

Education Admissions Policy



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Introduction



Stirling Council Schools, Learning and Education are committed to the provision of high quality learning and teaching in all our nurseries and school settings, ensuring children and young people have the best possible experiences as they progress through their educational journey.

This policy has been created as a guide for parents and carers regarding the admission of children and young people into all education settings within Stirling Council.

Part A: Nursery Enrolments



The information provided in this section gives advice to parents regarding admission and enrolments to nursery provision in Stirling.

Admissions

We offer a range of early learning and childcare provision which provides choice and flexibility for families. We allocate places using a system that is fair and transparent for all applicants.

All children will be offered early learning and childcare in accordance with the terms set down by the Scottish Government in line with the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

Eligibility Criteria

Parents and carers are entitled to up to 1140 hours of Scottish Government funded early learning and childcare (ELC) per year if they have a three or four year old child. Parents and carers are also entitled to this if they have a two year old and meet certain eligibility criteria. Dependent on birth date, some children are eligible for an additional year in ELC in the year they become five years old where parents/carers choose to defer entry to primary school.

We provide funded early learning and childcare for all children aged 3-5 years and 2 year olds who meet the eligibility criteria in line with a “provider neutral” model. This means that families can access their entitlement with the provider of choice, as long as that provider meets the criteria set out in the National Standard for Early Learning and Childcare, and is contracted with Stirling Council to offer the entitlement. This gives the choice of applying for a place within a local authority nursery, a partner nursery from the private, voluntary and independent sector or with a partner childminder.

Information on the National Standard can be found on the Scottish Government [website](#).

Who is eligible for a funded place?

Children aged 5 years old (deferring entry to P1)

Children whose 5th birthday falls on or after the first day of the school term in August up until the last day in February, can choose to defer entry to primary school. Children who have birth dates within this period are eligible for an additional funded year of early learning and childcare.

If your child currently has a place in a Stirling Council nursery or with a partner nursery or childminder, and you choose to have an additional year in nursery, you must complete the online deferred entry form to note your intention to defer your child starting school. This should be submitted by 31 January in the year in which your child is entitled to start school. This will allow your early learning and childcare provider to retain a place for your child with them for an additional year.

You should also enrol your child in their catchment school by 31 January. Should you change your mind regarding deferred entry this allows a place in P1 to be held for your child. The deadline for withdrawing a deferred entry application is 15 March. If you change your mind after this date a place will still be made available in P1 for your child, and whilst every effort will be made to provide a place in your catchment school, this cannot be guaranteed.

If you are new to the Stirling Council area and wish to access an additional year in nursery, please submit the online deferred entry form, noting your choice of early learning and childcare provider. If you have not already done so, we will ask you to complete an application form for a place with your chosen early learning and childcare provider.

The online deferred entry form and a copy of the Parent/Carer Frequently Asked Questions Guide to Deferred Entry can be found on the Stirling Council [website](#).

Please ask your current early learning and childcare provider if you require any support in submitting your form. Alternatively, or for any other queries, please contact ey@stirling.gov.uk.

Children aged 3 and 4 years old

All 3 and 4 years olds are entitled to a fully funded place.

Children usually begin nursery at 3 years old and remain there until they go to primary school.

Children aged 3 years old become eligible for a Government funded place at the start of the term following their third birthday:

- Children who are 3 between 1st March and 31st August are eligible for a funded place from the start of the school term in August.
- Children who are 3 between 1st September and 31st December are eligible for a funded place from the start of school term in January.
- Children who are 3 between 1st January and 28th February are eligible for a funded place from the start of school term in April (after the Easter holiday).

Children under 3 years of age

Parents can access a nursery place for a child under 3 years of age within some local authority nurseries and within most private, voluntary and independent sector nurseries, and with childminders.

There is no funding for children under 3 years of age unless they meet the eligibility criteria for 2 year olds (please see below for eligibility). Places in Stirling Council for children under the age of three are limited and priority is given to families most in need. It is not always possible to guarantee that we'll be able to offer your child a place in your preferred nursery. Allocations for these places follow the admissions process detailed within this policy to ensure fairness and equity.

Charges for a nursery place in local authority nurseries for a child under 3 years is detailed in the nursery charges section of this document. Private, voluntary and independent sector nurseries and childminders have their own fees structure and parents can contact them directly for details of their charges.

For more information, please contact the participating nursery directly.

Certain 2 year old children are eligible to 1140 hours of free early learning and childcare. This entitlement is delivered in local authority nurseries, within some private, voluntary and independent partner nurseries and with partner childminders.

Criteria for funded 2 year old places

The Scottish Government funds free childcare places for eligible two-year-olds. A funded place is available if a child:

- is looked after by the local council
- is the subject of a Kinship or Guardianship Order
- has a parent who was previously care experienced
- has a parent who is supported by the Family Nurse Partnership.

Funded places are also available where the parent or carer of the child receives at least one of the following:

- Income-based Job Seekers Allowance
- Income Support
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Incapacity or Severe Disablement Allowance
- State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit but not Working Tax Credit **
- Maximum Child Tax Credit and maximum Working Tax Credit **
- Universal Credit — and have household take-home pay below and identified threshold **
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

** Please note, the total amount of credits and income is subject to annual change. Please refer here for the current qualifying criteria.

Funded early learning and childcare for 2 year olds – mygov.scot

If a 2 year old meets the criteria for a funded place, they will be entitled to the same number of hours as a 3 or 4 year old which is 1140 hours of early learning and childcare per year. Where there is identified need and space is available, some children may be able to access a place from their 2nd birthday. For most 2 year olds, spaces are allocated in the term following the child's birthday.

In exceptional cases, discretionary funded places can be offered to non-eligible children under the age of three. The number of hours offered for these places will be assessed according to need and availability in the appropriate setting. For further information, please refer to Exemptions on page 14.

Cross boundary places

In line with 'Funding follows the Child', children who live in any local authority area can apply for a nursery place within Stirling Council.

If a child has additional support needs and is from another authority, Stirling Council would fund the 1140 hours if a place is available but we would seek a planning meeting with the home authority regarding any additional support required. We would expect the home authority to pay for any support required. Part of the planning process would be discussion regarding funding of resources.

Access to funded hours

Parents are able to access the funded hours weekly and, in Stirling, are entitled to up to 25 or 30 free hours a week dependant on whether the nursery is operational in line with the school term time or over extended weeks of the year. Nursery operating models are detailed below:

Extended year nurseries (model 1)

A small number of nurseries are open for 48.2 weeks of the year and are closed for:

- one week at Easter plus the Easter Bank Holidays
- May Day Holiday Monday
- one week at Christmas plus Christmas Eve and the Christmas and New Year bank holidays.

In this model, funded hours are accessed over 5 x 5 hour sessions between 8am-1pm, 1pm-6pm or 8am-6pm over 45.6 weeks of the year in a pattern which best meets the needs of the family. Where there is availability, families have the opportunity to choose to purchase additional sessions over and above the 5 funded sessions, and additional weeks over and above the 45.6 funded weeks, up to a total of 48. 2 weeks.

Nurseries offering this model are:

- Allans Nursery
- Arnprior Nursery
- Cornton Nursery
- Cowie Nursery
- Fallin Nursery
- Hillview Nursery
- Park Drive Nursery
- Raploch Nursery
- Wellgreen Nursery

Children will mainly be offered an extended year contract with the above operating models. In some circumstances, where there is availability and an alternative offer would better meet the needs of the child, a term-time option can be considered in discussion with the Head or Principal Early Childhood Educator in the Nursery.

Extended year nurseries (model 2)

The majority of Stirling Council nurseries (those attached to, or located within the grounds of a primary school) operate over 45.6 weeks of the year and are closed for:

- one week at Easter plus the Easter Bank Holidays
- May Day Holiday Monday
- 2 weeks and 2 days in the school summer holidays
- one week at Christmas plus Christmas Eve and the Christmas and New Year Bank Holidays.

