
To: Education and Children's Services Policy Board

On: 20 August 2020

Report by: Director of Children's Services

Heading: Response to proposal to consult on Admissions to Schools and Placing Request Policy

1. Summary

- 1.1 On 16 January 2020 the education and children's services policy board agreed to a formal consultation on proposals to review Admissions to Schools and Placing Request Policy.
- 1.2 In line with legislative requirements detailed in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, amended through the enactment of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, a formal consultation on the proposal was undertaken and a consultation document was prepared and issued simultaneously to parents and interested parties affected by the proposal.
- 1.3 The consultation formally opened on 27 January 2020 and closed at 12 noon on 31 March 2020. Due to unprecedented circumstances surrounding COVID-19, schools closed on 20 March 2020. In line with statutory guidance, 30 days are required as a minimum consultation period. The time provided from the commencement of this consultation until 20 March 2020, not including school holidays or weekends, equated to 36 days of consultation. Notwithstanding this, the last recorded response received by the department was on 29 March 2020. Taking cognisance of the fact that notice of the consultation, including when any representations were to be received, was given on 27 January 2020 and that all public meetings had been held prior to school closures on 20 March 2020, the department considered it appropriate that the consultation ran its course.
- 1.4 The purpose of this report is to provide the education and children's services policy board with recommendations which recognise the issues and comments made and responses provided, in the course of the consultation exercise. A report on the issues raised and a consideration of these is included as Appendix 1 to this document.
- 1.5 The outcome of this consultation demonstrates support for the proposal and the education and children's services policy board is therefore asked to

approve the recommendation to implement the Admissions to School and Placing Request Policy included as Appendix 2 to this document.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The education and children's services policy board is asked to:
- note the issues raised through the formal consultation detailed in Appendix 1;
 - note the comments made by Education Scotland in relation to the educational benefits of the proposals detailed in appendix 3;
 - approve the revised Admissions to Schools and Placing Request Policy attached as appendix 2; and
 - approve the implementation of the policy for requests for August 2021 intakes onwards.

3. Background

- 3.1 The education and children's services policy board agreed to a formal consultation on the proposal of an Admissions to Schools and Placing Request policy.
- 3.2 Elected members agreed a consultation document which was subsequently issued to parents and interested parties affected by the proposal.
- 3.3 The consultation formally opened on 27 January 2020 and closed at 12 noon on 31 March 2020.
- 3.4 Responses to the proposal are contained within Appendix 1 to this report.

4. Consultation

- 4.1. Following agreement to consult on the proposal to review Admissions to Schools and Placing Request Policy a consultation document was issued to parents and interested parties affected by the proposals.
- 4.2. The consultation document invited members of the public to respond to the proposals either through contributions to public consultation meetings or by written submissions in hard copy or email to the director of children's services. Interested parties also had the opportunity to take part in the consultation through the Council's online survey.
- 4.3. Three public meetings were held for parents and members of the public as part of the consultation process on 3, 5 and 18 February 2020.
- A presentation was made by officers from children's services to outline the background to the proposal, highlighting the impact this would have on the school communities. Questions were invited and notes of the questions asked and the answers provided by education officers were recorded.
- 4.4. A report on written responses received and comments made through the Council's online survey is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.
- 4.5. The total number of responses received are detailed in the table below:-

Comment To Be Made Public	Proposal 1	Proposal 2	Proposal 3	Proposal 4	Other Comments	TOTAL
No	28	29	35	25	39	156
Yes	27	24	41	33	37	162
Total	55	53	76	58	76	318

- 4.6. All responses received were considered and responded to in relation to the educational benefits identified by the Council and the recommendation to the education and children's services policy board is informed by the positive and supportive comments received from Education Scotland.

5. Comments and observations arising from the consultation

- 5.1. During the course of the consultation, questions were raised regarding how the Council would progress this policy and the 4 proposals within it. Appendix 1 to this document, "Response to the consultation on the proposal to review Admissions to Schools and Placing Request Policy, details the questions asked and the responses provided.
- 5.2. Education Scotland have been consulted on the proposal in line with legislative requirements detailed in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, amended through the enactment of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. The response received from Education Scotland was supportive of the Council's proposal and it is attached to this document as Appendix 3. The summary of their findings is noted below.

"HM Inspectors' agree that the revised policy has the potential to bring educational benefits. Children and young people should gain from continuity and progression in transitioning between associated schools in the local clusters. Parents will maintain their rights to submit a placing request to the council. In the event of demand for places exceeding the availability of places at any particular school, there is now a clearer process for dealing with excess demand. HM Inspectors understand that earlier enrolment allows more time for the management of school places and associated resource implications. HM Inspectors welcome the council's commitment to producing a parent-friendly leaflet to reflect any final policy decision and for their pledge to communicate with the school groups which participated."

Implications of this report

1. **Financial**
None.
2. **HR and Organisational Development**
None.
3. **Community/Council Planning**
Our Renfrewshire is thriving - All children currently attending schools will have the opportunity to continue within the schools they are in currently.

- 4. Legal**
Renfrewshire Council will adhere to the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 (the 2010 Act) in respect of any proposals that alter education provision.
- 5. Property/Assets**
Through its school estate the Council aims to have sufficient capacity with establishments which provide learning environments which support the delivery of the curriculum.
- 6. Information Technology**
None.
- 7. Equality and Human Rights**
The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. An equalities impact assessment is attached as Appendix 4 to this report.
- 8. Health and Safety**
None.
- 9. Procurement**
None.
- 10. Risk**
None.
- 11. Privacy Impact**
None.
- 12. Cosla Policy Position**
None.
- 13. Climate Risk**
None.

List of Background Papers

Background Paper 1: Proposals to consult on Admissions to Schools and Placing Request Policy

Children's Services

AG/GMcK

24 July 2020

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Response to the consultation on the proposal to review Admissions to Schools and Placing Request Policy

Consultation Process

- 1.1. Following agreement to consult on the proposal to review Admissions to Schools and Placing Request Policy a consultation document was issued to all interested parties, which included the following proposals:
 1. Change to primary 1 registration dates;
 2. Revise primary 1 registration allocation of catchment places;
 3. Revise transfer from primary to secondary allocation of catchment secondary places; and
 4. Revise allocation of placing request places.
- 1.2 Public consultation meetings were held with parents, members of the public and staff from the affected schools on:-
 - 3 February 2020 at Castlehead High School – 23 people attended
 - 5 February 2020 at Johnstone High School -13 people attended
 - 18 February 2020 at Trinity High School – 8 people attended
- 1.3 The consultation formally opened on 27 January 2020 and closed at 12 noon on 31 March 2020. Due to unprecedented circumstances surrounding COVID-19, schools closed on 20 March 2020. In line with statutory guidance, 30 days are required as a minimum consultation period. The time provided from the commencement of this consultation until 20 March 2020, not including school holidays or weekends, equated to 36 days of consultation. Notwithstanding this, the last recorded response received by the department was on 29 March 2020. Taking cognisance of the fact that notice of the consultation, including when any representations were to be received, was given on 27 January 2020 and that all public meetings had been held prior to school closures on 20 March 2020, the department considered it appropriate that the consultation ran its course.
- 1.4 Copies of the consultation document were made available to parents of every pupil in attendance, school staff, at the public meetings and to all parent council groups. Copies of the document were also distributed to local libraries and a copy was placed on the Council website. An advert to notify the public of the consultation meeting was also placed in the local press. In addition, the consultation document was made available to council officers, local elected members, MSPs and MPs for the Renfrewshire area and Education Scotland.
- 1.5 All formal responses submitted as part of the consultation exercise have been retained and can be viewed on request to the director of children's services.

2 The Consultation

- 2.1 A number of written responses were received from interested parties registering their comments on the proposal. The following is a breakdown of responses that were received:

Category	Number of Responses	Type of Response
Renfrewshire Parent / Carer	169	on-line survey or questionnaire
Other Local Authority Parent / Carer	2	on-line survey or questionnaire
School Staff	3	on-line survey or questionnaire
School Pupil	2	on-line survey or questionnaire
Employee Renfrewshire Council	1	on-line survey or questionnaire
Resident – Renfrewshire	7	on-line survey or questionnaire
Other	7	on-line survey or questionnaire
Total Stakeholder Responses	191	
School Groups	19	school response proformas (which involved 283 pupils)
General Enquiries	9	8 e-mailed enquiries / 1 letter

2.2 The public meetings were held within three Renfrewshire localities and attendance recorded as detailed in 1.2 above.

2.3 Notes of each of the meetings were taken and can be obtained by request to the director of children's services and can be viewed on the Council website.

2.4 Staff were advised of the consultation and had the opportunity to attend the public events.

3 Analysis of key issues raised during the consultation

3.1 191 on-line survey or questionnaire responses and 19 school groups responses totalling 210 responses were received. We also received 9 general enquiries.

3.2 Of the 318 comments made by the responders via the on-line survey or questionnaire, 156 comments were requested not to be made public.

Comment to be made public?	Proposal 1	Proposal 2	Proposal 3	Proposal 4	Other Comments	Total
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These comments have been considered and responded to through Renfrewshire Council's responses noted at section 4 below but they are not recorded as specific questions or comments below.

Comments from school groups have also been recorded in section 4.6.

3.3 In total, the council received 191 responses from stakeholders including children and young people. From those that responded 67% agreed with the proposal and 33% disagreed. Additionally, the council asked schools to engage with groups of children and young people in order to hear their views. Nineteen school groups returned responses.

The children and young people were strongly in favour, with 89% of groups in favour and 11% against.

4 Response to key issues raised during the consultation

4.1 Comments, questions and responses from public meetings have been noted.

4.1.1 A proposal was approved to consult on a review of Admissions to Schools and Placing Request Policy, which included the following proposals:

1. Change to primary 1 registration dates;
2. Revise primary 1 registration allocation of catchment places;
3. Revise transfer from primary to secondary allocation of catchment secondary places; and
4. Revise allocation of placing request places.

4.1.2 Renfrewshire Council has a legislative requirement under the Education (Scotland) Act 1918 to provide education provision for both denominational and non-denominational education.

4.1.3 Officers within Children's Services continually reviews the performance of the school estate in terms of core fact findings which relate to the sufficiency, condition and suitability of buildings.

4.1.4 The department require to carry out an annual staffing exercise for teachers.

4.1.5 Current issues experienced in relation to the transfer from primary to secondary within the last two years were discussed.

4.1.6 Reference was made to the roll projection process.

4.1.7 Attendees were advised of Renfrewshire Council's commitment to the Equalities Act 2010.

4.1.8 The presentation delivered outlined the rationale and timeline of the proposal. It highlighted the Council's commitment to improving outcomes for all children through careful management of the admissions and placing request policy.

4.2 The head of schools, the head of early years and an education manager conducted a question and answer session at Castlehead High School:

Q: Bringing forward registration is asking parents/ nursery staff to make decisions on children deferring nine months before they attend school.

R: The registration date does not affect the process for deferred entry, the timescale for this will remain as it is currently.

Q: St Charles primary has increasing roll with house building in the area. The school has important role in providing support for sacraments. Will there still be places available for baptised children given increase in house builds?

R: We regularly review sufficiency in schools and are very conscious of house building in areas. Where required we would seek developer contributions to ensure we were providing sufficient places for catchment denominational children.

Q: There was no public meeting held at St Andrews where this issue relates to for the last 2 years. This school is over capacity. Press misinterpretation of statements in relation

to over subscription were not corrected by Renfrewshire Council. Are there any plans in the future to extend or have separate building?

- R: We are aware of current pressures on St Andrews. We cannot comment on press publications. We are comfortable that catchment children attending associated primaries can currently be accommodated at the school. Our current School Estate Management Plan does not include proposal to extend or alter St Andrews or change the catchment area, which would require statutory consultation.
- Q: The school says one third of children come from catholic schools. If two thirds of pupils are not from catholic schools does this impact on catholic teaching.
- R: We cannot confirm the figures quoted, however, the proposals do not directly impact on the learning and teaching Renfrewshire children receive.
- Q: Surely someone should look at why St Andrew's receive a high number of placing requests?
- R: It was acknowledged that this is parental choice, but that geography will likely play a part in this. St Andrew's is a modern building with Paisley Grammar being prioritised for replacement by the council. We have spent considerable sum during summer holiday on upgrading Paisley Grammar, however, at some point in the future this will be further addressed
- Q: If someone goes to a Paisley school who lives in the catchment area but wants to go to another school. What would cover this?
- R: Proposal 2 covers this aspect.
- Q: When I was at primary and transferring to secondary there was option to choose school because of different circumstances.
- R: If you do not wish to attend catchment schools because of geography or childcare etc you can make a placing request for another school out with your catchment area.
- Q: All children should go to their local school.
- R: There is a requirement under the Education (Scotland) Act 1918 for Renfrewshire Council to provide education provision for both denominational and non-denominational education. Parents can request either the denomination or non-denominational catchment school. The placing request process is available to parents who wish to attend a school outwith the catchment area. If the school has spaces following the allocation of all catchment spaces then the placing request must be granted.
- Q: Why should I have to walk past our local school to go to our allocated school?
- R: There is a requirement under the Education (Scotland) Act 1918 for Renfrewshire Council to provide education provision for both denominational and non-denominational education. Parents can request either the denomination or non-denominational catchment school. The placing request process is available to parents who wish to attend a school outwith the catchment area. If the school has spaces following the allocation of all catchment spaces then the placing request must be granted.
- Q: Denominational primary schools, siblings isn't a priority at secondary, having baptismal certificate is priority, getting baptised is this what we are aiming for?
- R: Denominational provision is set within legislation; in that we are required to provide catholic schools. The denominational priority of baptismal certificate is to avoid people seeking to change to feeder schools at later stages to jump the queue to get into the secondary.
- Q: My scenario is that I have a child who crossed a cluster as we moved house, but has been in catholic education since P1, can length of time at a feeder school be considered? My fear is that house building in St Andrews catchment area may have an impact.

- R: Your comments have been noted and it is something that we will give further consideration.
- Q: I think much is good with the proposals which brings clarity to parents and provides clear steps as to what parents are looking at.
- R: Our aim is to make the policy as clear as possible.
- Q: St James Parent Council – on behalf of some parents who have been in the school since P1 of different faith?
- R: Catchment pupils within the associated schools have been accommodated in the school. Pupils in attendance at feeder schools of different faith would be priority 5.
- Q: If a school is close to capacity or over subscribed for catchment. Would there be changes to boundaries?
- R: All areas of Renfrewshire are allocated a catchment area. We look at the impact of housing on local schools and make representations to planning. Where required we may look for developer contributions for extensions or new schools or look at re-drawing of boundaries. Changing of boundaries requires formal consultation, example of this currently is development (Weirs Wynd) where we have looked at impact of housing on the local schools and we are consulting to redirect pupils to another local school who can cope with the additional numbers. Commitment of department is that catchment children should attend where possible their local community school.
- Q: Key word is community, surely in this day and age of 2020 inclusion and diversity for everyone by having joint campuses is what we want from local school, is this under consideration for Paisley? Travelling within the area, busing children to and from schools isn't doing anything for our carbon footprint.
- R: We currently have shared campuses across the estate, under this consultation we are not specifically looking at this area. There are limited capital funds for new schools, in May 2019, the council agreed to look at Paisley Grammar and this will be happening soon.
- Q: Gleniffer are currently having open days for parents
- R: Gleniffer currently has capacity for all children within the associated primary schools. There are no plans to amend the current secondary catchment areas.
- Q: If Paisley Grammar is getting rebuilt will St Andrews be only school over capacity?
- R: The vast majority of children within Renfrewshire go to their feeder catchment schools. There are a small number of schools where capacity can be an issue.
- Q: It would be helpful if in the future capacities of each of the secondary schools was made available?
- R: Your comment has been noted.
- Q: You told us earlier where you live determines where you will go, why are we told this last minute?
- R: We will work to re-write guidance to make this clear for parents in the future.
- Q: Is your prediction based on the rolls for the next 10 years that pupils get in?
- R: Yes, there is sufficient capacity for pupils from associated schools. If required we can review accommodation and add additional temporary accommodation like Bishopton if this is required, rather than re-directing which ensures children attend their catchment school.
- Q: A school should be a school, however, appreciate no scope to change denominational provision under the 1918 act legislation. Have you looked at what neighbouring authorities are doing?
- R: Yes, each local authority has different rules, we have looked at neighbouring authorities to align practice as far as possible.
- Q: The state of repair of some buildings, why is there such inconsistency?
- R: With limited resources the council prioritise budgets on core facts available. The school estate management plan identifies required works and details what actions will

be taken forward. Recently as mentioned Paisley Grammar is to be prioritised. The previous SEMP reports we have addressed issues at a number of schools. We will continue to review levels of maintenance and seek to prioritise funding in this way. We appreciate that geography, buildings and facilities can influence parental choice when selecting schools.

- 4.3 The director of children's services and an education manager conducted a question and answer session at Johnstone High School:

Q: Why is medical needs so far down the priority list?

R: All Renfrewshire secondary schools are DDA compliant. Children would not be disadvantaged and the council would look to put resources in place whether that be staffing or modification to parts of the building where possible to allow children to attend their catchment school. Your comments have been noted and the council will review how this priority is reflected.

Q: At priority 2 a pupil has a sibling in the school. Should this be a higher priority than those with a baptismal certificate. Given the legislation is from 1918 and over 100 years old?

R: Your comments have been noted. The council is governed by this legislation with the local authority having no power to change this as this is a statutory provision.

Q: Surely the legislation can be challenged?

R: This could be, however as a local authority officer I hold responsibility to enact legislation around the provision of education.

Q: Can I just say the proposed policy is still quite complex.

R: Thank you for your comments. As part of the new policy, we will work on producing a parent friendly document that is easy to understand.

Q: Just to try and understand the process, my son attends St Andrew's and my other son Todholm. Is it correct that all roman catholic children will be given priority over Todholm children. This is a red flag to me that Todholm children are not a higher priority.

R: This is correct, as a local authority we have a statutory obligation to provide denominational education.

Q: St Andrew's is crammed, there is a large demand for this school which is ever increasing with house building in the area with children now moving down the pecking order.

R: If the proposals are approved priority will be given to denominational children. St Andrew's is a denominational school to facilitate denominational education provision for children in Paisley. If the proposals are agreed they would come into effect for the 2021/22 session. The current P7's would not be affected and would be allocated spaces in line with current policy. For future intake years, if there are any spaces remaining following the admission of baptised catchment children these would be allocated in the proposed priority order.

Q: The priority numbers ranges from 1-8. Should the right hand column start at 9?

R: Clarification was provided that the left hand column is the process for denominational schools and the right hand column is the process for non-denominational schools.

Q: Where would a child be who has a sibling in the school who is not of catholic faith?

R: Priority 6.

Q: Priorities 1-4 relate to the 1918 Act. Number 5 in terms of hierarchy does not fall under legal responsibility. Perhaps should be placed in the same box with priorities 5 and 6 being merged together. I would recommend that priority 6 is split into 2 priorities – Renfrewshire and outwith Renfrewshire.

- R: Thank you for your feedback. This is for catchment children, the outwith Renfrewshire is not applicable to this priority.
- Q: I think you should clarify number 5 as you run the risk of children jumping to an associated school.
- R: The length of time would be considered as is noted in the handout, however, we will look to make this more explicit.
- Q: I think there should be a bar to prevent this.
- R: Unfortunately, under placing request legislation this is not possible, if there are spaces are available in a school we are obliged to consider requests.
- Q: The system would need to be looked at to ensure individuals don't jump the system.
- R: The process will be managed in line with the policy. Again, we will look to make this more explicit. In relation to placing requests we are governed by legislation.
- Q: We thought automatic transfer from Todholm to St Andrew's, could this be made clearer?
- R: The parents have a choice of either the denominational or non-denomination catchment school. However, this is dependent on spaces being available. We will ensure this is made as clear as possible. There is an online school catchment checker tool available on the Council's website which allows parents to confirm catchment schools.
- Q: What if catchment areas change?
- R: This would be subject to a formal consultation exercise and parents would be advised.
- Q: What if child is in a school and would be affected?
- R: This would be subject to a formal consultation exercise and parents would be able to submit a response for consideration as part of this process.
- Q: Should this be the case, can they not be given priority for continuity?
- R: Unfortunately, this is not possible.
- Q: Are there plans to change secondary catchment areas?
- R: No.
- Q: Are there any plans to change the catchment area of St John Ogilvie?
- R: No.
- Q: What are the proposed changes to Weirs Wynd?
- R: The consultation exercise has recently closed. The proposal is to rezone this development from Johnstone High to Linwood High and Kilbarchan Primary School to East Fulton Primary School.
- Q: I think if rezoning and the child is currently within P1-P7, they should get to go to the existing catchment high school.
- R: Your comments have been noted.
- Q: For some schools, the RC children are getting priority and there may physically be no room for others.
- R: The legislation places a duty on the council to provide denominational education. If there are spaces available then these will be offered.
- Q: I think following on from that when it comes down to numbers I'd like to be informed. How do we know? Can we know the numbers?
- R: This information changes as there are a number of factors to consider. The council allocate spaces in line with their policy.
- Q: I would like to raise the question – what provision is being put in place for non denominational pupils that are being disadvantaged in not being allowed to attend?
- R: Our projections advise us that there are enough spaces for associated schools.
- Q: From last year to this year what improvements have been put in place to Paisley Grammar to bring it in on par with other Paisley schools?

