



Education Procedure Manual 3/14

NUMBER OF PUPILS IN ROOMS

For

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

Effective from: April 2025

Education, People & Business



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Version Control History

Version No.	Effective Date	Details of change from previous version	Date Approved	New version no.
	Sep 2009	Updated to new template; updating terminology.	28/03/25	1.0

GDPR Statement

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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 provides detail on the maximum number of pupils who may be suitably accommodated in the various classrooms of every educational establishment.

2.0 Scope

- 2.1 This applies to all educational establishments within East Dunbartonshire Council.

3.0 References & Related Documentation

- 3.1 The following documents should be referenced when considering this procedure:
- Schools General (Scotland) Regulations 1975
 - Equalities Act 2010

4.0 Procedure

- 4.1 Regulation 8 of the Schools General (Scotland) Regulations 1975 indicates that an education authority shall determine the maximum number of pupils who may be suitably accommodated in the various classrooms of every educational establishment. This regulation serves to control (for health or safety reasons) the number of pupils and staff who can reasonably be accommodated within a room at any time. The purpose of this manual is to indicate the method to be adopted when determining this number for every room in your school.
- 4.2 Room capacity is a function of a number of factors including the total floor area, the available free floor area, the total volume of the room, the ventilation system within the room, the number and position of exits from the room and, significantly, the use being made of the room.
- 4.3 It is recognised that any one room can be used for a wide range of educational activities including class teaching, practical work, audio visual presentations and tutorials. It is difficult in some situations to define the limits of a room or teaching space, for example where a primary school is of open plan design. While a room may have a capacity of 30 for a normal class teaching situation, this capacity is capable of being increased beyond this number for large group activities such as viewing a DVD: on the other hand, the same room may only be suitable for fewer than 30 pupils when they are to be engaged in certain practical work.
- 4.4 In the interest of pupils and teachers alike there should be determined a 'recommended operational capacity' for every room or teaching space based on its total area as it relates to its normal function. To assist in the determination of capacity the recommended minimum area per pupil for various learning and teaching activities is shown in appendix 1 where recognition of the anticipated area occupied by fixed furniture as well as movable desks, chairs *etc.* has been incorporated within the area/pupil factor. An area's capacity may be exceeded or reduced if different activities are substituted for the normal activity. However, it must be noted that the operational capacity is also liable to be modified in practice by other factors such as the terms of

the teachers' contract.

- 4.5 It is also recognised that in individual situations there may very well be a room which because of its design and/or its layout and/or an abnormally high proportion of fitted furniture has a capacity which in the interests of the health and safety of pupils and staff alike should be set at less than the capacity which would be determined by the formulae specified in [Appendix 1](#). A modification to the notional capacity must then be made. In such cases the head teacher should approach School Planning & Improvement Team for confirmation of an assessment of the acceptable maximum capacity for that room.
- 4.6 To meet the terms of Regulation 8 a record of the capacity of each room must be maintained in the school. A regularly updated schedule of accommodation meets this requirement. The schedule for your own school should be readily available to members of your staff for reference. You should also inform the staff and the Head of Education of any changes to the schedule as they are made.

Appendix 1: Recommended Occupational Capacity

$$\text{Recommended Occupational Capacity} = \frac{\text{area or room (m}^2\text{)}}{\text{area per pupil (m}^2\text{)}}$$

Primary	Normal Teaching Activity (area per pupil, m²)
Classroom in traditional school	1.7
Class base in open or semi-open plan school	1.5
Gym	4.0
Assembly Hall	0.5
Audio/Visual	1.4
General purpose (in schools of traditional design)	1.7
Tutorial/noisy/quiet/withdrawal activity	These areas vary in size in existing schools. As per pupil will vary widely depending on use.
Secondary	
Classrooms, tutorial rooms	1.5
Music practice rooms	2.0
Games hall	10.0
Gymnasium	5.0
Fitness rooms	4.0
Pool	4.0
Dance Studio	4.0
Language Labs	1.5
Computer rooms	1.5
Speech and Drama areas	2.5
Business Studies areas	3.0
Home Economics areas	3.5
Art areas	3.0
Technical areas	4.0
Technical Drawing areas	2.5
Technological Studies areas	3.0
Departmental lecture areas	0.8 or number of fixed seats
Science laboratories	3.0
Assembly Hall	0.5
Library/resource	2.0
School lecture theatre	Number of fixed seats
Educational Support Areas	1.5
As defined in Procedure Manual No. 3/16	
Nursery	
Bases	1.0
Activity Areas	2.5