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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Education &amp; Communities Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>06 September 2016</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Corporate Director Education, Communities &amp; Organisational Development</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>EDUCOM/46/16/RB</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Ruth Binks Head of Education</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712891</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Draft revised Policy for Admission and Pupil Placement in Mainstream Schools</b>		

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## 1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Education and Communities Committee for the proposed changes to the 2009 Policy on Admission and Pupil Placement in Mainstream Schools.

## 2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 In 2009 an external consultant was commissioned to undertake a review of Inverclyde Council's Policy on Admission and Pupil Placement in Mainstream Schools. The Policy was adopted in November 2009.
- 2.2 The Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development recommended that a revised policy on placing requests be presented to the Education and Communities Committee for consideration in September 2016. This was due to the amount of placing requests and appeals for some schools, most notably Notre Dame High School. Also the 2009 policy had not been reviewed since its implementation.
- 2.3 A comprehensive review of the policy has been undertaken and the proposed draft policy is attached as Appendix 1.
- 2.4 Several proposed changes have been made to the 2009 policy. These include changes to priorities for admissions and to the identified working capacities of schools.
- 2.5 There are two main changes for priority for admission if a school is oversubscribed. These are:
- the use of attendance at an associated school as a qualifying factor
  - that for a denominational school, those who can demonstrate or have declared an affinity with the religious ethos of the school and can provide documentary evidence of this will be used as a qualifying factor.
- 2.6 A review of the working capacity for all schools is currently underway. This means that the maximum intake for each year group can be defined for secondary schools and the overall capacity can be defined for primary schools. The outcome of this review will inform the placing request process and an associated report will be presented to the Education and Communities Committee in November 2016.

### **3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 That the Education and Communities Committee note the contents of the draft revised policy.
- 3.2 That Committee Members agree that officers undertake a consultation with stakeholders affected by the report with a view to presenting the final draft policy to the Education and Communities Committee in November 2016.

**Ruth Binks**  
**Head of Education**

## **4.0 BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 The Policy and Resources (Executive) Sub-Committee on 21 May 2009 agreed to commission an independent review by an experienced consultant of the policies and procedures for school admissions and placing requests, and their operational implementation, following decisions made by the Council's Schools Appeals (Placing Requests) Committee.
- 4.2 The review into the arrangements for admissions into mainstream schools in Inverclyde identified a number of issues which required to be addressed. In summary these were:
  - The need for a single policy which is applicable to all schools
  - The need for a policy which acknowledges the reduced availability of places and supports the delivery of the Schools Estate Management Plan
  - The need for a policy which reflects current legislation
  - The need for a policy which clearly defines priorities in respect of placing requests
  - The need for a policy which clearly defines the decision making process in place in respect of all admissions to mainstream schools in Inverclyde.
- 4.3 The Education and Lifelong Learning Committee of 18 August 2009 approved the issue of a revised policy for Admissions and Placing Requests for consultation.
- 4.4 The Education and Lifelong Learning Committee of 03 November 2009 agreed to the implementation of the new policy.
- 4.5 On 03 May 2016 in a report presented to the Education and Communities Committee the Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development recommended that the Education and Communities Committee agree to revise the current capping figure for Notre Dame High School from 140 to 160 per year group from session 2016/17 as an interim measure pending a revised policy on placing requests to be presented to the Education and Communities Committee for consideration in September 2016.
- 4.6 A comprehensive review of the policy has been undertaken. This has involved an evaluation of the strengths and challenges of how the 2009 policy works in practice and assessing the guidance associated with the policy to see if it is still fit for purpose.
- 4.7 Both Education and Legal Services have at all stages of the review, checked that the policy meets the legislative requirements of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, as amended.
- 4.8 To inform the review process, a detailed analysis was undertaken of the policy documentation relating to the admissions and placing requests policies and procedures of 18 other local authorities. In addition, an analysis was undertaken of the reasons for appeal that were submitted during March 2016.

