

**Government of Punjab  
Department of School Education**

**ORDER**

Memo No: E-1098041/2026/ 145 - 54

Date: 15.04.2026

**Subject: Guidelines for implementation of Section 12(1)(c) of “The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act-2009” for academic session 2026-27, in the State of Punjab.**

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The Department of School Education, Punjab (hereinafter referred as the “Department”) vide the notification number SED-EDU701016/2023-4EDU71/1060127/2025, dated 21.03.2025 had issued order mandating all private unaided recognised schools, to reserve 25% of the seats to be filled exclusively by children belonging to Economically Weaker Sections and Disadvantaged Groups and subsequently guidelines for admission of children u/s 12(1)(c) were issued vide notification dated 14-08-2025.

In continuation of the above, to facilitate the admission process in the academic session 2026-27, in the schools falling under the relevant provisions of section 12(1)(c) of “The Right of Children to Free & Compulsory Education Act (hereafter referred as “RTE” Act) 2009”, and also to ensure effective implementation of these provisions in transparent and fair manner, the following guidelines are being notified.

All private unaided recognized schools, except minority schools, shall admit children belonging to the Economically Weaker Section and Disadvantaged Groups of the society in Nursery or LKG or UKG or Class-1 (whichever is the entry level classroom of the school) to the extent of at least 25 percent of the total seats (as clarified in 5(i)).

**1. Applicability Criteria for Schools:**

These guidelines shall be applicable to all private unaided recognized schools (except the minority schools) as prescribed in sub-clause (iv) of clause (n) of Section 2 of the RTE Act, 2009.

**2. Eligibility criteria for students:**

a. The following categories of children, who belong to Disadvantaged Groups (DG) shall be eligible for admission as per notification issued by the Department vide notification No. SED-EDU7013/14/2025-EDUCATION-7/1/1284700/2026 dated 7<sup>th</sup> Jan, 2026.

(i) Scheduled Caste

(ii) Backward Class/ Other Backward Classes not falling in the creamy layer.

(iii) Children of war widows.

(iv) Children of disabled persons (Minimum 40% disability).

(v) Children with special needs and suffering from disability as defined in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.

(vi) Orphan children (as defined in Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015).

b. The children, whose parents fall under the definition of Economically Weaker Section and having Income and assets certificate for Economically Weaker Section issued by the Competent Authority as per letter No. 1/16/2019-RC1/116 dated 14.05.2019 issued by the Government of Punjab as amended from time to time, shall be identified as children belonging to Economically Weaker Section and shall be eligible to be considered for the purpose of admission under Section 12(1)(c) of “The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act-2009”

**c. Category-wise seat reservation:**

The division of 25% seats under the Right to Education (RTE) quota shall be as follows:



Category	Sub-classification of the 25% seats
Economically Weaker Section	12.5%
Disadvantageous Group	12.5%

**3. Neighbourhood Criteria for candidate-school mapping:**

- i. Children residing within a 0-3 km radius of the school will be given first priority for draw/admissions.
- ii. Children residing within a radius of 3-6 km of the school will be given second preference in the draw/admission.

**Note:** *The school transportation costs shall be borne by the parents/ guardians, wherever applicable.*

**4. Age Classification Criteria into Entry Class(es):**

For the purpose of admission, "Entry Class(es)" shall refer to the entry grade(s) of formal schooling i.e. Nursery/ LKG/ UKG or Class I, as the case may be, depending upon the entry level class of the concerned school.

The minimum age of child for the purpose of admission in each class shall be as follows: -

Sr. No.	Class	Age
1.	Nursery	3 years
2.	L.K.G.	4 years
3.	U.K.G.	5 years
4.	1 <sup>st</sup>	6 years

The student should have completed/attained the age as per above table, as on 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2026.

**5. Calculation of 25% seats composition in schools:**

- i. 25% of seats shall be calculated proportionate to the admissions in the school in the academic year 2026-27, up to maximum of the sanctioned strength and shall be verified from UDISE data.
- ii. While calculating the number of seats equal to 25%, in case the number of seats is in fraction, the same shall be rounded off to the nearest whole number.

