

ANGUS COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND LEARNING COMMITTEE, 30 MARCH 2021

ANGUS COUNCIL SCHOOL ADMISSIONS AND PLACING REQUEST POLICY

KELLY MCINTOSH, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

ABSTRACT

This report seeks approval for the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning to review existing procedures for admissions and placing requests to Angus Council schools. The report also seeks approval to bring forward a consultation proposal in terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

1. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) Approves the proposal to undertake a comprehensive review of the current Angus Council admissions and placing requests procedures.
- (ii) Requests that consultation proposals for a revised Admissions Policy are brought before Children and Learning Committee for approval.

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE ANGUS COMMUNITY PLAN/COUNCIL PLAN

Angus Council Plan:

Maximise inclusion and reduce inequalities

Angus Local Outcomes Improvement Plan and Locality Plans:

- The best start in life for children
- More opportunities for people to achieve success

The Tayside Plan for children young people and families 2017-20

- Reduce inequalities and disadvantage
- Provide services which are experienced as integrated and consistent
- Involve children, young people and parents in the design of services
- Improve outcomes

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The [Education \(School and Placing Information\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2012, No.130](#) sets out the duty on local authorities to publish information about schools more generally and placing request procedures specifically. In Angus Council these arrangements are published on our website at the following links:

https://www.angus.gov.uk/schools_and_young_people/schools/enrolling_in_primary_school
https://www.angus.gov.uk/schools_and_young_people/schools/moving_to_secondary_school?page_id=230
https://www.angus.gov.uk/schools_and_young_people/schools/making_a_placing_request

3.2 All Angus Council schools have a defined 'delineated' or 'catchment' area. Children and young people are entitled to attend their catchment school based on their home address. Families who wish for their child/ren to attend a school out with the catchment must make a placing request. The legal right to make a placing request is set out in the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 ([Section 28A refers](#)).

- 3.3 Separate placing request arrangements are in place for children and young people with Additional Support Needs. These provisions are set out in the [Education \(Additional Support for Learning\) \(Scotland\) Act 2004](#), as amended by the [Education \(Additional Support for Learning\) \(Scotland\) Act 2009](#). The procedure relating to this is set out in [Schedule 2](#) of the Act.
- 3.4 Separate admissions procedures are in place for access to Early Learning & Childcare provision. These are not within the scope of this report.
- 3.5 Under the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#) a proposal to vary any admissions arrangements for a school (including guidelines for the handling of placing requests) are subject to statutory consultation.

4. CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 The current published information in relation to Angus Council admissions and placing request procedures is lacking in detail. Angus Council does not have a single, coherent policy document to cover these procedures. As such, the totality of information available to parents / carers is located in several places on the Council website and is difficult to set in the context of the legislative requirements. One single policy incorporating all of the legislative requirements has been the approach taken by other local authorities and is considered to be good practice.
- 4.2 At present, Angus Council prioritises applications for admission to schools on the following basis:

Entitlement: *Children whose home address is within the schools delineated area*

Priority 1: *Children whose address is outside the delineated area but who have a brother or sister already attending the school. (This can sometimes include another relative who lives permanently at the same address)*

Priority 2: *Children whose home address is not within the school's delineated area and who do not have a brother or sister already attending the school*

Placing requests will usually be granted, except where there are circumstances as defined in the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 which justify the refusal of such a request. For St Margaret's and St Thomas' Roman Catholic Primary Schools the above priorities apply but within any one category priority will be given to children who have been baptised in the Roman Catholic faith. This will be confirmed by inspection of the Baptismal Certificate.

- 4.3 A small number of Angus Council schools are at or very close to their calculated building capacity. Angus Council's current published procedures do not allow for the formal establishment of waiting lists where this is the case. If the number of spaces available in a school means that within any one category only *some* placing requests have to be refused, applications from children whose address is within Angus will receive first priority. After that priority is decided by the single factor of distance from home to school. This means that children who live nearest to the requested school will be given priority.
- 4.4 Angus Council publishes limited information specific to placing request procedures for children with Additional Support Needs:
- Children may be placed in additionally resourced schools or classes when their additional support needs cannot be met in their local school. The decision to make such a placement will be taken after assessment involving parents, teachers, school medical officer and educational psychologist.*

A range of other information relating to children with Additional Support Needs is also available on the Council website: https://www.angus.gov.uk/schools_and_young_people/additional_support_needs

- 4.5 Angus Council undertakes an annual roll capping exercise in relation to school rolls. Procedures relating to this exercise are detailed within committee reports but not clearly linked to the Council's admissions procedures.

5. PROPOSALS

5.1 It is proposed to undertake a comprehensive review of Angus Council admissions and placing requests procedures. The intended outcome of this work is to establish a coherent admissions policy document which clearly sets out all relevant information for parents / carers. This will enable informed choices to be made when choosing a school. Revised procedures will also afford the Council greater flexibility when considering placing requests.

5.2 It is proposed that the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning develops a consultation proposal paper and brings this before Children and Learning Committee for consideration and approval.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Under the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Act) Scotland 2010 a statutory consultation will be required as part of the development of a revised admissions policy. A formal Proposal Paper containing an Educational Benefits Statement will be prepared for consideration by Children and Learning Committee and, if approved, for publication. The statutory consultation period will run for a period of no less than 30 school days. A public meeting will be arranged within the consultation period. Legal advice will be sought as to arrangements for this during the pandemic.

7.2 The equalities implications of this work are considered as part of the Equalities Impact Assessment that accompanies this report.

8. CONSULTATION

8.1 The Director of Education and Lifelong Learning and the Director of Legal and Democratic have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

NOTE: The background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) which were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report are:

- [Education \(Scotland\) Act 1980](#)
- [Education \(School and Placing Information\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2012, No.130](#)
- [Education \(Additional Support for Learning\) \(Scotland\) Act 2004](#)
- [Education \(Additional Support for Learning\) \(Scotland\) Act 2009](#)
- [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#)

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