

Sending your child to school



Information pack for parents and carers

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General information

Within Renfrewshire there are a number of primary and secondary schools. To get information on schools, you can contact your catchment school or:

Renfrewshire Council
Education and Leisure Services
Renfrewshire House
Cotton Street
Paisley PA1 1LE

Phone number: **0141 842 5663**

E-mail: schools.els@renfrewshire.gov.uk

There is also information on our website at www.renfrewshire.gov.uk

Normally, your child will go to the catchment primary or secondary school for their area. The school or Education and Leisure Services (phone 0141 842 5698) can give you details of the area it covers.



Denominational and non-denominational schools

In most parts of Renfrewshire there are Roman Catholic schools (denominational). You must register your child either at the catchment denominational school or at the non-denominational school for your area.

Additional support needs

For advice and information if your child has additional support needs, as defined in the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004, please contact the Education Officer (Education Support) at **0141 842 5441** or email at asn.els@renfrewshire.gov.uk.

Pupil travel

We provide free transport for all primary pupils who live more than 1.6 kilometres (one mile) from their catchment school and to secondary pupils who live more than 4.8 kilometres (three miles) from their catchment school. The distances are based on the recognised shortest, safe walking route (further details available in the department's policy on the provision of school transport). This policy may be reviewed at any time. We may provide transport for children with additional support needs. For more information, phone **0141 842 5625**.

School catering

A midday meal or snack is provided in all primary, secondary and special schools. Freshly prepared, nutritional lunches are available. Pupils can also bring packed lunches.

Children of parents receiving Income Support or income-based Jobseeker's Allowance are entitled to a free meal at lunchtime. You can get application forms from:

- any school
- Customer Service Centre, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AY
- Johnstone Registration Office, 16-18 McDowall Street, Johnstone, PA5 8QL, tel: 01505 320012/331771
- Renfrew Registration Office, Town Hall, Renfrew, PA4 8PF, tel: 0141 886 3589.

If you need more information please contact: **0141 842 4441**.

Registering your child for primary education

Entry to primary schools is on a once-a-year basis at the start of the new session in August each year. Registration takes place in mid January in your catchment school. You will need your child's original birth certificate, and proof of residence, to register them for school. Adverts appear in nurseries, schools and newspapers in early January providing details on how to register your child. You can register your child at only one school, either the denominational or non-denominational school in your catchment area. If you are unsure which school you should register at, please call **0141 842 5698** for advice.

Entry age

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

You can, however, ask for your child to start school early if their fifth birthday falls after the last day of February. A separate leaflet, Early Entry, is available from Education and Leisure Services. Phone **0141 842 5698**.

Moving into Renfrewshire

If you are moving into Renfrewshire and your child has already been to a school elsewhere, you should contact Education and Leisure Services with proof that you now live in the area. To make sure that children resident in the catchment area of a particular school are able to attend their catchment school, we ask that parents provide at least two proofs of residence which must include:

- a council tax notice for the property or proof that you have registered for council tax at that property, and
- a solicitor's letter confirming missives have been concluded, or a rent book for rented property, or a tenancy agreement, or child benefit notification. You will be asked to provide original documents, not copies.

Note: Missives are formal letters that the seller and buyer exchange which prove that you have entered into a legal agreement to buy the house.

Transfer from primary to secondary school

A group of primary schools in an area are normally linked with a secondary school. All secondary schools have a catchment area which includes their linked primary schools. Pupils transfer from primary school to secondary school between the ages of 11 and 12 (in most cases). Your child's primary school can tell you the name of the secondary school to which your child should normally transfer after the primary 7 stage.

Placing requests

You may ask for your child to go to a school other than your catchment school. This is called making a placing request. You do not need to tell us your reasons for making a placing request, but it may be helpful if you do.

There are strong educational reasons for making sure that the transfer or entry of children to a school happens at the start of a school session in August, so it is better to make placing requests before the start of a session. Parents who are moving to a new area may have to make requests at other times.

