



SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

EDUCATION AND CHILDRENS' SERVICES

EMERGENCY CLOSURE REVIEW REPORT JUNE 2026

Glendinning Terrace Primary -Early Learning and Childcare
Provision- ELC

(ELC -Closed on temporary emergency basis due to Health and
Safety concerns in April 2025)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This review report has been prepared following the temporary closure of Glendinning Early learning and Childcare provision, aligned to Glendinning Primary School, in April 2025 due to an emergency situation. This report only concerns the Early learning and Childcare Provision at the Primary School which was housed in a temporary unit in the grounds of Glendinning Primary.
- 1.2 It is the first review of the temporary emergency closure status. For the reasons set out in this report, the recommended option is to continue the temporary closure period for up to one further year to provide a period of grace. This would allow the Council to follow the **Scottish Borders Council ELC Sustainability Policy (Appendix 1)** and **Scottish Government New Schools Consultation Act- Statutory Guidance and Early learning and Childcare Statutory Guidance**, in order to undertake a full collaborative feasibility review with the Glendinning school community at its heart. That review process would include, but would not be limited to, assessing demand for ELC provision, considering the options proposed by the community for reinstating ELC provision, and evaluating the long-term sustainability of the ELC provision and how that affects the primary school, given that they are aligned. The recommended approach would also allow Education Officers and the community to consider options for reinstating the ELC, including evaluating construction estimates received to date, rather than moving prematurely to a statutory

consultation on permanent closure of the ELC provision. Officers therefore consider that a full collaborative review is now required under the ELC Sustainability Policy (Appendix 1), with the community at heart of the process, including but not limited to the whole school community, Community council, Parents and Carers, children and young people, MP's, MSP's, and elected Council Members.

- 1.3 When emergency health and safety concerns arose in April 2025, Council officers liaised with the parents and carers of children attending the ELC and considered all reasonable options. However, due to the seriousness of the risks identified, officers had no alternative but to close the provision immediately. The temporary Unit housing the ELC was deemed unfit for purpose and presented a significant health and safety risk, making immediate temporary closure the only available option in the circumstances. Officers have now undertaken this first review of the emergency temporary closure, as required at least annually under the Council's ELC Sustainability Policy 2025, and to consider the next steps for the ELC following one year of temporary closure. The review also takes account of the community survey, which opened in December 2025 and closed at the end of February 2026, and sought views from parents and carers on potential options for reinstatement, current demand and alternative ideas for re-establishing and sustaining ELC at Glendinning. Although the ELC remained temporarily closed during the November 2025 enrolment period, parents and carers were invited to contact the Early Years team if they would have requested a place at Glendinning but for the closure, to help officers assess demand. The Parent Council of Glendinning Primary School has also raised concerns about the impact of the continued closure on future intake to the primary school, which is an important consideration in any wider review. Assessing demand for the ELC is therefore central to a review and to officers' consideration of the longer-term position of the provision.

2. BACKGROUND, CONTEXT & LEGAL POSITION.

2.1 Glendinning Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) was established within Glendinning Primary School but operating within a temporary Unit at Glendinning Primary School. This was due to the expansion of early learning and childcare. The expansion of Early Learning and Childcare, which was fully implemented in the Borders in 2020, provides 1140 hours of funded Early Learning and Childcare for every 3-and-4-year-olds and to eligible 2-year-old children. The model of provision implemented in Scottish Borders Council (SBC) is based on a mixed market model of delivery which allows children to access their provision in local authority Early Learning and Childcare settings, Private and Voluntary providers and with childminders. Prior to emergency temporary closure in April 25, the ELC had 12 children attending the ELC provision.

2.2. Following an assessment of the occupancy and suitability and condition of the premises in April 25, the portacabin/ temporary unit was closed with immediate effect. The ELC service at Glendinning Primary retained its Registration with the Care Inspectorate and it was classified as "inactive" which means it could re-open without requiring to re-register. In order to provide the highest quality experience for the children, those at the time who accessed their funded ELC place at Glendinning were moved to another nursery in the town of Galashiels for the final term of that academic year. All parents were involved with this and the children and families were given transition support during the Easter holidays 2025. Glendinning ELC operated from a Temporary Unit that was over 20 years old. Work had been done with SBC architects to look for an alternative space within the school for the ELC. However, it was considered that there was no suitable alternatives so further work looking at the feasibility of other options required to take place. There was, at the time of the emergency closure, capacity for all the children in the local authority nurseries elsewhere in Galashiels and Officers understand this to still be the case. Early Years Officers were clear that all parents who had requested Glendinning as a 1st choice of nursery were offered either their 2nd choice or at an alternative nursery in Galashiels at time of emergency closure. All applications had a home address of Galashiels. Due to the immediate health and safety concerns of the condition of the temporary unit, all children who were at the time of the emergency temporary closure enrolled within Glendinning Primary School Nursery, were relocated to Balmoral Primary school nursery as this is their partner school at the end of term (April 2025). Out of the 12 children who were enrolled at time of the emergency closure, 3 families had requested an alternative place within other nurseries in the town. All these requests were accommodated.

