

Agenda



Educational Services Committee

Date: Wednesday, 22 September 2021

Time: 14:00

Format: Zoom Video Conference

Contact: Scott Kelly, Committee Officer
Email: scott.kelly@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

Dear Member

Please attend a meeting of the **Educational Services Committee** as detailed above. The business is shown on the attached agenda.

The Convener has directed that the powers contained in Section 43 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 will be used and so Members will attend the meeting remotely.

Note:-

Members of the Committee are requested to note that in accordance with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, as amended in 2014, the report relating to Item 7, 'Response on the Proposal to Consult on Changes to the Admissions and Placing Request Policy for Mainstream Schools' has been issued three weeks in advance of the meeting. The remainder of the reports for this meeting will be issued by Thursday, 9 September 2021, in accordance with the normal timescale for issuing reports, as governed by the Council's Standing Orders.

Yours faithfully

JOYCE WHITE

Chief Executive

Distribution:

Councillor Karen Conaghan (Chair)
Councillor Jim Brown
Councillor Ian Dickson (Vice Chair)
Councillor Diane Docherty
Councillor Jim Finn
Provost William Hendrie
Councillor Daniel Lennie
Councillor David McBride
Councillor Jonathan McColl
Councillor Iain McLaren
Councillor John Millar

Councillor John Mooney
Councillor Sally Page
Councillor Martin Rooney
Mrs Barbara Barnes
Mr Gavin Corrigan
Miss Ellen McBride
Ms Hannah Redford
Miss Sheila Rennie
Ms Julia Strang
Vacancy

All other Councillors for information

Chief Education Officer

Date of Issue: 1 September 2021

Audio Streaming

Please note: the sound from this meeting may be recorded for live and subsequent audio streaming via the Council's internet site. At the start of the meeting, the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being audio streamed.

Audio recordings of the meeting (including the attendance or contribution of any party participating or making a contribution) will be published on the Council's website and the Council's host's webcast/audio stream platform.

You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the General Data Protection Regulation. Data collected during this audio stream will be retained in accordance with the Council's [Privacy Notice](#)* and Retention Schedules including, but not limited to, for the purpose of keeping historical records and making those records available via the Council's internet site.

If you have any queries regarding this and, in particular, if you believe that use and/or storage of any particular information would cause, or be likely to cause, substantial damage or distress to any individual, please contact Peter Hissett, Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration on 01389 - 737800.

*<http://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/privacy/privacy-notice/>

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 22 SEPTEMBER 2021

AGENDA

1 STATEMENT BY CHAIR – AUDIO STREAMING

The Chair will be heard in connection with the above.

2 APOLOGIES

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are invited to declare if they have an interest in any of the items of business on this agenda and the reasons for such declarations.

4 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING 7 – 11

Submit, for approval as a correct record, the Minutes of Meeting of the Educational Services Committee held on 9 June 2021.

5 LOCAL NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE FOR TEACHERS To Follow

Submit for information, and where necessary ratification, the Minutes of Meeting of the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers held on 22 June 2021.

6 OPEN FORUM

The Committee is asked to note that no open forum questions have to date been submitted by members of the public.

7 RESPONSE ON THE PROPOSAL TO CONSULT ON CHANGES TO THE ADMISSIONS AND PLACING REQUEST POLICY FOR MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS 13 – 44

Submit report by the Chief Education Officer informing of the outcome and findings of the statutory consultation exercise undertaken in respect of the formal consultation on the proposed changes to West Dunbartonshire's Admissions and Placing Requests Policy.

8 PROPOSAL PAPER AND LAUNCH OF STATUTORY CONSULTATION FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW CAMPUS IN FAIFLEY To Follow

Submit report by the Chief Education Officer seeking approval for the launch of the statutory consultation document by the Chief Education Officer under the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 on the proposal to construct co-located replacements for St Joseph's Primary School, St Joseph's Rainbow Base and Edinbarnet Primary School, together with a new ELCC to replace Auchnacraig and Lennox ELCCs, and also provide a Community Library and Community space within a new campus to be located on the site of the current St Joseph's Primary School.

9 SCHOOL TRANSPORT CONTRACTS – SESSION 2021/22 To Follow

Submit report by the Chief Education Officer:-

- (a) detailing home-to-school transport contract information for school session 2021/2022 and beyond; and
- (b) explaining procedures put in place for school transport contracts in liaison with Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) for mainstream school transport and the Corporate Procurement Unit for Additional Support Needs (ASN) school transport from school session 2021/2022.

10 STRATEGY TO RAISE ATTAINMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT IN WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE To Follow

Submit report by the Chief Education Officer providing an update on activity and progress with regard to implementing West Dunbartonshire's Strategy to Raise Attainment and Achievement.

11 SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY (SQA) ATTAINMENT UPDATE

Officers will provide a verbal update in relation to the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) Attainment Update.

12 EARLY YEARS IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE To Follow

Submit report by the Chief Education Officer providing an update of the plan for expansion of Early Learning and Childcare in West Dunbartonshire Council.

13 LITERACY AND NUMERACY – BENCHMARKING To Follow

Submit report by the Chief Education Officer advising on the performance of literacy and numeracy in West Dunbartonshire at Early Years, P1, P4, P7 in 2021.

14 SUMMER HOLIDAY 2021 PROGRAMME EVALUATION To Follow

Submit report by the Chief Education Officer providing an update on plans to reduce holiday hunger across West Dunbartonshire Council during summer 2021 and providing information about the additional Scottish Government funding allocations.

15 HOLIDAY HUNGER PAYMENTS To Follow

Submit report by the Chief Education Officer providing an update on Free School Meal payments and seeking approval for administering Holiday Hunger payments based on entitlement as a result of low income.

16 2020/21 EDUCATION, LEARNING & ATTAINMENT DELIVERY PLAN YEAR-END PROGRESS To Follow

Submit report by the Chief Education Officer providing the final position against the 2020/21 Delivery Plan.

17 EDUCATIONAL SERVICES BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT TO 31 JULY 2021 (PERIOD 4) To Follow

Submit report by the Chief Officer – Resources providing an update on the financial performance of Education Services to 31 July 2020 (Period 4).

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of the Educational Services Committee held by video conference on Wednesday, 9 June 2021 at 10.05 a.m.

