



Midlothian Council

Children, Young People and Partnerships Directorate

### **Statutory School Consultation**

### **THIS IS A PROPOSAL DOCUMENT**

Proposal to clarify the catchment area of St David's Roman Catholic High School and to vary the Admissions Arrangements to Denominational Secondary Education.

#### **Proposals**

- Clarify the catchment area of St. David's Roman Catholic High School with implementation from August 2027.
- Variation to the 'Education Policy Admission to Primary and Secondary Schools', in relation to entry to denominational primary and secondary schools will be implemented from August 2027 or as soon as possible thereafter.

#### **Affected Schools**

The following Midlothian Council school is directly affected and considered in this Proposal Document:

- St. David's Roman Catholic (RC) High School

The following Midlothian Council schools are affected by the proposals:

- Sacred Heart Roman Catholic (RC) Primary School
- St. Andrew's Roman Catholic (RC) Primary School
- St. David's Roman Catholic (RC) Primary School
- St. Luke's Roman Catholic (RC) Primary School
- St. Mary's Roman Catholic (RC) Primary School
- St. Matthew's Roman Catholic (RC) Primary School
- All Midlothian non-denominational schools, excluding Saltersgate School

The following East Lothian Council school is affected and considered in this Proposal Document:

- Loretto Roman Catholic (RC) Primary School

#### **The affected consultees are:**

- The parents and carers of the children at the affected schools;
- The Parent Councils of the affected schools;
- Parents and carers of children expected to attend an affected school within 2 years of the date of publication of this Proposal document;

- The pupils, deemed to be of suitable age and maturity to be able to communicate a view on the proposal, at the affected schools;
- The teaching and ancillary staff at the affected schools;
- The trade unions and professional association representatives of the above staff;
- Community Councils;
- Community Planning Partnership;
- Archdiocese of St. Andrews & Edinburgh

**The purpose of this document is to introduce the proposals outlined above, the anticipated educational benefits of the proposals, and to explain the consultation process and how you can have your say.**

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## **SECTION 1: The Proposals for Consultation**

- Clarify the catchment area of St. David's Roman Catholic High School with implementation from August 2027.
- Variation to the 'Education Policy Admission to Primary and Secondary Schools', in relation to entry to denominational primary and secondary schools will be implemented from August 2027 or as soon as possible thereafter.

### **Proposal 1 - clarify the catchment area of St David's Roman Catholic High School**

The consultation carried out in 2025 highlighted differing stakeholder views regarding the historical arrangements between Midlothian and East Lothian Councils. The catchment maps and admission policies of both Midlothian Council and East Lothian Council do not show Loretto RC Primary as forming part of the St David's RC HS catchment. However, some stakeholders believed that Loretto RC Primary was within the catchment area of St David's RC HS catchment. Despite extensive research, no definitive records have been identified that demonstrate when or how the catchment area for St. David's RC High School may have been formally altered. Proposal one is to clarify the catchment area of St. David's RC High School to cover all addresses in the Midlothian Council region only.

### **Proposal 2 - variation to the 'Education Policy Admission to Primary and Secondary Schools', in relation to entry to denominational primary and secondary schools.**

1. Midlothian Council has one denominational high school, St. David's RC High School.
2. Only children living in the clarified catchment area of St. David's RC High School will be deemed as catchment to the school.
3. The Council's research of catchment maps and admission policies from both Midlothian and East Lothian Councils do not show Loretto RC Primary School as forming part of the St. David's RC High School catchment. Based on this research, the education authority understood that following the disaggregation of Lothian Regional Council in 1996, pupils from Loretto RC PS were not formally within the catchment area for St David's RC HS but were afforded priority in admissions through an informal arrangement. The meeting of Midlothian Council elected members on 9 September 2025 instructed officers to set aside any historical arrangement and enter into a new agreement, including any priority for Loretto RC Primary School pupils.
4. If Midlothian Council establishes a new agreement with East Lothian Council regarding children who both reside in the Loretto RC Primary School catchment area and attend the school to attend St. David's RC High School, the proposed priority groups in Table 1 on page 3 will apply and offers will be issued on that basis.
5. Pupils in Midlothian Council denominational schools may be affected by the proposed change in priority groups.
6. The proposed priority order can be found at Appendix 4 and the following scenarios are intended to show how these proposals may affect families.

## **Scenario 1**

My child is not baptised Roman Catholic but attends a Midlothian Council Roman Catholic primary school.

### *Current priority*

- If the child lives in Midlothian, they are treated as a catchment child.
- They are prioritised after all baptised Roman Catholic children (with or without siblings.)
- They are prioritised before pupils from outside Midlothian making placing requests.

### *Proposed priority (if the changes are implemented)*

- Your child would remain below all baptised Roman Catholic children, whether those baptised pupils live in Midlothian or attend, and reside in the catchment area of, Loretto RC Primary School.
- They would be admitted before non-baptised children from Loretto RC Primary School and other external placing requests.

### *What is changing:*

Midlothian non-baptised pupils would be in priority group 7 or 9 depending on if they have a sibling attending St. David's RC High School at the same time.

All baptised Roman Catholic pupils whether resident in Midlothian or attending and residing in the catchment area of, Loretto RC Primary School will be offered places first.

Therefore, there is a risk that all places at St. David's RC High School have been allocated to pupils in priority groups 1 to 6 or 8. In these circumstances pupils in priority groups 7 and 9 will be offered places at their non-denominational catchment high school.

## **Scenario 2**

My child is baptised Roman Catholic, lives in Midlothian, but attends non-denominational primary school.

### *Current priority*

- Attendance at a non-denominational primary school does not affect priority.
- The key factors are Midlothian residence and Roman Catholic baptism.

### *Proposed priority*

- No change.
- Your child remains above all non-baptised children (including Midlothian non-baptised pupils) and above all Loretto pupils.

### *What is changing:*

Midlothian resident, Roman Catholic baptised pupils would be in priority groups 3 or 4 depending on if they have a sibling attending St. David's RC High School at the same time. It is likely that all pupils in priority groups 3 and 4 will be offered places at St. David's RC High School.

### **Scenario 3**

My child is baptised Roman Catholic, lives in Midlothian, and attends a Midlothian Roman Catholic primary school.

#### *Current priority*

- This is one of the highest priority categories for entry, with or without a sibling attending St. David's RC High School at the same time.

#### *Proposed priority*

- This remains one of the highest priority groups.
- These pupils continue to be admitted before all other children, including Loretto RC Primary School pupils and Midlothian resident non-baptised pupils.

#### *What is changing:*

Midlothian resident, Roman Catholic baptised pupils would be in priority groups 3 or 4 depending on if they have a sibling attending St. David's RC High School at the same time. It is likely that all pupils in priority groups 3 and 4 will be offered places at St. David's RC High School.