In this operating model, funded hours are accessed over 5 x 5 hour sessions between 8am-1pm, 1pm-6pm or 8am-6pm in a pattern which best meets the needs of the family. Where there is availability, families have the opportunity to choose to purchase additional sessions over and above the 5 funded sessions.

Children will mainly be offered an extended year contract with the above operating models. In some circumstances, where there is availability and an alternative offer would better meet the needs of the child, a term-time option can be considered in discussion with the Head or Principal Early Childhood Educator in the Nursery.

Term-time nurseries (model 3)

A few nurseries operate in line with the 38 weeks of the school term-time and close in line with schools holiday periods:

- 1 week February mid-term
- 2 weeks at Easter plus the Easter Bank Holidays
- May Holiday Monday
- 6 weeks in the summer holidays
- 2 weeks in October
- 2 weeks at Christmas including the Christmas and New Year Bank Holidays.

St Mary's Episcopal Nursery in Dunblane operates between the hours of 9am-3pm. Children access their funding in 5 x 6 hour sessions per week. There is no option to purchase additional sessions or weeks within this operating model.

Cambusbarron and Fintry nurseries operate between the hours of 8am-6pm. Children access their funding in 6 x 5 hour sessions per week. Where there is availability, families have the opportunity to choose to purchase additional sessions over and above the 6 funded sessions. There is no option to purchase additional weeks within this model.

Childminders and nurseries in the private, voluntary and independent sector may offer slightly different operating models with funded hours distributed across their individual open weeks and hours. Please contact your chosen provider directly to enquire on how this is allocated.

Please note that the funded entitlement to early learning and childcare is *up to* 1140 hours per year. Parents and carers can choose to take as little or as many hours from this as best suits individual family needs. Your funded entitlement will be offered in blocks of hours, but you do not need to use the full number hours which have been allocated to you. For example, if you have been allocated 8am-6pm, you can access any hours within this time which best suit you.

Should your child join us mid-way through an academic year, the 1140 hours entitlement is calculated on a pro rata basis. Any entitlement accessed in a previous authority within the same academic year is deducted from the total number of 1140 hours to calculate the balance which can be accessed with a Stirling Council provider for the remainder of that year.

The Admissions Process

How do I apply for a nursery place?

To apply for a childcare place, parents/carers can either contact the provider of choice and request an application form, or download this from the Stirling Council [website](#). When the application form has been completed, this should be returned to your chosen provider by 28th February of the year in which you wish for your child's nursery/childminder place to begin.

Applications will still be accepted out with this time, however it may be that a lesser number of options will be available to you.

Stirling Council Nursery Admissions Panels meet in March to discuss applications and allocate places which best meet the needs of children and families. Parents receive written confirmation of a place offer once all admissions have been decided.

Stirling Council nurseries, private, voluntary and independent sector nurseries and childminders offer a range of different types of provision for children aged 0-5 years, both part-time and full-time. The application form is the same for all settings.

When should parents complete application forms?

Applications for 3 and 4 year old places can be accepted in local authority settings from the start of the new term each August for children who will be due to begin nursery or take up a place with a childminder in the academic year beginning the following August. All applications will be held until the cut-off date of 28 February where they will be considered together through the admissions process.

For example:

Child's Date of Birth	Applications accepted between	Child begins nursery/childminder
Child turns 3 between 1 March 2025 and 28 February 2026	August 2024 and 28 February 2025	During academic year beginning August 2025 in line with eligible start dates

On the application form, parents are asked to indicate their first, second and third choice of provider along with preferred session times. Preferences are accommodated wherever possible. Applications received by 28th February are considered together which allows us to allocate places to best meet the needs of each child and family. Applications received after this date will still be considered but there will be a reduced choice of days and sessions available.

A member of staff from the nursery can provide support to complete an application form if requested.

Applications for 0 - 3 places, including eligible 2 year olds, can be submitted throughout the year. Information on households where an eligible 2 year old may reside is provided by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) to local authorities. Stirling Council sends letters to these households to inform parents/carers of their eligibility. There is no requirement to apply for a place should you choose not to do so.

Applications to childminders and to settings in the private, voluntary and independent sector can be made throughout the year.

Do children already accessing early learning and childcare have to re-apply each year?

Children already attending a Stirling Council nursery or accessing early learning and childcare do not have to re-apply each year. These children are referred to as “returners” for the following year. Returning children are automatically allocated a place for the following year unless the initial place was awarded on a temporary basis for emergency reasons. Parents of returning children will be given the opportunity to change the sessions/days allocated to them for the following year if they wish to do so.

If a parent wishes to move their child to a different provider, a new application should be submitted to the appropriate establishment.

Allocating Places

Applications for places are made at learning community level to best meet the requested days and sessions for each family.

When the demand for places within a particular provider exceeds supply, it is necessary to have a system for deciding on the allocation of places in a transparent and equitable way. Stirling Council has a duty to ensure that all eligible children are prioritised when places are allocated. All eligible children are allocated their full funded entitlement first before any unfunded places can be offered.

In order to ensure a fair process for the allocation of places, a priority system is in place.

Priorities:

- **Priority 1:** Children whose application form is supported by the appropriate inter-agency documentation, including children on the Child Protection Register and those with additional support needs.
- **Priority 2:** Children deferring entry from Primary 1 and remaining in nursery and Eligible 2 year old children.
- **Priority 3:** Eligible pre-school children from the associated learning community.
- **Priority 4:** Eligible ante pre-school children from the associated learning community.
- **Priority 5:** Children from out with the associated learning community.
- **Priority 6:** Children from out with the Stirling Council area.

Other Considerations

In circumstances where more children sit within the same priority criteria than spaces are available, a 'weighting' system will be provided to settings to ensure those in most need are allocated spaces first. Should a situation occur when all children sit within the same priority criteria, and are 'weighted' with the same number of points, a ballot will be evoked. Consideration will be given, where applicable, to working families and those in training who require an early learning and childcare place in order to be able to do so.

Please note, the maximum number of children a nursery can accommodate at one time is determined by their Care Inspectorate registration. This is based on the inside space available within the setting. At times, places in a nursery may be 'capped', i.e. where the number of available places are less than the number of places registered by the Care Inspectorate. Places may be capped where demand has fallen, and the number of places is adjusted to meet a more efficient adult:child ratio. Places may also be capped where an assessment has been carried out of the needs of the children attending the setting. Where it is deemed that children would benefit from a higher ratio of staff to children, the number of available places can be reduced to better support children with additional support needs. Decisions in these circumstances are made in collaboration with the nursery senior management team and multi-agency professionals who support the children.

Nursery Charges

Charges for Unfunded Hours

The rate for unfunded hours in all Stirling Council nurseries is subject to an annual increase in August. Information regarding charges can be found on the Stirling Council [website](#).

Charges apply to:

- Additional early learning and childcare provision over and above the funded entitlement.
- Children aged 0 - 3 years with no entitlement to funded hours.
- Children who are not in one of the exempt from charges categories.

Contracts

All parents will be asked to sign a contract agreeing to session times and any additional charges (as applicable).

Please note, funded providers set individual charges and terms and conditions.

Parents/carers can contact these providers directly for this information.

Can additional hours be purchased on a temporary basis?

Extended hours in local authority nurseries may be offered for a time limited period (if available) to assist in difficult or emergency situations, for example, illness, seasonal work, change of shift pattern or jury duty. The additional hours will be reviewed or withdrawn at the end of the specified period.

Temporary allocations of extended hours will be confirmed to parents in writing.

Payment of Fees

Nursery fees should be paid on time and when due which is the fifteenth of each month. Payments should be made through the ParentPay system. Staff in the nursery will advise how to set this up. Unpaid fees are managed through the Council arrears process. If an account remains in arrears, this will result in the removal of unfunded sessions and early learning and childcare provision will be reduced to funded sessions only.

