

Education, Children and Families Committee

10am, Tuesday, 10 December 2013

School Admissions

Item number	7.4
Report number	
Wards	All

Links

Coalition pledges	P2 , P4
Council outcomes	CO1 , CO2
Single Outcome Agreement	SO3

Gillian Tee

Director of Children and Families

Contact: Moyra Wilson, Senior Education Manager: Inclusion, Pupil and Parent Support

E-mail: moyra.wilson@edinburgh.gov.uk | Tel: 0131 469 3066

Executive summary

School Admissions

Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide information on the school admissions process and issues associated with placing requests for out of catchment schools.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the following

1. Paperwork for admissions has been reviewed to ensure clarity and an online form to request an outwith catchment form has been created.
2. Seminars on admissions have been delivered to all headteachers.
3. Accurate and consistent messages about school placements will be delivered to parents by means of our updated booklet and media messages.
4. Composite class and team teaching policies will be updated to include reassurance to parents on learning and teaching.
5. Parents will be told where there are likely to be places for outwith catchment pupils and where there are likely to be no places
6. Proposed changes to the independent appeals process is at present being considered by the Scottish Parliament.
7. There will be clarity of information for parents about the role of Children and Families in the appeals process.
8. The intention to raise the issues described in this report with the Scottish Government.
9. The Committee is asked to request a report in October 2014 reviewing the 2014 Admissions, Appeals process.

Measures of success

Overall progress will be measured using the following

- Compliance with all Statutory Deadlines
- 70 % usage of online forms to request an outwith catchment form
- Numbers of appeals not upheld in line with department policies and class size regulations.

Financial impact

All work identified in this area is delivered within existing budgets.

Equalities impact

All work within this area seeks to address inequalities both in terms of provision of resources and impact on outcomes for children and young people.

Sustainability impact

There are no adverse economic, social or environmental impacts resulting from these areas of activity.

Consultation and engagement

There are a variety of means of consultation with parents. These are at school and local authority level. Parents are consulted through Neighbourhood Groups and Consultative Committee with Parents. Parents are also part of the Rising Rolls working group and officers meet with individual parent councils where schools are affected by rising rolls. Headteachers meet with their own Parent Council to discuss placements in their own school.

Background reading / external references

[The School Admissions \(Appeals Arrangements ... - Legislation.gov.uk](#)

[Class Size legislation](#)

[Tribunals Scotland Bill](#)

School Admissions

1. Background

- 1.1. In Edinburgh, admissions for P1 and S1 each August are managed by the Grants, Awards and Placements team. The headteacher is responsible for all admissions at all other stages and for P1 and S1 after August.
- 1.2. Edinburgh has high levels of placing requests with many pupils attending non-catchment schools. In 2012, 24% of primary pupils did not attend their catchment primary school.
- 1.3. Primary school rolls in the city are projected to rise to a peak of nearly 31,000 pupils by 2019 which is an increase of 4,080 (15.2%) on the provisional September 2013 roll of 26,920. From a low of 24,500 in 2009, rolls are projected to have increased by 26% by 2019.
- 1.4. There are still 5000 spare places in the city but they are not in the schools where demand is highest. For the past two years primary schools across the city have held Open Days to let new parents see what happens in the school and also to promote local schools for local children. There is now a sustained media campaign taking place to encourage parents to visit their local school and to make clear there will be less likelihood of out of catchment places in the coming year, even for siblings.
- 1.5. The number of initial applications for outwith catchment places in Primary 1 is as follows.

2013	1084
2012	1109
2011	1099
2010	1115
2009	866

- 1.6. As catchment populations have increased the success rate of placing requests into non-catchment schools has decreased. The percentage of placing requests refused has increased from 18% in 2009 to 37% in 2013. The number of P1 appeals each year is as follows:

Year	Appeals Received	Appeals granted	Percentage of appeals granted
2013	261	46	17.62%
2012	310	55	17.74%
2011	233	47	20.17%
2010	92	12	13.04%
2009	132	19	14.39%

2. Main report

- 2.1. The policies and procedures which underpin the admissions process for mainstream primary and secondary schools have been in place since the inception of Edinburgh City Council. Legal advice has indicated that any change to these policies would require a full scale statutory consultation with all parents.
- 2.2. Each year parents receive a booklet outlining the P1 and S1 placing procedure. Those parents wishing to apply for an outwith catchment place in the past received a paper form to complete. In that form there were tick boxes for parents to complete if they identified the following issues of childcare, work place and bullying as reasons for requesting an outwith catchment placement. This may have lead parents to believe that these areas were prioritised in allocating a placing request however this was not the case.
- 2.3. A new online form has now been created for outwith catchment placing requests and this simply asks for the reasons for a request. Paper forms are still available but we are encouraging parents to use the online form. The new online system allows us to interrogate the forms to identify the main reasons parents are giving for making out of catchment requests which is beneficial in our analysis of these requests.
- 2.4. The admissions booklet for P1 and S1 has now been reviewed to ensure clarity of key message on the cover and within the booklet. The remainder of the booklet has now been written in a question and answer format to ensure clarity of key messages for parents.
- 2.5. These messages are as follows:
- I. 2 proofs of residence are required
 - II. Allocation of places are based on residence before 28 February

