

CO-ORDINATED ADMISSION SCHEME FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL TRANSFERS ENTRY SEPTEMBER 2024

[Ratified February 2023]

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The School Admissions (Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2007 require local authorities to have a scheme covering every maintained school (but not special schools) in its area. Regulations require local authorities (LAs) to exchange specified 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 be 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 admission authority (e.g. voluntary aided and foundation) schools to set and apply their own admission arrangements and over subscription 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 secondary 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 dates specified in the scheme.
- 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 explain its intentions clearly to parents in its composite prospectus.
- 2.5. Offers of places must be sent on **1st March** (or the next working day if the 1st 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 (in the majority of circumstances will be the home LA) can make an offer.
- 2.6. Parents who cannot be offered one of their preferred schools must, if there are places available, be informed of where places exist 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 **1st March** to ensure that places which become available are reallocated effectively.

3. Administration of the Scheme

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.

- 3.1. Application information is sent to parents early **September**. Leicestershire's application letter invites all parents resident in Leicestershire to name three preferred schools, in order of preference by close of business on **31st October** for admission the following Autumn Term. It is made clear that parents should name all schools at which they wish their child to be considered for a place including their catchment area school or any foundation or voluntary aided school.
- 3.2. On or by **23rd November**, Leicestershire LA sends other admission authorities details of applicants for their schools. Any additional information received by the other admissions authorities direct (e.g. letter of support from minister, professional documentary evidence etc) can be treated in the same way as that received via Leicestershire LA once it has been established that this only relates to applications which are mentioned and ranked on Leicestershire LA's form.
- 3.3. Leicestershire LA applies its own admissions criteria to requests for places in its own schools and for those academies that engage the LA to apply their criteria on their behalf, whether applications have come direct from parents resident in Leicestershire or those who are resident in other authorities and have applied via their home authority.
- 3.4. The other admission authorities then apply their admission criteria, and send Leicestershire LA, by **16th January**, a list indicating 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 ranked against the criteria, admission authorities of seriously over-subscribed schools need not give individual rankings to applicants in the lowest priority grounds for admission, if there is no likelihood of being able to offer them a place after elimination of multiple offers.

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 then compares the lists from all schools in its area. Where a child qualifies for more than one offer of a place, a place would be offered at the school which was highest in the parent's order of ranking. For applicants living in another LA, Leicestershire notifies the home LA whether or not it is able to offer a place in line with any preferences made.
- 3.6. Leicestershire LA then adjusts the list for any other school for which a preference was expressed by that parent, moving another child, who was previously not eligible to be allocated a potential place up the list to a provisional place, which has been vacated.
- 3.7. By **1st February**, Leicestershire LA will also have received notifications from other LAs of any places which those LAs or schools in their areas can offer in response to any preference expressed by one of their residents. There will be, at most, one such offer from each other 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 **1st March** (or next working day) – the “National Offer Day” – Leicestershire LA communicates to every resident parent who applied for a place to tell them of the decision. Parents who have not applied or for whom no preference can be agreed will be informed of schools where there is space and will be invited to make an application.
- 3.10. Late applications and requests for changes to list of preferences will be dealt with as follows:

Received after 31st October closing date but on or before 16th November

When Leicestershire LA considers that applications are received late for a good reason and is by 16th November it may be possible to consider 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 31st October, providing documentary evidence of the reason for lateness is also received.

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 31st October. Late applications will include requests to amend previously submitted applications, (where for example a new school has been added to the original preferences).

- 3.11. On 1st March, Leicestershire parents who have not applied or have recently arrived to Leicestershire (or others wishing to secure a Leicestershire school) can contact Leicestershire for a list of schools where there are spaces and can apply to express

a preference. Similarly, a list of schools with spaces is always sent to parents whose preferences have not been met.

3.12. **Received after 1st March**

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.

3.13. Applications received from the autumn term will be processed as mid-term applications as detailed in the national Code 2021.

3.14. All admitting authorities must maintain over-subscription waiting lists (OSL) for a minimum of the Autumn Term in the academic year of admission, ranked in the same order as the published over-subscription criteria. For community and those academies engaging Leicestershire admissions service, will have the LA to maintain their waiting lists.

4. Scheme Timetable

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.