Exemptions

As part of Stirling Council's commitment to supporting vulnerable children and families and the aim of providing access to affordable early learning and childcare, there are some children who will be exempt from charges.

Criteria in which children may be considered exempt (but not exhaustive) are:

- Any child who is recorded on the Child Protection Register, or where it is demonstrated that there is a risk of being recorded on Register.
- Children born to mothers under 16 years of age and/or those in full time education to allow them to return to education.
- Children who are looked after, in the care of the local authority, or are under a Statutory Supervision Order, or are in Foster Care and do not meet any other eligibility criteria.
- A family with an additional Health Plan Indicator (HPI). HPI indicates that the child, and/or their carer, requires sustained additional input from professional services to help the child attain their health and development potential.

Stirling Council is committed to reducing the impact of childhood poverty and can implement flexible exemption criteria to support short term exceptional circumstances.

Exceptional circumstances may include:

- Having no income due to immigration status.
- A move into temporary accommodation and no paperwork available to support application.
- A change in family circumstances which has caused acute stress and where grave or specific concerns have been identified by an appropriate agency.

All exemptions to charges should be agreed, where possible, at a Team around the Child (TAC) meeting. Where a TAC meeting is not planned, the head of establishment can use professional judgement to allocate a place. All exemptions will be offered on a temporary basis and reviewed at regular intervals.

Meals and Snacks in Stirling Council Nurseries

Lunch

All 3, 4 and 5 year old children and eligible 2 year olds are entitled to a free meal if they are in nursery or with a childminder for more than 4 hours. If a child is attending a funded morning session, a free meal will be offered. During unfunded sessions parents can purchase a meal if they choose to do so. A substantial snack is provided during afternoon sessions.

Snacks

The Scottish Government provides funding to all early learning and childcare settings through the Scottish Milk and Healthy Snack Scheme. Through this scheme, all children are entitled to one portion of milk and one portion of fruit or vegetables each day. Should your child attend nursery for a full day, an additional snack is provided in the afternoon.

Meals in the Private, Voluntary and Independent Sector or with a Childminder

Meals and snacks will be offered during funded sessions. Costs for meals and snacks during unfunded sessions vary therefore parents should contact their chosen provider directly for further information.

Settling In and Transition

Funded hours will start from the first day of the term a child becomes eligible. In order to help a child settle in and manage the transition from home to nursery, there will be a staggered intake over a few weeks at the start of each term. There is no charge for settling in sessions on a funded or part funded place, which will be as flexible as possible. Where it is possible, settling in sessions will be offered during the holiday period prior to the child beginning nursery. This is dependent on availability of space and adult:child ratios.

For children aged 0 - 3 years who are not entitled to a funded place, settling in will be agreed with the provider based on the child's individual needs. Children can take different times to settle and consideration will be given to supporting this. The first 5 sessions of settling in are free and any additional settling in sessions, up to 10 in total will only be charged on the basis of what is used, i.e. per hour rather than per session. A session is one 5 hour block.

Staff are very experienced and skilled in helping children settle, however, during the settling in period it is a requirement that you, or another nominated adult, aged 16 years or over, is available to collect your child earlier than the agreed settling in time on the rare occasion this may be necessary.

Attendance at Nursery

Although attendance at nursery is voluntary, it is desirable for children to have a regular pattern of attendance. Should a child's attendance become irregular or stop altogether, settings will contact the parents to discuss any support required for the child to return to their placement.

A placement will only be reviewed when all avenues have been explored. No child will be removed from the placement roll without serious consideration of the implications for the child.

Part B: Early Entry to School



The information provided in this section gives advice to parents who are considering applying for their child to start school early.

What does the term 'Early Entry' mean?

Councils are required to set the latest date by which children must have their fifth birthday in order to fall within the category of those who are considered to be old enough to attend school. Children born before or on this date are regarded as being 'of school age'. Children born after this date are not regarded as being old enough to attend school.

If I apply for my child to enter school early, how will Schools, Learning and Education staff decide on my application?

Schools, Learning and Education staff will consider whether:

- Your child's learning and development would be best met within an early years setting where the curriculum on offer is designed to meet the needs of young children.
- The particular primary school class to which the child would be admitted would be able to provide education suited to the abilities and aptitudes of your child.

In considering the best decision for an individual child, Schools, Learning and Education staff will consider key aspects of your child's learning and development. We will review your child's Starting Points Profile, observe your child in the nursery, consider the head of the establishment's report (Section B of the application form) and discuss your child's learning and development with nursery staff.

Key aspects of learning for consideration will include your child's:

- Approach and attitude to learning.
- Ability to communicate own feelings and express ideas confidently.
- Levels of independence and self-help.
- Emotional and personal development including self-confidence and esteem.
- Stage of development.
- Ability to take part in conversations and discussions within a range of groupings and situations.
- Progression within Curriculum for Excellence.

Decisions will also be made within the context that:

- Nurseries provide the challenge, enjoyment, depth and relevance, personalisation and choice important to young children’s development.
- Curriculum for Excellence is ideally suited to meeting the needs of young children, promoting emotional and social development, self-esteem and confidence.
- The starting point for learning is the child, and children need opportunities to develop their thinking through investigation, first-hand experience, talk and play, with other children and with adults. Nursery settings plan for and provide these opportunities.
- Activities and experiences within nursery settings are carefully differentiated to meet the needs of all learners. The skill of the nursery staff ensures that relevant learning opportunities exist for all children, regardless of age or stage of development.

What issues should I consider before deciding to apply for Early Entry?

Before making a decision, parents are asked to consider:

- Their child’s learning and development.
- Their child’s emotional and social development.
- Possible long-term implications for their child.

It is helpful to discuss these issues with staff at your child’s nursery.

A child’s maturity and ability to cope with change should be given careful consideration at any point of transition. Research shows that early entry to school may put undue pressure on a child and suggests that early introduction to schooling could “increase anxiety and have a negative impact on children’s self-esteem and motivation to learn”.

Transition to school is a major event in the lives of young children which needs to be carefully planned for and supported. Early entry to primary school can be counter-productive to this.

Parents are asked to consider the possible long-term implications, when at the end of secondary school their child may still be too young to leave school along with their peers, and when potential difficulties exist around entrance to their preferred form of higher education.

If I decide to apply, what should I do?

A parent wishing to proceed in applying for early entry must complete an Early Entry Request application form. The parent or legal guardian of the child should complete section A of the form. The head of the nursery completes section B and discusses the application with a member of school senior management team.

The Early Entry application form can be found on the Stirling Council [website](#).

Part C: School Enrolments



The information provided in this section gives advice to parents regarding admission and enrolments to primary and secondary schools in Stirling.

Catchment Areas

Each school serves an area which is known as the school catchment. Each address in the Stirling Council area is allocated a primary and secondary denominational and non-denominational school. Parents/carers can check the school catchment area for their address on the Stirling Council [website](#).

St Mary's Episcopal Primary School in Dunblane does not have a catchment area. Further information is available in the Provision of Denominational Education section of this policy. Most children attend their local catchment school, however, families may wish to request an alternative school by submitting a placing request. Please see Part E for more information on Placing Requests.

Proof of Residency

Children must be resident in Stirling and within the catchment area of the school at the time an enrolment form is completed. This applies to P1 enrolments for August start and all other pupils either moving to Stirling or to a new catchment area in Stirling during the academic session.

Parents or carers completing the enrolment form are required to provide proof of residency within the catchment area of the school they are applying to. The following document will be accepted as proof of pupil identification:

- Child's birth certificate

AND two of the following to prove residency:

- Current Council Tax bill.
- Child Benefit entitlement letter.
- Original notification letter from the Department for Work and Pensions confirming the right to benefits or state pension or original notification letter from HM Revenue and Customs confirming the award of Tax Credits for the current tax year.
- Tenancy agreement (if the residence is rented).
- Two household utility bills (no more than 3 months old).
- Bank/building society or credit card statement (no more than 3 months old and showing current address).

