
REVIEW OF GLENDINNING TERRACE ELC (TEMPORARY EMERGENCY CLOSURE) REVIEW REPORT 2026

Report by the Director of Education and Children's Services

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

25TH JUNE 2026

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report seeks approval of the Glendinning Terrace (Emergency Closure of Early Learning and Childcare) Review Report 2026 and recommends continuing the emergency closure of the ELC for *up to* one further year, to allow community collaboration on the future of the ELC, before a further report is brought back to elected members.**
- 1.2 "Temporary closure" under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 (As Amended) applies where a school or nursery is closed due to very low numbers, with the prospect of reopening if demand increases. This can only be done in very restricted circumstances and must not be used to undermine the requirements of the Schools Consultation (Scotland) 2010 Act (As Amended). "Temporary closure" should only be pursued where the setting has been assessed as having the potential to reopen in the future (e.g. through an analysis of future rolls or demand for funded early learning and childcare places) That is not the position here. The ELC building was found to be unsafe and thus the Council may act urgently without prior statutory consultation or following the planned temporary closure process as per Scottish Government guidance. New Scottish Government guidance recognises this distinction, while requiring the Council to continue meeting its wider duties, including securing funded ELC entitlement, supporting continuity of learning and care, considering alternative provision, travel and community impacts, and engaging appropriately on children's rights and wellbeing.
- 1.3 The key issue is therefore whether there remains a reasonable prospect of reopening the provision in some form. Temporary closure can only properly continue where it remains genuinely temporary and does not amount, in effect, to a permanent closure. If the Council concludes that the building cannot be made safe or reinstated in some format by construction work within a "reasonable" timeframe, that reinstatement or relocation is not

financially viable, and that there is no realistic prospect of reopening, it should move to consider a formal closure proposal of the ELC under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 (As Amended) rather than rely on an open-ended emergency temporary closure.

- 1.4 The Review Report at **Appendix 1** follows the April 2025 emergency temporary closure of Glendinning ELC, which operated from a temporary unit within the grounds of Glendinning Primary School. This report concerns only that ELC provision. The Review Report in Appendix 1 is the first review of the emergency temporary closure. It concludes that, at this stage, it is not reasonable either to re-establish the ELC in its previous form at the moment or to proceed to statutory consultation on permanent closure either. The recommended option is to continue the temporary closure for up to one further year to allow a full collaborative feasibility review with the Glendinning school community, in line with Scottish Borders Council ELC Sustainability Policy 2025 (Appendix 2) This will assess demand, consider community options mooted for reinstatement, allow officers and the community to consider the estimates for reinstatement that have been received so far, and review the long-term sustainability of the ELC within the wider context of Glendinning Primary School as well, before any final decision is made.
- 1.5 When serious health and safety concerns arose in April 2025, officers engaged with affected parents and carers and considered all reasonable options. Given the condition of the portacabin and the significant risks identified, temporary closure was the only viable option. Officers have completed the first annual options review under the Council's ELC Sustainability Policy to consider next steps following one year of emergency closure. The review takes account of the community survey, November 2025 enrolment enquiries, and Parent Council concerns about the impact on future primary intake. Assessing current and future demand is therefore central to determining the longer-term position of the provision.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

I recommend therefore that Council:

- 2.1 **Approves the report Glendinning Terrace (Emergency Closure of ELC) Review Report 2026 and recommends continuing the emergency closure of the ELC facility for *up* to one more year to allow full community collaboration to review the overall position with the ELC as per SBC ELC Sustainability Policy 2026 and Scottish Government Guidance.**
- 2.2 **Agrees that a report on the collaborative review be brought back to Council, for approval and to advise on next steps**

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Glendinning Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) was established in within Glendinning Primary School but operating within a temporary Unit (Portacabin) 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.
- 3.2 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 currently enrolled, 3 families had requested an alternative place within other nurseries in the town. All these requests were accommodated.
- 3.3 There is a universal entitlement for all 3- and 4-year-olds and eligible 2 years, 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 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.