- R: We have spent significant sum on Paisley Grammar improving the aesthetics. Around 7 weeks of work took place during the summer break to progress the internal works. The comments received to date have been positive on the improvements. The school estate management plan (SEMP) approved in May 2019, recommends a new build school for Paisley Grammar. The children's services directorate were tasked with progressing this and will go back to the education and children's family policy board in the near future.
- Q: In looking at your forecasts have you looked at extending St Andrews?
- R: No, this did not form part of the SEMP approved in May 2019.
- Q: From infancy how long did it take St Andrew's to come to fruition?
- R: I do not have this information available as I was not in post at this point. A secondary build project is complex and can have a number of challenges. You are probably looking at around 4-5 year timescale for a new build secondary school.
- Q: Are the children being consulted in this. The ones who it will affect where one catholic friend will get in and one will not.
- R: Children can respond to the consultation exercise. I need to consider what is statutory and what the council require to deliver. The existing policy does not prioritise siblings and everyone goes into the ballot. I hope the proposals go some way to address this issue with children's vested interests at the front of this. Education Scotland will also review the proposals and will consider the educational benefits as part of their scrutiny process.
- Q: With placing request priorities if pupils have a sibling in the school why has this been switched if same as the act?
- R: This aligns the policy in line with catchment priorities.
- Q: Is there not potential for a number of years that the sibling priority to still be relevant?
- R: Clarification was provided in relation to the difference between the catchment and placing request elements of the proposals.
- Q: My son is still to start P1, what would we need to do if not happy and we want to change at P2?
- R: The registration and placing request processes were explained. Advised the other catchment school would be an option, however, once classes are structured it can be difficult to move within an existing school year. It may be that a re-direction would be offered, and when the classes are structured for the next school year, every effort would be made look to see if we can accommodate the child at their catchment school. Parents are also welcome to put in a placing request at any time and this will be dealt with in line with policy.
- Q: Are the placing request statistics published?
- R: Yes, this information is published annually on the council's website.
- Q: It will be Dargavel my child goes to. There are modular buildings at Bishopton, will these be kept as a backup incase the build isn't ready on time?
- R: Yes. At the time of transfer to the new school parents will have the choice as to whether the children remain in Bishopton or move to the new school.
- Q: Is Trinity the catchment denominational school for Dargavel?
- R: Yes.
- Q: Would the plan be that the pupils move when the school is ready?
- R: Yes, this will be down to parental choice.
- Q: How do we keep up to date with the process?
- R: The timeline for the consultation was explained.
- Q: If passed at the policy board how will this be communicated?
- R: Documentation would be produced for parents and issued via schools.
- Q: My son is at nursery – a split placement. There was no communication from partnership nursery but there was from the council nursery.

R: We will look into this as a copy of the documentation was also provided to our partnership nurseries and we requested that this was issued to parents.

4.4 The head of Schools and an education manager conducted a question and answer session at Trinity High School:

Q: Is there a forum available to discuss the deferred entry process further?

R: This is considered on an individual basis and nursery staff would arrange a meeting with parents where requested.

Q: I disagree with you on spaces being available at catchment schools, as I moved to the area and could not get my children into their catchment school. The schools are not keeping spaces. When you move into an area the classes can be full. I was offered the option of a temporary move into another school until spaces became available, however, I would like you to recognise the fluidity of society.

R: Where possible classes are structured reserving a space for those moving into the catchment area during the school session. I accept that during the school year classes can become full, however, should this be the case the local authority would offer you a place at another school and when carrying out the classification exercise for the following year would then look to see if we can offer places to any catchment children in this situation.

Q: Could you please clarify what reserved spaces are reserved at the beginning of a school session?

R: Where possible a place is reserved within each class, however, without knowledge of your situation it appears in your situation that another family may have moved into the area first.

Q: I think you have contradicted yourself as there are not enough spaces.

R: We have looked at our roll projections and do not anticipate any issues for new primary 1 intakes.

Q: Do these numbers include all the new developments?

R: Yes, the roll projection takes account of new housing.

Q: I'm aware Kirklandneuk primary is short of space and they are still building.

R: We are aware of all housing developments within Renfrewshire and liaise with our planning colleagues on a regular basis ensuring any impact of housing developments is fully assessed.

The school estate management plan identifies required works and details what actions will be taken forward.

Q: Would catchment reviews be required?

R: The proposals are not about catchment reviews or specific to the Renfrew area. Catchment reviews would be specific and if required a statutory consultation exercise would be carried out. Recently where issues have been identified catchment reviews have been undertaken.

Q: If you are catchment and go to associated primary would you automatically go to high school?

R: If you are catchment and go to the associated primary school, a space is automatically reserved for you at the feeder secondary school. For example if you attend St Mary's primary school then there is a space at St Andrew's Academy for you.

Q: If your home address is in the St Andrew's catchment area and attending an associated primary is there any difference.

R: We are trying to ensure there is sufficient space for primary children attending associated schools being able to transfer to their associated secondary school. If the proposals are approved priority will be given to baptised children to attend denominational secondary schools. We do not anticipate any issues with feeder school pupils being able to transfer to their associated secondary school.

- Q: Perhaps the wording needs to be tightened up a bit as looking at this it is not clear that this only comes into effect if there isn't enough space.
- R: Thank you for your feedback. I take your point around this as this has previously been raised. Our aim is to make the policy as clear as possible and we will look at this.
- Q: Would it be the same for Renfrew High School? My children attend Arkleston but our catchment school is Gallowhill. Will this change in 6 years?
- R: As you live outwith the catchment area of Renfrew High School you would require to make a placing request if you wish for your children to attend this secondary school. I acknowledge the uncertainty for you and appreciate the proposals do not alleviate this. A postcode checker is available on the council's website which shows the catchment area/ schools.
- Q: I would like to make the point regarding my own situation. I live within the Houston catchment but my children attended St Filian's due to no non denominational primary places being available. A place was offered at St Benedict's and I requested Gryffe, however this is a long 4 months to wait for a decision. This can be very stressful and traumatic for children. You do not get a choice to attend denominational or non denomination if no spaces are available and children are therefore being overlooked based on location. People can also convert to the catholic religion and don't want a black mark against their names should they change. This is not in line with a modern society.
- R: Thank you for your feedback. Your comments have been noted.
- Q: Like your roll projections parents also plan for 10 years based on where they live/ school choice etc and it can be hard to accept change.
- R: The proposals would only come into play should there not be enough spaces available. The proposals are to ensure there are sufficient spaces within our schools in-line with legislation. Parents will always have an element of choice and the proposals set out a number of priority categories that will be applied during the allocation of school places if approved which we hope would not undermine this.
- Q: What are the timescales?
- R: An overview of the timescales were provided confirming that the consultation runs until 31 March. If approved the changes will not affect the current P7's and would be implemented from August 2021.
- Q: How many pupils were within the ballot for St Andrew's this year?
- R: There were 46 pupils included within the ballot.

4.5 Questions, comments and responses from online survey have been summarised by proposal comments under headings below:

4.5.1

Questions and Comments: Proposal 1: Change to primary 1 registration dates

Deferred Entry:

- As a parent of a February child I have strong beliefs that the registration dates need to be changed. I spoke with various professionals plus friends/family and the consensus is that children born in Jan/Feb should go to school when they are 5.

This change will I believe cause more deferments of entry for As you will be requiring some younger children to register up to 4 months before they turn 4. Hopefully this will be taken into consideration with nursery placements.

- My daughter should attend school when she is 4.5, I am anxious about this as I have many friends who are teachers and they advise at high school they can struggle due to their maturity levels. Personally wish there was 2 intakes in a year.

- Proposed registration date in November is almost a full year before the children are due to start school. Kids who are still 3 and whose parents fear they're not going to be ready: how will you deal with this?

Response:

The registration date does not affect the process for deferred entry, the timescale and processes for this will remain as they are currently. Registration allows us to secure a place for a child but if nearer the time of starting school this is not required it can be released.

General Comments:-

- Against
- Against this change. January is fine as it gives time to get registered and know your child is going to that primary for induction days in May and months to prepare school uniform etc.
- I am not either for or against this proposal, as I don't see what benefit a change of registration dates would bring.
- I have no issues with this aspect of the proposal.
- My little girl misses out because the dates are February and her birthday is in March meaning she won't go to school until she's 5. This should at least be a later date such as schools in Northern Ireland.
- Don't mind this change.
- Happy with proposed dates.
- This is an excellent idea.
- Agree fully with proposals.
- This would be better I think.
- These changes seem like a good idea and I approve of them.
- St Charles Primary Parent Council support the proposed revision.

Response:- All comments have been noted.

Planning:-

- Earlier registration allows more time to prepare for both parents and council.
- I believe this will provide peace of mind or give ample time to make preparations dependent on the outcome.
- Early planning and allocation is always most helpful for staff and parents.
- This seems like a reasonable idea to allow schools to organise numbers for following year.
- I support the proposal outlined to bring forward registration dates, in the belief that it allows schools and authorities more time to better plan and prepare for intake.
- Eminently sensible and allows greater opportunities for planning for the new session.

Response:-

Comments align with the rationale within the consultation document i.e. "that by accepting this proposal allows for early decision making in relation to primary 1 catchment allocations and will also assist Children's Services with staffing forecasts and recruitment exercises".

Religion:-

- This proposal is unfair due to children who are baptised as Roman Catholic and non-practising getting preference over children who are baptised as Christian (non Roman Catholic) but practising their Catholic faith.

Response:-

Denominational schools have been part of the public provision of education since the Education (Scotland) Act 1918 enabled the transfer of such schools into local authority control. The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 enables local authorities to establish denominational schools if satisfied that such a school is required. The provision of denominational schools is subject to the statutory requirement that every public school shall be open to pupils of all denominations. As noted in the original consultative proposal document, the authority in framing the proposed new arrangements must adhere to legislative requirements and have regard to guidance. Parents can request either provision regardless of faith or none, only where a school is oversubscribed will catchment priorities be applied.

4.5.2

Questions and Comments: Proposal 2: Revise primary 1 registration allocation of catchment places

Catchment:-

- I am against the proposal if the number of catchment places are reduced, in order to cater for additional placing requests. This is evident in our current catchment primary school of Houston, as we waited a number of years for our children to attend.
- Should be after local children are given their place - pay council tax at a premium for these schools and should not have to take our children out of our and there way to attend an alternative.
- I think it's good to have the local community and people who live close a chance to get their kids into the school in their catchment rather than having to travel just to take their children to school because a child from outside the catchment got a place.
- I strongly believe that priority should be given to those residing in the catchment area at all times.
- I'm unaware of the Catchment area allocation placements..
- Personally I feel catchments areas are there for a reason, shouldn't be changed to make families have their children attend a school miles away from their home.

Response:-

Catchment pupils will always have priority over placing requests. It is only in the case of over subscription that catchment priorities will apply. Pupils living outwith a catchment area or non-Renfrewshire residents require to make placing requests. This consultation does not include the changing of any current catchment areas.

General Comments:-

- Against - please see comments sent by email.
- For.
- St Charles Primary Parent Council support the proposed revision, noting the comments below.

Response:- Comments Noted.

Parental Choice:-

- Where schools are equidistant then choice should be there to accommodate working hours of parents and pick up of pupils by other carers.
- If placement at allocated catchment schools does not suit family circumstances, there may still be places available within alternative schools. Requests will be considered in line with catchment and placing request priorities depending on the number of available spaces in a school.

Response:-

If placement at allocated catchment schools does not suit family circumstances, there may still be places available within alternative schools. Requests will be considered in line with catchment and placing request priorities depending on the number of available spaces in a school.

Religion:-

- I think this policy promotes religious segregation.
- No place for schools within council control that place any basis of religion on where pupils can and should learn. If parents wish to send their pupils to a school with particular religious emphasis then they should pay for that. Secular Schools only.
- This proposal is unfair due to children who are baptised as Roman Catholic and non-practising getting preference over children who are baptised as Christian (non Roman Catholic) but practising their Catholic faith.
- Faith cannot be a deciding factor in allocation decisions . This is discrimination and unfair to every child who is not baptised. Faith should not have ANY place in deciding whether a child is granted a place or not. Outdated & wrong.
- It is right that the allocation of catchment places should have certain criteria attached especially for denominational schools.
- My personal view is Roman Catholic Schools should be attended by children who are raised in a practising catholic environment. And priority should always be given to those children.
- Agree that baptism of pupils should hold higher priority for catholic school requests.
- Agree that those of the catholic faith should take priority for places in denominational schools.
- I generally do agree with these proposals. The provision of a catholic-based education does seem most suitable for families with a connection with the Catholic Church therefore to ask for proof of that connection (when a school so oversubscribed) is fair.
- The Diocese welcomes the acknowledgement of the rights of Catholic parents to enrol their baptised children in their local denominational school in the first instance.

Response:-

Denominational schools have been part of the public provision of education since the Education (Scotland) Act 1918 enabled the transfer of such schools into local authority control. The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 enables local authorities to establish denominational schools if satisfied that such a school is required. The provision of denominational schools is subject to the statutory requirement that every public school shall be open to pupils of all denominations. As noted in the original consultative proposal

document, the authority in framing the proposed new arrangements must adhere to legislative requirements and have regard to guidance. Parents can request either provision regardless of faith or none, only where a school is oversubscribed will catchment priorities be applied.

Siblings:-

- My child has a sibling at St Andrews High School, she is at a catchment school, St James Primary school & may not be admitted as we are not practicing Catholic's.

Response:-

Only when a school is oversubscribed will priorities for allocation of catchment places be required to be used. Under the current policy sibling status is not considered as a ballot is held for all pupils. The new policy allows sibling considerations within each of the new catchment priorities.

4.5.3

Questions and Comments: Proposal 3: Revise transfer from primary to secondary allocation of catchment secondary places

Associated Primary:-

- If outwith the current catchment area and child is attending school which is linked to secondary school they should have a placement for said secondary school.
- If a child live in the catchment area and has attended a feeder school for 7 years there should be no question that the transfer to the correct secondary school.
- Feeder schools catchment and non catchment should have priority over non feeder schools within the catchment.
- Again I feel those who attend certain schools should get transferred to the catchment high school.
- This is of high importance to me, my son has grown up through primary school with his peer group. Important to move to a secondary school with his peers from primary school.

Response:-

Only when a school is oversubscribed will priorities for allocation of catchment places be required to be used. Under the current policy non-catchment children attending associated primary schools, wishing to transfer to primary school's associated high school is not considered, as a ballot is held for all pupils. The new policy allows non-catchment pupil's attendance at an associated primary school to be considered within the new catchment priorities. If it is not possible to grant all requests established transition arrangements are in place to support all primary school children into secondary school.

Building:-

- Although the proposals will address the problem of oversubscription to the local denominational school in the short term, a new denominational secondary school should be built in the Paisley area to avoid the problem of oversubscription in the future.

Response:-

The Council continually reviews the performance of the school estate in terms of core fact findings which relate to the sufficiency, condition and suitability of buildings. Within the current School Estate Management Plan there are no proposals to build a new denominational secondary school.

Catchment:-

- Again, similar to proposal 3, I would be against this on the basis if catchment spaces were reduced. Secondary places should be based upon current address.
- Should be after local children are given their place - pay council tax at a premium for these schools and should not have to take our children out of our and there way to attend an alternative.
- It seems wholly unfair that my Daughter, who lives a few hundred yards from St. Andrews Academy may not be not be enrolled there, as she has previously attended Todholm Primary, only a short distance away. This cannot be right in this day and age.
- It is fair that existing pupils of Renfrewshire schools should be allocated places in their catchment school before pupils moving to the area.
- Children from surrounding areas (walkable distance) should be given priority over children bused from other areas for St Andrews academy regardless of religion. The alternatives secondary schools are not within safe/acceptable walking distance.
- I believe the consultation is important to have a fair system for catchment issues. My particular interest is that I have children living in the same estate as a Faith Secondary School, however I think proximity to the school and ASN needs are important.
- Catchment area for pupils should be closest School for ease of travel, for example I live at PA5 8WT (new Brookfield development) but I am advised Johnstone High School is allocated here but it is 1.6 miles distance where Gryffe High School is closer.
- Proof of residence should be requested and checked to ensure priority is given to those living in the catchment area. Priority should also be given to homeowners over tenancies (see additional comments), and those with siblings already in the school.
- My son is in the catholic school and daughter will go there too however as the local catholic school is in renfrew I would maybe prefer the kids to be at a local school within walking distance and not in the next town, I'd hope to transfer to park mains.

Response:-

Catchment pupils will always have priority over placing requests. It is only in the case of over subscription that catchment priorities will apply. Pupils living outwith a catchment area or non-Renfrewshire residents require to make placing requests. This consultation does not include the changing of any current catchment areas.

General Comments:-

- I'm against this proposal. See below.
- I am against this proposal.
- Against - please see comments sent by email.
- For
- St Charles Primary Parent Council support the proposed revision, noting the comments below.
- Transfer from St Fergus Primary 1 to St Mary's Primary 1.

Response:- Comments noted.

Parental Choice:-

- I think it is a personal preference from the parent what school they think is best for their child regarding secondary school.

Response:-

If placement at allocated catchment schools does not suit family circumstances, there may still be places available within alternative schools. Requests will be considered in line with catchment and placing request priorities depending on the number of available spaces in a school.

Religion:-

- I think this also promotes religious segregation and to prioritise someone who has a catholic baptism certificate does not make sense as it does not prove sufficiently that someone is a practising catholic.
- Catchment area should be the initial priority when allocating places. In this multi-cultural society we live in it is time to just call a school a school and not have it defined by its denomination which takes priority over where you live.
- Where there are two schools that are equal distance I think choice should be given regardless of faith especially if the family supports the values of the faith without the certificate.
- Against. Can believe that we still segregate children's education through religion. Using children i. And out of areas which has an affect environmentally. Break up friendships when children are segregated. Children in communities don't have frie.
- No place for schools within council control that place any basis of religion on where pupils can and should learn. If parents wish to send their pupils to a school with particular religious emphasis then they should pay for that. Secular Schools only.
- I don't believe there should be segregation in education, especially in public funded schools.
- Faith cannot be a deciding factor in allocation decisions . This is discrimination and unfair to every child who is not baptised. Faith should not have ANY place in deciding whether a child is granted a place or not. Outdated & wrong.
- New proposals are overly complex and dated in attitude. They overlook the demographics of our society - people moving due to changes in work/personal circumstances. They could exacerbate sectarianism and do not accommodate the development/loss of faith.
- Priority should be given to baptised Roman Catholic children.
- Again the Diocese welcomes the revised procedures which safeguard the rights of Catholic children to transfer to the Associated Denominational Secondary School which enables them to continue their education in a Faith School as a priority.

Response:-

Denominational schools have been part of the public provision of education since the Education (Scotland) Act 1918 enabled the transfer of such schools into local authority control. The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 enables local authorities to establish denominational schools if satisfied that such a school is required. The provision of denominational schools is subject to the statutory requirement that every public school shall be open to pupils of all denominations. As noted in the original consultative proposal document, the authority in framing the proposed new arrangements must adhere to legislative requirements and have regard to guidance. Parents can request either provision regardless of faith or none, only where a school is oversubscribed will catchment priorities be applied.

Siblings:-

- I have a Son in P5 and a Daughter in S5. I wish my Son to attend the same High School as her (which is in our catchment area). This is also the school that both myself and my husband attended.
- We understand that denominational schools have priority and that of oversubscribed the ballot will prioritize siblings but would be interested to find out how this is going to work.
- Understandable that RC children are given first places at RC secondary, however after this allocation should be based upon siblings and then distance from school within catchment area only. This would alleviate travel for council and children alike.
- My child has a sibling at St Andrews High School, she is at a catchment school, St James Primary school & may not be admitted as we are not practicing Catholic's.
- I think that places should be reserved according to beliefs, however siblings should be kept in same schools.

Response:-

Only when a school is oversubscribed will priorities for allocation of catchment places be required to be used. Under the current policy sibling status is not considered as a ballot is held for all pupils. The new policy allows sibling considerations within each of the new catchment priorities.

4.5.4

Questions and Comments: Proposal 4: Revise allocation of placing request places

Approach to Consultation:-

- Unaware on this also.

Response:-

Proposed changes were available from our website, copies were provided to Renfrewshire schools and libraries, or you could request a copy by calling, emailing or writing to the department. Summary sheets were provided at the public meetings. FAQ's were also available on our website. The department intend to produce a parent friendly leaflet following the outcome of the consultation.

Associated Primary:-

- If outwith the current catchment area and child is attending school which is linked to secondary school they should have a placement for said secondary school.

Response:-

Only when a school is oversubscribed will priorities for allocation of catchment places be required to be used. Under the current policy non-catchment children attending associated primary schools, wishing to transfer to primary school's associated high school is not considered, as a ballot is held for all pupils. The new policy allows non-catchment pupil's attendance at an associated primary school to be considered within the new catchment priorities. If it is not possible to grant all requests established transition arrangements are in place to support all primary school children into secondary school.

Catchment:-

- Yes should only be offered after local children are placed.
- The safety and well-being of children should be put first when travelling to school. As a resident in Hawkhead Village, my Daughter should have the right to walk to the Secondary School on her doorstep, regardless of the Primary School she has

attended.

- I think in certain cases some children who attend nursery schools out of their catchment for whatever personal reason want to attend that primary should be looked at within good reason.

