

# Change to West Lothian catchment area called for

A new West Lothian high school's catchment area should include part of Edinburgh so that pupils attending a Catholic primary in South Queensferry can continue denominational education, a councillor has said.

Louise Young, who represents the Almond ward, is calling on Edinburgh City Council to enter formal discussions with officials in the neighbouring local authority.

She said more than a third of parents with children at [St Margaret's Primary](#) on Station Road, a Roman Catholic school, want their child to continue in denominational education after P7.

Despite this most pupils end up attending the local non-denominational secondary rather than [St Augustine's](#) on Broomhouse Road, which is the nearest Roman Catholic high school which includes South Queensferry in its catchment area.

The Lib Dem councillor said most parents are put-off by the travel time into Edinburgh "which during morning traffic can take 35-40 mins each way".

She added that a round trip to the new Sinclair Academy denominational school in Winchburgh is "significantly closer" and would mean a round trip for parents of around half an

hour.

Backing a catchment change so that St Margaret's pupils can attend Sinclair Academy, which opened to pupils last month, Ms Young said this would "give pupils more time to engage in extra-curricular activities, homework, or time with family".

"Edinburgh Council was approached by West Lothian Council during construction of Sinclair Academy, regarding the option to include West of Edinburgh in their catchment but this was not progressed," she said.

"While non-catchment requests are considered by West Lothian, this offers no guarantee to St Margaret's families and with the ongoing housing development in West Lothian, it may become more difficult to secure a place.

"This is of particular concern for families with more than one child if there is no guaranteed place for a sibling."

Cllr Young said a survey showed that most parents "wish to pursue a catchment change to Sinclair Academy".

She is set to table a motion at the education committee on Tuesday to instruct officers to enter into formal discussion with West Lothian Council "on the option to realign the catchment and ascertain whether they are willing to accommodate this change".

by Donald Turvill, Local Democracy Reporter

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Scottish Liberal Democrat Cllrs Louise Young and Kevin Lang – brother and sister – observing the 2021 Scottish Parliamentary election count ©2021 The Edinburgh Reporter