- III. Late catchment pupils after 28 February are not guaranteed places in a catchment school
- IV. Siblings are not guaranteed out of catchment placements
- V. Parents will be asked to sign a letter confirming their understanding that there is no guarantee of a place for any future siblings
- VI. If a parent is unsuccessful at appeal they then have the right to take their appeal to the sheriff court within the 28 days of the refusal of the appeal

This review of processes has already begun and will be further enhanced by a lean review of processes taking place in November/ December 2013 and an audit in November looking at

- Information collated by Children & Families to inform the Pupil and Student Support Committee decision making and subsequent outcomes
- Statutory time requirements
- The independence of the Pupil and Student Support Committee [see 2.6] to ensure there is fair and transparent process

- 2.6. The Pupil and Student Support Committee is a committee comprising an elected member from each political party and a religious representative from the Education Children and Families Committee. The Pupil and Student Support Committee review all outwith catchment placing requests and decide the priority order for placement. This is usually siblings, other children resident in Edinburgh, children from outwith Edinburgh and in each category this is based on distance from the school. The priority order will be used to allocate any available places, with the remainder being placed accordingly on a waiting list. The Committee may decide that the circumstances of an individual child are exceptional and place that child at a higher point on the priority order for placement.

Intakes, Catchment Pupils and Communication

- 2.7. Intakes are set jointly by Children and Families staff from Pupil Placements, Devolved School Management and Asset Management in January based on
 - a. the number of catchment pupils registered for each school
 - b. the available accommodation
- 2.8. There is a need in this intake setting to
 - ensure that parents are accurately informed about the situation in their school
 - ensure the head teacher is aware of the decision making process
 - ensure an accurate picture of available capacity in all schools

- 2.9. Seminars on the admissions process and the engagement of parents with the process have taken place in November for all primary headteachers. There will also be Frequently Asked Question briefings prepared for each headteacher, Parent Councils and local councillors.

Class Organisations

- 2.10. Head teachers plan their class organisation for the following year in December each year. This is then sent to the Devolved School Management team who check organisations and advise schools on specific issues. In planning class organisations headteachers must take heed of class size legislation and national agreements.
- 2.11. The Education (Lower Primary Class Sizes) (Scotland) Regulations 1999 amended 2010 specifies a class size maximum of 25 for P1. Prior to this Children and Families were unable to hold to the 25 class size guidance and regularly had to take up to 30 pupils in each class.
- 2.12. Team teaching is now more common when intakes are based on multiples of 30. Government guidance states clearly that there should not be a floating teacher to assist with team teaching [that is a teacher who works between two larger classes] instead there should be, for example, one teacher for 25 children and two teachers for 35 children.

Team Teaching in Edinburgh

Session	Numbers	Percentage
2009/10	5	0.51%
2010/11	6	0.61%
2011/12	20	2.01%
2012/13	33	3.27%
2013/14	21	2.01%

The increase in the team teaching classes between 2010/11 and 11/12 was related to the limit of 25 being established through legislation, and the drop this year was mainly due to school extensions and new accommodation becoming available.

- 2.13. Composite classes can be viewed with some anxiety by parents who have not encountered them before. However, once parents have experienced composite classes the feedback is usually very positive. Composite classes are common

across Scotland. In Edinburgh the pattern of composite classes has been as follows:

Edinburgh		
Session	Numbers of classes	Percentage
2009/10	129	13.24%
2010/11	111	11.32%
2011/12	115	11.47%
2012/13	108	10.33%
National	4997	31.00%
Aberdeen	117	22.8%
Dundee	98	23.7%
Glasgow	310	20.6%

2.14. There is a need to:

- ensure that parents know proposed class organisations may change between February and June
- Provide reassurance and guidance to parents about composite class and team teaching arrangements and policies

Appeals

2.15 The appeals process is administered by Committee Services and they send out all documentation to parents. The Grants, Awards and Placements team prepare the appeal reports for Children and Families officers to present to the individual appeal committees stating why outwith catchment placements have been refused in a school and confirmed by Pupil and Student Support Committee.