The school you ask for is referred to as the 'specified school'. You can apply for only one school at a time. The specified school is important because we only have to consider your first preference. If we grant your placing request, we will write to you to confirm this and advise you to contact the school to arrange to enrol your child. We will also ask you to confirm, in writing, that you wish to accept the offer of a place at the specified school. By accepting this offer, the place being held for your child, at their catchment school, can be offered to someone else. If you do not wish to accept the offer, then the place at the specified school can be offered to someone else.

The council has a duty to grant placing requests, wherever possible. However, it is not always possible to grant every placing request to a particular school. The size of the school, the current roll, the number of children who already live in the catchment area and other factors will affect the council's ability to grant a placing request.

The law relating to placing requests covers children applying to change their school as well as those starting a primary or secondary school. If you want to make a placing request, please fill in the attached form. You must fill in one form for each child.

Please send Education and Leisure Services (not the school) the filled-in placing request for each child. Please also tell the head teacher of your catchment school that you are making a placing request.

We will acknowledge placing requests within five working days of receiving the form.

How decisions are made

The director of Education and Leisure Services makes decisions about placing requests that are handed in by 15 March, for the new session which begins in August.

We will consider all requests. If there are more requests than places available for a particular

school, or a particular stage in a school, the director will make decisions based on our priorities for admission. Please note, granting a placing request for one child does not guarantee entry for brothers and sisters, should you wish to make another placing request to the same school at a later date.

Guidelines and conditions

By law we are allowed to produce guidelines on how we will decide admissions to schools.

If there are places available in a school, we will give first choice to those children who live in its catchment area. This includes children who are considered suitable for primary education before the normal entry age.

For placing requests we give priority in the order below.

- 1 Children who have older brothers or sisters at the school.

We then give children in Renfrewshire priority in the order below.

- 2 For Catholic schools, children from outside the catchment area who have been baptised in the Roman Catholic Church and whose parents have the same religious beliefs as the school.
- 3 Medical reasons, supported by the family doctor and a community medicine specialist, that say that the child could only be educated with difficulty in another school because of their medical condition.

- 4 In the case of secondary schools, those children transferring from an associated primary school in its catchment area.
- 5 In the case of single-parent families where refusing the placing request would seriously affect the child's care and wellbeing.
- 6 If the child's educational wellbeing would be affected in relation to the availability of subjects previously studied in another school.
- 7 All other children who live in the council area whose parents have made a placing request.

We then give children from outside Renfrewshire priority in the order of categories 2 to 7, which are numbered 8 to 13. We grant placing requests in the order of priority listed above. At the final stage, there may be more requests of the same priority than places available. Any available places will be allocated by using the department's ballot procedures. (Details of the ballot procedures are available from this department).

