

# Determining Primary School Capacity

---



**Guidance**  
**24 October 2014**

# Contents

Part 1: Introduction	1
1. Background	1
1.1 Present Situation	1
1.2 The Commission on the Delivery of Rural Education	1
1.3 Benefits of a Consistent Approach	2
2. Purpose and Scope of Guidance	2
2.1 Why Calculate School Capacity?	3
2.2 Existing Policy and Legislation	4
3. Approach	5
4. Timescale	5
5. Recommendations	6
Part 2: Primary Schools	7
1. Planning Capacity	7
1.1 Definition	7
1.2 Calculating Planning Capacity	7
1.3 Notes	12
2. Working Capacity	13
2.1 Definition	13
2.2 Calculating Working Capacity	13
2.3 Notes	15
3. Worked Examples	17
Part 3: Secondary Schools	21
Appendix 1	22
Appendix 2	24

# Part 1: Introduction

---

## 1. Background

### 1.1 Present Situation

The provision and delivery of education at a local level in Scotland is the statutory responsibility of Local Authorities under the Education (Scotland) Act 1980. This includes effective management of their school estate which involves determining the maximum number of pupils who may be suitably accommodated in every room in a school (under the Schools General (Scotland) Regulations 1975), and the administration of the placing request system in their area. As a result, Local Authorities have determined their own school capacity modelling policies over time. This has resulted in variations across the country in how school capacity is calculated.

The latest Scottish Government guidance regarding school capacity was issued in December 2004: “Guidance on Determining School Capacities – Circular No 3/2004”, a link to which can be found in Appendix 1.

There has been a significant level of innovative design in new school buildings in Scotland. Within the context of Curriculum for Excellence, space is being designed and used more creatively and increasing flexibility in learning and teaching is being realised. This is complemented by a significant increase in wireless/mobile technology. Such changes in the school estate need to be taken into account when determining the utilisation of school buildings, whilst recognising that Local Authorities must also manage their existing school estate.

### 1.2 The Commission on the Delivery of Rural Education

The Commission on the Delivery of Rural Education was established in August 2011 by the Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA) to examine both how the delivery of rural education could maximise the attainment, achievement and life chances of young people in rural areas, and the link between rural education and rural communities. The Commission was also asked to review the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 (the 2010 Act) and its application and make recommendations on the delivery of all aspects of education in rural areas.

The Commission’s Report, published in April 2013, set out 38 recommendations to the Scottish Government and Local Authorities, including one on school capacity. The Commission found that inconsistency in the use of capacity figures in school closure proposals was resulting in the data being challenged and distrust between communities and Local Authorities. Recommendation 23 proposed:

“A consistent approach to school capacity modelling should be agreed between the Scottish Government and Local Authorities”.

In response, the Scottish Government agreed to review the guidance on determining school capacities and to work closely with CoSLA, the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES), individual Local Authorities and others to develop a consistent approach which can be applied to school capacity modelling in Scotland in future. This process has led to the production of this guidance.

### **1.3 Benefits of a Consistent Approach**

Through the Commission's work and discussions with Local Authorities it became clear that a more consistent approach to school capacity modelling could lead to the following:

- A clear, transparent basis for school capacity calculations used in school closure consultations, which would improve confidence in the data used and reduce argument on the subject.
- Fairer and quicker negotiations across the country in obtaining developer contributions for school extensions or new schools as a result of local housing developments. A consistent approach would help developers understand the implications of their development proposals.
- More reliable and useful national data (provided to Scottish Government through the annual Core Facts Statistical return) for analysing Scotland's School Estate at both a local and national level, allowing benchmarking to take place with other Local Authorities.
- A recommended approach to school capacity modelling, which is adopted by all Local Authorities, should provide stronger evidence for capacity calculations and therefore a stronger basis for placing request decisions.

## **2. Purpose and Scope of Guidance**

This document provides guidance to Local Authorities on the determination of "School Capacity" with the aim to provide a more consistent approach to calculating the capacity of schools across the country. A consistent approach could be achieved if all Local Authorities adopt this guidance.

Following consultation with Local Authorities, it was generally agreed that providing guidance on calculating Secondary School capacities was not a priority at this time. It was suggested that it might be more appropriate once Curriculum for Excellence and the new National Qualifications have been fully implemented across the country, and any implications for school layout are understood. As a result, this guidance is focused on calculating the capacity of Primary Schools in Scotland.

This guidance does not apply to pre-school or Additional Support Needs (ASN) provision within a Primary School.

Given the diverse nature of Local Authorities in Scotland, both geographically and demographically, it would not be possible or effective for the Scottish Government to impose a strict method for calculating school capacity which would work in all Authority areas. Different factors will have a greater or lesser impact on school capacities depending on local circumstances, and the effective management of the

relevant factors will vary. It should be recognised that a proportion of Scotland's schools will not be able to comply fully with this guidance at this time.

This guidance sets out the Scottish Government's recommended method of calculating primary school capacity which Local Authorities should endeavour to follow as far as possible in order to increase consistency across the country to achieve the benefits set out in Section 1.3. The proposed method is designed to be flexible to allow Local Authorities to apply it to suit their existing systems and needs. It remains a Local Authority responsibility to choose how they calculate capacity in their areas.

