

**ITEM No ...2.....**

**REPORT TO: CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMITTEE – 2 MARCH 2026**

**REPORT ON: RETAINING RESERVED PLACES IN SCHOOLS**

**REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE**

**REPORT NO: 51-2026**

**1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 The Executive Director of the Children and Families Service is required to review the allocation of reserved places on an annual basis. This report proposes an allocation of reserved places in Dundee's schools for academic session 2026/2027.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATION**

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- a approve the proposals for the allocation of reserved places in schools for the academic session 2026/2027 as outlined in Appendix 1; and
- b note the existing criteria for admission to school (Extract from Placing Request Guidelines) as outlined in Appendix 2.

**3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

**4.0 MAIN TEXT**

4.1 Requests for places in Dundee schools for Primary 1 and S1 for the academic session starting in August 2026 must be submitted by the first Monday in February. The allocation of places will follow the Council's current procedures. Initially, places are given to children living in the school's catchment area (Priority 1). Any remaining places are then allocated based on the Council's Enrolment and Placing Request Guidelines. Details of the criteria for admission to school are given in Appendix 2 (Extract from Placing Request Guidelines).

4.2 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. Families moving into the school catchment area, either after spaces are allocated or during the school session, may therefore not be able to secure a place in their catchment school for any of their children. This can result in children travelling to more distant schools as the catchment 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 different schools.

4.3 The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 gave 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.

4.4 Reserved places are defined as those which are reasonably required to accommodate children likely to become resident in the catchment area of the school in the school session to which the placing request relates.

4.5 Dundee City Council wishes to see school accommodation used effectively and efficiently. To avoid disruption to education and to families it is desirable that places are available for children moving into the catchment area during the school session.

- 4.6 In previous years approval has been given to hold a number of places for children moving into the catchment area of schools which have previously experienced challenges in meeting these requests. The number of places is the minimum required at any one time. Places are therefore re-used during the session to accommodate requests from new Priority 1 children moving into the area. This can result in a reserved space being used more than once in any given session.
- 4.7 The following points should be noted concerning the deployment of reserved places:
- Reserved places are only created where space permits. Where the number of Priority 1 children enrolled fill a class to its maximum size, a reserved place cannot be created.
  - Reserved spaces take into account the projected number of children and young people who have either already enrolled in the catchment school or are holding places in the catchment school, and the number of placing requests received for each school by the closing date of first Monday in February.
  - When all reserved places have been used for Priority 1 children moving into the catchment area no more places can be granted. If a child then leaves the school roll that place will again be reserved for Priority 1 children moving into the catchment area and will be allocated to such children as required.
  - No Priority 1 child will be refused a place while a reserved place exists and has not already been allocated.
- 4.8 The allocation of reserved places is reviewed annually by the Executive Director of Children and Families Service based on the changing demand for places. This includes a review of the previous session's placing requests, knowledge of the planning capacity and current occupancy rates. The schools concerned and the allocation of reserved places for the academic session 2026/2027 are listed in Appendix 1.
- 4.9 The proposed allocation of reserved places will help to 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 their catchment school.

## **5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 This report has been subject to an Integrated Impact Assessment to identify impacts on Equality and Diversity, Fairness and Poverty, Environment and Corporate Risk. An impact, positive or negative, on one or more of these issues was identified. An appropriate senior manager has checked and agreed with this assessment. A copy of the Integrated Impact Assessment showing the impacts and accompanying benefits of/mitigating factors for them is included as an Appendix to this report.

## **6.0 CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 The Council Leadership Team have been consulted in the preparation of this report and are in agreement with its content.

## **7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1 None.

Audrey May  
Executive Director of Children and Families Service

Pamela Nesbitt  
Strategic Education Manager

**APPENDIX 1****ALLOCATION OF RESERVED PLACES IN DUNDEE SCHOOLS****School Session 2025/26**

<b>School</b>	<b>Allocation of Reserved Places 2025/26</b>	<b>Total No of Places 2025/26</b>	<b>Allocation of Reserved Places 2026/27</b>	<b>Total No of Places 2026/27</b>
Barnhill PS	3 at P1, 1 per stage thereafter	9	3 at P1, 1 per stage thereafter	9
Blackness PS	6 at P1, 1 per stage thereafter	12	6 at P1, 1 per stage thereafter	12
Craigowl PS	3 at P1	3	3 at P1	3
Downfield PS	3 at P1	3	3 at P1	3
Eastern PS	3 at P1, 1 per stage thereafter	9	3 at P1, 1 per stage thereafter	9
Forthill PS	3 at P1, 1 per stage thereafter	9	3 at P1, 1 per stage thereafter	9
Our Lady's RC PS	5 at P1, 1 per stage thereafter	11	5 at P1, 1 per stage thereafter	11
Rosebank PS	5 at P1, 1 per stage thereafter	11	5 at P1, 1 per stage thereafter	11
St Andrew's RC PS	3 at P1	3	3 at P1	3
St Joseph's RC PS	5 at P1	5	5 at P1	5
St Mary's RC PS	2 at P1	2	2 at P1	2
St Ninian's RC PS	5 at P1	5	5 at P1	5
Ss Peter & Paul RC PS	5 at P1	5	5 at P1	5
Victoria Park PS	3 at P1	3	3 at P1	3
Greenfield Academy	8 in S1, S2 and S3	24	8 in S1, S2 and S3	24
Grove Academy	8 in S1, S2 and S3	24	8 in S1, S2 and S3	24
Harris Academy	8 in S1, S2 and S3	24	8 in S1, S2 and S3	24
Morgan Academy	8 in S1, S2 and S3	24	8 in S1, S2 and S3	24
St John's HS	8 in S1, S2 and S3	24	8 in S1, S2 and S3	24