### **Scenario 4**

My child lives in the catchment area for and attends Loretto RC Primary School and is baptised Roman Catholic.

#### *Current priority*

- Historically, pupils in this category were admitted under a long-standing informal arrangement rather than through a placing request process.
- This practice sits outside the published admissions policy.

#### *Proposed priority*

- A placing request would be required.
- Should the proposed agreement between Midlothian and East Lothian Councils proceed, your child would be prioritised:
  - below Midlothian resident baptised Roman Catholic children, but
  - above Midlothian resident children who are not baptised Roman Catholic, even if those children attend a Midlothian Roman Catholic primary school.

#### *What is changing:*

These pupils will be in priority groups 5 or 6 depending on if they have a sibling attending St. David's RC High School at the same time. It is likely that all pupils in priority groups 5 and 6 will be offered places at St. David's RC High School.

### **Scenario 5**

My child lives in the catchment area for and attends Loretto RC Primary School and is not baptised Roman Catholic.

### *Current priority*

- Historically admitted as part of the informal Loretto arrangement, with no differentiation by faith set out.

### *Proposed priority*

- Your child would be placed after all Midlothian catchment pupils, and children who live in the catchment area for and attends Loretto RC Primary School baptised Roman Catholic pupils.
- After Midlothian catchment non-baptised children,
- Before general external placing requests.

### *What is changing:*

These pupils would be in priority group 8 or 10 depending on if they have a sibling attending St. David's RC High School at the same time.

Therefore, there is a risk that all places at St. David's RC High School have been allocated to pupils in priority groups 1 to 7 or 9. In these circumstances pupils in priority groups 8 and 10 will not be offered places at St. David's RC High School and will be offered a place at a high school by East Lothian Council.

If St David's RC High School is oversubscribed, children in this category are less likely to be offered a place.

## **Introduction**

7. An update to the Midlothian Council Learning Estate Strategy was approved at full Council December 2022 and also included Midlothian Council's strategy for the provision of specialist provisions and services across its estate.
8. The Learning Estate Strategy seeks to provide improved, flexible and adaptable learning environments to deliver 21st century education as part of a wider place making agenda. This vision is key to meet the principles of Scotland's Learning Estate Strategy and to address the three key national education and skills priorities:
  - Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)
  - Curriculum for Excellence (CfE)
  - Developing the Young Workforce (DYW)
9. The following core principles underpin the proposals for varying Admissions Arrangements to Primary and Secondary Education:
  - Promoting excellence and equity by delivering a more equitable distribution in learning opportunities by ensuring that every one of our children has the right to aim for excellence and to attain excellence in multiple ways
  - Interrupting the cycle of poverty by school hubs having a role at the heart of their community to help address the inequalities that reduce life chances;
  - Getting it right for every Midlothian child by utilising the school estate to deliver early intervention strategies through, where possible, the co-location of services together with a family learning approach;

- Taking a community-based approach to building schools which meet the needs of communities and enhance the lives of all those who live in those communities.
10. In short, we aspire to create a learning estate that enhances communities and at its heart supports children and young people through their learning journey from early years, primary and secondary school, college or university to the world of employment, education or training equipped with the skills for life, work and learning both they and society will need to succeed in the growing global knowledge economy of the 21st century.
  11. Midlothian Council's Strategy for Digital Learning, 'Learning in the Digital Age' (2016) is a commitment to equip children and young people with the knowledge and digital skills essential for learning, life and work.
  12. Midlothian Council aims to put the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child's ethos at the heart of each of its schools. A number of Midlothian schools have embedded the Right Respecting Schools (RRS) principles in their school improvement plans. Children's rights are continually promoted and are featured in the curriculum, and class charters.
  13. The National Learning Estate Strategy is aligned to Midlothian Council's Education Policy Admission to Primary and Secondary Schools (referred to as 'School Admission Policy' for the purposes of this document) aims set out in the National Improvement Framework (NIF) of achieving excellence and equity for all children and young people and closing the poverty related attainment gap.

## **Background and Context**

14. The requirement to vary the Midlothian Council School Admission Policy for all schools was identified in the Midlothian Learning Estate Strategy 2017 – 2047 and reaffirmed in the 2022 update.
15. Midlothian Council has a legislative duty to provide suitable educational opportunities for children and young people within its boundaries. Midlothian Council's approach to pupil placement is to ensure a place for every pupil at their catchment schools and to review and grant placing requests whenever possible. The impact of parental choice and the demand for places at specific schools have highlighted the need to review the current School Admission Policy to ensure it remains effective and relevant.
16. Each home address in Midlothian is assigned two catchment schools for both primary and secondary education, one denominational and one non-denominational. The designated catchment schools are determined based on the pupil's home address. While Midlothian Council strives to ensure there are sufficient places for all children within a catchment area to attend their designated school, residing within a catchment area does not guarantee a child a place at that school. Where catchment schools are over-subscribed, Pupil Placement seeks to allocate places at neighbouring schools to ensure every pupil is afforded the opportunity to attend a local school.
17. All parents and carers have the right to request a place for their child at a school outside their designated catchment area; this is known as a placing request. It is Midlothian Council's statutory duty to approve placing requests when there are available places, except in specific circumstances outlined in The Education (Scotland) Act 1980. Midlothian Council's current school admission policy can be found on: [Pupil registration and placing requests | Admission to Primary and Secondary Schools policy](#)

18. Midlothian Council is recognised as one of Scotland's fastest-growing local authorities. This rapid growth has brought significant challenges, particularly for education. This growth has led to heightened pressures on schools which includes applying intake limits at several schools to safeguard places for Midlothian pupils to be able to attend their catchment school.
19. The increasing population and housing developments within Midlothian continue to generate growth in pupil numbers. There is a significant risk that Midlothian Council will not have a place for every pupil at their catchment school and Midlothian Council's Learning Estate Strategy considers this from a strategic perspective. In the short term this risk is mitigated by the application of limits on pupil intake, reviews of placing requests, and, in the case of denominational schools, by giving priority to those with exceptional circumstance followed by those who are baptised Roman Catholic.
20. For the avoidance of doubt, this proposal uses the term "baptised Roman Catholic" as the standard evidence of Roman Catholic faith. For the purposes of this definition, the following are included:
- Individuals baptised in the Roman Catholic Church;
  - Individuals who have received the Sacrament of First Holy Communion within the Roman Catholic Church;
  - Individuals baptised in another Christian denomination who are now practising within a Roman Catholic parish and can provide both a valid baptismal certificate and a supporting letter from their parish priest.
21. At a meeting of Midlothian Council elected members on 12 November 2024, the Executive Director Children, Young People and Partnerships was instructed to undertake a consultation to update Midlothian Council's Education Policy Admission to Primary and Secondary Schools for all schools (excluding Early Learning and Childcare and Saltersgate).
22. This consultation was undertaken between 2 April 2025 and 2 June 2025 with a paper presented to a full meeting of Council on 9 September 2025. Council decided to:
- i. Agree that the revised School Admission Policy will take effect from September 2025.
  - ii. Agree to maintain the current arrangements as set out in paragraph 11 for the admission of pupils attending Loretto RC Primary School which entitles them to attend St David's RC High School as their catchment denominational high school. Subject to recommendation iii being agreed with East Lothian Council and subject to consultation.
  - iii. Instruct the Executive Director, Children, Young People and Partnerships to take steps to recover the costs of school education and any ancillary costs on an ongoing basis from East Lothian Council for former Loretto RC Primary School pupils attending St David's RC High School from August 2025.
  - iv. Instruct the Executive Director, Children, Young People and Partnerships to take forward a) as set out below and any legally required steps, including carrying out any necessary statutory consultation (Ensuring that any statutory consultation provides clarity i) as to the catchment area of St David's RC High School and ii) the basis of admission to St David's RC High School) in order to either:
    - a) set aside any existing agreements or arrangements, and enter into a new