**6. Application Process:**

All eligible parents/guardians shall apply through the official portal: [rte.epunjabschool.gov.in](http://rte.epunjabschool.gov.in)

- All eligible parents/guardians shall submit their applications through the official online portal, namely [rte.epunjabschool.gov.in](http://rte.epunjabschool.gov.in).
- The date from which portal is opened for the student registration and other related timelines of the portal will be published separately on the above-mentioned website and [www.ssapunjab.org](http://www.ssapunjab.org) as well.
- All parents/guardians intending to apply under Section 12(1)(c) shall be required to:
  - (a) duly register the eligible child on the aforesaid portal;



- (b) fill in the prescribed application form in accordance with the instructions provided therein; and
- (c) upload all requisite documents as specified in Clause 7 of these guidelines in support of their application.
- Any parent/guardian found to have furnished incorrect information or uploaded false/fabricated documents on the portal shall be liable for rejection of application and initiation of appropriate legal action, including criminal proceedings, as per applicable laws. The Department reserves the right to verify the documents at any stage, and any discrepancy detected may result in cancellation of admission.

7. Eligibility Documents for application:

Sr. No.	Areas of Verification	Category	Accepted Document
1	Proof of Age	Applicable for all	Any one of the documents - 1. Birth certificate under "The registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969". 2. Hospital/ Auxiliary Nurse and Midwife (ANM) register record 3. Anganwadi record 4. Declaration through an affidavit of the age of the child by the parent or guardian, which has to be duly attested by First Class Magistrate.
2	Proof of Residence	Applicable for all	Any one of the Documents:- 1. UID- Aadhaar Card 2. Voter Identity card (Parents/Legal Guardian) 3. ORR (Ordinary Resident Register) issued by the appropriate authority 4. Electricity Bill 5. Telephone Bill 6. Water Bill 7. House Tax Receipt 8. Driving License 9. Copy of Rent Agreement, 10. Ration Card 11. Certificate by Employer 12. Certificate from Tehsildar / Local Authority 13. Certificate from Child Welfare Committee (CWC) in case children declared CNCP or CICL are residing in a Child Care Institution

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			(CCI) 14. Passport
3	<b>Proof of Eligibility</b>	<b>Applicable to all applicants, in accordance with the category to which they belong.</b>	
	<b>1. EWS</b>		Income and assets certificate for Economically Weaker Section issued by the Competent Authority as per letter No. 1/16/2019-RC1/116 dated 14.05.2019 issued by the Government of Punjab as amended from time to time.
	<b>2. Disadvantaged Groups</b>	Scheduled Caste	Caste Certificate of candidate issued by the Competent Authority of Govt. of Punjab.
		Backward Class/ Other Backward Classes not falling in the creamy layer.	Caste Certificate of candidate issued by the Competent Authority of Govt. of Punjab.
		Children of war widows.	Any one of the Documents - 1. War Widow/Ex-Serviceman (ESM) Identity Card 2. Discharge Book/Service Particulars of the Deceased Soldier 3. Pension Payment Order 4. Death Certificate of the Soldier 5. Dependent Identity Card 6. Ex-Servicemen ID Card 7. Any other document issued the Department of Sainik Welfare, Punjab
		Children of disabled persons (Minimum 40% disability).	Certificate of disability from the Civil surgeon, Unique Disability ID (UDID)card



		Children with special needs and suffering from disability as defined in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.	Certificate of disability from the Civil surgeon, Unique Disability ID (UDID) card
		Orphan children (as defined in Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015).	1. Certificate issued by the District Child Protection Officer (DCPU) 2. Certificate issued by Child Care Institute/Child Welfare Committee

8. **Allotment of Seats:** Admission process shall be carried out through a centralized online draw of lots, based on eligibility, student preference, and neighbourhood criteria as per clause 3 above.

9. **Responsibilities of the Schools:**

All private unaided recognized schools shall comply with the following terms and conditions:

i. **Admission Compliance**

The school shall admit the students, who are allotted seats through the system of online draw of lots. The admission shall be given by the school authorities, subject to physical verification of documents and fulfilment of eligibility criteria of the child. No school or person shall, while admitting such a child, subject the child or his/her parents/guardian to any screening procedure, against the seats allocated under Section 12(1)(c) of the RTE Act, 2009.

ii. **Non-Discrimination and Inclusion**

The school shall ensure that the students admitted under these guidelines:

- are not segregated from other children in classrooms.
- are not taught separately in different locations or timings.
- are not discriminated against in any manner.

**Equal access shall be provided to:**

- Library facilities
- ICT/computer facilities
- Extracurricular activities
- Sports and all other school entitlements

Schools shall take proactive measures to ensure classrooms are inclusive and safe spaces for all children.

iii. **Portal Updates and Record Maintenance**

The school shall:

- update students' enrolment status after each admission cycle on the online system
- update students' attendance regularly on the portal
- It is mandatory that the schools shall keep record of all the students enrolled and their details.