2.3 There is a universal entitlement for all 3- and 4-year-olds and eligible 2-year-olds, to be offered 1140 hours a year (pro-rata, depending on birth date), of funded Early Learning and Childcare (ELC). It is the Council's duty to provide this which is done through its' own nursery settings, through contracted providers in the private and voluntary sectors and also through some childminders. Local authorities have the statutory responsibility for ensuring that the funded entitlement is available to all eligible children in their area, and will be the primary guarantors of quality and key enablers of flexibility and choice – ensuring that there is a range of options for families in their local area. Within the Galashiels town conurbation, there are 5 other local authority nurseries – 1 of which is open full days year-round.

2.4 There are no catchment areas for Early learning and Childcare. Although the ELC is temporarily closed due to emergency closure, Officers require to keep track of all enquiries about the ELC to assess and keep track of the demand for the ELC. It was stipulated that in enrolment week (November 2025) if any parent or carer had wished to enrol in Glendinning ELC, but couldn't because it was closed due to the health and safety issues, they should get in touch with Early Years Officers to advise them of this. This was on the literature and communications sent out about enrolment week. This was important so that Officers could be kept aware of demand for the ELC despite the emergency closure, and to see what the result of the emergency closure had on possible future enrolment, and to try and mitigate any negative effects. Officers received 2 e-mails in this regard. One parent was looking for her son to return to Glendinning for 2025/26 and for her youngest to

attend in 2 years ' time when he is eligible, and another email, which was a parent who contacted officers as she who was looking for their child to attend in 2026/27.

2.5 The legal position where an ELC building becomes unsafe and requires immediate closure is this:- the authority may close it immediately without first undertaking a statutory consultation or following the planned temporary closure (previously known as mothballing) process as it is not planned. The updated Scottish Government Statutory Guidance 2026 refers to "temporary closure" as the term now used in place of "mothballing". "Temporary closure" applies to planned, non-emergency temporary closures where the local authority has discretion over timing and process. This is usually only when settings have reached a critically low level of enrolment but where there is a realistic chance of the provision reopening due to demand increasing and it would be imprudent to look to close a setting permanently by way of Statutory Consultation at that time to find that demand increases. Accordingly, where an ELC premises such as Glendinning ELC becomes unsafe overnight or in a very short time period, and must be closed immediately for health and safety reasons, the authority is not expected to undertake prior engagement on temporary closure with the community as it is not planned. In such circumstances, urgent closure is seen as a matter of operational necessity and public safety and is allowed legally due to critical need.

2.6 Although the emergency closure itself falls outside the planned temporary closure framework, the authority must still discharge its wider statutory and public law responsibilities, however. In particular, it must ensure that:

- the delivery of children's funded ELC entitlement, including the mandatory level of funded hours is maintained;
- the continuity of learning and care for affected children;
- the capacity and proximity of alternative settings;
- the travel implications for families; and consideration of
- any effect on the wider school or community use of the ELC building.

The current guidance also emphasises the need for engagement and communication aligned to all decision-making stages, and requires authorities to evidence consideration of children's rights and wellbeing under the post-UNCRC incorporation framework. This was undertaken at the time of the emergency temporary closure in April 2025 (by way of an IIA) and requires to be considered further throughout the engagement process over the emergency closure time scale. The key issue for the authority then becomes the assessment and consideration of alternatives to reinstate the ELC in some format and the costs of those and value for money, and when this might be reasonably undertaken.

2.7 In those circumstances, *the authority must assess whether there remains a reasonable prospect of reopening the provision in some form.* The updated guidance makes clear that temporary closure is only valid where it remains genuinely temporary and does not have the effect of a permanent closure. The guidance states that any arrangements which would, or would likely, have the effect of a permanent closure of a school or nursery are to be treated as a

relevant proposal under the 2010 Act, and therefore require compliance with the statutory consultation provisions that apply to permanent closures. Accordingly, if the authority concludes that:

- the building cannot be made safe within a “reasonable” timeframe;
- reinstatement or relocation is not financially viable; and
- there is no realistic prospect of reopening the nursery,

then the authority should not rely on an open-ended “temporary emergency closure” but instead, it should move to a formal closure proposal under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 and proceed with a Statutory Consultation on a proposal to make a significant change such as a closure on a permanent basis.

4. OPTIONS ANALYSIS

4.1 In order to review the current emergency closure status of ELC provision at Glendinning primary school, and what might be the next steps for it, Officers have identified several potential options:- This report contains the analyses of the options in order to:-

- Assist officers to identify the most reasonable option for the ELC Provision within this first review being June 2026
- Consult with the Glendinning school community and the wider Galashiels Cluster area about to obtain as much input and guidance from them as to their views thus far (this has been done initially by way of a survey-which was carried out in December 2025 – February 2026)
- then make a proposal to Councillors on the most reasonable option for next steps. This report contains details of the options considered and assesses next steps taking into consideration Scottish Borders Council Sustainability of ELC policy 2025 (Appendix 1)and underpinned by Scottish Government Guidance, with a view to sustaining and continuing to support demand for Glendinning Terrace ELC, where reasonable and possible.
- This would also be assessed against enrolment trends, financial sustainability of the ELC, condition and suitability of the ELC provision, capacity and proximity of nearby ELC provisions, impact on community use or otherwise of the ELC unit, potential impact on sustainability of closing an ELC to sustainability of the school/ community vis a vis 2024 Addressing Depopulation Action and any impact on wider community which ELC Glendinning serves along with financial burdens and how those interplay with the Scottish Borders Council’ statutory duties under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, Section 47 in relation to ensuring the mandatory amount of early learning and childcare is available to eligible pre-school children.

