



Education Services

Inverclyde policy on admissions and pupil placement in mainstream schools

Revised September 2023



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Section A - core principles of the policy

- 1.0 The Admissions and Pupil Placement Policy is applicable to all mainstream schools in Inverclyde.**
- 1.1 The Admissions and Pupil Placement Policy recognises the right of parents to make a placing request to have their child educated in a school of their choice. Parents in turn should recognise that they do not have an automatic right to have their placing request granted.
- 1.2 For the purposes of determining which school a pupil should attend the authority is divided into defined geographical catchment areas. Each address in Inverclyde is assigned to a non-denominational and a denominational primary and secondary school.
- 1.3 At the point of entry to primary school parents may choose the primary school of either educational sector, (non-denominational or denominational) assigned to their home address, which they wish their child to attend. This policy is premised on the assumption that having made a choice about the educational sector (denominational or non-denominational) at primary stage, a pupil will remain in that sector for the duration of their education in Inverclyde.
- 1.4 All of the denominational schools in Inverclyde are Roman Catholic. Roman Catholic schools are open to all children regardless of faith. Where a denominational school is oversubscribed, either for within the catchment area pupils or through placing requests then priority will be given to pupils who can demonstrate or have declared an affinity with the religious ethos of the school and can provide documentary evidence of this in the form of a certificate of baptism into the Roman Catholic faith before entry into primary school and a supporting letter from the Church. (see sections C and D)
- 1.5 There are no denominational primary schools within the areas of Quarriers Village, Kilmacolm, Inverkip and Wemyss Bay. Parents often choose to send their children to the local non-denominational primary school because of the travelling distance to their nearest denominational primary school. In such circumstances the following admission arrangements will apply:
- Only those children who have a certificate of baptism into the Roman Catholic faith before entry to primary school whose parents have selected to send their child to the non-denominational school serving the defined catchment area assigned to their address rather than to their assigned denominational primary school because of travelling distance, will have the choice at Primary 7 of seeking admission to the denominational school assigned to their address. The Council's policy in respect of school transport will apply.
- 1.6 Inverclyde has a Gaelic nursery and primary unit attached to Whinhill Primary School. It is the right of parents to make a request to the Authority for Gaelic medium education. Parents wishing their child to be educated in primary Gaelic medium should register with Whinhill Primary School choosing the drop down menu for Gaelic medium.





- 1.7 Each secondary school has a list of associated primary schools. This means that pupils who live within the geographical catchment area and of the chosen sector (denominational or non-denominational) would normally transfer to the secondary school without the need for a placing request.
- 1.8 Attendance at an associated primary school, either through a placing request or the submission of a request to remain if a family have moved house does not guarantee a place at the associated secondary school and a placing request should be submitted.
- 1.9 A Pupil Placement Panel will be convened by the Corporate Director of Education, Communities and Organisational Development if the situation arises where the number of pupils in a defined catchment area who are eligible to enter a school in primary or secondary is greater than the number of places available in the school.

The Pupil Placement Panel will also scrutinise recommendations on entry made by the appropriate Head of Service in Education Services to ensure the criteria has been applied appropriately and to determine which placing request applications should be granted and which should be refused.
- 1.10 The Pupil Placement Panel will comprise the Corporate Director of Education, Communities and Organisational Development, the Head of Legal and Property Services and a Head of Service from another council service selected from a rota.
- 1.11 Where documentation such as proof of residence, a qualifying letter or baptism into a faith are requested, then the applicant will be given 4 weeks to produce original copies of any documentation requested. A Council Tax notice, plus a recent utility bill or other acceptable evidence will be accepted as proof of residence. Where there is doubt about any of the documentation, the Authority reserves the right to verify this information by cross checking with Council Tax records or undertaking spot checks.