## APPENDIX 2

### DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICES

#### PRIORITY SCHEME FOR ENROLLING PUPILS (INCLUDING PLACING REQUESTS) IN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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

Priority 1 Children normally permanently resident within the catchment of the specified school (see note 5).

Priority 2 Where the Executive Director of Children & Families considers that the particular needs of the pupil would only be met by attendance at the school (i.e. within an enhanced provision or sporting academy linked to the school).

Priority 3 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) in attendance at that school.

- The member of the extended family for whom the placing request has been made must have lived within that extended family for a period of at least 2 years.
- for Primary 1 entrance the following August, the sibling or qualifying relative must be in the present Primary 1 to Primary 6).
- for Secondary 1 entrance the following August, the sibling, or qualifying relative must be in the present S1 to S5

Priority 4 (Secondary only) Children on transfer to S1 who attended an associated primary of the secondary but are not normally resident in the catchment area of the secondary school (An associated primary school is one whose catchment area falls within the catchment area of the secondary school, except in the case of non-Dundee primary schools where the association is by specific arrangement and subsequently approved by Education Committee)

Priority 5 Children *living in Dundee City*, but 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) in attendance at that school, and who did not attend an associated primary school.

Priority 6 Children *living outwith Dundee City*, 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) in attendance at that school, and who did not attend an associated primary school.

#### Notes for Denominational Education

1. In denominational schools places within each priority category will be allocated first to children who have been baptised into the Roman Catholic Church. Thereafter places will be offered to other children.

#### Notes for P1 Admission and P7-S1 Transfer

2. In the unlikely event of there being insufficient spaces in a school to meet the needs of Priority 1.

Children who have enrolled on time (by the first Monday in February), spaces will be offered by reference to the shortest safe walking distance (as calculated by the DCC software system and GIS) between their normal place of residence and the school.

3. Where non catchment placing requests are received on time (by first Monday in February) and in the event of there being more requests than spaces within a priority grouping, spaces will be offered by reference to the shortest safe walking distance (as calculated by the DCC software system and GIS) between applicant's normal place of residence and the school.) See note 4 for exception.
4. Where placing requests are received on time for Priority 4 children (by first Monday in February) and in the event of there being more requests than spaces within the priority grouping, spaces will be offered by reference to the length of time the child has been enrolled in the associated primary school with the longer enrolment being given the highest priority. Following this, note 3 applies.
5. Certain Dundee Secondary Schools have associated primary schools that are outwith Dundee. These primary schools do not form part of the geographic catchment of the secondary school. However, at P7-S1 transfer all P7 pupils of the primary school who live in the catchment area of the associated primary school are given priority 1 status for the associated secondary school, but a placing request must be submitted by the first Monday in February.
6. Any placing request received after the closing date including late priority 1 applications, will only be processed after all on time applications have been allocated.

#### Notes for Waiting Lists

7. 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 made. For example, a child whose placing request was made on 1 May will have a higher priority than a child whose placing request was made on 1 June. In the event of there having been two or more placing requests made on the same day the child whose normal place of residence is closest to the school based on the shortest safe walking distance (as calculated by the DCC software and GIS) will have priority over the other children. In the case of flatted or multi story accommodation, priority will be given in the order Flat 1 before 2 or Flat A before B.
8. Priority 3, 4, 5 and 6 Children The names of Priority 3, 4, 5 and 6 children whose placing requests have been refused will be put on a separate waiting list in the order of their Priority. Within each Priority category (except Priority 4), children will be placed on the waiting list in order of the distance of their normal place of residence from the requested school. For example, for all priority categories except Priority 4, a child who lives one mile from the school will have a higher priority than a child who lives two miles from the school. For Priority 4, a child who has been enrolled in the associated primary school for 2 years will have a higher priority than a child who has been enrolled for one year. 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 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. If there are no children on the Priority 4 waiting list it will be allocated to the child on the Priority 5 waiting list who has the highest priority. If there are no children on the Priority 5 waiting list it will be allocated to the child on the Priority 6 waiting list who has the highest priority. Places on the waiting list of denominational schools will be allocated based on baptismal certification then criteria as above.
9. Incoming Children Where children are to move into the catchment area of a school they will be treated as being Priority 1 from date of confirmation of their new address. Please note that from place being agreed, the child must be enrolled within six weeks of that date. If the child has not been enrolled within this timeframe, the place may be withdrawn.