2.16 Appeal panels are independent of the council however parents do not perceive this to be the case as Committee Services administer the appeals and they are held in the City Chambers. The Senior Solicitor and Senior Education Manager in Children and Families also train the appeal committees. At the same time the Placements team and Senior Education Manager are expected to discuss the

process of appeals with parents despite the fact they are presenting the case for Children and Families.

- 2.17 If an appeal is unsuccessful parents have the right to take the appeal to the sheriff court. This happens on average twice a year. Most parents however prefer not to take the route to the sheriff because of cost and instead write to Children and Families, to local councillors and M.S.Ps to complain about the process and the result. In the space of two months this year the Senior Education Manager dealt with 100 such complaints.
- 2.18 Appeal Committees can at times make decisions which mean there is a need to rearrange the class structure which upsets other parents in school. If Children and Families lose the Common case [the grounds for refusal for all places in a particular school] all appellants on the day have places granted. Children and Families then have to review all existing placing requests for that school and write to parents giving them the opportunity to appeal. This was done at Blackhall this year which meant existing proposed class organisations had to be changed introducing a composite class. This caused concern amongst the existing parents.
- 2.19 If a pupil is allocated a place at an appeal they are known as excepted pupils for one year i.e. they do not count in class numbers for one year. During the past year there were a number of excepted pupils, in the case of Davidsons Mains Primary School there were six excepted pupils and during the summer holidays an additional class was opened. It is doubtful the excepted pupil legislation was meant to extend to more than one or two pupils.
- 2.20 The Tribunals (Scotland) Bill was introduced to the Scottish Parliament on 8th May 2013. If this Bill becomes law then it will establish a new Tribunal system that will gradually take over the functions of various tribunals, including the Education Appeal Committee. The Bill is now at Stage 2 of the legislative process and it is unlikely to become law until late 2014. After that the various tribunals will be transferred to the new tribunal service in stages and it is anticipated the Education Appeal Committee will be one of the later transfers. Whilst it is impossible to be certain it is unlikely that the new tribunal will take over the role of the Education Appeal Committee until at least 2015/16. The new Tribunal will be entirely independent of the Council and so the Council will no longer administer the appeals. There will, however, no doubt be new challenges in presenting hundreds of appeals to a tribunal in a short space of time.
- 2.21 If there are to be legislative changes then it would be sensible to review all aspects of the placing request system. The most fundamental question is whether parental choice is a practical reality given smaller class sizes and rising birth rate. If the placing request system is to remain in place then the grounds on which an education authority can refuse a placing request as laid down in the 1980 Act could also be reviewed to be clearer and more relevant. For example it may be sensible to have a ground that a placing request can be refused if every P1 class in the school has reached either 25, or 30 if there is a team teaching situation. This would make things easier to understand for the parents, and

more straight forward for the Appeal Committee/Tribunal. However that is a legislative decision.

- 2.22 In conclusion it is important to note that the admissions and appeals process is a high profile area for Children and Families and it is important to ensure a consistent, transparent and fair application of policies at all times.

3. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the following:

- 3.1 Paperwork for admissions has been reviewed to ensure clarity and an online form to request an outwith catchment form has been created.
- 3.2 Seminars on admissions have been delivered to all headteachers.
- 3.3 Accurate and consistent messages about school placements will be delivered to parents by means of our updated booklet and media messages.
- 3.4 Composite class and team teaching policies will be updated to include reassurance to parents on learning and teaching.
- 3.5 Parents will be told where there are likely to be places for outwith catchment pupils and where there are likely to be no places
- 3.6 Proposed changes to the independent appeals process is at present being considered by the Scottish Parliament.
- 3.7 There will be clarity of information for parents about the role of Children and Families in the appeals process.
- 3.8 The intention to raise the issues described in this report with the Scottish Government.
- 3.9 The Committee is asked to request a report in October 2014 reviewing the 2014 Admissions, Appeals process.

Gillian Tee

Director of Children and Families

Links

Coalition pledges P2. Hold the maximum P1 class size at 25 and seek to reduce class sizes in line with Scottish Government recommendations
P4. Draw up a long-term strategic plan to tackle both over-crowding and under use in schools

Council outcomes	CO1. Our children have the best start in life, are able to make and sustain relationships and are ready to succeed CO2. Our children and young people are successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens making a positive contribution to their communities
Single Outcome Agreement	SO3. Edinburgh's children and young people enjoy their childhood and fulfil their potential
Appendices	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. P1 and S1 intake sessions 2014/15: Timetable of events2. Parent Booklet Placing in Schools – Session 2014/15