This guidance supersedes the Scottish Government Guidance on Determining School Capacities – Circular No 3/2004 issued in December 2004 for Primary Schools.

## **2.1 Why Calculate School Capacity?**

A clear, consistent basis for calculating the capacity of schools requires to be defined for the following reasons:

### **a) Forward planning**

To allow assessment of the need for future investment in the school estate, e.g. new build and refurbishment of schools and other changes in school provision taking account of factors such as population trends and new housing.

To anticipate the impact of new housing to secure appropriate developer contributions.

### **b) Curricular and organisational needs**

To establish the number of children for whom the school can provide the desired curriculum, and to allow assessment of the implications of any new staffing standards, changing methodologies and new resources.

### **c) Placing requests**

To establish a clear and consistent basis for contributing towards determining whether placing requests should be granted or refused and identifying schools which are currently over capacity or may exceed capacity in the future.

### **d) Calculation of performance indicators**

Accurate capacity and roll information for each school is required to monitor and evaluate the usage of school places.

## **e) Informing consultations on proposed changes to the school estate**

To meet legal requirements to provide clear, accurate information in consultations on changes to the school estate, e.g. school closures, that the public has confidence in.

## **f) Scottish Government Policy**

To take account of the priorities and objectives set by the Scottish Government, such as:

To ensure that P1-P3 classes in primary schools comply with class size legislation and P4-P7 classes comply with the maxima set out in teachers' terms and conditions of service.

Changes to curriculum policy and guidance and the provision of the facilities required to deliver the curriculum.

The Scottish Government recognises that capacity is an important practical measure for Local Authorities which has many uses. It should however be borne in mind that capacity is only one of many measures of the school estate, and that it should only ever be considered alongside other qualitative measures such as educational issues and geography.

The Scottish Government does not have a recommended occupancy level for schools. It is up to Local Authorities to consider both quantitative and qualitative measures when making decisions on their school estate.

## **2.2 Existing Policy and Legislation**

This guidance encompasses legislative and policy changes.

The statutory guidance issued under Section 28A(3) of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 (the "1980 Act"), which authorities are required to have regard to, sets out the exceptions to the duty on an education Authority to comply with a placing request. Section 44(4) of the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000, which came into force on 31 December 2004, inserted an amendment into Section 28A of the 1980 Act which enables authorities to refuse a placing request in certain circumstances as if to allow it would have the consequence that the capacity of the school would be exceeded in terms of pupil numbers. This increases the importance for Local Authorities to determine the capacity of their schools.

Regulation 2 of the Education (Lower Primary Class Sizes) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2010, inserted an amendment into Section 3 of the Education (Lower Primary Class Sizes) (Scotland) Regulations 1999, which set the new lower statutory class size maximum of 25 in all single stage P1 classes. Class size maxima in P1-P3 single stage classes are governed by the aforementioned regulations and Local Authorities are required to take account of these as well as the class size maxima set by national agreement in teachers' terms and conditions of service.

Current class size maxima are as follows\*:

**Primary 1:** 25 pupils  
**Primary 2-3:** 30 pupils  
**Primary 4-7:** 33 pupils  
**Composite class:** 25 pupils

\*NB: These class size limits are current at the date of publication of this guidance. However, the Scottish Government has indicated that it intends to consult in 2014 on possible changes to these limits

Local Authorities are required to have regard to these limits. These have been included in the Primary School Capacity methodology below.

The full text of the new Section 3 of the Education (Lower Primary Class Sizes) (Scotland) Regulations 1999 is set out in Appendix 2.

Importantly, when applying this guidance, Local Authorities must ensure they are adhering to the School Premises (General Requirements and Standards) (Scotland) Regulations 1967 in relation to school site size, sanitary facilities etc., relevant aspects of the 1980 Act which relate to school accommodation, pupil safety etc. as well as relevant building standards and health and safety legislation.

### **3. Approach**

This guidance has been developed in consultation with a wide group of Local Authority stakeholders. An extensive review of existing literature on this topic has been undertaken as well as a review of Local Authorities' existing school capacity policies and relevant guidance and legislation (see Appendix 1 for a list of relevant guidance and legislation).

All Scottish Local Authorities were invited to be involved in the preparation and provision of this guidance.

Following consultation with CoSLA, ADES and Scottish Local Authorities, this document sets out the recommended approach to primary school capacity modelling in Scotland to create greater consistency across the country.

### **4. Timescale**

To avoid cutting across admission and placing request processes, it is recommended that Local Authorities, if they choose to do so, implement this guidance from January 2015 for the start of the new school session in August 2015 where possible.

As with any new guidance of this nature, there will be a transitional period as Local Authorities begin to adopt it. During this time it is reasonable for Local Authorities to apply their existing methodology when making decisions regarding their school estate until such a time when the Local Authority incorporates this guidance into its own processes. It is not expected that Local Authorities would re-calculate capacities in current closure consultations.