Present: Provost William Hendrie and Councillors Jim Brown, Karen Conaghan, Ian Dickson, Diane Docherty, Jim Finn, Daniel Lennie, David McBride, Jonathan McColl*, John Mooney, Sally Page and Martin Rooney, and Mrs Barbara Barnes, Mr Gavin Corrigan, Ms Hannah Redford, Miss Sheila Rennie and Ms Julia Strang.

*Arrived later in the meeting.

Attending: Laura Mason, Chief Education Officer; Andrew Brown, Senior Education Officer – Policy, Performance & Resources; Claire Cusick, Senior Education Officer – Pupil Support; Julie McGrogan, Senior Education Officer – Raising Attainment/Improving Learning; Kathy Morrison, Senior Education Officer – Education, Learning & Attainment; Craig Jardine, Corporate Asset Manager; Sharon Jump, Capital Project Manager; Michelle Lynn, Assets Co-ordinator; Joe Reilly, Business Unit Finance Partner (Education); Alan Douglas, Legal Manager; and Scott Kelly, Committee Officer.

Also Attending: Councillors Iain McLaren and Lawrence O'Neill (both in attendance for the item 'Learning Estate Improvement Plan' only).

Apologies: Apologies for absences were intimated on behalf of Councillor John Millar and Miss Ellen McBride.

Councillor Karen Conaghan in the Chair

STATEMENT BY CHAIR – AUDIO STREAMING

Councillor Conaghan, Chair, advised that the meeting was being audio streamed and broadcast live to the internet and would be available for playback.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mrs Barnes declared a non-financial interest in the item 'Strategy to Raise Attainment and Achievement in West Dunbartonshire', being a member of the board of the Leamy Foundation.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of Meeting of the Educational Services Committee held on 10 March 2021 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

LOCAL NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE FOR TEACHERS

The Minutes of Meeting of the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers held on 23 March 2021 were submitted and all decisions contained therein were approved.

OPEN FORUM

The Committee noted that no open forum questions had been submitted by members of the public.

Note: Councillors Brown and McColl entered the meeting at this point.

LEARNING ESTATE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer:-

- (a) informing of the outcome of the site options appraisal identifying a site to accommodate the proposed Faifley Campus; and
- (b) seeking approval to proceed to the next stage of the project.

After discussion and having heard the Chief Education Officer and relevant officers in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the outcome of the Site Options Appraisal as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report which identified a campus facility located on the St Joseph's Primary site incorporating:-

- Edinbarnet P.S.;
 - St Joseph's P.S.;
 - Education Resource Centre (currently at Edinbarnet);
 - ELCC Provision (Auchnacraig/Lennox);
 - ASN Facility (currently at St Joseph's);
 - Community Library; and
 - Community space.
- (2) to note the affordability of the proposed site as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report, 'Financial Summary', and paragraph 7.7 of the report;
- (3) that the St Joseph's Primary site be taken forward as the potential campus provision and to authorise the Chief Education Officer to progress with preparation for the Statutory Consultation process to be launched at a future meeting of the Educational Services Committee;
- (4) to note that the Learning Estate Board on 30 March 2021 agreed to progress with adopting hub West Scotland as the preferred route to market;
- (5) to authorise the Chief Education Officer to develop the design and thereafter tender the same through the hub West Scotland procurement route with a report being brought to a future meeting of the Tendering Committee to allow the contract to be placed following the conclusion of both the Statutory Consultation process and the Council obtaining a suitable offer of grant funding from the Scottish Government; and
- (6) to instruct officers to work closely with all relevant service areas to maximise the benefits to the Faifley community which will be realised by the new campus with especial regard to roads and lighting to promote safer routes to school.

Note: Councillors McLaren and O'Neill left the meeting at this point.

STRATEGY TO RAISE ATTAINMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT IN WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer providing an update on activity and progress with regard to implementing West Dunbartonshire's Strategy to Raise Attainment and Achievement.

After discussion and having heard the Senior Education Officer – Raising Attainment/Improving Learning, the Senior Education Officer – Policy, Performance & Resources, and the Chief Education Officer in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the progress made in the past three months with the Strategy to Raise Attainment and Achievement in West Dunbartonshire.

Note: Ms Redford left the meeting during consideration of this item.

EARLY YEARS IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer providing an update of the plan for the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare in West Dunbartonshire Council.

After discussion and having heard the Senior Education Officer – Education, Learning & Attainment in further explanation of the report, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the progress that had been made in delivering the statutory entitlement of 1140 hours early learning and childcare; and
- (2) to note the contents of Appendix 1 to the report, 'Early Learning and Childcare Expansion Delivery Analysis'.

SCHOOL LEAVER DESTINATIONS 2019/2020

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer providing an update on our partnership approach to improving the number of our young people leaving school and entering a positive destination.

After discussion and having heard the Senior Education Officer – Policy, Performance & Resources in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the analysis and action plan recommended for improvement.

PUPIL EQUITY FUND UPDATE

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer informing of practices to narrow the poverty related attainment gap resourced from the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) and providing an update on how we have ensured adherence to policy and revised guidance in light of COVID-19.

After discussion and having heard the Senior Education Officer – Pupil Support in further explanation and in answer to a Member's questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note West Dunbartonshire Council's practices in relation to PEF; and
- (2) to note West Dunbartonshire Council's governance of PEF.

EDUCATION DELIVERY PLAN 2021/22 (AUGUST 2021 TO JULY 2022)

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer presenting the Education Delivery Plan 2021/22.

Having heard the Senior Education Officer – Policy, Performance & Resources in further explanation of the report, the Committee agreed to note the Delivery Plan for 2021/222.

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL'S INTEGRATED CHILDREN'S SERVICES DELIVERY PLAN 2021-23

A report was submitted by the Chief Education Officer providing an update on the Integrated Children's Services Plan 2021-2023. It was noted that an additional appendix to the report, containing an Equality Impact Screening and Assessment Form, had been issued to Members in advance of the meeting.

Having heard the Senior Education Officer – Pupil Support in further explanation of the report, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the Integrated Children's Services Plan 2021-2023; and
- (2) to note the Strategic Priorities (Appendix1 Integrated Children's Services Plan 2021-23).

The meeting closed at 12.35 p.m.

