

**To:** Education and Children's Services Policy Board

**On:** 23 May 2019

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**Report by:** Director of Children's Services

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**Heading:** Review of Guidance on Admission to School

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## **1. Summary**

- 1.1. At the Council meeting on 28 February 2019 a motion was passed requesting Children's Services review the current policy and procedures on admission to school.
  - 1.2 Changes to the current policy "Revised Guidance on Admission to School", in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, requires a full consultation exercise to be undertaken. The purpose of this report is to provide elected members with an update on the proposal to undertake this consultation and the timescales required to do this.
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## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 The education and children's services policy board is asked to:
    - approve a pre-engagement exercise be taken forward to ascertain the views of service users; and
    - agree that following the pre-engagement exercise, a report on the proposals for a formal consultation be submitted to the education and children's services policy board.
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## **3. Background**

- 3.1. A review of the current policy on admission to school will ensure openness and transparency in the approach taken by the council in allocating places for schools in Renfrewshire.

- 3.2. The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 (“the 2010 Act”) makes provision for the consultation process that is to apply regarding various proposals made by Councils for schools. The principal purpose of the 2010 Act is to provide strong, accountable statutory consultation practices and procedures that local authorities must apply to their handling of all proposals for school closures and other major changes to schools. These consultation processes are expected to be robust, open, transparent and fair, and seen to be so. They are also expected to be consistent across Scotland. The 2010 Act applies to a wide range of changes to the school estate, referred to as “relevant proposals”. Making any changes to our admission policy is covered by this requirement.
- 3.3. Given the range of views expected on the review of admission to school guidance, officers are proposing a pre-engagement exercise with service users. The views and outcomes from this exercise will be reviewed and considered in the forming of formal consultation proposals.
- 3.4. The proposed timeline and summary actions for progression of the proposed review are set out below:-

Activity	Date
Approval for pre-engagement exercise, from Education and Children’s Services policy board	23 May 2019
Establishment of working group and preparation for pre-engagement exercises.	June /July 2019
Pre-engagement exercises with:- Education Scotland, Elected Members, Church Representatives, Heads of Establishments, Parent Councils, Staff and Pupils.	August / September 2019
Analysis of engagement exercises	October / November 2019
Preparation of formal consultation proposal report	November / December 2019
Seek approval from education and children’s services policy board to proceed to formal consultation	Early 2020 (tbc)
Complete formal consultation to amend council policy	Summer 2020 (tbc)

- 3.5. As detailed in 3.2 and 3.3 there is a requirement to gather information through a pre-engagement exercise to ensure that the proposals being made in any formal consultation are representative of community views. Following the pre-engagement exercise there are statutory timescales involved in a formal consultation that require to be adhered to, therefore it is not possible to carry out the consultation and implement outcomes for the 2019/2020 school session.

- 3.6. The department will continue to follow current policy on admission to school, pending the outcome of formal consultation being decided. This will ensure clarity for any families in schools which could be affected as a result of any issues relating to the capacity of the school.

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## Implications of this report

### 1. Financial

None.

### 2. HR and Organisational Development

None.

### 3. Community/Council Planning

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| Our Renfrewshire is thriving                         | - | - | Admissions criteria supports children and young people within their local community.                        |
| Creating a sustainable Renfrewshire for all to enjoy | - | - | Placement of children and young people within their local community; encouraging pupils to walk to school.# |

### 4. Legal

Provision of education is based on statute. Legal services advice has ensured that the current standard circulars assist the council to meet its legal obligations.

This proposal adheres to the procedures required to take forward any proposal in terms of the Schools (consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 amended through the enactment of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

### 5. Property/Assets

None.

### 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. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

### 8. Health and Safety

None.

### 9. Procurement

None.

- 10. Risk**  
None.
- 11. Privacy Impact**  
None.
- 12. Cosla Policy Position**  
None.

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### **List of Background Papers**

- (a) Background Paper 1: Revised Guidance on Admission to School, 9 December 2004
- (b) Background Paper 2: Revised Standard Circular 7, Revised August 2014  
Guidance on Admission to School

The foregoing background papers will be retained within children's services for inspection by the public for the prescribed period of four years from the date of the meeting. The contact officer within the service is Alison Gallagher, Resources Manager, 0141 618 7240.

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### ***Children's Services***

*AG/GMcK/LG*

*9 May 2019*

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