Inclusion: School Grants, Awards & Placements

P1 & S1 Intake – session 2014/15: timetable of events

Date	What is happening?
21 – 25 October 2013	<p>Publicity materials, forms and letters sent for printing.</p> <p>Primary schools: P7 pupils address data to be verified on Click+Go by end of this week to allow Provisional Allocations Report to be populated.</p>
28 October – 01 November 2013	<p>Posters advertising transition procedures & P1 registration week distributed to all nursery & primary schools (including Partner Provider nurseries), doctors' surgeries, leisure centres and libraries. In addition all nursery and primary schools (including Partner Provider nurseries) receive a limited supply of Placing in Schools booklets & non-catchment placing request application forms.</p> <p>Letters issued to parents of N5 & P7 children advising of catchment school and intake procedures.</p> <p>Primary schools: 1st Head Teacher seminar takes place on 1 November.</p>
04 November 2013	<p>Provisional Allocations Report populated for P7 pupils, based on address details held on Click+Go.</p> <p>Secondary schools: appropriate supply of school handbooks to be issued to primary schools for onward distribution to P7 pupils (based on Provisional Allocations Report).</p>
05 November 2013	<p>Primary schools: open day for parents of catchment P1 children.</p>
07 November 2013	<p>Press adverts to appear in Evening News & Metro publicising P1 & S1 procedures.</p>
08 November 2013	<p>Primary schools: deadline for N5 pupil address data to be verified on Click+Go in preparation for registration week.</p> <p>Primary schools: 2nd Head Teacher seminar takes place.</p>
11 – 15 November 2013	<p>Primary schools: P1 registration week. RC baptismal certificates to be collated at time of registration (where relevant). Catchment pupil details to be recorded on SEEMiS.</p> <p>NEW online non-catchment placing request form goes live. Paper copies to be issued from this week, only if necessary.</p>
29 November 2013	<p>Primary schools: closing date for return of proposed class organisation to Devolved Finance & Resource Officer</p> <p>Primary schools: closing date for recording all registered catchment P1 pupils on SEEMiS.</p>
Early-December 2013	<p>Non-catchment placing requests recorded by GAP on SEEMiS and receipt acknowledged to parents in writing or by automated email if using online form.</p> <p>Secondary schools: Head Teachers to inform Devolved Finance & Resource Officer of projected roll for 2014/15.</p>

24 December 2013	Closing date for receipt of non-catchment placing requests from parents to allow for accurate projection of requests citywide.
06 January 2014	Home to school route measurement calculations requested from Statistics & Information team for placing requests to schools likely to be oversubscribed. Nursery & Primary schools: investigate N5 children not yet registered on SEEMiS and advise parents to register as soon as possible.
13 – 17 January 2014	Internal meetings held involving Senior Education Manager (Inclusion & Pupil/Parent Support), GAP, Devolved Finance & Resources, Asset Planning and Communications Service to assess demand for places citywide, propose intake limits and class organisations for 2014/15. Oversubscribed Roman Catholic schools identified. Baptised Roman Catholic children prioritised. Preparation of reports to Committee on Pupil/Student Support.
By 31 January 2014	Proposed intakes and class organisations issued to Head teachers by Devolved Finance & Resource Officer.
Early-February 2014	Parent Council meetings take place, where appropriate.
Mid-February 2014	Draft staffing allocations notified to schools by Devolved Finance & Resource Officer.
28 February 2014	Children registered up to this date are guaranteed a place in their catchment school. Any children registered after this date will be regarded as 'late catchment' and are NOT guaranteed a place at their catchment school.
04 March 2014	Meeting of the Education, Children & Families Committee to discuss and agree a series of recommended strategies to manage intakes, including setting intake limits for some schools.
15 March 2014	Statutory deadline for placing requests which must be responded to by 30 April. All requests for oversubscribed schools received by this date are considered by the Committee on Pupil/Student Support. Primary schools: SEEMiS New Intake Registration screen and Delete Registration screen locked – details of new P1 registrations after this date to be emailed to GAP. Important note for all schools: data on SEEMiS subject to change after this week as GAP manage admissions. Changes notified to affected schools by email as required.
18 & 19 March 2014	Meeting of the Committee on Pupil/Student Support to consider all placing requests for all oversubscribed schools received by 15 March, and schools unable to accommodate all catchment children. The committee will determine priority order where waiting lists are to be created.
31 March 2014	Deadline for receipt of requests to delay entry to P1.
11 April 2014	Decisions on all placing requests received by 15 March finalised and waiting lists become operational. Catchment children unable to be accommodated in their preferred catchment school placed elsewhere.