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**Report by Chief Education Officer****Education Services Committee – 22 September 2021**

Subject: Response on the Proposal to Consult on Changes to the Admissions and Placing Requests Policy for mainstream schools

1. Purpose

- 1.1** The purpose of the report is to inform the Education Services Committee of the outcome and findings of the statutory consultation exercise undertaken in respect of the formal consultation on the proposed changes to West Dunbartonshire's Admissions and Placing Requests Policy.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) Notes the findings from the statutory consultation exercise,
- (ii) Approves the implementation of the proposal to make a limited variation to the Admissions and Placing Requests Policy for mainstream schools within West Dunbartonshire Council from school session 2022/2023.

3. Background

- 3.1** At the meeting on 11 March 2020, Education Committee agreed to commence formal consultation on a proposal to: vary the placing request criteria in respect of handling placing requests for primary and secondary schools; provide clarity on the documents to demonstrate proof of residency, and to clarify the ballot process.
- 3.2** The consultation has been undertaken in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 and copies of the proposal document were made available to all stakeholders as prescribed by the Act. The consultation ran from 16 March 2020 until 13 May 2020, however due to Covid-19 and restrictions on public gatherings the consultation period was extended until 31 March 2021.
- 3.3** The details of the proposed changes were fully explained in the proposal document that was previously issued to Education Committee on 11 March 2020, and was available to all stakeholders from the Council's website or by request.
- 3.4** Responses to comments received from the consultation were published as part of the consultation report which was available from our website

from Monday 14 June 2021 until Sunday 4 July 2021 allowing a full 3 week review of the document. No further comments were received on the consultation report.

4. Main Issues

- 4.1** Over the last 5 years, there has been change in the patterns of population density in relation to school catchment areas, which presents a challenge to the service in relation to effectively managing resources and in a small number of schools there have been occasions when not all placing requests could be accommodated. The placing requests criteria have not been reviewed for a number of years, and whilst they work well in most cases, in recent years informal feedback from parents suggested that not all the criteria were perceived to be fair and / or clearly understood by all. The consultation exercise provided an opportunity for stakeholders to provide feedback on the proposed changes and help formulate the policy in order to make the process clearer and more transparent.
- 4.2** The majority of schools are not oversubscribed and most pupils attend their designated catchment school. The proposed limited variations would not result in any more or any fewer placing requests being granted. In the majority of cases, the only consequence of this change would be the pupil's position on the criteria ranking. In varying the current Admissions and Placing Requests Policy it is important to note that the proposed changes will not affect the majority of mainstream schools and will not affect most of our 12,317 school pupils. In schools where the intake is oversubscribed, places would continue to be granted in accordance with the agreed capacity and agreed criteria.
- 4.3** The current criteria and proposed revised criteria contained within the Proposal Paper are detailed in Appendix 1. The placing request criteria are applied in the rank order shown. If, for any category, the number of requests exceeds the number of places available the next succeeding criteria will be used to prioritise those requests, and so on, until all priority criteria have been exhausted. If, after this process, two or more requests cannot be distinguished as having priority, then a ballot will be held to allocate the places available. The current ballot process is undertaken by a Senior Education Officer and members of the staffing team and parents are subsequently notified of the outcome. Informal feedback from parents in previous years indicated parents were not aware of the ballot until it had taken place and had concerns in relation to this. The proposed change would ensure that parents are notified in advance of the ballot and invited to attend whilst the ballot is being undertaken.
- 4.4** One of the main changes is the proposed inclusion of criteria for denominational schools. This proposal will ensure clarity on the prioritisation of placing requests to denominational schools. Where there are more placing requests received than places available, the new criteria would enable pupils with a baptismal certificate to be given appropriate priority. This criteria would only be applied in the event of there being more

placing requests than places available. Where there are sufficient spaces available this would not impact on pupils who do not have a baptismal certificate.

- 4.5** The proposed revisions to the current policy took into consideration concerns raised previously by parents / carers in relation to residency and the Proposal Paper made reference to further information about proof of residency documentation being required and possible checks that the Council may use to confirm the information provided.

Statutory Consultation Process

- 4.6** The statutory consultation process was undertaken and the Proposal Paper which set out the proposal on which the Council was consulting was published on our website and stakeholders were invited to participate in the consultation exercise. An electronic link to the Proposal Paper was issued by email to the consultees listed within the document and was also published on the Council's website and social media accounts.
- 4.7** The consultation ran from 16 March 2020 until 13 May 2020, however due to Covid-19 and restrictions on public gatherings the consultation period was extended until 31 March 2021 to enable public meetings to be held. Four public consultation meetings were set up, and due to the Covid-19 pandemic and restrictions on public gatherings these meetings were held virtually. No members of the public attended the 2 virtual public consultation meetings held on 3 March 2021. The virtual public consultation meeting held on 16 March 2021 at 2.00 p.m. was attended by 1 member of the public, and no members of the public attended the virtual public consultation meeting held on the evening of 16 March 2021.
- 4.8** At the public meeting the proposal was broadly accepted and the main points raised related to oversubscribed schools, review of class numbers, and how the Council was ensuring everyone could participate in the consultation exercise. The points were addressed at the meeting and noted in the Minute from the meeting which was published as part of the Consultation Report.

Responses to the Consultation

- 4.9** 175 respondents registered with the online survey. 171 respondents (98.84%) identified as resident within West Dunbartonshire, 2 respondents (1.16%) identified as not being resident within West Dunbartonshire and 2 respondents did not answer the question.
- 4.10** From the 175 respondents, 143 (86.67%) identified as parents or carers, 5 (3.03%) identified as child/young person, 28 identified as Council staff member, 1 (0.61%) identified as Trade Union representative, 3 (1.82%) identified as 'other', and 10 skipped the question. It was also noted that 15 respondent identified themselves within 2 categories.
- 4.11** Table 1 below provides a summary of the number responses in relation to the proposed revised criteria and rank order.

Table 1

Do you agree with the proposed revised criteria and rank order?	Yes	No	Did not answer	Agreed	Disagreed
1. Children residing within West Dunbartonshire area.	99	7	69	93.40%	6.60%
2. In relation only to denominational schools, those children/young people who have been baptised in the RC church and whose parents/carers have the same religious beliefs as the school.	68	39	68	63.55%	36.45%
3. Children with relevant medical conditions who require facilities or support available only in the requested school. All applications under this category should be supported by documentary evidence provided by your family doctor and community paediatrician.	102	6	67	94.44%	5.56%
4. Children who have siblings already in the school and who will continue to attend the school for the session the application is being made. The number of siblings at the school will be taken into consideration.	100	7	68	93.46%	6.54%
5. Children from single-parent families where, for example, proximity of school to the parent's place of work/study would be advantageous for the care and well-being of the child.	81	26	68	75.70%	24.30%
6. Travel distance from home to school by a suitable walking route. Those living closest in the school ranking highest.	88	19	68	82.24%	17.76%
7. Suitability of particular teaching methods to the child's needs or the availability of subjects which he/she was previously studying.	82	24	69	77.36%	22.64%
8. Children from outwith West Dunbartonshire (priority in order of categories 2-7)	71	36	68	66.36%	33.64%

4.12 Table 2 shows the responses to the question asking whether respondents agreed with the proposal to revise the ballot process and arrangements.

