

CO-ORDINATED ADMISSION SCHEME FOR FIRST TIME ADMISSION TO INFANT AND PRIMARY SCHOOLS, AND INFANT TO JUNIOR TRANSFERS ENTRY SEPTEMBER 2024

[Ratified February 2023]

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The School Admissions (Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) Regulations 2008 require local authorities to have a scheme covering every school whether maintained or not (but not special schools) in its area. Regulations require local authorities (LAs) to exchange specified school application information with their neighbours. The purpose of a co-ordinated scheme is to establish mechanisms for ensuring, as far as reasonably practical, that every parent of a child living within the LA who has applied for a school place in the normal admission round receives an offer of one, and only one, school place on the same day as set out in the revised School Admissions Code 2021.
- 1.2 The duty to comply with parental preference is not affected by co-ordinated admission arrangements, except where more than one place could be offered. Nor do co-ordinated scheme affect the rights and duties of governing bodies of own admitting schools, that act as their own admissions authority (e.g. voluntary aided and academy) schools to set and apply their own admission arrangements and oversubscription criteria.
- 1.3 All local authorities are required, by section 88M of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (SSFA) and the Co-ordination Regulations 2007, to have in place a scheme each year for all maintained, Trust, Voluntary Aided schools and Academies in their area. Any changes to arrangements for coordinating these applications must be formulated by 1 January each year unless they remain unchanged. In which case this will fulfil the legal requirement to formulate a scheme.
- 1.4 For Leicestershire schools the local authority will continue to co-ordinate offers for primary school places, both in-year (on a traded basis) and at the normal admissions round. However, only the home local authority can make offers for primary school places in the normal round.

2. Main obligations imposed by the regulations

[School Admissions Code September 2021 applies.]

- 2.1 The common application must allow parents to express a preference for at least 3 schools within or beyond their home local authority area, and the reasons for their preferences.
- 2.2 Local authorities and admission authorities in the area must exchange information on applications made and potential offers by the last working day in March in the offer year (as specified in the regulations).

- 2.3 Local authorities must pass information on applications to other local authorities about applications to schools in their area. The maintaining local authority must inform the home local authority if it intends to offer a place, by the dates specified in the scheme.
- 2.4 The maintaining local authority must tell the home local authority if it could offer a place. The home local authority may take account of this in deciding whether or not to offer the parent a place at a school in its own area but must set-out its intentions clearly to parents in its composite prospectus.
- 2.5 Offers of places must be sent on **16th April** (or the next working day if the **16th April** is not a working day) in the year during which a child will be admitted to school by the home local authority. Schools must not contact parents about the outcome of their application until after these offers have been received. Only the local authority can make an offer in the normal round.
- 2.6 Parents who cannot be offered one of their preferred schools must be advised of how to enquire about availability of places at other schools.
- 2.7 It remains a requirement to co-ordinate fully across borders. The home authority will make the offer of a single place.
- 2.8 Schemes must continue after the offer date to ensure that places which become available are reallocated effectively.

3. Administration of the Scheme for first time admissions to Infant and Primary schools:

NB¹ For all dates mentioned below, if the date is not a working day, then close of business on the next working day applies.

NB² Leicestershire schools which receive direct applications in error must inform Leicestershire LA whether or not the parent lives in the area so that the home LA can ensure that the parent has received an application.

- 3.1 Leicestershire LA's first time admission application process invites all parents resident in the LA to name their preferred school(s) from 1st June to **15th January** (national closing date), where January is the year of admission. Parents may express a preference for at least three schools and those preferences must be ranked in order of preference. It is made clear that parents should name all schools at which they wish their child to be considered for a place, including voluntary aided, trust or academy schools. Parents are recommended to include their catchment area school in their preferences. Although parents must rank their preferences, all preferences will be treated as equal by admissions authorities in applying their own admissions policies. Ranking only applies when more than one school can be allocated in such circumstance the highest ranked school will always be offered.
- 3.2 Leicestershire residents who wish to apply for a school within the area of another local authority must do so by applying to their home authority i.e. Leicestershire. Non-Leicestershire residents who wish to apply for a place in Leicestershire must apply through their home authority who acts as their agent and shares information with Leicestershire.
- 3.3 By **30th January** Leicestershire LA will share their application information of those Leicestershire residents who have applied for school places with other LA's. Files from other LA's should also be received at this time to be imported into ONE and validated according to Leicestershire's criteria.
- 3.4 By **8th February** Leicestershire will then share their application data with the Leicestershire Admissions Authority Schools e.g. Voluntary Aided, Academy, and Trust for the school Governors to apply their admissions criteria then rank the list of

applications according to their admission criteria, to return to Leicestershire LA. The list should indicate the order in which all children for whom application to the school has been made, have priority by reference to the over-subscription criteria. Although applications need to be assessed and grouped against the criteria, admission authorities of seriously over-subscribed schools need not give rankings to individual applicants except where a priority group falls across the Admission Number (AN). They do, however, need to notify the LA of those children who are next in line, should places become available as a result of applying the scheme.