Pictures of paper documents or screenshots of online bills or statements will be accepted as long as the parent/carer name, address and date of issue are clearly visible.

Offers of tenancy or signed missives will not be accepted as proof of residency.

If enrolling directly to a Roman Catholic school in Stirling the child's Baptismal Certificate must also be provided when completing the enrolment form. Please see page 16 for more information.

Admission to Primary School for Primary 1 (August start)

As stated in the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, it is usual for children in Scotland to start primary school in the August term when they are aged between 4½ and 5 years old:

- Children who are 5 years old before the start of the school session in August must start school at the beginning of that August session.
- Children who are 5 years old between the start of the school session and the end of February of the next year may start their primary education at the start of the school session in August.

The main enrolment for Primary 1 is in January each year to allow time for school and local authority planning and effective transition. Schools will communicate enrolment information including associated early years establishments.

The Schools, Learning and Education Business Team distribute information to all nurseries and primary schools detailing the procedure to enrol a child for the session due to start the following August. They will also publicise school enrolment dates for each primary school on the Council website.

Children must be enrolled in the non-denominational or denominational school for the catchment area in which they live. Enrolment forms are available to complete electronically via the Council website parents/carers are able to upload documentary evidence of residency within the catchment directly to the online form. Please see page 14 for the list of documents required as proof of residency.

If the number of enrolments exceeds the space available in the school, places will be allocated in accordance with the date applications and supporting documentation were received. No other criteria is used to prioritise catchment pupil intake.

Once places have been allocated parents/carers will be advised of transition arrangements for their child by the school.

Deferring Entry to Primary School

Parents of children whose 5th birthday falls on or after the first day of the school term in August and up until the last day of February can choose to defer entry to primary school. Please see Part A page 3 for more information on Deferred Entry.

Admission to Secondary School for S1 (August start)

Enrolments for transfer from primary to secondary are organised annually by Schools, Learning and Education. This is based on the catchment area in which the pupil lives. Parents will receive a letter via their current primary school which will outline the arrangements.

If parents/carers wish for a child to attend a different secondary school than their catchment secondary school, a placing request form must be completed.

If a child is attending a primary school as a result of a successful placing request, a further placing request may be required to attend the secondary school associated with the primary school. This includes non-denominational children attending a Roman Catholic primary school who wish to attend St Modan's High School.

Admission to Secondary School (General Admissions)

Parents/carers wishing to enrol their child in a new school during the school session should contact schools directly to make arrangements.

The child must be resident within the catchment area to enrol in the school. Proof of residency is required and this is done through completing an enrolment form and providing documentary evidence of address. Please see page 20 for the list of documents required as proof of residency.

Placement of children in year groups is by date of birth. Circumstances including previous deferral or early entry may also be taken into account. Parents/carers have a right to request if their child can repeat a year at school or if their child can accelerate to the year above at school. The request for repeating a year or accelerating a year applies to those parents/carers of children under normal school age who are asking Schools, Learning and Education for a change to their child's current school stage.

Parents/carers considering making a request for their child to repeat a year or to accelerate a year must speak to the head of establishment their child currently attends and a Team around the Child meeting should take place to discuss the request further. Following a TAC meeting, the head of establishment would submit relevant paperwork to the Education Placement Panel for consideration. Further information can be found on the Stirling Council website.

If parents/carers wish their child to go to a different school to their catchment area school they must submit a placing request.

Placing Requests

If a family wishes for a pupil to be enrolled in a school other than their catchment school, they may make a placing request. Placing requests should be submitted online. Placing requests for pupils aged 16 or over should be completed by the pupil themselves.

Schools, Learning and Education will accommodate catchment area pupils and reserved places in school prior to considering the allocation of remaining spaces in line with the Council's criteria. There is no guarantee of a placing request being accepted.

Please see Part E for more information on Placing Requests.

Provision of Denominational Education

Within Stirling Council there are three Roman Catholic primary schools and one Roman Catholic secondary school. Children baptised Roman Catholic who reside within the Stirling Council area may enrol at any Roman Catholic primary school in Stirling. A copy of the child's baptismal certificate, or equivalent formal evidence of baptism, will be required as part of the enrolment process. Stirling Council will only provide transport for pupils to the Roman Catholic establishment closest to the child's residence.

Children not baptised Roman Catholic, or living outwith the Stirling Council area whose parents/carers wish them to attend Roman Catholic primary school in Stirling are required to submit a placing request.

Children baptised Roman Catholic who reside within the catchment area for St Modan's High School may enrol in St Modan's High School. A copy of their child's baptismal certificate, or equivalent formal evidence of baptism, will be required as part of the enrolment process. Baptised children attending a Roman Catholic Primary School within the catchment area moving from P7 to S1 will be enrolled automatically as part of the transition process. Placing requests are required for children who are not baptised Roman Catholic or living outwith the catchment area and wish to attend. This includes non-denominational pupils who attend a Roman Catholic primary school within the St Modan's High School catchment area.

St Mary's Episcopal Primary School in Dunblane is also a denominational school. It does not have a catchment area and placement is not prioritised on the basis of religious affiliation. Any parent/carer who wishes their child to attend St Mary's Episcopal Primary School is required to submit a placing request. Places are prioritised in line with criteria detailed in Part E.

As all pupils are required to submit a placing request to attend St Mary's Episcopal Primary School, there is no eligibility for home to school transport for children attending the school.

Provision of Gaelic Medium Education

Local authorities in Scotland have a duty to promote and support Gaelic education, under the Education (Scotland) Act 2016 – Section 15(6).

In Stirling, Gaelic Medium Primary Education is available at Riverside Primary School, where children are taught solely through the medium of Gaelic. Intake to Gaelic Medium Education is only at the beginning of Primary 1 unless transferring from Gaelic Medium provision in another authority. Children due to begin P1 resident within the Stirling Council area can enrol directly to Gaelic Medium education. Children from outwith the local authority are required to submit a placing request. Please see Part E for further information.

At the end of a child's Gaelic Medium primary education, Gaelic Medium provision is continued at Wallace High School where young people have the opportunity to study Gaelic as a subject, which can progress to a qualification in Gaelic in the Senior Phase. All other subjects are taught in English.

Should pupils wish to continue with Gaelic Medium in secondary school, pupils resident within Stirling Council will be given the option to transfer to Wallace High School, rather than the catchment school for their home address.

Pupils from outwith the local authority are required to submit a placing request. Please see Part E for further information.

Provision of Education in Specialist Additional Support Needs Provisions

Local authorities in Scotland have a duty to promote and support Gaelic education, under the Education (Scotland) Act 2016 – Section 15(6).

Specific Circumstances

Temporary Places

Under the Education Act (1980), the Council has primary responsibility for pupils belonging to its area. Children are entitled to attend a school in an area where they are ordinarily resident. This means the place where the child is habitually and normally resident, apart from temporary or occasional absences of long or short duration.

Children and young people who are involved with court proceedings and whose ordinary residence is therefore uncertain can be offered a temporary place until such times as a legal decision is made.

Parents requesting a temporary place for their child will require documentary evidence of their home address together with evidence of the length of time they have been resident at this address (although a place will not be refused purely on the basis that the parent has only recently moved to the area).

Documentary evidence of parental rights and responsibilities relating specifically to residence is also required.

International Students

Arrangements have been made with Stirling University so that international students who are not able to provide the evidence of residence normally required to enrol their children in school will be provided with a letter from their landlord (most family accommodation is on campus) and a copy of their registration documentation from the university bearing their term-time address.

Children from Outwith the EU

An enrolment form must be completed for all children living in Stirling who are entitled to be educated within a Stirling Council school.