Table 2

Do you agree with the proposal to revise the ballot process and for parents to be notified in advance of arrangements for a ballot, and to be invited to be present when the ballot is being carried out?	Yes	No	Did not answer	Agreed	Disagreed
Respondents	89	15	71	85.58%	14.42%

Comments – Online Survey

4.13 65% of respondents to the online survey indicated that they would not want their comments made public in relation to the respondent and therefore comments received were collated into themes and responses were contained within the Consultation Report.

4.14 26 comments were received in relation to the proposed changes to the criteria / rank order and these comments have been grouped broadly as follows. The Education responses to comments are detailed in Appendix 2.

- Children should attend their catchment school unless there was a reason they could not go to that school
- Against the use of the denominational criteria
- Did not agree with the method of calculating distance to school and travel methods
- Children with additional support needs should attend the most suitable school
- Siblings should be given a higher priority, or guaranteed a place
- Unclear on how to change rankings or what was being asked in relation to one of the questions
- Comments relating to ELCCs: in relation to priority being given to children who attend the ELCC in the school; and clarification on whether the criteria for siblings means that priority would be given for an ELCC if there were siblings in the attached school)
- Concern that individuals may find it difficult to understand and complete the survey
- Clarification on what happen when a family moves outwith the catchment area
- Specific question relating to individual circumstances and ballot process for places at ELCCs.
- Wrap around care.

4.15 13 respondents provided additional comments on the proposal, and these comments were varied and have been grouped below, and the Education response to the comments is detailed within Appendix 3.

- Schools are oversubscribed and need to be replaced
- Consideration be given to childcare
- Ensuring accuracy of address
- Compliance with GDPR
- Not in agreement with denominational criteria being used Parents should be able to put forward their case in person
- Agreed that parents should attend ballot
- Not in agreement that parents should attend ballot
- Children outwith catchment area not considered in ballot
- Non resident children being considered for schools
- Early years ballot process

Oral or Written Comments

4.16 In addition, 2 submissions were received by email outwith the online survey and Appendix 4 provides details on the comments and the Education response.

Education Scotland Report

4.17 The full report from Education Scotland (Appendix 5) was published on their website and also published as part of the Consultation Report. Education Scotland was, overall, supportive of the proposal. Education

Scotland raised issues that the Council should consider if the proposal is taken forward and these were addressed within the Consultation Report and are detailed in Appendix 6. HM Inspectors believe West Dunbartonshire Council's proposal is of educational benefit, and will offer clear criteria on the process of allocation school places.

Consultation Report

- 4.18** The Council is required to prepare and publish its final Consultation Report when the consultation exercise has been concluded. In preparing the report, the Council must consider the report from Education Scotland and other responses to the consultation. The consultation report must explain how the Council has reviewed the proposal, a summary of the points raised during the consultation and the Council's response to them. The Consultation Report was published for a 3 week period from Monday 14 June 2021 until Sunday 4 July 2021 allowing a full 3 week review of the document. No further comments on the proposal were received.

Proposed Changes to current criteria

- 4.19** Having reviewed all the comments in detail, the notes from the public meeting and the report from Education Scotland, Education Services are proposing the following criteria for granting requests (in rank order of priority). Full guidance will be developed on each of the criteria to support parents should these criteria be agreed.

1. Children residing within West Dunbartonshire
2. In relation only to denominational schools, those children/young people who have been baptised in the Roman Catholic (RC) Church. All applications seeking to receive recognition under this category should be supported by documentary evidence (for example a baptismal certificate from the Roman Catholic Church or a supporting letter).
3. Children who have a medical condition which requires the provision of facilities or support provided only within the school requested. All applications under this category should be supported by documentation evidencing the reasons for the request from a medical practitioner such as the family doctor or the community paediatrician. There is a separate process for placements for pupil with additional support needs and information on this process is available from our website.
4. Children who have siblings at the school during the next academic year. The number of siblings at the school will be taken into consideration and multiple siblings will be given higher consideration.
5. Children from single-parent families where, for example, proximity of school to the parent's place of work or study would be advantageous for the care and well-being of the child.

6. Travel distance from home to school by a suitable walking route. Those living closest to the school ranking highest.
7. Suitability of particular teaching methods specific to the needs of the child, or the availability of subjects which the child was previously studying.
8. Children/young people from outside West Dunbartonshire (priority in order of categories 2-7) will be considered only after those resident within West Dunbartonshire have been considered.

The criteria will be applied in the order shown above. If, for any category, the number of requests exceeds the number of places available the next succeeding criteria will be used to prioritise those requests, and so on, until all priority criteria have been exhausted. If, after this process, two or more requests cannot be distinguished as having priority, then a ballot will be held to allocate the places available and parents will be made aware of the arrangements for the ballot.

Proposed Changes to Proof of Residency

- 4.20** There were no objections to the proposal to clarify the documentation required to provide proof of residency when pupils move into the catchment area, and Education is of the view that clarity would be beneficial and therefore proposes to revise the wording within the current policy as follows:

“If you move house during term time you can register your child at their new catchment school at any time. Contact the school direct for information on registration. You need to provide proof that you now live in the area, as places cannot be allocated until we have proof that the child is resident within the property. You must provide the child’s birth certificate and at least 2 proofs of residence which must include:

- council tax notice for the property, or proof that you have registered for council tax at that property, and
- mortgage statement for address or solicitor’s letter confirming missives have been concluded, or a rent book for rented property, or a tenancy agreement.

You must provide original documents and not copies and supporting evidence will be checked for accuracy.”

Proposed Clarification of Ballot Process

- 4.21** A significant number of respondents agreed with the proposed change to the ballot process which would enable parents to be notified of the ballot and invited to attend, and it is proposed to amend the current policy to reflect the revised process.

Date of Implementation

- 4.22** The above criteria will take effect for entry to school in August 2022.