	Parents notified of decisions in writing, and those refused places invited to submit a 'second-preference' placing request.
14 April 2014	Statutory 28-day period commences allowing parents to appeal against refusal to Placing in Schools Appeal Committee. Preparation of reports to the Placing in Schools Appeal Committee commences.
Mid-April 2014 onwards	Primary & Secondary schools: using Intake Registration Details report (P1) or Provisional Allocations Report (S1) on SEEMiS, parents of children allocated places to be contacted to confirm acceptance of place, and invite to induction visit. Inform GAP if places are declined. Decisions on 'late' placing requests begin to be dealt with and will be responded to within a 2-month statutory period.
12 May 2014	End of statutory appeal period for placing requests received by 15 March. Deadline for receipt of requests for second-preference schools (where initial request has been refused).
16 May 2014	Decisions on second-preference placing requests issued to parents in writing.
Mid-May – June 2014	Placing in Schools Appeal Committee hearings take place.
17 – 19 June 2014	P7/S1 transition days.
04 – 08 August 2014	Any remaining reserved places offered to children on waiting lists.
11 August 2014	Waiting lists passed to relevant schools. Responsibility for subsequent allocation of places and maintenance of waiting list devolved to Head Teacher.
13 August 2014	Primary & Secondary schools: parents of children who have not attended as expected should be contacted 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.
22 August 2014	Primary & Secondary schools: places held by children who have not attended as expected can be offered to those on the waiting list.
13 October 2014	Pupil data cleared from both Intake Registration Details & Provisional Allocations Report in preparation for next session's intake.

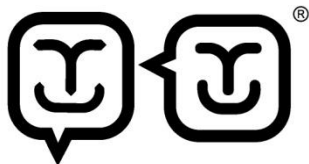
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THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

Placing in Schools – Session 2014/15 New P1 & S1 Intake

When deciding the school you wish your child to attend, there are a number of important points you need to consider.

- Places are allocated to children based on their residence. All parents must provide proof of residence for a catchment place when they register their child for school.
- All schools have two catchment schools, non-denominational and Roman Catholic. You should choose your preferred school of these two.
- Your child is only entitled to a place in the primary school where they attend nursery if you live in the catchment area of the school.
- Catchment places will only be guaranteed to children living in a primary school catchment by 28 February 2014.
- Where a denominational Roman Catholic school is oversubscribed with catchment children, priority will be given to catchment baptised Roman Catholics.
- If your placing request is successful for one child, this does not guarantee that requests for younger children will be successful. This could mean that your younger children would attend a different school to their older brother or sister.



HAPPY TO TRANSLATE

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Placing in Schools – Session 2014/15

New P1 & S1 Intake

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Introduction

Starting primary school and moving on to secondary school are two very important milestones both for children and their parents. The Council realises this and has a range of policies and procedures in place to make each transition as smooth as possible for all concerned.

This booklet provides information on registering your child for school. While all parents have a right to express a preference for a particular school, it is important to recognise that, due to the increasing birth rate, there are fewer places available for children living outside the catchment area and this means more placing requests are likely to be refused each year.

For the P1 Intake, even if you plan to request a place at another school we strongly recommend that you **visit your own local catchment primary school** on Primary Schools Open Day, **5 November 2013**, as you will be offered a place in your catchment school if your placing request is unsuccessful.

All our schools offer a high quality educational experience and visiting your local catchment school will give you an opportunity to find out more about the school, staff and the curricular and extracurricular opportunities available. Most parents choose to send their children to one of their catchment schools.

Section 1: Starting Primary School (P1)

What age should my child start school?

The table below shows the school year when your child should start primary school:

<i>Child born between:</i>	<i>Child will start school in:</i>
1 Mar 2009 – 28 Feb 2010	August 2014
1 Mar 2010 – 28 Feb 2011	August 2015
1 Mar 2011 – 29 Feb 2012	August 2016
1 Mar 2012 – 28 Feb 2013	August 2017
1 Mar 2013 – 28 Feb 2014	August 2018

Parents of children due to start school, and who attend a City of Edinburgh nursery school or class, will receive a letter in October about starting school. This letter will tell you what your catchment schools are and how to register your child for P1.

If a child is of school age but has not reached age 5 by the start of the new school session, usually mid-August, their school place can be delayed until the start of the next school year. However, only children with January and February birthdays are entitled to receive a continued, funded nursery place at either a City of Edinburgh Council nursery or a partner nursery should their parents request this.

Continued funding for a nursery place for children whose birthdates fall between August and December is not an entitlement and is at the discretion of the child's resident local authority. This is the case even when a child has received just one year of pre-school funding. Applications for delayed entry have reduced considerably over the past two years and increasingly most children of this age are successfully supported in Primary 1.

We recommend that you register your child for primary school even if you are planning to apply for delayed entry.

If your child is not of school age, you may make an application for early admission if you feel your child is ready for school. Your child's nursery head teacher must support your request and an assessment of the child will be required.

