



SENDING YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL FORM PC1/PC1a

Information on arrangements for:

- ◆ *The enrolment of children in primary and secondary schools*
- ◆ *Placing requests*



Across Argyll & Bute there are 73 Primary Schools, 6 with Gaelic Medium provision; 3 3 – 18 Schools; 5 Secondary Schools; 2 Joint Campuses and 1 Learning Centre.

Responsibility for the running of the education service lies with the Executive Director of Community Services and Head of Service Education.

The school nearest to you will be able to supply you with a list of names, addresses, telephone numbers and other relevant information on the schools within the authority.

Primary School

Normally, your child will attend the **local** primary school. The school itself can provide details of the actual boundaries of the area it serves.

You may if you wish make a **placing request** for your child to attend a school other than the local school (see page 3/4).

Transfer from Primary to Secondary

A group of primary schools in an area is normally associated with a single secondary school. Pupils normally transfer from the primary school to its associated secondary school between the ages of 11½ and 12½ years.

Your local primary school will be able to tell you the name of the secondary school to which your child would normally transfer after the Primary 7 stage.

You may also make a **placing request** for your child to attend a secondary school other than the one associated with the primary school (see page 3/4).

Denominational and non-denominational schools

In parts of Argyll & Bute there are denominational schools which serve a defined area. You may enrol your child, therefore, either at a local denominational school or at the non-denominational schools. (In certain rural areas, however, there are few denominational schools and this local choice is not possible in every part of Argyll and Bute).

Gaelic Medium Education

Gaelic Medium Education is offered in 6 Primary School establishments: Bowmore, Islay; Salen, Mull; Rockfield, Oban; Sandbank, Dunoon; Strath of Appin and Tiree. Gaelic Medium Education is formal and equal stream of education that is predominantly delivered through the medium of Gaelic with an initial immersion phase leading to bilingualism in the later stages of primary education. Continuity and progression of Gaelic language is maintained in all of associated secondary school establishments. Gaelic Medium serves the area in which it is provided and not the catchment of the school and transport can be arranged, where appropriate, and resources allow.

Additional Support Needs

If your child has additional support needs, you can obtain advice and guidance from the Council's psychological service.

Your child may continue to be educated in the local school or, in some cases, in a special unit based in the school. However, where a learning difficulty or a physical impairment is particularly severe, it may be better for your child to be educated in a separate special day school or residential school. Decisions on how the special education needs of your child might best be met will be taken only after full consultation with you.

Full information about special education provision in your area can be obtained from the Education Manager: Inclusion and Integration in Argyll House. You may also obtain information about other special schools not managed by the Council to which the authority may send pupils.

Pupil Travel and Accommodation

Apart from certain rural and island areas in Argyll & Bute, (and for some pupils attending specialist schools), pupils travel to school daily. Where, in exceptional cases, this is not possible, hostel accommodation or lodgings are provided. (Further information on hostel provision may be obtained from the Head of Children and Families based in Kilmory, Lochgilphead.)

Argyll & Bute provides free transport for all primary pupils who live more than two miles from their local school (by the recognised shortest safe walking route) and to secondary pupils who live more than three miles from their local school (by the recognised shortest safe walking route) subject to school transport policy. This policy is more generous than that prescribed by statute and therefore may be reviewed at any time. Arrangements for free transport may be made for children with additional support needs.

The education authority does not provide transport for those pupils in receipt of a placing request other than in the most exceptional circumstances.

School Catering

A midday meal or a range of snacks is provided in most primary schools, all secondary and special schools. Freshly prepared, nutritional lunches are available (a typical two course lunch in primary school is £2 and in secondary schools £2.10). From Monday 5th January 2015 all children in Primary 1 to Primary 3 are eligible to receive a free school meal. In most primary and all secondary schools, a cash cafeteria service also offers an extended range of snacks. Pupils who wish to bring packed meals can also be accommodated in the school. 9 out of the 10 secondary schools operate cashless catering and without a cashless catering card pupils will be unable to purchase school meals and snacks.