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# Integrated Impact Assessment

Committee Report Number: 51-2026

Document Title: Retaining Reserved Places in Schools

Document Type: Procedure

Description:

The Executive Director of Children and Families Service is required to review the allocation of places on an annual basis and this report proposes an allocation of reserved places for session 2026/2027.

Intended Outcome:

The Committee is asked to:

- a) approve the proposals for the allocation of reserved places in schools for the academic session 2026/2027 as outlined in Appendix 1; and
- b) note the existing criteria for admission to school (Extract from Placing Request Guidelines) as outlined in Appendix 2.

Period Covered: 02/03/2026 to 02/07/2027

Monitoring:

Ongoing review of placing requests leading to annual review of reserved places for next session

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# Equality, Diversity and Human Rights

## Impacts & Implications

Age: No Impact

Disability: No Impact

Gender Reassignment: No Impact

Marriage & Civil Partnership: No Impact

Pregnancy & Maternity: No Impact

Race / Ethnicity: No Impact

Religion or Belief: No Impact

Sex: No Impact

Sexual Orientation: No Impact

Are any Human Rights not covered by the Equalities questions above

impacted by this report? No

## Fairness & Poverty

### Geographic Impacts & Implications

Strathmartine:	Positive
Lochee:	Positive
Coldside:	Positive
Maryfield:	Positive
North East:	Positive
East End:	Positive
The Ferry:	Positive
West End:	Positive

Positive Implications:

It is desirable that places are available to children moving into the catchment area during the school session. The proposed allocation of reserved places will help to ensure that while parental choice is maintained whenever possible, that will not unduly restrict parents moving into an area from sending their child or children to the local school.

## **Household Group Impacts and Implications**

Looked After Children & Care Leavers: No Impact

Carers: No Impact:

## **Household Group Impacts and Implications**

Lone Parent Families: No Impact

Single Female Households with Children: No Impact

Greater number of children and/or young children: No Impact

Pensioners - single / couple: No Impact

Unskilled workers or unemployed: No Impact

Serious & enduring mental health problems: No Impact

Homeless: No Impact

Drug and/or alcohol problems: No Impact

Offenders & Ex-offenders: No Impact

# Socio Economic Disadvantage Impacts & Implications

Employment Status: No Impact

Education & Skills: Positive

To avoid disruption to education and to families it is desirable that places are available to children moving into the catchment area during the school session.

Income: No Impact

Caring Responsibilities (including Childcare): No Impact

Affordability and accessibility of services: No Impact

Fuel Poverty: No Impact

Cost of Living / Poverty Premium: No Impact

Connectivity / Internet Access: No Impact

Income / Benefit Advice / Income Maximisation No Impact

Employment Opportunities: No Impact

Education: Positive

To avoid disruption to education and to families it is desirable that places are available to children moving into the catchment area during

Health: No Impact

Life Expectancy: No Impact

Mental Health: No Impact

Overweight / Obesity: No Impact  
the school session.

Child Health: No Impact

Neighbourhood Satisfaction: No Impact

Transport: No Impact

## **Environment**

### **Climate Change Impacts**

Mitigating Greenhouse Gases: No Impact

Adapting to the effects of climate change: No Impact

### **Resource Use Impacts**

Energy efficiency & consumption: No Impact

Prevention, reduction, re-use, recovery or recycling of waste: No Impact

Sustainable Procurement: No Impact

### **Transport Impacts**

Accessible transport provision: No Impact

Sustainable modes of transport: No Impact

### **Natural Environment Impacts**

Air, land & water quality: No Impact

Biodiversity: No Impact

Open & green spaces: No Impact

### **Built Environment Impacts**

Built Heritage: No Impact

Housing: No Impact

Is the proposal subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)?

No further action is required as it does not qualify as a Plan, Programme or Strategy as defined by the Environment Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005.

## **Corporate Risk**

### **Corporate Risk Impacts**

Political Reputational Risk: No Impact

Economic/Financial Sustainability / Security & Equipment: No Impact

Social Impact / Safety of Staff & Clients: No Impact

Technological / Business or Service Interruption: No Impact

Environmental: No Impact

Legal / Statutory Obligations: Positive

By having this report and an agreement for reserved spaces, the service is in line with appropriate

legislation. Organisational / Staffing & Competence: No Impact

Corporate Risk Implications & Mitigation:

The risk implications associated with the subject matter of this report are "business as normal" risks and any increase to the level of risk to the Council is minimal. This is due either to the risk being inherently low or as a result of the risk being transferred in full or in part to another party on a fair and equitable basis. The subject matter is routine and has happened many times before without significant impact.