Further information is available at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/earlyyears.

Which Primary School should my child attend?

For every address in the city there is a catchment **non-denominational** primary school and a catchment **Roman Catholic** primary school. If you would like to check the catchment schools for your home address go to www.edinburgh.gov.uk/catchmentmaps.

Most parents choose to send their child to a catchment school; however you have the right to express a preference for another school, although we cannot guarantee that we can meet these requests (see **Section 3**).

How do I register my child for primary school?

You must register your child at your preferred catchment school during registration week, 11 – 15 November.

It is important to recognise that if you live outside the school catchment area, attending the nursery class in a particular school does not entitle your child to a place in the primary school.

Our Roman Catholic schools are often oversubscribed with catchment children. We cannot therefore guarantee your child will get into your Roman Catholic catchment school. In the event of a Roman Catholic school being oversubscribed priority will be given to baptised Roman Catholics where evidence of baptism has been presented by **28 February 2014**.

What paperwork do I need for registration?

You must present the following documents when you register:

- your 2013/14 Council Tax demand notice;
- a current utility bill (in your name);
- your child's birth certificate;
- your child's proof of RC baptism (if your preferred catchment school is Roman Catholic).

Please note these are the **ONLY** accepted forms of proof. If you are unable to provide any of the above documents at the time of registration you will be referred to the School Placements team.

After you register you may be asked to provide this proof again at a future date. The Council is entitled to make random spot checks as part of fraud prevention. If false addresses are provided to gain a placement, the place will be removed.

Do I need to register for my child's catchment school if I plan to make a placing request for another school?

Even if you do plan to make a placing request, it is important that you also register with your catchment school to ensure that a place is available for your child if your placing request is unsuccessful.

I don't currently live in the catchment area but plan to move into it. Will I get a place for my child?

We will allocate your child a place if you move into the catchment area by **28 February 2014**. We do try to reserve places [one place in each class] for families who may move into the catchment area after this date but cannot guarantee this. If we are not able to give you a place immediately you will be placed on the waiting list for the school.

What happens if I have bought or rented a house in another catchment area and have proof of this but will not move in until after 28 February 2014?

We do not allocate a place at your new catchment school until you have actually moved into your new house. We cannot guarantee a place in your new catchment school if you move after **28 February**. As above we do try to reserve places [one place in each class] for families who may move into the catchment area after this date but cannot guarantee this. If we are not able to give you a place immediately you will be placed on the waiting list for the school.

If you are moving into the city from another Council area, or from outwith Scotland, and we cannot offer your child a place in your catchment school after you have moved address we will offer a place in the nearest school to your home with an available place.

What happens after I have registered my child?

Your catchment school will contact you in mid-April to confirm your place and provide information on induction visits to the school

When the school session begins in August, children are normally admitted gradually and attend mornings only for the first two weeks. This helps the children to settle into their new life at school. The Head Teacher will advise exactly what will happen for your child.

Can I request a different school?

You have the right to express a preference for a school in a different catchment area, and this is called a placing request (full details are in **Section 3**).

Section 2: Moving from Primary to Secondary School (S1)

Which secondary school will my child be allocated?

Parents of children in P7 who attend a City of Edinburgh primary school will receive a letter in November about moving to secondary school.

Please note you will be allocated a place at your catchment secondary school based on your home address, not the primary school they currently attend. This means that if your child is attending a non-catchment primary and if you want them to attend the secondary school associated with that school you would need to make a placing request (see **Section 3**).

Every address within Edinburgh has a **non-denominational** catchment secondary school and a **Roman Catholic** catchment secondary school. If your child attends a non-denominational primary school, your child will be allocated a place in your non-denominational catchment area secondary school. Similarly, if your child is attending a Roman Catholic primary school, the Roman Catholic catchment area secondary

school will be allocated. However, if you wish your child to attend your other catchment area school you can request this after you have received your letter in November.

In the event of a Roman Catholic school being oversubscribed with catchment children priority will be given to baptised Roman Catholics where evidence of baptism has been presented by **28 February 2014**.

Schools will normally contact parents in mid-April to confirm places for catchment children and offer invitations to an induction visit.

What happens if I live in another local authority area?

If your child attends a City of Edinburgh primary school, the Council informs each neighbouring local authority of such children, allowing a place to be reserved at the appropriate school in your area. If you wish your child to attend a secondary school in Edinburgh you will need to make a placing request (see **Section 3**).

If you live within the catchment area of Kirknewton Primary School in West Lothian, your non-denominational catchment school is Balerno Community High School. Your child will be allocated a place in this school.

What happens if I live within the City of Edinburgh area, but my child attends a primary school in another local authority area?