4.2 Three possible options have been identified and are considered within this first review of the Emergency Temporary Closure of ELC provision at Glendinning Primary School namely: -

Option 1	Reestablish ELC at Glendinning – undertaking remedial work/ construction to bring ELC provision back to the primary school premises as soon as possible for instatement of the ELC.
Option 2	Continue the temporary closure of the ELC provision at Glendinning Primary for up to one further year, to allow work with the school community in line with SBC ELC Sustainability Policy 2025 and Scottish Government Guidance to determine whether the provision can be re-established for Session 2027/28.
Option 3	Embark on a Proposal to Permanently close ELC at Glendinning Primary School–and therefore undertake a Statutory Consultation on Closure of the ELC provision under the Schools (Consultation) Scotland Act 2010 (As Amended)

4.3 OPTION 1 Reestablish ELC at Glendinning

- 4.3.1 At the time of emergency closure in April 2025. Officers made the decision to close the ELC temporary unit due to several significant safety concerns. This decision was not taken lightly but was due to it being declared not fit for purpose and where the authority was confronted with an emergency situation in which a nursery building had become unsafe and unusable, requiring closure at very short notice.
- 4.3.2 The most critical issue identified was the deterioration of the door on the roadside elevation of the temporary unit which housed the ELC. This door served as a primary fire escape. The door and its surrounding timber were found to be extensively rotten and beyond repair, several repairs had been attempted before coming to this conclusion. Contractors advised that replacement of the door was not possible due to the condition of the surrounding structure and no guarantee the building would be secure or safe. As a result, the nursery was left with only one functional fire exit, which Health and Safety colleagues deemed insufficient. Based on this assessment, the decision was made to close the building immediately for safety and start to explore alternative options for the nursery. The overall condition of the temporary unit was also taken into account. The external cladding was no longer wind or watertight after several attempts to repair, and there were additional safety concerns relating to the walkway, which included further issues with rotting timbers.
- 4.3.3 Officers understand that SBC Architects prepared an assessment of the existing school layout and a proposal for internal alterations to accommodate the ELC provision, including the removal of the current temporary unit in August 2025.

4.3.4 The estimated project costs for all three possible options which have been obtained thus far are over £260,000 each- which can be seen in these the tables below:-

4.3.5 All Options require consideration of Care Inspectorate requirements of any registered services which are:-

- Access from playroom to a secure outdoor area
- Access to toilets from playroom
- Access to small kitchen area for preparing snacks
- Plumbing for appropriate number of sinks (handwashing - adult and child sized, messy sink for cleaning paint pots etc.)
- Secure access to nursery from main school and outdoors

Consideration also needed to be given as to how staff would be deployed to supervise children's access to the outdoors and toilets when maintaining adequate supervision within the playroom itself. All services delivering funded Early Learning and Childcare are required to meet the National Standard, of which Criteria 3 is focussed on high quality physical environments. In order to meet the national standard, services need to achieve evaluations of "good" from Care Inspectorate. Where limitations or barriers are placed around children access to spaces and personal choices, these fall under "weak" evaluations as outlined in the Shared Quality Framework (Care Inspectorate/ HMIE) **'Weak' quality, safety and maintenance of spaces** *"Potential barriers to outdoor play and learning have not been recognised or given adequate consideration. This means that the physical environment does not meet children's needs"*.

4.3.6 Replacement of Temporary Unit. Officers understand that purchasing a new temporary unit could be done but is seen as very expensive due to the significant capital cost of initial purchase (estimate between £52,000- £110,000) as a base line cost with the understanding that temporary units are seen as disproportionately expensive as they require significant physical alterations to achieve technical standards plus additional costs associated with installation and site preparation, and ongoing maintenance requirements. Officers understand that these units also have a limited lifespan, typically between 5 and 10 years, and generally provide poor insulation, which can lead to dampness and low internal temperatures. At Glendinning ELC, officers understood that staff have frequently had to relocate children into the main school building during colder weather because conditions within the portacabin were unsuitable. Given the combined costs of purchase, installation, maintenance, and eventual replacement, this option was felt did not represent a

sustainable long-term solution for the ELC provision currently, but this needs to be considered and assessed further.

4.3.6 Moving the ELC into the Primary School building- Option A Repurposing the spare classroom within Glendinning Primary school for ELC

This option is also possible however Officers understand that in exploring a basic reconfiguration, a significant number of issues have so far been identified that would need to be addressed in order to achieve registration from Care Inspectorate. As there is no direct access to the outdoor from this classroom, children's choice and independence would be compromised as all children would need to go to the outdoor area together at planned times due to staffing ratios and meal routines. Education officers stated that this would be a barrier to a registration. Due to the incline of the playground and the height of the building at that end, extensive grounds work would be needed to level the playground area sufficiently to create direct access to an outdoor area. Creating an outdoor area at that end would also impact the space available to the wider school and lessen access around the building. Children would need to share the main entrance with P1-7 and share cloakroom facilities. While a secure door could be fitted to the classroom, this would then mean that children needed to leave the nursery to access the toilet or changing facilities and travel through the school which would require a staff member to supervise. This would potentially leave staff and children remaining in the playroom out of ratio. Also, to use the existing toilets in Glendinning primary school, significant alteration would be required as the Care Inspectorate would not support children accessing gender specific toilets with P1-7 children. This would potentially impact P1-7 children. The possible plans for this option looked to mitigate against the issues identified but come at a much higher cost than had originally thought. The estimate for such repurposing is understood to be thus far:-

