

ANGUS COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

7 MARCH 2000

PRIMARY SCHOOLS - AMENDMENTS TO SCHOOL CAPACITIES AND INTAKE LIMITS

REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

ABSTRACT

This report draws the Committee's attention to Regulations designed to ensure that class sizes in P1 to P3 are not allowed to rise above 30 pupils. The report describes the impact of these Regulations on the pupil capacities of all large and medium sized primary schools in Angus, and recommends that amendments to these school capacities and intake limits be considered.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Education Committee:

- (i) notes the contents of this report and notes also the contents of the Education (Lower Primary Class Sizes) (Scotland) Regulations 1999 (a copy of these Regulations is available for perusal in the Members' Lounge)
- (ii) approves the proposed school capacities and intake limits for 26 primary schools as the basis for consultation with School Boards (the Appendix lists all 26 schools affected, together with the proposed amendments to the school capacity and intake limit of each)
- (iii) notes that all School Boards affected have been alerted to this issue and their comments have been sought on the draft proposals summarised in the Appendix
- (iv) instructs me to report back to the Education Committee on the outcome of the consultation with School Boards as soon as possible.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Reference is made to the meeting of the Education Committee of 21 January 1997 when school capacities and intake limits for all Angus schools were approved (Article 6 of the minute refers).
- 2.2 Members of the Committee will be aware that central government has made a commitment to reduce class sizes in P1 to P3; Regulations were laid before Parliament on 7 April 1999 to help to make this commitment a reality. A copy of these Regulations is available for perusal in the Members' Lounge. National conditions of service for teachers mean that effectively no primary class can have more than 33 pupils in it, whereas the government's commitment is to ensure that no class in P1, P2 or P3 contains more than 30 pupils.
- 2.3 As part of the Excellence Fund for Schools, education authorities have been allocated some additional funding to minimise the number of P1 to P3 classes which do have more than 30 pupils. This additional funding is clearly of some assistance; for example in the school census of September 1999 there were only three early years classes in Angus

schools with more than 30 pupils (two P2 classes and one P3 class). Additional teacher staffing allocations in the current school session have supported 10 Angus primary schools in ensuring that no P1 to P3 class contains more than 30 pupils (although it should perhaps be noted that in a number of cases the lack of available additional classroom accommodation has meant that this has been accomplished by creating team-teaching arrangements).

- 2.4 The existence of Regulations means there is now a framework within which it should be possible to plan ahead a little more actively than was possible previously. This forward planning relates specifically to consideration of the numbers of pupils who can be enrolled in Primary 1 of any school each August.
- 2.5 In order to undertake the type of forward planning required, the previously agreed intake limits (and - by implication - school capacities) require to be reviewed.

3 IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOL CAPACITIES AND INTAKE LIMITS

- 3.1 For many primary schools, there is a simple link between the school capacity, the number of classrooms available and the intake limit. The simplest example would be a single stream primary school with seven classrooms; in any one year group there could have been as many as 33 pupils, with a resulting school capacity of 231 pupils (7 x 33). In this case, the school's intake limit would have been 33 pupils.
- 3.2 For schools which are clearly single-stream (or two-stream), the proposal now is to amend the intake limit from 33 pupils (or 66 pupils) to 30 pupils (or 60 pupils). However, the school capacity of such schools is derived from assuming that all P1 to P3 classes have no more than 30 pupils and all P4 to P7 classes can accommodate up to 33 pupils

(Note - There is clearly an argument for a maximum class size of 30 pupils throughout the primary school, but at present there is no statutory basis on which to establish such an arrangement)

- 3.3 A number of Angus primary schools are neither single stream nor two-stream schools; the reasons for this vary with, for example, older buildings not having been originally designed as primary schools, or modern buildings having been adapted to cater for nursery classes. In these cases, the linkage between school capacity and intake limit is less clear. For example, a primary school with 12 classrooms must cater for 7 different stages of the school and has little choice but to create composite classes between some stages. Teachers' national conditions of service continue to make provision for a maximum class size of 25 pupils in the case of a composite class. Thus, a 12-classroom primary school which is using all 12 classrooms may have little option but to arrange classes as noted below:

P1	30 pupils
P1/P2	16/8 pupils
P2	30 pupils
P2/3	8/16 pupils
P3	30 pupils
P4	33 pupils
P4/5	16/8 pupils
P5	33 pupils
P5/6	8/16 pupils
P6	33 pupils
P7	25 pupils
P7	25 pupils*
Total	335 pupils

- * Although in theory the P7 classes can obviously rise above 25 pupils, in practice, having had to operate with a maximum of 49 pupils between P4 and P7 there would appear to be little prospect of a sudden increase in roll in P7.

