sustainable thriving achieving
East Dunbartonshire Council
www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk

People Matter
Education, People & Business

Education Procedure Manual 3/15

THE CAPACITY OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS

For

Teachers and Employees on Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT) Conditions of Service

Effective from: September 2023

Education, People & Business

This document can be provided in large print, Braille or on audio cassette and can be translated into other community languages. Please contact the Council's Corporate Communications Team at: East Dunbartonshire Council, 12 Strathkelvin Place, Southbank, Kirkintilloch G66 1TJ
Tel: 0300 123 4510

本文件可按要求翻譯成中文，如有此需要，請電 0300 123 4510。

اس دستاویز کا درخواست کرنے پر (اردو) زبان میں ترجمہ کیا جا سکتا ہے۔ براہ مہربانی فون نمبر 0300 123 4510 پر رابطہ کریں۔

ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਦਾ ਮੰਗ ਕਰਨ ਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ 0300 123 4510 ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

Gabhaidh an sgriobhainn seo cur gu Gàidhlig ma tha sin a dhìth oirbh. Cuiribh fòin gu 0300 123 4510

अनुरोध करने पर यह दस्तावेज हिन्दी में भाषांतरित किया जा सकता है। कृपया 0300 123 4510 पर फोन कीजिए।

Contents

Version Control History

Version No.	Effective Date	Details of change from previous version	Date Approved	New version no.
-	Apr 2017	Update to new template; updating terminology.	09/09/23	1.0

GDPR Statement

East Dunbartonshire Council holds, uses and processes information in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations and all other relevant national data protection laws. Further information detailing how East Dunbartonshire holds and uses personal information and copies of privacy notices used throughout the Council are available on our website.

Policy Review Statement

This policy will be reviewed in line with:

- Legislative Change
- Changes to SNCT National Conditions of Service
- Other external factors
- Feedback on the effectiveness of the policy
- Requests for review by Elected Members, Trade Unions and/or Management

1.0 Purpose

1.1 This procedure is to establish the capacity of primary schools.

2.0 Scope

2.1 This procedure applies to all primary schools within the East Dunbartonshire Council educational establishment.

3.0 References & Related Documentation

3.1 The following documents should be referenced when considering this procedure:

- Education (Lower Primary Class Sizes) (Scotland) Regulations 1999

4.0 Introduction

The capacity of a primary school is the maximum number of pupils the Council believes the school can accommodate. The capacity considers factors such as sizes of classroom bases (classrooms) and the number of pupils in each year stage.

An accurate capacity of each school requires to be defined for various purposes, as outlined below.

4.1 Forward Planning

To enable the assessment of the need for future investment in the school estate, *e.g.,* the building of new schools and refurbishment of existing schools. Forward planning may involve examining factors such as birth rates, new housing builds and migration patterns.

4.2 Placing Requests

To establish a clear and consistent basis for determining whether placing request applications may be granted or refused, and to identify schools which may currently, or in the future, have capacity issues due to placing request acceptance.

4.3 Performance Indicators

Accurate capacity and roll information for each school is required to monitor and evaluate the uptake of primary school places.

4.4 Curricular and Organisational Needs

To establish the number of children for who the school can provide the required curriculum, and to enable any changes to staffing standards, methodologies or resources.

4.5 Informing consultations on proposed changes to the school estate

To meet legal requirements to provide clear, accurate information in consultations on proposed changes to the school estate.

4.6 Scottish Government Policy

To take account of the move towards meeting the priorities and objectives set by the Scottish Government, such as:

- ensuring that P1 to P7 classes comply with primary class size legislation
- implementing changes to curriculum policy, and to guidance and to the provision of facilities required to deliver the curriculum.

5.0 Determining Area Per Pupil In Classroom Bases

5.1 To determine how many pupils may be accommodated in a classroom base, the size of the free floor area in the space is calculated in square metres (m^2). This total area is then divided by 1.7 m^2 for closed class bases (*e.g.*, traditional cellular classrooms, or semi cellular reference design primary schools, or 1.5 m^2 for open class bases, and the total is rounded down to the nearest whole number.

5.2 Appendix 1 provides a list of the recommended area per pupil figures for the commonly found rooms within primary schools.