## **5.0 CURRENT POSITION**

- 5.1 Although the policy does not make a change to the catchment areas and therefore does not require to undergo statutory consultation, it is recommended that the policy undergoes some consultation with those who will be directly affected by the policy e.g. Head Teachers and Parent Forums. Following consultation, the revised final draft policy would be presented to the Education and Communities Committee in November 2016 with the recommendation of an immediate implementation for the 2017 school enrolment process. Exemplar communications and letters will be attached to the November 2016 report.
- 5.2 Although much of the 2009 policy remains in place, several important changes have been made. The most significant changes include priority for admissions if a school is oversubscribed, the establishment of the working capacity of each school in order to establish capping figures and further guidance on the reservation of places for pupils who are within the catchment area.
- 5.3 The current policy for priority for admission if a school is oversubscribed has been revised, with

two main changes that are noted in 5.4 and 5.5 below.

- 5.4 Within the current policy, if a child has moved outwith the catchment area for a school during their time at a school but who has requested to remain at the original school, that child is given no preference if they submit a placing request for the associated secondary school over pupils who may live closer but have not attended an associated primary school. In practice this has meant that a pupil could be the only person, or one of a handful of pupils from a particular class, not attending the secondary school associated with the primary school. The fact that pupils were not staying with the friendship groups from their primary schools was one of the most common reasons for appeals during 2016.

The first recommendation is to use attendance at an associated primary school as a preferential qualifying criterion for granting placing requests. This is an approach used by other local authorities including Dundee, East Dunbartonshire, East Renfrewshire, South Ayrshire and Renfrewshire.

- 5.5 The second recommended change in relation to priority for admissions if a school is oversubscribed is with regard to denominational schools. In the 2009 policy, no priority is given to those who have an affinity with a faith if a denominational school is oversubscribed.

In the new policy it is recommended that it will remain a core principle of the policy that Roman Catholic schools (the only denominational schools in Inverclyde) are open to all children regardless of faith. However, it is recommended that if a denominational school is oversubscribed then priority is given to those pupils who can demonstrate or have declared an affinity with the religious ethos of the school and can provide documentary evidence of this. This practice is also adopted by other local authorities including Glasgow, Renfrewshire, Dundee, East Dunbartonshire, Edinburgh, Fife, Perth and Kinross, Stirling, South Lanarkshire and West Lothian.

The listed authorities differ on the proof requested to show religious affinity with the Catholic faith, with some authorities asking only for a certificate of baptism whilst others request a certificate of baptism or a letter. The recommended approach for Inverclyde is to ask for a certificate of baptism and a supporting letter from the Church.

- 5.6 Whilst the capping of schools and the reservation of places is referred to in the 2009 policy, it does not directly reference the capping levels for each school. It is recommended that the figures used to establish the working capacity of each school are revised as part of this review and the maximum intake per year group for secondary schools is identified on this basis.
- 5.7 The Education (Scotland) Act 1996 granted local authorities the power to reserve places for children moving into an area part way through the school session. Under the terms of Inverclyde's 2009 policy on Admission and Pupil Placement in Mainstream schools, the Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development has the delegated powers to reserve up to a maximum of four places per year for entry into P1 and S1 in schools with the intention to release any reserved places between October and December. Although this has remained an option, the current practice allocates all available places within a school through placing requests.

By clearly establishing the working capacity of a school and the maximum intake per year group for a secondary school, it should be possible to identify when schools approach their capacity and to identify if reserved places for those who may move into the catchment area are required. If a school is approaching its capacity, the proposal in the revised policy is that the Authority should exercise its right to retain two places in S1 for pupils who move into the catchment area for a secondary school and if possible, one place for pupils in other secondary year groups. For primary schools reaching capacity, the Council will reserve one space per year group for pupils who move into the catchment area.

The proposed new policy does not release reserved places at any point through the year. This is because pupils may move into the catchment area at any time during the school year, there is additional disruption to learning if a pupil moves mid-year and there are additional complexities in defining a protocol for releasing places. This proposal also supports the

Council's priority for repopulation. Other local authorities who explicitly state that they will exercise their right to reserve places for catchment area pupils are Dundee, East Renfrewshire, Highland, Edinburgh and West Lothian.

- 5.8 One of the complexities for officers currently working through the placing request process is if a family does not provide requested evidence to show proof of address. With the additional requested documentation that the new policy may require if a school is oversubscribed e.g. letters or baptism certificates, then it is even more important that families are able to produce requested documentation within a reasonable timescale.

