

**Schools, Learning and Education
Review of Placing Request Policy
Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010
Proposal – October 2021**

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This proposal paper is being published in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.
- 1.2 The proposals outlined in this Proposal Document seek to amend the current Placing Request Policy.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 details the rights and duties of parents and functions of education authorities in relation to placing requests.
- 2.2 Local authorities are required to have arrangements in place to manage the process for placing requests.
- 2.3 The Placing Request Policy (available at [placingrequestpolicy.pdf \(stirling.gov.uk\)](https://www.stirling.gov.uk/placingrequestpolicy.pdf)) provides information to schools and service users on admission to a school other than the pupil's catchment school. The Placing Request Policy covers both primary and secondary schools.
- 2.4 Requests for P1/S1 (August start) made before 15th March are considered and ranked on the criteria detailed in the Placing Request Policy. All requests received prior to 15th March must receive a response by 30th April.
- 2.5 Only children resident in Scotland have a right to access education in Scotland. The Placing Request Policy is considered in conjunction with the Admissions Policy to ensure that a child subject of a Placing Request has, or will have, a right to access education in Scotland.
- 2.6 If a placing request is refused the application is not held on a waiting list and parents/carers have the following options:
- confirm attendance at their catchment school
 - submit a placing request for another school or submit another placing request for the same school
 - Lodge an appeal against the refusal of a placing request.
- 2.7 When a placing request is granted, the child's enrolment at their catchment school is not withdrawn until the child takes up their place at the specified school.

3. Reasons for Formulating the Proposal

- 3.1 To ensure that the criteria used to rank Placing Requests is in compliance with Section 23 of The Education (Scotland) Act 1980) which states:
- Where an education authority's arrangements for the placing of children in schools under their management give any priority to siblings of pupils attending such schools, those arrangements shall not discriminate between siblings belonging to the area of that education authority and siblings belonging to the area of another education authority.*
- 3.2 To consult on the extension of the medical grounds criteria to include exceptional ASN requirements, such that the chosen school is the only school that could provide for the child.

- 3.3 To provide clarity regarding placing requests received on 15th March annually. The current Placing Request Policy outlines the treatment of Placing Request applications received for P1 and S1 'prior'/'before' and 'after 15th March' but does not specify the treatment of applications received on 15th March.
- 3.4 To provide clarity regarding Placing Requests submitted from outwith Scotland.
- 3.5 To introduce a waiting list system if placing requests are refused.
- 3.6 To alleviate operational difficulties in terms of managing pupil numbers where Placing Requests are withdrawn by parents/carers once the request has been granted.

4. Details of Proposed Changes

- 4.1 To amend two aspects of the criteria used to assess placing requests as follows:

	Current	Proposed
1.	<p>Placing requests are split into 2 groups:</p> <p>Group A Pupils resident within the Stirling Council Area.</p> <p>Group B Pupils resident outwith the Stirling Council Area.</p>	<p>Placing requests are split into 2 groups:</p> <p>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</p> <p>Group B All other pupils resident outwith the Stirling Council Area.</p>
2.	<p>Medical 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.</p>	<p>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.</p>

- 4.2 To clarify that Placing Request applications received on 15th March would be given a response by 30th April.
- 4.3 To clarify that placing requests made from outwith Scotland will only be considered if suitable proof of imminent residency in Scotland and outwith the school catchment area is provided.
- 4.4 To introduce a waiting list system where it is not possible to approve all placing requests, with placing requests on the waiting list ranked as detailed in the amended Placing Request Policy.
- 4.5 To automatically withdraw allocated spaces at catchment schools for Stirling Council pupils where placing requests to other Stirling Council schools are granted. Any parent/carer who wished to withdraw their Placing Request after the request had been granted would be required to submit a catchment enrolment application.

5. Educational Benefits Statement

5.1 This Educational Benefits Statement considers the educational benefits should the proposal be implemented.

5.2 It is not anticipated that the proposals would have an impact on the delivery of learning and teaching or the learning environment.

5.3 Current and Future Pupils

There will be no impact on current pupils.