Option A- Repurposing the spare classroom within the Glendinning Primary Building		
Construction	£	255,493.58
Consultants Fees	£	32,200.00
Building Warrant	£	1,270.00
Site Investigation	£	2,000.00
Asbestos Survey	£	2,000.00
Furniture/IT	£	6,000.00
Client Contingency (10%)	£	20,271.63
TOTAL	£	324,512.94

**4.3.6 Option B -Repurposing the Primary school building -
Incorporating the ELC in a self-contained area in one end
of the primary school with its own secure access door
which would also support free flow into an outdoor area.**
This possible option also needs considered with the

understanding that this would impact the available space and access for the wider school, however. Again, consideration has been given to toilet arrangements and the suggestion mooted was to reconfigure some of the existing head teachers office into ELC toilets which would allow the council to meet staff supervision and independent access to toilets requirements, if a secure door was fitted at the entrance to the computer suite to prevent children entering the wider school. This option also considered minimal impact to the wider school while work was being done. However, due to the extent of the work needed to make the ELC fit for purpose and able to offer a high-quality experience, the cost was much greater than originally anticipated and the costs are estimated to be below:-

Option B - Incorporating ELC in self-contained end of primary school with own secure access into outdoor area		
Construction	£	226,194.16
Consultants Fees	£	32,200.00
Building Warrant	£	1,270.00
Site Investigation	£	2,000.00
Asbestos Survey	£	2,000.00
Furniture/IT	£	6,000.00
Client Contingency (10%)	£	20,271.63
TOTAL	£	292,573.72

4.3.8 In proceeding with either option above, it is clear that additional work would be required due to the age and condition of the school building itself. National guidance also needs taken account of with regards:-

4.3.9 **Toilets Care Inspectorate - Spaces to Grow and Thrive says**

"Providing children with clean, suitable, safe toilets they can access easily is essential for ensuring children develop good bladder and bowel health habits throughout their life. It is important for children to feel safe and comfortable when going to the toilet" - building and infection prevention and control expectations differ greatly between ELC and school. While school aged children require full height and locks are required on cubicle doors, these are not advised for children below the age of five as personal care by an adult is often needed. Toilets also need to be quickly and easily accessed to support younger children. "Where school age children share the environment with younger children it is best practice for them to have separate toilet facilities." Spaces to Grow and Thrive. And in terms of Outdoor Spaces "Children need to be able to move freely and

independently indoors and outdoors. This is sometimes known as free flow. This encourages children's independence and provides them with different opportunities and experiences. In an indoor/outdoor setting children must be able to move between spaces when they choose and without any input from staff. How easy it is for children to do this depends to a large extent on the design of the environment. Children need to be able to move outdoors without having to go through a corridor or another internal space. Children should be able to see the outdoor area from inside. They should not have to ask staff to move between areas and should be able to open any doors easily, taking account of their age and stage of development and their needs."

4.3.9 Option C –Consider the establishment of an Early Level Composite class, whereby ELC children would be accommodated within the current p1-3 classroom alongside school aged pupils. This model is also considered as Scottish Borders Council currently operates three ELC composite classes across the authority. However, implementation of this model would require a variation to registration application to be submitted to the Care Inspectorate.

4.3.10 Where the Council has successfully established composite classes elsewhere, these have been located within existing registered nursery premises. At Glendinning, the proposal would require the registration of new spaces within the school building for Early Learning and Childcare provision. In addition, registration requirements limit composite classes to a maximum of eight pre-school children, and two-year-olds cannot be included within registered numbers due to their higher level of need. This would significantly restrict enrolment capacity. Existing composite models benefit from direct access to outdoor learning spaces, age-appropriate toilet and changing facilities, and dedicated snack preparation areas within a secure, self-contained environment. At Glendinning, children would not have direct access to outdoor provision or suitable toilet facilities, limiting their opportunities and reducing the quality of the experience that could be offered.

4.3.10 Furthermore, the long-term sustainability of an Early Level composite class is dependent on pupil numbers at each stage, staffing levels, classroom capacity, and maximum class size regulations. Significant adaptations would also be required to provide suitable toilet facilities for ELC children, create a snack preparation area, secure the classroom environment, and address the impact on staffing ratios. Given the substantial capital investment required and the conclusion that the physical environment would still not provide a sufficiently high-quality learning experience for the children, this option is not seen as an attractive option to be considered currently but this needs to be explored and considered further. Estimated costs for this option are:-

Option C- ELC children would be accommodated within current p1-3 classroom with school aged children.		
Construction	£	202,716.30
Consultants Fees	£	32,200.00
Building Warrant	£	1,270.00
Site Investigation	£	2,000.00
Asbestos Survey	£	2,000.00
Furniture/IT	£	6,000.00
Client Contingency (10%)	£	20,271.63
TOTAL	£	266,457.93