(Received as enquiry through mailbox)

- I would prefer that there were fewer placing requests overall. If people wish their children to attend a particular school, then they should live within the catchment area. In my experience in Houston (HPS and GHS), there are far too many pupils from outwith catchment attending the school, making the school population significantly larger and leading to various issues such as the need to create composite classes in primary and general overcrowding in both schools. The school roll is made up of pupils from the surrounding areas, for example, Brookfield and Dargavel. This compromises the opportunities for the children who actually live within catchment (and whose parents/carers pay the associated council tax).

Response:-

Catchment pupils will always have priority over placing requests. It is only in the case of over subscription that catchment priorities will apply. Pupils living outwith a catchment area or non-Renfrewshire residents require to make placing requests. This consultation does not include the changing of any current catchment areas.

General Comment:-

- No view on this as will be sending both children to closest primary and secondary school.
- Unless families have 'special' requirements why the 'need' to request then i am not sure about how the allocation would be fair.
- I am against this proposal. See below.
- I am against this proposal.
- I feel the current system is fair and priority is given if there is a child already placed within the school.
- Against - please see comments sent by email.
- For.
- Revised procedures are clear and reasonable.
- St Charles Primary Parent Council support the proposed revision.

Response:- Comments noted

Placing Request:-

- For this proposal on the basis that placing requests are either kept the same or reduced slightly. I still feel a number of placing requests spaces should be kept.
- Anyone requesting a placing request should have criteria they must meet to make the allocation fairer

Response:-

Only when a school is oversubscribed will priorities for allocation of catchment and placing requests be required to be used. The new policy allows sibling considerations within each of the new placing request priorities.

Religion:-

- Priority should be given to baptised Roman Catholic children.
- As previously stated I feel this promotes religious segregation.
- No place for schools within council control that place any basis of religion on where pupils can and should learn. If parents wish to send their pupils to a school with particular religious emphasis then they should pay for that. Secular Schools only.
- Catholic children should receive priority out with the catchment if within the feeder primary school.
- To change the priority to religion over siblings attending the same school or medical reasons, may place unnecessary stress on families in relation to work life balance.
- Faith cannot be a deciding factor in allocation decisions . This is discrimination and unfair to every child who is not baptised. Faith should not have ANY place in deciding whether a child is granted a place or not. Outdated & wrong.

Response:-

Denominational schools have been part of the public provision of education since the Education (Scotland) Act 1918 enabled the transfer of such schools into local authority control. The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 enables local authorities to establish denominational schools if satisfied that such a school is required. The provision of denominational schools is subject to the statutory requirement that every public school shall be open to pupils of all denominations. As noted in the original consultative proposal document, the authority in framing the proposed new arrangements must adhere to legislative requirements and have regard to guidance. Parents can request either provision regardless of faith or none, only where a school is oversubscribed will catchment priorities be applied.

Siblings:-

- Older siblings already at the school should come into consideration.
- I think schools where siblings are already established should give priority regardless of faith although agree that should give priority to those paying their council tax in Renfrewshire.
- New p1s with siblings at a placing request school should be guaranteed a place.
- Placing request places would be more fairly allocated if in the order of: Renfrewshire Resident within Catchment Area with sibling already in attendance, Renfrewshire Resident within Catchment Area based upon distance from home or primary school.
- My child has a sibling at St Andrews High School, she is at a catchment school, St James Primary school & may not be admitted as we are not practicing Catholic's.
- Again, consideration should be given to sibling placements.

Response:-

Only when a school is oversubscribed will priorities for allocation of catchment places be required to be used. Under the current policy sibling status is not considered as a ballot is held for all pupils. The new policy allows sibling considerations within each of the new catchment priorities.

4.5.5

Questions and Comments: Any other comments for/against the proposal?

Approach to Consultation:-

- Only reason I am objecting is I cannot find any accessible information about what the proposal is about. We have had various letters home from school but none of them have been easy to read or tell me anything about the proposals. If I knew what the proposal actually was, then I might support it. Without adequate information, however, I'm afraid I cannot.

Response:-

Proposed changes were available from our website, copies were provided to Renfrewshire schools and libraries, or you could request a copy by calling, emailing or writing to the department. Summary sheets were provided at the public meetings. FAQ's were also available on our website. The department intend to produce a parent friendly leaflet following the outcome of the consultation.

Additional Support Needs:-

- Why is ASN in this form after all children should be placed in a school that can best meet the needs of the child should it not also I have a child in a ASN unit and other child starting school next year if she does not get a place in the unit should would not be able to go to the same school as her siblings as not catholic so you would then need to pay for transportation as I can't be in two places at one time!

Response:-

Specialist units, whilst located within a primary or secondary establishment are not part of mainstream provision. As an outcome from the consultation the department will further review guidance on ASN and medical prioritisation to ensure this is clearer.

Associated Primary:-

- If outwith the current catchment area and child is attending school which is linked to secondary school they should have a placement for said secondary school, also if grandparents/carers stay within the catchment area and the child will attend after school, the child should be able to attend secondary school.
- If already overcrowded ONLY feeder schools should be allocated places at a secondary school for S1, they should not allow placing requests or catchment requests for that academic year at all.

If there is room, only those with siblings already at the school should be allocated slots.

When asking parents at the P1 stage which high school you will be sending your child to, forward plan the numbers who will require a space and advise them early if there will be spaces or not when their child is due to transition from primary to secondary. Where you register your child in P1 should have no bearing on what high school they go to, this should be determined by what primary school they attend in P7 providing they now live in the catchment area of the primary school.

Revise your home to school transport policy to 1. Those entitled to free meals, should get free transport regardless of distance to school 2. Make everyone else pay for a place on the bus, the bus will pay for itself.

- My son has attended St. John Ogilvie since P1, now he will not automatically transfer to St Andrews Academy, due to his Muslim religion and having no baptism certificate. We enrolled him in a denominational school as religious values and beliefs are implemented. Although the bible and the Quran Have differences, faith is an important part of our lives. Under the new proposal the class he will spend 7 years with and religious education he has been taught could end as he is not be guaranteed a place at St. Andrews academy. In my opinion if a child has attended a feeder school and is in catchment then this should be Automatic.
Problem will also arise when my younger son moves to secondary with the added stress that he may not attend the same school as his sibling. I appreciate schools are at capacity however the bigger issue is that there is only 1 denominational school in Paisley, especially with the increase number of houses being built in the area, and this is what need to be revised.

Response:-

Only when a school is oversubscribed will priorities for allocation of catchment places be required to be used. Under the current policy non-catchment children attending associated primary schools, wishing to transfer to primary school's associated high school is not considered, as a ballot is held for all pupils. The new policy allows non-catchment pupil's attendance at an associated primary school to be considered within the new catchment priorities. If it is not possible to grant all requests established transition arrangements are in place to support all primary school children into secondary school.

Building:-

- It seems sensible to prioritise those who share the faith of the denominational school when deciding on places at the school. Although it makes sense, it also removes an element of parental choice in ensuring the best education for their child. The proposals would seem to be short sighted in their approach- a better solution would be to operate within these parameters for the next few years whilst a new denominational secondary school is built in the Paisley area to cater for all pupils who wish to attend it. A revision of the catchment boundaries for school within Renfrewshire but outwith Paisley may also help to ease oversubscription and ensure pupils travel a sensible distance to a denominational secondary school of their choosing.

Response:-

The Council continually reviews the performance of the school estate in terms of core fact findings which relate to the sufficiency, condition and suitability of buildings. Within the current School Estate Management Plan there are no proposals to build a new denominational secondary school.

Catchment:-

- From my own experience I feel the admission and placing request policy document should be updated to include a provision for children moving schools within the Renfrewshire District. The policy is not very clear and even from speaking to Ren Council staff about this, even they were unsure. We moved to Houston a number of years ago and I was told to complete a placing request form, even though Houston PS was in fact our catchment school. In addition, our children already attended another Ren Council PS. Moreover, I heard of parents who falsify their address in order to have their children attend a certain PS or Secondary School I feel further checks or proof is required over and above a copy of council tax or title deeds.

- The proposals fail to address the current failure of Renfrewshire schools to leave places for people moving into the area. Children are best schooled in the area that they live in since this is their community, especially when they are new to an area. For example, St Fillan's Primary generously accommodates many pupils moving into Bridge of Weir/Houston since neither non-denominational school adequately reserves places for newcomers despite hosting many children from out-of-catchment. St Fillan's thus educates many children who have chosen to attend a local school rather than actually selecting a catholic school and many families would like their children to move onto Gryffe High School. The CURRENT procedure is to offer a secondary school place based on primary school denomination NOT on home address and to appeal against this e.g. for a child at St Fillan's to attend Gryffe High, leaves parents and pupils waiting 4-5 months before they know if their application has been successful.

Response:-

Catchment pupils will always have priority over placing requests. It is only in the case of over subscription that catchment priorities will apply. Pupils living outwith a catchment area or non-Renfrewshire residents require to make placing requests. This consultation does not include the changing of any current catchment areas.

The department currently have a reservation of places policy to assist with keeping spaces for people moving into catchment areas.

Distance:-

- We are busing children in and out of area's which is not good for the environment. We are breaking up children's friendships and community if children are not able to attend the local school. St Andrews is practically in our estate where the children could safely walk to school. I have heard of numerous parents looking at changing children's religion to get into a school! Absolutely ludicrous!
- The wellbeing and safety of the child should be taken into consideration, as they could have a catchment school in their area but they are being asked to travel to another school miles away all because of religion. I feel the catchment policy should be reviewed at St Andrews academy as 8 schools are being bused from all over Paisley but a lot of children in the area are being asked to walk past this school to go to another.
- The wellbeing and safety of the child should be taken into consideration, as they could have a catchment school in their area but they are being asked to travel to another school miles away all because of religion. I feel the catchment policy should be reviewed at St Andrews academy as 8 schools are being bused from all over Paisley but a lot of children in the area are being asked to walk past this school to go to another.
- I believe that 1) Education should be provided as locally as possible to reduce impact on the climate emergency; 2) Education should be provided equally to all regardless of their religion or none.
I oppose the proposals because it will increase sectarianism in education and average travel distance.

Response:-

Consideration of safe travel routes is a priority for the Council, where travel to a school exceeds home to school transport distances or where there is no safe walking route free school transport is provided. This consultation does not include the changing of any current catchment areas.

General Comments:-

- All of these proposals I have been happy with for my children as we have not had to do any placing requests as we stay in the catchment area but I think it doesn't do any harm having a look into what works and what can be improved upon.
- I am for the proposal but I'm quite disappointed that this was not implemented sooner. My child will be transferring to secondary school after the summer, he is already in an overcrowded year group and for the past few years it's come to my attention that parents/carers with children attending the denominational primary school are not even considering the denominational secondary school for their child, but are very vocal about it being their right for their child to attend the non denominational secondary school (Gryffe) and then sending their child to the non denominational secondary school. The changes should have been made years ago. If I chose to send my children to a denominational primary school, I would then send them to the relevant secondary but it seems a lot of parent/carers in Houston have clearly exploited your current policy purely just because of the area we live and are putting an already over crowded secondary school under more pressure.
- I do agree with the proposals suggestion of bringing forward the dates of registration as this will help all parties in their planning.
- I feel that it is a good idea to revise the current policies for this proposal.

Response:- Comments noted.

Miscellaneous

- Please please please please pretty please make the new process digital. Other councils seem to have digital admissions and it would seem like such a huge improvement over the current way of doing admissions. This year my husband had to take a whole day of annual leave so we could register our daughter as his employer wouldn't let him out to do it otherwise and I was working away. I think this is also a 'cost of the school day' issue as for lower income families they may have taken unpaid time off to attend the catchment school. It would be really appreciated if you could make online registration a d placing requests an option .

Response:-

The council are currently reviewing solutions for online registration and placing request applications.

Placing Request:-

- After submitting a placement request parents \ children should be notified much quicker if they have a place. Primary schools have started early introduction meetings for new P1s and this can be unsettling if they get use to a school and then they are unsuccessful with getting a place.
- I note that for secondary school placing requests, subject choices will no longer be identified as a priority. Will this be detrimental to the education of many of our older children particularly. This is one part of the proposal I would object to.

Response:-

Section 28B of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 obliges the local authority to make provision for admissions to schools and priorities for admissions and placing requests. The local authority policy defines that we need to consider all catchment requests prior to the allocation of placing requests, we endeavour to do this by the 15th of March at the latest. Placing requests are thereafter considered as soon after this date as is possible.

Subject choices will be considered for year stages S3 and above, the new application form allows space for subject information to be completed.

Religion:-

- Catholic Schools should give priority to catholic children. All this nonsense about parents up in arms because their kids who WERE NOT CATHOLIC couldn't go to St Andrew's and had to travel to the other schools was a disgrace it wasn't principles it was convenience. They were quite happy for the kids to go to a non faith school in primary but get upset when it comes to high school. I'm raising my children as Catholics and I expect my child to attend a catholic school. It's not discrimination it's a choice. As for primary I will need to make a placing request for St Charles and again children who are baptised Roman Catholics should be given priority.
- There have been issues with religious bigotry and segregation in Scotland for some time. I feel this policy proposal is a backward step which will reduce integration between denominational and non-denominational schools. I do not believe that religion should be the priority when choosing a school and local demographics and geography should be taken into consideration. This will potentially mean that children who can walk safely to a local school will be unable to do so and will be forced to either walk a long distance with potential safety issues or use public transport or be driven by parent to a more distant school. I feel this is a negative proposal and also feel that environmental factors have not been taken into consideration when drawing up this proposal. Schools should be part of the local community and it makes no sense to stop children from attending their local school and being part of that community simply because of the religion they were born into.
- The increasing number of children looking to enter St Andrew's is causing a restriction of space for the current children. I am pleased that Baptism Into the Catholic Church will now be taken into account for priority admission into a Catholic school. I think this is well overdue.
- Pupils should continue to learn about the many forms of religion in our society but I'm afraid that a council should not endorse a school with any emphasis of any religion. Schools should be for all pupils and places should and must not be allocated based on a particular religion.
- I feel this is too late for me however if I can help others that is what I want. I had to move house in 2019 because my catholic daughter who was in the feeder primary school however just out with the catchment area came below the priority of a non denominational school children within the catchment. We had to move house to get her into the school with her friends as there were too many pupils within catchment. My views are that catholic primary schools should be the priority to a catholic high school rather than the non denominational school. If the wish for the catholic high school is so strong the child should attend the catholic primary school and vice versa.

- I do not feel we should be moving backwards into an education society that discriminates against religion, especially in public funded schools. One of education's most powerful features is the ability to bring people together and to open opportunities for our children, no matter their background. What sort of message do our schools send to children when they discriminate based on religion? An inclusive education system today is the best chance we have of creating an inclusive society tomorrow.
- I feel religion should be taken out of any decision determining whether a child is granted a place in a specific school. This is only going to create greater inequality and further differences. We are supposed to be an inclusive society and religion should not be a basis on deciding whether a child is granted a space. I find this very sad that In today's society I am having to express this viewpoint. We are only moving backwards and not forwards if religion is used as a deciding factor. Please don't build barriers where there should be none . Education is a vital tool to open our minds and learn , it should be available to every child irrespective of faith or background.
- We are not practising Roman Catholic's but we have similar beliefs. We have been baptised in the protestant church. We don't agree with all the teaching of the RC church but we would like the opportunity to send our kids there based on what we all believe. Can the placing request criteria include those of other faiths.
- The Diocese of Paisley acknowledges that Renfrewshire Council is required to formally plan for education within the Council area and these proposals on the rights of Catholic parents to select a Catholic education for their children alongside the proposals for non-denominational schools are designed to ensure sufficient school places for all children throughout their school career based on parental preferences and Cluster organisation.

The centrality of the proposals highlighting the right of Catholic parents to choose Catholic schools is commended. The linking of enrolment in Primary 1 of the local Catholic PS to transition to the local Catholic HS gives reassurance to the Catholic community that progression from Catholic PS to Catholic HS in linked catchment areas is of paramount importance. Thus Catholic children will have guaranteed access to Catholic Schools throughout their school experience from P1 to S6..

Consequently the Diocese supports the revised proposals.

- We support the proposals and are encouraged by the prominence provided for education in a Catholic faith environment. Our Primary schools are hugely important and central in supporting kids growth in the Catholic faith, particularly in respect of the sacraments.

While supportive of the majority of the proposals as set out, we would ask that consideration be given in the transition from Primary to Secondary for friendship groups to be provided with higher priority, and that presence at a Primary School (of whatever denomination) for a full Primary term (i.e. 7 years) is recognised where the denomination of the child differs from the Secondary school (e.g. non-Catholic kids who have been at St Charles from P1-P7 are able to move to St Andrews with their friendship groups)

Response:-

Denominational schools have been part of the public provision of education since the Education (Scotland) Act 1918 enabled the transfer of such schools into local authority control. The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 enables local authorities to establish denominational schools if satisfied that such a school is required. The provision of denominational schools is subject to the statutory requirement that every public school shall be open to pupils of all denominations. As noted in the original consultative proposal

document, the authority in framing the proposed new arrangements must adhere to legislative requirements and have regard to guidance. Parents can request either provision regardless of faith or none, only where a school is oversubscribed will catchment priorities be applied.

Siblings:-

- It can be a stressful time as a parent and for a child when worrying whether your child will be allocated to a school which is as close to your home as possible, even more so when your first child is accepted into that school and there is then the possibility that your second child will not be placed in that school due to numbers. There is a high percentage of parents who chose to live somewhere due to the proximity of the school to their home to find out that this may not have any bearing on the decision. Property developers, local housing authorities and schools have a responsibility to ensure that parents are able to make informed choices on where they live and what primary school they choose for their child. They need to be told at the first instance which secondary school options will be instead of finding out at the last minute. The Environmental impact also need considering . Closer to the school will encourage walking and not have the need for cars or 2-3 buses.
- While we appreciate that St Andrews Academy is becoming crowded. This change in policy should be introduced in a phased way, it is not fair that the majority of Todholm children were accepted one year then suddenly not the following year. Families with older siblings already at the high school are being forced to have multiple drop offs/pickups, this should be considered. Children should be able to walk a safe/acceptable distance to and from secondary school, especially as most parents work and the options for after school care are limited at this age. Hawkhead to Paisley Grammar is not a safe/acceptable route to school, especially crossing the railway bridge. If you really want parents to send their kids to PG you should put on a bus. I feel my child may be discriminated against as they are potentially being refused entry to the closest school (by far) on the grounds of religion. Why does RC not build on the success/popularity of St Andrews by extending it?
- Not all pupils want to leave primary and go to the same school as their peers. For my oldest she has thrived by leaving behind the friends from primary and even more so the toxic relationships that had developed over 7 years of growing and maturing. I don't think she would have excelled the way she has at Trinity if she had gone to her catchment secondary school. My youngest is getting close to moving to secondary and we are hoping she will also get the chance to excel at what I believe as a teacher is an excellent school even though she doesn't have a RC baptismal certificate, although she has been baptised into the Christian faith. I think that younger siblings should be given the first chance to places at secondary so that they can have the support of family and the same opportunities.
- I believe priority should be given for secondary school registrants with siblings already in the school. I also feel that priority for both primary and secondary places should be given to homeowners over tenancies, in particular short term tenancies. I believe that some people arrange short term tenancies in the area simply to secure a school placement and then move outwith the catchment area once the pupil's place is confirmed.
- Would like to see siblings attend same school even if requires a placing request.

- My child being in a catchment school, involves herself in all aspects of the religious teachings given, however will not be participating in Baptism registration or practices. Due to this, there is a strong possibility, that a registered baptised child from non-catchment school or area may be given priority placement over my child & my child rejected, remembering that, even although she's at a catchment school & has an older sibling at St Andrews high school.

Response:-

Only when a school is oversubscribed will priorities for allocation of catchment places be required to be used. Under the current policy sibling status is not considered as a ballot is held for all pupils. The new policy allows sibling considerations within each of the new catchment priorities.

4.6 Summary of questions, comments and responses from children at various schools

19 schools responded, 17 were supportive of the proposal and 2 against. 283 pupils took part in the school group responses. Below are some of the key comments made:-

Educational Experience

- Pupils believed educational experience could be impacted if someone has taken part in the transition process from nursery to primary or primary to secondary then have to go to another school. They believe there should be consistency through all sectors and no need to move elsewhere.
- The teachers try to do everything they can to make school good with the rooms that we have.
- It is very hard for us all to meet as a school and we have one short assembly a week to announce pupil of the week so we can all be together.
- Our school has small classes but we need them. It lets us have more time with our teacher and means we learn a lot more.
- We love the size of our school. We would like some more pupils but definitely don't want classes that are full.
- The majority of pupils spoke highly about currently enjoying our small class sizes and additional space both in the school and classrooms. Some had friends at Houston Primary and spoke of the large class sizes and lack of space. One P.5 pupil did think that our school classrooms might have difficulty accommodating thirty- three pupils.
- Also, one did express concern that the pupil numbers could go down in the next few years, so that our younger children may not have the opportunity to have as many friends as he did currently in the upper school.
- We agree that pupil that have medical needs should be accommodated in order to give everyone a fair chance (equitable).
- We agree with registering your child for education in the November, prior to an August intake.
- We agree that registration dates should be published in early learning establishments, schools, the Council's website and the local press throughout September and October.
- Children thought it was a good idea to move forward the registration for primary 1 children as this provides children, families, schools and the local authority time to

prepare and organise for the next school session. As explained in the quote below.