Local authorities will inform the Council of such children and a place will be allocated at your appropriate catchment secondary school. If you wish your child to attend a secondary in the same authority as the primary school, you must contact the relevant authority.

What happens if I plan to move address?

We will allocate you a place in your catchment school if you move into the area by **28 February 2014**. We do try to reserve places for families who may move into an area after this date but cannot guarantee this. If we are not able to give you a place immediately you will be placed on the waiting list for the school.

What happens if I have bought or rented a house in another catchment area and have proofs of this but will not move in until after 28 February 2014?

As above we do try to reserve places [one place in each class] for families who may move into an area after this date but cannot guarantee this. If we are not able to give you a place immediately your child will be placed on the waiting list for the school. Allocation of places is based on when you become resident in a house not when you buy or rent it.

If you are moving into the city from another Council area, or from outwith Scotland, and we cannot offer your child a place in your catchment school after you have moved address we will offer a place in the nearest school to your home with an available place. Your child will also be placed on the waiting list for the catchment school.

Can I request a different school?

You have the right to express a preference for a school in a different catchment area, and this is called a placing request (full details are in **Section 3** below).

Section 3: Making a Placing Request for a Non-Catchment School

Parents have a right to express a preference for another school and these will only be granted if places are available after places have been allocated to children living in the catchment area. It is important to recognise that the rising birth-rate means there has been a reduction in the number of successful placing requests in recent years.

Our guidance on how we manage placing requests is outlined in the question and answer section.

How do I make a placing request?

You must complete an application form, available online at **www.edinburgh.gov.uk/schoolplaces**. Paper copies are also available at any nursery or primary school in the city. The closing date for applications is **24 December 2013**. Receipt will be acknowledged either by return letter or email within 14 days of your request. Please note if you are making a placing request and it is successful, you will not receive support with travel expenses.

Can I apply for more than one school?

You can only make one placing request initially. On the application form you are required to tell us your preferred catchment school – in the event of your request being refused the Council will try to reserve a place in your preferred catchment school. Please note that even if you are submitting a placing request for a primary school you must also register at your preferred catchment school.

It is very important that you give us **all** relevant information in support of your request. This may include medical evidence and reports from any other services or agencies that may have been involved with your child.

How do you decide which placing requests are successful?

Classes are not normally created for non-catchment children. When there have been more placing requests received than there are places available in an individual school, they are considered by the Committee on Pupil/Student Support which meets in mid March each year. This is a committee of elected members of the Council, and they determine the priority order for all requests. This priority order will be used to allocate any available places, with the remainder being placed accordingly on a waiting list.

The Committee has the authority to prioritise individual applications where the reasons for the request are deemed exceptional. Otherwise, requests are normally prioritised in the following order:

1. Children who will have older brothers/sisters who are attending the requested school in the next session;
2. Children who are resident within the City of Edinburgh Council area, but who **do not** have brothers/sisters who will be attending the requested school in the next session;
3. Children who are **not** resident within the City of Edinburgh Council area, and who will not have brothers/sisters attending the requested school in the next session.

If there is more than one placing request in any of the 3 categories above, the priority order of requests is then determined by the shortest, safest walking distance from the child's home to the nearest school gate. This is calculated using an electronic mapping system. Distances measured are based upon all geographic information that the Council has at its disposal at the time of measurement.

When will I be informed of the outcome of my placing request?

The Council will give their decision in writing by **30 April 2014** to all parents who submitted placing requests by **24 December 2013**.

What happens if my placing request is granted?

If your placing request is granted, you will receive a letter confirming you have a place. At this time, if a place was reserved in your preferred catchment school, this will be withdrawn.

The granting of a placing request for one child does not guarantee that a future placing request, for the same school, for a younger brother or sister will be granted and this could mean that your children will have to attend different schools. You will be asked to sign a form to acknowledge this.

You will be responsible for all transport arrangements and costs which may arise.

What happens if my placing request is refused?

If your request is refused you will receive a letter explaining the statutory grounds for refusal which the Council must use by law. It will also give you details about your right to appeal against our decision. A place will normally be reserved at your preferred catchment school (as indicated on your application form) and you will be given an opportunity to make a second preference request for an alternative school.

For all schools where placing requests are refused, a waiting list is created and your child will be placed on this.