5. People Implications

- 5.1** There will be no implications for any teaching or support staff in any schools as a result of the limited variation to the Admissions and Placing Requests policy.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications

- 6.1** There are no financial or procurement implications associated with this report.

7. Risk Analysis

- 7.1** There are no risks in adopting the recommendations contained in this paper and HM Inspectors believe the proposal is of educational benefit.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 8.1** The policy complies with the requirement that all children have the right to education. Where applications exceed the number of school places, authorities have to use a fair process to make practical, objective decisions and ensure that applications are considered on their merits before a final decision is made. There is potentially some differential impact in terms of religion in some very limited potential sets of circumstances that might arise, but this is in pursuit of a legitimate aim, is proportionate and is within the law. The Equalities Impact Assessment identified positive impacts in terms of disability and for women - Appendix 7.

9. Consultation

- 9.1** Consultation on the proposed changes was undertaken in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

10. Strategic Assessment

- 10.1** The proposed changes to the policy were fully consulted upon and support the Council's strategic priorities of meaningful community engagement and open, accountable and accessible local government.

Laura Mason
Chief Education Officer
23 August 2021

Person to Contact:	Linda McAlister, Education Support Officer, Linda.mcalister@west-dunbarton.gov.uk Contact Number – 07436 129 590
Appendices:	Appendix 1 – Proposed Changes in Proposal Paper Appendix 2 – Education Response to Survey Comments on Criteria and Rank Order Appendix 3 - Education Response to Other Survey Comments on the Proposal Appendix 4 – Education Response to Written or Emailed Comments Appendix 5 – Education Scotland Report Published June 2021 Appendix 6 – Education Response to Education Scotland Report Appendix 7 - Equalities Impact Assessment No.390
Background Papers:	Report and Proposal Paper submitted to Education Committee on 11 March 2020 Consultation Response Report published June 2021 here
Wards Affected:	All council Wards

Proposed Changes in Proposal Paper

Current Criteria and Proposed Changes in rank order of priority

Current Criteria	No.	Proposed Criteria	Comment
Children who are resident within West Dunbartonshire	1	Children residing within the West Dunbartonshire	<i>There is no change to this criteria and priority will always be given to children residing within the West Dunbartonshire area, and they are assessed on the detailed criteria.</i>
	2	In relation only to denominational schools, those children/young people who have been baptised in the Roman Catholic (RC) Church and whose parents/carers have the same religious beliefs as the school	<i>This is a new criteria and supports families who can evidence their commitment to the denominational school. It does not exclude parents from making a placing request to the denominational school it just means priority will be given where the same religious beliefs as the school can be demonstrated.</i>
Cases which include medical grounds supported by the family doctor and by the Community Paediatrician	3	Children with relevant medical conditions who require facilities or support available only in the requested school. All applications under this category should be supported by documentary evidence provided by your/family doctor and the community paediatrician.	<i>The criteria has been expanded to clarify to parents that the medical condition relates to the child and that they need to demonstrate that the support required can only be provided at the placement school.</i>
Children who have older siblings in the school.	4	Children who have siblings already in the school and who will continue to attend the school for the session the application is being made. The number of siblings at the school will be taken into consideration.	<i>This criteria is already in place and supports families with more than one child/young person already in the school. The criteria has been expanded and multiple siblings will be given higher consideration.</i>

Single parent families, where, for example, proximity of school to the parent's place of work would be advantageous for the care and well-being of the child	5	Children from single-parent families where, for example, proximity of school to the parent's place of work/study would be advantageous for the care and well-being of the child.	<i>The criteria is already in place, however it has been widened to include situations where the single parent is studying rather than just their place of work.</i>
Distance between home and school; and	6	Travel distance from home to school by a suitable walking route. Those living closest to the school ranking highest	<i>This criteria caused confusion with some parents who believed this meant priority was given to those furthest from the school and the criteria has been reworded to provide clarity.</i>
The suitability of particular teaching methods to the child's needs or the availability of subjects which he/she was previously studying.	7	Suitability of particular teaching methods to the child's needs or the availability of subjects which he/she was previously studying.	<i>This criteria remains unchanged.</i>
	8	Children/young people from outside West Dunbartonshire (priority in order of categories 2-7)	<i>Only after children/young people resident within West Dunbartonshire are considered would we consider children outside the area.</i>

Current process and proposed change to Ballot Process

Current Process	Proposed Process	Comment
If all the requests which may be granted or refused in terms of the priorities for admission have been dealt with and there remains an excess of placing requests over places to be filled, the Executive Director will arrange to have the available places determined by lot.	The criteria will be applied in the order shown above. If, for any category, the number of requests exceeds the number of places available the next succeeding criteria will be used to prioritise those requests until all priority criteria have been exhausted. If, after this process, there are still more placing requests than places available a ballot will be held to allocate the places available. The ballot will be organised by the Senior Education Officer, with parents being notified of the arrangements for the ballot, and invited to attend.	<i>Process would be changed to ensure parents were aware in advance that there were more requests than places available and that a ballot would be undertaken.</i>

Current process and proposed change to providing documentation when moving house during term time into catchment area

Current Documentation	Proposed Documentation	Comment
You will need your child's original birth certificate, and council tax notice as proof of residency.	<p>If you move house during term time you can register your child at their new catchment school at any time. Contact the school direct for information on enrolment. You need to provide proof that you now live in the area, and places will not be allocated until the child is resident within the property and we ask that you provide the child's birth certificate and at least 2 proofs of residence which must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • council tax notice for the property, or proof that you have registered for council tax at that property, and • mortgage statement for address or solicitor's letter confirming missives have been concluded, or a rent book for rented property, or a tenancy agreement. <p>You must provide original documents and not copies and supporting evidence will be checked for accuracy.</p>	<i>The proposed change is to provide clarity on the documents required to demonstrate proof of residency, legal guardianship and a statement to clarify that a check will be undertaken.</i>

Education response to comments received through the online survey in relation to criteria and rank order

Catchment school – comments supporting view pupils should go to their catchment school unless there is a specific reason not to.

Response: Most pupils do attend their catchment school, however the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 (as amended) gives parents the right to request a place at a school other than their local catchment areas school and education authorities have a duty to meet such requests if there is a space at the requested school. All West Dunbartonshire schools should be able to meet the needs of children, and where there are other factors, for example health & safety, or disability pupils will always be at a school that meets their specific needs.

