

**REPORT TO: EDUCATION COMMITTEE - 26 OCTOBER 2009**

**REPORT ON: PUPILS WHO RESIDE IN DUNDEE AND ATTEND ANGUS PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

**REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION**

**REPORT NO: 150-2009**

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 This report reviews the procedures for the allocation of places in secondary schools, particularly as they affect pupils who reside in Dundee and who attend Angus primary schools, and considers whether these pupils should be accorded priority 1 status.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 The Education Committee is recommended to:

- i. note the content of this report;
- ii. note that those who reside in Dundee but attend Angus primary schools will have priority 2,3 or 4 status, depending on their individual circumstances;
- iii. instruct the Director of Education to discuss the means of communicating the information to parents/carers; and
- iv. instruct the Director of Education to monitor this situation in all neighbouring authorities.

## **3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 An element of the Council's general revenue grant is directly related to the number of pupils attending primary schools in the city, irrespective of their place of residence. The Council receives annual revenue grant of around £3,600 per primary school pupil. Therefore for every Dundee primary age child that is educated in an Angus primary school the City Council effectively loses out on an annual revenue grant of £3,600. It is highly likely that the financial loss to the city would become even more significant if there were a change in policy which enabled parents in the city to send their children to Angus primary schools whilst enjoying priority 1 status for Dundee secondary schools.

## **4.0 MAIN TEXT**

### **4.1 Background**

4.1.1 In a report to Dundee City Council Education Committee, '*Review Of Procedures For The Allocation Of Places In Schools And Of School Catchment Areas*' (report no. 609-97, 25 September 1997, refers), it was agreed that priority 1 status for enrolment in any Dundee secondary school would be accorded to those who attended an associated primary school in the secondary cluster.

4.1.2 In a subsequent report, '*Changes To The Procedures For The Allocation Of Places In Secondary Schools*' (report no. 155-2003, 17 March 2003, refers), it was recognised that Angus Council had revised the catchment area of Monifieth High School. The result of this was that Dundee parents living in the north-east of the Barnhill Primary School catchment area, who chose to send their children to Angus primary schools, no longer had priority 1 status for Monifieth High School because they were not Angus residents. However, because these children did not attend a Dundee primary school, they did not have priority 1 status for any Dundee secondary school.

- 4.1.3 Report 155-2003 proposed that pupils attending Angus primary schools at that time should be granted priority 1 status for the secondary school in Dundee in whose catchment area they resided, but that this should be seen as a temporary measure, and it would be made clear to parents making placing requests from August 2003 that if they wished to secure a priority 1 place in a Dundee secondary school, they should enrol their child in an associated primary school of that secondary school.
- 4.1.4 The changes proposed in report 155-2003 were the subject of a consultation exercise, the results of which were reported on in a further report to the Education Committee, *'Changes To The Procedures For The Allocation Of Places In Secondary Schools - Report On Formal Consultation Process'* (report no. 546-2003, 18 August 2003, refers). Following consultation, the Education Committee approved report 546-2003, which confirmed the proposals set out in the earlier report.

## 4.2 Current Situation

- 4.2.1 137 pupils from all year groups, P1 to P7, have Dundee addresses and attend Angus primary schools, as at October 2009. It is important to note that all of these pupils could secure a place in a Dundee primary school if their parents so wished, and would thereby gain automatic priority 1 status for a Dundee secondary school.
- 4.2.2 It is noted that the great majority (120) are attending schools in the catchment area of Monifieth High School. While they retain the statutory right to make a placing request for that school, it is distinctly possible they will be unsuccessful, given the pressure on places there. The remaining 17 pupils attend schools elsewhere in Angus.
- 4.2.3 While most of the 137 children live in the north-east of the city, in the catchment areas of Baldragon, Braeview and Grove, there are children from every catchment area attending Angus primary schools.
- 4.2.4 There is some slight evidence of a downward trend in these numbers over the next seven years.
- 4.2.5 There are important points which must be borne in mind in reviewing the procedures for allocating places in our secondary schools:
- a In the current session 2009-10 there was pressure on places in five out of nine of our secondary schools, and in three of those - Grove, Morgan and St Paul's - very few if any places were available below priority 1 status.
  - b Within any priority category, where there are more applications than places available, places are allocated according to distance from the secondary school. If the procedures were to be changed to grant pupils attending Angus schools priority 1 status for the Dundee secondary in whose catchment area they reside, it might be possible that a pupil attending, say, Grange Primary School would secure a place at Grove Academy ahead of a pupil attending Barnhill Primary School.
  - c If a Grange Primary pupil living in Dundee had priority 1 status for Grove Academy, s(he) would certainly take priority over, say, a priority 2 Craigiebarns pupil, i.e. who had a brother or sister already at Grove.
  - d If an Angus primary school pupil living in Dundee had priority 1 status for the secondary school in whose catchment area they reside, s(he) would certainly take priority over Dundee pupils with priority 3 or 4 status, i.e. those attempting to enrol in the school through a successful placing request.
  - e The financial implication outlined in paragraph 3.1 would become more acute if more Dundee parents chose to send their children to a primary school in Angus, knowing or believing that a subsequent place in a Dundee secondary school would be available.

**4.3 Conclusion**

- 4.3.1 No consideration will be given to granting priority 1 status to pupils attending Angus primary schools because, in the event there would be more priority 1 pupils than places available, there would always be a risk that they would receive a priority 1 place at the expense of a priority 1 pupil who had attended a Dundee primary school, by dint of living closer to their catchment area secondary school.
- 4.3.2 These pupils will have the appropriate priority status, 2,3 or 4, depending on their address and the secondary school in which they wish to enrol.

**5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 This report has been screened for any implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environment Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management. There are no major issues.

**6.0 CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 This report has been subject to consultation with the Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services) and Director of Finance.

**7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1 None

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19 October 2009

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