## **5. Recommendations**

The Scottish Government makes the following recommendations:

- That all Scottish Local Authorities adopt the approach set out in Part 2 to calculate the Planning Capacity of Primary Schools in their areas to create greater consistency across the country.
- That all Scottish Local Authorities adopt the approach set out in Part 2 to calculate the Working Capacity of Primary Schools in their areas to determine the sufficiency of its School Estate, taking into account local factors such as existing Local Authority policies, nature and design of schools etc.
- That all Scottish Local Authorities consider what a consistent approach to calculating the capacity of Secondary Schools should be, and seek to work together to develop this by 2016.

## Part 2: Primary Schools

---

It was generally agreed that in order to keep it simple, there should be no more than two measures of primary school capacity. These are **Planning Capacity** and **Working Capacity**.

Generally, Local Authorities already calculate these measures, however, there was inconsistency around what they were called, specifically what was included in the calculation and when and how they were used.

### 1. Planning Capacity

#### 1.1 Definition

Planning Capacity is a physical, theoretical measure of the total number of pupils which could be accommodated in a school, based on the total number of teaching spaces, the size of those spaces and the class size maxima.

It is important to note here that in reality, Planning Capacity is rarely achieved due to the size of a school and how many classes it can offer, differences in class sizes for different age groups, etc. Some pupil distributions are more efficient, allowing some schools to operate more closely to Planning Capacity than others.

Planning Capacity should be used for broad strategic issues relating to school provision, e.g. for forward planning for the school estate, to assess the impact of new government policies, etc.

As outlined in the Suitability Core Fact publication (see Appendix 1) it is this figure which should be returned to the Scottish Government in the annual School Estate Core Facts Statistical return.

If all Local Authorities measure Planning Capacity in the same way, the data which is reported to the Scottish Government and published on an annual basis will be consistent, leading to the benefits outlined in Section 1.3 of Part 1 of this guidance.

#### 1.2 Calculating Planning Capacity

There are 4 steps to calculating Planning Capacity:

- |   |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Determine which teaching spaces will be included</li><li>2) Determine the size of selected class bases</li><li>3) Determine the maximum number of pupils which could be accommodated in each class base</li><li>4) Total Planning Capacity</li></ol> |
|---|

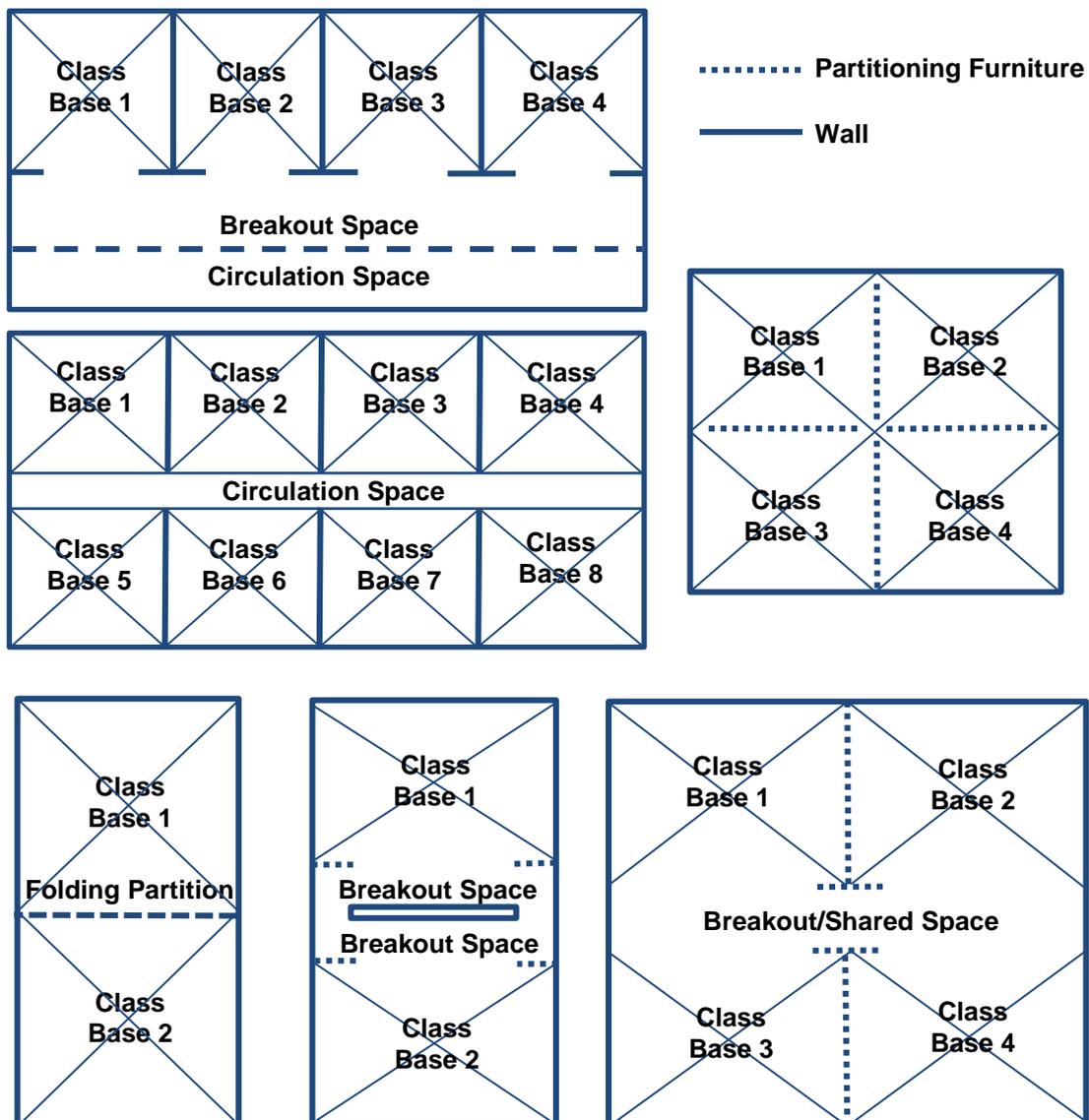
### 1) Determine which teaching spaces will be included