Religious Belief – comments which indicated not agreeing that religious beliefs should be used as a criteria for placing requests and concerns that it is unfair and discriminatory.

Response: There is a requirement under the Education (Scotland) Act 1918 for the Council to provide education provision for both denominational and non denominational education. 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.

Travel Distance - non-drivers should be taken into consideration, distance to nearest school should be by an actual route, and distance not just be walking route but any method of sustainable green transportation e.g. train or safe bicycle route, and children not in catchment area but on safe green sustainable travel route by given priority. Did not agree with the proposal that pupils nearest to schools are given priority especially in respect of secondary provision where schools can already be a distance away from home addresses.

Response: The method of calculating home to school distance is calculated on the safest walking route in line with our school transport policy. The Council supports and encourages sustainable school travel such as walking; cycling and bus strategies, and pupils' resident within West Dunbartonshire are given priority for catchment schools/placing requests before considering non-resident pupils. This criteria is ranked low down the priority list and only used after others have been considered. The online survey indicated that 82.24% of those who responded agreed with the criteria and rank order.

Children with additional needs, who need support, should be able to be considered for the best school advised by consultants and by the parents, regardless of catchment area and in these circumstances /should get a place at the most equipped school before anyone else outwith West Dunbartonshire.

Response: It is recognised that some children or young people may need extra

support, long or short term for a variety of reasons to help them make the most of their school education and to feel included in their learning. A decision is made on which children have additional support needs by using the Stepped Approach as outlined in Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) and ensuring the child is in the most appropriate establishment.

Siblings - Children applying to the same school as a sibling should be given automatic acceptance even if they are outwith the catchment area. The priority for siblings should be changed and families who live closest to the school and who have siblings/cousins attending the school should always get priority. The priority for siblings should be ranked higher.

Response: Catchment children will always be given priority prior to considering placing request as this is the local school for those children. Placing requests are accommodated whenever possible and selection criteria is only applied where there are insufficient places available in the school, and whilst every effort is made to grant all placing requests, this cannot be guaranteed. Cousins are not regarded as siblings for the purpose of this policy. The sibling criteria is ranked 4th, and 93.46% of respondents agreed with the proposed wording and rank order for siblings.

Comment that the respondent was unclear as how to put the criteria in rank order and another unclear what was being asked at Q10.

Response: The consultation provided respondents with the opportunity to agree with the proposed ranking or to indicate the order of ranking that they would have preferred. Children from outwith West Dunbartonshire area are considered after children resident within the area. Question 10 asked whether respondents agreed with this and whether they also agreed that the same order of selection criteria be applied to non-resident children. Information relating to the consultation provided email address and telephone contact number for queries.

Early Learning Childcare Centres -View that priority be given to children who attend an ELCC in the same setting as primary school before it goes to children outwith West Dunbartonshire as would be beneficial for transition to primary school, and clarity on whether the sibling policy means that priority nursery placements will be given to children who have siblings in the attached school.

Response: West Dunbartonshire Council early learning and childcare settings are organised into 6 geographical communities, based on area and address. Parents are encouraged to apply to the settings within their community which offers the model they would like to choose for their child's early learning and childcare. Nursery settings do not have catchment areas and parents can apply to any nursery in their community whereas admissions to schools are different and are based on catchment areas based on home address. The proposed changes are in relation to primary and secondary mainstream schools and do not cover early learning and childcare which is covered by separate guidance.

Completing the questionnaire - view that many parents in West Dunbartonshire may find it difficult to understand and fill out the questionnaire, and alienates many parents and therefore their opinion.

Response: There were a variety of methods available to encourage inclusive

participation in the consultation exercise including: completing an online survey, providing a written submission which could be by letter or email, there was also the opportunity to attend one of our public consultation meeting, and provision to contact us through the designated telephone number to speak to an education representative.

Moving outwith WDC – what happens if a child attending a school moves outwith WDC area and what support would be provided.

Response: Where a family changes residence to a location outwith the catchment area of the school in which the child is registered and wish their child to continue to attend their current school a request can be made to remain at the school. Such requests will normally be granted provided the parent agrees to comply with the policy on transport arrangements and costs. Schools have processes in place to support pupils moving into the school and deal with any issues that arise.

Early Learning Childcare registration – concerns in relation to the process for allocating places to children in early learning childcare centres and the ballot process that had been followed.

Separate guidance is available in relation to places at ELCCs and proposal relates to mainstream primary and secondary schools only.

Wrap around care needs significant investment and better provision.

This proposal relates to admissions and placing request criteria and wrap around care is outwith the scope of the proposal.

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.

Education response to written or emailed comments received outwith the online survey is detailed below.

Boundary Lines - clarification was sought on whether, as a result of this consultation, the boundary lines for catchments schools be reconsidered.

Response: This proposal does not include any plans to amend school catchment areas as part of this consultation. The proposal sets out how the Council will prioritise placing requests going forward.

The existing arrangements make no distinction between admission priorities for non-denominational and denominational schools support the new criteria for admission to denominational schools.

Response: The views supporting this new criteria are noted. This criteria would be used in the event that there are more requests than places available within a denominational school in which case baptised Roman Catholic pupils are awarded the highest priority.

Arrangements for pupils from St Joseph's Primary School in Helensburgh, Argyll and Bute Council, who are zoned to Our Lady and St Patrick's High School in Dumbarton and that this should be included in the criteria.

Response: This matter is outwith the scope of the consultation exercise in relation to proposed changes to the schools Admissions and Placing Request policy. There are plans for Education Officers to undertake further discussion with the Archdiocese and the relevant neighbouring local authorities in relation to any arrangements for pupils who reside outwith the boundary of West Dunbartonshire to attend our schools.

Baptismal Certificate - the presentation of a copy of a baptismal certificate of the child who is to be enrolled into a denominational school should be included in your new policy.

Response: There is a requirement under the Education (Scotland) Act 1918 for the Council to provide education provision for both denominational and non denominational education. Parents can request either the denominational or non denominational catchment school, in which case non denominational pupils within the catchment area would not have a baptismal certificate. Evidence of a baptismal certificate would be required in the event that there were more pupils than places available in which case the selection criteria as evidence of the baptismal certificate would provide higher priority to denominational pupils.