- 3.4 There are no catchment areas for Early learning and Childcare. Although the ELC is temporarily closed due to emergency closure, Officers are required to document all enquiries about the ELC to evaluate and monitor demand for the ELC. It was stipulated that in enrolment week (November 2025) if any parent or carer wished to enrol a child 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, 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 once eligible, another parent reached out to officers via email indicating she who was looking for their child to attend in 2026/27.
- 3.5 Where an ELC building becomes unsafe and requires immediate closure, the Council may act urgently without first undertaking statutory consultation or following the planned temporary closure process. The current Scottish Government guidance distinguishes emergency or critical closures from planned temporary closures and recognises that immediate action may be required for health and safety reasons.
- 3.6 However, the Council must continue to meet its wider duties, including securing children's funded ELC entitlement, supporting continuity of learning and care, considering alternative provision, travel implications and community impact, and ensuring appropriate engagement and consideration of children's rights and wellbeing. The key issue is therefore whether there remains a reasonable prospect of reopening the provision in some form. Temporary closure can only properly continue where it remains genuinely temporary and does not amount, in effect, to a permanent closure. If the Council concludes once the review with the community has taken place, that the building cannot be made safe within a reasonable timeframe, or that reinstatement or relocation is not financially viable, and that there is no realistic prospect of reopening, it should move to consider a formal closure proposal under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 rather than rely on an open-ended emergency temporary closure.

3.7 Emergency Closure Review/ Options Appraisal 2026

- a) In order to determine what the next steps should be following the emergency closure in April 2025. Officers carried out a review and considered opinions of the local community by way of a survey distributed to the Galashiels cluster area parent and carer cohort and all local childminders by way of group call and email communication.
- b) This has taken the form of informing the local elected members and reaching out to the local community by way of a survey asking for views

and feedback. This was to encompass views of parents and carers, community members and groups and all interested parties about the future of the ELC in light of the necessary temporary closure due to health and safety concerns and not fit for purpose temporary unit in which the ELC was housed, to ensure that all potential novel options for the ELC to be reinstated are identified, and considered, including all identified alternatives to closure, to appropriately review in full prior to any further recommendations to be made to elected members.

- c) Officers contacted parents and carers to share a survey on intention and thoughts about Glendinning ELC, obtain as much data as possible to assess demand for the ELC and to generate ideas about increasing demand and to give the community a chance to provide ideas and comments in general about the temporary closure status of the ELC and gauge what the community feels should happen next.
- d) The survey opened on 15th December and closed on 22nd February 2026 and was shared by Group call to all the school and ELC communities including private nurseries and childminders, by way of Group call and social media and also sharing by email to HT of Glendinning and shared to all HT's to cascade to the parent councils of the Galashiels cluster schools. The results of the 2026 emergency closure review survey and all comments and ideas within the survey are documented in **Section 5 of the Review Report in Appendix 1** but summarised below. Officers are aware that there is a slight delay in bringing the results of this survey to Council due to competing workload demands of Officers involved in Scottish Borders Council school estate work and the Scottish Parliamentary Elections. The report contains details of the options considered and assesses next steps taking into consideration also the Scottish Borders Council Sustainability of ELC policy (Appendix 1) with a view to sustaining and continuing to support demand for Glendinning Terrace ELC, where reasonable and possible, given financial burdens.
- e) A full breakdown of the survey results can be found in the report, but a highlighted version can be provided below:-

The data received from the survey was as follows:-

Question 1- How are you responding to this activity?

14 responses to this survey.

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%

Question 2-

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

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%

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*

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

In answer to the question:- Do you have any ideas as to how to sustain the ELC/Nursery setting at Glendinning Primary School?

12 Comments/ suggestions themes were:-

Accommodation and reinstatement options

- Use existing accommodation, repair the current unit, or build a new nursery extension.
- Use temporary or shared community spaces while permanent provision is developed.

Funding, transparency and sustainability

- Provide transparency on options, costs and potential community fundraising.
- Seek Council funding and explore a sustainable community hub with income-generating and environmentally friendly features.

Delivery model and staffing

- Explore a combined ELC/P1 model with shared staff and play-based learning.
- Use hub staffing more flexibly to support provision.

Impact on families and the school community

- Promote the school and retain an ELC link to support future enrolment.
- Restore safe local provision to reduce practical and emotional strain on families.
- Recognise access, equality, transport and wider school sustainability concerns arising from the loss of local ELC provision.

