

**COMMITTEE:** Education & Children’s Services Committee

**MEETING DATE:** 17 March 2026

**BY:** Depute Chief Executive Children and Communities

**REPORT TITLE:** Roll Capping in East Lothian Secondary Schools – Session 2026/27

**REPORT STATUS:** Public

---

## **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to ask Education and Children’s Services Committee to approve the S1-S4 intake levels for East Lothian secondary schools for Session 2026/27.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members are recommended to:

- 2.1 Approve a maximum intake level in S1-S4 for session 2026/27 in the schools listed below. The reasons for this are set out in section 3.

<b>School</b>	<b>Maximum S1 intake level</b>	<b>Maximum S2 intake level</b>	<b>Maximum S3 intake level</b>	<b>Maximum S4 intake level</b>
Dunbar Grammar School	180	200	220	220
Knox Academy	200	180	180	180
Musselburgh Grammar School	160	160	150	150
North Berwick High School	180	200	200	200
Preston Lodge High School	200	260	210	240
Rosehill High School	160	140	150	150

Ross High School	220	240	220	220
------------------	-----	-----	-----	-----

- 2.2 We request that Education and Children’s Services Committee delegates any changes to the maximum intake level in S1 – S4 to the Head of Education in consultation with the Education Convener, should the number of pupils requiring a place at the school significantly increase or decrease.

### 3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The main principles for managing secondary school rolls in East Lothian are to:
- provide high quality education at local schools for local pupils;
  - ensure equality of resources throughout East Lothian;
  - commit to a real choice of education inside our schools and not between our schools.
- 3.2 As an education authority, East Lothian Council has to manage public funds and ensure a balanced education service across the authority in terms of expenditure and resources. This is partly managed by agreeing to limit the overall school roll for a school or to limit the number of pupils in one specific year. This is commonly referred to as “capping”.
- 3.3 When considering how to cap school rolls, East Lothian Council as an education authority must look at all its schools and available resources. We also consider the total population of children who require places in our secondary schools and how many of those are within each catchment area. We consider how each school will manage its resources, and we then balance that with other schools’ situations to ensure that resources are shared evenly throughout East Lothian, thereby avoiding unreasonable public expenditure.
- 3.4 Limiting the number of pupils that the school can admit each academic year allows schools to timetable and employ a suitable number and category of teachers. In general, capping will support appropriate and early organisation for schools to meet their pupils’ needs for a high level of education. Capping prevents detrimental impacts on pupils’ education and ensures effective and efficient management of resources by the authority.

**Note:** Practical classes, such as science subjects, are set in multiples of 20 pupils in secondary schools. Non-practical classes are set in multiples of 30 pupils and those classrooms are furnished to accommodate a maximum of 30 pupils. Where a limit has been set for S1 roll, this has been calculated in multiples of 20 and 30, as per practical and non-practical class maximum.

### 3.5 S1 August 2026 – School Roll

Based on the number of pupils expected in S1 and the current S1-S5 pupils progressing into S2-S6, the pupil numbers for next session 2026/27 are expected to be:

School	<u>S1</u>	<u>S2</u>	<u>S3</u>	<u>S4</u>	<u>S5</u>	<u>S6</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Dunbar Grammar	170	175	205	202	181	147	1080
Knox Academy	190	161	167	171	139	97	925
Musselburgh Grammar	150	137	134	144	116	72	753
North Berwick High School	170	180	193	176	161	159	1039
Preston Lodge High School	185	232	192	212	175	122	1118
Rosehill High School	145	123	135	133	78	64	678
Ross High School	210	218	208	209	206	128	1179

- 3.6 The total roll includes pupils who are expected to transfer to S1 in August 2026 and the number of pupils expected to move up into S2 and so on, to S6.
- 3.7 The process is complex owing to pupils moving to and leaving East Lothian, late applications, and pupils choosing private schools. We consult with Head Teachers regularly and consider the statistics and information that we collate to decide on appropriate recommendations for the S1 intake. This has informed our capping recommendation, set out in 2.1 above.
- 3.8 Reserved places must also be considered as part of the roll for secondary schools and a separate report has been completed for this.

## 4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no policy implications in this report.

## 5 RESOURCE AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Finance: None
- 5.2 Human Resources: None

5.3 Other (e.g. Legal/IT): None

5.4 Risk: None

## 6 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 **Select the statement that is appropriate to your report by placing an 'X' in the relevant box.**

An Integrated Impact Assessment screening process has been undertaken and the subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on: equality and human rights; tackling socio-economic disadvantages and poverty; climate change, the environment and sustainability; the Council's role as a corporate parent; or the storage/collection of personal data.

