



SENDING YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL

Information on arrangements for:

- ◆ *The enrolment of children in primary and secondary schools*
- ◆ *Placing requests*
- ◆ *Application form for Placing Requests*



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General Information

Across Argyll & Bute there are 82 Primary Schools, (7 with Gaelic Medium provision) 10 Secondary Schools and 1 Learning Centre.

Responsibility for running the education service lies with the Executive Director and Heads of 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. This information is also available on the website including Gaelic Medium Education, Denominational and non-Denominational schools.

Choosing a School including Denominational and Gaelic Medium schools

Councils usually divide cities, towns and county regions into catchment areas, and children living in a catchment area usually go to their local school. Parents have the right to express a preference for a particular school and it is the Council's duty to accommodate this wherever possible.

This means that if you have a child who is due to start primary school or who will be transferring to secondary school soon, you have a right to express a preference for a particular school. You may be happy to use your catchment school but you also have the right to choose a different school by making a Placing Request to a school outwith your catchment area.

The law also applies if you want your child to change school, as well as when he or she starts primary or secondary school. Details on this can be found in the Placing Request section.

In parts of Argyll & Bute there are denominational primary schools which serve a defined area. You may enrol your child, therefore, either at a local denominational school or at the non-denominational schools. If you want to enrol your child in a denominational school and you are not of the denomination faith, you will need to make a Placing Request and you should register for Education at your non-denominational catchment school. In certain rural areas, however, there are few denominational schools and this local choice is not possible in every part of Argyll and Bute.

To enrol your child for Gaelic Medium Education you will need to register at the Gaelic Medium school you want your child to attend. Gaelic Medium Education is offered in 7 Primary School establishments: Bowmore, Bunessan, Salen, Rockfield, Sandbank, Strath of Appin and Tiree.

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 Equality in Argyll House. You may also obtain information about other special schools not managed by the Council to which the authority may send pupils. You can find more information through Enquire, the Scottish advice service for additional support for learning by phoning 0345 123 2303 or visiting their website www.enquire.org.uk

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 Council provides free transport for all primary pupils who live more than two miles from their catchment area school (by the recognised shortest safe walking route) and for all secondary pupils who live more than three miles from their local school (by the recognised shortest safe walking route) in line with 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 so this must be taken into consideration when making a placing request.

If spare seats exist on dedicated school transport vehicles, a child who does not meet the walking distance criteria, or a placing request (who would not normally qualify for transport) may be granted a privilege ride seat at a charge determined by the Council. It should be noted that these privileged places may be withdrawn at very short notice in the event of a change in circumstances.

Privilege rides are not available on journeys which operate as registered local bus services. In such cases non-entitled pupils must pay the appropriate fare

School Catering and Clothing Grant information

A midday meal is provided in all primary (excluding Iona and Ulva Primary Schools), secondary and special schools. Freshly prepared, nutritional lunches are available (currently a two course lunch in school is £2.20). Milk is available and charged at 10p per portion. Prices may be reviewed in April or August 2020. Children in Primary 1 to Primary 3 are eligible to receive a free school meal. In 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.

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 (income should not exceed £16,105), child tax credit and working tax credit with an income not over £6,900, **Universal Credit** (monthly take home pay for period must be under £610) or support under Part VI of the immigration and Asylum Act 1999, are entitled to a free meal at lunchtime.

Children of parents receiving income support, income based jobseeker's allowance, any income related element of employment and support allowance, child tax credit and working tax credit with an income not over £6,900, Council Tax Rebate (25% Reduction For Single Occupancy is not included), Housing Benefit or Universal Credit (monthly take home pay for period must be under £610) may apply for a school clothing grant of £100 per pupil.

Further information and application forms may be obtained from any school or Customer Service Point. (Clothing Grant and Free School Meal eligibility criteria subject to change).

Registering your child in Primary School

Registering your child

School age children are those who are 5 years old by the time they start school in August or will turn 5 before the following March. Entry into Primary 1 is on a once a year basis in August. You should register your child for Primary 1 before the end of the preceding January. Local advertisements issued in January each year provide full details on how to register your child. You should register your child at your local catchment area school.

Entry Age – Early Entry to Primary School

You can make a request for **early entry** to school for a child whose fifth birthday falls after the above period. A separate booklet, available from the education office in Argyll House or your local school contains full details. Details are also on the Council website.