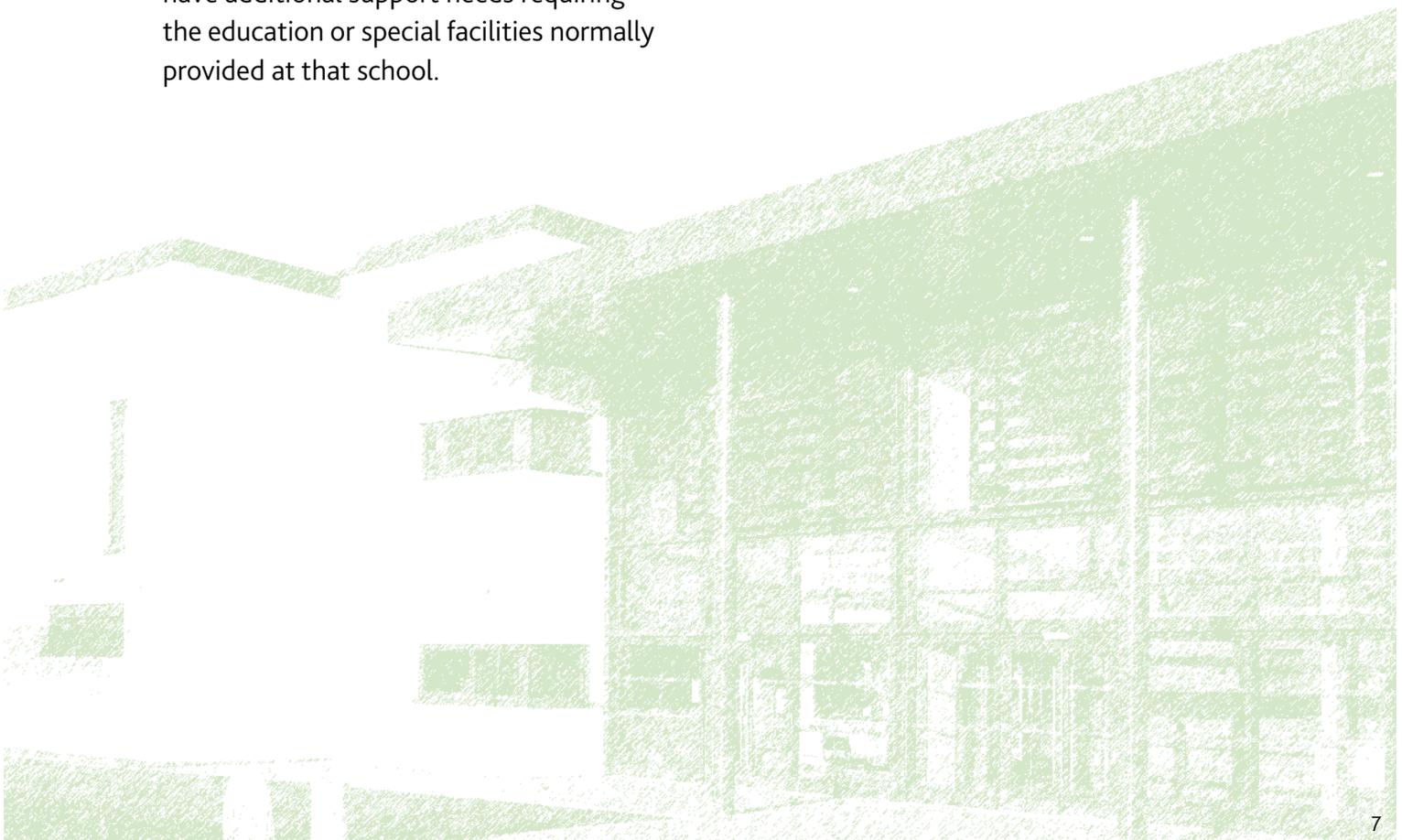
Transport

You should be aware that if we grant your placing request, we do not have to provide a school bus pass or any other help with transport.

Why we may not grant placing requests

Once you have told us, in writing, that you want your child to go to a particular school, we can only refuse your request for certain reasons set out by law in the Education (Scotland) Act 1980. We do not have to admit your child to the school of your choice in the following circumstances.

- If the school would have to employ an extra teacher or spend a lot of money, for example, if we would have to provide an extra classroom.
- If your child's education would suffer as a result of changing school.
- If education in the school you want would not be suitable to the age or ability of your child. This might apply if you want your child to be admitted to a stage of education that he or she is not ready for yet or to a school which cannot meet your child's needs.
- If the specified school you have requested is a special school and your child does not have additional support needs requiring the education or special facilities normally provided at that school.
- If we think that your child would be likely to disturb the order and discipline in that school, or the educational wellbeing of other pupils at the school.
- If the education authority have already required the child to discontinue attendance at the specified school.
- If you want your daughter to go to a boys' school, or your son to a girls' school.
- If accepting the request would prevent us from reserving a place at the school for a child who is likely to move into the area.
- If accepting the request would make it necessary for us to create an extra class or employ another teacher at a future stage of your child's primary education.