Section B - admissions procedures

1.0 Arrangements for registering a pupil in primary 1.

- 1.1 The Education (Scotland) Act 1980, as amended by the 1981 Act, requires education authorities to secure the adequate and efficient provision of school education including arrangements for the admission of children to schools.
- 1.2 The process of registration records a child as eligible for education to be provided by the authority. The procedure of enrolment commits the authority to providing that education in a particular school.
- 1.3 The process for enrolling is as follows:
On a date or dates in January each year intimated and publicly advertised by Education Services, parents/carers should register their children with their catchment area school of their chosen denomination if their children:
 1. Have attained the age of 5 years before that date
 2. Will attain the age of 5 years on or before the last day of February of the following year
- 1.4 Birth Certificates and proof of residence (Council Tax letter, plus a recent utility bill or other acceptable evidence) must be produced.
- 1.5 At the point of registration parents will have access to the handbook containing information about the school. Parents will also receive information about how to make a placing request should they decide not to send their child to their catchment school.
- 1.6 If a parent wishes to defer entry to primary school they still must register at the appropriate school to be advised of the Council's deferred entry procedures.
- 1.7 If a child has not reached the age of 5 years by the last day in February they would not be eligible to register at this time. In exceptional circumstances, a formal request for early entry should be submitted to Education Services for consideration.

2.0 Arrangements for transferring from primary to secondary school.

- 2.1 On completion of their primary education, pupils will normally transfer to the secondary school within their geographical catchment area and of their chosen denomination unless they have been granted a placing request to another secondary school.
- 2.2 Pupils will transfer from primary school to secondary school once per year on the date of the start of the new session for pupils. Transfer will normally take place at the end of primary 7.





- 2.3 The Head Teacher of the primary school will advise parents/carers in December each year that their children are due to transfer to secondary school in the following August. Intimation will be made of the name of the secondary school to which the child should transfer and details of liaison meetings with parents will be provided.
- 2.4 There are no denominational primary schools within Quarriers Village, Kilmacolm, Inverkip and Wemyss Bay. Parents often choose to send their children to the local non-denominational primary school because of the travelling distance to their nearest denominational primary school. In such circumstances the following admission arrangements will apply:
- Only those children who have a certificate of baptism into the Roman Catholic faith before entry to primary school whose parents have selected to send their child to the non-denominational school serving the defined catchment area assigned to their address rather than to their assigned denominational primary school because of travelling distance, will have the choice at Primary 7 of seeking admission to the denominational school assigned to their address. The Council's policy in respect of school transport will apply.
- 3.0 Arrangements for registering a pupil into primary and secondary school after the start of the school session in August.**
- 3.1 This applies to pupils moving into the catchment area of their chosen denomination after the start of a school session. In the first instance parents should make contact with the school directly to enquire if they have space for their child in the relevant stage or year group. Parents should provide proof of the address and the child's date of birth.
- 3.2 In addition, for secondary school placements, parents will need to provide details of the subjects that the child has studied, particularly at stages S4 and above. It may not be possible to match all subjects previously studied and children may need to choose new subjects to make a full timetable.
- 3.3 During school holidays, parents should contact Education Services to discuss the arrangements for registering their child into their preferred primary or secondary school.
- 3.4 If a catchment school does not have space to accommodate pupils, then a space will be found at an appropriate alternative school and transport, if necessary, will be provided until such times as a space becomes available.



Section C - oversubscription of catchment area schools and the capping of schools

1.0 Oversubscription of schools.

Although rare, the situation may arise whereby a school is oversubscribed at either the primary 1 or secondary 1 stage for pupils of the chosen denomination who live within the catchment area of the school. In these circumstances, the Pupil Placement Panel should convene to determine the allocation of places.

While every effort is made to provide places for all children in the school in their defined catchment area within their chosen denomination, places cannot be guaranteed. In such circumstances, pupils will be offered a place in the school of their chosen denomination nearest to their home address, until such times as a place becomes available in their catchment school. Inverclyde Council will meet any additional transport costs incurred due to attendance at the non-catchment school.

If a school is oversubscribed and cannot take pupils within the defined catchment area and chosen denomination then places will be granted in the following order:

- 1 A child who has a medical condition or additional support needs, who requires facilities or support only available in the requested school.
- 2 Those cases where a brother or sister attends the school and will continue in this school during the session.
- 3 In the case of denominational schools: pupils within the catchment area who can demonstrate an affinity with the religious ethos of the school and can provide documentary evidence of this in the form of a Certificate of Baptism into the Roman Catholic faith.
- 4 In the case of a denominational secondary school which has Kilmacolm, Inverkip and Wemyss Bay (village schools) as an associated school: priority will be given to those who have attended the denominational school associated with the secondary school.
- 5 Distance of home address from the chosen school.