Children of parents receiving income support, income based jobseeker's allowance, any income related element of employment and support allowance, child tax credit but not working tax credit with an income not over £16,010 or child tax credit and working tax credit with an income not over £6,420, are entitled to a free meal at lunchtime. Information and application

forms to arrange for meals may be obtained from any school or area office. (Free School Meals eligibility criteria subject to change).

Registering your child in Primary School

Entry to primary schools in Argyll & Bute is on a once-a-year basis - at the start of the new session in August each year.

Entry Age

Your child will be admitted automatically to school in August if his or her fifth birthday falls between 1 March of that same year and the last day of February of the following year.

You can, however, make a request for **early entry** to school for a child whose fifth birthday falls after the above period. A separate booklet, obtainable from the education office, Argyll House, contains full details.

Registering your child

If your child is due to start school in the August, he or she should be registered in your local primary school before the end of the preceding January. Local advertisements issued in January each year provide full details on how to register your child.

Placing Requests

Your child will normally attend the local primary school and transfer from it, after the Primary 7 stage, to its associated secondary school. However, as a parent, you have the right to make a **placing request** for your child(ren) to be educated in a school other than the local school. In December each year, the authority will advertise its arrangements in connection with placing requests.

There are sound educational reasons for trying to ensure that the transfer or admission of children to a school takes place at the start of a school session. Community Services: Education, therefore, advises all parents who desire a placing request (other than those who are moving home to a new area) to seek this to take effect only at the start of the next school session.

Should you wish to make placing requests in respect of more than one school for your child, the duty of the authority as defined by the Act applies only to the first named school.

Every effort, however, will be made to try to meet parental wishes, but you should note that it is not always possible to grant every placing request to a particular school.

How to make a placing request

If you wish to make a placing request you must complete a separate copy of the attached pro-forma (PC1(a)) for each child involved.

You do not have to give a reason for making a placing request. If, however, there are more requests than places available, your case may well be strengthened if your reasons are known.

Please send the completed form(s) to the education office responsible for the school you wish your child to attend and inform the head teacher of your local school that you are making a placing request.

You should receive an acknowledgement from the education service within 5 working days of receipt of your application.

If placing requests are submitted by **11th March 2016**, every effort will be made to meet parents' requests within the limits of the accommodation and places available in schools.

Your placing requests will be considered against a set of guidelines which set out the council's priorities for admission.

As soon as a decision has been made you will be notified of the result. If your placing request is successful, you will be asked to contact the school to establish arrangements for enrolment.

If your Request is Refused

If your placing request is refused, or if you are not advised by the authority of its decision on your request by 30 April (or within 2 months for requests made at other times of the year), you may lodge an appeal with an appeal committee. Information on how to appeal may be obtained from the education office, Argyll House.

The appeal should be sent to the Head of Education, Argyll House, Dunoon PA23 8AJ.

You will, by the time of the appeal, know the reasons why your placing request was refused and you will be given the opportunity to present your case in person or through a representative, whichever you prefer.

If the appeal committee refuses your request, you have the right of further appeal to the Sheriff (other than in the case of early entry requests, where there is no guarantee of appeal).

How Decisions are Made

The responsibility for decisions on placing requests rests with The Director of Community Services and Head of Service Education.

However, where there are more requests than places available for a particular school or a particular stage in a school, all requests will be considered by a local attendance council who will then make recommendations to the responsible member within Community Services: Education.

You will be given the opportunity of presenting your case orally to the local attendance council. **Should this situation arise**, you will be advised in good time of the date and location of the appropriate meeting and you will be asked at that time if you wish to attend. You may be accompanied at this meeting by a friend.