agreement with East Lothian Council setting out the basis of admission, including any priority given within the School Admission Policy for pupils of Loretto RC Primary School who wish to attend St David's RC High School; with the instruction that any arrangement/agreement does not disadvantage Midlothian Catholic children and promotes the Roman Catholic ethos of St David's RC High School;

- b) Remit to the CPWG and co-opt the Religious Representative to CPWG to develop the detail of the consultation and bring back to the next Council for approval.

- 23. The Pupil enrolment for the 2026/27 school session is well underway. 1,440 Midlothian primary pupils and 1,252 Midlothian secondary pupils registered as of 15 March 2026 for the August 2026 intake. This is an eight percent increase in registrations for P1 and a three percent increase in registrations for S1. This includes 252 who have advised they intend to defer entry to primary school.
- 24. As of 15 March 2026, the following placing requests were received for Primary 1 and Secondary 1 entry for the 2026/27 school session: 256 placing requests were received, including 22 from outside Midlothian, marking a slight decrease from the previous year's total of 264 requests. The Education Appeal Committee will be convened in May and June to consider any appeals received in respect of placing requests which have been refused.

### **Proposal to clarify the catchment area of St David's Roman Catholic High School**

- 25. Each primary school and secondary school in Midlothian has a defined catchment area, determining the local school a child is entitled to attend based on their permanent, main residence.
- 26. The Council's research included a review of catchment maps and admission policies (current and historical) from both Midlothian and East Lothian Councils, as well as discussions with East Lothian Council. Neither Midlothian Council nor East Lothian Council's catchment maps show Loretto RC PS as forming part of the St David's RC HS catchment. Additionally, Midlothian Council's then existing admission policy did not refer to Loretto RC PS pupils. Based on this research, the education authority understood that following the disaggregation of Lothian Regional Council in 1996, pupils from Loretto RC PS were not formally within the catchment area for St David's RC HS but were afforded priority in admissions through an informal arrangement. The education authority proceeded with the consultation on this basis, acting in good faith.
- 27. Feedback received during the 2025 consultation highlighted differing stakeholder views regarding historical arrangements between Midlothian and East Lothian Councils, with some respondents expressing the belief that Loretto RC Primary School had formed part of the St. David's RC High School catchment prior to local government reorganisation in 1996 and that it remained within the catchment area.
- 28. In light of this feedback, further extensive research was undertaken to establish the historical position of Loretto RC Primary School. This included a search of archival records from Midlothian County Council and Lothian Regional Council held by Democratic Services, education department archives, the National Records of Scotland, and the City of Edinburgh Council archives. In addition, the Archdiocese of St Andrew's and Edinburgh were contacted to request any relevant documentation. Despite this comprehensive investigation, no definitive records have been

identified that demonstrate when or how the catchment area for St. David's RC High School may have been formally altered, nor has evidence been found to confirm the legal or policy basis for the longstanding practice of admitting pupils from Loretto RC Primary School.

29. The education authority obtained legal advice from a King's Counsel who advised that the informal arrangements for admission of Loretto RC Primary School pupils to St David's RC High School could not continue. Education authorities have a statutory duty to have a School Admission Policy in place when determining school placing requests in terms of Section 28B Education (Scotland) Act 1980 as amended. These proposals therefore seek to ensure that any arrangements for the transfer of the pupils of Loretto RC Primary School is reflected within the School Admission Policy and remove the uncertainty as to the catchment area for St David's RC High School by confirming that the catchment area of St. David's RC High School will be defined as the Midlothian Council area. Accordingly, all addresses within the Midlothian Council area will be in the St. David's RC High School catchment area
30. A map of the clarified catchment area for St David's RC High School can be found in Appendix 2.

### **Proposed variation to the Admissions Arrangements to Denominational Primary and Secondary Education**

31. Prior to the launch of the 2025 consultation, the education authority undertook research to seek to clarify the basis of the then informal practice for admission of Loretto RC PS pupils to St David's RC HS. Under that practice, East Lothian Council each year provide to Midlothian Council a list of pupils who attend Loretto RC PS, and who they consider would be entitled to attend St David's RC HS. This arrangement is specific to Loretto RC PS and does not extend to other Roman Catholic primary schools within East Lothian.
32. The decision of Midlothian Council on 9 September 2025 agreed to maintain the current arrangement for the August 2026 intake.
33. The Executive Director, Children, Young People and Partnerships was instructed to take forward any necessary statutory consultation, to clarify the basis of admission to St David's RC High School, including the setting aside of any existing agreements or arrangements and to seek to enter into a new agreement with East Lothian Council to define the admission arrangements for Loretto RC Primary School pupils attending St David's RC High School. Admission of children to St. David's RC High School from Loretto RC Primary School is contingent on Midlothian Council and East Lothian Council entering a new agreement, as decided in the minutes of the Midlothian Council's elected members meeting on 9 September 2025, available here: [Midlothian Council > Meetings](#)
34. It was also agreed at September Council, to remit Midlothian's Education and Children's Services Cross Party Working group to develop the prioritisation list shown in Appendix 4 in discussion with the Council's Religious Representative. On 16th December 2025, the Executive Director Children, Young People and Partnerships (Acting) presented the revised admission to secondary school priority groups for denominational schools, which was approved.
35. At a meeting of full Council on 24th February 2026 elected members noted that the consultation on the proposed priority groups would take place in April 2026. It was also noted that discussions

between Midlothian Council and East Lothian Council had taken place in January 2026 and a notional contribution was agreed.