Wording of denominational criteria – view that there should be a full stop after RC Church, or, add after it ‘and the family has chosen Catholic education’. The reason for this is that in rare cases it may be that the baptised child lives with mum, but dad is the Catholic. Or the Catholic parent has died, and the surviving parent is not Catholic, but the pupil is. If it remains as it is, and 2 pupils are looking for a placing request someone could argue that the Catholic child does not meet the second part of that policy statement where it states, “and whose parents/carers have the same religious belief as the school”

Response: The wording for this criteria has been considered in view of comments received and will be reviewed.

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by West Dunbartonshire Council to review the placing request criteria for mainstream schools (primary and secondary).

May 2021

1. Introduction

1.1 This report from Education Scotland has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HM Inspectors) in accordance with the terms of the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#) ("the 2010 Act"). The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of West Dunbartonshire Council's proposal to review the placing request criteria for mainstream schools (primary and secondary). Section 2 of the report sets out brief details of the consultation process. Section 3 of the report sets out HM Inspectors' consideration of the educational aspects of the proposal, including significant views expressed by consultees. Section 4 summarises HM Inspectors' overall view of the proposal. Upon receipt of this report, the Act requires the council to consider it and then prepare its final consultation report. The council's final consultation report should include this report and must contain an explanation of how, in finalising the proposal, it has reviewed the initial proposal, including a summary of points raised during the consultation process and the council's response to them. The council has to publish its final consultation report three weeks before it takes its final decision.

1.2 HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for children and young people of the schools; any other users; and children likely to become pupils within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper;
- any other likely effects of the proposal;
- how the council intends to minimise or avoid any adverse effects that may arise from the proposal; and
- the educational benefits the council believes will result from implementation of the proposal, and the council's reasons for coming to these beliefs.

1.3 In preparing this report, HM Inspectors undertook the following activities:

- attendance at the virtual public meeting held on 16 March 2021 in connection with the council's proposals;
- consideration of all relevant documentation provided by the council in relation to the proposal, specifically the educational benefits statement and related consultation documents, written and oral submissions from parents and others; and
- virtual visits to Bonhill Primary, Clydebank High School, Gavinburn Primary, Our Lady and St Patrick Secondary, St Mary's Duntocher Primary, St Michael's Primary, St Peter the Apostle Secondary, St Stephen's Primary and Vale of Leven Academy, including discussion with relevant consultees.

2. Consultation process

2.1 West Dunbartonshire Council undertook the consultation on its proposal(s) with reference to the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#).

2.2 The council undertook the consultation between 16 May 2020 and 31 March 2021. The initial end date was extended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Advertisements were placed in the local newspapers and through social media platforms and copies of the proposal document were made available through the council's website. Four virtual public meetings were held which were attended by a total of one person. An online survey tool which asked a series of questions and invited additional comments was used to enable stakeholders to respond to the proposal.

2.3 The council received 175 responses to its online survey. The survey asked stakeholders to reflect on each proposed criteria for the allocation of school places and whether they agreed with individual proposals rather than the proposed changes in their entirety. Most respondents expressed agreement with the council's proposed approach to offering more transparency and fairness over the allocation of placing requests.

3. Educational aspects of proposal

3.1 Over the past two years, West Dunbartonshire Council has been unable to grant all received placing requests. These proposed changes to the policy seek to make the process of allocating placing requests more accessible and clearer to all. The proposed changes establishes a list of ranked criteria with school places being allocated to children and young people who meet the criteria ranked highest. Places will then be allocated according to the next criteria on the list until places are exhausted. The council also seeks to clearly define criteria to ensure children or young people and parents understand whether the criteria will apply to them. The council has also offered further information about proof of residency documentation required and possible checks that the council may use to confirm the information provided. HM Inspectors believe these steps will be of educational benefit because it will allow parents to make informed decisions about their child's education and ensure places are allocated in a fair, transparent and consistent manner.

3.2 Stakeholders who responded to the consultation were generally positive about the council's proposal. A few highlighted concerns about the ranking of criteria and believed that the order should be reviewed to offer more importance to particular circumstances, such as siblings attending the same school or travel distance to establishments. The council should review this feedback before making final decisions relating to the ranking.

3.3 Staff, young people and Parent Council representatives who met with HM Inspectors, recognised the value of the council offering a clear, systematic approach to allocating placing requests. Staff and Parent Council representatives discussed the need for greater clarity in the description of some of the criteria. For example, a criteria relates to children and young people with medical conditions who require specific facilities or support. Stakeholders would like further clarity on whether this extends to children and young people with additional support needs. Council leaders should review the language used for criteria to ensure clarity for all. Parents also requested that the policy is written in Plain English to support transparency and accessibility.

3.4 The council received a written submission from the Archdiocese of Glasgow. It was supportive of the proposal and welcomed the distinction between admission priorities for non-denominational and denominational schools being made. It requested clarity in the language used within the policy in relation to placing requests to a denominational school. The wording states that as well as providing a baptismal certificate, parents should also hold the same religious beliefs as the school. The Archdiocese of Glasgow wants to ensure all children and young people who are practicing Roman Catholics are not disadvantaged if their parents do not hold the same religious beliefs. As stated above, council leaders should review the language used in the criteria to address this issue.

4. Summary

HM Inspectors believe West Dunbartonshire Council's proposal is of educational benefit. It will offer clear criteria on the process of allocating school places. Children or young people and parents will be able to review the ranked criteria to identify which criteria they will meet. They can then use this information to make informed decisions about educational placements. It should offer transparency and fairness to all children and young people as the criteria will be applied consistently. It will also ensure parents understand the required documentation for making a

placing request and the checks which may be undertaken by the council of the information provided. In taking forward the proposal, the council should reflect on the feedback from stakeholders including the Archdiocese of Glasgow, relating to the language used to define criteria being clear and understood by all stakeholders. The council should also ensure the order and ranking of criteria is fair and reflects the needs of the local community.

HM Inspectors
May 2021

Education response to Education Scotland report

Education Scotland

In taking forward the proposal, the council should reflect on the feedback from stakeholders including the Archdiocese of Glasgow, relating to the language used to define criteria being clear and understood by all stakeholders.

Response from Education Services

The Council will reflect on the feedback from stakeholders and review the language used to define criteria to ensure it is clear and can be understood by stakeholders. For pupils with more complex additional support needs, assessments are made throughout the year and decisions are made through the JRP forum to which discusses the allocation of places to schools. In this way pupils who require extra support are identified as early as possible and appropriate support is put in place. The wording on the medical criteria will clarify that there is a separate process for pupils with additional support needs.