Guidelines and Criteria

The local attendance council and members of Community Services work to a set of guidelines in reaching decisions on placing requests. These guidelines set out the council's priorities for admission and can be summarised as follows:

Primary

Where there are places available in primary school, priority will be given to:

- ◆ those children who live in its delineated area but have been unable, for whatever reason, to be accommodated in the area school to date;
- ◆ Thereafter, to early entry children who live in the school's delineated area and who are considered suitable for primary education.

Secondary

Where there are places available in a secondary school, priority will be given in the granting of placing requests to:

- ◆ those children who live in its delineated area, where applicable, but have been unable, for whatever reason, to be accommodated in the area school to date;
- ◆ those children who live in the delineated area of an associated primary school but who have been unable to be accommodated in the area's secondary school to date

General

Thereafter, where there are more placing requests for primary or secondary than there are places available, priority will be given to:

- ◆ those cases which include medical grounds supported by the family doctor and the community medicine specialist;
- ◆ *(in the case of secondary schools with a delineated area)* those children who do not live in the delineated area, but who attend primary schools within it.
- ◆ the presence of older siblings in the school.

Other factors

Other factors which the local attendance council and the responsible member within Community Services may wish to take account of include:

- ◆ 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;
- ◆ distance between home and school;
- ◆ the suitability of particular teaching methods to the child's needs or the availability of subjects which he/she was previously studying.

Where it is impossible to identify priority applications, local attendance councils have been advised that the only reasonable solution is to draw lots. This may be done by the local attendance council or the responsible member of Community Services.

Why the Requests are Sometimes Not Granted

The authority may refuse a placing request where granting it would, amongst other reasons:

- ◆ make it necessary for the authority to take additional teaching staff into employment;
- ◆ give rise to significant expenditure in extending or altering the school's accommodation or facilities;
- ◆ seriously interrupt the continuity of the child's education;
- ◆ be likely to be seriously detrimental to order and discipline in the school or adversely affect the education well-being of the pupils there.

Additional Information

Although the information in this document is correct at the time of printing, it is possible that arrangements could change either before the commencement or during the course of the school year in question or in relation to subsequent school years. This information leaflet provides only general guidance about placing requests.

Specific information may be found in:

Education (Scotland) Act 1981 (HMSO)

Education (School and Placing Information)(Scotland) Regulations 1982 and Amendments
Regulations 1990/93 (S1 1982 No. 950)(S.125)

Education (Appeal Committee Procedures)(Scotland) Regulations 1982 (S1 1982 No. 1736)

Education (Placing in Schools Etc. Deemed Decisions)(Scotland) Regulations 1982 (S1 185 No. 1733)

Scottish Education Department Circulars 1074, 1080, 1083 and 1093 (SOED, St. Andrew's House, Edinburgh)

Choosing a School – A Guide for Parents (SOED, St. Andrew's House, Edinburgh)

PLACING REQUEST

PC1a

TO: Executive Director of Community Services, Argyll House, Alexandra Parade, Dunoon, PA23 8AJ

1. Name of Parent/Guardian

Surname _____ Forename(s) _____

2. Home Address _____

_____ Postcode _____

Tel. No. _____ **Email** _____

3. Name of Child

Surname _____ Forename(s) _____

4. Sex: Male/Female (please delete) Date of Birth / /

5. Name of School in your delineated Area which your child should attend:
_____ Stage in School _____

6. School to which placing request is sought:

Name of School: _____

7. Reason(s), if any, for seeking a placing request#:

- *(A) I agree that if granted, this placing request will take effect at the start of the next session.
- *(B) Having considered the educational advice given against mid-session transfer, I wish this placing request, if granted, to take effect at the first available opportunity.
- *Delete as appropriate

DECLARATION BY PARENT OR GUARDIAN:- I have read and understood the statement made on travelling.

Signature of Parent or Guardian: _____ Date: _____

#Note: While it is not necessary to provide reasons to justify your request, this can be of advantage to you should there be more applications than places available in the school of your choice. If there is not sufficient space available on this form please attach a separate sheet of paper.