

**REPORT TO: EDUCATION COMMITTEE - 10 MARCH 2008**

**REPORT ON: RETAINING RESERVED PLACES IN SCHOOLS 2008/2009**

**REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION**

**REPORT NO: 155-2008**

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 Reference is made to Article V of the minute of meeting of the Education Committee of 19 February 2001 where approval was given to retain reserved places in certain schools to accommodate children moving into the catchment area during the school year. The Director of Education is required to review the allocation of places on an annual basis and this report proposes an allocation of reserved places for session 2008/2009.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 The Education Committee is recommended to approve the proposals to reserve places in schools as set out in Appendix I.

## **3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 There are no financial implications from these proposals.

## **4.0 BACKGROUND**

4.1 Requests for places in Dundee schools are submitted by the first Monday in February (4 February 2008) for the school session beginning in August. Places are allocated in accordance with the Council's procedures. Places are allocated first to children in Priority 1 (living in the catchment area in the case of children entering primary 1, or attending an associated primary school in the case of children entering secondary school). Thereafter any unallocated places are used to meet placing requests from children in Priorities 2, 3 and then 4. Parents of children are notified of no later than 31 March. Details of the criteria for admission to school are given in Appendix 2.

4.2 In most schools the system outlined above means that all requests for places can be met. However, in a small number of schools the high demand for places from children living outwith the school catchment area means that all available places are filled at a given stage in the school. This means that families moving into the school catchment area after 31 March may find it difficult or impossible to secure a place in the local school for one or all of their children. This can result in children travelling to more distant schools as the local school is at capacity due to placing requests from outwith the catchment area. In more acute cases this situation can result in children from the same family attending more than one school.

4.3 The Standards in Scotland's Schools Etc. Act 2000 gave local authorities an

additional right to refuse a placing request where the placing request is from a child who lives outwith the catchment area and placing the child in the school would prevent the Council from retaining reserved places at the school. Reserved places are defined as those which are reasonably required to accommodate pupils likely to become resident in the catchment area of the school in the school year to which the placing request relates.

4.4 Dundee City Council wishes to see school accommodation used effectively and efficiently. At present over 88% of all placing requests are met. To avoid disruption to education and to families it is desirable that places are available to children moving into the catchment area during the year.

4.5 Approval has previously been given for a number of places to be reserved for children moving into the catchment area of schools which have previously experienced problems in meeting these requests. The number of places is the minimum required at any one time. Places are therefore re-used during the year to accommodate requests from new Priority 1 pupils moving into the area.

4.6 The schools concerned and the allocation of reserved places for the school session 2008/2009 are listed in Appendix I. These numbers have been reviewed in the light of experience gained in session 2007/2008. For session 2008/2009 reserved places have been removed from Downfield Primary School and Forthill Primary school. This is due to the enhanced capacity of both schools as a result of a new building for Downfield Primary School and extensive refurbishment of Forthill Primary School. Lawside Academy has also been removed as it is being merged with St Saviour's High School and replaced by St Paul's RC Academy.

4.7 The following points should be noted concerning the deployment of reserved places:

- Reserved places are only created where space permits. Where sufficient Priority 1 pupils enrol to fill a class a reserved place cannot be created.
- No Priority 1 pupil will be refused a place while a reserved place exists.
- When all reserved places have been used for Priority 1 pupils moving into the catchment area no more places can be granted. If a pupil then leaves the school roll that place will again be reserved for Priority 1 pupils moving into the catchment area and will be allocated to such pupils as required.

4.8 The allocation of reserved places is reviewed annually by the Director of Education in the light of changing demand for places.

## **5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environment Assessment, Anti-Poverty and Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management.

5.2 There are no major issues.

## **6.0 CONCLUSIONS**

6.1 The proposed allocation of reserved places will help to ensure that while parental choice is maintained wherever possible, that will not unduly restrict parents moving into an area from sending their child or children to the local school.

