

# Admissions in Mainstream Schools

**Implementation date: 18 August 2021**

## Control schedule

<b>Approved by</b>	Education, Children and Families Committee
<b>Approval date</b>	15 December 2020
<b>Senior Responsible Officer</b>	Lorna French, Acting Head of Schools and Lifelong Learning
<b>Author</b>	Arran Finlay, Senior Education Officer
<b>Scheduled for review</b>	August 2023

Version control

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Comment</b>
0.1	December 2017	Maria Plant	
0.2	15 December 2020	Arran Finlay	

Subsequent committee decisions affecting this policy

<b>Date</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Link to report</b>	<b>Link to minute</b>
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# Admission in Mainstream Schools

## Policy statement

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The policy document provides a formal framework for the admissions to mainstream schools.

The policy and associated procedure document will ensure consistency across all schools.

## Scope

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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.

## Definitions

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**Reserved places:** Places reserved for children and young people moving into the school catchment through the year.

**R.C. school:** Roman Catholic school.

**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.

**Composite Class:** A class in which there are pupils at more than one stage of the primary school

**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 the Council place more than 25 children in a P1 class there will be two teachers

**Mainstream Schools:** Schools which meet the needs of the majority of pupils and are non specialist provisions

**Placing Request:** A request for a placement in a school

**Non Catchment Placing Request:** A Request for a placement in a school which is not the catchment school for the address of the individual

**Department:** Communities and Families Department

**Exceptional:** a pupil whose circumstances are deemed exceptional by the Committee on Pupil/Student Support

**Intake Limit:** the number of pupils to be admitted into a year group as decided by the Department

**In time Catchment Application/Non-Catchment Placing Request** – applications received by 24<sup>th</sup> December each year (from 2021)

## Policy content

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### 4.1 Statement

There are duties, under Section 1 of the Education Act 1980 (“the Act”), on local authorities to provide appropriate school education for all school age children, living in their area. The Act describes who a person of school age is - that is a child or young person who has reached the age of five years, but has not yet reached the age of sixteen All admissions must comply with class size legislation and national agreements

### 4.2 Content

#### Allocation of Placements

Key principles applied by the Council to the provision of school places:

- Children and young people are admitted to schools in the areas where they stay. These are known as the catchment areas for the school. There are separate catchment boundaries for RC and non-denominational schools at both primary and secondary level and pupils have the option of attending either of their catchment schools, subject to availability of places;
- In areas of the City, for example new building developments which currently fall outside existing catchment areas, the Council will identify an

‘appropriate school’ for pupils living in those areas. This is normally based on distance and geography;

- Pupils living in the City of Edinburgh Council area have priority for places over pupils living in other local authority areas;
- The Council aims to provide places for P1 and S1 pupils at their catchment school if they are living in a property in the catchment area and register with the school by 24<sup>th</sup> December of the year preceding that in which they will start in P1 and S1.
- If there are places available after catchment demand is met placing requests for non-catchment pupils will be allocated,
- Entitlement to a place in a school is based upon home address and not on attendance at early years or primary establishments.

### **4.3 Class Sizes and Organisation**

The council meets the legislation on class sizes, in line with the Education (Lower Primary Class Sizes) (Scotland) Regulations 1999 and through national agreement. This means a class size maximum of:

P1            25 pupils

P2/P3        30 pupils

P4 – P7      33 pupils

In secondary schools practical class sizes are a maximum of 20, non practical class are a maximum of 33 in S1 and S2 and 30 in S3 – S6.

The most efficient arrangement of class size and provision of teaching staff in P1 and S1 for each new session is sought for each school after taking account of demand for catchment places in non-denominational schools and of demand from pupils who are baptised Roman Catholic in RC schools;

P1 intake limits, classroom size restrictions and limits on the overall pupil numbers will be applied where necessary to assist in managing school provision;

Additional classes are not normally created specifically to cater for non-catchment placing requests. This includes situations where granting requests in one year would result in the need for additional classes at other year stages.

#### **4.4 Oversubscribed Roman Catholic Schools**

Where catchment applications for denominational schools exceed the available school capacity, or would cause accommodation issues at a future stage, priority will be given to baptised Roman Catholic pupils. Additional staff will not normally be employed to support a P1 intake greater than that required to meet the RC baptised catchment demand unless by doing so resolves potential accommodation issues at another school.

