

# **POLICIES ON ADMISSION TO BASIC EDUCATION**

Admission to basic education consists of three parts:

- 1) Assignment of a local school (Basic Education Act section 6)
- 2) Admission for weighted-curriculum education, English-language education, bilingual education (Finnish-English), Swedish-language immersion education and Montessori education (Basic Education Act section 28)
- 3) Admission to general education in a secondary school (Basic Education Act section 28).

The Board decides annually on the new teaching groups to be established and/or the maximum number of pupils to be admitted/chosen at each school.

Power to decide on pupil admissions is determined by the Board's decision on transferring the decision-making power based on education legislation (The Board's delegation decision).

The decision on admission is made for the duration of the grades available at the school, unless otherwise stated in the applicable law or later.

## **1. ASSIGNMENT OF A LOCAL SCHOOL (BASIC EDUCATION ACT SECTION 6)**

In general, a local school is assigned in the following situations:

- Entry to the 1st grade
- Transfer to the 7th grade (unless the pupil is studying at a comprehensive school that teaches grades from 1 to 9)
- Pupil moving.

The local school is assigned within the pupil catchment area depending on the pupil's place of residence. There are six pupil catchment areas:

- Espoonlahti
- Eastern Leppävaara
- Central and Northern Espoo
- Western Leppävaara
- Matinkylä-Olari
- Tapiola.

The aim is to assign a local school to which the pupil can walk. If a pupil is unable to reach any school in their pupil catchment area by walking, an effort will be made to assign a school to which they can travel using public transport. If necessary, the distance between the pupil's home and school will be considered separately after a local school has been assigned and when processing the possible application for the school trip benefit.

The Board decides annually on the maximum number of pupils per school in general education. Local schools are assigned within these limits.

### **1.1. Entry to the 1st grade**

Local schools are assigned among the future new pupils living in the pupil catchment area with consideration of their health and other weighty factors, the sibling criterion and distance between the pupil's home and school. In addition, any wishes the guardian has expressed regarding local school on the application form will be taken into account when possible.

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

- 1) Health-related or other weighty reason

First, a local school is assigned to those pupils whose local school must be assigned based on a health-related or other weighty reason. A health-related or other weighty reason refers to a reason closely related to the future pupil that directly affects what kind of school is suitable for them. For example, a pupil who cannot study at a school that has a complex layout or many stairs due to their illness or bodily injury. The guardian must refer to the health-related or other weighty reason in the application form and submit an expert statement (such as a doctor or psychologist) or another document proving the weighty reason (a multidisciplinary report prepared at an ECEC centre/school) by the time indicated by the City of Espoo before the local school is assigned.

## 2) Sibling criterion

Secondly, a local school is assigned to new pupils for whom the sibling criterion is important. Sibling refers to an older sibling living at the same address and attending a local school assigned by the City of Espoo.

On the application form, the guardian must mention that they are applying with the sibling criterion. The sibling criterion does not apply if, at the time of the decision, the sibling indicated in the application form

- is in the last year of the school in question
- studies at a school in another pupil catchment area
- had been admitted for weighted-curriculum education, English-language education, Swedish-language immersion education, bilingual education (Finnish–English) or Montessori education
- has been admitted as a secondary applicant for the general education group of the school in question
- has been admitted to a group for preparatory education
- has been admitted to a special class of a school to be designated separately (see section 1.4).

## 3) School travel length

Thirdly, a local school is assigned to those new pupils whose local school assignment does not depend on the criteria mentioned in sections 1–2. The local school is assigned so that travel to and from school is as safe and short as possible considering all pupils in the pupil catchment area.

## 4) Local school preference

Fourthly, a local school is assigned to the new pupils whose guardian's preference mentioned on the application form can be realised. The aim is to realise preferences for local schools as often as possible.