4.3.12 Officers have appraised the above options for re-establishing the ELC at Glendinning in the immediate short term. Officers appreciate that re-establishing the ELC whether through the provision of another temporary unit or within the existing school building—is not, on the information currently available and with the estimates currently obtained, necessarily the most viable option. This is due to the significant costs of the necessary works required to deliver the options. Given the financial implications, and the availability of alternative ELC provision in the town of Galashiels, the benefits of proceeding with the required construction work do not appear to justify implementation at this stage. Reinstatement in its current format is therefore not considered the most reasonable option at present. However, officers recognise that this matter requires further due consideration, particularly as the community has identified other potential options through the community survey (**Section 5**), including community funding, and exploration of all those options with them should now be explored further. The community should therefore be invited to consider all options through a collaborative review process. Continuing the temporary emergency closure for up to one further year, to collaborate with the community on sustainability options and to allow the community to help inform the next steps, would mean that there remains no ELC provision at Glendinning during that period, however. Officers acknowledge that this is not desirable and may have a significant impact on local families, particularly those without access to transport and those with children at the primary school who would otherwise have chosen Glendinning ELC for younger siblings. This may create additional travel and practical difficulties, which officers are mindful of. As an example, Balmoral Primary ELC is a 27-minute walk from Glendinning ELC and is 1.1 miles away. This could be a significant concern for families on low incomes without transport and should be mitigated as far as possible. There is also likely to be an impact perhaps on sustainability of the school roll, as families are unable to choose an ELC provision at Glendinning, and this could have an impact on the primary school roll in the longer term.

4.4 OPTION 2 - Continue the temporary closure of the ELC provision at Glendinning Primary for up to one further year, to allow work with the school community in line with the ELC Sustainability Policy 2025 to determine whether the provision can be re-established in some form for Session 2027/28 and what the next steps should be.

4.4.8 Officers have concluded that, in the current circumstances, the most reasonable option is to extend the emergency temporary closure status for up to one further year. Officers understand that the portacabin/ temporary unit is to be removed on safety grounds and that this removal is scheduled for July 2026. Current evidence of demand is that two families indicated that they would have sought enrolment had the temporary closure not been in place. However, this must be considered alongside the fact that 12 children were enrolled before the emergency temporary closure required to be implemented, demonstrating a level of demand for ELC at Glendinning primary and its importance to the longer-term sustainability of the primary school and the Glendinning community within Galashiels. Accordingly, maintaining the emergency closure status for up to one further year would allow time for a full collaborative feasibility study to be undertaken, including consideration of the options identified through the community survey earlier this year. The community would be invited to take part in a collaborative review process in terms of reinstating alternative provision for ELC at the school. It would also enable more accurate monitoring of demand, including during the November 2026 enrolment period, and ensure that all options are assessed in line with the Scottish Borders Council ELC Sustainability Policy 2025 , including assessing the building condition, reinstatement costs, alternative provision, educational impact benefits and negatives, rural/community impact where relevant, and children's rights implications. Families and the community need to be informed and engaged as early as practicable to enable a full collaborative and transparent review to take place and for the school community to have their say on the options, estimates and for them also to have their say on next steps.

4.4.9 OPTION 3- PROCEED TO EMBARK ON A STATUTORY CONSULTATION TO A PROPOSAL TO PERMANENTLY CLOSE ELC

4.5.1 Any permanent change to an ELC or School requires a full Statutory consultation process and adherence to The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 (As Amended). A proposal to permanently close the ELC at Glendinning Primary school would require such a full statutory consultation.

4.5.2 A closure proposal should only therefore be considered when all other reasonable options have been considered, and the authority is clear that the educational benefits of a closure proposal have been assessed and that this is the best and only reasonable option to take forward.

- 4.5.3 Scottish Borders Council's ELC Sustainability Policy 2025 requires the current position of the ELC to be considered collaboratively with the school community. This includes assessing the impact on families who may not have access to transport, who may be unable to walk a reasonable distance to alternative ELC provision, or who may face financial barriers to meeting transport costs. Although alternative provision has been offered within Galashiels, these practical barriers may affect some families' ability to access their funded ELC entitlement. This requires careful consideration under the SBC ELC Sustainability Policy 2025 and in terms of **Scottish Government New Schools Consultation Act 2010- Statutory Guidance and Early learning and Childcare Statutory Guidance**, as part of the overall review. While Glendinning ELC was closed because the accommodation was unfit for purpose in an emergency situation, and not because of low demand or enrolment numbers per se, the continued inability to reopen the provision may now have wider implications for the sustainability and enrolment of Glendinning Primary School. These issues should therefore be examined in greater detail through full engagement with the local school community, Community Council, elected members, trade unions and other relevant stakeholders, to consider the future of ELC provision at Glendinning Primary, the primary itself and its longer-term sustainability as a whole when considering options for reinstating or closure on a permanent basis.
- 4.5.4 A proposal for permanent closure is therefore not being recommended currently. The school community and local community as a whole needs to be invited on board to collaborate on the next steps and Officers are keen to work with the community to allow them to understand the estimates obtained thus far, to reinstate the ELC and consider all options going forward. Officers do not wish to rush to close this ELC but wish to consider *all* options prudently as offered by the community in the survey as noted below and do so together in a two-way process to allow the community to have their say about what the community wants for the ELC both now and into the future in full understanding of the possible cost implications, and which would also ensure robust compliance with SBC ELC Sustainability Policy and Scottish Government Statutory Guidance (Appendix1)

5. ENGAGEMENT WITH COMMUNITY DURING EMERGENCY CLOSURE REVIEW

- 5.1. A temporary emergency closure status review survey opened on 15th December and closed on 22nd February 2026. This was on citizen space and was a chance to reach out to obtain views about demand and to find out what the community felt about the emergency closure thus far, and what might be done to try and reestablish the ELC to sustain it.