In addition to standard documentation, children being enrolled from outwith the EU must have:

- Passports (of the child and their parents/the adults enrolling them).
- Relevant visas.

Queries

Any queries relating to enrolment should be directed to the Forward Planning Officer schooladmissions@stirling.gov.uk.

Part D: Admission to Stirling's Specialist Additional Support Needs ASN Provisions and School



The information provided in this section gives advice to parents/carers regarding admission to a specialist ASN provision or school.

Introduction

Stirling Council's inclusive approach to education ensures that most children and young people with identified additional support needs attend their local mainstream school or nursery setting and follow a curriculum that is adapted to suit their needs. Specialist additional support needs (ASN) provision is designed to meet the needs of a small number of children and young people with enduring severe and/or complex profiles of need, who require a specialised environment and curriculum in order to access their education.

Section 15 of the Standards in Scotland's Schools Etc. (Scotland) Act 2000 states that “an education authority, in carrying out its duty to provide school education to a child of school age, shall provide that education in a school other than a special school unless one of a number of circumstances arise:

- Would not be suited to the ability or aptitude of the child or young person.
- Would be incompatible with the provision of efficient education for the children with whom the child would be educated.
- Would result in unreasonable public expenditure being incurred, which would not normally be incurred.

If one of the circumstances mentioned above arises, the authority may provide education for the child in question in a school other than a special school; but they shall not do so without considering the views of the child and of the child's parents in that regard.

The presumption of mainstreaming provides the right to all children and young people with additional support needs to learn in mainstream schools and early learning and childcare settings along with their peers.

Staged Intervention Framework

Stirling Council adopts a staged intervention framework to support the assessment, identification and planning required for a child's or young person's needs. The framework has been informed by national legislation and guidance:

- The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 (as amended 2009)
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 (UNCRC)
- Getting it Right for Every Child approach
- Children and Young People Act 2014
- Standards in Scotland's Schools Etc. (Scotland) Act 2000
- Curriculum for Excellence
- Equality Act (2010)
- Presumption to provide education in a mainstream setting guidance (2019)

The staged intervention framework is adopted in all of Stirling's schools and nurseries and focuses on identifying a child's or young person's support needs, overcoming barriers to learning, and getting it right for every child through ongoing assessment and planning.

For most children and young people, their needs in a school or early learning and childcare setting will be met through universal support, provided through high quality teaching and learning.

Where it has been identified that a child or young person requires additional, targeted, or enhanced support, a Team around the Child (TAC) would be in place to ensure that the right people, teams, and services are part of the assessment and planning process. There are a range of supports that can be provided to support the inclusion of children in mainstream schools and nurseries and through the staged intervention process:

- Additional supports provided within a school or nursery such as group work, support for learning input, school counselling, family support.
- Targeted support provided by other services or teams within education such as educational psychology, a teacher for the visually impaired, Parent and Family Support team.
- Enhanced support provided by other services outwith education such as Children and Families social work, Health professionals.

It is through the robust assessment and planning process of staged intervention and the TAC, that some children and young people are identified as requiring a higher level of specialist support such as input from other services outwith education, or consideration of a specialist additional support needs provision.

The TAC does not make decisions about whether a child or young person should be allocated a Stirling Council specialist placement. Consideration and decisions related to a request for a specialist placement sits with the Education Placement Panel. Information from the TAC is vital in informing the Education Placement Panel of a child's or young person's profile of need.

A request for consideration of a specialist placement, is coordinated by a child's or young person's named person in school or lead professional in nurseries, on behalf of the TAC, and this is sent to the Council's Education Placement Panel for consideration.

Purpose of the Education Placement Panel

Stirling Council has 1 specialist standalone school and 9 specialist provisions; most of which are based within a mainstream school. Although a specialist provision might be based within mainstream school setting this does not mean that the provision is only for children or young people from that mainstream school. All of Stirling's specialist provisions and school are for children and young people who reside across the local authority area although the education service aims to place a child or young person in an appropriate provision closest to their home address.

The Education Placement Panel considers requests relating to specialist placements in the following circumstances:

- Children / young people currently in mainstream nurseries, primary or secondary school, where a TAC is seeking consideration of a specialist provision. This includes key transition stages from nursery to Primary 1, and Primary 7 to S1.
- Placement requests from other local authorities to place children in Stirling's specialist school / provisions.
- Parental placing requests for a Stirling specialist school/provision.
- Children or young people who have arrived in the local authority area and have come from a specialist provision in another local authority area, or who present with a severe, and / or complex profile of need.
- Children or young people currently in a Stirling specialist school/provision who may transition to a full-time mainstream placement.
- Planned transitions for children and young people already in a Stirling Council specialist provision/school.

Guiding Principles of decision-making regarding placement requests

The Education Placement Panel adheres to the following guiding principles when considering how best to meet learners' needs:

- **Inclusion:** All children and young people should be supported in their local early learning and childcare setting or school community wherever possible.
- **Least intrusive, most effective intervention:** Services will work together to achieve the least intrusive level of support, and the most effective intervention provided for children and families.
- **Continuum of Support:** Through Stirling Council's staged intervention framework, there is a clear range and continuum of support available for children and young people, from early intervention to specialist services, through universal, additional, targeted, or enhanced levels of support.
- **Comprehensive Assessment:** All decisions will be based upon a robust assessment of needs and risks, and a thorough consideration of available support and resources.
- **Transparency:** There will be transparency in all decision-making processes.
- **Equity:** All decisions will be based on the need to ensure equity and fairness in the allocation of resources for the most vulnerable children.
- **Best value:** Ensuring that services are provided within the context of quality and cost and are targeted effectively.

Members of the Education Placement Panel

The group is co-chaired by:

- Collaborative Improvement Officer
- Principal Educational Psychologist

The following professionals are members of the Panel and attendance will vary depending on the children and young people being discussed.:

- Headteacher and Collaborative Development Officer - ASL Inclusion Service
- Depute Principal Educational Psychologist
- Collaborative Improvement Officer (Schools team and/or Early Years team)
- Headteacher or Principal Teacher from each of the specialist provisions / school
- Headteacher or Depute Headteacher representatives
- Head of Nursery or Principal Early Childhood Educator (PECE) representative

The Co-chairs facilitate discussions, and the Education Placement Panel will reach a decision collectively, with final approval of decisions made by the Service Manager.

Frequency of Education Placement Panel Meetings

The Educational Placement Panel meets termly. Most requests are for children and young people who are transitioning from nursery to Primary 1 and from Primary 7 to S1, therefore there are specific meetings held annually to discuss children and young people at these key transition stages.

Primary 7 to S1 children are discussed in November of a child's Primary 7 year. It is expected in line with the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 (as amended 2009), that transition discussions will have started at least 12 months prior to transition by the child's TAC.

Nursery to Primary 1 children are discussed in December and it is expected, in line with the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 (as amended 2009), that transition discussions will have started at least 6 months prior to transition by the child's TAC.

Information Required for the Education Placement Panel

When a TAC makes a request for the needs of a child or young person to be considered by the Education Placement Panel, the TAC provides a range of assessment and planning information. This information is considered, in line with Section 15 of the Standards in Scotland's Schools Etc. (Scotland) Act 2000 around the presumption of providing an education in a mainstream school setting.

Assessment information would include the:

- Child's or young person's strengths,
- Child's or young person's profile of needs, including barriers to learning,
- Supports and strategies in place, and an evaluation of the impact of these supports and strategies,
- Views of the child/ young person and their family.

This information would be contained within the Council's staged intervention assessment and planning paperwork, which the TAC, including parents / carers, should have discussed and agreed within three months of a request being made to the Education Placement Panel.

The views of multi-agency TAC professionals related to a child's or young person's profile of needs should be contained within this assessment however it is the role of education professionals to advise the TAC members, in relation to their knowledge of Stirling's specialist school / provisions.