# 1.2. Transfer to the 7th grade

Local schools are assigned among all pupils transferring to grade 7 who live in the pupil catchment area with consideration of the A-level language studies they have already completed, any health-related or other weighty reasons, the sibling criterion and the distance between the pupil's home and school. In addition, any wishes the guardian has expressed regarding local school on the application form will be taken into account when possible.

Within each pupil catchment area, the local school is assigned in the following order of priority, taking into account that the pupils can continue any A-level language studies they have already started:

## 1) Health-related or other weighty reason

First, a local school is assigned to those pupils whose local school must be assigned based on a health-related or other weighty reason. A health-related or other weighty reason refers to a reason closely related to the pupil that directly affects what kind of school is suitable for them. For example, a pupil who cannot study at a school that has a complex layout or many stairs due to their illness or bodily injury. This also applies to situations where a pupil cannot go to a certain school due to serious bullying, for example. The guardian must refer to the health-related or other weighty reason in the application form and submit an expert statement (such as a doctor or psychologist) or another document proving the weighty reason (a multidisciplinary report prepared at the primary school) by the time indicated by the City of Espoo before the local school is assigned.

## 2) Sibling criterion

Secondly, a local school is assigned to pupils for whom the sibling criterion is important. A sibling refers to the pupil's sister or brother who lives at the same address and who is a pupil at a local school indicated by the City of Espoo. On the application form, the guardian must mention that they are applying with the sibling criterion. The sibling criterion does not apply if, at the time of the decision, the sibling indicated in the application form

- is in the last year of the school in question
- studies at a school in another pupil catchment area
- has been admitted for weighted-curriculum education, English-language education, Swedish-language immersion education, bilingual education (Finnish–English)
- has been admitted as a secondary applicant for the general education group of the school in question
- has been admitted to a group for preparatory education
- has been admitted to a special class of a school to be designated separately (see section 1.4).

### 3) School travel length

Thirdly, a local school is assigned to those pupils whose local school assignment does not depend on the criteria mentioned in sections 1–2. The local school is assigned so that travel to and from school is as safe and short as possible considering all pupils in the pupil catchment area.

### 4) Local school preference

Fourthly, a local school is assigned to the pupils whose guardian's preference mentioned on the application form can be realised. The aim is to realise preferences for local schools as often as possible.

## 1.3. Pupils moving

A local school will be assigned to pupils moving to Espoo or to another pupil catchment area within Espoo once they have moved.

A new local school is assigned to a pupil moving to another neighbourhood within the same pupil catchment area only if continuing in the same school would result in higher school travel costs for the municipality than travel to another school in the pupil catchment area. This will be considered from the perspective of the policies concerning school travel benefits that are in force at the time.

### 1.3.1 Pupils moving before the start the next school year

The application period for the 1st and 7th grade is open at a separately defined time in spring. If a pupil about to begin the 1st grade or a pupil transferring to the 7th grade moves before the beginning of the next school year, their local school can be assigned based on the new address. The guardian must provide the pupil's future address and exact date of the move in the application form. The decision concerning the local school is conditional when assigned based on a new address. The decision will expire if the new address mentioned in the application form is not valid and registered in the Population Information System by the deadline that is set annually. When the conditional decision expires, a local school is assigned for the pupil based on their home address that is valid on the mentioned deadline.

## 1.4. Pupils requiring pupil-specific support

Pupil-specific support is primarily offered at the local school, either in a general education group, in flexible group arrangements or in a special class consisting of the school's pupils. The local school is assigned in accordance with sections 1.1 and 1.2.

A pupil can receive pupil-specific support by attending a special class of another, separately assigned school, if this is necessary due to the pupil's best interest or prerequisites for the organisation of teaching. A special class is assigned in accordance with sections 1.1 and 1.2 as applicable. However, the sibling criterion does not affect the assignment of a special class. The teaching arrangements for a pupil are set out in a support decision issued under Basic Education Act 20 f.

The Board decides annually on the maximum number of pupils per school in general education and on the new special classes.