- If people sign up earlier it means everyone can be better organised
- Children were concerned about levels of staff and the fact that class numbers are rising but this does not always mean that there will be extra staff.
- Children want to maintain our inclusive ethos but also ensure that our school does not become so full that we cannot maintain this. They agreed that a change to placing requests would support this.
- Children are concerned that if breakout spaces are used as classrooms that this will affect the overall ability of all children to learn to the best of their ability.
- Children could understand the principle that you should move onto your feeder secondary e.g. if you attend a denominational primary then you should move on to attend your denominational secondary school however they also felt that as they got older they are more able to be involved in decisions about their education and felt that it was unfair that his decision was being made for them when they enrolled for primary school. This sentiment is illustrated by the quote below.
- I don't think it is fair that parents have to make a decision when you are 4 years old and then you can't change your mind when you get older.
- Overall our children agreed that the proposed changes to the policy would benefit our school.
- Don't think this would make a difference.
- Move registration to November.
- Learning would be more fun.
- Children felt it would not impact on them in any way.
- Many have older siblings or friends in St Andrew's and they speak positively about the school and the teachers.
- Some of the P7s didn't like Paisley Grammar when they visited as part of the transition where as others did.

Physical Environment

- This might affect how many people are in class.
- The playground may have more people playing in it.
- We may make more friends.
- The majority of pupils felt a November registration for P1 would be a good idea as it would be over with by the end of the year so parents wouldn't have to think about it again and would have plenty time to plan and prepare their child. They also realise this gives the council extra time to ensure numbers are fixed and class sizes agreed so correct staffing can be put in place.
- A few thought January was still better as that's what people expect and that's the year they start school (also was after Christmas when people were less busy!).
- Pupils were particularly adamant that siblings should be taken into account when placing pupils – they do not think families should have to go to different schools.
- They think it is fair that pupils baptised into the Roman Catholic faith should get priority into a denominational school.

- Our pupils were almost unanimously of the view that if you have attended a feeder primary you should go to the secondary associated with that regardless of your address. They understand this could increase pupil numbers, therefore class sizes in their school. It would also impact traffic around the school as more people would drive in. They speak of this in a particularly local context eg Brookfield and Quarriers are very near to Bridge of Weir but are not in catchment for the primary. Despite this, they believe you should be able to go to secondary school with your primary school friends and take advantage of all the transition programmes put in place for feeder primaries.
- One caveat is that they believe you cannot just move to a primary to get to a desired secondary but should be there from at least P3 or P4.
- Pupils think it is particularly unfair that pupils can attend a denominational school for seven years then immediately gain access to the local non-denominational secondary school because of their address. They think pupils from feeder schools should have priority (despite their address) over pupils from denominational schools. Again they also believe keeping sibling together is a priority.
- One child (who is about to go to private school) believes strongly that people know the catchment school when they move into a property so if they know this 'rule' they should abide by it.
- They believe pupils wishing to attend a denominational school should have priority if they have attended the feeder primary and are baptised in the Roman Catholic faith, although, in common with the theme above, they always think siblings should be together. They understand this also impacts school numbers as whole families would be 'guaranteed' a place. They are very strong on the fact that parents should not be driving around the country taking different pupils to different schools - they know people who do this and they think it is a very bad idea from a family, school, safety and environmental point of view!
- They feel there are a lot of children in the playground and this makes it difficult to share the limited resources such as the basketball court and the football pitch. There are 84 children in P4 alone and even having a day that P4 can use the area still makes it hard to take turns.
- PE hall needs to be shared to fit everyone in and if visitors are in working with a group the hall is closed for the day because there are no empty classrooms to do events in.
- There are too many cars near the school and it is very hard to drive into the school area.
- There should be a lot less cars.
- The bus people have a long walk to the bus and this can be difficult with mums and dads arriving to meet their children.
- Feel that policy is fair.
- All pupils felt proposal was fair.
- Children felt it would not impact on them in any of the above areas.
- Outdoors - The playground won't be safe if there are too many pupils in it.
- Outdoors - We need enough space to play properly.
- Outdoors -If we have more pupils we would need more bins as littering is already a problem.

- Outdoors -We have big open spaces right now and that shouldn't change.
- Indoors - It's better when the class sizes are small because it's a calmer atmosphere. We can concentrate much better.
- Indoors - If we have bigger numbers then we need bigger rooms.
- Indoors - Smaller classes means teachers can give the help to people who need it.
- Indoors - Smaller classes builds better friendships.
- Indoors - If classes are bigger then we need more teacher. If a class is full it should have to two teachers in it.
- Travel - The car parks are already really busy so we need to be careful if there is going to be more traffic.
- Travel - If pupils get a place out with the catchment area then they should have a school bus.
- Our pupil council had no major concerns with any aspect of the consultation. During our discussion, most of the older pupils were aware of the consultation taking place because of discussions overheard at home by their parents that are on our parent council.
- The pupils were very aware of their small class sizes and enjoy the space both indoors and outdoors. A couple of pupils shared how their parents had been at the school when there was modular accommodation and when this had been removed the playground space had been increased.
- All pupils felt that took the school buses, that they had plenty of additional capacity and that having two crossing patrol people was excellent for road safety.
- Outdoor – If the school were not over crowded, the school playground would be safer.
- Indoor – Easier to learn when the classroom is not too full.
- Travel/ Safety - It would be harder for parents to travel to two schools to take siblings. Therefore, you agree with changes.
- Children agree that they have a great outdoor space in which to play and are all aware that they are very lucky to have such a high quality playground environment. Our playground is already very busy and children were concerned that should our school roll continue to increase that this would lead to a less quality experience. Children are also aware that more children has an impact on staffing and that there may be more children within the school environment but not necessarily more teaching and support staff.
- The Bishopton bus is getting way too crowded and noisy which isn't a good thing. It's also hard to find a seat which can be dangerous
- The car park is getting full up.
- The quotes above illustrate that the children are concerned with the safety of travelling to and from school as our school roll increases.
- Children were concerned that if the school roll within St John Bosco Primary School continues to increase that additional spaces within the school such as our active room and ICT room would have to be used as classrooms. One child in particular was concerned that the loss of the active room in particular may mean that children with 'invisible disabilities' would be worst affected as this would mean that they did not

have a break out space to access if they became distressed within the main classroom environment.

- For high school children all get the school bus.
- Would give us space for us to play in.
- Big size classes are not a problem because you have more friends.
- RC should make indoor and outdoor for schools as they are just now.
- Let people go to the same school as they go to now.
- Children's views are that this is fair and they have no objections to the proposal. They think it makes sense.

Most children were supportive of the proposal that Catholics should get priority of placing in Catholic schools, however, most thought that medical needs should be given a higher priority. A few children thought it should just be whoever signs up first. The following are quotes from some of the children in the Pupil Council Group:

(P4) "I think medical conditions should be before siblings."

(P4) "I think the medical condition should be before where you live."

(P7) "It is giving a better chance for Catholics to grow in their religion."

(P4) "I think it should be whoever signed up first."

(P5) "I think it should be whoever chooses first."

- 'St. Andrew's is closer to where I live.'
- 'St. Andrew's has better sports facilities than Paisley Grammar.'
- 'I like sport so I would like a high school that has good sports facilities.'
- The children spoke about having a clean and modern school with good sports facilities. They would like to go to a high school that is close to where they live.
- Many of the children live in and around St. Andrew's and feel it would be easier to go there than have to walk a longer distance to Paisley Grammar.
- On their transition visits the children felt the playground and outside space at Paisley Grammar seemed very small.

Other Comments

- Pupils thought a November enrolment would be good because the school would look nicer with the Christmas decorations up which would make more people want to come!
- Children are supportive of the proposal in general. They did mention that they felt that when dealing with placing requests and allocation of primary to secondary catchment places that pupils with medical needs that cannot be accommodated in any other Renfrewshire school should be given as high a priority as having a sibling already in the school .
- They are not concerned about the P1 registration dates.
- Agree with the earlier P1 registration, give parents more time to get to know the school. Agree with points 2 and 3.
- Pupils stated if early in November that would be ok as any later and people would be busy with organising for Christmas.
- Also stated it would be good idea if done earlier because if you needed more staff you could interview with plenty of time and have people in place.
- Pupils felt you should have baptismal certificate to be priority for denominational

school.

- Pupils felt points made were reasonable.
- Pupils felt points made were reasonable.
- Children feel there are plenty of options available in Erskine area and therefore not an issue for them.
- All children agreed with the new proposal but were worried about those who want to come to our school but live outside the catchment area or aren't baptised.
- Two pupils were concerned that if our school role grew that the pitch area would need to be removed.
- Pupils were not keen on this – "This priority only applies to Denominational Schools – The Pupil is baptised Roman Catholic (If oversubscribed at this point a ballot prioritising siblings is required). "
- The children would like to ensure that everyone knows about the changes when they happen so that this is fair for all children and families.
- The main concern for children was that the policy is fair and that everyone knows about any changes that do occur.
- The children appreciate the fact that their school is well regarded within the local community.
- I like that people want to come to this school, it means that they think it's a good school
- 'I want to go to high school with my friends.'
- 'We should be allowed to go to the high school that we want.'

Response:-

Renfrewshire Council welcomes the positive comments from the children of primary and secondary schools who responded and we will ensure appropriate feedback is provided in relation to the Council's decision on this catchment review.

4.7 The National Secular Society provided their comments on the consultation these are attached as Appendix A to this report. The department's response is attached as Appendix B.

4.8 Summary

In review of comments made the department will take steps to review information within the final proposed policy document to include:-

- Review of guidance on Additional Support Needs (ASN) and medical prioritisation to ensure this is clearer;
- Review of guidance in relation to length of time of attendance at associated primary schools, when transferring to secondary schools to ensure this is clearer;
- In addition to the publication of the outcome of consultation on website. Ensure that the outcome of consultation is communicated to school groups who participated in providing responses to the consultation; and
- Production of a parent friendly guide/leaflet to reflect any final policy decision.



Response to Renfrewshire Council's consultation on Admissions to Schools and Placing Request Policy

March 2020

Introduction

1. The National Secular Society works for the separation of religion and state, and for equal respect for everyone's human rights so that no one is either advantaged or disadvantaged on account of their beliefs. We regard secularism and equality as essential features of a fair and open society. This includes within state-funded education.
2. We are **against** the proposed changes to the Admissions to Schools and Placing Request Policy. Specifically, we are against:
 - Proposal 2: Revise primary 1 registration allocation of catchment places
 - Proposal 3: Revise transfer from primary to secondary allocation of catchment secondary places
 - Proposal 4: Revise allocation of placing request places
3. Proposals 2, 3 and 4 would all disadvantage non-Catholic families and further segregate communities in Renfrewshire.
4. We strongly oppose any religious discrimination or selection in admissions. There is no justification for restricting access to a publicly funded school based on the religious beliefs of children or their families.
5. Introducing further religious selection in admissions would needlessly exacerbate sectarian divisions as well as ethnic and socio-economic segregation.
6. Scotland, and particularly Renfrewshire, already experience significant problems with sectarianism. Separating children according to the religion of their parents is not working to end the problem, and merely entrenches division. It is imperative that local councils work to solve the problem of sectarianism by ensuring children of families from all religion and belief backgrounds learn and play together, so they can live and work together as adults.
7. Northern Ireland, which also experiences high levels of sectarianism, is working on integrating its schools and bringing Protestant families, Catholic families, and families of other religions and beliefs together. Scotland should be moving in that same direction.

8. We are particularly disturbed by the criteria in Proposals 2 and 4, which would prioritise children with a baptism certificate over children with siblings in the school and children with medical needs that cannot be accommodated in any other school, including wheelchair users. Such criteria clearly place the desire of the Catholic Church to maximise the number of Catholics in the schools it controls over the welfare needs of pupils and their families. It is outrageous that a local council would put the agenda of a religious institution before the best interests of the children in their community.
9. For these reasons, religion should not play any role at all in school admission or transfer processes. We ask the council to abandon these plans and to treat all families equally – regardless of their religion.

6. Specific objections to statements in the consultation documents

10. We feel it is important to highlight our objections to particular assertions made in the accompanying documents to this consultation. Specifically, we object to the following statements in *Appendix 1 – Procedures for consultation relating to: Proposal to consult on: Admissions to Schools and Placing Request Policy* (pp. 7 –24 in the [Consultation on Admissions to Schools and Placing Request Policy - Board Report](#)):
11. Para 5.2.2: *“The proposal to change the admissions policy will allow the Council to fulfil its duty to provide education to children and young people who are baptised into the Roman Catholic Church in a denominational school.”*
12. The Council has a duty to ensure children and young people have equal access to good education. It does not have a duty to further the mission of the Roman Catholic Church. By entitling children with baptism certificates a privileged position in school admissions, the Council is allowing itself to function as an instrument of a religious organisation. This is neither compatible with basic democratic principles, nor with the Council’s duty to treat all citizens under its jurisdiction equally and fairly.

Like all of Scotland, Renfrewshire is a place of growing religious diversity. If the Council claims it has a duty to ensure Roman Catholic families can access state-funded schools tailored to the Roman Catholic faith, there is nothing to stop other religious groups insisting that the Council provide them with access to state-funded schools tailored to their religion. For example, the Council should expect to see greater demand for Muslim schools, Hindu schools etc. Attempting to accommodate the varied educational wishes of parents and ‘faith leaders’ from many different faith groups is not only impractical but also undesirable – it will lead to segregated communities, destruction of community cohesion, and an end to the principle of equal education for all.

13. Para 5.2.5: *“All Renfrewshire schools remain open to all pupils and will continue to have an inclusive, supportive, tolerant and respectful ethos with a drive to help every child achieve and attain their very best. The diversity of our school communities contributes to their success.”*
14. The very principle of giving priority to pupils with baptism certificates means that effectively, denominational schools are not “open to all pupils”. Where oversubscribed,

they will be open to baptised Catholics only – even pupils with medical need who are not Catholic would be rejected. Additionally, any school that does not treat pupils equally on the basis of religion, and promotes one specific religion or belief above all others, cannot truly be called “inclusive”, “tolerant” or “respectful”. Favouring Catholics over non-Catholics in admissions is also not conducive to “diversity” within a school community.

15. Para 5.2.6: *“The proposal introduces more control on school applications and would ensure that within denominational schools available places are prioritised for baptised Roman Catholic pupils. These pupils would more likely be able to attend their local catchment Roman Catholic school instead of being redirected (with any associated transport costs) and placed in a school outside their local area until a place becomes available at their local school. There are educational benefits arising from this because pupils will face less disruption and be more settled if they are accommodated in their local Roman Catholic school. This is because they will not need to travel to an alternative school in a different area and possibly a different school to their sibling(s); and they will not face the prospect of a second transfer between schools after moving into the area.”*
16. While this paragraph makes clear the advantage of the new proposal for Catholic families, it completely ignores the impact the policy will have on non-Catholic families. Non-Catholic families would also like their children to attend their local school without having to travel in a different area, but if their local school is a Catholic school, their children would be far less likely to get in under the proposed new admissions criteria.
17. Para 5.2.7: *“...Under the proposed new arrangements, children who are baptised Roman Catholic would accord priority. This recognises the educational benefits of the time spent in a denominational primary and of the pupils’ faith and experiences.”*
18. Again, this paragraph considers only the perceived advantages for Catholic families, but not non-Catholic families. It also assumes that the pupils from Catholic families are themselves Catholic, which is often not the case. Baptism and enrolment into a Catholic primary school are usually performed at an age before children can even understand the concept of religion, let alone communicate religious preferences. This means many pupils baptised as Catholics and sent to Catholic schools do not in fact believe in the Catholic faith. Schools should be places where children can develop their own ideas about religion and make a genuine choice about what religion they wish to follow, if any. Increasing faith-based segregation into Renfrewshire’s school system further impedes children’s ability to do this.
19. Para 5.4 *“...Equitable application of the policy would ensure fairness and transparency.”*
20. The proposed policy itself is not equitable and not fair, because it disadvantages non-Catholic families.
21. We also object to the following statement within the report titled Proposal to consult on Admissions to Schools and Placing Request Policy (p. 1 – 6 24 in the [Consultation on Admissions to Schools and Placing Request Policy - Board Report](#)):
“The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or

potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report."

22. This is an utterly bewildering statement. By prioritising Catholics in school admissions, the new policy has the potential to cause discrimination against people with a number of different protected characteristics, including:

- **Disability – Direct discrimination.** Proposals 2, 3 and 4 make it clear that children with a baptism certificate will be prioritised over pupils who have “medical needs that cannot be accommodates in any other school”, including those who are a “wheelchair user”.
- **Gender reassignment – Indirect discrimination.** [Documents](#) published by the Catholic Church indicate that they do not recognise the concept of transgender. Parents/guardians who are transgender are therefore less likely to baptise their children into the Catholic faith, and so they are more likely to be disadvantaged by admissions criteria that prioritise baptised Catholics.
- **Marriage and civil partnership – Indirect discrimination.** The Catholic Church is clear that it only recognises opposite-sex marriages. It also considers it immoral to have children outside of marriage. Parents/guardians who are unmarried, in a same-sex marriage, or in a civil partnership are therefore less likely to baptise their children into the Catholic faith, and so they are more likely to be disadvantaged by admissions criteria that prioritise baptised Catholics.
- **Race – Indirect discrimination.** Religious affiliation is closely linked to race. Certain ethnicities are far less likely to be Catholic than others. Families belonging to a race that is less likely to be Catholic would therefore be more likely to be disadvantaged by admissions criteria that prioritise baptised Catholics.
- **Religion or belief – Direct discrimination.** All children who are not baptised Catholics will be disadvantaged by admissions criteria that prioritise baptised Catholics.
- **Sexual orientation – Indirect discrimination.** The Catholic Church teaches that sexual relations between people of the same sex are immoral. It also does not recognise same-sex marriage. Parents/guardians who are gay, lesbian or bisexual are therefore less likely to baptise their children into the Catholic faith, and so they are more likely to be disadvantaged by admissions criteria that prioritise baptised Catholics.

7. Conclusion

23. Renfrewshire Council should abandon the policies in Proposals 2, 3 and 4 within this consultation, on the grounds that they will result in unnecessary discrimination and segregation.

24. Instead, Renfrewshire Council should work towards phasing out faith-based education in its state schools and concentrate on bringing families of all faiths and none together.

25. The National Secular Society is happy to work together with Renfrewshire Council to explore alternative options.
26. We also have a good relationship with the [Integrated Education Fund](#), which works to build more integrated schools in Northern Ireland. We would be happy to arrange introductions with them if Renfrewshire Council would consider pursuing a more inclusive, cohesive approach to education.

This response was prepared by Megan Manson, campaigns officer, National Secular Society

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Megan Manson
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Dear Ms Manson

Thank you for your correspondence in relation to the Admissions to Schools and Placing Request Policy consultation.

Denominational schools have been part of the public provision of education since the Education (Scotland) Act 1918 enabled the transfer of such schools into local authority control. The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 enables local authorities to establish denominational schools if satisfied that such a school is required. The provision of denominational schools is subject to the statutory requirement that every public school shall be open to pupils of all denominations. As noted in the original consultative proposal document, the authority in framing the proposed new arrangements must adhere to legislative requirements and have regard to guidance. Best value, effective and efficient management of resources are other duties that councils must follow as administrators of the public purse.

Every one of Renfrewshire Council's schools are open to pupils of all denominations and continue to have an inclusive, supportive, tolerant and respectful ethos with a drive to help every child achieve and attain their very best.

Education Authorities are obliged to produce guidelines in respect of placing in schools. Denominational schools are permitted under Schedule 11, paragraph 5 of the Equality Act 2010 to give preference to members of their own religion when deciding who to admit to the school. It is considered that the Council's proposal complies with its statutory duties.

The department recognises that the consultation is an emotive issue for some members of the community. The Council is not excluding any group through the proposal but merely seeking to form guidelines to be able to prioritise places should a school be oversubscribed by catchment pupils, in an equitable and fair way and recognising the arrangements that can be made in respect of Roman Catholic schools.

An important tenet of the proposal is that only in the event of oversubscription by catchment pupils would priority be given to baptised Roman Catholic children in Roman Catholic schools. Renfrewshire Council prides itself on its inclusive values, practices and attitudes found in its educational establishments. The curriculum followed within our schools provides opportunity to share experiences of all faiths regardless of the type of establishment attended. We recognise that some families of other faiths and none seek places in Roman Catholic schools for a faith based education.

Under the proposed new arrangements all our schools would continue to be open to all pupils of all faiths and none. The possession of a Roman Catholic baptismal certificate is not a condition of entry to our Roman Catholic schools. It would simply be a factor in prioritising places in Roman Catholic schools in cases where the catchment is oversubscribed.

We note your concern that all families, irrespective of faith, would like their children to attend their local school, without having to travel to a different area. It is important to note, therefore, that pupils can register at their catchment denominational or non-denominational school for their local area. These guidelines only apply in the event of over-subscription to a school.

The vast majority of respondents have been agreeing with the proposal acknowledging where there are insufficient places across the school estate, that baptised Roman Catholic children be given priority should a Roman Catholic school be oversubscribed by catchment demand and recognising that all Renfrewshire schools will remain open to all pupils.

The proposal has been assessed in relation to its impact on equality and is in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Yours sincerely

Alison Gallagher
Resources Manager



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RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

Admissions to Schools and Placing Request Policy

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- Appendix F - Ballot Process Policy
- Appendix G - Form: Renfrewshire Schools (Secondaries and Associated Primaries)
- Appendix H - Form: School Registration
- Appendix I - Form: Request to Remain Notification Letter
- Appendix J - Form: Information For Parents–Transfer from Primary to Secondary

Forms A,G,H,I and J - may be subject to change depending on administrative / future requirements to gather / process information.