The report to the Education Committee will recommend that the Council accepts the amended wording from the Archdiocese and considers this a positive step to address some of the concerns raised during the consultation about equity of choice for pupils.

The language within the policy will be reviewed to ensure that is clear and can be understood and will be supported by a supporting FAQ document.

Education Scotland

The council should also ensure the order and ranking of criteria is fair and reflects the needs of the local community.

Response from Education Services

The results from the survey indicated that 93% of respondents, agreed with the rank criteria for siblings, who agreed with the criteria and ranking, an 82% agreed with the rank criteria for travel distance. Feedback from all stakeholders has been considered, and a comparison with criteria and rank order used by neighbouring councils was also taken into consideration.

AssessmentNo	390	Owner	LMCALISTER
Resource	Transformation		Service/Establishment Education, Learning & Attainment
	First Name	Surname	Job title
Head Officer	Linda	McAlister	Education Support Officer
	(include job titles/organisation)		
Members	Andrew Brown - Senior Education Officer Linda McAlister - Education Support Officer		
	<i>(Please note: the word 'policy' is used as shorthand for strategy policy function or financial decision)</i>		
Policy Title	Admissions and Placing Requests Policy (PP5.1)		
	The aim, objective, purpose and intended outcome of policy		
	To review and improve the placing request criteria for primary and secondary mainstream schools and where applications exceed the number of school places, there is a fair process to enable the authority to make practical, objective decisions and ensure that applications are considered on their merits before a final decision is made. It is proposed that the Council's Admissions and Placing Requests Policy (PP5.1) is changed to make limited changes to the current criteria relating to placing requests for primary and secondary schools, and further amended to provide clarification on proof of residency required for catchment schools, and the ballot process.		
	Service/Partners/Stakeholders/service users involved in the development and/or implementation of policy.		
	A public consultation exercise has been conducted in compliance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. Views on the proposed changes were sought from a range of stakeholders: parents/carers; pupils; parent councils; members of the public; Trades Unions; staff within schools; community councils; Education Services Committee members; Archdiocese Glasgow; neighbouring councils.		
Does the proposals involve the procurement of any goods or services?		No	
If yes please confirm that you have contacted our procurement services to discuss your requirements.		No	
SCREENING			
<i>You must indicate if there is any relevance to the four areas</i>			
Duty to eliminate discrimination (E), advance equal opportunities (A) or foster good relations (F)		Yes	
Relevance to Human Rights (HR)		Yes	
Relevance to Health Impacts (H)		No	
Relevance to Social Economic Impacts (SE)		No	
Who will be affected by this policy?			
Parents / pupils in mainstream primary and secondary schools in relation to school admissions and placing requests in the event that a school is oversubscribed.			
Who will be/has been involved in the consultation process?			
A public consultation exercise has been conducted in compliance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. Views on the proposed changes were sought from a			

range of stakeholders: parents/carers; pupils; parent councils; members of the public; Trades Unions; staff within schools; community councils; Education Services Committee members; Archdiocese Glasgow; neighbouring councils. Full consultation has been carried out including online survey and public meetings.

Please outline any particular need/barriers which equality groups may have in relation to this policy list evidence you are using to support this and whether there is any negative impact on particular groups.

	Needs	Evidence	Impact
Age			No impact on age as age is not a criteria.
Cross Cutting			
Disability	All west Dunbartonshire Schools are accessible for disabled children.	Review of current criteria and proposed amendment to the wording to provide clarity.	The policy includes a priority criteria for pupils with a medical reason which can be demonstrated that support can be provided at the placement school are given high priority.
Social & Economic Impact	Duty to provide equality of opportunities.	Single parent families are generally on low income and child care costs can affect ability to work or undertake further education.	Children from single-parent families where, for example, proximity of school to the parent's place of work/study would be advantageous for the care and well-being of the child.
Sex	Duty to provide equality of opportunities.	The vast majority of single parents are women	The existing criteria for single parents to be given priority has been expanded to include where the parent is undertaking study and the requested school would be advantageous to the care and well being of the child.
Gender Reassign			Placement is not based on gender.
Health			The policy includes a priority criteria for pupils with a medical reason which can be demonstrated that support can be

			provided at the placement school are given high priority.
Human Rights	Article 2 of the First Protocol: Right to Education	The majority of pupils attend their catchment school and the majority of placing requests to go to a school, other than the catchment school are normally granted. Only where there are more requests than places available would the criteria be applied.	The policy does not violate the right to education. Only where applications exceed the number of school places, would the policy be applied.
Marriage & Civil Partnership			Positive impact for single parents in relation to criteria and this may have an unintentional impact on married parents.
Pregnancy & Maternity			
Race			Placement is not based on race.
Religion and Belief	Parents can choose to register their child at either the denominational or non denominational school within the catchment area, or make a placing request to either a denominational or non denominational school outwith the catchment area and this right does not change.		A new criteria has been included in relation only to denominational schools, which will give higher priority those children/young people who have been baptised in the Roman Catholic (RC) Church. This does not exclude children of any or no faith applying for a place in a denominational school and the criteria would only be applied in cases where there were more placing requests made than places available. This means there is potentially some differential impact in

			this area in some circumstances
Sexual Orientation			
Actions			
Policy has a negative impact on an equality group, but is still to be implemented, please provide justification for this.			
<p>There is potentially some differential impact in terms of religion in some very limited potential sets of circumstances that might arise, but this is in pursuit of a legitimate aim, is proportionate and is within the Equality Act 2010 and schools which provides a general exception for schools with religious character have certain exceptions to the religion or belief provisions which allow them to discriminate because of religion or belief in relation to admissions. This criteria would only be used where there are more placing requests received than spaces available.</p>			
Will the impact of the policy be monitored and reported on an ongoing basis?			
<p>Schools admissions and placing requests for P1/S1 are reviewed on an annual basis and the impact of the policy will therefore be monitored on an annual basis.</p>			
Q7 What is your recommendation for this policy?			
Introduce			
Please provide a meaningful summary of how you have reached the recommendation			
<p>The policy complies with the requirement that all children have the right to education. Where applications exceed the number of school places, authorities have to use a fair process to make practical, objective decisions and ensure that applications are considered on their merits before a final decision is made. There is potentially some differential impact in terms of religion in some very limited potential sets of circumstances that might arise, but this is in pursuit of a legitimate aim, is proportionate and is within the law. We have identified positive impacts in terms of disability and for women, as noted in the EIA</p>			