



## **Co-ordinated Scheme for Primary School Admissions for 2011/12**

**Status** : Proposed to Cabinet following Admissions Forum

# **Proposed Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for Primary schools within Wiltshire for year 2011/12.**

## **Introduction**

1. This scheme for co-ordinated admissions is pursuant to section 89(b) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, for co-ordinating the arrangements for the admission of pupils to Primary schools within the LA area. It applies to Primary schools in Wiltshire with effect from September 2011 intakes. There will be an annual review of the scheme as per the School Admissions Code in force at the time.

## **Interpretation and Glossary**

2. In this scheme –

“the LA” means Wiltshire Council acting in their capacity as a local (education) authority;

“the LA area” means the County of Wiltshire;

“primary education” has the same meaning as in section 2(1) of the Education Act 1996;

“Primary education” has the same meaning as in section 2(2) of the Education Act 1996;

“primary school” has the same meaning as in section 5(1) of the Education Act 1996;

“Primary school” has the same meaning as in section 5(2) of the Education Act 1996;

“school” means a community, voluntary controlled, foundation or voluntary aided school, other than special schools, which is maintained by the LA;

“admission authority” in relation to a community or voluntary controlled school means the LA and, in relation to a foundation or voluntary aided school means the governing body of that school;

“the specified year” means the school year beginning in September 2011

“admission arrangements” means the determined arrangements which govern the procedures and decision making for the purposes of admitting pupils to a school;

“late admission” means any application for a place in the first year of primary or infant education or the first year of junior education that is received after 15 January 2011.

“additional application” means any application for any other year group in the school up to and including Yr 6;

“eligible for a place” means that a child’s name has been placed on a school’s ranked list within the school’s published admission number.

# The Scheme

## The Normal Admissions Round

### 3. Starting School

There is a legal entitlement for all three and four years olds to have access to fifteen hours free early education per week - available from registered childminders, school-based childcare, Sure Start centres, pre-schools, day nurseries, playgroups, or nursery schools.

A child must be in full-time education in the term following their fifth birthday. In Wiltshire children can start school at the earliest from the September following their fourth birthday. Full time provision will be made available in all reception classes for all children from September 2011.

4. Parents will be able to make an online application. Online applications will be made directly to County Hall, Trowbridge. If an online application has been submitted, a written application is not necessary. The online facility will be available at least from 1 September 2010 up until the deadline of 15 January 2011.
5. There will be a standard form for written applications known as the Primary Common Application Form (PCAF) used for the admission of pupils into the first year of Primary education in the specified year.
6. Unless an online application has been made, the PCAF must be used as a means of expressing one or more preferences by a parent wishing to apply for a school place for their child either within or outside the county. The child must live in Wiltshire.
7. The LA will make arrangements to ensure
  - a) the PCAF is accompanied by written guidance notes explaining the coordinated admissions scheme, and
  - b) that copies are available on request from the LA and from all primary and Primary schools in the LA area, and
  - c) that an electronic version of the form is available for parents to make an online application.
8. The PCAF and accompanying guidance notes will invite the parent to express up to three preferences in rank order (schools may be inside or outside Wiltshire), and to give their reasons for each preference, explain that the parent will receive no more than one offer of a school place and specify the closing date and the address to which it must be returned. They will also confirm that:
  - a) a place will be offered at their highest ranked school at which they are eligible to be offered a place; or
  - b) if a place cannot be offered at any one of their preferred schools, and the child is living in Wiltshire, a place at an alternative school will be allocated.
9. Split Site Schools. Where a school operates from separate bases and at each base provides for the full primary age range (ie both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2), the two sites will be treated as separate schools for admissions purposes. This means that an

application must name the site preferred. An applicant can use two preferences to name both sites.

10. The governing body of a foundation or voluntary aided school can ask parents who have expressed a preference for their school on the PCAF, to provide additional information on a supplementary form only if the additional information is required in order to apply their oversubscription criteria to the application. Where a supplementary form is required it is the responsibility of the individual governing body to provide a copy to each parent who has expressed a preference for the school on a PCAF and who has requested such a form.
11. Where a school receives a supplementary form it may not be regarded as a valid application unless the parent has also completed a PCAF which expressed a preference for that school. The PCAF or an online application must have been returned to the LA. It is the responsibility of schools using supplementary forms to inform the applicant of the need to submit a PCAF to the LA.
12. The closing date for applications is **15 January 2011**. All Completed PCAFs are to be returned directly to the LA. Any PCAFs which are incorrectly returned to schools must be forwarded to the LA to be received by the deadline. Forms returned to schools and not received by the LA by 15 January 2011 will be treated as late applications.
13. The LA will send out an acknowledgement of receipt for each PCAF and all online applications. Applicants will be advised to contact the LA if they have not received an acknowledgement within ten working days of posting their application.
14. **Shared Responsibility.**  
Where two adults have shared responsibility for a child they should agree before submitting an application form which school(s) to name as their preference(s). In cases of dispute, or when two application forms are submitted, the LA will process the application received from the adult with whom the child is living. The address on the child benefit notification letter will be taken as evidence of residency.

