



# **Moray Council**

## **Revised Admissions to Schools Policy**

### **Comments / Enquiries Received**

**09 February 2016  
24 March 2016**

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*Please note that content within is unedited (except for the removal of personal data)*

## Correspondence

**Subject:** 20160210-Military Families Schooling Issue

**Received:** from 20160211 to 20160223

### Received by 24 individual respondents

Subject: Military Families Schooling Issue

Reference: Page 34 of the document found at this link -

<http://www.moray.gov.uk/minutes/data/CP20151209/Item%207-Appendix%20A.pdf>

Dear Moray Council and the Scottish Government,

I am concerned that the wording in this draft document does not address the main concern that Military Families, who are assigned to Moray temporarily from England, have regarding their children being placed in the year below their academic peer group. In some cases dropping from Secondary school back to Primary school. As you may know, the impact of this is that affected children are repeating work and therefore dropping behind their peers leading to them struggling to catch up when they return to England c.24 months later.

I would ask that the wording in the draft policy is amended to state that **“When placing children who arrive in Moray from other parts of the UK, including service children, their age will be taken into account along with many other factors including, the number of years the child has spent in formal education (see table in the document), their academic ability, maturity and special needs etc. Indeed the wishes of the parent and child must also be given serious consideration by the teaching professionals, when assessing the most appropriate class in which to enrol the child. Furthermore the longer term impact of the child’s needs should be taken into account, noting that service children, in particular, will return to England within c.24 months.”** This would then link well with the table in the draft document.

Could you please reassure us that indeed it will be possible, that the draft document will be changed to reflect this and finally that an appeals procedure, direct to the Corporate Director for Education, will be in place for parents?

Without such wording, we fear that nothing will change.

Kind regards

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### Additional points raised on behalf of Military families

Can the implementation date for the new policy be brought forward to August 2016?

There is a lack of transparency over the early entry criteria.

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# Revised Admissions to Schools Policy 2016

## Admissions to Schools Policy Proposal

### Response from the City and Royal Burgh of Elgin Community Council

#### Background

The Moray Council has conducted a statutory consultation exercise on its proposals to introduce revised “Admissions to Schools in Moray – Policy and Procedures”.

Various public meetings were held by the Council to explain its proposals. The Community Council was represented at the meeting in Elgin Library on the afternoon of 24<sup>th</sup> February 2016.

The Community Council has tried to look at the overall picture as it affects Elgin, and to look at the greatest overall benefit, while recognising that some parents and their children may well be adversely affected by the proposals.

#### The Consultation Process

The Community Council recognises that the consultation process, its timing and content, is driven by statute. The Community Council was disappointed at the low numbers of people who attended the various meetings, and concludes that parents are in general content with the proposals.

#### Merits of the Proposal

The Community Council generally supports the revised policy and procedures and believes that it is comprehensive. However the Community Council would make the following comments:

- 1) Para 5.7 of the policy and procedures – what would happen if the false information provided is discovered *after* the child has started at the school in question? While the Community Council would not wish to see fraud rewarded, we believe that any decision taken at that time should be made in the best interests of the child, and if that means that the child remains at that school, then so be it;
- 2) Appendix 2 – Priority Policy for Granting Placing Requests – if the parent or guardian can demonstrate that the child has specific medical needs (which fall short of the severe and complex needs detailed in Priority Order 1) which can be better met by attending that particular school as opposed to the child’s catchment area school, then that should rank as new Priority Order 3. We would envisage that being a rare occurrence;
- 3) Appendix 4 – Grounds of Refusal of Placing Requests – we would ask that when a written intimation of a refusal is sent to a parent or guardian, that it not rely solely on the written language from the statute alone e.g. for a parent to receive a letter advising that the placing request has been refused as “granting it would be likely to be seriously detrimental to the educational well-being of pupils attending the school” without further explanation can be upsetting to parents or guardians. Words of explanation in simple language should be added to the letter to explain.

**City and Royal Burgh of Elgin Community Council**  
**24<sup>th</sup> March 2016**

**Social Media**

No questions / comments were received.

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## Survey Monkey Comments

1.	<p>Having shared the information with St Thomas Parent Council, may we just acknowledge that the proposals provide a transparent structure to facilitate a decision making process. They take into account the needs of the majority and we recognise that challenges will arise on managing the minority of specific situations. It is as fair as it can be. We would however appreciate further clarity/comments on the following :</p> <p>When seeking placement in out of Zone school parent must put down a second choice. We believe that this year there was no space in the form for detailing the second choice.</p> <p>The statement “ The department and individual schools will continue to engage effectively with parent councils, parents and families, children and young people “ – Can you share with us the vision of how these communications may be carried out.</p>
2.	<p>There is only direction about where to find Grounds for Refusal of a Placing Request for pupils with ASN. It would be better if this list could be included as part of Appendix 6.</p>
3.	<p>I live 2 miles outside Elgin, to take away the dual zoning from Lhanbryde means a 14 mile round trip to Milnes every day resulting on my children having very little time for homework and sports after school, therefore detrimental to their education.</p>