

Procedure: Admissions to Mainstream Schools

1 Purpose

- 1.1 This procedure aims to provide clear guidance for all staff in the management of admissions to schools. It accompanies the Admissions Policy.

2 Scope

- 3.1 This policy covers the admission of pupils to all stages in mainstream schools and in particular to those pupils in P1 and S1 in August of any school year.

3 Definitions

- 3.1 Reserved places: Places reserved for children and young people moving into the school catchment through the year.
- 3.2 Proofs of residence: A copy of council tax and a utility bill.
- 3.3 R.C. school: Roman Catholic school.
- 3.4 School Catchment: An area from which children and young people are eligible to attend a local school. This area is based on the child's home address.
- 3.5 Composite Class: A class in which there are pupils at more than one stage of the primary school.
- 3.6 Team teaching: Team Teaching is where two teachers teach a class that has more than the maximum number of pupils for that particular stage, for example if there are more than 25 children in a P1 class there will be two teachers.
- 3.7 Mainstream schools: Schools which meet the needs of the majority of pupils and are non specialist provisions.
- 3.8 Placing Requests: A request for a placement in a school.
- 3.9 Non Catchment Placing Request: A request for a placement in a school which is not the catchment school for the address of the individual.
- 3.9 Exceptional: Unusual or complex.

4 Actions

Catchment Registration and Placing Requests for P1 and S1

- 4.1 Catchment registration and the handling of placing requests across the city is a major but routine organisational procedure undertaken by the Communities and

Families Department on an annual basis. This process commences in November with schools being asked to register their catchment children, and parents being asked to make their placing requests by mid-December. Head Teachers are involved throughout the process and are asked to consult with parents in early February, where necessary, to share with them plans for P1 and S1 intakes and class organisations for August. Schools are made aware that class organisations can change between now and the start of the session.

- 4.2 It is important to note that numbers of pupils do change, sometimes on a daily basis, as a result of parents making late registrations often requiring changes to class organisations. The initial figures are analysed during January to establish class organisations and identify any accommodation issues and identify where catchment pupil numbers might exceed school capacity. Proposed intakes are based on these figures. The process continues to be managed by the Department through to the start of session in August when the waiting list is returned to the school to manage. However, consideration will be given to whether in the future this process would also be best managed by the department centrally rather than by schools.
- 4.3 The process is characterised by complex patterns of pupil flow across the city and a constantly evolving picture as late applications are made and pupils are withdrawn. Nearly all schools experience a drop between the number of catchment P1 pupils registered in January and the number taking up a place in August. In many schools this drop can be significant and is explained by parents successfully making a placing request to another school, deciding to defer entry, choosing the private sector or moving house within the intervening period.
- 4.4 These changes make it difficult not to over-plan for placements and many schools which initially appear to have more catchment pupils than can be accommodated are likely to have no difficulty in ultimately accommodating their catchment intake in August. It also means that some placing requests refused in April will be successful by August. There can, however, be no guarantees and some schools require careful monitoring of their numbers throughout the process. For some schools the final organisation of the P1 classes may not be known until late in the process because of complex cross catchment movement of pupils.
- 4.5 Communities and Families publish a timeline outlining the process involved in P1 and S1 placements on an annual basis which is attached at Annex 1.
- 4.6 If a placing request is refused a parent has the right to appeal in the first instance to an independent committee and if that is unsuccessful to the Sheriff Court.

Catchment Registration and Placing Requests for Other Stages

- 4.7 Placing requests at other stages follow the same procedures as for P1 and S1. These requests are managed by Headteachers. If there are no available places the headteacher will refuse the place and add the names to the waiting list.

- 4.8 At all stages in primary and secondary schools if a placing request is refused a parent has the right to appeal in the first instance to an independent committee and if that is unsuccessful to the Sheriff Court.
- 4.9 None of the above affects a parent's statutory right to make a placing request to any school.

Waiting lists

- 4.10 Those children who are refused a place will be placed on a waiting list. The priority order for the waiting list in P1 and S1 is determined by the Committee on Pupil Student support comprising representatives of the Education Children and Families Committee who meet in February/March of each year. The usual priority order is:
- a) Siblings;
 - b) Edinburgh children;
 - c) Out of Edinburgh Children.
- 4.11 Within each category distance [to the school from the home] is then used to determine the place on the waiting list; the shorter the distance the higher the place on the waiting list.

Key considerations for Parents

- 4.12 There are six key points for parents to consider when applying for school places:
- 4.12.1 Places are allocated to children based on their residence and all parents must provide proof of residence for a catchment place when they register their child for school;
 - 4.12.2 All schools have two catchment schools, non-denominational and Roman Catholic. Parents must choose which of these is their preferred school;
 - 4.12.3 Children attending a nursery class in a primary school are only entitled to a place in the primary school if they live in the catchment area of the primary school;
 - 4.12.4 In a non denominational school catchment places for P1 and S1 will only be guaranteed to children living in the school catchment by the end of February in the year they begin primary or secondary school;
 - 4.12.5 If a denominational Roman Catholic school is oversubscribed with catchment children, priority will be given to catchment baptised Roman Catholics;
 - 4.12.6 If a placing request is successful for one child, it does not guarantee that requests for younger siblings will be successful. This could mean that siblings would attend different schools;

Fraud Prevention

- 4.13 The Council is obliged to make random spot checks of addresses as part of fraud prevention and parents may be asked to provide proof of residence at any time before the school session begins. The Corporate Fraud team will investigate all claims of false addresses being used to gain a school place and, if proven, the place will be withdrawn.

