

REPORT TO: DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL EDUCATION COMMITTEE 19 FEBRUARY 2001

REPORT ON: RETAINING RESERVED PLACES IN SCHOOLS

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

REPORT NO: 121-2001

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report brings to the attention of the Education Committee a proposal to retain reserved places in certain schools to accommodate children moving into the catchment area during the school year. The report also proposes a change to current procedures for placing requests with respect to children who are waiting to gain a place in their local school.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Education Committee is recommended to:

- i) approve the proposals to reserve places in schools as set out in Appendix I
- ii) instruct the Director of Education to review the allocation of reserved places on an annual basis.
- iii) make a proposal as set out in Appendix II to amend the procedures for the allocation of places in schools to allow the names of children in Priority 1 (living in the catchment area or attending an associated Primary School) to be placed on a waiting list for a place in their local school until such a place exists.

and

- iv) agree to publish and consult on that proposal

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are no financial implications from these proposals other than costs of advertising and administration.

4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The proposals are designed to ensure that places are available in local schools for children in the local area avoiding the need to travel to more distant schools.

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The proposals seek to ensure that all children in a local area have the opportunity to attend the local school.

6.0 BACKGROUND

6.1 Requests for places in Dundee schools are submitted by 15 of March for the school session beginning in August. Places are allocated in accordance with the Council's procedures. Places are allocated first to children in Priority 1 (living in the catchment area or attending an associated primary school). Thereafter any unallocated places are used to meet placing requests from children in Priorities 2, 3 and then 4. Parents of children are notified of places by 30 April. Details of the criteria for admission to school are given in Appendix III.

6.2 In most schools the system outlined above means that all requests for places can be met. However, in a small number of schools the high demand for places from children living outwith the school catchment area means that all available places are filled at a given stage in the school. This means that families moving into the school catchment area after 30 April may find it difficult or impossible to secure a place in the local school for one or all of their children. This can result in children travelling to more distant schools as the local school is at capacity due to placing requests from outwith the catchment area. In more acute cases this situation can result in children from the same family attending more than one school.

6.3 The Standards in Scotlands Schools Etc. Act 2000 gives local authorities an additional right to refuse a placing request where the placing request is from a child who lives outwith the catchment area and placing the child in the school would prevent the Council from retaining reserved places at the school. Reserved places are defined as those which are reasonably required to accommodate pupils likely to become resident in the catchment area of the school in the school year to which the placing request relates.

6.4 The use of reserved places will accommodate the needs of most children moving into an area. However the Director of Education would be concerned that where a child is placed temporarily in a school other than the catchment school because a place is not currently available this situation should be rectified as soon as possible. At present proximity to the school is used to allocate a place where there is more than one placing request with the same priority. This can result in a place being allocated to a child newly moved into an area while other children have been waiting considerably longer for a place.

7.0 REPORT

7.1 Dundee City Council wishes to see school accommodation used

effectively and efficiently. At present 92% of all placing requests are met. To avoid disruption to education and to families it is desirable that places are available to children moving into the catchment area during the year.

- 7.2 It is proposed that a fixed number of places be reserved for children moving into the catchment area of schools which have previously experienced problems in meeting these requests.
- 7.3 The schools concerned and the allocation of reserved places for the school session 2001 / 2002 are listed in Appendix I.
- 7.4 The allocation of reserved places will be reviewed annually by the Director of Education in the light of changing demand for places.
- 7.5 Where children who are Priority 1 are unable to gain a place in their local school it is proposed that they be placed on a waiting list. When a place becomes available it will be allocated to the person who has been on the waiting list longest. In the event of two or more requests having been made at the same time priority will be established on the basis of distance from the school with the child living closest to the school having the highest priority. The procedures for allocating places to Priority 2, 3 and 4 children remain unchanged. This change of procedure is designed to allocate places to Priority 1 children on a basis which is seen to be fair and equitable by all concerned.
- 7.6 It is also proposed that the children of families moving into an area be given Priority 1 and allocated places (or placed on the waiting list) in accordance with the placing request procedures up to four weeks before taking up residence. This is dependent on satisfactory proof of permanent residence and moving dates being received. This change will allow families to make adequate preparations for their children beginning a new school.
- 7.7 If agreed to by the Education Committee the proposals set out at paragraph 7.5 and 7.6 will require to be the subject of consultation with parents of pupils, School Boards and the Roman Catholic Church before the Council can finally decide whether or not to implement them.
- 7.8 The information leaflet for parents on procedures for making placing requests will be amended to include the changes to procedures as set out in 6.3 above, and in 7.5 and 7.6 if those changes are implemented.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The proposed changes to placing request procedures will ensure that while parental choice is maintained wherever possible, that will not unduly restrict parents moving into an area from sending their child or children to the local school.