- 1.1 If within catchment area places for the chosen denomination have had to be declined then a waiting list will be held by Education Services reflecting the above criteria. Parents will be informed if places become available. If the parent subsequently chooses that their child remain at the school outwith the catchment area or chosen denomination the following should be borne in mind:
 - Transport will only be made available for that academic year
 - The pupil may have to submit a placing request to their chosen secondary school
- 1.2 If Inverclyde Council refuses an application to one of its schools it must explain the reasons why to parents in writing. The grounds for refusal of a place are listed in Appendix 2. Parents have the right to appeal this decision through the appeals process.

2.0 Capping of schools.

- 2.1 Inverclyde Council is permitted to limit the overall roll of a school (the term commonly used is “capping”). It can limit not just the overall roll but also the intake of pupils into specific year groups. Where there are schools whose rolls will exceed their capacity or by the granting of placing requests will exceed their capacity in the future, there is a need to restrict access to these schools so that the roll can remain within the agreed capacity of the school.
- 2.2 The Council is allowed to reserve places within primary and secondary schools, based on the assumption that the places will be required for children and young people who are likely to move into the delineated areas of the schools during the session (Section 28A of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 as amended).
- 2.3 For the purpose of secondary schools which are approaching capacity, Inverclyde Council may keep two places for S1 for pupils who move into the catchment area and one place for pupils in other years.

For primary schools who are approaching capacity, Inverclyde Council will keep one space per year group for pupils who move into the catchment area.

Inverclyde Council will not employ an extra teacher or create another class due to placing requests.



Section D - making a placing request

1.0 Arrangements for making a placing request at the beginning of an academic year.

- 1.1 Parents who wish their child to attend a school other than their defined catchment school are entitled to make a placing request for the school of their choice.
- 1.2 Information on how to make a placing request is distributed to parents/carers by head teachers at the point of enrolment in January in the case of pupils who are starting primary 1. When pupils transfer from primary to secondary school the information will be given out as part of the information pack in December.
- 1.3 Parents/carers may make only one placing request at a time for a pupil. If the initial request is refused the opportunity will be available to parents to make another request should they so wish.
- 1.4 Where applications are being made for the start of a new session these should be submitted to Education Services no earlier than 1 January and no later than 1 February prior to the start of the session in August. Applications received for P1 or S1 after the 1 February will only be considered after the applications received on time have been processed.
- 1.5 Applications will be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt of each application.
- 1.6 Parents/carers will be advised in writing of the decision made in respect of their application no later than 30 April.
- 1.7 Late applications may be considered at the discretion of the Head of Education.
- 1.8 If a placing request is submitted then the catchment area place that the pupil is entitled to will be kept until the outcome of the placing request application has been confirmed.
- 1.9 While every effort is made to grant placing requests, circumstances can arise whereby there are more applications than places available. In such cases the priorities for admission will be as follows:
 - 1 A child who has a medical condition or additional support needs, who requires facilities or support only available in the requested school.
 - 2 Those cases where a brother or sister attends the school and will continue in this school during the next session.
 - 3 In secondary schools: children who attend a primary school associated with the secondary school as a result of a placing request or a request to remain according to the length of time at the associated primary school. This means that pupils who have attended for the longest time will have the highest priority. Appendix 3 shows the list of associated school groups.





- 4 In the case of denominational schools: pupils within the catchment area who can demonstrate an affinity with the religious ethos of the school and can provide documentary evidence of this in the form of a certificate of baptism into the Roman Catholic faith obtained prior to entry to school.
 - 5 All other children of school age residing in the defined catchment area of the school according to distance of home address from chosen school.
 - 6 All other children of school age residing in Inverclyde according to distance of home address from chosen school.
 - 7 Children of school age residing outwith Inverclyde whose additional support need is supported by significant input by education and another appropriate agency and who are requesting a place within a school which has specialist provision to meet the child's needs.
 - 8 Children of school age residing outwith Inverclyde according to distance of home address from chosen school.
- 1.10 When a placing request is granted the previously allocated place at the catchment school will be withdrawn. The newly allocated place will not be withdrawn unless the place was obtained on the basis of false information.
- 1.11 The Pupil Placement Panel should convene to determine the allocation of places. It will be the role of the Pupil Placement Panel to scrutinise recommendations on placing request applications made by the appropriate Head of Service in Education Services to ensure the criteria have been applied appropriately and to determine which applications should be granted and which should be refused. Where a placing request application is refused parents will be advised in writing of the grounds for refusal.
- 2.0 Arrangements for transferring from primary to secondary school.**
- 2.1 Parents who wish to make a placing request during the school year or school holidays should contact the school of their choice or Education Services to obtain an application form.
 - 2.2 Placing request applications which are submitted to Education Services during the school year or school holidays will be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt. Parents/Carers will be notified of the decision made in respect of their application within 8 weeks (exclusive of school holidays).