The survey was circulated to the Galashiels schools and ELC cluster area via Group call and Email to all parents and carers and also to all private nurseries and childminders via the ELC channels. This was circulated far and wide within the community to insure as wide engagement as possible for all in the local Glendinning and wider Galashiels Cluster community given ELC do not have catchments.

5.2 This survey stated its aims within the overview as:-

Glendinning ELC (Emergency Mothball Status) Review Survey

In April 2025, Unfortunately Glendinning ELC (Early Learning and Childcare) required to be temporarily mothballed due to emergency health and safety concerns. All children who attended the ELC setting required to be placed in other ELC settings within Scottish Borders Council.

Officers worked with parents to try to arrange alternative arrangements as swiftly as possible to address the emergency situation with the ELC building.

Consequently, there is currently no ELC provision at Glendinning primary school for the 2025-2026 session due to the serious health and safety concerns identified with the building and the ELC setting remains temporarily closed because of this.

Since then, Education Officers have been conducting thorough assessments of the feasibility and cost of providing an ELC space inside the school building for the 2026-2027 session. This assessment has revealed additional considerations due to the serious health and safety issues.

Scottish Borders Council regret that Glendinning ELC enrolment places requested for the 2026-2027 session were not able to be granted, and that the ELC building will remain temporarily mothballed in this emergency situation due to the serious health and safety concerns identified.

Parents who had been hoping to use the ELC at Glendinning Primary School for the 2026-2027 session have been able to explore the range of provisions available in the area and have worked with officers for alternative enrolment options.

It is important now for Scottish Borders Council to conduct a full review of the Glendinning ELC setting given its emergency mothballed status, and understand the demand for Glendinning ELC to consider and support its sustainability into the longer term.

As part of this review, Scottish Borders Council is committed to a survey of parents/ carers within the Glendinning Primary School Catchment and the wider Galashiels Primary School Cluster area to understand demand and gather views about how to sustain numbers and to continue to support demand for the ELC setting in Glendinning. Views from the Community are also welcomed.

This review is about the Early Learning and Childcare Setting at Glendinning Primary (mothballed due to emergency measures) only, not the primary school.

Why your views matter

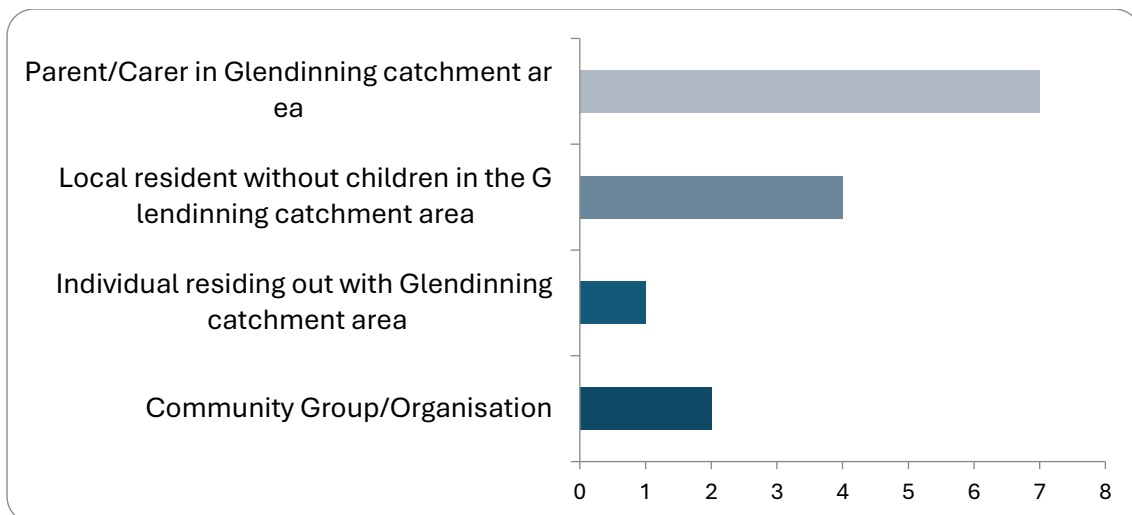
To help with this process, we would like you to complete the following survey. This mirrors other surveys in the Scottish Borders which have been used to assess demand, and help consider the sustainability of nursery settings.

5.3 The questions and results of the survey were as follows:-

5.4 Glendinning ELC (Emergency Mothball Status) Review Survey:-
<https://scotborders.citizenspace.com/regulatory-services/glendinning-elc-mothball-status-review-survey>

Question 1- How are you responding to this activity?

There were 14 responses to this part of the question.



