

PRINCIPLES OF PUPIL ADMISSION FOR BASIC EDUCATION

PUPIL ADMISSION

The admission of new pupils for comprehensive education is comprised of three parts in this policy decision.

- 1) The assignment of a pupil's local school (Basic Education Act, section 6).
- 2) The admission of a pupil for educational arrangements with confirmed separate selection criteria. These include language immersion education, English-language education, bilingual education, Montessori education or specialised education (Basic Education Act, section 28).
- 3) The admission of a pupil to a school other than his/her local school as a 'secondary applicant' (Basic Education Act, section 28).

The maximum number of new teaching groups to be formed and/or pupils to be admitted to each school is decided by the Committee for each school year. The decision on each pupil's school study place is made for the duration of the grades in that school; in joint comprehensive school for the duration of the pupil's education.

CATCHMENT AREAS

A local school is assigned according to the catchment area in which the pupil lives. There are seven catchment areas: Espoonlahti, Central Espoo, Eastern Leppävaara, Western Leppävaara, Matinkylä-Olari, Northern Espoo and Tapiola.

DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY IN PUPIL ADMISSIONS

Decision-making authority in decisions concerning pupil admissions is specified in the Committee decision on the transfer of decision-making authority based on education legislation (delegation decision).

1. ASSIGNING A LOCAL SCHOOL TO THE PUPIL

A local school will be assigned to the pupil primarily in the following cases:

- The pupil is entering first grade
- The pupil is transferring to seventh grade (unless the pupil is attending a joint comprehensive school)
- The subsequent grade is not found in the school which the pupil is attending the following school year
- The pupil has moved

1.1. Entering first grade

The pupil will be assigned to a local school taking into consideration all the new pupils living in the catchment area, health or other special reasons, the sibling basis and school commutes. Furthermore, any local school preferences expressed by the guardians will also be taken into consideration, if possible.

Every effort is made to assign a local school that will not require the municipality to provide school transport. If the local school assigned ends up requiring the municipality to provide school transport, primary consideration will be given to schools which can be reached using public transportation.

1.1.1. Assigning a local school to pupils entering the first grade

Local schools are assigned within each catchment area in the following order of priority:

1) Pupils with a health reason or other special reason

First, a local school will be assigned to pupils with a health-related or other special reason that must be taken into consideration when assigning a school.

A health-related reason involves, for example, cases in which a pupil is unable to make long trips to school due to an illness or is unable to study in a school with lots of stairs due to a physical disability. In such cases, the reason given is such that it has a direct impact on what kind of school would be suitable for the pupil in question. Guardians are required to submit a medical certificate by a specified deadline before the local school has been assigned.

A special reason involves, for example, cases in which a pupil needs special assistance or special education, whose arrangement requirements must be taken into consideration when assigning a local school. Guardians are required to submit a document explaining the special reason(s) by a specified deadline before the local school has been assigned.

A special reason might also involve cases in which the pupil has a specifically personal reason that will have a direct impact on what kind of school would be suitable for him/her. Guardians are required to submit an expert statement by a specified deadline before the local school has been assigned.

2) Pupils with a sibling basis

Second, a younger sister/brother living at the same address will be assigned to the same local school attended by an older sister/brother at the time the decision is made, if the guardians so desire.

The sibling basis is not applied if, at the time of the decision and in the same school, the older sister or brother

- attends the highest grade
- attends English-language education, language immersion education, bilingual education, Montessori education, or specialised education
- is a secondary pupil
- attends a preparatory education group/temporary education group for immigrants
- attends a special class.

3) School commute

Third, a local school will be assigned to other pupils in such a way that ensures that the school commute for all pupils within the catchment area is as safe and short as possible.

4) Local school preference

Fourth, the local school preferences expressed by guardians are taken into consideration, if possible.