Any changes to Appendices B,C,D,E and F would require board approval.

1. Background

1.1 Catchment areas

- 1.1.1 The geographical area of Renfrewshire Council is divided into delineated catchment areas for primary and secondary schools. Each school is either non-denominational or denominational (Roman Catholic).
- 1.1.2 The arrangements described in this document do not apply to Gaelic education, there are separate arrangements for this provision of education.
- 1.1.3 Each residential property which is located within Renfrewshire Council has a 'catchment' denominational and non-denominational primary and secondary school assigned to it. This is determined by the geographical location of the property and each school's delineated catchment area in which the property is located.
- 1.1.4 Although the Council aims to provide enough places for all children at the preferred catchment primary and secondary school, living within the delineated catchment area of a school does not guarantee a child a place at a catchment school.
- 1.1.5 The Council's website www.renfrewshire.gov.uk "Find My Nearest ...", provides details on the catchment schools applicable to home addresses. You can also view a map (graphical representation) of a school's delineated catchment area. If there is any doubt regarding the catchment schools for a particular property, Children's Services can advise.
- 1.1.6 In the situation where there is an agreement for shared custody of a child where a child lives with a different parent/carer regularly at a different property, the local catchment school is defined by Children's Services as the residence of the parent/carer who receives Child Benefit for said child. Recent documentary evidence of receipt of Child Benefit or equivalent paperwork may be required to be submitted. Only for exceptional circumstances may alternative documentation be considered by headquarters.
- 1.1.7 Placement at an Additional Support Needs (ASN) School or specialist unit will be considered outwith this policy by Children's Services where:
 - it is in the best interests of the child;
 - the needs of the child have been assessed and recorded in their wellbeing plan; and
 - there has been discussion with the Children's Services Inclusion Officer and a decision taken at the Education Support and Resource Group (ESRG).

1.2 Associated schools

- 1.2.1 Each primary school is associated with a number of other primary schools to a secondary school. The catchment area of the secondary school is generally made up of the catchment areas of the associated primary schools. There are 8 non-denominational clusters of associated schools and 3 denominational clusters of associated schools in Renfrewshire.

- 1.2.2 The exception to 1.2.1 above is St Catherine's Primary School whose delineated catchment area overlaps that of Trinity High School and St Andrew's Academy. St Catherine's Primary School works collaboratively with both schools.
- 1.2.3 It is assumed that for Renfrewshire parents/carers, the secondary school place that their child will transfer to is their home address catchment secondary school, of the same denomination as the primary school their child already attends. The secondary school is deemed their designated local secondary school.

1.3 Denominational/Non-denominational schools

- 1.3.1 Any Renfrewshire parent/carer has the choice of requesting a place in either of their catchment schools, on first entry to education provided by Renfrewshire Council or as part of the transition from primary to secondary school.
- 1.3.2 Parents/carers of children who are baptised Roman Catholic, and who want their child to apply for a place in a denominational school, should inform the school/Council and provide evidence in the form of their child's Roman Catholic Baptismal Certificate at the time of application. The Council aims to provide enough places for all baptised Roman Catholic children to attend their catchment denominational school.

Only in exceptional circumstances will other documentation be considered e.g. asylum seeker with no access to original documents.

- 1.3.3 Parents/carers of children who are not baptised Roman Catholic, and who want their child to apply for a place in a denominational school, can also make a request.

1.4 Applying for a school place

Applications for a place in a **catchment** mainstream primary or secondary school can be made by Renfrewshire parents/carers for their child:

- for initial commencement of education at the beginning of the primary 1 year stage, or
- at any stage when becoming resident within the school's delineated catchment area, or
- when, as a result of being educated elsewhere (e.g. home schooling or private education), they have never attended a Renfrewshire Council educational establishment, but are now returning to the public education system, or
- at time of transition from primary to secondary education.

1.5 Choice of school

- 1.5.1 Information on all Renfrewshire's educational establishments is available via the Council's website. All of Renfrewshire's schools have their own website where you will find a wide variety of information specific to each school.

- 1.5.2 Requests for catchment placements should be made in line with the application procedures detailed within Section 2.
- 1.5.3. Parents/carers have the right to make a placing request for their child or children to be educated in a school other than their catchment school. The Council must grant placing requests unless there is a legal reason not to. Please refer to “Sending Your Child to School” information pack (Appendix A) for further details. No decisions will be made for requests for the start of a new academic session, before 15 March in any given year.

1.6 Reserved places

The Council is entitled to reserve a reasonable number of places for children moving into each school's delineated catchment area up to and during the following academic year. Please refer to Reservation of Places In Schools Policy (Appendix B) for further details.

2. THE APPLICATION PROCEDURE

2.1 Age for commencement of primary education

- 2.1.1 Enrolment to the primary one year stage at Renfrewshire schools takes place once a year at the start of the new session in August. Children who reach the age of five years between 1 March of that year and the last day of February of the following year are expected to apply for a place in a catchment school. For example, children turning 5 between 1 March 2020 and 28 February 2021 will be eligible to apply for a school place for August 2020.
- 2.1.2 If your child has already been in education elsewhere i.e. from another country / region and you are now requesting placement in a Renfrewshire school, the child's date of birth will determine the year stage they should be placed in.

2.2 Deferred entry

- 2.2.1 If a child reaches the age of five during January or February (after the August in which they are supposed to commence their primary education), parents/carers may choose to defer entry until the following academic year. A fully funded nursery place will be available for such children.
- 2.2.2 If a child reaches the age of five between the start of the new academic session in August and the end of December, parents/carers may also choose to defer entry for a year however, a funded nursery place will not automatically be provided.
- 2.2.3 If a parent/carer intends to defer commencement of their child's primary education, they should still apply to register their child in the appropriate catchment primary school and advise the head teacher of their intention to defer entry. The appropriate paperwork will then be completed and returned to Children's Services for processing.

- 2.2.4 Should your child's deferred entry be confirmed, it will be assumed that you will not require the P1 place for the commencement of the academic year for which the deferral was submitted; should you change your mind on deferring your child before the start of the academic year, there is no guarantee that a place will be available in your preferred catchment school.
- 2.2.5 If you defer your child's entry to primary education, you are required to apply for a place in your preferred catchment school in November of the deferral year in order to be considered for a P1 place commencing the next academic year in August. This application will be treated as a new application to register your child and will be treated equally along with all other applications submitted.
- 2.2.6 If at any other stage outwith Primary 1 placement, you wish to defer your child's progression to the next stage of their educational journey, you will be required to discuss this with their current school. It should be noted that a request to delay entry once education has commenced, is not normal practice. An assessment of the child may require to be carried out and the decision on placement will be determined by the Council.

2.3 Early commencement of primary education

The Council does not have to educate children who are not of school age. Parents/carers may wish to make a request for early entry to school for a child whose fifth birthday falls after the last day in February. Requests for early entry to school should be made directly to Children's Services headquarters.

2.4 Applying for a P1 school place during the normal catchment registration round

- 2.4.1 Applications for P1 places commencing at the beginning of the academic year in August should be made in person at a specified location during school registration days which take place in November.

Applications submitted after school registration days should be made to the catchment school of your choice until the end of the academic year prior to which your child will begin primary education. However it is advisable where possible to make your application during school registration days as this provides you with the optimum chance of securing a place in your preferred school. Delay in registering may result in a place not being available.

- 2.4.2 The exact dates for school registration days will be published annually from around the beginning of September onwards, and will be visible before the commencement of school registration days on the Council's website as well as in the local published press.
- 2.4.3 Parents/carers must provide satisfactory documentary evidence of the age of their child and that their family reside within the catchment area of the school. This evidence includes:

No.	Document	Verification Purpose
1	Child's full Birth Certificate	Required to verify child's date of birth for allocation of correct year stage. A copy will be held for verification of who has parental rights.
2	Most recent Council Tax Notice or if not currently resident in the property either a concluded missive or a signed and witnessed tenancy agreement/lease.	Required to verify that home address is within catchment area of the requested school. We will check the information provided with other Council departments and our audit colleagues and this may include visiting your home to confirm residence. We may also check your address again prior to a school term commencing and if we suspect fraud we may rescind your place and could refer the matter to the Procurator Fiscal.
3	Child Benefit Statement. In the event that a Child Benefit Statement is not available, a Driving Licence or a Bank Statement/utility bill showing transactions over the most recent 3 months and the applicant's address may be accepted. Or If appropriate to current circumstances - Court Order / Looked After Child / Foster Carer document(s).	Required to verify address of parent with whom the child is living with.
4	Roman Catholic Baptismal Certificate (if applicable)	Required to verify baptismal status which may be required for prioritisation purposes, only where a denominational school is oversubscribed.

The list above is not exhaustive and the Council retains the right to ask for further information when proof of residency is not satisfied.

- 2.4.4 In the situation where there is an agreement for shared custody of a child where a child lives with a different parent/carers regularly at a different property, the local catchment school is defined by Children's Services as the residence of the parent/carers who receives Child Benefit for said child. Recent documentary evidence of receipt of Child Benefit or equivalent paperwork may be required to be submitted. Only for exceptional

circumstances may alternative documentation be considered by headquarters.

- 2.4.5 Parents/carers who intend to make a placing request for a non-catchment school should in the first instance apply for a place in their catchment school, and also inform the head teacher of their intention to submit a placing request. This is required to ensure there is a catchment place allocated in the event a placing request cannot be granted.
- 2.4.6 A placing request must be submitted for children to attend a primary school for which they do not reside within the delineated catchment area of. Please refer to “Sending Your Child to School” information pack (Appendix A) for further details.
- 2.4.7 In the event that the number of applications from catchment pupils is greater than the number of places available at that stage in the catchment school, the allocations process is detailed in Section 3. Priority is given to catchment pupils in the first instance, thereafter placing requests may be considered.
- 2.4.8 Following catchment allocations, if there are any further spaces available these will be allocated to placing requests in line with Placing Request Allocations Policy, please refer to Section 3.5.

2.5 Transferring from Primary 7 to S1 during the normal catchment transfer round

- 2.5.1 As part of the P7-S1 transition programme, all parents/carers of children in P7 who attend a Renfrewshire primary school will be advised of the designated catchment school allocated, based on the pupil’s home address and denomination of primary school currently attended.

Evidence of residency may be requested by schools or Children’s Services at any time, as part of the above allocations.

Pupils who attend a Renfrewshire school from outwith the authority will require to contact their own local authority or if they wish to attend a Renfrewshire secondary school, make a placing request application for consideration.

- 2.5.2 In the situation where there is an agreement for shared custody of a child where a child lives with a different parent/carer regularly at a different property, the local catchment school is defined by Children’s Services as the residence of the parent/carer who receives Child Benefit for said child. Recent documentary evidence of receipt of Child Benefit or equivalent paperwork may be required to be submitted. Only for exceptional circumstances may alternative documentation be considered by headquarters.
- 2.5.3 At the time of being advised of the designated allocated school, parent/carers can make a request if they wish to attend the alternative catchment school for their area. They can also make a placing request application for a non-catchment school.

- 2.5.4 Renfrewshire parents/carers with children residing in the authority and not being educated in a Renfrewshire Council primary school, but who wish for their child to attend a Renfrewshire secondary school from the commencement of the S1 year stage, will require to contact Children's Services before the end of October to apply for a place in the following academic session. Failure to do so may result in a place not being available.
- 2.5.5 In the event that the number of applications from catchment pupils is greater than the number of places available at that stage in the catchment school, the allocations process is detailed in Section 3. Priority is given to catchment pupils in the first instance, thereafter placing requests may be considered.
- 2.5.6 Following catchment allocations, if there are any further spaces available these will be allocated to placing requests in line with Placing Request Allocations Policy, please refer to Section 3.5.

2.6 Applying for a school place outwith the normal catchment rounds

- 2.6.1 Applications for a catchment place to commence at any point during the academic year outwith the normal catchment rounds should be made by a parent/carer directly to the preferred catchment school.

Where places are available the school will agree a date and time for the parent/carer to complete a registration application and to provide the required appropriate documentary evidence as described in paragraph 2.4.3.

Applicants may find that the school is already full at the year stage requested. In this situation parents/carers will be asked to contact Children's Services to discuss options for redirecting their child to an alternative establishment. We will do our best to meet requests, please refer to Sections 5 and 6.2 for further details on re-direction.

- 2.6.2 Any application for a catchment school place being submitted during a school holiday should be directed to Children's Services. The department will arrange for you to make your submission at Children's Services headquarters by prior arrangement; documentary evidence, as per paragraph 2.4.3, will be required to be provided at this point. Children's Services will pass your application to the school on their return from the holiday period.

2.7 Change of circumstances

- 2.7.1 Allocations cannot be confirmed until all required documentary evidence has been received in full. If a child's location of residency changes after submission of a request for a catchment school, the parent/carer should inform the school immediately or, if during a school holiday, Children's Services. The Council reserves the right to refuse a place in any of its educational establishments when it is not satisfied that a request meets the required criteria for a place.
- 2.7.2 If you are or become a resident within the catchment area of the school which your child attends, and at a later date move out of the catchment area. You

are deemed to be a “request to remain” (Appendix I). Technically you are now considered to be a placing request within the school, but without the requirement to fill out a placing request form. Continuation within the primary school does not automatically guarantee placement at the associated secondary school.

2.7.3 Where the new family residence is outwith the delineated catchment area of the school applied for but remains within Renfrewshire Council:

- and the parent/carer has not yet been sent confirmation of a registered place being granted or the new academic session has not started, the registration application will be rescinded and a new application will require to be submitted for the new catchment school as appropriate.
- and a registered place has been confirmed at the school initially applied for however, you wish to make a registration application for your new catchment school, you will be required to inform the school you no longer require this place and make an application for the new catchment school as soon as possible.

2.7.4 If the location of the new residence is outwith Renfrewshire Council:

- and the parent/carer has not yet been sent confirmation of a registered place being granted or the new academic session has not started, the registration application will be rescinded and the parent/carer will be required to apply for a catchment place to the appropriate local authority where the new residence is located as soon as possible. If placement is still required at a Renfrewshire school a placing request will require to be made.
- and a registered place has been confirmed at the school initially applied for however, you wish to make a registration application for your new catchment school. You will be required to inform the school you no longer require this place and make an application for a catchment place to the appropriate local authority where the new residence is located.

2.7.5 In all cases a request to remain, will be considered by the school where a child no longer resides within the delineated catchment area of the school they attend and they wish to remain registered or enrolled there (Appendix I).

2.8 Applying for a catchment school place before being resident within the school's delineated catchment area

2.8.1 Applications for catchment school places prior to becoming resident within the school's delineated catchment area should be made no more than 4 weeks in advance of taking up residency. If you attempt to make an application more than 4 weeks in advance of becoming resident within the school's delineated catchment area, you will be advised that you must reapply when your date of residency is no further than 4 weeks in the future.

2.8.2 On applying for a catchment place in advance of residency, satisfactory documentary evidence of future residency must be supplied; only on providing satisfactory documentary evidence will a catchment place (if available) be

temporarily held (for a maximum of 4 weeks). On becoming resident within the school's delineated catchment area you must provide further documentary evidence confirming your residency; your child will not be able to enrol at a catchment school until evidence of residency is provided.

- 2.8.3 If after 4 weeks you fail to provide further documentary evidence of your residency within the school's delineated catchment area, the place will be released and made available or offered to other catchment applicants who satisfy the criteria. Should you make a further request for a future catchment place it will be placed at the end of the list of any "live" applications i.e. those already recorded for a place commencing 4 weeks or less in the future.

2.9 Applying for a placing request

Parents/carers who do not reside within the delineated catchment area of a Renfrewshire school are required to submit a placing request in order for their child to be considered for a place. Please refer to "Sending Your Child to School" information pack (Appendix A) for further details.

A placing request can be submitted at any time, however for the start of an academic session it is required that forms are submitted by the 15 March prior to August intake to allow the application to be included in the first round of allocations. No decisions will be made for requests for the start of a new academic session, before 15 March in any given year. Requests received after this date will be considered on an individual basis.

Placing requests will only be considered where there are sufficient spaces, after catchment allocations have been made.

2.10 Information for all requests

Requests for documentary evidence is required to be produced the applicant will be given 4 weeks to produce original copies.

Requests for places received during school holidays, will be processed on a school's return as soon as possible; every endeavour will be made to target the first day pupils start the new academic year.

3 THE DECISION MAKING PROCEDURE / OVER SUBSCRIPTION

3.1 Processing applications for places in schools and the decision process

This section considers the timeline of when applications are received, when they are processed and when parents/carers will be advised. The overwhelming majority of applications for places are requested for the commencement of an academic year in August. For clarity, catchment allocations (3.2, 3.3 and 3.4) are considered and prioritised before any placing request applications (3.5).

3.2 Allocation of catchment spaces for Primary 1

Enrolment for P1 placements following registration of pupils in November will be processed firstly for catchment allocations and thereafter for placing request applications. The normal round of catchment allocations will be decided by the end of January, prior to August intake.

In the case where the number of applications for a place in a catchment school is less than the number of places available all applications will be granted.

Should a school be oversubscribed by catchment applications priorities for catchment allocations will be adhered to, as per Appendix C.

It should be noted that the later applications are received and so processed for places to commence for the new academic year in August, will inevitably mean that there will be a reduction in the availability of places remaining. It is strongly advised that parents/carers apply to register as early as possible with complete and satisfactory documentary evidence to help gain a place for their child in the school of their choice.

Places will only be confirmed once all the required evidence as detailed in Section 2.4.3 above is provided and the Council is satisfied with proof of residency for the applied school's catchment area. Parents/carers should be mindful of this and seek to conclude any outstanding information as soon as possible to secure a place for their child.

3.3 Allocation of Catchment spaces for Primary 7 Transfer to Secondary 1

Transfer from Primary to Secondary catchment decisions as part of the normal transfer round, will consist of parents being notified if living in Renfrewshire and attending a Renfrewshire school, by the end of October, prior to August intake, of the school designated for their child. The process if they do not wish to accept this placement and options available will be explained. If we do not hear from parents, the assumption is made that the place offered will be taken.

In the case where the number of applications for a place in a catchment school is less than the number of places available all applications will be granted.

Should a school be oversubscribed by catchment applications priorities for catchment allocations will be adhered to, as per Appendix D. The normal round of catchment allocations will be decided by the end of November, prior to August intake.

It should be noted that the later applications are received and so processed for places to commence for the new academic year in August, will inevitably mean that there will be a reduction in the availability of places remaining. It is strongly advised that parents/carers notify us of their request for alternative placement as early as possible with complete and satisfactory documentary evidence to help gain a place for their child in the school of their choice.

Requests may be made for documentary evidence in relation to home address and baptismal certification. Places will only be confirmed once all the evidence is provided and the Council is satisfied with proof of residency for the applied school's catchment area and if applicable baptismal certification. Parents/carers should be mindful of this and seek to conclude any outstanding information as soon as possible to help gain a place for their child.

3.4 Allocation of Catchment Spaces outwith start of academic year / other stage / change of denomination.

If you have moved house within Renfrewshire and changed catchment areas or moved into Renfrewshire from outwith the authority you are required to liaise with the appropriate catchment school. Applications to register for a catchment place to start at times other than commencement of the new academic year in August, i.e. outwith the normal allocation rounds, are processed directly with the schools.

In considering these applications, the date and time the application is received is used to determine the order they are processed. Those received earliest are processed first.

In the case where the number of applications for a place in a catchment school is less than the number of places available all applications will be granted.

Where there are no catchment spaces available, the parent will be asked to contact Children's Services to discuss options for redirecting their child to an alternative establishment. We will do our best to meet requests and provide support with transport where appropriate. Please see Sections 5 and 6 for further details on re-direction.

3.5 Allocation of Placing Requests

Where a pupil does not wish to attend either the denominational or non-denominational school for their catchment area they are required to make a placing request.

Where a child is currently attending a Renfrewshire school and wishes to change denomination of school they currently attend they are required to make a placing request. This does not apply to P7 transfer catchment allocation rounds, parents will be advised of how to submit such a request in writing at the time of transfer.

Once catchment allocations are agreed, any remaining places will be allocated to placing requests in both primary and secondary sectors. For placing requests received by the 15 March, parents/carers will be advised by 30 April of the status of their child's application. No decisions will be made for requests for the start of a new academic session, before 15 March in any given year.

Placing request applications for places received after the 15 March will be provided with a decision within 2 months of submission of their application.

It should be noted that the later applications are received, and so processed for places to commence for the new academic year in August, will inevitably mean that there will be a reduction in the availability of places remaining. It is strongly advised that parents/carers apply as early as possible.

It should be noted that for normal round of placing request applications for the start of a new school session, decisions cannot be made until the 15th of March at the earliest prior to the August intake. This is a requirement by law and as such may cause delays in attendance at induction days.

Should a school be oversubscribed catchment requests are given first priority, thereafter placing request applications are considered. Priorities for placing request allocations policy will be adhered to, as per Appendix E.

4 APPEALING A DECISION

4.1 Catchment

4.1.1 The Council appreciates that parents/carers may be very disappointed that their child cannot go to the school they desire because the year stage at the school is full.

4.1.2 There is no formal appeal process for catchment allocations. Section 28B of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 obliges local authorities to make provisions for admission to school and priorities for admissions and placing requests. If a school is oversubscribed it may use admissions criteria. The Council's admissions policy for catchment allocations are attached as Appendices C and D.

