

Roll increases at Giffnock school

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Courtesy The Extra

St Ninian's High School has been allowed to exceed its maximum intake of 300, with 320 students set to join for 2019/20.

The school currently has an 'agreed planning capacity' of 1,704 but, at September 2018, there were 1,776 students.

A report to councillors, by Director of Education Mhairi Shaw, states: "Schools can operate above their planning capacity. This is often the case in very popular schools, since they inevitably attract placing requests and so fill pupil year groups.

"Exceptionally efficient timetabling is used at St Ninian's to ensure that there is the most effective use of all resources including maximum room utilisation."

Following a 2016 policy change for dealing with oversubscribed schools, East Renfrewshire Council agreed to fund new temporary teaching rooms at St Ninian's.

Officers are currently working with the school to ensure these are in place for 2021/22, when the school capacity will temporarily increase to 1,818 pupils.

"The additional accommodation to temporarily increase the school's planning capacity is required over the period up until the 2023-24 S1 intake progresses through the school," the report states.

"Thereafter, for the foreseeable future, there are expected to be sufficient places for baptised Roman Catholic children, residing in St Ninian's catchment, to be placed in the school with an S1 intake of 300.

"It is planned that once the transitional period is over, accommodation at St Ninian's will be reconfigured to revert to the current planning capacity and provide the school with additional social/ancillary space in discussion with the head teacher."

In a Roman Catholic school, should catchment applications exceed available places then the highest priority is given to pupils baptised in the Roman Catholic faith.

During the S1 application process for August 2019, 279 pupils have been guaranteed a place, leaving space for a further 22 pupils.

There are an additional 55 children – 31 who are Catholic – now in the St Ninian's catchment area seeking a place in August, taking the school into oversubscription.

Schools are now offering much more than the 'typical' school meal.

Legal challenge forces East Renfrewshire schools to put vegan meals on the menu

Under current arrangements, this would mean a ballot for the 22 available places between the 31 Catholic pupils.

However, 320 S1 places have been allocated to the school, allowing all pupils who attended an associated primary school and those baptised Catholic to join.

The remaining 13 pupils have been allocated a place at their nondenominational catchment school.

The report states: "In summary we have placed all baptised Roman Catholic S1 pupils who applied for St Ninian's for August 2019, as known at March 2019.

"Of the total 320 catchment pupils at St Ninian's, 246 are baptised Roman Catholic children and we have also been able to accommodate an additional 74 catchment children of other faiths/none applying to the school."

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