6.0 Applying Class Size Maxima

6.1 Once the maximum number of pupils that can be accommodated in a classroom base is known, current class size maxima should be adhered to:

- P1: 25 pupils
- P2-P3: 30 pupils
- P4-P7: 33 pupils
- Composite class (of any stages): 25 pupils

6.2 It should be noted that, on occasion, a P1, P2 or P3 class may contain more than the statutory maximum number of pupils, when 'excepted pupils' have been placed in the school through the Education (Lower Primary Class Sizes) (Scotland) Regulations 1999. In addition, the regulations allow for such classes to be taught by more than one teacher (“team teaching”), provided that the maximum number of pupils per teacher present does not exceed the prescribed maximum for that year group. However, for the purposes of capacity calculation, such circumstances are not considered.

7.0 Capacity

There are three types of primary school capacity:

- Maximum Physical Capacity
- Working Capacity
- Realistic Planning Capacity

7.1 Maximum Physical Capacity

7.1.1 The maximum physical capacity takes account only of the available floor area and the normal function of the space.

7.1.2 Maximum physical capacity is calculated by

- determining how many class bases are in the school
- determining the available floor size of the class bases
- determining the maximum number of pupils which could be accommodated in each class base, irrespective of current class size restrictions

7.1.3 Depending on the size of the classroom base, the maximum physical capacity may exceed the upper class size maximum.

7.2 Planning Capacity

7.2.1 Planning capacity is the measure of the total number of pupils which could be accommodated in a school, based on the total number of class bases, the size of those spaces and the maximum number of pupils applied to the size of the space.

The Planning Capacity is based on a theoretical class distribution.

7.2.2 Planning capacity is used for broad strategic issues relating to school provision, such as forward planning of the school estate, or to assess the potential impact of new government policies.

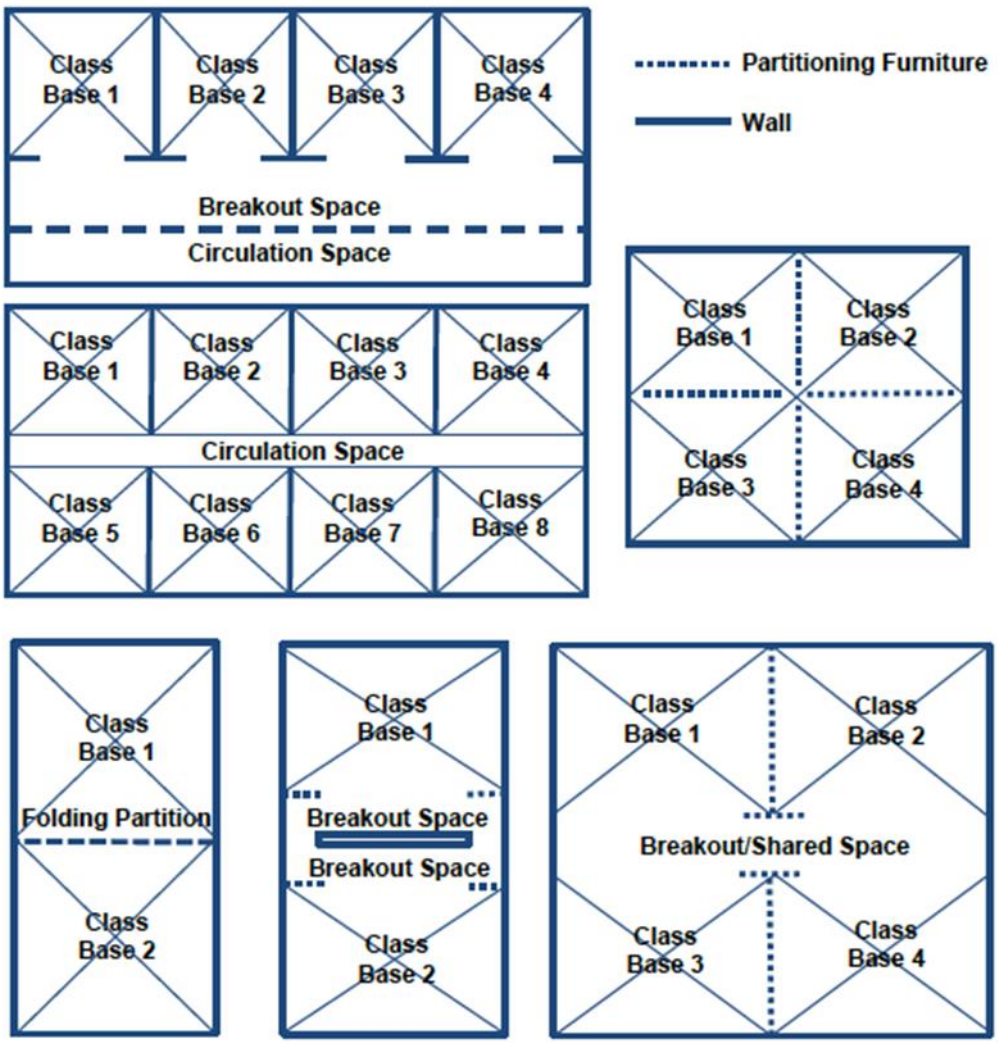
7.2.3 When calculating planning capacity, due to the lower class size limits introduced in 2010, it is necessary to account for different class size limits at different stages. To do this, an idealised class distribution is determined based on the number of spaces in the school. In determining this idealised distribution, the Council will use its knowledge and professional experience to judge appropriate distributions. This is considered to be a realistic planning capacity. This will be reviewed annually by the Council, and may be recalculated if required.