The proposed policy defines a reasonable timescale as four weeks. The policy also states that where there is doubt about any of the documentation, the Authority reserves the right to verify this information by cross checking with Council Tax records or undertaking home visits. This is allowable under the terms of schedule 2 - 5(b) and 6 of 1998 Data Protection Act. Other authorities who state that they will check information or carry out random spot checks on information provided by applicants are Dundee, Edinburgh, Fife and Renfrewshire. Glasgow also states that they will share the enrolment information to ensure that all sums due to the Council are paid.

## 6.0 IMPLICATIONS

### Finance

- 6.1 There is no cost connected to the implementation of this policy but there will be a small cost to undertake the consultation process which will be absorbed within the Education services budget.

#### Financial Implications:

##### One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report £000	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					There may be some minor costs incurred in the implementation of this revised policy which will be contained within the Education budget.

##### Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact £000	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

### Legal

- 6.2 This policy takes into account the requirements of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, as amended.

### Human Resources

- 6.3 The processing of placing requests is labour intensive for Education Services. The outcome of the placing request exercise informs the annual teacher staffing exercise which cannot be completed until the placing request exercise and subsequent appeals are finalised.

## **Equalities**

6.4 Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

Yes    See attached appendix

No    This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

## **Repopulation**

6.5 This policy supports the Council's repopulation agenda.

## **7.0 CONSULTATIONS**

7.1 If agreed, the planned consultation on this draft policy will be undertaken with the Chairs of Parent Councils and Head Teachers.

7.2 While it is proposed that further consultations take place, consultation has already taken place with legal services, church members and lay members of the Education Appeals Committee.

## **8.0 CONCLUSIONS**

8.1 The revised draft policy makes our process for the management of admissions to schools and placing requests more equitable and less open to challenge.

8.2 It is anticipated that the Policy on Admissions and Pupil Placement in Mainstream Schools will be reviewed on a 5 yearly basis, or earlier if required.

## **9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

9.1 Policy and Resources (Executive) Sub-Committee on 21 May 2009  
Review of Admissions and Placing request Policy of Inverclyde Council August 2009  
Review of Admissions and Placing request Policy of Inverclyde Council November 2009  
Notre Dame High School – Review of Agreed Capping Figure May 2016

## Appendix 1

# Inverclyde Council Draft Policy on Admissions and Pupil Placement in Mainstream Schools

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	<b>Section A - Core Principles</b>	
1.0	The Admissions and Pupil Placement Policy is applicable to all <b>mainstream schools</b> in Inverclyde.	
1.1	The Admissions and Pupil Placement Policy recognises the right of parents to make a placing request to have their child educated in a school of their choice. Parents in turn should recognise that they do not have an automatic right to have their <b>placing request</b> granted.	
1.2	For the purposes of determining which school a pupil should attend the authority is divided into defined geographical <b>catchment areas</b> . Each address in Inverclyde is assigned to a non-denominational and a denominational primary and secondary school.	
1.3	At the point of entry to primary school parents may choose the primary school of either educational sector, ( <b>non-denominational</b> or <b>denominational</b> ) assigned to their home address, which they wish their child to attend. This policy is premised on the assumption that having made a choice about the educational sector ( <b>denominational</b> or <b>non-denominational</b> ) at primary stage, a pupil will remain in that sector for the duration of their education in Inverclyde.	
1.4	All of the <b>denominational</b> schools in Inverclyde are Roman Catholic. Roman Catholic school are open to all children regardless of faith. Where a <b>denominational school</b> is oversubscribed, either for within the <b>catchment</b> area pupils or through <b>placing requests</b> then priority will be given to pupils who can demonstrate or have declared an affinity with the religious ethos of the school and can provide documentary evidence of this in the form of a certificate of baptism into the Catholic faith and a supporting letter from the Church. (see sections C and D)	
1.5	<p>There are no <b>denominational</b> primary schools with in the areas of Quarriers Village, Kilmacolm, Inverkip and Wemyss Bay. Parents often choose to send their children to the local non-denominational primary school because of the travelling distance to their nearest denominational primary school. In such circumstances the following admission arrangements will apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• children whose parents have selected to send their child to the <b>non-denominational</b> school serving there defined <b>catchment area</b> assigned to their address rather than to their assigned denominational primary school because of travelling distance, will have the choice at primary 7 of seeking admission to either the <b>non-denominational</b> or <b>denominational</b> school assigned to their address. The Council's policy in respect of school transport will apply.</li> </ul>	
1.6	Inverclyde has a Gaelic nursery and primary unit attached to Whinhill Primary School. It is the right of parents to make a request to the Authority for Gaelic medium education. Parents wishing their child to be educated in Gaelic medium should register with their local school and make a <b>placing request</b> . Gaelic Secondary education is accessed in Glasgow. Transport is provided.	
1.7	Each secondary school has a list of <b>associated primary schools</b> . This means that pupils who live within the geographical <b>catchment area</b> and of the chosen sector ( <b>denominational</b> or <b>non-denominational</b> ) would normally transfer to the secondary school without the need for a <b>placing request</b> .	
1.8	Attendance at an <b>associated primary school</b> , either through a <b>placing request</b> or the submission of a request to remain if a family have moved house does not guarantee a place at the <b>associated secondary school</b> and a <b>placing request</b> should be submitted.	
1.9	A <b>Pupil Placement Panel</b> will be convened by the Corporate Director of Education, Communities and Organisational Development if the situation arises where the number of	