36. The proposal means that the current arrangements by which East Lothian Council submit to Midlothian Council a list of pupils eligible for admission to St David's RC High School, following which Midlothian Council write to parents and carers of those pupils will cease. Parents and carers of pupils attending Loretto RC Primary School who wish their child to transfer into S1 at St David's RC High School will require to submit a placing request as fully detailed in the section below "Proposals for entry to denominational high school". Should there be more placing requests than spaces available, admission to St David's RC High School will be determined by the proposed denominational priority groups set out in Appendix 4.
37. The proposed prioritisation was subject to the outcome of engagement with East Lothian Council with regards to the additional and quantifiable education costs associated with Loretto RC Primary School pupils accessing St David's RC High School for secondary denominational education.
38. Should this proposal between Midlothian Council and East Lothian Council not be agreed for Loretto RC Primary School pupils, then the current denominational priority groups will remain in place, as shown in Appendix 3, until a new agreement is reached.

#### **Proposals for entry to denominational high school**

39. Midlothian Council has one denominational high school, St. David's RC High School.
40. Children attending and living in the catchment area of Loretto RC Primary School will not be catchment to St. David's RC High School.
41. If Midlothian Council establishes a new agreement with East Lothian Council regarding children who both reside in the Loretto RC Primary School catchment area and attend the school to attend St. David's RC High School, the proposed priority groups outlined in Appendix 4 will apply and offers will be issued on that basis.
42. Pupils from Loretto RC Primary School wishing to attend St. David's RC High School will need to submit a placing request. During the main placing round for entry to S1 the priority list proposed in this consultation will be used to allocate places. All Placing Requests outside of the main placing round will be assessed in line with Midlothian Council's Education Policy Admission to Primary and Secondary Schools.
43. Appendix 4 sets out the proposed changes to the Midlothian Council's Education Policy Admission to Primary and Secondary Schools which reflects the priority to be given to pupils attending Loretto RC Primary School who wish to transfer to attend St David's RC High School from secondary one. The scenarios listed on pages 3 to 6 give a more detailed explanation of the priority to be given to pupils under this policy, which will depend upon whether or not they have exceptional circumstances, whether they are baptised Roman Catholic and whether they have siblings attending St David's High School.
44. As a consequence of the proposed arrangements, a pupil who lives within the Loretto RC Primary School catchment area, and attends Loretto RC Primary School would be given priority in secondary 1 ahead of a Midlothian resident child who is not baptised Roman Catholic, even if that

child attends a Midlothian Roman Catholic primary school or has siblings attending St David's RC High School.

45. For entry to S1 at St. David's RC High School, Midlothian Council resident, Roman Catholic children will be in a priority group ahead of Roman Catholic children who attend and live in the catchment of Loretto RC Primary School. Please see Appendix 4.
46. The Education (Scotland) Act 1996, as amended by the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000, gives Education Authorities the power to reserve places at schools for pupils likely to become resident in the catchment areas after enrolment has completed. Details of reserved places are contained in Midlothian Council's School Admission Policy. For Roman Catholic schools, reserved places will only be granted to catchment baptised Roman Catholic children.

### **Proposals for entry to denominational primary school**

47. There are six denominational primary schools in Midlothian, all are Roman Catholic.
48. There is no proposal to alter the entry requirements for denominational primary schools, the priority groups will remain as per the existing policy, shown in Appendix 3.
49. If the proposal is approved, the variation to the Education Policy Admission to Primary and Secondary Schools (School Admission Policy) will be implemented from August 2027 with a revised version being shared as soon as possible thereafter.
50. The proposal to vary the School Admission Policy will affect all Midlothian denominational schools.
51. The proposal to vary the School Admission Policy will affect Loretto RC Primary School, Musselburgh.
52. The proposal to vary the School Admission Policy will indirectly affect all Midlothian non-denominational schools, excluding Saltersgate (as admissions to special schools are managed through the Education Resource Group (ERG)).
53. The factors which have been considered in the development of this Proposal Document are:
  - The responsibilities associated with the National Improvement Framework and the new duties imposed on Education Authorities by the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 as amended by the 2016 Act.
  - The agreed principles underpinning the development of an empowered school led system set out in the 'Education Bill Policy Ambition- Joint Agreement', June 2018 <https://www.gov.scot/Publications/2018/06/8745/downloads>
  - The duties placed on local authorities in relation to the adequate and efficient provision of school education in their area
  - The duties placed on local authorities to secure best value in the delivery of services
54. If approved, implementation of the proposal will mean:

- The variation to the School Admission Policy will be implemented from August 2027 or as soon as possible thereafter.

## **SECTION 2: Consultation Process and How to Have Your Say**

This section outlines how Midlothian Council has organised the consultation process for the proposal contained in this document, and how you can take part and give your views.

### **Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010**

1. Midlothian Council has a number of statutory duties relating to the provision of education within its area. These include carrying out a statutory consultation when proposing any permanent change to one of its schools, including Nursery Schools, such as a closure, relocation, or change to a catchment area.

The principal purpose of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* is:

*“to provide strong, accountable statutory consultation practices and procedures that local authorities must apply to their handling of all proposals for school closures and other major changes to schools.”*

2. This Proposal Document has been prepared in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 (as amended), having regard to the statutory guidance published by the Scottish Government on 14 May 2015 (updated February 2026) and the complementary guidance published by His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Education in Scotland (revised February 2026), which are available for reference at the following websites:

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010:  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2010/2/contents>

Statutory Guidance (updated February 2026):  
<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2015/05/4615>

Education Consultation Guidance for Local Authorities (revised February 2026)  
[HMIE overview and guidance for education authorities.](#)

3. The process for consultation, summarised in this section, details how the Midlothian Council is undertaking this consultation.
4. This Proposal Document has been issued to seek views on the proposals in this paper and report back to Midlothian Council on the outcome of the consultation in order that the Council can make a decision on any proposed changes.

### **Proposal Document issued to consultees and published on Midlothian’s website**

5. An information leaflet setting out details about the proposal and consultation meetings will be issued to the consultees listed on pages 1-2. Advice on where the complete Proposal Document can be obtained will be included and published on [St David's RC High School Catchment and Admissions Consultation](#)
6. An announcement will be made on Midlothian Council’s website and social media platforms.