The named person in a school or lead professional in a nursery must ensure that the relevant paperwork is submitted prior to the deadline for the Education Placement Panel meeting. The deadline for paperwork for each meeting will be circulated annually to schools and nurseries for information.

Education Placement Panel – Decision Making and Communication

The assessment information will be used to inform a decision about the presumption of mainstream for each child or young person, in conjunction with the following:

- Education Placement Panel members' knowledge of each specialist provision / school,
- Current profiles of need within a specialist provision / school,
- Curriculum offered in a specialist provision / school,
- Capacity within each specialist provision / school,
- The reasonable adjustments made by a child's or young person's current school or early learning and childcare setting.

To reach a decision the Education Placement Panel will also consider:

- Whether a continuation of mainstream nursery or school is in the child's or young person's best interests. The Panel can advise on other supports or strategies in relation to the curriculum, environment and peer group, to help overcome barriers to learning.
- If a specialist provision / school within Stirling Council is in the child's best interests, and which environment, curriculum and peer group would help to overcome the barriers to a child's or young person's learning and progress.
- If a specialist provision / school is identified as being in the best interests for a child or young person, the location of a child's or young person's home in relation to a specialist provision / school, to minimise travel where possible.

The Education Placement Panel may conclude that further assessment or a period of implementing or reviewing interventions would be beneficial, and the Panel would advise a TAC that a child or young person can be reviewed at a future Panel meeting if required.

An outcome summarising the Panel's discussion and the decision will be sent to the named person in the school or the lead professional in nursery. A copy of the outcome will be sent to the Head Teacher and Principal Teacher of the specialist provision/school, and the Educational Psychologist where appropriate. It will be the responsibility of the named person or lead professional to inform TAC members of the Panel's decision and to plan the next steps.

A letter is sent to parents/carers informing them of the decision and of their rights of appeal, where appropriate.

If a placement is agreed, a planning meeting with the TAC should be scheduled to agree a transition plan for the child or young person, and to identify any additional resources required, for example, staff training, equipment, adaptations, travel arrangements.

If a placement is not agreed, recommendations on other supports such as input from the ASL Inclusion team, complex care funding, educational psychology input, may be recommended. These should be discussed further by the TAC.

Parental Choice

Every effort is made to ensure that parents/carers and professionals agree on what is best for a child or young person, based on a robust assessment of need by all those involved in the assessment and planning process. It is important that parents, carers, and children and young people have their views heard.

Robust assessments completed by professionals are crucial in the process of helping parents and carers to understand a child's or young person's support needs and barriers to learning, and of any recommendations made regarding strategies and supports.

On occasion the views within a TAC may differ and it is important to ensure all views are respected and considered as part of the planning process. During discussions TAC professionals, especially educational professionals, have a crucial role in supporting parents and carers understanding of the benefits and possible limitations of a specialist school/ provision for their child, to ensure there is a clear understanding of what can and cannot be provided.

Parents and carers may disagree with the views of professionals within their child's TAC, and they may wish to pursue a placement in a specialist school or provision, despite professionals' views. Every effort should be taken by the professionals involved to give parents and carers confidence in a TAC decision.

If no agreement can be reached between parents or carers and the rest of the TAC members, parents and carers can request access to mediation or dispute resolution, and further information can be provided by contacting educ-comments@stirling.gov.uk.

If a parent or carer is not in agreement with a decision by the Education Placement Panel, they can write to the Service Manager at educ-comments@stirling.gov.uk for a review of the decision.

Parents have the right to express a preference for a particular school that they want their child to attend. Placing requests for a specialist school placement must be done via Stirling Council and information is provided in the next section of this policy on the placing request process.

Information for parents and carers on getting help and resolving disputes can be accessed by contacting educ-comments@stirling.gov.uk. Information is also available on the Stirling Council [website](#), and from [Enquire](#).

Parental Visits to Stirling Council's Specialist School / Provisions

The Council acknowledges that where a specialist provision or school has been identified for a child or young person, that it is important for the child, young person, and parents / carers to visit the identified provision. This would be planned through discussion with the TAC and the identified provision to ensure that an appropriate time is identified.

Parents and carers may request to visit a specialist provision or school prior to a decision by the Education Placement Panel. Stirling Council acknowledges that on some occasions this may be appropriate and stresses the importance that for any parental/carer visits to a specialist setting, this must take the least intrusive approach to minimise disruption to pupils during the school day. In general, visits would typically take place at the end of a school day, when pupils are not in attendance.

Where there is a need for a parent/carer to visit a provision when pupils are present, this must be discussed with your child's named person or lead professional, who will contact the specialist provision. Visits must not be intrusive or disruptive for pupils, and where possible other means of providing information about one of the specialist provisions may be the best approach.

It is unlikely to be appropriate for parents/carers to visit several similar provisions across the local authority area.

Overview of Stirling Council's Specialist School/Provisions

Name	Description
<p>Castleview Primary school</p>	<p>Primary & *Nursery Age</p> <p>Severe and/or complex, long term additional support needs where learners require a highly specialist and modified learning environment. The needs of learners are primarily associated with significant health, physical and medical needs, as well as significant visual and sensory needs, and global learning difficulties.</p> <p>*The nursery provision is only applicable to a small number of children who present with severe health and medical needs. Almost all children with complex profiles of need are supported in early learning and childcare settings.</p>
<p>Etive House - based in St Modan's High school</p>	<p>Secondary age</p> <p>Complex, long term additional support needs. Needs of learners are primarily associated with autistic children and young people, who may have other associated neuro-developmental needs, and who present with significant learning difficulties or learning disability, that requires a highly specialised and modified learning environment.</p>
<p>Katrine House - based in McLaren High school</p>	<p>Secondary age</p> <p>Complex, long term additional support needs. Needs of learners are primarily associated with autistic children and young people, who may have other associated neuro-developmental needs, and who present with significant learning difficulties, or learning disability, that requires a highly specialised and modified learning environment.</p>

Name	Description
Bluebell House - based at Bannockburn High school	<p>Secondary age</p> <p>Complex, long term additional support needs. Needs of learners are primarily associated with autistic children and young people, who may have other associated neuro-developmental needs, and who present with significant learning difficulties, or learning disability, that requires a highly specialised and modified learning environment.</p>
Ochil House - based in Wallace High school	<p>Secondary age</p> <p>Severe and complex, long term additional support needs where learners require a highly specialist and modified learning environment. The needs of learners are primarily associated with significant health, physical and medical needs, as well as significant visual and sensory needs, and global learning difficulties.</p>
Chartershall	<p>Secondary age</p> <p>Complex, long term additional support needs. Needs of learners are primarily associated with social, emotional and behavioural needs, where learners require highly specialised and modified learning environment and curriculum.</p>
Millhall - based in Fallin Primary school	<p>Primary age</p> <p>Complex, long term additional support needs. Needs of learners are primarily associated with social, emotional and behavioural needs, where learners require highly specialised and modified learning environment and curriculum.</p>
Bruce House - based in Bannockburn Primary school	<p>Primary age</p> <p>Complex, long term additional support needs. Needs of learners are primarily associated with autistic children and young people, who may have other associated neuro-developmental needs, and who present with significant learning difficulties, or learning disability, that requires a highly specialised and modified learning environment.</p>

Name	Description
<p>Trossachs House - based in Callander Primary school</p>	<p>Primary age</p> <p>Complex, long term additional support needs. Needs of learners are primarily associated with autistic children and young people, who may have other associated neuro-developmental needs, and who present with significant learning difficulties, or learning disability, that requires a highly specialised and modified learning environment.</p>
<p>Riverside - based in Riverside Primary school</p>	<p>Primary age</p> <p>Complex, long term additional support needs. Needs of learners are primarily associated with autistic children and young people, who may have other associated neuro-developmental needs, and who present with significant learning difficulties, or learning disability, that requires a highly specialised and modified learning environment.</p>

Part E: Placing Requests



The information provided in this section gives advice to parents/carers who are considering a placing request application for their child to attend a school other than their catchment school.

