



**REPORT TO: EDUCATION, CHILDREN'S AND LEISURE SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON 20 FEBRUARY 2024**

**SUBJECT: INFORMATION REPORT: PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL
CAPACITY, OCCUPANCY AND GENERAL PURPOSE SPACES
2023/24**

**BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND
ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)**

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of the Primary and Secondary School Planning Capacities, Occupancy and General Purpose Spaces for session 2023/24.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (D) (1) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to all the functions of the Council as Education Authority.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Primary School Functional Capacities have been reported annually to this Committee. Secondary School Functional Capacities have been included since 2018/2019.
- 2.2 The Functional Capacity of the school is the maximum number of pupils that a school can accommodate in any one year taking into account the organisational needs of the school and in particular the age distributions of the pupils.
- 2.3 Guidance to Local Authorities on the determination of "School Capacity" set out by the Scottish Government is followed when calculating the primary school capacity in order to increase consistency across the country ([Determining Primary School Capacity Guidance 2014](#)). Two measures of primary school capacity are used and are described as **Planning Capacity** and **Working Capacity**. Planning Capacity is the physical, theoretical measure of the total number of pupils which can be accommodated in a school, based on the total number of teaching spaces, the size of these spaces and the class size maxima. Working Capacity is the more realistic measure of the total number of pupils which can be accommodated in a school in a particular school session. The Planning Capacity is adjusted based on the organisational needs of the school that session, eg taking into account pupil roll, composite classes, etc to calculate Working Capacity.

- 2.4 In previous reports Planning Capacity was referred to as “Physical Capacity” and Working Capacity as “Functional Capacity”. In line with the above guidance we will now use the terms **Planning Capacity** and **Working Capacity** when reporting school capacities.
- 2.5 The Working Capacity for each school is calculated on census day in September each year, which in this case was 13 September 2023.
- 2.6 The Working Capacity and percentage occupancy for session 2023/24 for primary schools are attached in **Appendix 1** (schools in alphabetical order) and **Appendix 2** (schools according to Associated School Group). Secondary school capacities and percentage occupancy are attached in **Appendix 3**.
- 2.7 In Moray the maximum class size in Primary 1 has been set at 25 and in Primary 2 and 3 it has been set at 30 for session 2022/23. The maximum class size in Primaries 4-7 has been set at 33.
- 2.8 The number of General Purpose (GP) spaces within each primary school was also reviewed, see **Appendix 4**. A GP space is where a class or group of children can go to work outwith their classroom. It does not require to be the same size as a classroom as there is no requirement to have desks or chairs in these spaces. The area must exceed 18 square metres in order for it to be deemed suitable.
- 2.9 GP spaces include, halls, dining areas, computer suites and libraries. The greater the number of classes the greater need there is for GP spaces. Thus the ratio of class spaces to GP spaces is increased at 4, 7, 10, 14 and 19 classes, see **Appendix 5**.
- 2.10 In some schools where the school is under capacity, empty classrooms are used as GP spaces. These are not included in the total of GP spaces as they are designated class bases and would be used as such if needed.
- 2.11 The number of children with Additional Support Needs (ASN) in schools who require access to a separate space out with their class base has increased over recent years. In many schools this has led to designated class bases being used as additional ASN spaces, e.g. nurture rooms, sensory rooms or quiet rooms. These class bases used for the purposes of supporting ASN are currently included in the planning or working capacity figures. Their re-categorisation would reduce the overall capacity by 12 rooms over 10 schools.

3. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

There is no direct connection to either of these plans from this report.

(b) Policy and Legal

The adoption of the Scottish Government 2014 guidance will see a differential between the proposed Planning Capacity and the current Physical Capacity; in the majority of cases it will be lower. This may have an impact on current or future Developer Obligations guidance and

agreements. These will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and reported to Committee within the next Learning Estate Strategy Programme Delivery update planned for the next Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee.

(c) Financial implications

The continuing over provision of pupil spaces has ongoing resource implications for the council.

(d) Risk Implications

There are no risk implications arising directly from this report.

(e) Staffing Implications

There are no staffing implications arising directly from this report.

(f) Property

There are no property implications arising directly from this report.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

There is no requirement for an equality impact or socio economic impact assessment to be carried out.

(h) Consultations

Primary and Secondary School Head Teachers and Senior Officers in Education, Head of Education, Acting Head of Education, Resources and Communities, Chief Financial Officer, Legal Services Manager, Equal Opportunities Officer, and Caroline O'Connor, Committee Services Officer have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report as regards their respective areas of responsibilities.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 Committee is asked to note the Primary and Secondary School Capacities, Occupancy and General Purpose spaces for Session 2023/24.

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Background Papers:

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