The Planning Capacity calculation should include all teaching spaces in a school which are designated for full time class teaching. This will include all closed/cellular, semi-open and open-plan class bases.

Local Authorities should make a judgement on the status of any temporary accommodation e.g. modular external teaching spaces, in their longer term planning, to determine whether or not they should be included in the Planning Capacity calculation.

The nature and use of teaching space varies from school to school. In many cases, teaching spaces are moving away from traditional closed/cellular classrooms. Many new schools are being designed where class bases open out to breakout space. The diagrams below illustrate a variety of layouts which exist in Scotland's schools. It is only the designated Class Bases, as marked in the diagrams, which should be included in the capacity calculation.

#### Diagrams:



The Planning Capacity calculation should only include class bases. It should not include ancillary areas or general purpose (GP) areas.

The following areas are some examples of areas considered as ancillary and should not be included in the capacity calculation:

- Staff rooms
- Meeting rooms
- Offices
- Store rooms
- Smaller learning support or breakout areas not suitable to be a GP area.
- Reception area
- Areas designated solely for community use
- Toilets / wash areas
- Changing rooms
- Kitchen / dining facilities
- Medical rooms

A GP area is an activity space which is set aside to be used for educational purposes other than class based teaching. GP areas can be class bases or open spaces within a school, such as breakout space next to a class base. Any breakout space being used as a GP area should be of sufficient size to accommodate the required number of pupils undertaking the necessary activity e.g. half a class or a full class.

GP provision in schools will vary within and across Local Authority areas dependent upon the nature of the school and how it is designed. Local Authorities should take these factors into account when determining GP areas in each school.

Examples of GP areas:

- Teaching spaces not used as a class base
- Breakout areas
- Dance rooms
- Drama rooms
- Music rooms
- Art rooms
- I.T. suites
- Reading/Resource rooms
- Libraries
- Learning support rooms
- Gym/sports hall

It should be noted that teaching spaces which deliver full time class teaching as well as activities such as dance, music or I.T. are not GP areas.

The table below sets out the recommended minimum number of GP areas for a school, where possible, based on the total number of class bases in the school.

<b>Number of Class Bases</b>	<b>Number of GP Areas</b>
1-7	1
8-14	2
15-21	3
22+	4

For example, a school which has six class bases, where possible, should have at least one GP area. A school which has nine class bases, where possible, should have at least two GP areas.

Ultimately it is a Local Authority decision, based on the requirements of the school, how many GP areas a school should have.

Taking the above factors into consideration, how many and which rooms are being included in the capacity calculation should be determined.

## **2) Determine the size of selected class bases**

There are currently variations around how Local Authorities physically measure teaching spaces.

In line with Section 6 of the School Premises (General Requirements and Standards) (Scotland) Regulations 1967, it is recommended that rooms should be measured wall to wall. This eliminates issues around the variations in the amount, size and location of furniture.

## **3) Determine the maximum number of pupils which could be accommodated in each class base**

### ***Size of Room***

To determine how many pupils can be accommodated in a class base, it is recommended that the total class base be divided by  $1.7\text{m}^2$ , and then rounded down. This will give you the number of pupils which could be accommodated in that class base, based on size.

This is in line with the majority of Local Authorities' existing policies, and what some Local Authorities who currently calculate capacity using a different metric are planning to work towards in the future.

Currently some Local Authorities use different metrics to calculate semi-open or open plan class bases, however, for consistency it is recommended that semi-open and open plan class bases should be calculated in the same way, allowing for a minimum of  $1.7\text{m}^2$  per pupil.

### ***Class Size Maxima***

Once the maximum number of pupils which can be accommodated in a class base, based on size, has been determined, Local Authorities should then apply class size maxima. Current class size maxima are as follows\*:

**Primary 1:** 25 pupils  
**Primary 2-3:** 30 pupils  
**Primary 4-7:** 33 pupils  
**Composite class:** 25 pupils

\*NB: These class size limits are current at the date of publication of this guidance. However, the Scottish Government has indicated that it intends to consult in 2014 on possible changes to these limits

Generally, class bases are not assigned to a specific year group meaning the year group using a specific room can change year on year. Local Authorities should consider and apply an optimum and realistic class distribution for that school to calculate the Planning Capacity, based on their knowledge and experience. This need not reflect the specific class distribution in any given year.