2.3 Such applications will be referred to the Head Teacher of the school concerned who will advise if there are places available in the school. Where the Authority declines an application for reasons other than there being no places available in the school the application will be referred to the Pupil Placement Panel for decision. If a placing request application is refused parents will be advised in writing of the reasons for refusal.

3.0 Families who move to a new address.

3.1 Where a family moves to a new address which is outwith the catchment area of the school their child currently attends, they have two options:

- Enrol their child in the school serving their new defined catchment area for their chosen denomination.
- Complete a form requesting that their child remains in the school they currently attend. If this option is selected Inverclyde Council will not provide school transport. In the case of primary pupils, parents should check the secondary school assigned to their new home address. It is likely that a placing request may be required for their child to attend the secondary school assigned to their previous home address.

4.0 School transport.

4.1 Inverclyde Council provides school transport for pupils who live more than one mile from their local primary school or two miles from their local secondary school by the shortest safe walking route.

4.2 Children who attend a school as a result of a placing request are not entitled to school transport. If, in exceptional circumstances, a pupil is unable to attend the catchment area school of their chosen denomination because it will pose a risk to the safety of the pupil or there is a legal reason why they cannot attend that school then the Authority may consider providing transport at the discretion of the Head of Education.

5.0 Appeal procedures if a placing request is refused.

5.1 If Inverclyde Council refuses an application to one of its schools it must explain the reasons why to parents in writing. The grounds for refusal of a place are listed in Appendix 2.

5.2 If parents/carers are aggrieved by a decision of the Education Authority to refuse a placing request then the parent/carer may refer the decision to the Education Appeal Committee set up by Inverclyde Council.



5.3 The Education Appeal Committee hearing an appeal shall have a membership of three; one Councillor and two other members. The Councillor shall not be a member of the Council's Education & Communities Committee. The other members will not be members of the Authority or its Education Committee and will be in one of the following three categories:

- Parents of children of school age.
- Persons who in the opinion of the Authority have experience in education.
- Persons who in the opinion of the Authority are acquainted with the educational conditions in the area of the Authority.

Neither the Councillor nor the other members shall be a member of the Parent Forum of the school affected by the appeal.

5.4 The Education Appeal Committee shall be administered by the Council's Head of Legal and Property Services from whom details of the appeals procedure may be obtained. Appeals should be submitted in writing to the Head of Legal and Property Services.

5.5 The Head of Legal & Property Services shall maintain a rota to be used in selecting members to sit in hearings of the Committee.

6.0 Policy Review.

6.1 This policy will be reviewed on a 5-yearly basis, or earlier if required.



Appendix 1 - glossary of terms

Catchment areas

The catchment areas for a school are geographical. Every address in Inverclyde is in the geographical catchment area of a denominational and non-denominational school.

Mainstream school

A mainstream school is any school that is not classed as a special school. The definition of a special school is any school where the sole or main purpose of the school (or stand-alone unit) is to provide education specifically suited to the additional support needs of children and young persons selected for attendance at the school (or unit) by reason of those needs

Denominational school

The majority of denominational schools in Scotland are Roman Catholic and all of the denominational schools in Inverclyde are Roman Catholic. A Roman Catholic denominational school is one which promotes the ethos and values of the Roman Catholic faith. Denominational schools are run in the same way as other local Authority schools. Every state pupil is open to pupils of all denominations.

Non-denominational schools

A non-denominational school is one that does not cater for a specific faith.

Placing request

This is a request for a pupil to be educated at a school other than that allocated by the Education Authority. A placing request should be submitted if a pupil wants to attend a school outwith their geographical catchment area or if a change of denominational sector is required.

Associated school (either primary or secondary)

A group of schools that traditionally work together because they share the same geographical catchment area and denomination. Each associated group of schools has one secondary and feeder primary schools. Whilst most joint working takes place in the associated school group, attendance at an associated primary school does not automatically ensure a place at the secondary school.