Where there are not enough spaces to grant all catchment requests the admissions policy will be adhered to and where appropriate ballots carried out in line with ballot policy (Appendix F), there is no right of appeal to catchment decisions.

Following any ballot names will be held on a waiting list for any future allocations, people requesting placement after initial decisions have been made will be added to the end of the waiting list regardless of catchment priority banding.

4.2 Placing Requests

4.2.1 If a request is refused a parent may refer the decision to an appeal committee. They can make an appeal to the Education Appeal Committee, regarding the outcome of the placing request process, in relation to their application.

4.2.2 A parent can make as many placing requests in a year as they wish, but they are only entitled to appeal one. Please refer to "Sending Your Child to

School” information pack (Appendix A) for further details on making a placing request appeal.

5 REDIRECTION

5.1 The process

- 5.1.1 In negotiation with parents/carers, redirected children will attend an appropriate alternative establishment until a place becomes available in their preferred catchment school following the decision making process in Section 3.
- 5.1.2 As places become available in the allocated catchment school these will be offered to parents/carers of redirected children in the order in which the applications for a place in the school were received.

5.2 Returning to a catchment school after being redirected

- 5.2.1 When places in the allocated catchment school become available, parents/carers may instead wish for their child to remain in their redirected school and not return to their allocated catchment school. In such situations, the child will no longer be regarded as a redirected child and will be removed from the redirected list. Further information is available in Section 6.2 in relation to transport provision.

6 TRANSPORT

6.1 Transport provision

- 6.1.1 Further information on meeting the criteria for free transport is available via the Council’s website “Home to School Transport Policy”.
- 6.1.2 Ordinarily, we will not provide support with transport to schools outwith Renfrewshire Council.
- 6.1.3 Pupils admitted to a school by way of a placing request will not be entitled to transport.

6.2 Redirected children provision

- 6.2.1 Where a child has been redirected to a non-catchment school, the cost of transport may be met by the Council if the free home to school transport criteria has been met.
- 6.2.2 If the family of a redirected child chooses to keep their child in the redirected school when a place in an appropriate catchment school becomes available, travelling costs will no longer be met by the Council. Parents will have 4 weeks from the date of notification to make alternative arrangements before transport is withdrawn.

7 Submission of information

- 7.1.1 The information provided as part of an application for catchment place or placing request must be full and correct in every respect to the best of the parent's/carer's knowledge. Renfrewshire Council will conduct checks to establish the accuracy of information supplied.
- 7.1.2 From the point of applying for a school place (catchment or placing request), there will be ongoing investigations and scrutiny of children's entitlement to attend, at any point, a school in respect of their residence; this will continue after school enrolment. The Council will use all means available to it in order to investigate suspicions or allegations of fraud, including but not limited to, surveillance in cases where it is necessary and proportionate to do so. At any point, if there are any concerns regarding a child's entitlement to a place, Children's Services will seek documentary evidence to validate a child's entitlement to a place in a school.
- 7.1.3 A child's parent/carer is responsible for advising the school attended or Children's Services that they no longer reside within the school's delineated catchment area. Where parents request that they wish their child to remain in school, entitlement for Request to Remain will be considered. Where it is found that a child is no longer entitled to a place in a school (whether that be before or after school enrolment) since they no longer reside in a property in the delineated catchment area associated with the school, and a request to remain has not been approved, the Council will seek to exclude that child from the school in question.
- 7.1.4 Any attempts to obtain a place by deception may result in the rescinding of the parent's/carer's request for their child's place in a school and the matter being passed to our Legal Department / Procurator Fiscal's office for consideration of criminal proceedings.

Revised August 2020

Sending your child to school



Information pack for parents and carers



Sending your child to school

General information

Within Renfrewshire there are a number of primary and secondary schools. To get information on schools, you can contact your catchment school or:

Renfrewshire Council

Children's Services

Renfrewshire House

Cotton Street

Paisley PA1 1LQ

Phone number: 0300 300 0170

E-mail: cssupport@renfrewshire.gov.uk

There is also information on our website at
www.renfrewshire.gov.uk

Denominational and non-denominational schools

Normally, your child will go to the catchment primary or secondary school for their area. Further information on placement allocations is available within our [Admissions to Schools and Placing Request Policy](#).

You must register your child either at the catchment denominational school or at the non-denominational school for your area. In most parts of Renfrewshire there are Roman Catholic schools (denominational).

Please note: You can register at only one school.

Additional support needs

If you are a Renfrewshire resident and you are making a placing request for an independent additional support needs school, you are advised to discuss this with the Education Manager with responsibility for ASN in Children's Services before submitting the application form. You can use the contact details above.

Entry age

Your child will be admitted to school in August if their fifth birthday falls between 1 March of that same year and the last day of February of the following year. You can, however, ask for your child to start school early if their fifth birthday falls after the last day of February.

A separate leaflet and application for Early Entry, is available from www.renfrewshire.gov.uk or by telephoning 0300 300 0170.

Registering your child for primary education

Entry to primary schools is on a once-a-year basis at the start of the new session in August each year. Registration takes place in November in your catchment school. You will need your child's original birth certificate and proof of residence, to register them for school. Adverts appear in nurseries, schools and newspapers in early October providing details on how to register your child. You can register your child at only one school, either the denominational or non-denominational school in your catchment area. Delay in registering may result in a place not being available. If you are unsure which school you should register at, please call 0300 300 0170 for advice.

Moving into Renfrewshire

If you are moving into Renfrewshire and your child has already been to a school elsewhere, you should contact your new catchment school with proof that you now live in the area. Parents/carers must provide satisfactory documentary evidence of the age of their child and that their family reside within the catchment area of the school. This evidence includes:

1. Child's full Birth Certificate
2. Most recent Council Tax Notice or if not currently resident in the property either a concluded missive or a signed and witnessed tenancy agreement/lease. We will check the information provided with other Council departments and our audit colleagues, this may include visiting your home to confirm residence. We may also check your address again prior to a school term commencing and if we suspect fraud we may rescind your place and refer the matter to the Procurator Fiscal.
3. Child Benefit Statement. (In the event that a Child Benefit Statement is not available, a Driving Licence or a Bank Statement/utility bill showing transactions over the most recent 3 months and the applicant's address may be accepted). Or if appropriate to current circumstances: Court Order / Looked After Child/Foster carer document(s).
4. Roman Catholic Baptismal Certificate (if applicable).

The list above is not exhaustive and the Council retains the right to ask for further information when proof of residency is not satisfied.

Transfer from primary to secondary school

A group of primary schools in an area are normally associated with a secondary school. All secondary schools have a catchment area which includes their associated primary schools.

Pupils transfer from primary school to secondary school between the ages of 11 and 12 (in most cases). If you live within Renfrewshire, Children's Services can tell you the name of the secondary school to which your child should normally transfer after the primary 7 stage.

When your child is due to transfer from primary to secondary at the beginning of a new session in August, if you live within Renfrewshire you will be notified based on your home address and denomination of primary school attended, of the secondary school where a place has been allocated.

If you wish to attend the alternative denomination of secondary school for your catchment area, to that allocated you will be asked to put this request in writing. There is no guarantee of entry when changing denomination at the secondary school stage.

If you live out with Renfrewshire you should contact your local authority regarding provision, you can also consider making a placing request to attend a Renfrewshire secondary school.

You should note that the granting of a placing request to a primary school, when transferring from primary to secondary school does not guarantee entry to the associated secondary school.

Places in schools will be allocated in line with the Council's Admissions to Schools and Placing Request policy.

Renfrewshire secondary school handbooks are available from individual secondary schools. Details of induction days and parents' meetings will be provided by secondary schools.

Further information / Admissions to Schools and Placing Request Policy can be found by visiting www.renfrewshire.gov.uk or by telephoning 0300 300 0170.

Placing requests

You may ask for your child to go to a school other than your catchment school. This is called making a placing request. You do not need to tell us your reasons for making a placing request, but it may be helpful if you do. Please ensure all declarations are responded to, or we will be unable to process your application.

There are strong educational reasons for making sure that the transfer or entry of children to a school happens at the start of a school session in August, so it is better to make placing requests before the start of a session. Parents who are moving to a new area may have to make requests at other times.

The school you ask for is referred to as the 'specified school'. You can apply for only one school at a time. If we grant your placing request, we will write to you to confirm this and advise you to contact the school to arrange to enrol your child. The place being held for your child, at their catchment school will no longer be available.

If you want to make a placing request, please fill in the attached form. You must fill in one form for each child. Please send to Children's Services (not the school) the filled-in placing request for each child. Please also tell the head teacher of your catchment school that you are making a placing request.

We will acknowledge placing requests within five working days of receiving the form. If you do not receive an acknowledgement, please contact us, as we may not have received your application.

The Council has a duty to grant placing requests, wherever possible. However, it is not always possible to grant every placing request to a particular school. The size of the school, the current roll, the number of children who already live in the catchment area and other factors will affect the Council's ability to grant a placing request.

The law relating to placing requests covers children applying to change their school as well as those starting a primary or secondary school.

How decisions are made

After all catchment allocations have been decided, the director of Children's Services makes decisions about placing requests that are received in Renfrewshire House by 15 March, for the new session which begins in August.

We will consider all requests. If there are more requests than places available for a particular school, or a particular stage in a school, the director will make decisions based on our placing request priorities.

Please note, granting a placing request for one child does not guarantee entry for brothers and sisters, should you wish to make another placing request to the same school at a later date.

No decisions will be made for requests for the start of a new academic session, before 15 March in any given year.

Guidelines and conditions

By law we are allowed to produce guidelines on how we will decide admissions to schools (this information is contained within our Admissions to Schools and Placing Request Policy).

If there are places available in a school, we will give first choice to those children who live in its

catchment area. This includes children who are considered suitable for primary education before the normal entry age.

Thereafter, for placing requests we give priority in the order below:

Placing Request Priorities
<p>1. Renfrewshire Resident Denominational Primary School only: The pupil is baptised Roman Catholic. Denominational Secondary School only: The pupil is baptised Roman Catholic and the pupil attends a primary school, associated with the relevant secondary school. If oversubscribed at this point a ballot, prioritising siblings is required. If applicable and siblings attend the school please provide name(s) and stage(s).</p>
<p>2. Renfrewshire and Non-Renfrewshire Residents The pupil has sibling(s) attend the school</p>
<p>3. Renfrewshire Resident For Secondary Schools only: The pupil attends a primary school, associated with the relevant secondary school</p>
<p>4. Renfrewshire Resident The pupil has medical needs (that cannot be accommodated in any other Renfrewshire school e.g. wheelchair user where no lift / stair lift is available).</p>
<p>5. Renfrewshire Resident Categories 1-4 do not apply</p>
<p>6. Non-Renfrewshire Resident Denominational Primary School only: The pupil is baptised Roman Catholic Denominational Secondary School only: The pupil is baptised Roman Catholic and the pupil attends a primary school, associated with the relevant secondary school</p>
<p>7. Non-Renfrewshire Resident For Secondary Schools only: The pupil attends a primary school, associated with the relevant secondary school</p>
<p>8. Non-Renfrewshire Resident The pupil has medical needs (that cannot be accommodated in any other Renfrewshire school e.g. wheelchair user where no lift / stair lift is available).</p>
<p>9. Non-Renfrewshire Resident Categories 1-8 do not apply</p>

In-line with placing request legislation, no decisions will be made for requests for the start of a new academic session, before 15 March in any given year.

Transport: Placing Requests

You should be aware that if we grant your placing request, we do not have to provide a school bus pass or any other help with transport.

Why we may not grant placing requests

Once you have told us, in writing, that you want your child to go to a particular school, we can only refuse your request for certain reasons set out by law in the Education (Scotland) Act 1980.

Examples of where we do not have to admit your child to the school of your choice may be:

- If the school would have to employ an extra teacher or spend a lot of money, for example, if we would have to provide an extra classroom.
- If your child's education would suffer as a result of changing school.
- If education in the school you want would not be suitable to the age or ability of your child.
- If the specified school you have requested is an additional support needs school and your child does not have a requirement for the education or special facilities normally provided at that school.
- If we think that your child would be likely to disturb the order and discipline in that school, or the educational wellbeing of other pupils at the school.
- If accepting the request would prevent us from reserving a place at the school for a child who is likely to move into the area.
- If accepting the request would make it necessary for us to create an extra class or employ another teacher at a future stage of your child's primary education.

If we refuse your placing request

If we refuse your placing request, or if we have not given you our decision on your request by 30 April for new session P1 and S1 requests (or within two months for requests made at other times of the year or for new session other stages applications), you may make an appeal to an appeal committee.

You can appeal against a placing request refusal only once in a 12 month period. This does not mean that you cannot make another placing request. It just means that if we refuse your first placing request and you lodge an appeal, you cannot appeal to the appeal committee again, on another placing request decision, within 12 months of the date of receipt of the original appeal letter.

You must appeal in writing to the director of Children's Services. By the time of the appeal, you will know why we refused your placing request. At the appeal hearing you will have the chance to present your case in person or through a representative.

If the appeal committee agree that we were right to refuse your child a place in the school you want, you have 28 days from receiving the appeal committee's decision to appeal to the Sheriff Court.

In case places become available in the school you want, we will keep your request open until 31 August of the year you made it unless you tell us you want to change your request to another school.

Pupil travel

We do not provide travel for placing requests, however for catchment pupils we do provide free home to school transport for all primary pupils who live more than 1.6 kilometres (one mile) from their catchment school and to secondary pupils who live more than 3.2 kilometres (two miles) from their catchment school. The distances are based on the recognised shortest, safe walking route (further details available in the department's "Home to School Transport Policy". This policy may be reviewed at any time. We may provide transport for children with additional support needs. For more information, phone 0300 300 0170.

Gaelic Medium Education

Gaelic medium education is now an established sector in Scottish education.

Gaelic medium education includes children who come from families where Gaelic is spoken and children from families with little or no background in the language. Gaelic medium education is currently available in approximately half of the education authorities across Scotland.

Due to a low number of requests, and lack of availability of qualified staff, there is currently no provision within Renfrewshire itself, however, children from Renfrewshire currently have access to Gaelic medium education as a result of partnerships with other neighbouring local authorities. When making a placing request for this provision, the appropriate local authority placing request application form should be used.

Although the information in this document is correct at the time of printing, it is possible that arrangements could change either before the start of, or during the course of, the school year in question, or in relation to later school years. This information leaflet only provides general guidance about placing requests.

For office use only

Input by: Date: Cat: catchment checked: ☐ P1 Registered: ☐

Placing Request Application Form

Parent/Carer or Young Person over 16 Details:

Title: First Name: Last Name:

Home Address:

Postcode:

Telephone Number:

Email:

If you would like to discuss this application by telephone, please complete this security question:
What was the name of your first primary school?

Answer:

Child / Young Person:

First Name: Last Name:

Date of Birth: / /

Gender:

Additional Support Needs:

Does the child/young person have any additional support needs? Yes ☐ No ☐

If so please specify, and attach any reports or evidence:

If the child/young person is receiving additional support in the current nursery or school,
what is the support and who provides it?

Does the child/young person have, or there is in preparation, or have you
asked for an assessment for a Coordinated Support Plan (CSP)? Yes ☐ No ☐



School Details:

My child currently attends (specify Nursery or School):

I would like my child to go to (specify school):

The catchment school for my area is:

Session to Start (e.g. 2020):

Stage required (please tick one box below).

Stage in primary: P1

☐

P2

☐

P3

☐

P4

☐

P5

☐

P6

☐

P7

☐

Stage in secondary: S1

☐

S2

☐

S3

☐

S4

☐

S5

☐

S6

☐

If the application is for a place in stages S3 to S6 of a secondary school, please advise of subjects and levels being studied e.g. English, Level: National 4.

Subject 1	Subject 2	Subject 3	Subject 4	Subject 5	Subject 6	Subject 7	Subject 8	Subject 9
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Priorities

We grant placing requests on the basis of priorities set out below.

Please tick one box below that applies to your situation:

Tick	Priority
<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Renfrewshire Resident Denominational Primary School only: The pupil is baptised Roman Catholic. If your child holds a baptismal certificate please provide a copy. Denominational Secondary School only: The pupil is baptised Roman Catholic and the pupil attends a primary school, associated with the relevant secondary school. If oversubscribed at this point a ballot, prioritising siblings is required. If applicable and siblings attend the school please provide name(s) and stage(s) below
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Renfrewshire and Non-Renfrewshire Residents The pupil has sibling(s) attend the school and will continue to do so at time of placement. Please provide name(s) and stage(s) <input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Renfrewshire Resident For Secondary Schools only: The pupil attends a primary school, associated with the relevant secondary school.



Data Protection

We need your details for the purposes of dealing with your application for a placing request and they will be used for the purposes of the Council's public functions. The Council may check your details with other information held and may share these with other Council services and other local authorities to check the accuracy of the information and to prevent or detect fraud or crime or to protect public funds.

Further information on how the Council handles your personal information can be found on:
www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/article/2201/privacy-policy

If your child currently attends a school or nursery outside the Renfrewshire Council area, we would also seek access to the education records for your child from that education authority. By signing the declaration below, you consent to Renfrewshire Council Children's Services receiving a copy and access to your child's current educational record held by that education authority.

If you require further information on how the Council will process your application, information on schools or help with completion of this application form, please contact 0300 300 0170.

Declaration

I confirm that I have made myself fully aware of Renfrewshire Council's "Sending Your Child to School" information pack before submitting this application form. The information I have given is full and correct in every respect to the best of my knowledge.

I acknowledge that if the information that I have submitted is found to be fraudulent my placing request application will be rescinded and the Council could pass the matter to the Procurator Fiscal's Office.

I acknowledge that the form will be returned to me if I have not completed the application in full.

I have read and understood the statement under the Data Protection Act 1998.

I am aware that if this placing request is granted, it may not be possible for future sibling applications to be granted.

I also confirm that I am aware that if applicable to my application, when transferring from primary to secondary school the granting of a placing request does not guarantee entry to the associated secondary school. The allocation of secondary placement will be dependent on my home address.

I understand that Renfrewshire Council do not provide transport for pupils attending schools as a result of successful placing requests.

Signature of Parent/Carer or Young Person (if over 16)

Date



RESERVATION OF PLACES IN SCHOOLS POLICY

On occasion, a number of Renfrewshire schools are unable to provide a place for children moving into the catchment area during a school session.

The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act (2000) addresses this problem and allows authorities the right to reserve places in schools at the start of the session for children who may move into the catchment area during the session.

The authority can reserve as many places as are, in its opinion reasonably required to accommodate pupils who are likely to become resident in the catchment area of the school over the course of a school session. However, reserved spaces may be used at the start of a term if the catchment demand for places requires the spaces.

To facilitate the provision of a school place in a local school for children moving into a catchment area during a school session, places will be reserved at the start of the session as follows:

- (i) For primary schools, one place per class per stage and one place per composite class.
e.g. P1 max intake is = 50 (2 classes of 25).
2 classes = 2 reserved spaces for this year stage are required.

Current maximum class sizes in Primary Schools are:-

P1 = 25

P2 = 30

P3 = 30

P4 = 33

P5 = 33

P6 = 33

P7 = 33

For all stages Composite Classes = 25

(Minimum number of pupils in a composite year stage is 5

e.g. P1/2 = 5 P1 pupils and 20 P2 pupils)

- (ii) For secondary schools one place per two register classes, per year group.

A year stage intake is set so that one place is reserved for every two register classes in that year stage. This would be rounded up for schools with an odd number of register classes.

Number of Register Classes	Number of Reserved Spaces Held
1	1
2	1
3	2
4	2
5	3
6	3
7	4
8	4
9	5
10	5

- e.g. S1 maximum intake is = 165 (5 register classes of 33)
5 register classes = 3 reserved spaces will be held

Catchment Allocations Policy for Primary Schools

Based on the pupil's home address, this will determine the primary catchment schools available. The pupil should be enrolled at either the denominational or non-denominational school accordingly.