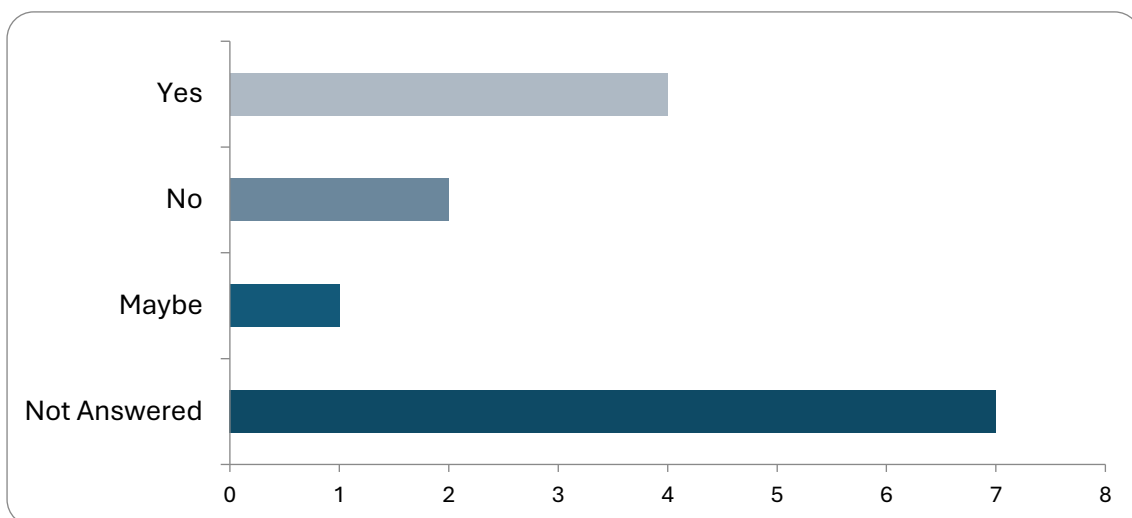
Option	Total	Percent
Parent/Carer in Glendinning catchment area	7	50.00%
Local resident without children in the Glendinning catchment area	4	28.57%
Individual residing out with Glendinning catchment area	1	7.14%
Community Group/Organisation	2	14.29%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

5.5 Question 2-

If Glendinning ELC /Nursery were able to be reinstated would you consider sending your child/children to this setting?

Would use

There were 7 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Yes	4	28.57%
No	2	14.29%
Maybe	1	7.14%
Not Answered	7	50.00%

5.6 The "yes" answers were:-

1. *My only child (currently) is eight years old and in primary 4 so not directly affected (other than via the overall negative impact of uncertainty weighing on the school community).*
2. *Age 9, attends Glendinning Terrace Primary School*
3. *Child 1 is 6 years old. Attends Glendinning terrace PS and is in primary 2.*
4. *Child one is 5 years old and attends primary one at Glendinning
Child two is 2 years old and would have started Glendinning ELC in August if it was available*

5.7 The numbers equated to one child's family, who say they would have used a reinstated ELC who had a child of ELC age.

5.8 The Parent Council of Glendinning Primary School advised Officers out with the survey forum that they felt that as there were circa 13 enrolments prior to the emergency closure in 2026 last year, they felt that demand for the ELC and impact of continued temporary emergency closure will greatly affect the primary school and that demand for the setting was still high, which is important to note for sustainability . This is also noted by Officers and the need to consider the bigger picture for Glendinning ELC and Primary School.

5.9 If "no" or "maybe" to use ELC at Glendinning, please explain why you answered that, and what would need to change for you to send your child/ children to Glendinning nursery ?

There were 3 responses to this part of the question:-

1. *No longer nursery age group -Child 1 is 10 years old, attends Glendinning Primary school and is in Primary 7

Child 2 is 5 years old, attends Glendinning Terrace Primary school and is in Primary 1*
2. *No more children of nursery age*
3. *No young children currently but have family that has been affected by this
I don't have any younger children at this moment, but both my children attended Glendinning ELC and I would definitely be sending any future children there.*

5.10 Do you have any ideas as to how to sustain the ELC/Nursery setting at Glendinning Primary School?

5.11 Comments/ suggestions

There were 12 responses to this part of the question and which are listed below:-

Response	Main suggestion / issue raised	Summary
1	Maybe have space within the school or have the existing portacabin renovated and fixed.	Use existing accommodation or repair current unit.
2	The costings of alternative viable options should be shared, whether that is options within the existing school (for example combining ELC and P1) or a new external building. If the Council cannot fund projects in full, the community should be given the option to crowdfund or raise money in other ways. The unknown is one of the major issues currently.	Request for transparency on options, costs and possible community fundraising.
3	Look at ways for funding and allocate funding from SBC. Open ELC to paid places for younger children if demand exists. Develop a modern hub building that also provides some form of commercial activity, for example rental space for event use in the evening.	Seek funding support from the Council.
4	Install energy-efficient lighting and insulation, solar panels, and introduce composting and a community garden in nearby unused land. Develop and sell sustainable eco resources such as recycled toys and books to parents. Partner with local businesses to reduce food costs in conjunction with a community garden.	Create a sustainable community hub with income-generating and environmentally friendly features.