7. A “Frequently Asked Questions” (FAQs) document will be available on [St David's RC High School Catchment and Admissions Consultation](#)

### **Distribution**

A copy of this document is available on the Midlothian Council website: [St David's RC High School Catchment and Admissions Consultation](#)

A summary of the proposals will be provided to:

- The parents and carers of the children at the affected schools;
- The Parent Councils of the affected schools;
- Parents and carers of children expected to attend an affected school within 2 years of the date of publication of this Proposal document;
- The pupils, deemed to be of suitable age and maturity to be able to communicate a view on the proposal, at the affected schools;
- The teaching and ancillary staff at the affected schools;
- The trade unions and professional association representatives of the above staff;
- Midlothian Councillors;
- Community Councils
- Community Planning Partnership;
- Relevant users of the affected schools;
- Constituency MP and MSP;
- His Majesty's Inspectorate of Education Scotland
- Archdiocese of St. Andrews & Edinburgh

A copy of this document is also available from:

- Danderhall Library & Leisure Centre, 59 Edmonstone Road, Danderhall, EH22 1QL
- Gorebridge Library, 98 Hunterfield Road, Gorebridge, EH23 4TT
- Fairfield House, 8 Lothian Road, Dalkeith, EH22 3ZG
- Lasswade Library, 19 Eskdale Drive, Bonnyrigg, EH19 2LA
- Loanhead Library, The Loanhead Centre, George Avenue, Loanhead, EH20 9LA
- Newbattle Library, 1 Newbattle Way, Easthouses, Dalkeith, EH22 4SX
- Newtongrange Library, St Davids, Newtongrange, EH22 4LG
- Penicuik Library, Carlops Road, Penicuik, EH26 9EP
- Roslin Library, 9a Main Street, Roslin, EH25 9LD

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To be taken into consideration, responses to the consultation must be received by Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2026. These can be made electronically through the online consultation questionnaire at [St David's RC High School Catchment and Admissions Consultation](#) or emailed to [EducationConsultation@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:EducationConsultation@midlothian.gov.uk).

### **Written responses can be returned to:**

St David's RC High School Catchment and Admissions Consultation, Freepost SCO 622, Midlothian Council, Dalkeith EH22 1DN

### **Length of Consultation Period**

8. The consultation period will commence on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2026 and will last until Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2026 being a period of six weeks, which includes the required minimum of 30 school days.

### **Public Meeting and Drop-In Session**

9. Formal in-person public meetings and virtual public drop-in sessions will be held to discuss the proposal. The public meeting will be convened by Midlothian Council and addressed by the Chief Education Officer, Children, Young People and Partnerships Directorate, and other senior officers of Midlothian Council, and chaired by an independent person.
10. The public meetings will be an opportunity to:
  - Hear more about the proposal
  - Ask questions about the proposal
  - Have your views heard so that they can be taken into account as part of the consultation process
11. The public meetings will be held in person on:
  - 19 May 2026 in Woodburn Primary School at 6.30pm
  - 1 June 2026 in Sacred Heart RC Primary School at 6.30pm
12. Virtual drop-in sessions will be held on 13 May 2026 and 26 May 2026, there will be 20-minute time slots available from 2pm to 4pm and 5pm to 7pm. Please contact [EducationConsultation@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:EducationConsultation@midlothian.gov.uk) to book a time.
13. A minute will be taken at the public meeting of comments, questions and officer responses. A summary of the points raised and responded to will be added to the FAQs published on the Midlothian Council website.

### **Consultation with Children and Young People**

14. Pupils in the directly affected schools will be consulted on this proposal in accordance with the Children's Commissioner Guidance and further information will be provided to parents and carers via their child's school.

### **Involvement of His Majesty's Inspectorate of Education Scotland**

15. Midlothian Council will send the Proposal Document to His Majesty's Inspectorate of Education Scotland (HMIE), and they will receive a copy of all relevant written and oral representations and any other relevant documentation received during the consultation period.
16. HMIE will consider Midlothian Council's submissions and prepare an independent report on their findings. HMIE have three weeks to undertake this, and this period will not start until after the consultation period has ended. In preparing their report, HMIE may visit the affected schools and make such reasonable enquiries of such people there as they consider appropriate.

### **Preparation of the Consultation Report**

17. Midlothian Council will review the proposal having regard to the HMIE report, and all oral and written representations received. It will then prepare a Final Consultation Report. The report will be published in electronic and printed formats and will be available on the Midlothian Council website.
18. The Consultation Report will set out the total number of oral and written representations received in relation to the proposal. It will also include the Council's response to HMIE, the HMIE Report itself, and any other relevant information. In addition, the Report will describe the actions taken by Midlothian Council to address any alleged inaccuracies or omissions that were notified during the consultation process. It will explain how Midlothian Council has met the requirement to review the proposal considering the HMIE Report and all representations received.
19. Once completed, the Consultation Report will be published and made available for further consideration for a period of three weeks.

### **Decision**

20. The Consultation Report, and any other documentation, will be considered after the end of the three week period by the Council, who will come to a final decision on this matter.

### **Scottish Ministers Consent**

21. Under the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, Part 1, section 22C and 22D, Scottish Ministerial consent may be required prior to the implementation of this proposal. Should the proposal be approved at a meeting of Council and require the consent of Ministers, Midlothian Council will submit an application for consent prior to implementation.
22. Appendix 1 sets out the timeline for the Consultation. There is no timeline for approval by Scottish Ministers if it is required.

### **Note on Corrections**

23. If any inaccuracy or omission is discovered in this Proposal Document, whether by Midlothian Council or any person, Midlothian Council will consider whether relevant information has been omitted or whether an inaccuracy exists. Where necessary, Midlothian Council may take appropriate action, which could include issuing a correction, reissuing the Proposal Document, and/or revising the consultation period timescale. If such action is taken, all relevant consultees and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) will be informed. Anyone who has raised the concern will also receive an individual response to their submission.

### **SECTION 3: Educational Benefit Statement**

The Educational Benefits Statement for this proposal has been prepared having regard to the guidance and explanatory notes published by the Scottish Government in association with the schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 and which are available for reference at the following websites respectively:

[www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/91982/0097130.doc](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/91982/0097130.doc)

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2010/2/contents>

‘An education authority shall endeavour to secure improvement in the quality of school education which is provided in the schools managed by them; and they shall exercise their functions in relation to such provision with a view to raising standards of education.’

As required by the schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 this Educational Benefits Statement is written from the perspective of benefits, should the proposal be implemented. Additionally, the self-evaluation tool provided by Education Scotland is used to ensure compliance with the amended procedures now in place from the Act.

#### **Transition Programmes**

1. The proposed variation to the School Admission Policy will not impact existing transition arrangements for children resident in Midlothian. By affording appropriate priority to pupils transitioning to their catchment school, the proposal promotes a smooth, inclusive and well-supported transition, enabling continuity of education. Pupils who wish to attend a non-catchment school should attend transition for their catchment school until the outcome of their Placing Request is confirmed.

#### **Denominational Schools**

2. Pupils attending Midlothian denominational schools who are baptised as Roman Catholic will have clarity on the prioritisation of places. This ensures that these pupils are given appropriate priority to attend the only denominational secondary school in Midlothian, ahead of non-baptised pupils or those without a sibling at the denominational secondary school. This proposal supports pupils seeking to continue their denominational education at the secondary level.
3. The clarification of the catchment area for St. David’s RC High School enables families to determine whether their residence falls within the designated boundary and to understand the implications this may have on their application for a school place.
4. The proposal to include children from Loretto RC Primary School within the priority groups for transition into S1 at St. David’s RC High School provides families with assurance that their preference to continue a denominational education is formally recognised.

