

On 24/04/2016 18:23, Andrew Burns wrote:

Hello

Please forgive the slightly impersonal nature of this e-mail - I'm sending this to the large number of constituents who have been in touch over the last 48-hours about the temporary arrangements at WHEC ...

... I did promise to get back to you today with an update on the concerns being raised about the temporary accommodation arrangements currently in place at WHEC, for some Oxgangs Primary School pupils. Firstly; can I say thanks again for taking the time to raise this issue with me directly.

I was initially made aware of the concerns about the temporary accommodation on Friday evening (22<sup>nd</sup>), via several constituent e-mails. I immediately raised (electronically) all of this with Senior Officers. Then, on Saturday morning (yesterday), I received several further e-mails, and subsequently made personal contact with the Chief Executive who ensured (that morning) that two Senior Officers physically visited the premises. By coincidence, I separately met some Oxgangs Parents on the 'Pedal on Parliament' event on Saturday afternoon, and assured them that I was taking their concerns extremely seriously and had asked for an urgent update from Senior Officers, and would get back to everyone as soon as I possibly could.

I've now received the requested update and will outline the main points below. I do completely appreciate that what follows means that the temporary accommodation will remain in use tomorrow (Monday) – but I want to stress that I'm meeting the Chief Executive at 10am tomorrow morning and – as indicated below - officers are monitoring all the arrangements continuously and further adjustments may be made; and you can be sure that the current arrangements at WHEC will continue to be monitored extremely carefully and will be discussed again tomorrow. I will thus e-mail again, during tomorrow afternoon, and provide further feedback.

The update that I've now received:

- these arrangements are temporary, and regrettably the Council had no choice but to organise temporary accommodation arrangements due to the well-publicised issues with 17 of our school buildings
- officers are monitoring all of the arrangements continuously and will make adjustments if necessary
- we do appreciate that this is a difficult time for parents across the city and the Council will take any complaints they have about the temporary accommodation very seriously
- we are pressing extremely hard to get the output from ongoing surveys (which we had expected at the end of last week) as soon as practically possible, so that Parents are clear as to the length of time these current temporary-arrangements will require to be in place
- we expect to have this survey-output during this coming week, and will communicate such – to Parents – as quickly as possible
- the specific unit in question has been used at the WHEC as decant accommodation during refurbishment of parts of the main building
- it is also predominantly used during the exam period to minimise impact on school lets
- the unit is due for replacement subject to funding but given specific concerns about safety ... I am informed that Oxgangs pupils were walked through the fire escape arrangements when they were first placed in WHEC; as was the protocol for all pupils decanted to new settings
- I'm also informed that the fire escape routes are fully compliant and have been assessed following the erection of the fencing which cuts across the pathway. Additionally, there is a planned full scale fire alarm practice on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> April
- on the ventilation point, I have been assured that the windows in the unit are capable of being opened
- and I'm informed that some adjustments to internal flooring have been made today
- more widely - the safety of pupils (and staff) remains our paramount concern and ensuring

that we have educational arrangements in place within a school environment has been our priority

- as above, all of the temporary arrangements are being carefully monitored, and the Council will continue to look at other options if the pupils cannot return to their own school very soon

I appreciate that everyone will be aware of this – but full details on the School Closures across the City are detailed in the following section of the Council’s website, and the several links therein:  
[www.edinburgh.gov.uk/schoolclosures](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/schoolclosures)

... and all the related News Releases can be viewed via the following link:  
[www.edinburgh.gov.uk/news](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/news)

I will though definitely get back to everyone again, during tomorrow afternoon, with further feedback from the ongoing monitoring; specifically in relation to the temporary-arrangements at WHEC.

Andrew

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Check out my personal blog at [www.andrewburns.blogspot.co.uk](http://www.andrewburns.blogspot.co.uk) & twitter account [@AndrewDBurns](https://twitter.com/AndrewDBurns)

- Local Surgeries** - no appointment necessary, simply turn up:
- Every Monday, 6pm (during school term-time) @ Craiglockhart Primary School, Ashley Terrace
  - Every Tuesday, 6pm (during school term-time) @ St.Cuthbert's Primary School, Hutchison Crossway
  - Every Wednesday, 6pm (all year round) @ Fountainbridge Library, Dundee Street



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