

## **Education response to other comments received through the online survey in relation to the proposal**

**Capacity – concern that schools are over subscribed in the main and need to be replaced, particular schools are no longer fit for purpose.**

Response: All schools currently can accept catchment pupils and in line with our policy catchment places can be reserved within schools. There is only a small number of schools which cannot accommodate placing requests, and schools in this position can change year on year. There has been considerable investment in new build schools and programmed work to ensure all schools are fit for purpose.

**Childcare – more consideration to child care arrangements (for example grandparents picking up children) where family does not use catchment school.**

Response: Childcare is not considered a determining factor within the criteria.

**Proof of residence – ensuring address given is accurate, address should be considered in any ballot to ensure children from catchment areas are not losing out on places.**

Response: A proposed change is that the Admissions and Placing Request Policy clearly outlines the proof of residency required, and also outlines that information can be checked to ensure accuracy. Most children do attend their catchment school and ballots are generally held in relation to placing requests for pupils outwith the catchment school and the agreed set criteria of priorities is used to determine places. Only when this has been exhausted would a ballot be used.

**Data Protection - view that current system is fine, or would be fine as long as it complies with GDPR.**

Response: Compliance with GDPR will be taken into consideration for any policy change.

**Denominational schools - should be able to accommodate all pupils regardless of religion.**

Response: Parents can request either the denominational or non denominational catchment school, and within West Dunbartonshire Council denominational schools are open to pupils of all denominations, all faiths and none. Placing requests are accommodated whenever this is possible and the criteria would only be used in the event that there were more pupils than places available within the denominational school as a means to determine priority for places.

**Parents should have the opportunity to put their individual cases forward in person where a school is oversubscribed.**

Response: Where a decision is made that a placing request cannot be accommodated the decision is confirmed in writing and the parent is also notified of their right of appeal. The parent is invited to attend the appeal hearing and can put forward their case as to why they do not agree with the decision.

**Parents should attend ballot and communication at this time is vital.**

Response: A ballot would only be undertaken in the event that after the application of the set criteria there were still more places requested than spaces available. The proposal outlines a clearer process and arrangements for the ballot would be notified in advance.

**Opposed to parents attending ballot and concern not in the spirit of GIRFEC.**

Response: A ballot would only be undertaken in the event that after the application of the set criteria there were still more places requested than spaces available, and there would be no requirement for parents to attend.

**Where a child has been attending the school previous to this consultation and is outwith the catchment area they should be not be considered for the ballot.**

Response: The proposed changes to the policy will take effect after the August academic session in 2021/2022 and is for future applications.

**Pupils outwith WDC area - not in agreement with children outwith the local authority being considered for school in other areas.**

Response: Parents have a legal right to request that their child attends a school outwith their catchment area, and the authority is required to consider this. Children outwith the local authority will always be considered after those resident within the area.

**Early Learning Childcare - parent not notified of a ballot being held within early years or invited to attend.**

Response: Separate guidance exists for early years admissions and is outwith the scope of this consultation exercise.