Introduction

Where a parent/carer wishes their child to attend a school other than their catchment school they may make a placing request.

Schools, Learning and Education will accommodate catchment area pupils and reserved places in schools prior to considering the allocation of remaining spaces in line with the Council's criteria.

Due to places in some schools being in high demand from pupils living within the catchment area, parents/carers making a placing request should be aware that Schools, Learning and Education cannot guarantee a placing request will be accepted.

Making a Placing Request

Placing request applications should be submitted online via the Stirling Council [website](#). Placing requests for pupils aged 16 or over should be completed by the pupil themselves using the [Over 16 Placing Request Form](#).

Only one placing request per child will be considered at any one time.

Placing requests made from outwith Scotland will only be considered if suitable proof of imminent residency within Scotland and outwith the school catchment area is provided. Pupils entering P1 and S1 are required to enrol at their catchment school whilst the decision on their placing request is pending. Pupils entering P1 or S1 may be invited to participate in informal school transition experiences in advance of the placing request decisions being made. Transition programmes are organised by schools and nurseries and attending these experience visits will not influence the outcome of a placing request application. Any formal transition visit takes place after placing request decisions have been issued to families and schools.

If the placing request is granted, the child's enrolment at their catchment school will automatically be withdrawn by Schools, Learning and Education.

Any parent/carer who wishes to withdraw their placing request after the request had been granted in favour of their catchment school would be required to submit an enrolment form to this school.

Parents/carers should be aware that Schools, Learning and Education does not provide support with travelling to and from school for children who choose to attend a school as a placing request.

Where a child is already attending school, if that child moves to a new address outwith the catchment area, parents/carers are required to submit a placing request for continued attendance at that school. If the child was eligible for support with school travel from their previous address, support with travel will no longer be provided once they are resident outwith the catchment area. Pupils cannot continue to use any Stirling Council awarded school travel unless they have been approved for a Privilege Pass. More information can be found in the [School Travel Policy](#).

Placing Request Process

Parents/carers of children who are not resident within the catchment area of the school they wish their child to attend are required to submit a placing request.

Placing requests fall broadly into 3 categories.

1. Children of school age starting in P1 or S1 whose application is received prior to, or on 15 March

Primary 1 (August start)

- Children due to start P1 in August must be enrolled at the catchment primary school even if parents/carers intend to make a placing request.
- Parents/carers of children currently attending a nursery class in a primary school which is not the child's catchment school who wish their child to attend that school require to submit a placing request. Acceptance of the placing requests is not guaranteed.
- A placing request can only be made when a child is capable of accepting a place. As such parents/carers can only make a placing request in the academic session prior to the session they wish their child to be considered for admission to.

- Requests for P1 (August start) should be made before or on 15 March and will be considered and ranked on the Council criteria.
- All requests received prior to or on 15 March will receive a response by 30 April.

Secondary (August start)

- Parents/carers who reside outwith the catchment area for their chosen secondary school must submit a placing request even if their child currently attends an associated primary school. Acceptance of the placing request is not guaranteed.
- A placing request can only be made when a child is capable of accepting a place. As such parents/carers can only make a placing request in the academic session prior to the session they wish their child to be considered for admission to.
- Requests for S1 (August start) should be made before or on 15 March and will be considered and ranked on the Council criteria.
- All requests received prior to or on 15 March will receive a response by 30 April.

2. Children of school age starting in P1 or S1 whose application is received after 15 March

- Requests received after 15 March will be dealt with on a case by case basis and responded to within 8 weeks of the application being received.

3. Children of school age who move school during the school year.

- For applications requesting to transfer to a different school during the school year, Schools, Learning and Education will normally advise parents/carers regarding the outcome of their placing request application within 8 weeks. This allows all schools involved in the application to exchange information and respond to any points raised in the placing request. Sufficient time should be allowed when submitting a placing request, especially prior to school holiday periods. Requests submitted during, or near, school holiday periods reduces our ability to put transition arrangements in place.

How Placing Request Decisions are Made

After accommodating catchment area pupils and reserved spaces, Schools, Learning and Education will allocate any remaining spaces in line with the Council's criteria.

Category 1 Placing Requests

Category 1 placing requests are split into 2 groups:

- Group A: Pupils resident within the Stirling Council Area; or pupils resident outwith the Stirling Council area with a sibling attending the same establishment for the session the application is being made.
- Group B: All other pupils resident outwith the Stirling Council Area.
- All applications within Group A are considered prior to looking at Group B.
- Children from within the Stirling Council area will receive priority over all applications from outwith the Stirling Council Area.

The following criteria are then used in order to prioritise each group of applications:

1. Medical/ASN grounds relating to the child making the application, such that the chosen school is the only school that could provide for the child. These must be supported by documentary evidence from the family doctor and a local health practitioner. The Service Manager with responsibility for ASN will assess all applications seeking to receive recognition under this category.
2. An older brother or sister will be attending the same establishment for the session the application is being made.
3. The child is from a family that has exceptional family circumstances or is from a lone parent family. You may be asked to support this by suitable documentation.
4. Please note that Schools, Learning and Education cannot accept childcare, transport to or from school or parental work arrangements under this category.
5. Under this category the individual circumstances of each application will be considered and a judgement reached by Officers of Schools, Learning and Education.
6. Where it is not possible to accommodate all requests and 2 or more applications have equal criteria the final allocation will be by the distance from the child's ordinary residence to the requested school, the nearest getting priority. Distance is measured by the shortest available route which would be used to travel between the home address and the requested school, and not the shortest distance geographically.

Category 2 & 3 Placing Requests

Placing Requests for P1 and S1 children which are received after 15 March and placing requests for children who are moving school during the school session are considered on an individual basis and the above priorities may not therefore apply. A decision will be given in writing within 8 weeks from the date the application was received.

A placing request will not generally be processed during resolution of an exclusion procedure.

Why Requests are Sometimes not Granted

Schools, Learning and Education may refuse a placing request on several grounds.

Where:

- The school is already full and it would cost too much to extend the accommodation.
- Granting a placing request at the early stage of primary education would require the creation of an additional class in the future.
- Granting a placing request at the early stages of primary education would involve employing extra staff in the future.
- Granting a placing request would involve employing extra staff.
- Granting the placing request would have the consequence that the capacity of the school would be exceeded in terms of pupil numbers.
- Such a move would seriously disrupt the child's education.
- It is likely that the move would harm discipline or adversely affect the education of other children at the school.
- Granting a placing request for a child who is resident outwith the catchment area would prevent Schools, Learning and Education from reserving place/s at the specified school.
- Please note the above list of grounds is not exhaustive.
- Reserved places are places held for children moving into the catchment area during the academic year. These are assessed on an annual basis by Schools, Learning and Education and approved by committee.

Specifically for placing requests to Special Schools, Independent or Grant-Aided schools:

- Where the education in the school you want would not be suited to the ability or aptitude of your child.
- If your child does not have the additional support needs requiring the education or specialist facilities normally provided at that school.
- Schools, Learning and Education are able to make provision for the additional support needs of your child in another school.
- It is unreasonable in respect of suitability and cost to place your child in the specified school where provision can be made in another school.
- The specified school is not a public school.
- The authority have offered a place to your child in another school.
- The above is intended purely as a guide to reasons for refusal. Further information can be found at enquire.org.uk. Enquire is the Scottish advice service for additional support for learning.

Denominational Educational Provision

Within Stirling Council there are three Roman Catholic primary schools, Our Lady's Primary School, St Margaret's Primary School and St Mary's Primary School. There is one Roman Catholic secondary school, St Modan's High School.

Please see Part C for information on who can enrol in Roman Catholic schools in Stirling without submitting a placing request application.