3.8 The Options Considered during 2026 Emergency Closure Review:-

3 possible options were then identified and were considered:--

Option 1	Reestablish ELC at Glendinning – undertaking remedial work/ construction to bring this 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 the ELC Sustainability Policy to determine whether the provision can be re-established in some form 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)

- a) **Option 1 – reinstate ELC undertaking remedial work to bring back to school premises.** Officers have obtained estimates for re-establishing ELC provision at Glendinning, including a replacement temporary unit, internal alterations to the primary school building, and an Early Level composite class. At this stage, officers are aware that these options are expensive because each would require significant capital investment, with estimated costs ranging from approximately £266,000 to £324,000, alongside further practical, regulatory and quality considerations relating to Care Inspectorate requirements, outdoor access, toilet provision, staffing ratios and the suitability of the physical environment. Reinstatement would also generate unfunded recurring revenue costs including utilities & maintenance, which will need to be absorbed within existing budgets. Given these costs, the availability of alternative ELC provision in Galashiels, and the need to ensure any future provision is sustainable and of sufficient quality, reinstatement in its current form is not considered the most reasonable option currently. However, officers recognise the impact on local families and the wider sustainability of the school, and consider that the Council should work collaboratively with the community to explore all

options, including those identified through the community survey, before determining the next steps.

- b) **Option 2 – Continue the temporary closure of the ELC provision for up to one year to allow work with the school community, in line with the ELC Sustainability Policy, to determine whether provision can be re-established in 2027/28.** Officers have concluded that the most reasonable course is to continue the emergency temporary closure of the ELC provision at Glendinning Primary for up to one further year. This reflects the planned removal of the temporary unit on safety grounds in July 2026, at an estimated cost of approximately £25,000. Given the significant estimated costs and practical considerations associated with reinstating provision, further work is required to assess future demand and to understand the community's views with full information about the available options. Extending the temporary closure would provide time for a full feasibility study and structured options appraisal, including consideration of the options raised through the community survey. It would also enable officers to work collaboratively with families, the school and the wider community before determining whether ELC provision can be re-established in a sustainable form for Session 2027/28.
- c) **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)** Officers have considered the position carefully, including the statutory requirements for any permanent closure proposal, the Council's ELC Sustainability Policy, the reasons for the original emergency closure, the indicative costs and practical implications of reinstating provision, and the options for reinstating suggested by the community through the survey. At this stage, officers do not consider that proceeding directly to a statutory closure proposal would be appropriate. The key reasons are that the original closure arose from an emergency building condition issue rather than a planned review of demand; further work is required to establish current and future demand for ELC provision; all reasonable options for reinstatement or alternative delivery have not yet been fully explored and tested; the potential impact on families, access to funded ELC places and the wider sustainability of Glendinning Primary School requires fuller assessment as a whole if Officers are looking at the ELC; and the community should be given a further opportunity to understand and input their views on the practical and regulatory constraints of the estimates of the ELC reinstatement, before any decision is made. Continuing the temporary emergency closure for up to one further year is therefore considered the most reasonable option, as it allows time for a full feasibility study and structured engagement with families, the school community, the Community Council, elected members and Trade Unions under the ELC Sustainability Policy 2025 before any statutory closure proposal, or alternative option, is considered and decisions made.
- d) If Elected Members agree with the recommendations and outcome of this Emergency Closure Review 2026, a collaborative process will begin with the

community of Glendinning to discuss the ELC and future of it, as per ELC Sustainability Policy 2025.

4 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial

- a) The financial implications of all options considered within this report are summarised below. Options 1 and 2 would also require upfront capital investment in terms of reinstating the ELC whether that is in temporary cabin or restructuring construction work.

Options 1 - Reinstating the Early Learning and Childcare Centre

Capital reinstatement costs are currently estimated between £100k - £400k, subject to the option agreed with the community. Initial indicative estimates have been prepared and will require further refinement. Reinstatement would also generate unfunded recurring revenue costs including utilities & maintenance which will need to be absorbed within existing budgets. ELC staff have already been redeployed, and no additional staffing requirements are anticipated should the ELC be reinstated. These will be fully costed depending on decisions made. The removal of the temporary unit on safety grounds will be undertaken in July 2026, at an estimated cost of approximately £25k.