For example, it is likely that a school with four class bases will be made up of four composite classes. In this case, as long as the class bases are greater than 42.5m<sup>2</sup>, the Planning Capacity of the school would be 100. However, schools with eight or nine class bases could have varying numbers of composite classes.

The Planning Capacity for each class base will be capped by either the size of the room or the class size maxima, whichever is less.

Example:

A school has 13 class bases, ranging in size from 45m<sup>2</sup> to 60m<sup>2</sup>. Based on size, these rooms can hold 26 – 35 pupils respectively.

The class size maxima mean that no class can exceed 33 pupils and the P1-3 class size maxima require classes of no more than 25 and 30. There will also be composite classes capped at 25.

A realistic class distribution for a thirteen class school might be:

- 1 x 25 pupil classes for P1
- 2 x 30 pupil classes for P2–3
- 4 x 33 pupil classes for P4-7
- 6 x 25 pupil composite classes

This is checked against the class bases and as, in this example, these class sizes can be accommodated within the given class bases, it gives a Planning Capacity of 367 pupils.

<b>Class Base</b>	<b>Room Area (m<sup>2</sup>)</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>Planning Capacity</b>
1	45	P1	25
2	55	Composite	25
3	55	P2	30
4	55	Composite	25
5	55	P3	30
6	55	Composite	25
7	60	P4	33
8	55	P5	33
9	60	P6	33
10	60	P7	33
11	60	Composite	25
12	60	Composite	25
13	60	Composite	25
<b>Total</b>			<b>367</b>

This is a maximum realistic capacity, however, it can be seen that in practice it is unlikely that it would be achieved unless the school is 'full' at every stage.

#### **4) Total Planning Capacity**

The total Planning Capacity of the school can be found by adding together the Planning Capacity of each class base involved in the calculation.

Please see further examples on page 17.

#### **1.3 Notes**

When applying this guidance, Local Authorities must ensure that they are not in breach of The School Premises (General Requirements and Standards) (Scotland) Regulations 1967, for example, in relation to size of site, sanitary accommodation etc., relevant aspects of the 1980 Act which relate to school accommodation, pupil safety etc. as well as relevant building standards and health and safety legislation. Authorities should also consider how the school's facilities, such as dining areas, gym halls, circulation spaces etc. will provide for or limit the capacity of the school.

## 2. Working Capacity

### 2.1 Definition

Working Capacity is a dynamic and 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 e.g. taking into account pupil roll, composite classes, staffing etc. to calculate Working Capacity.

The Working Capacity should be used to determine the number of places available in a particular school session and therefore, when considering placing requests and other issues relating to a specific school session. It should be understood that Working Capacity should be used as a management tool by Local Authorities to monitor how efficiently their school estate is used and as a measurement against pupil roll to determine sufficiency, rather than as a physical measure of the school estate.

### 2.2 Calculating Working Capacity

Working Capacity is calculated using the same four steps used to calculate Planning Capacity, but takes into account the organisational needs of a particular school session. Working Capacity may or may not vary year to year.

- |   |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Determine which teaching spaces will be included</li><li>2) Determine the size of selected class bases</li><li>3) Determine the maximum number of pupils which could be accommodated in each class base</li><li>4) Total Planning Capacity</li></ol> |
|---|

#### 1) Determine which teaching spaces will be included

The teaching spaces included could vary from those included in the Planning Capacity calculation, for example, because:

- The teaching spaces designated as class bases and GP areas may change
- Where pupil rolls are decreasing, less class bases may be required
- Local Authorities may make use of “team teaching”<sup>1</sup>.

Only spaces used for class based teaching in that school session should be included in the Working Capacity calculation.

---

<sup>1</sup> In schools where there are accommodation pressures, The Education (Lower Primary Class Sizes) (Scotland) Regulations 1999 allows for such classes to be taught by more than one teacher (“team teaching”), provided that the maximum number of pupils per teacher present does not exceed the prescribed maximum for that year group. Whether this is an option will depend on each Local Authority’s own policy on team teaching. The use of team teaching will increase the number of pupils which can be accommodated in a specific class base.

## 2) Determine the size of selected class bases

This step is the same as for Planning Capacity. In line with Section 6 of the School Premises (General Requirements and Standards) (Scotland) Regulations 1967, it is recommended that rooms should be measured wall to wall. This eliminates issues around the variations in the amount, size and location of furniture.

## 3) Determine the maximum number of pupils which could be accommodated in each class base

This step varies from the method used in the Planning Capacity calculation.

First, as with Planning Capacity, the rooms should be divided by  $1.7\text{m}^2$  then rounded down to determine the number of pupils which could be accommodated in that class base, based on size.

The class distribution being used for that school session should then be applied, matching classes to specific rooms, to determine the cap on the number of pupils in that room based on class size maxima.