- 3.5 Leicestershire LA applies its own admissions criteria to requests for places in community and voluntary controlled schools, the relevant criteria for own admitting academies; and for those own admitting authorities that engage the LA to rank their applications, lists are then exchanged with these schools, for them to rank ratify their ranked lists.
- 3.6 Leicestershire LA then assesses the lists from all schools in its area. To check to see where a child qualifies for more than one offer of a place, the highest parental ranked preference school is the provisionally allocated, with any lower ranking secured school(s) withdrawn and allocated to others where possible. For applicants living in other local authorities, Leicestershire notifies the home LA whether or not it is able to offer a place in line with any preferences made.
- 3.7 By **20th March** Leicestershire LA will also have received notifications from other local authorities of any places which that LA or schools in their area can offer in response to any preference expressed by Leicestershire residents. There will be, at most, one such offer from the home LA. If no preferred school in Leicestershire LA can be offered, Leicestershire LA will not look for an alternative place if it knows that another LA will be making an offer of a place.

If Leicestershire LA is made aware that another LA will be making an offer of a place in a school which is higher up the parent's order of ranking than the school to be offered by Leicestershire LA, then Leicestershire LA will not make an offer for a place in a Leicestershire school.
- 3.8 Leicestershire then prior to offer date will send Leicestershire own admitting authorities that it ranks applications for their final ranked list for ratification.
- 3.9 On national offer day of **16th April** (or the next working day if the **16th April** is not a working day) Leicestershire LA contacts every resident parent who completed an application to inform them of the outcome of their requests.
- 3.10 Late applications and requests for changes to list of preferences will be dealt with as follows:

Received after **15th January** closing date but on or before 31st January

When Leicestershire LA considers that applications are received late for a good reason but by 1st February it may be possible to considered special cases as on-time, e.g. when a single parent has been hospitalised, or a family are returning from abroad. These will be considered along with the applications received before the closing date of 15th January, providing documentary evidence of the reason for lateness is also received and it is no later than end of February.

Any other applications will be considered to be late and will not be dealt with until after places have been allocated to those who met the closing date (15th January). Late applications will include requests to amend previously submitted applications, (where for example a new school has been added to the original preferences).

Received after **16th April**

Applications received after 1st March will be batched and considered approximately three weeks after the offer date. Applications received after this time will be dealt with as and when they arrive.

- 3.11 All applications received after September, in accordance with the Code 2021, will be processed as mid-term applications.
- 3.12 All admitting authorities must maintain over-subscription waiting lists (OSLs) for a minimum of the Autumn Term in the academic year of admission, ranked in the same order as the published oversubscription criteria. For community and those academies engaging Leicestershire admissions service, will have the LA to maintain their waiting lists.

4. Administration of the Scheme for Infant to Junior transfers and Infant to Primary school:

NB¹ For all dates mentioned below, if the date is not a working day, then close of business on the next working day applies.

NB² Leicestershire schools which receive direct applications in error must inform Leicestershire LA whether or not the parent lives in the area so that the home LA can ensure that the parent has received an application form.

- 4.1 Application information is sent to parents from **1st September**. Leicestershire's application information invites all parents resident in Leicestershire to name three preferred schools, in order of preference by close of business on **15th January** for admission the following September. It is made clear that parents should name all schools at which they wish their child to be considered for a place and we recommend for them to include their catchment area school or voluntary aided school.
- 4.2 The remainder of scheme (as detailed in the attached flow chart section 5) will follow the first time admissions timetable as detailed from within this document.
- 4.3 For those applications seeking a transfer from an infant school to a primary school, these will be considered as in-year (mid-term) transfers. Parents and guardians will be asked whether they wish their child to move immediately or be considered for mid-term transfer at the end of the summer term for a September start. Where a September start is requested the application will be held on file until nearer the close of the current academic year (early to mid June), and processed then.

5. Primary Scheme Timetable (All schools)

For any dates identified below:

- action to be taken by close of business on that date
- if the date is not a working day, then close of business on the next working day applies.