	<p>pupils in a defined catchment area who are eligible to enter a school in primary or secondary is greater than the number of places available in the school.</p> <p>The <b>Pupil Placement Panel</b> will also scrutinise recommendations on entry made by the appropriate Head of Service in Education Services to ensure the criteria has been applied appropriately and to determine which placing request applications should be granted and which should be refused.</p>	
1.10	The <b>Pupil Placement Panel</b> will comprise the Corporate Director of Education, Communities and Organisational Development, the Head of Legal and Property Services and a Head of Service from another council service selected from a rota.	
1.11	Where documentation such as <b>proof of residence</b> , a qualifying letter or baptism into a faith are requested, then the applicant will be given 4 weeks to produce original copies of any documentation requested. A Council Tax notice, plus a recent utility bill or other acceptable evidence will be accepted as proof of residence. Where there is doubt about any of the documentation, the Authority reserves the right to verify this information by cross checking with Council Tax records or undertaking spot checks.	
	<b>Section B – Admissions Procedures</b>	
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Arrangements for registering a pupil in P1.</b>	
1.1	The Education (Scotland) Act 1980, as amended by the 1981 Act, requires education authorities to secure the adequate and efficient provision of school education including arrangements for the admission of children to schools.	
1.2	The process of registration records a child as eligible for education to be provided by the authority. The procedure of enrolment commits the authority to providing that education in a particular school.	
1.3	<p>The process for enrolling is as follows:</p> <p>On a date or dates in January each year intimated and publicly advertised by Education Services, parents/carers should register their children with their catchment area school of their chosen denomination if their children:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have attained the age of 5 years before that date</li> <li>2. Will attain the age of 5 years on or before the last day of February of the following year</li> </ol>	
1.4	Birth Certificates and proof of residence (Council Tax letter, plus a recent utility bill or other acceptable evidence) must be produced.	
1.5	At the point of registration parents will have access to the handbook containing information about the school. Parents will also receive information about how to make a <b>placing request</b> should they decide not to send their child to their <b>catchment</b> school.	
1.6	If a parent wishes to defer entry to primary school they still must register at the appropriate school to be advised of the Council's <b>deferred entry</b> procedures.	
1.7	If a child has not reached the age of 5 years by the last day in February they would not be eligible to register at this time. In exceptional circumstances, a formal request for early entry should be submitted to Education Services for consideration.	
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Arrangements for transferring from primary to secondary school</b>	
2.1	On completion of their primary education, pupils will normally transfer to the secondary school within their geographical <b>catchment area</b> and of their chosen denomination unless	