	Consider an ELC/P1 composite, as both age groups are working at early level and should be using a play-based approach to learning. This would mean resources and staff could be shared across the early level.	
5	This could be an opportunity for Glendinning to be forward-thinking and to demonstrate effective play-based learning, including horizontal learning with children aged 3–5 in the same environment, as seen in Montessori settings and in other parts of Europe.	Explore a combined ELC/P1 model with shared staff and play-based learning.
6	Promote the school further to try to attract pupils. Possibly move the ELC into the school and use the classroom that is not currently being used. The worry is that with no ELC feeding in, the school loses pupils enrolling because they would naturally go to school at the ELC they attend.	Promote the school and retain an ELC link to support future enrolment.
7	Proceed with plans to build a new nursery onto the existing building.	Build a new nursery extension.
8	In the short term, children could be accommodated through partnerships with local museums, town halls, leisure centres and community centres, many of which may already have suitable indoor space that could be adapted for early years provision. There should also be consideration of a temporary childcare setting, such as modular or shared-use facilities, to ensure continuity of care until permanent suitable accommodation is built. Any solution should prioritise accessibility, safety and minimal disruption for children and families.	Use temporary or shared community spaces while permanent provision is developed.
9	The nursery helps many children and families who have siblings in Glendinning school. Some parents live up Glendinning and do not drive, making it difficult to walk to the closest school in winter conditions. Families are having to drop children at Glendinning and then take younger children	Nursery closure is causing practical and emotional difficulties for local families.

to a different nursery, which can cause emotional strain.

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|----|--|--|
| 10 | <p>Having no nursery here is causing strain on families who have children at the school, meaning two trips in the morning, especially for families who do not drive.</p> <p>The nursery could be saved by being redone so that it is safe and suitable for children.</p> | <p>Restore safe local provision to reduce strain on families.</p> |
| 11 | <p>Use the hubs and give them a larger number of staff to use appropriately between term time and hub settings.</p> | <p>Use hub staffing more flexibly to support provision.</p> |
| 12 | <p>The distance between the school and the nearest ELC/nursery provision, combined with steep hills, makes walking impractical and unsafe for young children. Because SBC is not required to provide transport for children of ELC/nursery age, this creates significant difficulties.</p> <p>For families with children of both school and nursery age, parents with vehicles may have to make two separate journeys for drop-off and collection, which is time-consuming, costly and stressful, and increases traffic congestion and environmental pollution. Parents without vehicles may be unable to enrol their nursery-aged child at the nearest provision due to distance and terrain, or may have to pay for private transport, which risks widening inequality.</p> <p>There may also be disruption to school education, as some families may seek a placement for their school-aged child at another establishment offering both primary and nursery provision so siblings can attend the same setting. Over time, this could negatively affect enrolment at Glendinning Primary School. In summary, the current arrangements risk creating inequity, increasing environmental impact, and undermining educational continuity and</p> | <p>Loss of local ELC creates access, equality, transport and school sustainability concerns.</p> |

community cohesion. Scottish Borders EIS requests that SBC make every effort to retain ELC/nursery provision at Glendinning Primary School.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Officers consider that extending the temporary emergency closure status of the ELC unit for *up to* one year is the most prudent course of action and allows a period of grace for the ELC without rushing to a closure proposal in terms of the Schools Consultation (Scotland) Act 2010 (As Amended). This would provide time to assess all the options put forward by the community for some form of reinstatement, alongside considering current demand and to assess the affordability of repair or construction works, in light of existing financial constraints and the cost estimates obtained and which need to be fully considered by Officers, elected members and the community in a collaborative way. This also sits in line with the SBC ELC Sustainability Policy 2025, which has at its heart decision making in partnership with communities. The community should be fully involved in shaping the next steps for the ELC setting.
- 6.2 The portacabin/ temporary Unit is indubitably no longer fit for purpose and is due to be removed in July 2026, during summer holidays. Over the course of the next year, officers will assess the longer-term sustainability of the ELC setting in conjunction with the school community, including the Parent Council and particularly in the context of their concern that the absence of ELC provision may affect future demand for the primary school. This will be considered alongside the proposals raised through the community survey and Officers will provide an undertaking to work with the school and ELC community to examine the feasibility of all of the options and assess them against educational benefits, affordability and value for money, taking account of the estimates already considered to see if there could be any further more cost effective options considered and taken forward with the emphasis on the educational benefits of reinstating the ELC. Officers will also carry out a full feasibility review and updated Integrated Impact Assessment of reinstating ELC at Glendinning, in light of the emergency closure following the temporary unit being deemed unfit for purpose. This process will take place with the community at the heart of the process and also allow more accurate monitoring of demand, including during the November 2026 enrolment period, to ensure that all options are assessed in line with the Scottish Borders Council ELC Sustainability Policy 2025, to try and promote the sustainability of

settings where reasonable and proportionate to do so, and in accordance with legislation and Scottish Government Guidance. A further report will be brought back to Council within one year of this report, once clear collaboration on all options has taken place with the school and ELC/ school community, along with Elected Members, community Council and all interested parties, to consider the next steps for the ELC provision and whether this can be restored.

- 6.3 If reinstatement or repurposing to restore ELC provision for Session 2027/28 is not realistically achievable once the review has concluded, and after officers have worked fully with the school and ELC community, elected members, community council and all other interested parties to consider all reasonable options, the authority should not leave the nursery in indefinite temporary closure. In such circumstances, the appropriate course would be to proceed to a formal closure proposal under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 and such a recommendation, should it be required, would be placed in a report for Elected Members to make such a decision.

June 2026

Appendix 1

Scottish Borders Council - ELC Sustainability Policy 2025