public consultation from Thursday 27 August to Friday 9 October 2026. This is the period in which you will be able to make representation to Dumfries and Galloway Council in respect of the proposal. It is important that everyone we are consulting with tells us about their thoughts on the proposal.

This summary provides further information on where a full copy of the proposal can be obtained and also advises as to how you can make representation.

The Proposal

Dumfries and Galloway Council is proposing, subject to the outcome of the Statutory Consultation process, to discontinue S1 to S4 education provision at Dalry Secondary School and realign its catchment area to Castle Douglas High School.

It is proposed that S1 to S4 education provision at Dalry Secondary School be discontinued with effect from 2 July 2027.

Reasons for this Proposal

This is considered to be the most appropriate response to address the reasons for the proposal which are:

- Dalry Secondary School's pupil roll for academic year 2025/26 was 13, resulting in increasing difficulty in delivering a broad and balanced curriculum (the number of enrolled pupils has since reduced to 8 for session 2026/27)
- The majority of pupils residing within the Dalry Secondary School catchment area choose to attend an alternative secondary school.
- There is no evidence that the number of catchment pupils will rise, with regional demographics showing a continuing decline and an expected 18% reduction in the 0–15 population over the next 10 years.
- Like many rural Councils, Dumfries and Galloway Council has been experiencing increasing challenges in recruiting staff, including at Dalry Secondary School.
- At the Full Council meeting on 28 March 2024, Members agreed that Dalry Secondary School should not be temporarily closed (formally known as 'mothballed') and that S1–S4 provision should continue until at least the end of 2025.

Dumfries and Galloway Council Plan 2023-2028

Councils, as an Education Authority, have a statutory duty in terms of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 to make adequate and efficient provision of school education across their entire area for the current school population and future pattern of demand. This is reflected in Dumfries and Galloway Council Plan 2023-2028, Education and Learning Directorate.

The Council will improve education and learning opportunities to help all our children, young people and citizens fulfil their potential. This starts with pre-school, then school, before progressing into further or higher education or transition into work. We will work with our partners to create and promote lifelong learning opportunities so everyone in the region can live a meaningful and fulfilling life and contribute to their community.

Strategic Outcomes

- Places of learning are inclusive, sustainable and meet the needs of local communities.
- We get it right for every child.
- Children, young people and adults transition successfully through all life stages.
- Young people and adults succeed in what they want to achieve.
- Participation in creativity and play is part of early and lifelong learning experiences.
- Local people can build their skills and confidence.

Alternatives to the Proposal (Including the Proposal)

The proposal and reasonable alternatives to the proposal were considered as part of the preliminary requirement and are detailed below;

- a) School Closure - discontinue S1 to S4 education provision at Dalry Secondary School and realign its catchment area to Castle Douglas High School
- b) Status Quo - No change to the current school arrangements at Dalry Secondary School.
- c) Temporary Closure (previously known as 'Mothballing') - Dalry Secondary School is closed for up to three years and its catchment area realigned to Castle Douglas High School, with the expectation that pupil numbers will increase sufficiently to allow the school to reopen.
- d) Nursery to S4 Provision - A single headteacher management structure created responsible for Nursery, Primary and S1–S4 secondary stages of education at Dalry School.

Representations may be made on the following;

- the proposal;
- reasonable alternatives to the proposal as listed above; and
- suggestions of other reasonable alternatives not listed above that address the reasons for the proposal.

What we will do –

We will consult by:

- Providing a notice of the consultation and a summary of the proposal to the relevant consultees - this is that notice and summary.
- Placing an advert in the local press.
- Putting information on our website - www.dumgal.gov.uk/consultations
- Holding a public meeting to explain the proposal (Monday 7 September 2026)
- Ask all consultees to tell us what they think of the proposal including via an online survey.

What to do now –

- Please read the full proposal document.
- Please attend the public meeting which will be held on Monday 7 September 2026 at 6pm at Dalry Secondary School, Dalry.
- Let us know what you think by 5pm on Friday 9 October 2026 via the survey link below:

Online Survey Link: <https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/kWgvbcLg1d>

QR Code to Online Survey:



Letter to: Statutory Consultation – Dalry Secondary School
Dumfries and Galloway Council
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Email to: statutoryconsultation@dumgal.gov.uk

Respondents are required to clearly state the capacity in which they are expressing their views and agree to their name and any statement/comments being published as part of the Statutory Consultation process and published in the final Consultation Report (all other personal information will be redacted).

What Next?

Dumfries and Galloway Council is seeking your views on the proposal during the consultation period - it does not assume that the proposal will go ahead. All points raised during the consultation period will be included in the final consultation paper before being presented to Elected Members at Education, Skills and Community Wellbeing Committee where a decision will be taken as to the outcome of this process.

If the proposal goes ahead, any children current and future from the Dalry Secondary School catchment area would be educated at Castle Douglas High School, although parents/carers would still be able to make placing requests for other secondary schools.

Please note that this summary document is for convenience only. Copies of the Proposal Paper can be obtained from:

- Dalry Secondary School, Dalry;
- Castle Douglas High School, Castle Douglas; and
- Dumfries and Galloway Council Headquarters, Dumfries.

And published on Dumfries and Galloway Council website at:

www.dumgal.gov.uk/consultations

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Larann Foss'.

Larann Foss
Head of Education Resources