#### **Determining offers**

15. The LA will act as a clearing house for the allocation of places by the relevant admission authorities in response to the PCAFs. The LA will only make a decision with respect to the offer or refusal of a place in response to any preference expressed on the PCAF where-
  - a. it is acting in its separate capacity as an admission authority, or
  - b. an applicant is eligible for a place at more than one school, or
  - c. an applicant is not eligible for a place at any of the schools for which a preference was expressed.
16. The process by which the LA will allocate places is explained at paragraphs 19 -20.
17. **By 1 February 2011** where parents have nominated a Primary school outside the LA area, the LA will notify the relevant LA.

18. **By 11 February 2011** the LA will notify all Foundation and VA schools of every preference that has been expressed for that school.
19. **By 28 February 2011** the LA will provide a final list to all other admissions authorities of every preference that has been expressed for their school(s) including those resident in other LA areas.
20. **By 25 March 2011** all foundation and voluntary aided schools must have considered all of the preferences for their school, and provide the LA with a ranked list of all applicants in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.
21. The LA will then match this ranked list against all other ranked lists and:
  - Where the child is eligible for a place at only one of the preferred schools, a place at the school will be offered to the child.
  - Where the child is eligible for a place at two or more of the nominated schools, they will be offered a place at whichever school was their highest available preference.
22. Where the child is not eligible for a place at any of the nominated schools and the child lives in Wiltshire, they will be allocated a place at a school. This will be their designated school or at another school (to which there would be an entitlement to free school transport if it were outside the statutory three mile distance from the home). Should this place subsequently be declined then it is the parent's responsibility to apply for an alternative school place.
23. **By 31 March 2011** the LA will inform other LAs of any places in Wiltshire schools which will be offered to their residents.
24. **By 15 April 2011** the LA will inform Wiltshire schools of the pupils to be offered places at their schools.
25. **On 21 April 2011** letters will be despatched to all parents who submitted an application form by 15 January 2011 offering a place at one school.
26. These offer letters will give the following information:
  - a. The name of the school at which a place is offered;
  - b. The reasons why the child is not being offered a place at any of the other schools nominated on the PCAF;
  - c. Information about their statutory right of appeal against any decisions to refuse places at other preferred schools;
  - d. Contact details for the LA and the schools for which they expressed a preference.
27. **10 May 2011** is the deadline for parents to accept the place offered. Parents will be asked to respond to the LA. If they do not respond by this date it will be assumed that the place offered has been declined.
28. **By 20 May 2011** the LA will send every maintained school a list of those pupils who has accepted a place at that school.

## **Late Applications for normal round of admissions**

29. Late applications, ie those received after the deadline for the normal admissions round, will not be considered until after all of those which were received on time have been processed.
30. Any applications received by a maintained school should be sent to the LA on receipt.

## **Applications received after 15 January 2011**

31. Any applications received by the LA for a maintained school received after 15 January 2011 will be dealt with as soon as possible with allocations to a single school being made and offer letters sent out from the LA as soon as is practically possible.
32. Any applications received by any maintained school should be forwarded to the LA within 5 days of receipt.
33. The LA will contact all foundation and aided schools named as a preference on an application form to determine whether or not a place is available. An offer will be made for the school named as the highest preference where there is an identified place. Where the child is not eligible for a place at any of the nominated schools, the child will be allocated a place at their designated school unless an alternative place is available within the safe statutory walking distance from their home address.
34. Any late applications received by the LA after 22 July 2011 which express a preference for an aided or foundation school will be forwarded to the school within five school days of receipt at which time the process described below for in year applications will apply.
35. On or before 31 August 2011 the LA will send out a list to all maintained schools in Wiltshire showing those pupils expected to start in the school at the beginning of the 2011/12 school year.