#### **Local Communities**

5. This proposal will not adversely impact local, social, or economic activities. The limited variation to the School Admission Policy will not affect the sustainability of communities or existing arrangements for community use of schools. Local children and young people will benefit from the

agreed curriculum for their local school, reflecting the local community and opportunities available to all young people.

### **Travel Arrangements**

6. The limited variation to the School Admission Policy will not affect travelling arrangements for Midlothian pupils or staff. Many staff travel throughout Midlothian to work in schools, and this proposal will not impact their travel arrangements.

### **Effects on Staff and School Management**

7. There will be no implications for teaching or support staff, nor any impact on school management arrangements. The proposal will allow for greater continuity of staffing across local schools, benefiting each child and young person.

### **Inclusion**

8. The proposals will ensure that local children attend their local catchment school, growing up as part of their community. The process for allocating places to children with additional support needs will not be affected by the variation to the School Admission Policy.

### **Learning, Teaching and Assessment**

9. All children and young people in Midlothian follow the national Curriculum for Excellence, regardless of the school they attend. The proposals will allow local children to benefit from the agreed local curriculum arrangements, reflecting the local community and opportunities available to all young people.

### **Health & Wellbeing**

10. The proposals will prioritise local children for local schools, keeping young people close to their parents, carers, and local healthcare facilities.

## **SECTION 4: Other Implications**

### **Transition Arrangements**

1. There are no changes to current transition practices across Midlothian.

### **Staffing Implications**

2. If this proposal is implemented there will be no implications for teaching and support staff in any of the affected schools.

### **Financial Implications**

3. Throughout January 2026, discussions took place between East Lothian and Midlothian Councils. For 2026/27 only, a notional contribution was agreed in recognition of partnership working and to allow Midlothian Council to progress to statutory consultation, allowing time for a formal agreement to be established between both Councils for future years.
4. These discussions are ongoing.

### **Integrated Impact Assessment**

5. Midlothian Council as a public authority has a duty under the Equality Act 2010, the Public Sector Equality Duty 2011, and the Fairer Scotland Duty (Part one of the Equality Act) to have due regard to their provisions when making strategic financial decisions. This is done through assessing the potential impact of the decision on equality through an Equality Impact Assessment. Midlothian Council will undertake the process of assessment during the consultation process in respect of this proposal to ensure that due regard is given to such matters in the decision-making process.
6. The result of the Integrated Impact Assessment will be included in the final Consultation Report document.

### **Equal Opportunities**

7. Having regard to the proposed variation to the School Admissions Policy for primary and secondary education for Midlothian, it is not believed that this will have a negative impact on any equality target groups.
8. Midlothian Council must also consider its duty in respect of socio-economic impact and as part of the consultation process Midlothian Council will consult with a wide range of stakeholders, including staff, parents/carers and children and will address comments about equality during this consultation.
9. Under the Equality Act 2010, education providers must not treat disabled pupils less favourably and should take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage. The variation to the School Admission Policy will comply with accessibility requirements and therefore would positively promote equal opportunities for any child who has a disability.

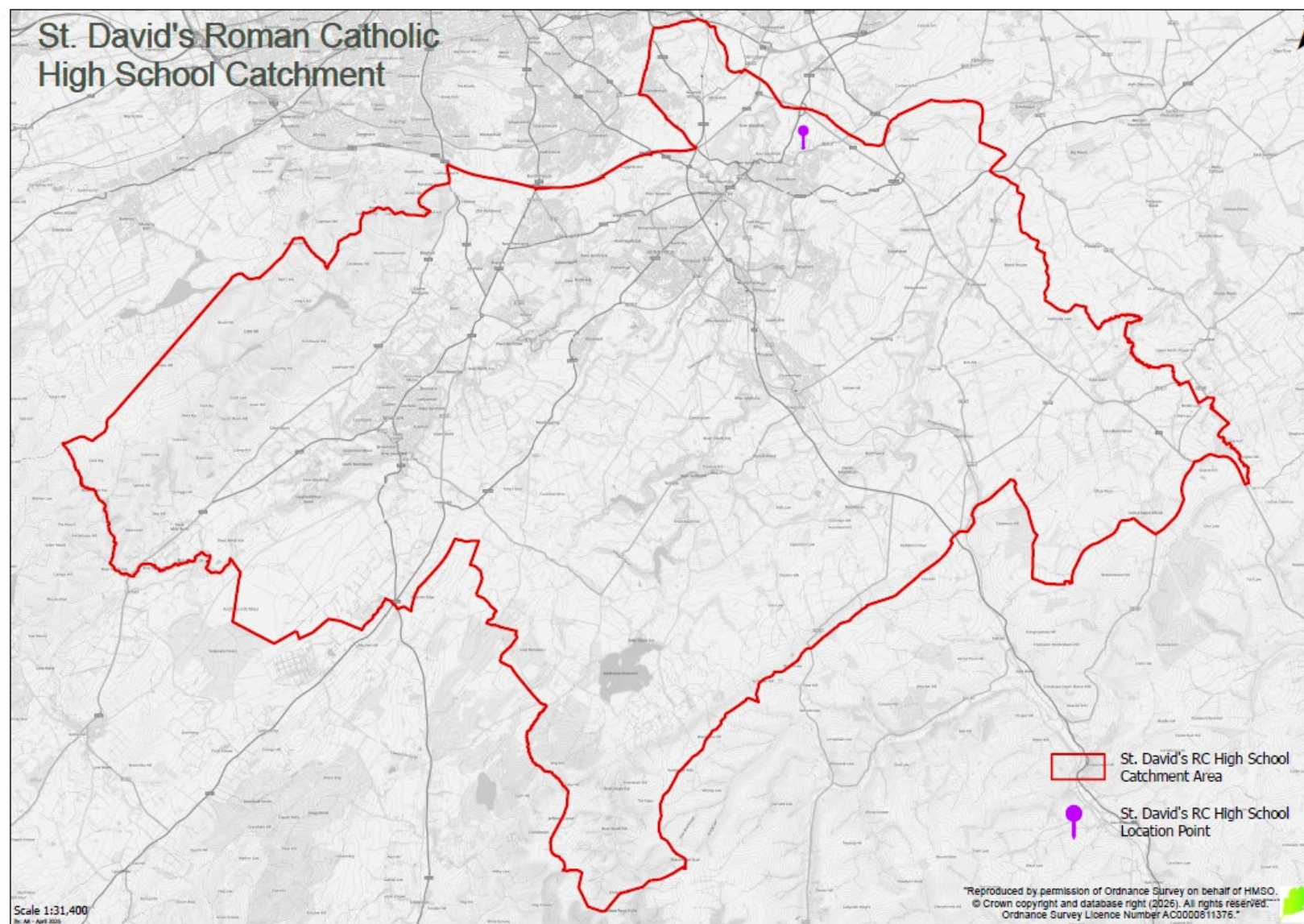
## **SECTION 5: Conclusion**

1. It is proposed that the clarified catchment area for St. David's RC High School will take effect from August 2027 or as soon as possible thereafter.
2. A review of the School Admission Policy has been undertaken and this proposal has been produced and published to facilitate informed consideration of the proposed variations to the School Admission Policy for primary and secondary schools, in accordance with Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.
3. It is proposed that the variation to the School Admission Policy takes effect from August 2027, or as soon as possible thereafter which aims to ensure that the policy remains fit for purpose and provides flexibility to allow appropriate priority when considering pupil placements.
4. Overall, there are no environmental impacts as a result of this proposal.
5. Overall, there are educational arguments in favour of this proposal.