## **7.0 CONSULTATION**

7.1 The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Depute Chief Executive (Finance), Head of Finance and Head Teachers of city schools have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

## **8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

8.1 None.

Anne Wilson  
Director of Education

18 February 2008

**APPENDIX I****ALLOCATION OF RESERVED PLACES IN DUNDEE SCHOOLS****School Session 2007 / 2008**

| School                  | Allocation of Reserved Places   | No of Places |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Barnhill PS             | 2 at P1, 1 per stage thereafter | 8            |
| Cleington PS            | 2 at P1, 1 per stage thereafter | 8            |
| Craigiebarns PS         | 1 per stage                     | 7            |
| Craigowl PS             | 3 at P1, 2 per stage thereafter | 15           |
| Eastern PS              | 1 per stage                     | 7            |
| St Joseph's RC PS       | 2 at P1, 1 per stage thereafter | 8            |
| SS Peter & Paul's RC PS | 2 at P1, 1 per stage thereafter | 8            |
| Grove Academy           | 2 in S1 and 2 in S2             | 4            |
| Harris Academy          | 2 in S1 and 2 in S2             | 4            |
| Morgan Academy          | 2 in S1 and 2 in S2             | 4            |
| St John's RC High       | 2 in S1 and 2 in S2             | 4            |
| St Paul's RC Academy    | 2 in S1 and 2 in S2             | 4            |

Criteria for Admission to Primary School

While parents/carers' wishes will be met whenever possible, if the number of places in any particular school is limited, priority for admission will be determined on the following basis:

**Priority 1** Children normally permanently resident within the catchment area of the specified school.

**Priority 2** Children **not** normally resident within the catchment area of the specified school, but having a brother or sister (or relative permanently living at the same address as part of an extended family) in attendance at that school. **See Note 1.**

**Priority 3** Children **not** normally resident within the catchment area of the specified school and having no brother or sister (or relative permanently living at the same address as part of an extended family) in attendance at that school. **See note 1.**

**Note 1** Provided that the member of the extended family for whom the placing request has been made has lived within that extended family for a period of at least 2 years.

Please note that for Primary 1 entrance the following August a sibling must be in the present Primary 1 to Primary 6.

**Note 2** Within denominational schools places in each priority category will be allocated first to children who have been baptised into the Roman Catholic Church and thereafter to other children within that category.

**Note 3** When it is necessary to refuse some placing requests for a school the following procedures will apply. For primary 1 August admissions requests received up to the February date given in the advertisement are dealt on distance from school. All other placing requests are held in chronological order.

## Criteria for Admission to Secondary School

While parents/carers' wishes will be met whenever possible, if the number of places in any particular school is limited, priority for admission will be determined on the following basis:

The priorities for admission to Secondary Schools from Session 2007/2008.

**Priority 1** Children attending a school designated as an associated Primary School of the specified school or a school outside Dundee the catchment area of which is within the catchment area of the specified school. Children who become normally resident within the catchment area of the specified school during or after P7.

Children normally permanently resident within the catchment area of the specified school but who have been unable to obtain a place at the primary school into whose catchment area they have moved following an unsuccessful application for enrolment or placing request.

**Children attending a primary school in Angus as at 31 August 2003, residing in Dundee and not having Priority 1 status for a Dundee secondary school will be designated as Priority 1 pupils for the Dundee secondary school within which catchment area they reside.**

**Priority 2** Children **not** normally resident within the catchment area of the specified school, but having a brother or sister (or relative permanently living at the same address as part of an extended family) **Note 1** in attendance at that school. Children normally resident within the catchment area of the specified school not attending a school designated as an associated primary school of the specified school but having a brother or sister (or relative permanently living at the same address as part of an extended family). **Note 1** in attendance at that school.

**Priority 3** Children normally resident within the catchment area of the specified school not attending a school designated as an associated primary school and having no brother or sister (or relative permanently living at the same address as part of an extended family) **Note 1** in attendance at that school.

**Priority 4** Children **not** normally resident within the catchment area of the specified school and having no brother or sister (or relative permanently living at the same address as part of an extended family) **Note 1** in attendance at that school.

**Note 1** Provided that the member of the extended family for whom the placing request has been made has lived within that extended family for a period of at least 2 years. Please note that for Secondary 1 entrance the following August a sibling must be in the present S1 to S5.

**Note 2** Within denominational schools places in each priority category will be allocated first to children who have been baptised into the Roman Catholic Church and thereafter to other children within that category.

**Note 3** When it is necessary to refuse some placing requests for a school the following procedures will apply. For Secondary 1 August admissions, placing requests received up to the date given in the advertisement are dealt with on distance from school. (Note that for St Paul's RC Academy this is the distance from the new school building in Gillburn Road). All other placing requests are held in chronological order.