At this stage, Local Authorities should take into account any existing local policies which cap class sizes below the statutory limits, e.g. for multi-stage composite classes, and apply their own policies regarding factors such as Primary 1 intake levels and team teaching, taking into account how any pre-school and ASN provision within a school could impact on the capacity.

### ***Flexible Approach***

Where the physical size of the class base limits the capacity to less than one full class with use of  $1.7\text{m}^2$  per pupil, it would be reasonable, in specific circumstances, to adjust the calculation to allow a full class to be accommodated if required in that session.

As outlined in the examples below, whilst it is acknowledged that  $1.7\text{m}^2$  per pupil may not be possible in all circumstances, it is recommended that the calculation does not go below  $1.5\text{m}^2$  per pupil.

Examples:

- A  $55\text{m}^2$  room will only accommodate 32 pupils according to the  $1.7\text{m}^2$  per pupil metric. If it was necessary to accommodate a class of 33 in this room, the total area of the room should be divided by the required class size, e.g.  $55 / 33$ , to determine the space available per pupil. In this case, it would be  $1.66\text{m}^2$ . As this is greater than  $1.5\text{m}^2$ , it would be deemed acceptable as a temporary measure.
- A  $48\text{m}^2$  room would only accommodate 28 pupils according to the  $1.7\text{m}^2$  metric. If it was necessary to accommodate more than 28 pupils in this room, the total room space should be divided by the required class size, e.g.  $48/33$ , to determine the space available per pupil. As this would only allow for  $1.45\text{m}^2$  per pupil, it is recommended that, the Working Capacity of a  $48\text{m}^2$  room would be 32 pupils maximum ( $48/1.5 = 32$ ).

Local Authorities will have very specific reasons if it chooses to use a metric of less than  $1.7\text{m}^2$  per pupil. Where Local Authorities have made a decision to only apply  $1.7\text{m}^2$  per pupil, this should be defensible in placing request decisions and such like.

A Local Authority should be able to apply this aspect of the methodology to some or all of its schools as it moves towards adopting these guidelines in all of its schools. For example, a Local Authority may choose to use less than  $1.7\text{m}^2$  to calculate the Working Capacity of some of its schools where there are pressures, but not others.

It is important to note that the  $1.7\text{m}^2$  per pupil metric is the minimum measure to be used for class bases when designing new schools, building extensions and undertaking refurbishments, and for both determining Planning Capacity and developer contributions. If a Local Authority chooses to provide  $>1.7\text{m}^2$  per pupil in their schools, it is at its discretion to do so. For example, a Local Authority may choose to provide  $2\text{m}^2$  per pupil. As a result, a class base for 33 pupils would need to be  $66\text{m}^2$ . When dividing this space by  $1.7\text{m}^2$  per pupil to calculate capacity, a room of this size would allow for 38 pupils based on the size of the room, however, the class size maxima will cap this room at 25, 30 or 33.

Use of measurements below  $1.7\text{m}^2$  per pupil should only be used at the Local Authority's discretion, in specific circumstances prescribed by the Authority, as an interim factor to deal with temporary or transitional arrangements in existing schools. It is appreciated that Scotland's existing school estate varies dramatically. This flexible approach is to allow Local Authorities to manage their existing estate more effectively in the interim period. Where Local Authorities make use of less than  $1.7\text{m}^2$ , they should continue to monitor these particular class bases and schools to work towards achieving a minimum of  $1.7\text{m}^2$  per pupil in these areas in the future.

It should be noted that on occasion a P1-P3 class may contain more than the statutory maximum number of children where 'excepted pupils' have been placed under the Education (Lower Primary Class Sizes) (Scotland) Regulations 1999.

#### **4) Total Working Capacity**

The total Working Capacity of the school for a particular school session can be found by adding together the Working Capacity of each room involved in the calculation.

Please see the examples on page 17.

### **2.3 Notes**

If Working Capacity or pupil rolls exceed the Planning Capacity of a school, for example due to use of less than  $1.7\text{m}^2$ , it is important for Local Authorities to monitor these areas and make decisions as to whether more permanent solutions are required to create additional Planning Capacity at the school.

Local Authorities must ensure that when putting measures in place to allow for a greater number of pupils in the school, e.g. converting GP areas into class bases, building temporary accommodation, using team teaching etc., that they are not in breach of The School Premises (General Requirements and Standards) (Scotland)

Regulations 1967, for example, in relation to size of site, sanitary accommodation etc. and relevant health and safety and building standards legislation. On a practical level, Local Authorities should also consider the impact putting measurements in place to allow for a greater number of pupils may have on the existing facilities, such as the dining areas, gym halls, circulation spaces etc. and whether these facilities could cope.

### 3. Worked Examples

#### Example 1:

In this example there are 10 class bases to be included in the Capacity calculation.

The area of each room is divided by  $1.7\text{m}^2$  to determine the maximum number of pupils which can be accommodated in the room based on size.

A realistic class distribution is then applied and the Planning Capacity determined by applying class size maxima.

To calculate Working Capacity for a specific school session, the assigned class distribution for that session is applied.

