
Procedure Title - Admissions in Mainstream Schools

Management Information	
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Lead Service Area	Schools & Lifelong Learning, Communities and Families
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Agreed by	Education, Children and Families Committee
Has Screening for Equality Impact been undertaken for this procedure	Yes/No: No Date
Has Implementation and Monitoring been considered for this procedure	Yes/No: No Date
If appropriate has Health and Safety section had oversight of this procedure Name of Health and Safety contact	N/A

Definition: Procedure – An agreed method or approach to comply with Policy, Legislation and Departmental Decisions.

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1. PURPOSE

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

2. SCOPE

This procedure 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

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

Proofs of residence: A copy of council tax and a utility bill.

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 Requests: 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

Shared Care: a pupil who lives for an equal amount of time with each parent

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 24th December each year

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 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 intakes and class organisations for August. Schools are made aware that class organisations can change between now and the start of the session. The Committee on Pupil Student Support meets in February each year to agree exceptionality and to prioritise pupils the waiting list – this does not guarantee them a place at the school.
- 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

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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 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. See attached Appendix One.
- 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 and will issue the formal refusal letter.
- 4.8 School staff involved in the placement process must ensure that there is not a conflict of interest where a child joining a waiting list is known to them, in such cases the Business Manager or Head Teacher must be informed (or the transactions team if the conflict lies with the HT). If a child is known to a member of staff e.g. their own child or a child of a family member, friend or colleague, this must be declared to ensure the waiting list remains fair and impartial for all.
- 4.9 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.

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 Education Children and Families Committee who meet in February each year. The usual priority order is:
- Exceptional Children
 - Siblings;
 - Edinburgh children;
 - Out of Edinburgh Children.

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- 4.11 Within each category (other than exceptional) 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:
- 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;
 - All pupils have two catchment schools, non-denominational and Roman Catholic. Parents must choose which of these is their preferred school;
 - 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;
 - In a non-denominational school catchment places for P1 and S1 will only be allocated automatically to children living in the school catchment by the 24th December in the year before they begin primary or secondary school. After that date, they will be treated as late catchment requests.
 - If a denominational Roman Catholic school is oversubscribed with catchment children, priority will be given to catchment baptised Roman Catholics, where proof is provided.
 - 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 established, the place will be withdrawn.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Senior Education Officers have overall responsibility for the maintenance of this procedure

Head Teachers are responsible for ensuring their staff follow this procedure

6. POLICY BASE

The procedure has been developed to implement the Admissions to Mainstream Schools Policy

7. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

[Admissions in Mainstream Schools Policy](#)

8. RECORD KEEPING

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	Head Teachers	As per records retention schedule
Placing Requests	Transactions Team, Waverley Court	Transactions Team Manager/Customer Manager	As per records retention schedule
Placing Appeal Paperwork	Committee Services	Corporate Governance Manager	As per records retention schedule

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Authorised by: Education, Children and Families Committee

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