## Appendix 1: Statutory Consultation Timeline: Variation to School Admission Policy

	<b>Date Beginning</b>	<b>Date Ending</b>	<b>Duration</b>
Statutory Consultation Period	21/04/2026	04/06/2026	30 school days
His Majesty's Inspectorate of Education Scotland (HMIE) Engagement Period	08/06/2026	28/06/2026	3 weeks
Publication of Consultation Report	31/08/2026	31/08/2026	1 day
Further Consideration after publication of report	31/08/2026	21/09/2026	3 weeks
Consideration of Consultation Report by Midlothian Council	22/09/2026	22/09/2026	1 day
Referral to Scottish ministers if a decision is made to proceed under which the terms of section 22C or 22D of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 apply,	23/09/2026		No defined timescale

## Appendix 2: Clarified Catchment Area St David's Roman Catholic High School



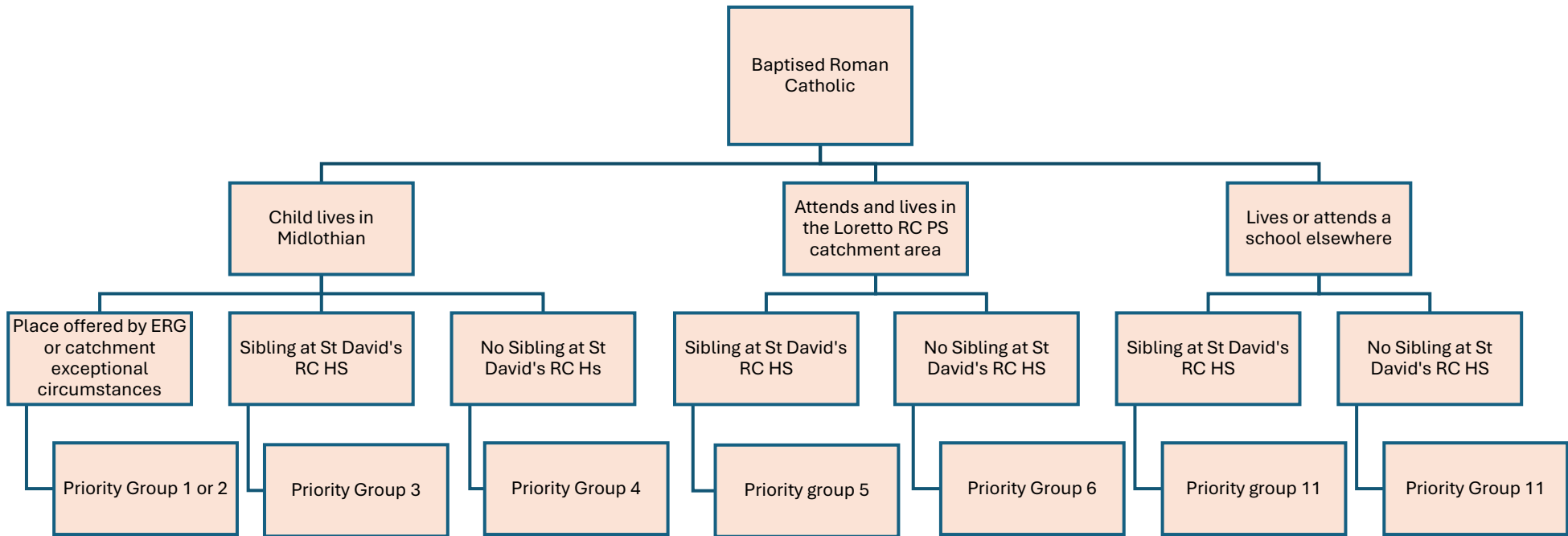
**Appendix 3: Existing Priority groups (note: groups will remain the same should the proposal not proceed)**

<b>Non-denominational schools</b>	<b>Denominational Primary Schools</b>	<b>Denominational High School</b>
Midlothian resident children who have been offered a place in the school's Complex Needs Provision class by the Education Resource Group (ERG)	Midlothian resident children who have been offered a place in the school's Complex Needs Provision class by the Education Resource Group (ERG)	Midlothian resident children who have been offered a place in the school's Complex Needs Provision class by the Education Resource Group (ERG)
Midlothian resident catchment children who have been prioritised based on exceptional circumstances	Midlothian resident catchment children who have been prioritised based on exceptional circumstances	Midlothian resident catchment children who have been prioritised based on exceptional circumstances
Midlothian resident catchment children who will have siblings attending the school at the same time.	Midlothian resident catchment children who are baptised in the Roman Catholic faith and will have siblings attending the school at the same time.	Midlothian resident catchment children who are baptised in the Roman Catholic faith and will have siblings attending the school at the same time.
then all remaining catchment children	Midlothian resident catchment children who are baptised in the Roman Catholic faith	Midlothian resident catchment children who are baptised in the Roman Catholic faith
Any remaining unreserved places will be available to Placing Requests, in line with the Admissions Policy Placing Request priority list.	Midlothian resident catchment children, who are not baptised in the Roman Catholic faith and will have siblings attending the school at the same time.	Midlothian resident catchment children, who are not baptised in the Roman Catholic faith and will have siblings attending the school at the same time.
	then all remaining catchment children	then all remaining catchment children
	Any remaining unreserved places will be available to Placing Requests, in line with the Admissions Policy Placing Request priority list.	Any remaining unreserved places will be available to Placing Requests, in line with the Admissions Policy Placing Request priority list.