Entry Age – Deferred Entry to Primary School

- Parents of children whose fifth birthday falls between September and February, have a choice about when their child starts school. Children of this age can start school either in the August before they are five or parents can defer their start until the following August.
- Children whose fifth birthday falls in January or February have the right to start school at 4½. They also have the right to defer entry and to have a free Early Learning and Childcare place for an extra year.
- Children whose fifth birthday falls between the beginning of September and the end of December also have the right to start school. They also have the right to defer entry to school but a free Early Learning and Childcare place is *not automatic* for these children, it is at the discretion of the local authority.

Placing Requests

Your child will normally attend the catchment area primary/secondary school, however, you have the right to make a **placing request** for your child(ren) to be educated in a school other than the catchment area school. In December each year, the authority will advertise its arrangements in connection with placing requests. Regardless of your decision you should enrol your child at your catchment school.

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, advises all parents that Placing Requests should take effect at the start of the next school session. There will be exceptions to this such as moving home.

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 Education (School and Placing Information) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 applies only to the first named school.

Every effort, will be made to try to meet parental wishes, however it is not always possible to grant all Placing Requests received into the Authority.

How to make a Placing Request

If you wish to make a placing request you must complete a separate copy of the attached application form for each child involved.

Please send the completed form(s) to Argyll House, 91 Alexandra Parade, Dunoon, PA23 8AJ 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 13th March 2020, 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 in Argyll House.

The appeal should be sent to the Head of Education, Argyll House, 91 Alexandra Parade, 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 Executive Director and Heads of 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 the Education Service.

You will be given the opportunity of presenting your case in person 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 if you wish.

Guidelines and Criteria

The local attendance council and members of Education Service 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 catchment 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 catchment 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 catchment 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 catchment 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 catchment area*) those children who do not live in the catchment 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 Education Service 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 Education Service.

Why the Requests are Sometimes Not Granted

The authority may refuse a placing request:

- (a) if placing the child in the specified school 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 pupils attending the school; or
 - (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 to create an additional class (or an additional composite class) in the specified school or take an additional teacher into employment at the school.
- (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 have already required the child to discontinue his/her attendance at the specified school;
- (d) if, where the specified school is a special school, the child does not have special educational needs requiring the education or special facilities normally provided at that school; or
- (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.'

(References to the "specified school" are to the school specified in your placing request).

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:

- Scottish Legislation
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/browse/scotland>
- Education (School and Placing Information) (Scotland) Regulations 2012
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2012/130/pdfs/ssi_20120130_en.pdf
- Choosing a School – A Guide for Parents
<https://www2.gov.scot/Publications/2002/11/15640/12181>
- Argyll and Bute Management Circulars 3.01, 3.02, 3.09
<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/education-and-learning/education-management-circulars>

PLACING REQUEST Application Form

TO: Executive Director, Education Service, Argyll House, Alexandra Parade, Dunoon, PA23 8AJ

1	Name of Parent/Carer:					
	Forename		Surname			
2	Home Address and Contact Details:					
				Post Code		
	Tel.No		email			
3	Name of Child:					
	Forename		Surname			
4	Gender	Male		Female	DOB	
5	Name of catchment area school which your child should attend:					
			Stage in School			
6	Name of school you wish to send your child to:					
7	Reason(s) for seeking a placing request:					
*(A)	<input type="checkbox"/>	I would like this placing request to take place in August 2020				
*(B)	<input type="checkbox"/>	I would like this placing request to start at the first available opportunity				
* Tick either box A or B above as appropriate						
Current data protection legislation requires us to publish Privacy Notices to tell you why and how we will process your information. You can view all Privacy Notices on our website at https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/privacy-notices . This registration form is covered by the Education – Placing Requests (for school places) privacy notice.						
If you require this form or the Privacy Notice in an alternative format, including a hard copy, please contact us at Argyll House, 91 Alexandra Parade, Dunoon, Argyll, PA23 8AJ or email argyllhousereception@argyll-bute.gov.uk or phone 01369 704000.						
DECLARATION BY PARENT/CARER:- I have read and understood the statement made on transport to school on page 4 of the Sending your Child to School leaflet.						
Signature of Parent or Carer					Date	