As can be seen from the above, it is possible for the school to take in 46 pupils in any one P1 year group, and to then allow this year group to rise to 49 pupils from P4 onwards, thereby creating effectively a school capacity of 335 pupils. Similar calculations are required for schools with 10 or 11 classrooms.

- 3.4 A small number of schools are effectively single-stream schools with one extra classroom or two-stream schools with one or two extra classrooms. These schools do not lend themselves readily to planning of the above type, and their capacities require to be considered on an ad hoc basis - as can be seen from the attached summary (Appendix).
- 3.5 For a small number of schools, there is an expectation that - within the next few years - some amendments may be required to their respective capacities (due to plans for extensions/removal of temporary accommodation/etc). These schools are highlighted in the Appendix purely for information at this stage.
- 3.6 There are 35 other primary schools managed by Angus Council which do not feature in the Appendix. Each of these schools is a small school and - without exception - each functions every year on the basis of the overwhelming majority of pupils being allocated to composite classes. In these circumstances, the amendments to class size maxima have no effect and therefore no changes are presently being proposed to their capacities or intake limits.

4 ADOPTION OF REVISED CAPACITIES AND INTAKE LIMITS

- 4.1 Before adopting the proposals in the Appendix, the Council is recommended to ascertain the views of School Boards. I have already written to School Boards alerting them to this issue. I have sought their comments on the contents of the Appendix with a request that any representations should reach me by 30 March 2000 at the latest.
- 4.2 It is hoped that any representations made by School Boards can be considered by the Education Committee at its meeting in April 2000. Thereafter - if possible - there would be merit in adopting a revised set of intake limits for all new P1 cohorts, starting with the cohort entering Primary 1 in schools in August 2000.

5 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 In accordance with the Standing Orders of the Council, this report has been the subject of consultation with the Chief Executive, the Director of Finance and the Director of Law & Administration.
- 5.2 In addition, as indicated above, the views of School Boards are being sought on the detailed proposals contained within the Appendix. Head Teachers of affected schools have also been asked for their comments on the contents of the Appendix.

Jim Anderson
Director of Education

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

ANGUS COUNCIL - EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

School Roll (roll Sept 1999)	School	Current Capacity	Number of Classrooms	Revised Capacity	Revised Intake Limit
<u>Arbroath</u>					
(426)	Hayshead	462	15	444	60
(297)	Inverbrothock	343	12	335	46
(345)	Ladyloan	343	12	335	46
(218)	Muirfield	343	12	335	46
(373)	Timmergreens	462	14	444	60
(306)	Warddykes	462	14	444	60
(165)	Friockheim	231	7	222	30
<u>Brechin</u>					
(282)	Andover	462	14	444	60
(453)	Maisondieu*	487	15	469	60
<u>Carnoustie</u>					
(376)	Carlogie	462	14	444	60
(458)	Kinloch	546	17	504	72
<u>Forfar</u>					
(283)	Chapelark	343	12	335	46
(262)	Kirkriggs	315	11	310	42
(402)	Langlands	462	14	444	60
(251)	Wellbrae	231	7	222	30
(164)	Letham	231	7	222	30
<u>Kirriemuir</u>					
(358)	Northmuir	462	14	444	60
(261)	Southmuir**	343	12	335	46
<u>Monifieth</u>					
(314)	Grange	462	14	444	60
(382)	Seaview	462	14	444	60
(208)	Birkhill***	231	7	222	30
<u>Montrose</u>					
(316)	Borrowfield	462	14	444	60
(403)	Lochside	462	14	444	60
(168)	Ferryden	231	7	222	30
(210)	Southesk	264	8	252	30
(n.a.)	Rosemount	n.a.	7	222	30

Notes

- * Maisondieu Primary School - in the medium term it is hoped that the current temporary accommodation can be replaced with a view to Maisondieu Primary School being able to accommodate a maximum of 14 classes (capacity 444, intake limit 60)
- ** Southmuir Primary School - plans are well advanced to build a new 12 classroom Southmuir Primary School (capacity 335, intake limit 46)
- *** Birkhill Primary School - active consideration continues to be given to putting together a funding package to enable an extension to be built to Birkhill Primary School (proposed capacity 260 pupils, intake limit 36 pupils)