Where a Roman Catholic school is oversubscribed the following actions will be taken:

- Priority will be given to catchment Baptised Roman Catholics (BRC) in allocating places;
- in the event that there are insufficient places for all catchment BRC then BRC may be prioritised into other RC schools;
- Non BRC, or BRC who do not obtain a place at their catchment RC school and who choose not to be prioritised into another RC school, would be given places at their non-denominational catchment school.

#### **4.5 Oversubscribed Non-Denominational Schools**

At times when there are oversubscribed **non-denominational** schools the decision may be made to prioritise placing requests out of the school.

#### **4.6 Reserved Places**

- One place per class will be reserved for pupils moving into a school catchment in each class in primary school and two places reserved for each team-teaching class where possible.
- In secondary schools one reserved place for every 40 incoming catchment pupils will be kept at each year stage where possible. In some areas of the city new housing developments mean that there is the potential for higher than normal movement into particular catchment areas. Where it is possible to do so, in these areas additional places may

be reserved in each class in order to try and ensure that pupils moving into the area can obtain a place at their catchment school.

- Where possible a reserved place shall be maintained until a child moves into the catchment. Where this happens, the reserved place is given to the child, and is no longer available. If placing requests appeals are granted either by the Appeal Committee or a Sheriff this may result in fewer reserved places being available due to the increased class size.

#### **4.7 Team Teaching and Composite Classes**

Team teaching and composite class are part of the organisation in many primary schools.

Arrangements in primary schools may be implemented where catchment numbers are expected to exceed capacity based on P1 class sizes of 25. This normally involves raising the P1 intake to multiples of 30 to meet the class size 30 at P2 and P3. Team teaching classes may be organised at other stages in primary schools.

Regardless of the type of class, the same selection criteria must be used for all classes in a given school. Head Teachers will use a range of criteria. The selection criteria include:

- Meeting learners needs
- Age (stage appropriate)
- Friendships
- Gender balance
- Exceptional circumstances

Not all the above criteria need to be used but more than one criterion must be used. The specific criteria chosen will vary across schools, and professional judgment will be used to best meet the needs of learners in individual schools. More information held in the “Class Organisation in Primary Schools” procedure.

## **Implementation**

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The policy will be implemented from 18<sup>th</sup> August 2021. The policy will be shared on the City of Edinburgh Council website. The School Handbook will be updated to reflect the new policy. The policy and procedure will be reviewed in 2023.

## Roles and Responsibilities

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The City of Edinburgh Council's Chief Education Officer has overall responsibility for this policy.

The P1/S1 Intakes Advisory Group is formed from relevant council teams annually to determine intake limits for each school and advise the Committee on Pupil/Student Support

The City of Edinburgh Council's Transactions Team are responsible for the day to day administration of the procedure for P1 and S1 and advising parents of policy. The responsibility will transfer to Headteachers at the start of session

Headteachers are responsible for collecting information on catchment children, registering P1 children, advising parents of the policy and the administration of other stages

The Council delegates to Communities and Families the function of managing the provision of school places using principles and practices that are in line with the [Education \(Scotland\) Act 1980](#) and other relevant legislation.

## Related documents

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- [Education \(Scotland\) Act 1980](#)
- [The Education \(Appeal Committee Procedures\) \(Scotland\) Amendment Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Lower Primary Class Sizes\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 1999](#)
- [The Education \(Lower Primary Class Sizes\) \(Scotland\) Amendment Regulations 2010](#)
- [Admissions to Schools Procedure](#)
- [Organising Classes in Primary Schools Procedure](#)

## Integrated impact assessment

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All new and revised policies must be subject to an integrated impact assessment to ensure that the Council is compliant with legislation.

The impact is

- More catchment reserved places for Secondary pupils
- Earlier application date for catchment applications
- Inclusion of Conflict of Interest recording

## **Risk assessment**

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The risk of not having a consistent, clear and published policy means that parents/carers are not kept informed of this process and pupils are not able to access school education.

## **Review**

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This policy will be reviewed on a two-year cycle with the next review being August 2023 by Education, Children and Families Committee.

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