5 Responsibilities

- 5.1 The Senior Education Manager: Inclusion, Pupil and Parent Support has overall responsibility for the maintenance of this procedure.

6 Policy Base

- 6.1 The procedure has been developed to implement the Policy: Admissions to Mainstream Schools.

7 Associated Documents

Policy: Admissions to Mainstream Schools

8. Record Keeping

- 8.1 When a procedure has been followed there are often outputs such as decisions made or events occurred that need to be recorded. These outputs are considered Council records. Please list all Records, including completed forms, generated by this procedure. For each record, list its title, location, responsible officer and minimum retention period.

Record Title	Location	Responsible Officer	Minimum Retention Period
Education Records	Education Establishments	Headteachers/Managers	As per records retention schedule

Annex 1: Placements Timeline P1 S1

Inclusion: School Grants, Awards & Placements

	What is happening?
By 30 October	<p>All N5 & P7 pupil address data verified and UPRN allocated on Click+Go. Catchment schools identified and initial information letters sent to parents.</p> <p>P1/S1 Placing In Schools Booklet reviewed and updated.</p> <p>Posters advertising registration week distributed to all nursery & primary schools (including Partner Provider nurseries).</p>
November	<p>Primary schools open day for parents of catchment P1 children.</p>
Early November	<p>Advert in Evening News & Metro publicising P1 & S1 procedures.</p>
Early November	<p>P1 registration week starts. RC baptismal certificates to be collated at time of registration (if applicable). Catchment pupil details to be recorded on SEEMiS.</p> <p>Provisional Allocations Report populated for P7 pupils, based on address details held on Click+Go.</p> <p>Secondary schools send appropriate supply of school handbooks to primary schools for onward distribution to P7 pupils.</p> <p>Online non-catchment placing request form goes live. From this date requests are recorded by GAP on SEEMiS each day and acknowledgment letter or automated email sent to parents confirming receipt.</p>

<p>Mid November</p>	<p>P1 registration week ends. Subsequent registrations by appointment.</p> <p>School Placements team begin liaising with Corporate Fraud Team to query dubious addresses.</p>
<p>End November</p>	<p>Closing date for return of primary school proposed class organisation to Devolved Finance & Resource Officer.</p> <p>All catchment P1 pupils registered during registration week to be recorded on SEEMiS by this date.</p>
<p>24 December</p>	<p>Closing date for non-catchment placing requests to allow for accurate projection of requests citywide.</p> <p>Secondary Head Teachers to inform Devolved Finance & Resource Officer of projected roll for coming session.</p>
<p>Early January</p>	<p>Nursery & Primary schools to investigate N5 children who are not yet registered on SEEMiS and encourage parents to register.</p> <p>Meeting held involving Senior Education Manager (Inclusion & Pupil/Parent Support), GAP, Devolved Finance & Resource, Council Solicitor, Asset Planning and Communications Service to assess demand for places citywide, propose intake limits and class organisations for coming session.</p> <p>Oversubscribed Roman Catholic schools identified and letters sent to affected parents.</p> <p>Preparation of reports to Committee on Pupil/Student Support.</p> <p>Home to school route measurements requested to prepare for the creation of waiting lists.</p>
<p>January /February</p>	<p>Primary Head Teacher seminars take place.</p>

End January	Proposed intakes and class organisations issued to Head Teachers by Devolved Finance & Resource Officer.
By end February	Parent Council meetings take place, where appropriate. Draft staffing allocations notified to schools by Devolved Finance & Resource Officer.
Late February/early March	Meeting of the Committee on Pupil/Student Support to consider exceptional reasons submitted for placement in all oversubscribed schools. Waiting lists to be created based on committee decisions.
28 February	Catchment guarantee date. All children who are resident in the catchment area by this date are guaranteed a place in their non-denominational catchment school unless they move address before the start of the coming session. New Intake Registration screen and Delete Registration screen locked from this date – schools to email late P1 registrations after this date to School Placements team.
Mid March	Decisions on oversubscribed schools sent to parents. Waiting lists become operational. Preparation of reports to the Placing in Schools Appeal Committee commences.
31 March	Closing date for requests to delay entry to P1.
15 April	Closing date for submission of placing in school appeals and second-preference requests.
From 19 April	Primary & Secondary schools to confirm places with parents and invite to induction visit. Inform GAP if places are declined. Decisions on late and second-preference placing requests sent to parents in writing from this date

	onwards.
May – June	Placing in Schools Appeal Committee hearings take place.
21 – 23 June	P7 transition days.
<i>From</i> mid August	<p>Waiting lists passed to relevant schools. Responsibility for subsequent allocation of places devolved to Head Teacher from this date following waiting list priority.</p> <p>Primary & Secondary schools to contact parents of children who have not attended as expected by telephone. If unable to contact parent letter issued by recorded delivery giving 7 days to respond advising place will be given up if necessary.</p> <p>Where possible, one reserved place per class held at primary schools for incoming catchment children.</p>
29 August	Places held by children who have not attended as expected can be withdrawn.
5 September	Pupil data cleared from SEEMiS in preparation for next session's intake.