7.2.4 Realistic planning capacity is not intended to reflect the specific class distribution in the school in any given year, though it may do occasionally coincide with specific distributions. It should be noted that some pupil distributions may be more ‘efficient’ than others. Some schools, in some years, may operate more closely to their planning capacity than they may be able to in other years. However, variance in pupil numbers at each stage may require that schools operate a class distribution different from the idealised class distribution. It is important to note that planning capacity is generally a theoretical measure, and therefore the capacity it represents may not be attained by the pupil/class distribution in the school.

7.2.5 Planning capacity includes all class bases in a school which are designated for full-time teaching. This includes all closed, cellular, semi-open and open class bases.

7.2.6 The configuration of class base varies from school to school. In many cases, and often in newly built schools, class bases have moved away from traditional closed/cellular

classrooms. Many new schools are being designed where class bases open out to breakout or to circulation spaces. The illustration below highlights some of the different layouts which are becoming increasingly common. It should be noted that it is only the designated class bases, as marked in the illustrations, which should be included in any capacity calculation.



7.2.7 Planning Capacity calculation includes only identified classroom bases. It does not include ancillary spaces, such as staff rooms or medical rooms, nor General Purpose (GP) areas, such as Music rooms or IT suites.

7.2.8 The following areas are examples of ancillary spaces that are not included in capacity calculations:

- Staff rooms
- Meeting rooms
- Offices
- Storerooms
- Smaller learning support or breakout areas not suitable to be a GP area
- Reception area

- Areas designated solely for community use
- Toilets/wash areas
- Changing rooms
- Kitchen/dining facilities
- Medical rooms
- General Purpose (GP) areas

7.2.9 A General Purpose (GP) area is an activity space which is set aside to be used for educational purposes other than classroom based teaching. GP areas can be, for example, classroom bases or open spaces within a school, such as breakout space next to a classroom base. Any breakout space being used as a GP area should be of sufficient size to accommodate the required number of pupils undertaking the necessary activity.

7.2.10 GP provision in schools varies and is dependent upon such factors as the design of the school and pressures resulting from fluctuations in school roll numbers.

7.2.11 The number of GP rooms in each school should be in proportion to the number of class bases. Please see Appendix 2 for further details.

7.2.12 A sample capacity calculation is shown in Appendix 3.

7.3 Working Capacity

7.3.1 Working Capacity is the planning capacity adjusted annually to take account of the total number of pupils which can be accommodated in a school in a particular school session. The Working Capacity is adjusted based on the organisational needs of the school *i.e*. it takes into account pupil roll, composite classes, number of teachers *etc*.

The Working Capacity is based on the actual class distribution.

7.3.2 The Working Capacity should be used to determine the number of places available in a particular school session. Working Capacity can also be used to monitor how efficiently the school estate is used, and as a measurement against pupil roll to determine sufficiency. However, it is not a physical measure of the school estate.

7.3.3 Working Capacity is calculated using the same process that is used to calculate Planning Capacity, but takes into account the current class distribution within the school year. The Working Capacity may vary annually, due to such factors as changes in the school roll or structural modifications to the school.

7.3.4 It is the working capacity at each stage which should be used in considering placing request applications, as well as in other matters where specific information related to a particular session is required.

7.3.5 Working capacity is calculated by

- determining how many class bases are in the school
- determining the available floor size of the class bases

- determining the maximum number of pupils which could be accommodated in each class base, contingent on current class size restrictions, and on the current year stage in the class base, and on the size of the room.

8.0 Schedules Of Accommodation

8.1 Accurate up-to date information on capacity and an awareness of the implications of curricular change for accommodation needs are vital in ensuring that schools make the best possible use of its provision. An annually updated schedule of accommodation records and calculates the capacity of each primary school. A schedule of accommodation is issued to primary schools each school session, in order for the Council to revise and recalculate capacity.