	they have been granted a placing request to another secondary school.	
2.2	Pupils will transfer from primary school to secondary school once per year on the date of the start of the new session for pupils. Transfer will normally take place at the end of Primary 7.	
2.3	The Head Teacher of the primary school will advise parents/carers in December each year that their children are due to transfer to secondary school in the following August. Intimation will be made of the name of the secondary school to which the child should transfer and details of liaison meetings with parents will be provided.	
2.4	There are no denominational primary schools with in Quarriers Village, Kilmacolm, Inverkip and Wemyss Bay. Parents often choose to send their children to the local non-denominational primary school because of the travelling distance to their nearest denominational primary school. In such circumstances the following admission arrangements will apply: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children whose parents have selected to send their child to the non-denominational school serving the defined catchment area assigned to their address rather than to their assigned denominational primary school because of travelling distance, will have the choice at Primary 7 of seeking admission to either the <b>non-denominational</b> or <b>denominational</b> school assigned to their address. The Council's policy in respect of school transport will apply</li> </ul>	
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Arrangements for registering a pupil into primary and secondary school after the start of the school session in August.</b>	
3.1	This applies to pupils moving into the <b>catchment area</b> of their chosen denomination after the start of a school session. In the first instance parents should make contact with the school directly to enquire if they have space for their child in the relevant stage or year group. Parents should provide proof of the address and the child's date of birth.	
3.2	In addition, for secondary school placements, parents will need to provide details of the subjects that the child has studied, particularly at stages S4 and above. It may not be possible to match all subjects previously studied and children may need to choose new subjects to make a full timetable.	
3.3	During school holidays, parents should contact Education Services to discuss the arrangements for registering their child into their preferred primary or secondary school.	
	<b>Section C - Oversubscription of catchment area schools and the capping of schools</b>	
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Oversubscription of Schools</b> <p>Although rare, the situation may arise whereby a school is oversubscribed at either the primary 1 or secondary 1 stage for pupils of the chosen denomination who live within the <b>catchment area</b> of the school. In these circumstances, the <b>Pupil Placement Panel</b> should convene to determine the allocation of places.</p> <p>Applications for all other stages of schooling for pupils within the <b>catchment area</b> of the chosen denomination should be dealt with by Head Teachers.</p> <p>While every effort is made to provide places for all children in the school in their defined catchment area within their chosen denomination, places cannot be guaranteed. In such circumstances, pupils will be offered a place in the school of their chosen denomination nearest to their home address, until such times as a place becomes available in their catchment school. Inverclyde Council will meet any additional transport costs incurred due to attendance at the non-catchment school.</p>	

	<p>If a school is oversubscribed and cannot take pupils within the defined catchment area and chosen denomination then places will be granted in the following order:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A child who has a medical condition or additional support needs, who requires facilities or support only available in the requested school.</li> <li>2. Those cases where a brother of sister attends the school and will continue in this school during the next session.</li> <li>3. In the case of denominational schools pupils who can demonstrate or have declared an affinity with the religious ethos of the school and can provide documentary evidence of this in the form of a certificate of baptism into the Catholic faith and a supporting letter from the Church.</li> <li>4. Distance of home address from chosen school.</li> </ol>	
1.1	<p>If within catchment area places for the chosen denomination have had to be declined then a waiting list will be held by Education Services reflecting the above criteria. Parents will be informed if places become available. If the parent subsequently chooses that their child remain at the school out with the <b>catchment area</b> or chosen denomination the following should be borne in mind:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transport will only be made available for that academic year</li> <li>• The pupil may have to submit a placing request to their chosen secondary school</li> </ul>	
1.2	<p>If Inverclyde Council refuses an application to one of its schools it must explain the reasons why to parents in writing. The grounds for refusal of a place are listed in Appendix 2. Parents have the right to appeal this decision through the <b>appeals process</b>.</p>	
	<b>2.0 Capping of schools</b>	
2.1	<p>Inverclyde Council is permitted to limit the overall roll of a school (the term commonly used is “capping”). It can limit not just the overall roll but also the intake of pupils into specific year groups. Where there are schools whose rolls will exceed their capacity or by the granting of placing requests will exceed their capacity in the future, there is a need to restrict access to these schools so that the roll can remain within the agreed capacity of the school.</p>	
2.2	<p>The Council is allowed to reserve places within primary and secondary schools, based on the assumption that the places will be required for children and young people who are likely to move into the delineated areas of the schools during the session (Section 28A of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 as amended).</p>	
2.3	<p>For the purpose of secondary schools which are approaching capacity, the Council may keep two places for S1 for pupils who move into the catchment area and one place for pupils in other years.</p> <p>For primary schools who are approaching capacity, the Council will keep one space per year group for pupils who move into the catchment area.</p> <p>The Council will not employ an extra teacher or create another class due to placing requests.</p>	
	<b>Section D - Making a Placing request</b>	
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Arrangements for making a placing request at the beginning of an academic year</b>	