1.2. Transferring to seventh grade

The pupil will be assigned to a local school taking into consideration all the pupils entering seventh grade living in the catchment area, the A language studies the pupil has already started, health or other special reasons, the sibling basis and school commute. Furthermore, any local school preferences expressed by the guardians will also be taken into consideration, if possible.

Every effort is made to assign a local school that will not require the municipality to provide school transport. If the local school assigned ends up requiring the municipality to provide school transport, primary consideration will be given to schools which can be reached using public transportation. Pupils attending a combined school are not assigned a local school when they transfer to seventh grade.

1.2.1. Assigning a local school to pupils transferring to the seventh grade

Local schools are assigned to pupils within each catchment area, taking the continuation of A language studies already begun into consideration, in the following order of priority:

1) Pupils with a health reason or other special reason

First, a local school will be assigned to pupils with a health-related or other special reason that must be taken into consideration when assigning a school.

A health-related reason involves, for example, cases in which a pupil is unable to make long trips to school due to an illness or is unable to study in a school with lots of stairs due to a physical disability. In such cases, the reason given is such that it has a direct impact on what kind of school would be suitable for the pupil in question. Guardians are required to submit a medical certificate by a specified deadline before the local school has been assigned.

A special reason involves, for example, cases in which a pupil needs special assistance or special education, whose arrangement requirements must be taken into consideration when assigning a local school. Guardians are required to submit a document explaining the special reason(s) by a specified deadline before the local school has been assigned.

A special reason might also involve cases in which the pupil cannot attend a certain school due to, for example, bullying or has a specifically personal reason that will have a direct impact on what kind of school would be suitable for them. The guardians must submit to the school a statement, which has been drafted specifically by a cross-disciplinary panel of experts assembled on a case-by-case basis or in multi-professional co-operation with student welfare professionals. Guardians are required to submit the statement by a specified deadline before the local school has been assigned.

2) Pupils with a sibling basis

Second, a younger sister/brother living at the same address will be assigned to the same local school attended by an older sister/brother at the time the decision is made, if the guardians so desire.

The sibling basis is not applied if, at the time of the decision and in the same school, the older sister or brother

- attends the highest grade
- attends English-language education, language immersion education, bilingual education, Montessori education, or specialised education
- is a secondary pupil
- attends a preparatory education group/temporary education group for immigrants
- attends a special class.

3) School commute

Third, a local school will be assigned to other pupils in such a way that ensures the school commute for all pupils within the catchment area is as safe and short as possible.

4) Local school preference

Fourth, the local school preferences expressed by guardians are taken into consideration, if possible.

1.3. Assigning pupils to a local school in which the subsequent grade is not found in the school which the pupil will be attending the following school year

Where applicable, sections 1.1 and 1.2 will be applied in assigning a local school, unless the Committee has issued a separate decision regarding the matter.

1.4. Assigning a local school to pupils moving to or within Espoo

Pupils moving to Espoo from another municipality or from abroad will be assigned to a local school once they have moved in to their new address.

Pupils who are moving to another school catchment area within Espoo are assigned to a local school after the move.

Pupils moving to a new address within the catchment area will be assigned a local school if remaining at the current school would incur additional school transport costs to the municipality as compared to attending another school in the catchment area.

As an exception to the above-mentioned rule, guardians may, during the spring enrolment for first or seventh grade, submit the pupil's pending address, provided that the family will be moving before the beginning of the following school year. In such cases, the pupil will be assigned to a local school based on the new address, but the decision made will be conditional. The decision will enter into effect only in cases where the submitted address is valid and appears in the Population Register as of the date stated for that year approximately two weeks before the beginning of the school year. If the address does not appear in the Population Register by the date in question, the pupil will be assigned to a local school based on the current address.

1.5. Assigning a local school to pupils receiving special support

Special support teaching arrangements are listed in the special support decision made for the pupil.

Special support is provided to pupils primarily in their local school. The local school is assigned in accordance with sections 1.1. and 1.2. If the interests of the pupil and educational arrangements so require, the pupil will receive his/her education in a special class. Special classes are assigned in accordance with sections 1.1. and 1.2., where applicable. However, the sibling basis is not applied when assigning a pupil to a special class.