**or**

The subject of this report has been through the Integrated Impact Assessment process and impacts have been identified as follows:

Subject	Impacts identified (Yes, No or N/A)
Equality and human rights	
Socio-economic disadvantage/poverty	
Climate change, the environment and sustainability	
Corporate parenting and care-experienced young people	
Storage/collection of personal data	
Other	

*[Enter information on impacts that have been identified]*

The Integrated Impact Assessment relating to this report has been published and can be accessed via the Council's website:

[https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210602/equality\\_and\\_diversity/12014/integrated\\_impact\\_assessments](https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210602/equality_and_diversity/12014/integrated_impact_assessments)

## 7 APPENDICES

7.1 None

## 8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 None

## 9 AUTHOR AND APPROVAL DETAILS

### Report Author(s)

<b>Name</b>	Leanne Ayton
<b>Designation</b>	Principal Officer Equity & Inclusion
<b>Tel/Email</b>	01620827485 <a href="mailto:layton1@eastlothian.gov.uk">layton1@eastlothian.gov.uk</a>
<b>Date</b>	17 March 2026

### Head of Service Approval

<b>Name</b>	Nicola McDowell
<b>Designation</b>	Head of Education
<b>Confirmation that IIA and other relevant checks (e.g. finance/legal) have been completed</b>	Yes
<b>Approval Date</b>	17 March 2026

# **Supporting Good Decisions**

**Promoting Equality and Human Rights;  
Reducing Poverty; and  
Protecting the Environment**

## **Integrated Impact Assessment Form**

# Integrated Impact Assessment Form

## Promoting Equality and Human Rights; Reducing Poverty; and Protecting the Environment

<b>Title of Policy/ Proposal</b>	Roll Capping in East Lothian Secondary Schools – Session 2026/27
<b>Timescale for Implementation</b>	March 2026
<b>IIA Completion Date</b>	13/2/26
<b>Completed by</b>	Leanne Ayton
<b>Lead officer</b>	Leanne Ayton

### Section 1: Screening

#### 1.1 Briefly describe the policy/proposal/activity you are assessing.

The main principles for managing secondary school rolls in East Lothian are to provide high quality education at local schools for local pupils, to ensure equality of resources throughout East Lothian and commit to a real choice of education inside our schools and not between our schools.

As an education authority, East Lothian Council has to manage public funds and ensure a balanced education service across the authority in terms of expenditure and resources. This is partly managed by agreeing to limit the overall school roll for a school or to limit the number of pupils in one specific year. This is commonly referred to as “capping”. When considering how to cap school rolls, East Lothian Council as an education authority must look at all its schools and available resources. We also consider the total population of children who require places in our secondary schools and how many of those are within each catchment area. We consider how each school will manage its resources and we then balance that with other schools’ situations to ensure that resources are shared evenly throughout East Lothian, thereby avoiding unreasonable public expenditure.

Limiting the number of pupils that the school can admit each academic year allows schools to timetable and employ a suitable number and category of teachers. In general, capping will support appropriate and early organisation for schools to meet their pupils’ needs for a high level of education. Capping prevents detrimental impacts on pupils’ education and ensures effective and efficient management of resources by the authority.

## 1.2 What will change as a result of this policy?

There will always be a capping recommendation. However, the process is complex owing to pupils moving to and leaving East Lothian, late applications, and pupils choosing private schools. We consult with Head Teachers regularly and consider the statistics and information that we collate to decide on appropriate recommendations for the S1 intake. This has informed our capping recommendation. Reserved Places must also be considered as part of the roll for secondary schools and a separate report has been completed for this. Therefore the capping level may change annually but this is detailed in the report.

## 1.3 Deciding if a full Impact Assessment is needed.

Please answer the following questions:

	Yes	No
1. The policy/ proposal has consequences for or affects people e.g. how they can access a service?		X
2. The policy/proposal has potential to make a significant impact on equality and human rights, socio-economic disadvantage, the council's role as a corporate parent, children's rights, or the council's commitment to tackling climate change?		X
3. The policy/proposal is likely to have a significant environmental impact as defined by the Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005?		X
4. The policy/ proposal involves a data processing activity (storage / collection of personal data) that is likely to result in a high risk to individuals as determined by Article 35 of the General Data Protection Regulation?		X

- If you have answered yes to questions 1 and 2 above, please proceed to complete the Integrated Impact Assessment. If you have answered No then an IIA does not need to be completed. Please keep a copy of the screening paperwork.
  - If you have answered yes to question 3, you will need to consider whether you need to complete a Strategic Environmental Assessment.
  - If you have answered yes to question 4, you will need to consider whether you need to complete a Data Protection Impact Assessment. Please seek further advice from the Team Manager Information Governance.
-

## Section 2: Integrated Impact Assessment

**2.1 Have those who are directly affected by the policy had the opportunity to comment on new proposals?**

**2.2 What information/data have you used to inform the development of the policy to date?**

**2.3 What does the evidence/ research suggest about the policy's actual or likely impact on equality groups and those vulnerable/ or experiencing socio-economic disadvantage?**

<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Which groups are in particular need of this service?	
What level of service uptake/ access is there from protected and vulnerable groups?	
Can you identify positive outcomes for service users	
What is the service user experience of those from protected or vulnerable groups?	
What opportunity have those from protected groups had to co-produce or comment on the service/ plans?	