## **In-Year Applications (for years outside the normal intake year for the school) effective from 1 September 2010 onwards**

36. The LA will make available copies of the Admissions Guide and PCAF through all primary and Primary schools and on request from County Hall.
37. All applicants for any school place must complete an application form which should be returned to the LA. The applicant must live in Wiltshire.
38. Where any maintained school receives an in year application form expressing a preference for that school the form should be forwarded to the LA within 5 school days of receipt.
39. Where the LA receives an in year application form expressing a preference for a Foundation or VA school details of the application will be forwarded to the school within 5 school days of receipt. Applications for schools which are outside Wiltshire will be passed on to the maintaining authority.
40. For a Foundation or VA school, the school's governing body is responsible for deciding the outcome of the application and advising the LA accordingly within 10 school days of the date on which the information was received by the school.
41. A decision letter will be sent out by the local authority within twenty school days of receiving the application form and this will provide information, if appropriate, about the statutory right of appeal.
42. Children not placed at one of their preferred schools will be considered under the Fair Access Protocol.
43. Waiting lists for schools must be kept and will be managed as per the admission arrangements for the particular school involved. Waiting lists will be kept in order of the relevant oversubscription criteria and not in date order of receipt.

## **Applications for transfer at a future date**

44. Applications for transfer will be considered a maximum of one traditional term in advance. Where early applications are received the admission authority will advise the parent that their application will not be considered until a specified later date. Details of early applications received directly by the LA will be sent on to all Foundation and VA schools at the earliest date they are eligible for consideration.

## **Children from overseas.**

45. Children who hold a full British Citizen passport or children whose passport has been endorsed to show they have the right of abode in the country are entitled to apply for a place at a maintained school. The passport or visa should be made available for inspection before an offer of a school place can be made. Asylum Seekers should make available evidence of their right of abode as provided by the National Asylum Support Service.

46. Applications on behalf of children currently living outside the UK will be considered but until the children are resident in the country their home address will be considered as being their place of residence outside the UK. Exceptions to this would be instances where the children are of parents returning from foreign postings, such as UK service personnel and other crown servants (including diplomats) who have been posted abroad on a fixed term contract and who are returning to live within the UK. Proof of the future UK residency will be required if application is made to an oversubscribed school.

### **Fair Access Protocol**

47. Schools will act in accordance with the Fair Access Protocol which has been adopted to give access to educational provisions for hard to place children and includes those children and young people of compulsory school age in some or all of the following categories:-

- ◆ those who are in care of a Local Authority (previously known as Looked After) \* (see below)
- ◆ those attending a YPSS centre who need to be reintegrated back into mainstream education;
- ◆ those who are permanently excluded\*;
- ◆ those who are out of education for longer than one school term.
- ◆ those whose parents have been unable to find them a place after moving into the area because of a shortage of places;
- ◆ those withdrawn from schools by their family following fixed term exclusions and unable to find another place.
- ◆ those who are refugees or asylum seekers;
- ◆ those who are homeless;
- ◆ those without a school place and with a history of serious attendance problems;
- ◆ those with unsupportive family backgrounds, where a place has not been sought;
- ◆ those known to the police or other agencies;
- ◆ those who are carers;
- ◆ those who have special educational needs (SEN) but without statements;
- ◆ those who are travellers; and/or
- ◆ those with disabilities or medical conditions.

\* Exception to this protocol- The Local Authority (Wiltshire) has the legal power to direct a school to admit a child in its care to a school best suited to that child's needs. This action will be taken in the best interests of the child.

48. In the vast majority of cases children and young people requiring a school place will continue to be admitted in accordance with the usual admission procedures rather than through this protocol



## Appendix: 2011/12 Timetable for Primary Co-ordination (WILTSHIRE)

<b>15 January 2011:</b>	<b>Closing date for all Common Application Forms to be received by the School Admissions Team at County Hall. Applications must be received by the LA by noon on this date.</b>
1 February 2011:	Details of applications which include preferences for schools in other LAs to be sent to those LAs.
11 February 2011 :	Details of applications to be sent to Foundation and VA schools.
25 March 2011:	Foundation and VA schools to provide the LA with ranked lists of applicants.
31 March 2011:	The LA will inform other LAs of any offers of places at Wiltshire schools to be made to applicants resident in their areas.
15 April 2011 :	By this date the LA will provide schools which details of those children to be offered places at the school.
<b>21 April 2011:</b>	<b>Notification letters despatched and sent to parents.</b>
10 May 2011 :	Last date for offers to be accepted by parents. Acceptances sent to LA.
20 May 2011:	The LA will send list of pupils accepting a place to every maintained school.
31 August 2011	LA will send out a list to all maintained schools showing the pupils expected to join the school at beginning of 2011/12 school year.