## 1.5. Pupils in need of instruction preparing for basic education

Instruction preparing for basic education (i.e. preparatory education) is organised inclusively in local schools or in regional groups for preparatory education. Regional groups for preparatory education operate in schools assigned by the Board. Pupils receive a study place in a school offering education that is as near as possible to their home and has vacant student places.

When a pupil transitions from group-based education preparing them for basic education to general education, a local school is assigned for them in accordance with sections 1.1 and 1.2.

The Board decides annually on the maximum number of pupils per school in general education and on new groups of group-based preparatory education.

## **2. ADMISSION FOR WEIGHTED-CURRICULUM EDUCATION, ENGLISH-LANGUAGE EDUCATION, BILINGUAL EDUCATION, SWEDISH-LANGUAGE IMMERSION EDUCATION AND MONTESSORI EDUCATION (BASIC EDUCATION ACT SECTION 28)**

The application periods for different weighted curriculum education, English-language education, bilingual education (Finnish–English), Swedish-language immersion education and Montessori education are open annually at separately specified times.

The Board decides annually on new teaching groups to be established in schools and on the minimum and maximum number of pupils to be admitted. Admissions are based on the admission criteria separately decided for each form of education by the Board. Admitted pupils are not entitled to school travel benefit, and their younger siblings do not have the right to be admitted to the same school based on the sibling criterion.

If a pupil admitted for the education later gives up their student place, a local school will be assigned for them following a separate application submitted by the guardian.

## **3. ADMISSION TO A SECONDARY SCHOOL (BASIC EDUCATION ACT SECTION 28)**

Pupils have the right to attend a local school assigned by the municipality as referred to in Basic Education Act section 6. However, pupils can apply for different weighted curriculum education and other forms of education referred to in section 2 (above) or for general education in some other school than their local school. These other schools are called secondary schools, and a pupil applying for such a school is called a secondary applicant.

The applications of secondary applicants are processed in accordance with the schedule announced by the City of Espoo. Secondary applicants can only be admitted if there are vacant student places in the school's general education groups after everyone has been assigned a local school, and if new pupils can be admitted depending on the school's facilities and without disrupting the appropriate teaching of pupils already studying in the teaching group.

Pupils admitted to a secondary school are not entitled to school travel benefit, and their younger siblings do not have the right to be admitted to the same school based on the sibling criterion. If a pupil admitted to a secondary school later gives up their student place, a local school will be assigned for them following a separate application submitted by the guardian.

### **3.1. Admission to a secondary school**

Those applying to another school than the local school assigned by the municipality, that is, secondary applicants, are admitted for general education in the following order of priority:

- 1) A pupil who has moved further away from the school and wishes to continue at their current school (see section 3.1.1).
- 2) Applicants in the order of the distance between the pupil and the school. If the distance is the same for several applicants, the order will be determined by drawing lots.

If there are still vacant study places after the applicants from Espoo have been admitted to the school, pupils living in another municipality can be admitted. If there are several applicants living in another municipality, the order will be determined by drawing lots.

#### **3.1.1 A pupil who has moved further away from the school and wishes to continue at their current school**

A pupil who has moved to another area within Espoo may continue to attend school as a secondary applicant in their current school until the end of the school year. The guardian is responsible for the pupil's travel to and from school and the resulting school travel costs. For later school years, the student will be a secondary applicant and the order of priority in section 3.1 is shall apply.

## **4. PUPILS IN ANOTHER MUNICIPALITY**

A pupil living in another municipality can apply to a comprehensive school in Espoo as a secondary applicant (see section 3 above) or for different weighted curricula and forms of teaching (see section 2 above). The pupil can be admitted after the applicants who live in Espoo have been admitted if the school's teaching groups have free study places and the pupil meets the admission criteria for the applied education/instruction form (such as bilingual education). If a pupil living in another municipality is admitted for the education they are applying for, the pupil's guardian is responsible for the pupil's travel to and from school and the related costs. The pupil's younger siblings do not have the right to be admitted to the same school based on the sibling criterion.