Working Capacity is then calculated by applying class size maxima.

Teaching Space	Type of Space	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Divided by 1.7m <sup>2</sup>	Planning Capacity		Working Capacity	
				Realistic Class Distribution	Planning Capacity	Actual Class Distribution	Working Capacity
1	Class Base	55	32	Composite	25	P1	25
2	Class Base	55	32	Composite	25	P1/2	25
3	Class Base	55	32	Composite	25	P2	30
4	Class Base	55	32	P1	25	P3	30
5	Class Base	55	32	P2	30	P3/4	25
6	Class Base	60	33	P3	30	P4	33
7	Class Base	60	35	P4	33	P5	33
8	Class Base	60	35	P5	33	P5/6	25
9	Class Base	60	35	P6	33	P6	33
10	Class Base	60	35	P7	33	P7	33
11	GP Area	50	-	-	-	-	-
12	GP Area	50	-	-	-	-	-
Total:					292		292

## **Example 2:**

In this example there are 5 class bases to be included in the Capacity calculation.

The area of each room is divided by  $1.7\text{m}^2$  to determine the maximum number of pupils which can be accommodated in the room based on size. A realistic class distribution is then applied and the Planning Capacity determined by applying class size maxima.

To calculate Working Capacity for a specific school session, the assigned class distribution for that session is applied. Working Capacity is then calculated by applying class size maxima.

\*In this case, the Working Capacity of one of the rooms has been adjusted to allow for a full class to be accommodated. The metric has not fallen below  $1.5\text{m}^2$  per pupil.

Teaching Space	Type of Space	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Divided by 1.7m <sup>2</sup>	Planning Capacity		Working Capacity		
				Realistic Class Distribution	Planning Capacity	Actual Class Distribution	Working Capacity	Working Capacity (Adjusted)
1	Class Base	50	29	Composite	25	P1	25	25
2	Class Base	50	29	Composite	25	P2	29	30*
3	Class Base	50	29	Composite	25	P3/4	25	25
4	Class Base	50	29	Composite	25	P4/5/6	25	25
5	Class Base	50	29	Composite	25	P6/7	25	25
6	GP Area	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
				Total	125		129	130

### **Example 3:**

In this example there are 16 class bases to be included in the Capacity calculation.

The area of each room is divided by  $1.7m^2$  to determine the maximum number of pupils which can be accommodated in the room based on size. A realistic class distribution is then applied and the Planning Capacity determined by applying class size maxima.

To calculate Working Capacity for a specific school session, the assigned class distribution for that session is applied. In this case, a Local Authority policy on P1 intake levels has been applied, showing a maximum of 15 pupils per P1 class.

Teaching Space	Type of Space	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Divided by 1.7m <sup>2</sup>	Planning Capacity		Working Capacity	
				Realistic Class Distribution	Planning Capacity	Actual Class Distribution	Working Capacity
1	Class Base	55	32	Composite	25	P1	15
2	Class Base	55	32	Composite	25	P1	15
3	Class Base	55	32	P1	25	P1	15
4	Class Base	55	32	P1	25	P1	15
5	Class Base	55	32	P2	30	P2	30
6	Class Base	55	32	P2	30	P2	30
7	Class Base	55	32	P3	30	P3	30
8	Class Base	55	32	P3	30	P3	30
9	Class Base	60	35	P4	33	P4	33
10	Class Base	60	35	P4	33	P4	33
11	Class Base	60	35	P5	33	P5	33
12	Class Base	60	35	P5	33	P5	33
13	Class Base	60	35	P6	33	P6	33
14	Class Base	60	35	P6	33	P6	33
15	Class Base	60	35	P7	33	P7	33
16	Class Base	60	35	P7	33	P7	33
17	GP Area	-	-	-	-	-	-
18	GP Area	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total					484		444

#### **Example 4:**

In this example there are 13 class bases to be included in the Capacity calculation.

The area of each room is divided by  $1.7\text{m}^2$  to determine the maximum number of pupils which can be accommodated in the room based on size. A realistic class distribution is then applied and the Planning Capacity determined by applying class size maxima.

To calculate Working Capacity for a specific school session, the assigned class distribution for that session is applied. This example shows how this could differ from year to year. Working Capacity is then calculated by applying class size maxima.

Teaching Space	Type of Space	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Divided by 1.7m <sup>2</sup>	Planning Capacity		Working Capacity			
				Realistic Class Distribution	Planning Capacity	Actual Class Distribution (Year 1)	Working Capacity (Year 1)	Actual Class Distribution (Year 2)	Working Capacity (Year 2)
1	Class Base	60	35	P1	25	P1	25	P1	25
2	Class Base	60	35	P2	30	P1	25	P1	25
3	Class Base	60	35	P3	30	P1/2	25	P2	30
4	Class Base	60	35	P4	33	P2	30	P2	30
5	Class Base	60	35	P5	33	P2/3	25	P3	30
6	Class Base	60	35	P6	33	P3	30	P3	30
7	Class Base	60	35	P7	33	P3/4	25	P4	33
8	Class Base	60	35	Composite	25	P4	33	P4	33
9	Class Base	60	35	Composite	25	P4/5	25	P5	33
10	Class Base	60	35	Composite	25	P5	33	P5/6	25
11	Class Base	60	35	Composite	25	P6	33	P6	33
12	Class Base	60	35	Composite	25	P6/7	25	P6/7	25
13	Class Base	60	35	Composite	25	P7	33	P7	33
14	GP Area	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15	GP Area	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total					367		367		385

## Part 3: Secondary Schools

---

Following consultation with Local Authorities, it was generally agreed that providing guidance on calculating Secondary School capacities was not a priority at this time. It was suggested that it might be more appropriate once Curriculum for Excellence and the new National Qualifications have been fully implemented across the country, and any implications for school layout are understood.