1.1	Parents who wish their child to attend a school other than their defined catchment school are entitled to make a <b>placing request</b> for the school of their choice.
1.2	Information on how to make a <b>placing request</b> is distributed to parents/carers by Head Teachers at the point of enrolment in January in the case of pupils who are starting primary 1. When pupils transfer from primary to secondary school the information will be given out as part of the information pack in December.
1.3	Parents/carers may make only one <b>placing request</b> at a time for a pupil. If the initial request is refused the opportunity will be available to parents to make another request should they so wish.
1.4	Where applications are being made for the start of a new session these should be submitted to Education Services no earlier than 1 January and no later than 1 February prior to the start of the session in August. Applications received for Primary 1 or Secondary 1 after the 1 <sup>st</sup> February will only be considered after the applications received on time have been processed.
1.5	Applications will be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt of each application.
1.6	Parents/Carers will be advised in writing of the decision made in respect of their application no later than 30 April.
1.7	Late applications may be considered at the discretion of the Head of Education.
1.8	If a <b>placing request</b> is submitted then the <b>catchment area</b> place that the pupil is entitled to will be kept until the outcome of the placing request application has been confirmed.
1.9	<p>While every effort is made to grant <b>placing requests</b>, circumstances can arise whereby there are more applications than places available. In such cases the priorities for admission will be as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A child who has a medical condition or additional support needs, who requires facilities or support only available in the requested school</li> <li>2. Those cases where a brother or sister attends the school and will continue in this school during the next session</li> <li>3. In secondary schools: children who attend a primary school <b>associated</b> with the secondary school as a result of a placing request or a request to remain according to the length of time at the <b>associated primary school</b>. This means that pupils who have attended for the longest time will have the highest priority. Appendix 3 shows the list of <b>associated school groups</b>.</li> <li>4. In the case of denominational schools pupils who can demonstrate or have declared an affinity with the religious ethos of the school and can provide documentary evidence of this in the form of a certificate of baptism into the Catholic faith and a supporting letter from the Church.</li> <li>5. All other children of school age residing in the defined catchment area of the school according to distance of home address from chosen school</li> <li>6. All other children of school age residing in Inverclyde according to distance of home address from chosen school</li> <li>7. Children of school age residing out with Inverclyde whose additional support need is supported by significant input by education and another appropriate agency and who are requesting a place within a school which has specialist provision to meet the child's needs</li> <li>8. Children of school age residing out with Inverclyde according to distance of home</li> </ol>

