

Midlothian School Admission Policy

Report by Derek Oliver, Executive Director Children, Young People and Partnerships (Acting)

Report for Decision

1 Recommendations

Council is recommended to approve the following:

- Agree to the revised admission to primary and secondary schools priority groups for denominational schools as set out in paragraph 3.3 of this report;
- Agree to carry out a statutory consultation on Midlothian Council's Admission Policy for Primary and Secondary Schools based on the above priority groups to commence early 2026; and
- Agree that all of the above recommendations are subject to the outcome of engagement with East Lothian Council with regard to the additional and quantifiable education costs associated with Loretto RC PS pupils accessing St David's RC HS for secondary denominational education.

2 Purpose of Report

At full Council 9th September, elected members agreed to remit to Midlothian Council's Education and Children's Services Cross Party Group to develop the detail of further statutory consultation on the admissions policy and bring back to the next Council for approval. The Council's Religious Representative was also to be co-opted onto the Cross Party Group on this matter.

This report sets out the agreement reached by the Education and Children's Services Cross Party Group, in conjunction with the Council's Religious Representative and Headteacher, St David's RC HS and as directed is being brought back to Council for approval.

Date 20TH November 2025

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3 Background

3.1 At full Council 9th September 2025, elected members considered a report on the outcome of the statutory consultation to vary admissions to Midlothian primary and secondary schools.

Midlothian Council considered fully the extent of views expressed by respondents to the consultation and the recommendations set out in the Council report ([School Admission Policy Consultation report to September 2025 Council](#)). Elected members approved the following recommendations:

- i. Agree that the revised School Admissions Policy will take effect from September 2025.
- ii. Agree to maintain the current arrangements as set out in paragraph 11 for the admission of pupils attending Loretto Roman Catholic (RC) Primary School which entitles them to attend St David's RC High School as their catchment denominational high school. Subject to recommendation iii being agreed with East Lothian Council and subject to consultation.
- iii. Instruct the Executive Director Children, Young People and Partnerships to take steps to recover the costs of school education and any ancillary costs on an ongoing basis from East Lothian Council for former Loretto RC Primary School pupils attending St David's RC High School from August 2025.
- iv. Instruct the Executive Director Children, Young People and Partnerships to take forward a) as set out below and any legally required steps, including carrying out any necessary statutory consultation (Ensuring that any statutory consultation provides clarity i) as to the catchment area of St David's RC High School and ii) the basis of admission to St David's RC High School):
 - a) set aside any existing agreements or arrangements, and enter into a new agreement with East Lothian Council setting out the basis of admission, including any priority given within the admission policy for pupils of Loretto RC Primary School who wish to attend St David's RC High School; with the instruction that any arrangement/agreement does not disadvantage Midlothian Catholic children and promotes the Roman Catholic ethos of St David's RC High School
- v. Remit to Midlothian Council's Education and Children's Services Cross Party Group and co-opt the Council's Religious Representative to the Cross Party Working Group to develop the detail of the consultation and bring back to the next Council for approval.

3.2 The Education and Children's Services Cross Party Group members consulted their respective political group members on the proposed priority groups for admission to Midlothian's denominational schools. The priority group list was agreed at a special Cross Party Group meeting held 18th November 2025 at which the Council's Religious Representative and Headteacher, St David's RC HS were present. As set out in the Schools Consultation Act (2010) a further statutory consultation will be required on the revised proposed priority groups and a report on the outcome of the consultation brought back to council for consideration. The statutory consultation will also include clarification on St David's RC HS catchment area.

3.3 The proposed priority groups for admission to Midlothian's denominational schools are as follows:

- Midlothian children complex needs provision class allocated by the Education Resources Group
- St David's RC HS catchment exceptional circumstances
- St David's RC HS catchment Roman Catholic with sibling
- St David's RC HS catchment Roman Catholic no sibling
- Loretto RC PS catchment Roman Catholic with sibling
- Loretto RC PS catchment Roman Catholic no sibling
- St David's RC HS catchment not Roman Catholic with sibling
- Loretto RC PS catchment not Roman Catholic with sibling
- All remaining St David's RC HS catchment children
- All remaining Loretto RC PS catchment children
- Non- St David's RC HS catchment children

3.4 Midlothian Council instructed the Executive Director Children, Young People and Partnerships to take steps to recover the costs of school education and any ancillary costs on an ongoing basis from East Lothian Council for former Loretto RC Primary School pupils attending St David's RC High School from August 2025. The Executive Director has written to East Lothian Council to progress discussions on known additional and quantifiable costs attributed to Loretto RC PS pupils accessing St David's RC HS for secondary denominational education.

3.5 Midlothian Council agreed on 9th September to maintain the current arrangements for the admission of pupils attending Loretto RC Primary School which entitles them to attend St David's RC High School subject to East Lothian Council reimbursing Midlothian Council for associated additional education and ancillary costs. Therefore, it is anticipated that East Lothian Council's decision on funding additional costs will be presented to Midlothian Council for consideration February 2026.

4 Report Implications (Resource, Digital and Risk)

4.1 Resource

If all of the recommendations are approved there will be no additional resources required and education recovery costs will mitigate additional costs arising directly from Loretto RC PS pupils accessing St David's RC HS for denominational secondary education.

4.2 Digital

None

4.3 Risk

The education authority has to comply with duties set out in Scottish legislation including the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 and The Education (School Placing Information) Regulations 2012 which set out the statutory duty on an education authority to publish its arrangements for the placing of all children in its schools, whether the child lives within Midlothian or outwith, and formulate guidelines to be followed with regard to placing in schools or if necessary in any particular school in the event of there being more placing

requests made than there are places available. The proposed variation to priority groups for admission, subject to the outcome of statutory consultation will mitigate any risk to the local authority of not fulfilling its statutory duties.

4.4 Ensuring Equalities

An Integrated Impact Assessment will be carried out and published if the recommendations set out in this report are approved and a statutory consultation is carried out.

Appendices

Appendix A – Additional Report Implications

Appendix B – Background information/Links

APPENDIX A – Report Implications

A.1 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

Midlothian will get it right for every child. Services are designed to ensure the rights of every child and young person in Midlothian will be upheld, as UNCRC is fully embedded into daily practice and processes.

A.2 Key Drivers for Change

Key drivers addressed in this report:

- Holistic Working
- Hub and Spoke
- Modern
- Sustainable
- Transformational
- Preventative
- Asset-based
- Continuous Improvement
- One size fits one
- None of the above

A.3 Key Delivery Streams

Key delivery streams addressed in this report:

- One Council Working with you, for you
- Preventative and Sustainable
- Efficient and Modern
- Innovative and Ambitious
- None of the above

A.4 Delivering Best Value

The implementation of the recommendations set out in this report will enhance best value in the delivery of Council services.

A.5 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

Communities and stakeholders will be invited to respond to any statutory consultation to be carried out subject to approval of recommendations set out in the report.

A.6 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

The report does not impact directly on Midlothian Council's performance and outcomes.

A.7 Adopting a Preventative Approach

Not applicable

A.8 Supporting Sustainable Development

Not applicable

APPENDIX B

Background Papers/Resource Links

[School Admission Policy Consultation report to September 2025 Council](#)