

Sending your child to school



Information pack for parents and carers

Sending your child to school

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

Children's Services

Renfrewshire House

Cotton Street

Paisley PA1 1LQ

Phone number: 0300 300 0170

E-mail: cssupport@renfrewshire.gov.uk

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



Renfrewshire
Council

Denominational and non-denominational schools

Normally, your child will go to the catchment primary or secondary school for their area. Further information on placement allocations is available within our Admissions to Schools and Placing Request Policy.

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

Please note: You can register at only one school.

Additional support needs

If you are a Renfrewshire resident and you are making a placing request for an independent additional support needs school, you are advised to discuss this with the Education Manager with responsibility for ASN in Children's Services before submitting the application form. You can use the contact details above.

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 and application for Early Entry, is available from www.renfrewshire.gov.uk or by telephoning 0300 300 0170.

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 November. 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 October 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. Delay in registering may result in a place not being available. If you are unsure which school you should register at, please call 0300 300 0170 for advice.

Moving into Renfrewshire

If you are moving into Renfrewshire and your child has already been to a school elsewhere, you should contact your new catchment school with proof that you now live in the area. Parents/carers must provide satisfactory documentary evidence of the age of their child and that their family reside within the catchment area of the school. This evidence includes:

1. Child's full Birth Certificate
2. Most recent Council Tax Notice or if not currently resident in the property either a concluded missive or a signed and witnessed tenancy agreement/lease. We will check the information provided with other Council departments and our audit colleagues, this may include visiting your home to confirm residence. We may also check your address again prior to a school term commencing and if we suspect fraud we may rescind your place and refer the matter to the Procurator Fiscal.
3. Child Benefit Statement. (In the event that a Child Benefit Statement is not available, a Driving Licence or a Bank Statement/utility bill showing transactions over the most recent 3 months and the applicant's address may be accepted). Or If appropriate to current circumstances: Court Order / Looked After Child/Foster carer document(s).
4. Roman Catholic Baptismal Certificate (if applicable).

The list above is not exhaustive and the Council retains the right to ask for further information when proof of residency is not satisfied.

Transfer from primary to secondary school

A group of primary schools in an area are normally associated with a secondary school. All secondary schools have a catchment area which includes their associated primary schools.

Pupils transfer from primary school to secondary school between the ages of 11 and 12 (in most cases). If you live within Renfrewshire, Children's Services can tell you the name of the secondary school to which your child should normally transfer after the primary 7 stage.

When your child is due to transfer from primary to secondary at the beginning of a new session in August, if you live within Renfrewshire you will be notified based on your home address and denomination of primary school attended, of the secondary school where a place has been allocated.

If you wish to attend the alternative denomination of secondary school for your catchment area, to that allocated you will be asked to put this request in writing. There is no guarantee of entry when changing denomination at the secondary school stage.

If you live out with Renfrewshire you should contact your local authority regarding provision, you can also consider making a placing request to attend a Renfrewshire secondary school.

You should note that the granting of a placing request to a primary school, when transferring from primary to secondary school does not guarantee entry to the associated secondary school.

Places in schools will be allocated in line with the Council's Admissions to Schools and Placing Request policy.

Renfrewshire secondary school handbooks are available from individual secondary schools. Details of induction days and parents' meetings will be provided by secondary schools.

Further information / Admissions to Schools and Placing Request Policy can be found by visiting www.renfrewshire.gov.uk or by telephoning 0300 300 0170.

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. Please ensure all declarations are responded to, or we will be unable to process your application.

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. 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. The place being held for your child, at their catchment school will no longer be available.

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 to Children's 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. **If you do not receive an acknowledgement, please contact us, as we may not have received your application.**

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.

How decisions are made

After all catchment allocations have been decided, the director of Children's Services makes decisions about placing requests that are received in Renfrewshire House 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 placing request priorities.

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.

No decisions will be made for requests for the start of a new academic session, before 15 March in any given year.

Guidelines and conditions

By law we are allowed to produce guidelines on how we will decide admissions to schools (this information is contained within our Admissions to Schools and Placing Request Policy).

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.

Thereafter, for placing requests we give priority in the order below:

Placing Request Priorities
<p>1. Renfrewshire Resident Denominational Primary School only: The pupil is baptised Roman Catholic. Denominational Secondary School only: The pupil is baptised Roman Catholic and the pupil attends a primary school, associated with the relevant secondary school. If oversubscribed at this point a ballot, prioritising siblings is required. If applicable and siblings attend the school please provide name(s) and stage(s).</p>
<p>2. Renfrewshire and Non-Renfrewshire Residents The pupil has sibling(s) attend the school</p>
<p>3. Renfrewshire Resident For Secondary Schools only: The pupil attends a primary school, associated with the relevant secondary school</p>
<p>4. Renfrewshire Resident The pupil has medical needs (that cannot be accommodated in any other Renfrewshire school e.g. wheelchair user where no lift / stair lift is available).</p>
<p>5. Renfrewshire Resident Categories 1–4 do not apply</p>
<p>6. Non-Renfrewshire Resident Denominational Primary School only: The pupil is baptised Roman Catholic Denominational Secondary School only: The pupil is baptised Roman Catholic and the pupil attends a primary school, associated with the relevant secondary school</p>
<p>7. Non-Renfrewshire Resident For Secondary Schools only: The pupil attends a primary school, associated with the relevant secondary school</p>
<p>8. Non-Renfrewshire Resident The pupil has medical needs (that cannot be accommodated in any other Renfrewshire school e.g. wheelchair user where no lift / stair lift is available).</p>
<p>9. Non-Renfrewshire Resident Categories 1–8 do not apply</p>

In-line with placing request legislation, no decisions will be made for requests for the start of a new academic session, before 15 March in any given year.

Transport: Placing Requests

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.

Examples of where we do not have to admit your child to the school of your choice may be:

- 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.
- If the specified school you have requested is an additional support needs school and your child does not have a requirement for 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 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 for new session P1 and S1 requests (or within two months for requests made at other times of the year or for new session other stages applications), 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 Children's 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.

Pupil travel

We do not provide travel for placing requests, however for catchment pupils we do provide free home to school 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 3.2 kilometres (two miles) from their catchment school. The distances are based on the recognised shortest, safe walking route (further details available in the department's "Home to School Transport Policy". This policy may be reviewed at any time. We may provide transport for children with additional support needs. For more information, phone 0300 300 0170.

Gaelic Medium Education

Gaelic medium education is now an established sector in Scottish education.

Gaelic medium education includes children who come from families where Gaelic is spoken and children from families with little or no background in the language. Gaelic medium education is currently available in approximately half of the education authorities across Scotland.

Due to a low number of requests, and lack of availability of qualified staff, there is currently no provision within Renfrewshire itself, however, children from Renfrewshire currently have access to Gaelic medium education as a result of partnerships with other neighbouring local authorities. When making a placing request for this provision, the appropriate local authority placing request application form should be used.

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.