A placing request application is required to attend Roman Catholic schools in Stirling under the following circumstances:

- A child who is not baptised and wishes to attend a Roman Catholic primary school in Stirling.
- A child who is not baptised and wishes to attend St Modan's High School. For the avoidance of doubt this includes any pupil who is not baptised and attends a Roman Catholic primary school within the St Modan's High School catchment area.
- A primary school pupil who is baptised and wishes to attend a Roman Catholic primary school in Stirling but resides outwith the Stirling Council area.
- A secondary school pupil who is baptised but resides outwith the catchment area for St Modan's High School.

As with all placing request applications there is no guarantee that this will be accepted, and pupils will not be eligible for support with travel to and from school.

St Mary's Episcopal Primary School is also a denominational school. It does not have a catchment area and placement is not prioritised on the basis of religious affiliation. Any parent/carer who wishes their child to attend St Mary's Episcopal Primary School is required to submit a placing request. Places are prioritised in line with criteria detailed in this policy.

Parents of children starting P1 who are submitting a placing request for any denominational school in Stirling should also enrol their child at their catchment school.

Gaelic Medium Education

Local authorities in Scotland have a duty to promote and support Gaelic education, under the Education (Scotland) Act 2016 – Section 15(6). In Stirling, Gaelic Medium Primary Education is available at Riverside Primary School, where children are taught solely through the medium of Gaelic. Gaelic Medium provision is continued at Wallace High School where young people have the opportunity to study Gaelic as a subject, which can progress to a qualification in Gaelic in the Senior Phase. All other subjects are taught in English.

Intake to Gaelic Medium Education is only at the beginning of Primary 1 unless transferring from Gaelic Medium provision in another authority. Parents interested in accessing Gaelic Medium provision should contact the school for further information. Transport to Gaelic Medium Education schools is allocated in accordance with Stirling Council School Travel Policy, which is in line with statutory guidance.

Parents/carers of children living outwith Stirling Council area who wish to access Gaelic Medium Primary Education at Riverside Primary School are required to submit a placing request. If this placing request is successful and, at the end of the child's primary education, they wish for their child to continue studying Gaelic at Wallace High School, they are required to submit a further placing request. As with all Placing Requests there is no guarantee that this will be accepted, and parents are responsible for making arrangements for travel to school for their child.

Additional Support for Learning

Most children and young people with additional support needs attend their local school or nursery and follow a curriculum that is adapted to their needs, in line with national guidance on the presumption to provide education in a mainstream setting. In Stirling this is done through our Staged Intervention process (please see our leaflet “A Guide to Staged Intervention” for more information).

Additional support may be provided by a support for learning teacher, support for learning assistants or other education staff such as outreach teachers, educational psychologists and inclusion support workers.

It is important that parents/carers of children with additional support needs discuss making any placing request with the Head of their child’s current establishment and that they provide as much information as possible on the placing request form to ensure that their child receives similar support if the placing request is successful. It should be noted that there is no guarantee that a placing request will be successful and as such for children entering P1, transition planning should continue with the catchment school and, where appropriate, be raised at staged intervention meetings. Where a placing request has not been previously discussed at a staged intervention meeting, Schools, Learning and Education will arrange one prior to a decision being reached.

Placing Requests to Specialist Additional Support Needs Provisions

In most cases, requests to specialist ASN provisions to support a child or young person’s needs is done through the staged intervention process by the team around the child. Places are allocated by the Education Placement Panel.

For parents/carers outwith this process, who wish their child to attend Castleview School or one of the specialist settings (Ochil House, Chartershall, Millhall; or the autism provisions at St Modan’s, Bannockburn and McLaren High Schools; and Bannockburn, Callander or Riverside Primary Schools) can do so by completing a placing request application.

On receipt of the placing request, further information will be sought from the professionals who are working with the child or young person, and parental views will be sought and recorded.

The Education Placement Panel provides a recommendation to the ASN Service Manager, Schools, Learning and Education, who makes the final decision related to placing requests for Stirling Council specialist school settings.

Placing Requests for Independent/Grant Aided Schools

In order to consider a placing request for an independent school not managed by Stirling Council, parents/carers must provide written confirmation that the school they wish to apply for has offered their child a place. A copy of this offer should be sent along with the completed placing request form.

Stirling Council staff will then ensure that an assessment process is carried out in conjunction with parents/carers and the team around the child. All information will then be presented to the Resource Allocation Group (RAG) for consideration. All decisions on day placements to independent or Grant Aided schools must be agreed by the Chief Education Officer, Schools, Learning and Education. Decisions on residential placements will be agreed jointly by the Chief Education Officer, Schools, Learning and Education and the Chief Social Work Officer, Children and Families.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

The UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 protects the rights of every child in Scotland from birth to 18 years old as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), from health and education to participation and protection.

Article 12 of the UNCRC ensures that a child has the right to be listened to and for their views to be taken seriously in all matters that affect them. This means Stirling Council has a duty to ensure that children have the opportunity to share their views about decisions that affect their life. School placing requests impact on the daily life of a child and as such, the child's consent and views are requested within the placing request application.

Support is available from Stirling Council's Children's Rights Officer should this be required.

Refusal of Placing Requests

If a placing request is refused we will detail the grounds for refusal in writing by 30 April or within 8 weeks, dependant on the nature of the application. Parents/carers can request a meeting with an officer of Schools, Learning and Education to answer any queries they may have.

What happens after a Placing Request is refused

If a placing request is refused the application is not held on a waiting list. Several choices are available at this stage.

It is possible to:

- Confirm attendance at your catchment school
- Submit a placing request for another school
- Submit another placing request for the same school

Throughout the school year, particularly between April and August, as families finalise their arrangements, places can sometimes become available in schools. Parents/carers may choose to submit a new placing request for the same school in the hope that such a place becomes available.

There is no guarantee that this will happen. Even if parents/carers choose to submit another placing request for the same school the child will not be able to participate in induction or transition arrangements until the request has been approved. It is strongly recommended that children participate in induction and transition arrangements for their catchment school while any subsequent placing request is being considered.

Lodge an appeal against the refusal of a placing request to mainstream schools

For refused placing requests to mainstream schools, an appeal can be lodged against Schools, Learning and Education. This is heard by an independent panel who decide if the decision is justified and if Schools, Learning and Education has followed correct procedure. Further information on the appeals process is available from the Head of Governance. An appeal must be lodged within 28 days of a refusal letter being issued.

Please note:

- Only one appeal can be lodged per year.
- It is not possible to process any other placing requests until an appeal is concluded.

Lodging an appeal against the refusal of a placing request to special schools or provisions

Parents/carers who have made a placing request to a special school or provision and have their request refused have the right to make a reference to the First Tier Tribunal for Scotland. This should be done instead of lodging an appeal to the Council Appeals Panel. Parents/carers also have the right to access free and impartial advocacy, mediation and dispute resolution services to help with the appeal.

Further information is available on the Stirling Council website.

Information on individual schools can be provided by contacting the appropriate headteacher. For more information please see our leaflet "Getting Help and Resolving Disagreements".

The Scottish Government publishes a useful booklet called: Choosing a School – A Guide for Parents.

Enquiries

All enquiries regarding placing requests should be made to:

Relating to mainstream placements:

Forward Planning Officer
schooladmissions@stirling.gov.uk
Tel: 01786 233220

Relating to specialist placements:

ASN Officer
schooladmissions@stirling.gov.uk
Tel: 01786 233212

Review of Education Admissions Policy

	Date	Lead Officers(s)
Produced	August 2025	Zoe Tetstall, Forward Planning Officer
Review	August 2028	

Stirling Council:

Phone: 01786 404040

Email: info@stirling.gov.uk

Web: www.stirling.gov.uk

Formats

If you need help or this information supplied in an alternative format please call 01786 404040.