The proposed changes would impact on future pupils in the following ways:

- Greater clarity on the process for reviewing and allocating Placing Requests.
- Ensuring that the treatment of siblings from outwith the Stirling Council area is in compliance with Section 23 of The Education (Scotland) Act 1980.
- Taking account of exceptional ASN requirements, such that the chosen school is the only school that could provide for the child.
- Allowing pupils to be placed on a waiting list where demand for spaces exceeds availability.
- Requiring future pupils living within the Authority to complete a new catchment enrolment application to apply to their catchment school if a placing request to a Stirling Council school is withdrawn after it has been granted.

If the proposed changes were implemented, there may be children/young people whose relative position changes when placing requests are considered. This will principally be due to alterations in the pupils considered within Group A to comply with Section 23 of The Education (Scotland) Act 1980.

5.4 Parents and Carers

The proposed changes would allow parents to make informed decisions about their child's education and will ensure placing requests are considered in a fair and transparent manner, complying with Section 23 of The Education (Scotland) Act 1980).

A clearer process for dealing with placing requests where demand for places exceeds the availability of places at any particular school would be implemented.

5.5 Current Users of Facilities/Local Community

There would be no impact on current users or the local community.

5.6 Staff and School Management Arrangements

The proposal would alleviate operational difficulties in terms of managing pupil numbers where Placing Requests are withdrawn by parents/carers once the request has been granted.

5.7 Other Pupils in the Council Area

The proposal would provide greater clarity on the process for reviewing and allocating Placing Requests.

a) Other Implications

There would be no financial impact or impact on transport arrangements.

It is believed that the overall advantages of amending the Placing Request Policy as detailed above will outweigh any potential disadvantages.

6. Date of Change

If the proposal is agreed the revised Placing Request Policy will be implemented from August 2022.

7. Consultation Process

The consultation process will be carried out in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 and a summary is shown below:

Process	Indicative Date
Consultation document issued to: a) the Parent Council or Combined Parent Council of any affected school, b) the parents of the pupils at any affected school, c) the parents of any children expected by the education authority to attend any affected school within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper, d) the pupils at any affected school (in so far as the education authority considers them to be of a suitable age and maturity), e) the staff (teaching and other) at any affected school, f) any trade union which appears to the education authority to be representative of the persons mentioned in subparagraph (e), g) the community council (if any), h) the community planning partnership (within the meaning of section 4(5) of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015) for the area of the local authority in which any affected school is situated, ha) any other community planning partnership that the education authority considers relevant i) any other education authority that the education authority considers relevant.	18 October 2021
Consultation begins through the Engage platform.	18 October 2021
Promotion advising the public of the consultation and date of the public meeting.	w/c 18 October 2021
Virtual public consultation meeting to be held.	10 November 2021
Public consultation ends (6 weeks after public consultation meeting, excluding school holidays).	22 December 2021
Report to Education Scotland on outcome of consultation.	January 2022
Response from Education Scotland on outcome of consultation.	February 2022
Consultation response report submitted to the relevant Committee or full Council as appropriate with final recommendations for consideration.	June 2022

8. Responding to the Proposal

[Engage Stirling](#) is the council's consultation and engagement platform. We now host all of our consultations and engagement projects in one place to make it easy for everyone to access all of our live projects and e-petitions. This also ensures that we can provide easy to access updates so everyone can see how their views influence policy and practice within the council.

Engage Stirling is open to everyone over the age of thirteen. They can access Engage from any device and create an account by following the on screen prompts. Users are only asked to sign up once and when this is done, they can access all of our live projects and e-petitions hosted on the site.

The consultation period will run from 18th October – 22nd December 2021.

A virtual public consultation meeting will take place on Wednesday 10 November 2021. Details on how to access this meeting are given on Engage Stirling.

To submit a response using an alternative method please contact educationenquiries@stirling.gov.uk or call 01786 233185.

9. Data Protection

The information you provide in the survey will be treated as confidential and in adherence with the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018. To find out more about your data protection rights and how we will use your data please see this [Privacy Notice](#).