9.0 CONSULTATION

- 9.1 The Director of Finance and the Director of Support Services and

headteachers of city schools have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

10.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

Anne Wilson
Director of Education

..... Date

APPENDIX I**ALLOCATION OF RESERVED PLACES IN DUNDEE SCHOOLS****School Session 2001 / 2002**

School	Allocation of Reserved Places	No of Places
Barnhill PS	2 per stage	14
Craigiebarns PS	1 per stage	7
Downfield PS	2 per stage	14
Eastern PS	1 per stage	7
Forthill PS	1 per stage	7
Ss Peter & Pauls	2 at P1, 1 per stage thereafter	8
Grove Academy	4 in S1 and S2	8
Harris	4 in S1 and S2	8
Morgan	4 in S1 and S2	8
St John's	4 in S1 and S2	8

NOTE 3

When it is necessary to refuse some placing requests for a school the following procedures will apply.

Priority 1 Children

The names of Priority 1 children whose placing requests have been refused will be put on a waiting list in order of the date on which their placing request was refused. For example, a child whose placing request was refused on 1 May will have a higher priority than a child whose placing request was refused on 1 June. If a place subsequently becomes available at the school it will be allocated to the child on the waiting list who has the highest priority. In the event of there having been two or more placing requests refused on the same day the child whose normal place of residence is closest to the school will have priority over the other children.

Priority 2, 3 and 4 Children

The names of Priority 2, 3 and 4 children whose placing requests have been refused will be put on a separate waiting list in order of the distance of their normal place of residence from the requested school. For example, a child who lives one mile from the school will have a higher priority than a child who lives two miles from the school. If a place subsequently becomes available at the school and there are no children on the Priority 1 waiting list it will be allocated to the child on the Priority 2 waiting list who has the highest priority. If there are no children on the Priority 2 waiting list it will be allocated to the child on the Priority 3 waiting list who has the highest priority. If there are no children on the Priority 3 waiting list it will be allocated to the child on the Priority 4 waiting list who has the highest priority. The waiting list will continue in force until 30 September of each school session.

Incoming Children

Where children are to move into the catchment area of a school they will be treated as being Priority 1 from a date 4 weeks before they move. So, if a child is due to move into the catchment area of a school on 1 June, they will be entitled to make a placing request on 1 March but will only be Priority 3. As at 1 May however they will be Priority 1.

Note 3 when it is necessary to refuse only **some** placing requests **within** any one of the above categories, priorities will be determined by the single criterion of distance from the specified school, with priority being given to children whose normal place of residence is closest to the specified school.

FOR PRIMARY USE

- 7.
- a) Where a parent asks for a child to be placed in a school at the beginning of the following school year, the Council has until 30 April to give a written decision, provided that the placing request **was received on or before 15 March at the address below.**
- b) In any other case, the council has two months to give a written decision.
8. If a parent does not receive a written decision by 30 April or within two months as the case may be the Council are deemed to have refused the placing request. The parent then has a right of appeal. The parent also has a right of appeal if a placing request is refused.
9. If a placing request is deemed to have been refused, or refused, details of the appeal procedure will be made available to the parent.

PLACING REQUESTS SHOULD BE SUBMITTED IN WRITING ON THE APPROPRIATE FORM TO:

Anne Wilson
 Director of Education
 Floor 8, Tayside House
 28 Crichton Street
 DUNDEE, DD1 3RJ

8 January 2001

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

Education (Scotland) Act 1980

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS ON

PLACING REQUESTS

1. Placing requests will be dealt with in the first instance by the Education Department.
2. Placing requests will be granted if there are no grounds for their refusal.
3. If a placing request is granted parents must arrange and pay for any transport to and from school.
4. If a placing request is refused, that decision will be intimated to parents in writing along with the reasons for it.