Option 2 - Continued temporary closure of Early Learning and

Childcare Centre No annual running costs due to children being relocated to other nursery. Staff Costs would be the same as previous years, due to redeployment to other ELC provisions. No additional costs other than the planned removal of the temporary unit on safety grounds in July 2026, at an estimated cost of approximately £25k.

Option 3- Statutory Consultation on permanent closure – Annual running costs would remain the same as those associated with continued emergency closure (option 2). A capital receipt would not be able to be realised as the temporary unit is being demolished in July 2026 at a cost of approximately £25k.

4.2 Risk and Mitigations

When the ELC closed in April 2025, there was a risk that the temporary unit would deteriorate further. This was to be mitigated by the Corporate Landlord maintaining the surrounding area and grounds to a reasonable standard. The Unit is due to be removed from the grounds in July 2026 during the summer recess. Officers recognise that the continued temporary closure has had, and will continue to have, an adverse impact on Glendinning Primary School and its community. It is therefore proposed that officers work openly with the community over the next year to consider what is viable and sustainable, taking account of financial constraints, community views and possible future options. This approach is consistent with Scottish Government guidance on emergency temporary closure and

ensuring that this does not move into a “defacto closure” by temporary closure. It is important that Officers follow the SBC ELC Sustainability Policy 2025, and is considered preferable to have this period of grace, to work with the community to try and look at all options together rather than moving directly to a statutory closure consultation at this stage.

4.3 Integrated Impact Assessment

- a) As part of the engagement process, officers will wish to need to consult with a range of stakeholders, including children/ parents/carers, staff and the wider community and will address all the comments made during this process, some of which may include equality issues and will be covered by an Integrated Impact Assessment. An Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) has already been carried out by education Council officers to meet statutory equality duties, to assess policies and practices and ensure compliance with all legislative requirements when Emergency Closure in April 2025 required to happen, but updates will be made after this period of engagement with the community. The aim of an IIA is to examine policies and practices in a structured way taking account of equality, human rights and socioeconomic disadvantage (poverty) implications when making decisions, ensuring the impact within the community is recognised and addressed accordingly. IIA screening is completed using the Council’s Integrated Impact Assessment Toolkit and allows the Authority to recognise positive steps it can take to promote fairness and equality of opportunity for all. As part of the collaborative process the Council will consult with a wide range of stakeholders, staff, parents/carers and young people and will welcome and address comments to include in the IIA process. An IIA is an iterative process which will be updated throughout this process.
- b) The outcome of the final Integrated Impact Assessment will inform a Final Report and the Council’s consideration of any proposed changes or actions prior to reaching a decision on whether they should be implemented.

4.4 Sustainable Development Goals

It is not anticipated that there will be any negative environmental impacts. Environmental Impacts have been considered throughout all reviews and will be considered in addition when the engagement over the next year has been undertaken.

4.5 Climate Change

Not anticipate there will be negative impacts.

4.6 Rural Proofing

Council Officers have carried out a Review in respect of the ELC, to consider all reasonable options currently. The analysis also considers the impact of each of the options on the wider community in Galashiels. This ELC is not considered a rural ELC as it is situated within the conurbation of Galashiels.

4.7 Data Protection Impact Statement

It is anticipated that the proposals in this report will have a minimal impact on data subjects, and the Data Protection Officer has confirmed that a Data Protection Impact Assessment is not required.

4.8 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

There are no changes required to the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of these proposals.

5 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Director (Finance & Corporate Governance), the Monitoring Officer/Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Director (People Performance & Change), the Clerk to the Council and Corporate Communications have been consulted in respect of the Consultation process prior to the Report going to Council and any comments received have been incorporated into this report.

Approved by

Lesley Munro
Director of Education and Children's Services

Author(s)

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Background Papers: N/A

Previous Minute Reference: N/A

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Contact us at Scottish Borders Council on 0300 100 1800.

Appendix 1 Glendinning Terrace ELC – Emergency Closure -Review Report 2026
Appendix 2 Scottish Borders Council -ELC Sustainability Policy 2025