1.6. Assigning a local school to pupils with a different language and cultural background

Pupils belonging to a preparatory education group/temporary education group for immigrants will be assigned a school at the nearest educational facility with available space.

When the pupil transfers into the general school population, a local school will be assigned to him/her. The local school is assigned in accordance with sections 1.1. and 1.2.

2. PUPIL ADMISSIONS UPON APPLICATION TO ENGLISH-LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION, BILINGUAL EDUCATION, LANGUAGE IMMERSION EDUCATION, MONTESSORI EDUCATION AND SPECIALISED EDUCATION

Each of the above educational arrangements has its own pupil admission selection criteria approved by the Committee or school administration. Pupils admitted are not entitled to a school transport subsidy, and younger sisters/brothers of the pupils are not entitled to be admitted to the same school on a sibling basis. If pupils admitted to one of the above educational arrangements later relinquish their school study place, they will be assigned to the local school requested by their ~~parents~~/guardians.

2.1. Placement on the wait list

If there are more eligible applicants for English-language education, bilingual education, language immersion education, Montessori education, or specialised education than there are study places, all eligible applicants will be put on a wait list in the order of the given selection criteria.

If any study places become available by the spring and summer, in August or by another time specified in more detail in the selection criteria, the applicant on the wait list will be invited to accept the available study place in the wait list order.

3. APPLYING FOR AND ADMISSION TO A SCHOOL OTHER THAN THE LOCAL SCHOOL ASSIGNED BY THE MUNICIPALITY

As stated in the Basic Education Act, pupils have the right to attend a local school assigned by the municipality. The pupil is entitled to apply for placement in a school other than the one assigned by the municipality (Basic Education Act, section 28). These schools are called secondary schools, and the pupil applying to a secondary school is called a secondary applicant.

Secondary applicants may be admitted only if there are available study places. The applications of secondary applicants are processed separately according to a prescribed schedule. Decisions on admissions to secondary schools are made primarily for the entire duration of school attendance.

Pupils admitted are not entitled to a school transport subsidy, and younger sisters/brothers of the pupils are not entitled to be admitted to the same school on a sibling basis.

3.1. Admission to a secondary school

Applicants to a school other than the local school assigned by the municipality, i.e. secondary applicants, are admitted to schools in the following order of priority:

- 1) Pupils who have moved out of the school area and still live in Espoo, but who want to remain at their current school (see section 3.3).
- 2) Short school commute (pupils living in Espoo)
- 3) Drawing (pupils living in Espoo)
- 4) Pupils living in another municipality (if there are multiple applicants, a drawing will be held)

3.2. Relinquishing a secondary study place

If pupils admitted to a secondary school later relinquish their school study place, they will be assigned to the local school requested by their guardians.

3.3. Pupils moving within Espoo who want to remain in their current school

Pupils who have moved within Espoo may remain as a secondary applicant in their current school until the end of the school year. The guardians will be responsible for paying any school transport costs. With regard to later school years, the pupil will be considered a secondary applicant and subject to the selection criteria specified in section 3.1.

4. PUPILS FROM OTHER MUNICIPALITIES

According to Section 4 of the Basic Education Act, municipalities are obligated to provide basic education for children of compulsory school age residing in their area. The new home municipality of pupils moving to another municipality is responsible for providing them with education.

Pupils living in another municipality may apply to the City of Espoo both as a secondary applicant and for educational arrangements mentioned in section 2. Pupils may be accepted in Espoo as an applicant specified in section 28 of the Basic Education Act only in cases where there are available study places in the school's teaching groups after placement of the municipality's resident pupils. Transportation costs of pupils residing in other municipalities will be the responsibility of guardians or the pupil's municipality of residence. The pupil's younger sister/brother is not entitled to admission to the same school on a sibling basis.