5. **The Council has the right to refuse a placing request:-**

- (a) If placing the child in the school would:-
- (i) make it necessary for the Council 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 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 Council to elect either to create an additional class or an additional composite class in the school or to take an additional teacher into employment at the school.
- (b) if the education normally provided at the school is not suited to the age, ability or aptitude of the child;
- (c) if the Council has already required the child to discontinue his/her attendance at the school;
- (d) if the school is a special school and the child does not have special educational needs requiring the education or special facilities normally provided at that school; or
- (e) if the school is a single sex school and the child is not of the sex admitted to the school.

6. **Criteria for Admission to School**

That while parents' wishes will be met whenever possible, if the number of places in any particular school is limited, priority for admission shall be determined on the following basis:

Priority 1 Children normally resident within the catchment area of the specified school.

Priority 2 Children **not** normally resident within the catchment area of the specified school, but having a brother or sister (or relative permanently living at the same address as part of an extended family) Note 1 in attendance at that school.

Priority 3 Children **not** normally resident within the catchment area of the specified school and having no brother or sister (or relative permanently living at the same address as part of an extended family) Note 1 in attendance at that school.

Note 1 provided that the member of the extended family for whom the placing request has been made has lived within that extended family for a period of at least 2 years.

Note 2 Within denominational schools places in each priority category will be allocated first to children who have been baptised into the Roman Catholic Church and thereafter to other children within that category.

7. a) Where a parent asks for a child to be placed in a school at the beginning of the following school year, the Council has until 30 April to give a written decision, provided that the placing request **was received on or before 15 March at the address below.**
- b) In any other case, the Council has two months to give a written decision.
8. If a parent does not receive a written decision by 30 April or within two months as the case may be the Council are deemed to have refused the placing request. The parent then has a right of appeal. The parent also has a right of appeal if a placing request is refused.
9. If a placing request is deemed to have been refused, or refused, details of the appeal procedure will be made available to the parent.

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8 January 2001

APPENDIX IIIB

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

Education (Scotland) Act 1980

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS ON

PLACING REQUESTS

1. Placing requests will be dealt with in the first instance by the Education Department.
2. Placing requests will be granted if there are no grounds for their refusal.
3. If a placing request is granted parents must arrange and pay for any transport to and from school.
4. If a placing request is refused, that decision will be intimated to parents in writing along with the reasons for it.
5. The Council has the right to refuse a placing request:-
 - (a) If placing the child in the school would:-
 - i make it necessary for the Council 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 pupils attending the school

5.

- (b) if the education normally provided at the school is not suited to the age, ability or aptitude of the child.
- (c) if the Council has already required the child to discontinue his attendance at the school.
- (d) if the school is a special school and the child does not have special educational needs requiring the education or special facilities normally provided at that school.
- (e) if the school is a single sex school and the child is not of the sex admitted to the school.

6. **Criteria for Admission to School**

That while parents' wishes will be met whenever possible, if the number of places in any particular Secondary School is limited, priority for admission shall be determined on the following basis:-

The priorities for admission to Secondary Schools from Session 2000/2001 up to and including Session 2004/05 is:-

Priority 1 Children attending a school designated as an associated Primary School of the specified school or a school outside Dundee the catchment area of which is within the catchment area of the specified school. Children who become normally resident within the catchment area of the specified school during or after P7.

Children normally resident within the catchment area of the specified school but who have been unable to obtain a place at the primary school into whose catchment area they have moved following an unsuccessful application for enrolment or placing request.

Priority 2

Children **not** normally resident within the catchment area of the specified school, but having a brother or sister (or relative permanently living at the same address as part of an extended family) **Note 1** in attendance at that school. Children normally resident within the catchment area of the specified school not attending a school designated as an associated primary school of the specified school but having a brother or sister (or relative permanently living at the same address as part of an extended family) **Note 1** in attendance at that school.

Priority 3

Children normally resident within the catchment area of the specified school not attending a school designated as an associated primary school of the specified school and having no brother or sister (or relative permanently living at the same address as part of an extended family) **Note 1** in attendance at that school

Priority 4

Children **not** normally resident within the catchment area of the specified school and having no brother or sister (or relative permanently living at the same address as part of an extended family) **Note 1** in attendance at that school.

Note 1

Provided that the member of the extended family for whom the placing request has been made has lived within that extended family for a period of at least 2 years.

Note 2

Within denominational schools places in each priority category will be allocated first to children who have been baptised into the Roman Catholic Church and thereafter to other children within that category.

Note 3

When it is necessary to refuse only some placing requests within any one of the above categories, priorities will be determined by the single criterion of distance from the specified school, with priority being given to children whose normal place of residence is closest to the specified school.