Only where there are not enough catchment spaces for all pupils, the following priorities will be applied in the order below:-

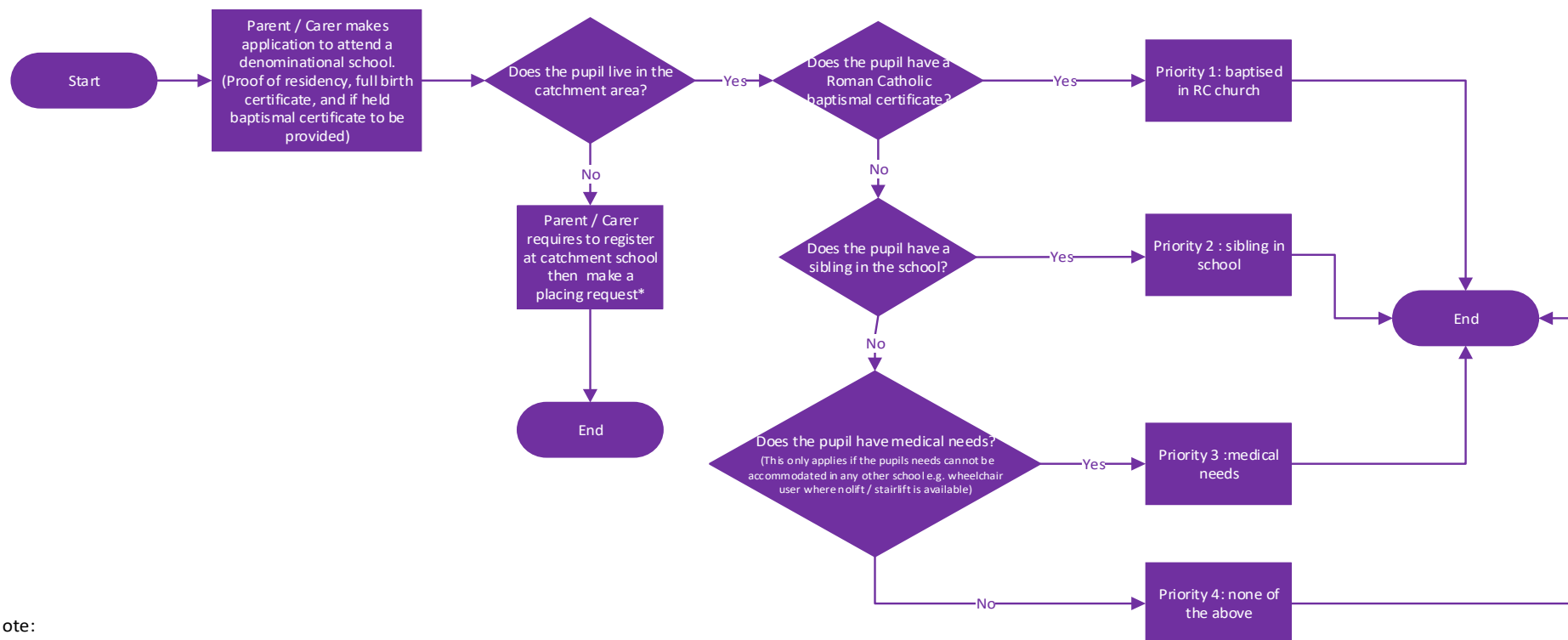
Denominational Primary Schools	Non-Denominational Primary Schools
1. The pupil is baptised Roman Catholic. • <i>If oversubscribed at this point a ballot, prioritising siblings is required.</i>	1. <i>Not Applicable for non-denominational primary schools</i>
2. The pupil has sibling(s) in the school. • <i>If oversubscribed at this point a ballot is required.</i>	2. The pupil has sibling(s) in the school. • <i>If oversubscribed at this point a ballot is required.</i>
3. The pupil has medical reasons supported by the family doctor and a community medicine specialist, that say that the child could only be educated with difficulty in another school because of their medical condition. <i>If oversubscribed at this point a ballot is required.</i>	3. The pupil has medical reasons supported by the family doctor and a community medicine specialist, that say that the child could only be educated with difficulty in another school because of their medical condition. <i>If oversubscribed at this point a ballot is required.</i>
4. None of the above applies. <i>If oversubscribed at this point a ballot is required.</i>	4. None of the above applies. <i>If oversubscribed at this point a ballot is required.</i>

- Where a school is oversubscribed at any of the above priorities a ballot for the available spaces will be held. Ballot Process Policy (Appendix F) will be followed.
- Those pupils not offered a place through this process will be recorded on a "waiting list", this list will apply to the current academic year only.
- After the allocation of places if there are no spaces available, any new requests will be added to the end of the waiting list where applicable.

Pictorial representations of the policy process for both primary denominational and primary non-denominational journeys are detailed below.

P1 Enrolment for Denominational Primary Schools

Prioritisation



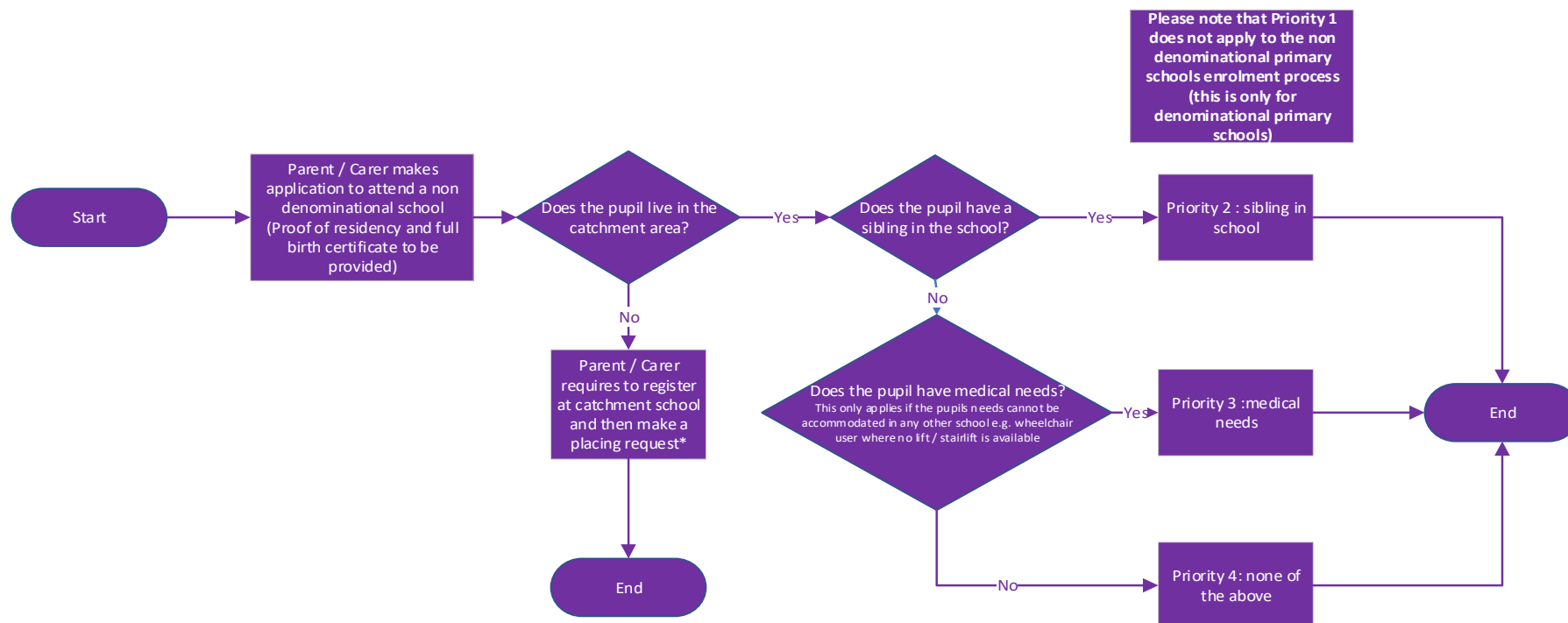
Note:

- Where a school is oversubscribed at any of the above priorities a ballot for the available spaces will be held with priority for siblings provided. Those pupils not offered a place through this process will be recorded on a "waiting list" for the current academic year.
- After the allocation of places if there are no spaces available, any new requests will be added to the end of the waiting list where applicable.

* Where a pupil does not live in the catchment area for a school they will require to make a placing request. If there are spaces available following catchment allocations, applications will be allocated in line with Placing Request Priorities.

P1 Enrolment for Non Denominational Primary Schools

Prioritisation



Note:

- Where a school is oversubscribed at any of the above priorities a ballot for the available spaces will be held with priority for siblings provided. Those pupils not offered a place through this process will be recorded on a "waiting list" for the current academic year.
- After the allocation of places if there are no spaces available, any new requests will be added to the end of the waiting list where applicable.

* Where a pupil does not live in the catchment area for a school they will require to make a placing request. If there are spaces available following catchment allocations, applications will be allocated in line with Placing Request Priorities.

Catchment Allocations Policy for Secondary Schools

Based on the primary school attended and the pupil's home address, this will determine the secondary catchment school for a pupil.

Only where there are not enough catchment spaces for all pupils, the following priorities will be applied in the order below:-

Denominational Secondary Schools	Non-Denominational Secondary Schools
1. The pupil is baptised Roman Catholic and has always attended a denominational primary school, associated with the relevant secondary school. <i>If oversubscribed at this point a ballot, prioritising siblings is required.</i>	1. The pupil has always attended a non-denominational primary school, associated with the relevant secondary school. <i>If oversubscribed at this point a ballot, prioritising siblings is required.</i>
2. The pupil is baptised Roman Catholic; has moved into a denominational primary school associated with the relevant secondary school after Primary 1 but has attended a denominational school since primary 1 elsewhere. <i>If oversubscribed at this point a ballot, prioritising siblings is required.</i>	2. The pupil has moved into a non-denominational primary school associated with the relevant secondary school after Primary 1 but has attended a non-denominational school since primary 1 elsewhere. <i>If oversubscribed at this point a ballot, prioritising siblings is required.</i>
3. The pupil is baptised Roman Catholic and has attended a denominational primary school since primary 1. <i>If oversubscribed at this point a ballot, prioritising siblings is required.</i>	3. <i>Not Applicable for non-denominational secondary schools</i>
4. The pupil is baptised Roman Catholic but attending a non-denominational school. <i>If oversubscribed at this point a ballot, prioritising siblings is required.</i>	4. <i>Not Applicable for non-denominational secondary schools.</i>
5. The pupil attends a denominational primary school, associated to the relevant secondary school but is not baptised. <i>If oversubscribed at this point a ballot, prioritising siblings and length of time attended is required.</i>	5. The pupil attends a non-denominational primary school, associated to the relevant secondary school. <i>If oversubscribed at this point a ballot, prioritising siblings and length of time attended is required.</i>
6. The pupil attends a non-denominational Renfrewshire school or a school outwith the authority. <i>If oversubscribed at this point a ballot, prioritising siblings is required.</i>	6. The pupil attends a denominational school or a school outwith the authority. <i>If oversubscribed at this point a ballot, prioritising siblings is required.</i>
7. The pupil has medical needs (that cannot be accommodated in any other Renfrewshire school . e.g. wheelchair user where no lift / stair lift is available).	7. The pupil has medical needs (that cannot be accommodated in any other Renfrewshire school . e.g. wheelchair user where no lift / stair lift is available).
8. None of the above applies.	8. None of the above applies.

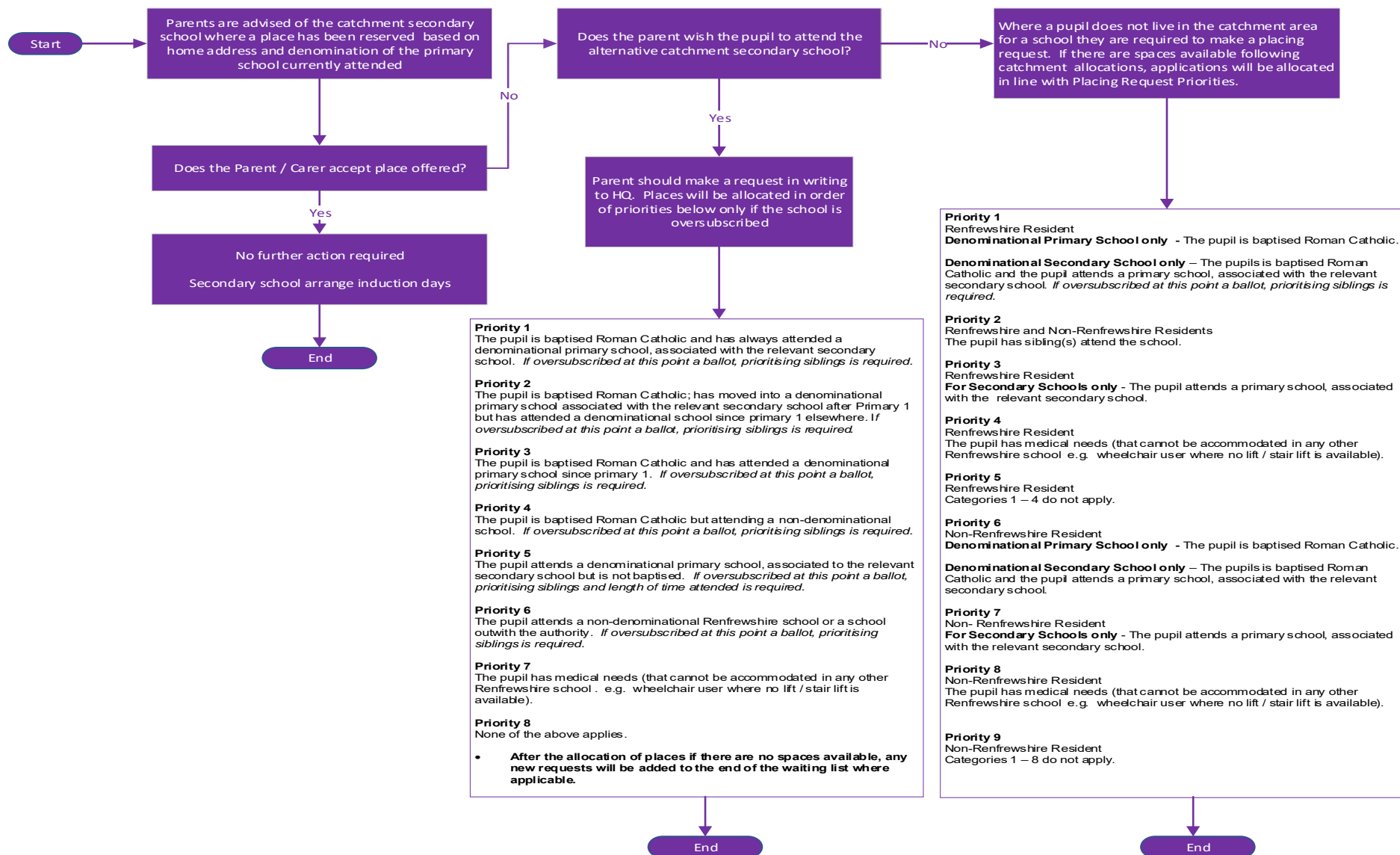
8. Where a school is oversubscribed at any of the above priorities a ballot for the available spaces will be held. Ballot Process Policy (Appendix F) will be followed.

9. Those pupils not offered a place through this process will be recorded on a “waiting list”, this list will apply to the current academic year only. After the allocation of places if there are no spaces available, any new requests will be added to the end of the waiting list where applicable.

Pictorial representations of the policy process for both secondary denominational and secondary non-denominational journeys are detailed below.

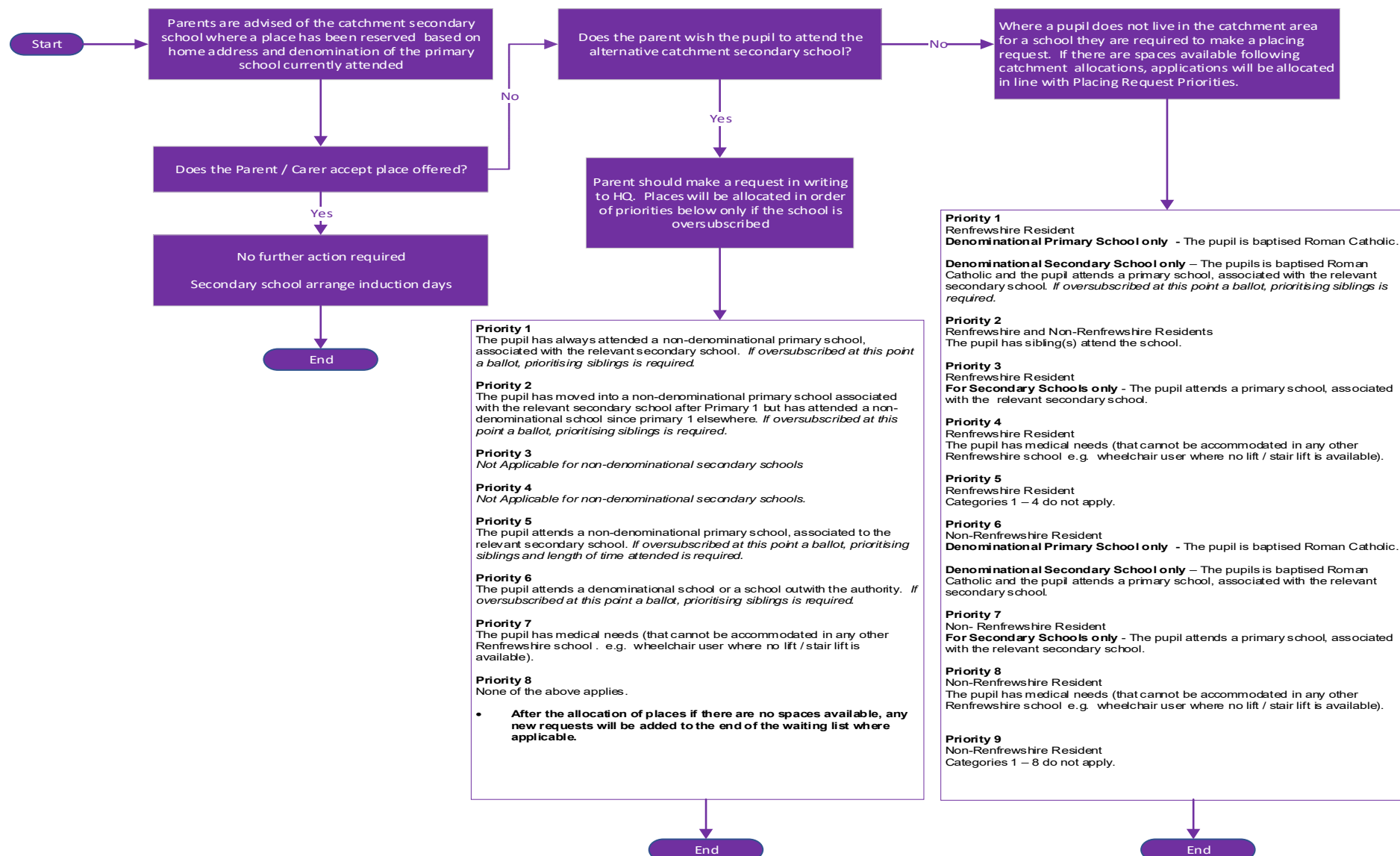
Primary 7 to Secondary 1 transfer: denominational

Prioritisation



Primary 7 to Secondary 1 transfer: non-denominational

Prioritisation



Placing Request Allocations Policy

When a pupil does not wish to attend the school for their catchment area and they wish to attend another school within Renfrewshire they are required to make a placing request.

The placing request will be considered, if following catchment place allocations, there are spaces still available.

Where there are not enough placing request spaces for all pupils, the following priorities will be applied in the order below:-

Priorities	
1. Renfrewshire Resident	Denominational Primary School only - The pupil is baptised Roman Catholic.
	Denominational Secondary School only – The pupils is baptised Roman Catholic and the pupil attends a primary school, associated with the relevant secondary school. <i>If oversubscribed at this point a ballot, prioritising siblings is required.</i>
2. Renfrewshire and Non-Renfrewshire Residents	The pupil has sibling(s) attend the school.
3. Renfrewshire Resident	For Secondary Schools only - The pupil attends a primary school, associated with the relevant secondary school.
4. Renfrewshire Resident	The pupil has medical needs (that cannot be accommodated in any other Renfrewshire school e.g. wheelchair user where no lift / stair lift is available).
5. Renfrewshire Resident	Categories 1 – 4 do not apply.
6. Non-Renfrewshire Resident	Denominational Primary School only - The pupil is baptised Roman Catholic.
	Denominational Secondary School only – The pupils is baptised Roman Catholic and the pupil attends a primary school, associated with the relevant secondary school.
7. Non- Renfrewshire Resident	For Secondary Schools only - The pupil attends a primary school, associated with the relevant secondary school.
8. Non-Renfrewshire Resident	The pupil has medical needs (that cannot be accommodated in any other Renfrewshire school e.g. wheelchair user where no lift / stair lift is available).
9. Non-Renfrewshire Resident	Categories 1 – 8 do not apply.

To be considered in the first round of allocations for the start of a new academic session, applications should be made before the 15th of March prior to the August intake. In line with placing request legislation, no decisions will be made before this date.

Where there are more requests than spaces available it may be necessary to carry out a ballot within a particular priority. Ballot Process Policy (Appendix F) will be followed.