Many Local Authorities have raised that it would be useful to have some form of consistency across the country on the following areas:

- Areas to be included and not to be included in the capacity calculation
- Which classes fall under the “practical” and “non-practical” classes
- Space per pupil in different teaching spaces e.g. gym halls, science labs, social spaces etc.

As stated in Section 5 of Part 1 of this guidance, it is recommended that all Scottish Local Authorities consider what a consistent approach to calculating the capacity of Secondary Schools could be and seek to work together, with Scottish Government, to develop this by 2016.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Relevant Guidance**

Guidance on Determining School Capacities 2004:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2005/01/20528/50015>

The SNCT Handbook of Conditions of Service:

[http://www.snct.org.uk/wiki/index.php?title=Main\\_Page](http://www.snct.org.uk/wiki/index.php?title=Main_Page)

The Suitability Core Fact: Scotland's School Estate

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/238946/0065800.pdf>

Curriculum for Excellence:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education/Schools/curriculum>

2 Hour P.E. Target:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education/Schools/HLivi/PE>

Primary School Sports Facilities:

[http://www.sportscotland.org.uk/resources/Facilities/Schools/Design\\_guidance\\_for\\_primary\\_school\\_sports\\_facilities](http://www.sportscotland.org.uk/resources/Facilities/Schools/Design_guidance_for_primary_school_sports_facilities)

Choosing a School – A Guide for Parents

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/11/10093528/6>

### **Relevant Legislation**

Education (Scotland) Act 1980

Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000

Schools General (Scotland) Regulations 1975

Schools General (Scotland) (Amendment) Regulations 1982

Schools General (Scotland) Amendment (No.2) Regulations 1982

The Education (School and Placing Information) (Scotland) Regulations 1982

Amendment Regulations 1990

Amendment, etc., Regulations 1993

Amendment Regulations 2000

Amendment Regulations 2007

Regulations 2012

School Premises (General Requirements & Standards) (Scotland) Regulations 1967  
(as amended)

Education (Lower Primary Class Sizes) (Scotland) Regulations 1999

Education (Lower Primary Class Sizes) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2010

Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) 2004.

Employment Law – sets minimum requirements for Authority’s employees in relation to sanitary facilities, office accommodation etc.

Accessibility strategies that authorities are implementing under the Education (Disabilities Strategies and Pupils’ Educational Records) (Scotland) Act 2002 and authorities’ obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

Health and Safety Legislation:

The Health and Safety at Work, etc Act 1974

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992

Schools (Safety and Supervision of Pupils) Scotland Regulations 1990

Building Standards:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Building/Building-standards/publications/pubtech/th2013nondomcomp>

## Appendix 2

### Education (Lower Primary Class Sizes) (Scotland) Regulations 1999

3. (1) Subject to paragraph (5) no lower primary class at a school shall contain more than 30 pupils while an ordinary teaching session is conducted by a single qualified teacher.

(2) Where an ordinary teaching session in the case of any such class is conducted by more than one qualified teacher, paragraph (1) shall be taken to prohibit the class from containing more than 30 pupils for every one of those teachers.

(3) Where a lower primary class at a school contains any excepted pupil (as defined by regulation 4), paragraph (1) or (2) shall apply as if he were not included in the class.

(4) The limit of 30 pupils imposed by paragraphs (1) and (2) shall apply-

- (a) in relation to a Primary 1 class, from August 1999 until the end of the school year beginning in 2010;
- (b) in relation to a Primary 2 class, from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2000; and
- (c) in relation to a Primary 3 class, from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2001.

(5) In respect of the school year beginning in 2011 and each subsequent school year, in relation to a Primary 1 class, the limit on the number of pupils imposed in paragraphs (1) and (2) shall be 25.



© Crown copyright 2014

You may re-use this information (excluding logos and images) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/> or e-mail: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

First published by the Scottish Government, October 2014  
ISBN: 978-1-78412-862-3 (web only)

eBook first published by the Scottish Government, October 2014  
ISBN 978-1-78412-863-0 (ePub)

Kindle eBook first published by the Scottish Government, October 2014  
ISBN 978-1-78412-864-7 (Mobi)

The Scottish Government  
St Andrew's House  
Edinburgh  
EH1 3DG

Produced for the Scottish Government by APS Group Scotland  
DPPAS38586 (10/14)

Published by the Scottish Government, October 2014