**2.4 How does the policy meet the different needs of groups in the community? Please note that where children will be affected by the policy or activity a Children's Rights**

**and Wellbeing Impact assessment must additionally be completed.** [Children's Rights and Well-being Impact Assessment - completion guidance and template | East Lothian Intranet](#)

Equality Groups	Comments
Older people, people in the middle years	
Children and young people children	
Women, men and transgender people (includes issues relating to pregnancy and maternity)	
Disabled people (includes physical disability, learning disability, sensory impairment, long-term medical conditions, mental health problems)	
Minority ethnic people (includes Gypsy/Travellers, migrant workers)	
Refugees and asylum seekers	
People with different religions or beliefs (includes people with no religion or belief)	
Lesbian, gay, bisexual and heterosexual people	
People who are unmarried, married or in a civil partnership	
<b>Those vulnerable to falling into poverty</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unemployed</li> <li>• People on benefits</li> <li>• Lone Parents</li> <li>• Care experienced children and young people</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carers (including young carers)</li> <li>• Homeless people</li> <li>• Those involved in the community justice system</li> <li>• People with low literacy/numeracy</li> <li>• Families with 3 or more children</li> <li>• Those with a child/ children under 1</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Geographical communities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rural/ semi rural communities</li> <li>• Urban Communities</li> <li>• Coastal communities</li> <li>• Those living in the most deprived communities (bottom 20% SIMD areas)</li> </ul>	
<p><b>People with communication needs:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gaelic Language Speakers {refer if necessary to the Council's Gaelic Language Plan}</li> <li>• British Sign Language (BSL) users {refer if necessary to the Council's BSL Plan}</li> <li>• English as a Second Language</li> <li>• Other e.g. Deafblind, Plain English, Large Print</li> </ul>	

**2.5 Are there any other factors which will affect the way this policy impacts on the community or staff groups?**

**2.6 Is any part of this policy/ service to be carried out wholly or partly by contractors?**

If yes, how have you included equality and human rights considerations into the contract?

**2.7 Have you considered how you will communicate information about this policy or policy change to those affected e.g. to those with hearing loss, speech impairment or English as a second language?**

**2.8 Please consider how your policy will impact on each of the following?**

<p><b>Equality and Human rights</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promotes / advances equality of opportunity e.g. improves access to and quality of services</li><li>• Promotes good relations within and between people with protected characteristics and tackles harassment</li><li>• Promotes participation, is inclusive and gives people control over decisions which affect them</li><li>• Preserves dignity and self-respect of individuals (does not lead to degrading treatment or stigma)</li><li>• Builds support networks, resilience, community capacity</li></ul>
<p>Comments:</p>
<p><b>Socio-Economic Disadvantage / reducing poverty</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Maximises income and/or reduces income inequality</li><li>• Helps young people into positive destinations</li><li>• Aids those returning to and those progressing within the labour market</li><li>• Improves employability skills, including literacy and numeracy</li><li>• Reduces the costs of taking part in activities and opportunities</li><li>• Reduces the cost of living</li></ul>
<p>Comments :</p>

--

<p><b>Tackling Climate Change</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reduces the need to travel or increases access to sustainable forms of transport</li><li>• Minimises waste / encourages resource efficiency / contributes to the circular economy</li><li>• Ensures goods / services are from ethical, responsible and sustainable sources</li><li>• Improves energy efficiency / uses low carbon energy sources</li><li>• Protects and/or enhances natural environments / habitats / biodiversity</li><li>• Promotes the transition to a low carbon economy</li><li>• Prepares and/or adapts communities for climate change impacts</li></ul>
--

Comments:
-----------

<p><b>Corporate Parenting and Care Experienced Young People</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Impacts on care experienced young people</li><li>• Provides opportunities or reduces opportunities to participate in activities which are designed to promote the wellbeing of young people</li><li>• Adversely affects the wellbeing of young people</li><li>• Adversely impacts on outcomes for care experienced young people</li></ul>
---

Comments:
-----------

### Section 3. Action Plan

What, if any changes will be made to the proposal/ policy as a result of the assessment?

Changes to be made	Expected outcome of the change	Resources Required	Timeline	Responsible person

#### For consideration of the Head of Service

Can you identify any cumulative impacts on equality groups or vulnerable people arising from this policy, when considered alongside other changes across other services?

#### Sign off by Head of Service

Name:

Date: