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Mum slams South Lanarkshire Council over school placements

May 23 2012 by Nicola Findlay, East Kilbride News

A WORRIED mum has told the News this week that she could have her three sons, two of whom have special needs, educated in three different towns in South Lanarkshire.

Louise Hood has slammed South Lanarkshire Council for adding to the stress of caring for her sons, five year-old Lewis and 10-year-old Andrew, both of whom have special needs.

Next year Andrew, who has Asperger's Syndrome and currently attends Mossneuk Primary, could be sent to Hamilton Grammar or Duncanrig Secondary.

And Lewis, who is due to start primary school in August and has the genetic condition chromosome 14 deletion, which has left him severely physically disabled, has been placed at a newly-opened specialist unit in Cairns Primary in Halfway, Cambuslang.

And with Louise's nineyear-old son Adam in mainstream schooling at Mossneuk Primary, she told the News she is facing a logistical nightmare if her three sons end up being educated in three different towns in South Lanarkshire.

The worried mum said this week: "Although the education department say they

will provide transport that doesn't take into account other school interests like parents' nights and school plays.

"My husband also works abroad a lot so effectively I am looking after the three boys on my own a lot of the time.

"Also, when I went to view the school at Cambuslang which Lewis has been placed at it wasn't even set up so I couldn't see what environment he will be educated in and a teacher hadn't been put in place, so I couldn't even speak to them about his future.

"It seems that my family circumstances haven't been taken into consideration by South Lanarkshire Council's education department."

And Louise is also concerned about Lewis's safety at the school he will be attending in Cambuslang.

"Although Lewis who has poor muscle tone, no speech, delayed development and is doubly incontinent, will be in one of the two classrooms dedicated to children with special needs, it is part of a mainstream school.



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"At playtime he will be mixing with 200 other children and he falls over a lot, so I am concerned about his safety."

Louise has also been told by one of Lewis's support workers that because the five-year-old has been placed in Cambuslang for his primary education, he will also have to attend high school in Rutherglen.

She also raised concerns over how her son, Andrew, who has Asperger's, would cope at a mainstream secondary school due to his proximity to other children, sensory and light issues.

A spokeswoman for South Lanarkshire Council said: "In all cases the individual needs of the pupil are assessed before a decision is taken on which school they can attend.

"Our priority is to best meet the individual needs of the child both for inclusion in mainstream education and for specialist provision.

"All available information is carefully looked at before a placement is offered to parents/carers.

"We provide transport for children attending additional support needs schools and bases and we work in partnership with parents/carers to work through any concerns to ensure we maximise learning opportunities in the school the child is attending.

"Possible placements for secondary aged children for August 2013 have not yet been made. We would encourage anyone who has concerns to contact us as our aim is to provide as much reassurance as we possibly can."

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