Section 4: Management of Placements

Management Principles

The City of Edinburgh Council manages the provision of school places using principles and practices outlined below;

- Pupils living in the City of Edinburgh Council area have priority over incoming requests from outside the Council area;
- The Council will endeavour to accommodate catchment pupils at their catchment school;
- Placing requests for non catchment pupils should be met, subject to available capacity and consistent with the efficient use of resources;
- The most efficient arrangement of class size and provision of teaching staff is sought for each school after taking account of demand for catchment places;
- Additional classes are not normally created to specifically cater for non-catchment placing requests in the primary sector. This includes the potential need to create additional classes in subsequent years beyond the P1 stage;
- First year intake limits, classroom size restrictions and limits on the overall pupil numbers will be applied where necessary to assist in managing school provision;
- Separate catchment boundaries are drawn for denominational and non-denominational schools at both primary and secondary level (*pupils having the option of attending either catchment school, subject to availability of places*).
- In areas of the City falling outwith established catchment areas (for example, the new Waterfront development); the Council defines which establishment is an '*appropriate school*' for pupils – normally judged on distance and geography.

Section 5: Additional Information

Supporting children with additional support needs

My child has additional support needs. Will they get the support they need in a mainstream school?

All children have the right to an education in a mainstream school where possible. If your child needs additional support to attend a mainstream school an assessment will be carried out to ensure their needs can be met. While we do try to support children in mainstream schools, a small minority of children with additional support needs may require a place in a special school or class.

Further info: www.edinburgh.gov.uk/asn

I would like my child to attend a special school or class. Is this possible?

Yes. If you wish to make this type of request please discuss this with an Educational Psychologist employed by the Council before making your request.

Further info: Tel: **0131 469 2800**

English is not my child's first language. Will they get additional support?

Throughout Edinburgh there are many pupils for whom English is an additional language. Some may require extra help to develop their English language skills and our English as an Additional Language Service (EAL) works in partnership with schools, homes and other agencies to support pupils.

Further info: www.ealedinburgh.org.uk

Gaelic Education

Can my child attend Edinburgh's Gaelic School?

Gaelic Medium Education is offered at nursery, primary and secondary levels. Edinburgh has a dedicated Gaelic Nursery and Primary School, Bun-sgoil Taobh na Pairce. Any parent who wishes their child to be taught in Gaelic can apply for a place at the primary school by contacting the headteacher. No previous knowledge of the language is required. Secondary Gaelic education is currently available at James Gillespie's High School for pupils who have completed a Gaelic Medium primary education.

Further info: www.edinburgh.gov.uk/gaelic

Specialist Education Provision for Talented Pupils

The Council offers a range of specialist provision for talented pupils, allowing them to receive specialist tuition in their chosen field alongside their academic studies.

I would like my child to attend the City of Edinburgh Dance School – how do I apply?

The dance school is based at Broughton High School. Current P5/P6 pupils can audition for a place on the P6/P7 'Talented Young Performers' course at Broughton High School which runs for two hours every Friday afternoon throughout the academic year. The students will participate in ballet, contemporary and jazz dance classes.

Current P7 pupils can audition for a place at the dance school which means they will attend Broughton High School for their secondary education. Students who attend the dance school will be put through the Royal Academy of Dance Ballet exams and SQA National 5, Higher and HNC Professional Stage Dance as well as having the opportunity to study AQA A-Level Dance.

Further info: Email: laura.mcadam@broughton.edin.sch.uk
Tel: **0131 332 7805**

I would like my child to attend the City of Edinburgh Music School – how do I apply?

The music school, a national centre of excellence, is based at Flora Stevenson Primary School and Broughton High School. A specialist music education is delivered in a range of musical styles. Please contact the school to find out how to apply.

Further info: Web: www.edinburghmusicschool.co.uk
Email: bro-musicschool@ea.edin.sch.uk
Tel: **0131 332 7805**

I would like my child to attend the Scottish Football Academy – how do I apply?

The Scottish FA Performance School for South East Region is based at Broughton High School. It offers talented young footballers the opportunity to develop their physical, mental and technical ability within the daily curriculum. Application forms will be available to current P7 pupils prior to Christmas, with 1st stage trials taking place in February/March.

Further info: Email: sportsacademy@edinburgh.gov.uk

Transport

Can I get transport for my child?

The Children and Families Department will assist with travel if the distance between the home address and catchment area school is two miles or more for children attending primary school and three miles or more for children attending secondary school, based on the most suitable walking route. This also applies if the Children and Families Department asks your child to attend a non-catchment school. Assistance with travel will not be given if you have chosen to send your child to a non-catchment school.

Further Information

Further general information on placing children in schools can be found in the Scottish Government publication *Choosing a School: a Guide for Parents*. This is available online at **www.scotland.gov.uk**.

Useful contacts

School Placements

Email: school.placements@edinburgh.gov.uk

Tel: 0131 469 3033

Early Years

Email: earlyyears@edinburgh.gov.uk

Tel: 0131 529 2103

School Catchment Areas

Email: school.catchments@edinburgh.gov.uk

Tel: 0131 469 3351