## 10. Reimbursement of fee to the schools:

- i. Reimbursement of fees to Private Unaided recognized schools shall be made as per the provisions of Section 12(1)(c) read with Section 12(2) of "*The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009*", which provides for reimbursement in respect of elementary education and the policy/guidelines of Government of India issued as such from time to time.
- ii. To receive fee reimbursement of such children as stated in point(i) above, students admitted against 25% reserved seats, such school shall provide a separate designated bank account, in the name of the respective school, to the Competent Authority. This account shall be used exclusively for the purpose of receiving the reimbursement amount from the competent authority. The reimbursement shall be credited into this account strictly as per the norms and procedures prescribed by the Government. No other transactions shall be carried out through this account. The school shall maintain accurate and up-to-date records of the receipts and expenditures from this account, and shall submit the requisite statements, along with supporting documents, to the concerned authority for audit and verification as and when required.
- iii. The school shall receive fee reimbursement for the expenditure incurred by the school to the extent of per-child-expenditure, as determined by the Government of Punjab, or the actual school fee, whichever is less.
- iv. If a school is already under obligation to provide free education to a specified number of children, as such school received land, buildings, equipment, or other facilities free of cost or at a concessional rate, or if the school has already provided free education to the disadvantaged group or other categories of children, then such school shall not be entitled to reimbursement to the extent of that obligation as per the provisions of the RTE Act, 2009.

## 11.

### Grievance Redressal Mechanism:

- i. The District Education Officer (Elementary/Secondary) of the concerned district shall be designated as the Grievance Redressal Officer. Only the parent/guardian aggrieved with the action/rejection of request for admission of the child, as applied on the portal, can file a written grievance, with the concerned District Education Officer (Elementary/Secondary). This grievance must be filed within one week of such rejection on the portal with the concerned District Education Officer (Elementary/Secondary). The concerned District Education Officer shall be responsible for hearing complaints and passing appropriate orders within a period of 15 days from receipt of such grievance.
- ii. In case the parent/guardian is aggrieved by the rejection of the candidature by the school, they can submit the grievance to the concerned District Education Officer (Elementary/Secondary), within one week of such rejection. The concerned District Education Officer shall be responsible for hearing complaints and passing appropriate orders within a period of 15 days from receipt of such complaint.
- iii. The concerned District Education Officer (Elementary/Secondary) shall or through their representative randomly inspect schools in their jurisdiction at



least once a year to monitor the implementation of the Sec 12(1)(c) of the RTE Act, 2009.

- iv. Any violation/failure to adhere to the rules governing the implementation of Section 12(1)(c) of the RTE Act, 2009 shall lead to appropriate action against such school. The concerned District Education Officer (Elementary/Secondary) may take appropriate action wherever required against such schools as per the provisions of the RTE Act, 2009.
- v. This action can be initiated either by District Education Officer (Elementary/Secondary) at their own initiative or based on a complaint received from any person as per the relevant provisions of RTE Act, 2009.
- vi. **Right to Appeal:** If any person feels aggrieved with the decision of the District Education Officer (Elementary/Secondary), such person may file an appeal before the Punjab State Commission for Protection of Child Rights within the stipulated time period, in accordance with the statutory provisions of the RTE Act, 2009.
- vii. This SOP is applicable for the academic session 2026-27 and necessary corrigendum if required can be issued from time to time. The SOP may be reviewed and modified from time to time by the Department of School Education based on periodic assessment and emerging needs.

Place: Chandigarh  
Dated: 15-04-2026


Sonali Giri  
Secretary to Govt. of Punjab  
Department of School Education

Dated: 15-4-2026

Endstt. No. 145-54

A copy is forwarded to the following for information and necessary action:-

1. P.A. to Secretary, School Education, Punjab.
2. P.A. to Director General School Education, Punjab.
3. P.A. to Chairman, State Commission for Protection of Child Rights, Punjab.
4. P.A. to Principal Accountant General (Audit), Punjab.
5. P.A. to all Deputy Commissioner's, Punjab.
6. P.A. to Director, School Education (Secondary/Elementary), Punjab.
7. P.A. to Director, State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT), Punjab.
8. P.A. to Chairman, Punjab School Education Board, SAS Nagar.
9. All District Education Officers (Elementary/Secondary), in the State of Punjab with the direction to ensure strict compliance and utmost priority with the above instructions in a time-bound manner.
10. D.M., MIS Wing, Punjab (for website).

  
(Harkirat Kaur Channe)  
Director, School Education  
(Elementary), Punjab