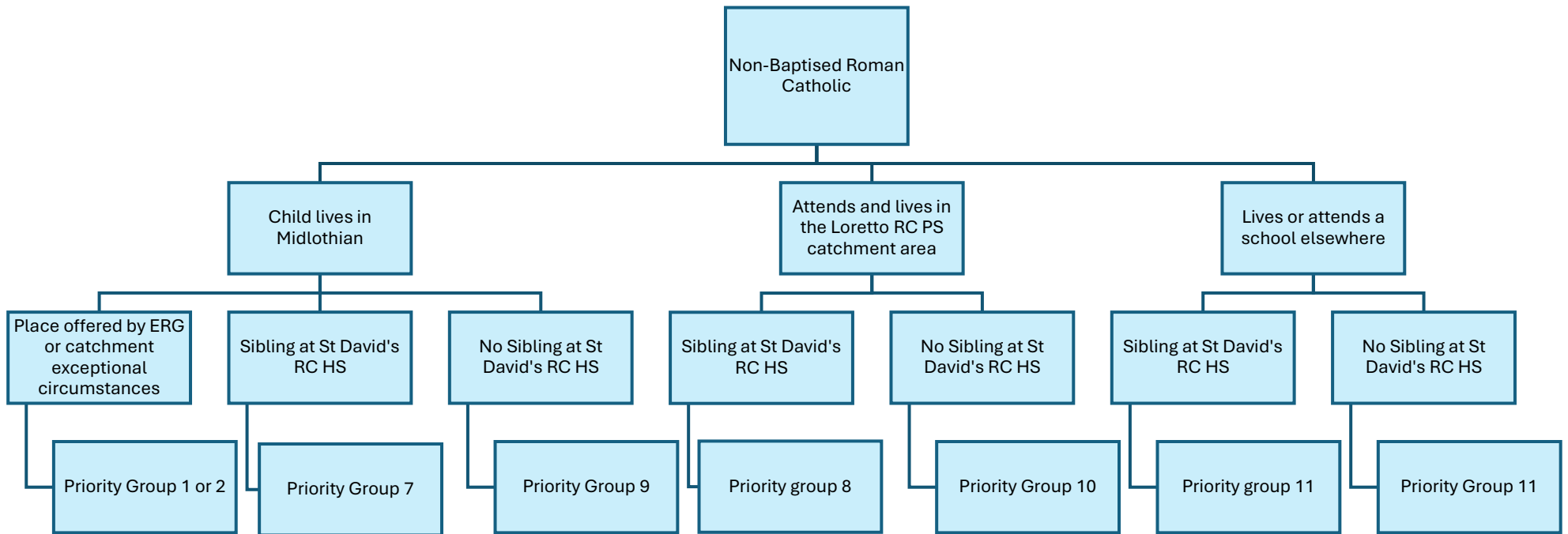
**Appendix 4: Priority groups should the proposed agreement be formed between Midlothian Council and East Lothian Council to include entry to S1 for Loretto Roman Catholic School pupils to St David's Roman Catholic High School**

Priority Group Number	Denominational High School
1	Midlothian resident children who have been offered a place in the school's Complex Needs Provision class by the Education Resource Group (ERG)
2	Midlothian resident catchment children who have been prioritised based on exceptional circumstances
3	Midlothian resident catchment children who are baptised in the Roman Catholic faith and will have siblings attending the school at the same time.
4	Midlothian resident catchment children who are baptised in the Roman Catholic faith and will not have siblings attending the school at the same time.
5	Loretto RC PS registered catchment children who are baptised in the Roman Catholic faith and will have siblings attending the school at the same time. (for entry to S1 at St. David's RC High School only)
6	Loretto RC PS registered catchment children who are baptised in the Roman Catholic faith and will not have siblings attending the school at the same time. (for entry to S1 at St. David's RC High School only)
7	Midlothian resident catchment children, who are not baptised in the Roman Catholic faith and will have siblings attending the school at the same time.
8	Loretto RC PS registered catchment children who are not baptised in the Roman Catholic faith with a sibling attending the school at the same time. (for entry to S1 at St. David's RC High School only)
9	All remaining Midlothian resident catchment children
10	All remaining Loretto RC PS registered catchment children. (for entry to S1 at St. David's RC High School only)
11	Any remaining unreserved places will be available to Placing Requests, in line with the Admission Policy Placing Request priority list.

**Appendix 5: Baptised RC Priority Flow Chart**



**Appendix 6: Non-Baptised RC Priority Flow Chart**



## Appendix 7: Consultation Questionnaire

### Midlothian Council

#### CLARIFY THE CATCHMENT AREA OF ST DAVID'S ROMAN CATHOLIC (RC) HIGH SCHOOL AND VARY THE ADMISSIONS ARRANGEMENTS TO DENOMINATIONAL SECONDARY EDUCATION CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM

I wish my response to be considered as confidential with access restricted to Elected Members and Council Officers of Midlothian Council.

#### **Proposal to clarify the catchment area of St David's Roman Catholic High School and to vary the Admissions Arrangements to Denominational Secondary Education and to clarify the catchment area of St David's Roman Catholic High School.**

Further detailed information about the proposal, which you are encouraged to read to help inform your response, can be found [St David's RC High School Catchment and Admissions Consultation](#)

Please note the closing date for submission of completed questionnaires is 4th June 2026.

You can return this electronically to [EducationConsultation@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:EducationConsultation@midlothian.gov.uk) or by post to St David's RC High School Catchment and Admissions Consultation , Freepost SCO 622, Midlothian Council, Dalkeith EH22 1DN

1. Are you responding to this questionnaire as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

Individual

Organisation (please give details below)

2. In which Local Authority do you reside?

Midlothian

East Lothian

Edinburgh City

Other

3. Which category best describes you?

	<b>Midlothian Denominational Primary School</b>	<b>Other Midlothian Primary School</b>	<b>St. David's Roman Catholic High School</b>	<b>Other Midlothian High School</b>	<b>Loretto Roman Catholic Primary School</b>	<b>Other</b>
<b>Parent of current pupil(s)</b>						
<b>Parent of future pupil(s)</b>						
<b>Pupil</b>						
<b>Member of staff</b>						
<b>Member of the community</b>						
<b>Other (please give details)</b>						

4. If you are a parent, please indicate which stage of education your child/ children currently attend (please tick all that apply)

- Not yet in education
- Pre-school education
- P1-P3
- P4-P7
- S1-S6
- No longer in school education

5. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to clarify the catchment area of St David's Roman Catholic High School?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- No opinion

6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to vary the 'Education Policy Admission to Primary and Secondary Schools', in relation to entry to denominational secondary schools?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- No opinion

7. To what extent do you agree or disagree that Midlothian resident catchment children, who are not baptised in the Roman Catholic faith and will have siblings attending St David's RC secondary school at the same time should not have any priority over RC baptised children from Loretto RC Primary School?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- No opinion

8. To what extent do you agree or disagree that children who attend a Midlothian denominational primary school but are not baptised RC and will not have a sibling attending St David's RC secondary school at the same time should not get any priority over children from Loretto RC Primary School who are baptised RC, or who are not baptised RC but have a sibling attending the school?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- No opinion

9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that all remaining Midlothian resident catchment children who wish to attend their catchment denominational secondary school, which is St David's RC HS, should not get any priority over children from Loretto RC Primary School (apart from those Loretto children who are not baptised RC and do not have a sibling attending the school)?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- No opinion

10. Please use this box if you wish to give a reason(s) for your view or if you wish to make any further comment on the proposal (if you need to continue on a separate sheet, please attach.)