8.2 There may, on occasion, be a need to review the accommodation allocation in a school more than once in a year - for example, if significant changes have taken place in the school after the commencement of the current session.

Appendix 1: Calculation of Capacity

Educational Activity	Recommended Area / Pupil (m^2)
Class base in enclosed classroom	1.7
Class base in open classroom	1.5
Gymnasium	4.0
Assembly Hall	0.5
General Purpose spaces (in schools of traditional design)	1.7
General Purpose spaces (in schools of open plan design)	1.5

$$\text{Recommended Maximum Capacity} = \frac{\text{Area of room } (m^2)}{\text{Area per pupil } (m^2)}$$

Appendix 2: Classroom Accommodation

Recommended Allocation of General Purpose (GP) Rooms

Class Bases	Number of GP Rooms
1 to 4	0
5 to 7	1
8 to 14	2
15 to 20	3
21 to 25	4

Appendix 3: Calculation of School Capacity

A3.1 Classrooms dedicated to class teaching

Name of School: Sample Primary School

Room No.	Area (m^2)	Current Use	Area / Pupil	Maximum Physical Capacity	Planning Capacity Class distribution	Planning Capacity	2017-18 Class Distribution	2017-2018 Working Capacity
1	60	Classroom	1.7	35	P7	33	P1	25
2	57	Classroom	1.7	33	P6	33	P1	25
3	57	Classroom	1.7	33	P5	33	P2	30
4	50	Classroom	1.7	29	Composite	25	Composite	25
5	52	Classroom	1.7	30	Composite	25	P3	30
6	63	Classroom	1.7	37	P4	33	P4	33
7	52	Classroom	1.7	30	Composite	25	Composite	25
8	55	Classroom	1.7	32	P3	30	P5	32
9	55	Classroom	1.7	32	P2	30	P6	32
10	58	Open Plan Class	1.5	38	P1	25	P7	33
Total:	**559**			**329**		**292**		**290**

a) Maximum Physical Capacity Calculation

This figure is obtained by dividing the area of the room by the area per pupil figure for the type of room. It is purely a calculation and does not depend on class size maxima.

e.g. Room 1

Area = $60m^2$ Type of Classroom = Enclosed Area per pupil = $1.7m^2$

Maximum Physical capacity = $\frac{60}{1.7}$ = 35.29 = 35 pupils

Based purely on area – the maximum number of pupils that can fit into classroom 1 is 35. This classroom is therefore suitable for any year group.

This is repeated for all class bases, and totalled, giving the school maximum physical capacity.

If the physical capacity calculation was 29 (*e.g.,* Room 4) the year groups that can use this classroom is limited to Primary 1 or a composite class due to the class size maximum (of 25) and they physical size of the room (29).

This figure is unlikely to change unless there is a physical alteration to the room.

b) Planning Capacity Calculation

The planning capacity is a theoretical figure, based on a model class distribution, and therefore the class size maxima are considered in this calculation.

In this sample school, there are 10 classrooms; it is assumed that there will be one class of each year group (= seven classrooms used), with three classrooms used for composite classes. In this example, it has been assumed that Room 1 is used for a Primary 7 class, therefore the maximum number of pupils permitted in Room 1 is 33.

The Planning Capacity for Room 1 is therefore 33.

This is repeated for all class bases, and totalled, giving the school planning capacity.

This figure may change if the number of classrooms changes.

c) Working Capacity Calculation

This calculation is based on the actual class distribution. In the sample school it was assumed that there would be one of each year group (P1-P7) with three composition classes (all at the class maximum).

Following registration, there was actually two P1 classes, one class each of P2-P7 and two composite classes. In addition, the P5 and P6 classes were not at the maximum (32 in each class).

Therefore, the Working Capacity calculation is:

Year Group	Number of actual pupils
Composite	25
Composite	25
P1	25
P1	25
P2	30
P3	30
P4	33
P5	32
P6	32
P7	33
TOTAL	**290**

This figure will change, as the number of actual pupils changes each school session.

A3.2 Class Bases formally allocated to other uses

Room No.	Area (m^2)	Current Use	Maximum Physical Capacity	Comments
11	58	Non-school use - playgroup	34	
12	59	Non-school use - nursery class	34	
13	45	Non-school use - local authority team	26	
TOTAL	**162**		**94**	

These rooms are included in the Schedule of Accommodation as, whilst not currently used as a class base, may be in the future. This allows the school to identify possible areas for expansion, should the school roll increase.