

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201502748, Stirling Council  
**Sector:** local government  
**Subject:** primary school  
**Outcome:** not upheld, no recommendations

### Summary

Mr C was informed that his daughter (Miss A) would be allocated to a composite class (where two or more year groups are taught together) the following academic year. She was the only female member of her current class who was to be placed in the composite class. Mr C was concerned about the impact of this decision on Miss A and her learning. Mr C complained to us that the council had failed to take into account the Scottish Government 'Getting it right for every child' (GIRFEC) provisions. Mr C was also unhappy about the way the council handled his complaint.

We contacted the Scottish Government who explained that, at present, the GIRFEC provisions were best practice. The council explained that best practice was followed when allocating children to composite classes. They said the relevant council policy makes allowances for headteachers to make decisions on the basis of individual needs. If a headteacher judges that a child's needs will not be met, they can exercise their discretion and move the child to a more appropriate class. We was satisfied that, in Mr C's case, the headteacher gave consideration to the relevant criteria for allocating children to composite classes and made their decision on that basis.

Mr C also complained about the way his complaint had been handled. He said that his complaint was not properly understood or represented and that Miss A's previous teachers were not interviewed. He said that it was not demonstrated how his proposed alternative solution would have compromised the council's policy. Additionally, he said that the GIRFEC provisions were not identified as a consideration in the response to his complaint. Following detailed consideration of all the relevant documents and correspondence, we concluded that the handling of Mr C's complaint was reasonable and did not uphold his complaint to us.