	address from chosen school	
1.10	When a <b>placing request</b> is granted the previously allocated place at the catchment school will be withdrawn. The newly allocated place will not be withdrawn unless the place was obtained on the basis of false information.	
1.11	The <b>Pupil Placement Panel</b> should convene to determine the allocation of places. It will be the role of the <b>Pupil Placement Panel</b> to scrutinise recommendations on placing request applications made by the appropriate Head of Service in Education Services to ensure the criteria have been applied appropriately and to determine which applications should be granted and which should be refused. Where a placing request application is refused parents will be advised in writing of the grounds for refusal.	
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Arrangements for transferring from primary to secondary school</b>	
2.1	Parents who wish to make a <b>placing request</b> during the school year or school holidays should contact the school of their choice or Education Services to obtain an application form.	
2.2	<b>Placing request</b> applications which are submitted to Education Services during the school year or school holidays will be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt. Parents/Carers will be notified of the decision made in respect of their application within 8 weeks (exclusive of school holidays).	
2.3	Such applications will be referred to the Head Teacher of the school concerned who will advise if there are places available in the school. Where the Authority declines an application for reasons other than there being no places available in the school the application will be referred to the <b>Pupil Placement Panel</b> for decision. If a placing request application is refused parents will be advised in writing of the reasons for refusal.	
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Families who move to a new address</b>	
3.1	Where a family moves to a new address which is out with the catchment area of the school their child currently attends, they have two options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enrol their child in the school serving their new defined <b>catchment area</b> for their chosen denomination</li> <li>• Complete a form requesting that their child remains in the school they currently attend. If this option is selected the Council will not provide school transport. In the case of primary pupils, parents should check which the secondary school assigned to their new home address. It is likely that a <b>placing request</b> may be required for their child to attend the secondary school assigned to their previous home address</li> </ul>	
<b>4.0</b>	<b>School Transport</b>	
4.1	Inverclyde Council provides school transport for pupils who live more than one mile from their local primary school or two miles from their local secondary school by the shortest safe walking route.	
4.2	Children who attend a school as a result of a <b>placing request</b> are not entitled to school transport. If, in exceptional circumstances, a pupil is unable to attend the catchment area school of their chosen denomination because it will pose a risk to the safety of the pupil or there is a legal reason why they cannot attend that school then the Authority may consider providing transport at the discretion of the Head of Education.	

<b>5.0</b>	<b>Appeal procedures if a placing request is refused</b>	
5.1	If Inverclyde Council refuses an application to one of its schools it must explain the reasons why to parents in writing. The grounds for refusal of a place are listed in Appendix 2.	
5.2	If parents/carers are aggrieved by a decision of the Education Authority to refuse a placing request then the parent/carer may refer the decision to the <b>Education Appeal Committee</b> set up by the Council;	
5.3	<p>The <b>Education Appeal Committee</b> hearing an appeal shall have a membership of three; one Councillor and two other members. The Councillor shall not be a member of the Council's Education &amp; Communities Committee. The other members will not be members of the Authority or its Education Committee and will be in one of the following three categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents of children of school age</li> <li>• Persons who in the opinion of the Authority have experience in education</li> <li>• Persons who in the opinion of the Authority are acquainted with the educational conditions in the area of the Authority</li> </ul> <p>Neither the Councillor nor the other members shall be a member of the <b>Parent Forum</b> of the school affected by the appeal.</p>	
5.4	The <b>Education Appeal Committee</b> shall be administered by the Council's Head of Legal and Property Services from whom details of the appeals procedure may be obtained. Appeals should be submitted in writing to the Head of Legal and Property Services;	
5.5	The Head of Legal & Property Services shall maintain a rota to be used in selecting members to sit in hearings of the Committee.	
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Policy Review</b>	
6.1	This policy will be reviewed on a 5-yearly basis, or earlier if required.	

## Appendix 1

### Glossary of terms

Catchment Areas	The catchment areas for a school are geographical. Every address in Inverclyde is in the geographical catchment area of a denominational and non-denominational school.
Mainstream School	A mainstream school is any school that is not classed as a special school. The definition of a special school is any school where the sole or main purpose of the school (or stand-alone unit) is to provide education specifically suited to the additional support needs of children and young persons selected for attendance at the school (or unit) by reason of those needs.
Denominational School	The majority of denominational schools in Scotland are Catholic and all of the denominational schools in Inverclyde are Catholic. A Catholic denominational school is one which promotes the ethos and values of the Catholic faith. Denominational schools are run in the same way as other local Authority schools. Every state pupil is open to pupils of all denominations.
Non-Denominational Schools	A non-denominational school is one that does not cater for a specific faith.
Placing Request	This is a request for a pupil to be educated at a school other than that allocated by the Education Authority. A placing request should be submitted if a pupil wants to attend a school out with their geographical catchment area or if a change of denominational sector is required.
Associated School (either primary or secondary)	A group of schools that traditionally work together because they share the same geographical catchment area and denomination. Each Associated group of schools has one secondary and feeder primary schools. Whilst most joint working takes place in the associated school group, attendance at an associated primary school does not automatically ensure a place at the secondary school.
Pupil Placement Panel	The Pupil Placement Panel comprises the Corporate Director of Education, Communities and Organisational Development, the Head of Legal and Property Services and a Head of Service from another council service selected from a rota. The role of the panel is to scrutinise recommendations on entry made by the appropriate Head of Service in Education Services to ensure the criteria has been applied appropriately and to determine which placing request applications should be granted and which should be refused.
Proof of Residence	Proof of residence should be a Council Tax notice and another formal letter e.g. a utility bill, a tax credit award notice.
Deferred Entry	All children who are 4 years of age by 28/29 February start primary school in the August of the same year. Children with January/February birthdays can automatically defer school entry for one year. Deferred entry for children born out with January / February is discretionary and is granted by the Additional Support Needs Forum.
Appeals Process	This is the right of the parent to appeal the decision made by the Authority to decline a place at their requested school.
Education Appeal Committee	The Education Appeal Committee is administered by the Council's Head of Legal and Property Services and has a membership of three, one Councillor and two lay members.
Parent Forum	A school's parent forum automatically includes every parent/carer with a child enrolled at the school. This is not the same as a Parent Council who act as a representative group for the parent forum.

## Appendix 2

### Reasons for refusal of a place at a school

**If Inverclyde Council refuses an application to one of its schools it must explain the reasons why to parents in writing. The following are the reasons why a Council may refuse an application for a place in one of its schools.**

- (a) If placing the child in the specified school (that is, the school specified in the application), would:
  - (i) Make it necessary for the Authority to take an additional teacher into employment
  - (ii) Give rise to significant expenditure on extending or otherwise altering the accommodation at or facilities provided in connection with the school
  - (iii) Be seriously detrimental to the continuity of the child's education
  - (iv) Be likely to be seriously detrimental to order and discipline in the school
  - (v) Be likely to be seriously detrimental to the educational well-being of the pupils attending the school
  - (vi) Assuming that pupil numbers remain constant, make it necessary, at the commencement of a future stage of the child's primary education, for the authority to elect either to create an additional class (or an additional composite class) in the specified school or to take an additional teacher into employment at that school
  - (vii) Though neither of the tests set out in sub-paragraphs (i) and (ii) above is satisfied, have the consequence that the capacity of the school would be exceeded in terms of pupil numbers
- (b) If the education normally provided at the specified school is not suited to the age, ability or aptitude of the child
- (c) If the education authority has already required the child to discontinue his attendance at the specified school
- (d) If the specified school is a special school and the child does not have an additional support need requiring the education or special facilities normally provided at that school
- (e) If the specified school is a single sex school (within the meaning given to that expression by Section 26 of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975) and the child is not of the sex admitted or taken (under that Section) to be admitted to the school
- (f) If accepting the request would prevent the Authority reserving a place at the school for a child likely to move into the area of the school.

(All references to the 'specified school' are to the school specified in the application.)



## Appendix 3

### Associated School Groups and Catchment Areas

Pupils who live in the catchment area for:

**Ardgowan Primary School**

**Gourock Primary School**

**Moorfoot Primary School**

**TRANSFER TO Clydeview Academy**

Pupils who live in the catchment area for:

**Aileymill Primary School**

**Kings Oak Primary School**

**Lady Alice Primary School**

**Whinhill Primary School**

**TRANSFER TO Inverclyde Academy**

Pupils who live in the catchment area for:

**Inverkip Primary School**

**Wemyss Bay Primary School**

**TRANSFER TO Inverclyde Academy OR St Columba's High School**

Pupils who live in the catchment area for:

**All Saints Primary School**

**St Mary's Primary School**

**St Patrick's Primary School**

**TRANSFER TO Notre Dame High School**

Pupils who live in the catchment area for:

**Newark Primary School**

**TRANSFER TO Port Glasgow High School**

Pupils who live in the catchment area for:

**Kilmacolm Primary School**

**TRANSFER TO Port Glasgow High School OR St Stephen's High School**

Pupils who live in the catchment area for:

**St Andrew's Primary School**

**St Joseph's Primary School**

**St Ninian's Primary School**

**TRANSFER TO St Columba's High School**

Pupils who live in the catchment area for:

**St Francis' Primary School**

**St John's Primary School**

**St Michael's Primary School**

**TRANSFER TO St Stephen's High School**