Pupil placement panel

The Pupil Placement Panel comprises of the Corporate Director of Education, Communities and Organisational Development, the Head of Legan and Democratic Services and a Head of Service from another council service selected from a rota. The role of the panel is to scrutinise recommendations on entry made by the appropriate Head of Service in Education Services to ensure the criteria has been applied appropriately and to determine which placing request applications should be granted and which should be refused.

Proof of residence

Proof of residence should be a Council Tax notice and another formal letter e.g. a utility bill, a tax credit award notice.

Deferred entry

All children who are 4 years of age by 28/29 February start primary school in the August of the same year. Children with January/February birthdays can automatically defer school entry for one year. Deferred entry for children born outwith January / February is discretionary. Further details of defer entry criteria are available on Inverclyde Council website.

Appeals process

This is the right of the parent to appeal the decision made by the Authority to decline a place at their requested school.

Education appeal committee

The Education Appeal Committee is administered by the Council's Head of Legal and Democratic Services and has a membership of three: one Councillor and two lay members.

Parent forum

A school's parent forum automatically includes every parent/carer with a child enrolled at the school. This is not the same as a Parent Council who act as a representative group for the parent forum.



Appendix 2 - reasons for refusal of a place at a school

If Inverclyde Council refuses an application to one of its schools it must explain the reasons why to parents in writing. The following are the reasons why a Council may refuse an application for a place in one of its schools.

- a) If placing the child in the specified school (that is, the school specified in the application), would:
 - i. Make it necessary for the Authority to take an additional teacher into employment
 - ii. Give rise to significant expenditure on extending or otherwise altering the accommodation at or facilities provided in connection with the school
 - iii. Be seriously detrimental to the continuity of the child's education
 - iv. Be likely to be seriously detrimental to order and discipline in the school
 - v. Be likely to be seriously detrimental to the educational well-being of the pupils attending the school
 - vi. Assuming that pupil numbers remain constant, make it necessary, at the commencement of a future stage of the child's primary education, for the authority to elect either to create an additional class (or an additional composite class) in the specified school or to take an additional teacher into employment at that school
 - vii. Though neither of the tests set out in sub-paragraphs (i) and (ii) above is satisfied, have the consequence that the capacity of the school would be exceeded in terms of pupil numbers.
- b) If the education normally provided at the specified school is not suited to the age, ability or aptitude of the child.
- c) If the education authority has already required the child to discontinue his attendance at the specified school.
- d) If the specified school is a special school and the child does not have an additional support need requiring the education or special facilities normally provided at that school.
- e) If the specified school is a single sex school (within the meaning given to that expression by Section 26 of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975) and the child is not of the sex admitted or taken (under that Section) to be admitted to the school.
- f) If accepting the request would prevent the Authority reserving a place at the school for a child likely to move into the area of the school.

(All references to the 'specified school' are to the school specified in the application).





Appendix 3 - associated school groups and catchment areas

Pupils who live in the catchment area for:

Ardgowan Primary School

Gourock Primary School

Moorfoot Primary School

TRANSFER TO Clydeview Academy

Pupils who live in the catchment area for:

Aileymill Primary School

Kings Oak Primary School

Lady Alice Primary School

Whinhill Primary School

TRANSFER TO Inverclyde Academy

Pupils who live in the catchment area for:

Inverkip Primary School

Wemyss Bay Primary School

TRANSFER TO Inverclyde Academy

OR St Columba's High School

(subject to policy)

Pupils who live in the catchment area for:

All Saints Primary School

St Mary's Primary School

St Patrick's Primary School

TRANSFER TO Notre Dame High School

Pupils who live in the catchment area for:

Newark Primary School

TRANSFER TO Port Glasgow High School

Pupils who live in the catchment area for:

Kilmacolm Primary School

TRANSFER TO Port Glasgow High School

OR St Stephen's High School

(subject to policy)

Pupils who live in the catchment area for:

St Andrew's Primary School

St Joseph's Primary School

St Ninian's Primary School

TRANSFER TO St Columba's High School

Pupils who live in the catchment area for:

St Francis' Primary School

St John's Primary School

St Michael's Primary School

TRANSFER TO St Stephen's High School