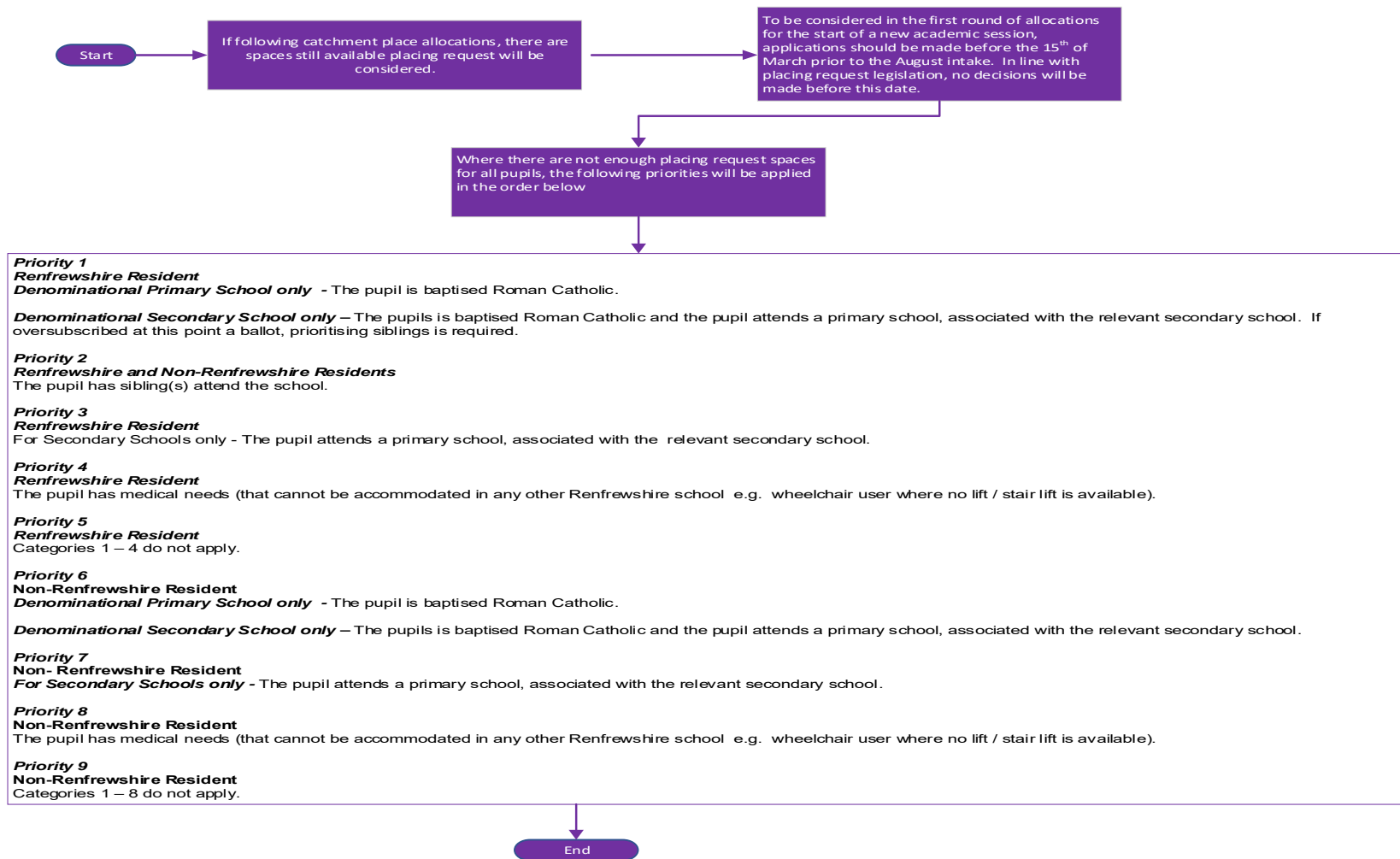
If further places become available after the first round of allocations, all current requests will be considered and allocated in order of priorities above.

Unsuccessful placing request applications for the start of a new academic year will be held until 31st August of that year. Applications made outwith the start of a new academic year, will be held until the end of the academic year applied for.

Pictorial representations of the policy process for placing request journey is detailed below.

Placing Request

Prioritisation



Ballot Process Policy

Where a ballot may be required for the allocation of places in schools, the ballot will be carried out by an officer from the Council's Internal Audit department. This officer is completely independent of the allocations process and is there to ensure fairness and transparency in the process.

- The officer is given a copy of the list of eligible children to be considered in the ballot.
- The officer will check the names on the list to ensure all eligible children are included and sign the sheet of names to verify all have been accounted.
- Where a priority states "*If oversubscribed at this point a ballot, prioritising siblings is required*" the children eligible who meet sibling criteria will be balloted firstly.
- When the names are checked, they are separated, folded and put into a large ballot envelope.
- As each successful name is pulled out, it is noted on the ballot sheet. (For twins / triplets etc if one sibling is drawn from the ballot the others will automatically receive the next allocation of spaces, if available).
- When the ballot has been concluded the officer selecting the names signs the ballot sheet and this is retained as a formal record of the procedure.
- The number of spaces available will be allocated in order of the ballot.

For catchment allocations –

In the eventuality of any further spaces becoming available these will be allocated in order of the ballot list. Any requests received after the initial ballot will be added to the end of the ballot list.

Ballot waiting lists will be held until the end of the academic year applied for.

For placing request allocations –

In the eventuality of any further spaces becoming available these will be allocated in line with priorities for placing requests, for all current applications held at that time.

Unsuccessful applications for the start of a new academic year, will be held until 31st August of that year. Applications made for out with the start of a new academic year, will be held until the end of the academic year applied for.

Appendix G

Secondary School	Associated Primary Schools
Castlehead High School (Non-Denominational Cluster)	Glencoats PS
	West PS
	Wallace PS
Gleniffer High School (Non-Denominational Cluster)	Brediland PS
	Bushes PS
	Heriot PS
	Langcraigs PS
	Lochfield PS
Gryffe High School (Non-Denominational Cluster)	Bridge of Weir PS
	Houston PS
Johnstone High School (Non-Denominational Cluster)	Auchenlodment PS
	Cochrane Castle PS
	Fordbank PS
	Howwood PS
	Kilbarchan PS
	Lochwinnoch PS
	Thorn PS
Linwood High School (Non-Denominational Cluster)	East Fulton PS
	Woodlands PS
Paisley Grammar (Non-Denominational Cluster)	Gallowhill PS
	Mossvale PS
	Ralston PS
	Todholm PS
	Williamsburgh PS
Park Mains High School (Non-Denominational Cluster)	Bargarran PS
	Barsail PS
	Bishopton PS
	Inchinnan PS
	Langbank PS
	Rashielea PS
Renfrew HS (Non-Denominational Cluster)	Arkleston PS
	Kirklandneuk PS
	Newmains PS
St Andrew's Academy (Denominational Cluster)	St Charles' PS
	St Fergus' PS
	St James's PS (Paisley)
	St John Ogilvie PS
	St Mary's PS
	St Paul's PS
	St Peter's PS
	St Catherine's PS (split catchment)
St Benedict's High School (Denominational Cluster)	Our Lady of Peace PS
	St Anthony's PS
	St David's PS
	St Fillan's PS
	St Margaret's PS
Trinity High School (Denominational Cluster)	St Anne's PS
	St Catherine's PS (split catchment)
	St James's PS Ren
	St John Bosco PS



REGISTRATION FOR EDUCATION

Parents can register their child in only one catchment school, either the denominational or the non-denominational school. If parents do not wish to attend either catchment school, a placing request application is required.

Name of School: _____

Pupil's Name: Forename(s): _____ Surname: _____

Sex: Male ☐ Female ☐

Date of birth:

<u>DAY</u>	<u>MONTH</u>	<u>YEAR</u>

Was your child premature? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, were they born between:

weeks 30-36 Yes ☐ No ☐
Below 30 Weeks Yes ☐ No ☐

Nursery the child currently attends: _____

Parent/Carer Details:-

Forename(s): _____ Surname: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ email: _____

Telephone No: _____ Mobile No: _____

Does the child have an older sibling in the school? Yes ☐ No ☐

Sibling(s) Name: _____ Year Stage: _____

Residence of child: (If different from parent/carers)

Postcode: _____ Telephone No: _____

Parents/carers must provide satisfactory documentary evidence of the age of their child and that their family reside within the catchment area of the school. This evidence includes:

No.	Document	For Verification of	Received
1	Child's full Birth Certificate	Required to verify child's date of birth for allocation of correct year stage. Held for verification of who has parental rights.	
2	Most recent Council Tax Notice or if not currently resident in the property either a concluded missive or a signed and witnessed tenancy agreement/lease.	Required to verify that home address is within catchment area of the requested school. We will check the information provided with other Council departments and our audit colleagues and this may include visiting your home to confirm residence. We may also check your address again prior to a school term commencing and if we suspect fraud we may rescind your place and could refer the matter to the Procurator Fiscal.	
3	Child Benefit Statement. In the event that a Child Benefit Statement is not available, a Driving Licence or a Bank Statement/utility bill showing transactions over the most recent 3 months and the applicant's address may be accepted. Or If appropriate to current circumstances - Court Order / Looked After Child / Foster Carer document(s).	Verification of address of parent with whom the child is living with.	
4	Roman Catholic Baptismal Certificate (if applicable)	Verification of baptismal status. Only where a denominational school is oversubscribed this may be required for prioritisation purposes.	

The list above is not exhaustive and the Council retains the right to ask for further information.

Has the parent/carer been advised of his/her right to request to place the child in a school other than this one? Yes ☐ No ☐

Decision of Parent/Carer – Tick one as appropriate:

- ☐ Enrol in catchment school
- ☐ Making a placing request Which school is request being made to? _____
- ☐ Making a placing request for Gaelic Medium Education
- ☐ Deferring entry to school. Has parent made application to defer? Yes ☐ No ☐
(If deferring entry, please check if the parent has made an application to nursery. If the answer is no, parent should be advised to contact nursery and request an application as soon possible.)

Secondary Provision

Parents are advised that when registering at a primary school, there is no automatic guarantee of transfer from the primary school to the associated secondary school.

As part of the P7-S1 transition programme, all parents/carers of children in P7 who attend a Renfrewshire primary school will be advised of the designated catchment school to be allocated, based on the pupil's current home address and denomination of primary school currently attended.

Evidence of residency may be requested by Children's Services at any time, as part of the above allocation process.

Further information is available within the Council's Admissions to Schools and Placing Request Policy.

Data Protection

We need your details for the purposes of dealing with school registration and they will be used for the purposes of the Council's public functions. The Council may check your details with other information held and may share these with other Council services and other local authorities to check the accuracy of the information and to prevent or detect fraud or crime or to protect public funds.

Further information on how the Council handles your personal information can be found on: <http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/article/2201/privacy-policy>

Declaration

I confirm that I have read and understand the information provided above.

The information I have given is full and correct in every respect to the best of my knowledge.

I acknowledge that if the information that I have submitted is found to be fraudulent my application will be rescinded and the Council could pass the matter to the Procurator Fiscal's Office.

If I change address I understand that I require to notify the school immediately.

I also confirm that I am aware that when transferring from primary to secondary school the granting of a placing request does not guarantee entry to the associated secondary school. The allocation of secondary placement will be dependent on my home address and denomination of primary school attended.

I have read and understood the statement under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Signature of Parent/Carer

Date

PRIMARY REQUEST TO REMAIN LETTER
TO BE SENT RECORDED DELIVERY TO PUPIL'S NEW ADDRESS
FROM THE SCHOOL

Dear

Request to remain at :...NAME OF SCHOOL Stage P.....

CHILD'S NAME:..... D.O.B.:.....

I understand you have recently changed/are about to change residence to an area outwith the delineated area of INSERT NAME OF SCHOOL, you have requested that your child, remain in this school.

I would advise you that your request, which is in effect a placing request for your child to continue to be educated in this school, can be granted.

The Council's policy on home to school transport regarding placing requests will apply in these circumstances, "In the case of a pupil who attends a school by virtue of a placing request, the parents or carers are responsible for arranging transport to school".

I would also like to clarify that should you wish your child to attend the secondary school associated with this primary school you may require, if your home address is not within the catchment area of the secondary school, to submit a placing request at the primary 7 stage prior to transfer to secondary education.

On the understanding of the above _____ will be most welcome to remain in this school and I hope that he/she will enjoy a fulfilling future educational career with us.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

A copy of this letter once filled out and put on to school headed paper, should also be sent to Children's Services Support HQ.

SECONDARY REQUEST TO REMAIN LETTER

TO BE SENT RECORDED DELIVERY TO PUPIL'S NEW ADDRESS
FROM THE SCHOOL

Dear

Request to remain at :...NAME OF SCHOOL Stage S.....

CHILD'S NAME:..... D.O.B.:.....

I understand you have recently changed/are about to change residence to an area outwith the delineated area of INSERT NAME OF SCHOOL, you have requested that your child, remain in this school.

I would advise you that your request, which is in effect a placing request for your child to continue to be educated in this school, can be granted.

The Council's policy on home to school transport regarding placing requests will apply in these circumstances, "In the case of a pupil who attends a school by virtue of a placing request, the parents or carers are responsible for arranging transport to school".

On the understanding of the above _____ will be most welcome to remain in this school and I hope that he/she will enjoy a fulfilling future educational career with us.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

A copy of this letter once filled out and put on to school headed paper, should also be sent to Children's Services Support HQ.

Information For Parents – Transfer from primary to secondary school

A group of primary schools in an area are normally associated with a secondary school.

All secondary schools have a catchment area which includes their associated primary schools.

Pupils transfer from primary school to secondary school between the ages of 11 and 12 (in most cases). If you live within Renfrewshire, Children's Services can tell you the name of the secondary school to which your child should normally transfer after the primary 7 stage.

When your child is due to transfer from primary to secondary at the beginning of a new session in August, if you live within Renfrewshire you will be notified based on your home address and denomination of primary school attended, of the secondary school where a place has been allocated.

If you wish to attend the alternative denomination of secondary school for your catchment area, to that allocated you will be asked to put this request in writing. There is no guarantee of entry when changing denomination at the secondary school stage.

If you live out with Renfrewshire you should contact your local authority regarding provision, you can also consider making a placing request to attend a Renfrewshire secondary school.

You should note that the granting of a placing request to a primary school, when transferring from primary to secondary school does not guarantee entry to the associated secondary school.

Places in schools will be allocated in line with the Council's Admissions to Schools and Placing Request policy.

Renfrewshire secondary school handbooks are available from individual secondary schools. Details of induction days and parents' meetings will be provided by secondary schools.

Further information / Admissions to Schools and Placing Request Policy can be found by visiting www.renfrewshire.gov.uk or by telephoning 0300 300 0170.

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by Renfrewshire Council to review its admissions to schools and placing request policy.

May 2020

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report from Education Scotland has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HM Inspectors) in accordance with the terms of the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#) ("the 2010 Act"). The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of Renfrewshire Council's proposal to review its admissions to schools and placing request policy. The proposal consulted on four changes to the existing policy. Proposal 1, change to primary 1 registration dates; Proposal 2, revise primary 1 registration allocation of catchment places; Proposal 3, revise transfer from primary to secondary allocation of catchment secondary places; and Proposal 4, revise allocation of placing request places. Section 2 of the report sets out brief details of the consultation process. Section 3 of the report sets out HM Inspectors' consideration of the educational aspects of the proposal, including significant views expressed by consultees. Section 4 summarises HM Inspectors' overall view of the proposal. Upon receipt of this report, the Act requires the council to consider it and then prepare its final consultation report. The council's final consultation report should include this report and must contain an explanation of how, in finalising the proposal, it has reviewed the initial proposal, including a summary of points raised during the consultation process and the council's response to them. The council has to publish its final consultation report three weeks before it takes its final decision.
- 1.2 HM Inspectors considered:
- the likely effects of the proposal for children and young people of the schools; children likely to become pupils within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper; and other children and young people in the council area;
 - any other likely effects of the proposal;
 - how the council intends to minimise or avoid any adverse effects that may arise from the proposal; and
 - the educational benefits the council believes will result from implementation of the proposal, and the council's reasons for coming to these beliefs.
- 1.3 In preparing this report, HM Inspectors undertook the following activities:
- consideration of all relevant documentation provided by the council in relation to the proposal, specifically the educational benefits statement and related consultation documents, written and oral submissions from parents and others;
 - an offer was made to all Renfrewshire Council Parent Council chairs and headteachers to discuss stakeholders' views about the proposals: and
 - discussions with council officers and a representative of the Diocese of Paisley.

2. Consultation process

- 2.1 Renfrewshire Council undertook the consultation on its proposal(s) with reference to the 2010 Act. The consultation process ran from 27 January to 31 March 2020. Public meetings were held on 5, 18 and 19 February 2020. In total, 44 members of the public attended these meetings. Despite the fact that

Renfrewshire Council's schools closed on 20 March 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the ability to respond to the proposal continued to the end of the original planned consultation period. The period from 27 January 2020 until Renfrewshire schools closed on 20 March 2020 included 36 days when schools were open. This is in line with expected duties under the Act.

- 2.2 In total, the council received 191 responses from stakeholders including children and young people. From those that responded 67% agreed with the proposal and 33% disagreed. Additionally, the council asked schools to engage with groups of children and young people in order to hear their views. Nineteen school groups returned responses. The children and young people were strongly in favour, with 89% of groups in favour and 11% against.
- 2.3 The council's consultation processes were more than sufficient. However, a few stakeholders found the proposal paper long and difficult to understand. As a result, it has committed to producing a more reader-friendly document. The council has also indicated that it will take steps to review information within the final proposed policy document to include clearer information with regard to prioritising medical and additional support needs. It will also demonstrate how it intends to take account of length of time of attendance at associated primary schools. The council may have gained a more comprehensive picture of stakeholder views by allowing respondents to indicate their support or otherwise for each individual part of the proposal within its online response form rather than just an overall indication of support or disagreement.

3. Educational aspects of proposal

- 3.1 The council outlines a number of educational benefits. HM Inspectors agree that the revised allocation of places for primary and secondary schools and arrangements for placing requests has the potential to provide greater clarity for parents. This should avoid large numbers of parents with an uncertain and random outcome with regard to placing requests determined through a balloting process. The council is right to highlight the importance of good community links and opportunities for children and young people attending its local schools. It also correctly outlines the greater opportunities for continuity and progression as children and young people make the transition between catchment primary and secondary schools in both the denominational and non-denominational sectors. The cluster working in each sector should support both of these entitlements.
- 3.2 A minority of parents expressed concerns about aspects of the proposal. For example, a few had misgivings over bringing the dates for enrolment for primary 1 forward given their child's level of maturity at an earlier stage. However, other parents recognised the advantage of earlier planning for families and the council. A few parents welcomed the inclusion of having a sibling attending a school as a factor considered in the revised policy in the event of over-subscription. A few stakeholders recorded their objections to consideration of religious beliefs as a factor in school entry.
- 3.3 The Diocese of Paisley supports the revised proposals. It acknowledges that Renfrewshire Council is required to formally plan for education within the council area including the right of Catholic parents to select a Catholic education for their children. It regards the linking of enrolment in primary 1 of the local denominational primary school to transition to the local

denominational high school as important. It values the progression from denominational primary schools to denominational high schools in linked catchment areas. Consequently, the Diocese welcomes the guarantee that Catholic children will have access to denominational schools throughout their school experience from P1 to S6.

4. Summary

HM Inspectors' agree that the revised policy has the potential to bring educational benefits. Children and young people should gain from continuity and progression in transitioning between associated schools in the local clusters. Parents will maintain their rights to submit a placing request to the council. In the event of demand for places exceeding the availability of places at any particular school, there is now a clearer process for dealing with excess demand. HM Inspectors understand that earlier enrolment allows more time for the management of school places and associated resource implications. HM Inspectors welcome the council's commitment to producing a parent-friendly leaflet to reflect any final policy decision and for their pledge to communicate with the school groups which participated.

**HM Inspectors
May 2020**

Equality Impact Assessment relating to:

Proposed Changes to Admissions Policy

Officer and department responsible for completing the assessment.	Alison Gallagher, Resources Manager, Children's Services
Name of policy, strategy or project.	Proposed changes admissions policy in relation to the arrangements for:- 1.Change to primary 1 registration dates; 2.Revise primary 1 registration allocation of catchment places; 3.Revise transfer from primary to secondary allocation of catchment secondary places; and 4.Revise allocation of placing request places.
What is the main purpose or aims of the policy, strategy or project?	The proposal sets out how the changes to admission arrangements to Renfrewshire Schools. It clarifies the arrangements to address oversubscription from within the catchment through use of consistent prioritisation. It will enable update of guidance which has not been reviewed for a number of years.
Who will be the beneficiaries of the policy/strategy/project?	Parents, Pupils, Staff by providing a clear understanding of procedures used within Renfrewshire Council.
Has the policy/strategy/project been explained to those it might affect directly or indirectly?	Yes. This has been undertaken formal engagement exercise which highlighted the challenges and opportunities available to address the inefficiencies within the current policy. Written representation were made to The Director of Children's Services, Renfrewshire Council, Education and Leisure Services, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1LE. All participants were advised of / had access to an equalities proforma which provided the opportunity to record any concerns relating to this proposed strategy; no responses were received in this respect. Additionally this proforma was made available on-line; again no responses were received. In line with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, amended through the enactment of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, a formal consultation was undertaken during 27/01/2020 and 31/03/2020. This included public consultation meetings which took place on 3, 5 and 18 February 2020; members of the public attended these meetings and no adverse responses were received in this respect. An equalities proforma was made available on-line; again no responses were received.
Have you consulted on the policy?	As above.

Complete the following table and give reasons/comment where:

- a) The policy/strategy/project could have a positive impact on any of the equality target groups or contributes to promoting equality, equal opportunities and improving relations with equality target groups.
- b) The policy/strategy/project could have a negative impact on any equality target groups. (If the impact is high a full EIA should be completed)

Equality group	Positive impact		Negative impact		Reason/comment
	High	Low	High	Low	
Race		✓		✓	In the consultative proposal document this sets out the proposed admission and transfer arrangements for denominational and non-denominational schools. All children living in the delineated catchment area would be entitled to enrol regardless of race, belief and religion. Only in the event that a school is over-subscribed will applications be prioritised.
Sex		✓		✓	
Disability		✓		✓	
Religion / Belief		✓		✓	<p>The proposed policy advances equality of opportunity for those within this group who are of a particular religious faith (Roman Catholic) and who wish to have their children enrolled in such a faith (Roman Catholic) based denominational school.</p> <p>Families of all faiths or none will still have every opportunity to seek enrolment within a Roman Catholic school.</p>
Sexual Orientation		✓		✓	
Age		✓		✓	The proposed policy advances equality of opportunity for those children who attend a denominational primary school as they will be afforded priority to progress to their local secondary in line with a 3-18 curriculum, supporting progression and transition.
Gender Reassignment		✓		✓	
Marriage and Civil Partnership		✓		✓	
Pregnancy and Maternity		✓		✓	