If we refuse your placing request

If we refuse your placing request, or if we have not given you our decision on your request by 30 April (or within two months for requests made at other times of the year), you may make an appeal to an appeal committee.

You can appeal against a placing request refusal only once in a 12 month period. This does not mean that you cannot make another placing request. It just means that if we refuse your first placing request and you lodge an appeal, you cannot appeal to the appeal committee again, on another placing request decision, within 12 months of the date of receipt of the original appeal letter.

You must appeal in writing to the director of Education and Leisure Services. By the time of the appeal, you will know why we refused your placing request. At the appeal hearing you will have the chance to present your case in person or through a representative.

If the appeal committee agree that we were right to refuse your child a place in the school you want, you have 28 days from receiving the appeal committee's decision to appeal to the Sheriff Court.

In case places become available in the school you want, we will keep your request open until 31 August of the year you made it unless you tell us you want to change your request to another school.

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





Placing Request Application Form

Please return to: Renfrewshire Council, Education and Leisure Services, Renfrewshire House, Operations Section, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1LE.

1 Your child's details

Full name:

Is your child:

male? female?

Date of birth:

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2 Your details

Title:

Mr Mrs Ms Miss Full name: Address Postcode Home phone: Work phone: Mobile: Email:

3 School details

I would like my child to go to (specify school): The catchment school for my area is: At the moment, my child goes to (school/nursery):

My child should go into (please tick one box):

Stage in primary

P1 P2 P3 P4 P5 P6 P7

Stage in secondary

S1 S2 S3 S4 S5 S6

4 Priorities

We grant placing requests on the basis of the priorities set out below. Please tick one box below that applies to your situation.

1

Your child has older brothers or sisters at the school. Please give details below.

Name of brother or sister: Stage: 2

Your child has been baptised in the Roman Catholic Church and you have the same beliefs as the school.

3

Medical reasons, supported by the family doctor and a community medicine specialist, that say that the child could only be educated with difficulty in another school. Please give details over the page.



	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4	<input type="checkbox"/>	Your child goes to an associated primary school in the catchment area of the secondary school.
5	<input type="checkbox"/>	You are a single-parent family and if the request is refused your child's care and wellbeing will be seriously affected.
6	<input type="checkbox"/>	Your child's educational wellbeing would be affected in relation to the availability of subjects previously studied in another school. Please give details below. <input type="text"/>
7	<input type="checkbox"/>	None of the above applies to your child but you have made a placing request. <input type="text"/>

Priorities 2 to 7 above are for children in Renfrewshire. We then re-apply them to children outwith Renfrewshire as priorities 8 to 13. If we grant your placing request, you must pay for transport.

You do not need to tell us your reasons for making a placing request, but it may be helpful if you do.

The Data Protection Act 1998

We will use the information you have given on this form to deal with your application for a placing request. We may check the information you have given us with other information we have. We may need to share the information with other council departments to check the accuracy of the information, prevent or detect fraud or crime, or protect public funds. We will not give anyone else the information you have given unless we are allowed to by law.

If your child currently attends a school or nursery outwith the Renfrewshire Council area, we will ask that education authority for access to your child's educational records. By signing the declaration below, you give your consent to Renfrewshire Council Education and Leisure Services having access to your child's educational records, held by that authority.

Declaration

1	Please tick appropriate box:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	I agree that if this placing request is granted, it will apply at the start of the next session (August 20 <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>).	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Having considered the educational advice I have received about transferring my child during a session, I want you to consider this placing request now.	
2	Please tick appropriate box:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	My child does not have a co-ordinated support plan and no co-ordinated support plan is being prepared or considered in respect of my child, in terms of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004, or	
<input type="checkbox"/>	My child has a co-ordinated support plan, or a co-ordinated support plan is being prepared or considered in respect of my child, in terms of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004.	
3	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have read and understood the statement on transport.
4	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have read and understood the statement under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Your signature:

Date:



