



## **Proposed Co-ordinated Scheme for Primary School Admissions for 2014/15**

**Status** : Proposed Primary Co-ordinated Scheme 2014/15

# **Proposed Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for Primary schools within Wiltshire for year 2014/15.**

## **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 2014 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;

“Academy” means a state funded, non fee paying independent school set up under a Funding Agreement between the Secretary of State and the proprietor of an Academy (most commonly, and hereafter, referred to as an Academy Trust). Academy Funding Agreements require them to comply with the Code and the law relating to admissions, though the Secretary of State has the power to vary this requirement where there is a demonstrable need.

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

“the specified year” means the school year beginning in September 2014

“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 noon on 15 January 2014.

“In - Year 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 2014.

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 2013 up until the deadline of noon on 15 January 2014.
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 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 each base provides for the full primary age range (i.e. 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 **noon on 15 January 2014**. 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 noon on 15 January 2014 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 fifteen school days of posting their application.

### **Shared Responsibility**

14. 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 majority of the school week. The address shown on the child benefit notification letter will be taken as evidence of residency. If this is not available then the address showing on the child's NHS medical card can be used 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. Noon 15 January 2014: **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.**
18. **By 10 February 2014** where parents have nominated a Primary school outside the LA area, the LA will notify the relevant LA.
19. **By 24 February 2014** the LA will notify all Foundation and VA schools and Academies of every preference that has been expressed for that school.
20. **By 28 February 2014** 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.
21. **By 13 March 2014** all Foundation and Voluntary Aided Schools and Academies 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.
22. 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.
23. 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 safe walking distance from the home). Should this place subsequently be declined then it is the parent's responsibility to apply for an alternative school place.
24. **By 01 April 2014** the LA will inform other LAs of any places in Wiltshire schools which will be offered to their residents.
25. **By 14 April 2014** the LA will inform Wiltshire schools of the pupils to be offered places at their schools.
26. On **16 April 2014 ( New National Offer)** letters will be despatched to all parents who submitted an application form by noon on 15 January 2014 offering a place at one school.
27. 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.

28. **30 April 2014** is the deadline for parents to accept the place offered.
29. By **12 May 2014** the LA will send every school a list of those pupils who have accepted a place at that school.
30. **By 16 May 2014** all schools must inform the LA of any places that have been accepted via the school directly.
31. **W/C 19 May 2014** the LA will send out chaser letters to all parents who have been offered places and not yet responded providing them with a further deadline to respond and informing them that failure to do so will result in the offer being withdrawn.
32. **W/C 02 June 2014: Final letter will be sent to all parents who have not accepted offer made on 16 April 2014 informing them that the offer has been withdrawn. Parents have the right to appeal.**
33. **13 June 2014** the LA will send out the second round offers for applications received between noon 15 January 2014 and 16 April 2014.

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

34. Late applications, ie those received after the deadline of noon 15 January 2014 but before 16 April 2014 for the normal admissions round, will not be considered until after all of those which were received on time have been processed. Offer letters will be posted out on 13 June 2014.
35. Any late applications received by the LA will not be considered before 17 April 2014. All applications received after noon on the 15 January 2012 and before 17 April 2014 will be considered together with any applicant previously refused a place and if necessary will be prioritised using the oversubscription policy in place at that time.
36. Any applications received by the LA after 16 April 2014 for a maintained school 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.
37. Any applications received by any maintained school should be forwarded to the LA within 5 days of receipt.
38. Any late applications received by the LA after 24 July 2014 which express a preference for an aided, foundation school or an academy 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.
39. On or before 31 August 2014 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 2014/15 school year.

## **Applications received after 16 April 2014**

40. Any applications received by the LA for a maintained school received after 16 April 2014 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.
41. The LA will contact all Foundation, Aided schools and Academies 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, and the child lives in Wiltshire, 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.
42. On or before 31 August 2014 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 2014/15 school year.

## **In-Year Transfer Applications (for applications outside the normal intake for the school)**

43. The LA will make available copies of the Admissions Guide and SCAF through all primary and secondary schools and on request from County Hall.
44. All applicants for a school place must complete an application form which should be returned to the LA. The applicant may or may not live in Wiltshire.
45. Should a parent living in Wiltshire wish to apply for a school in another authority, they must contact that authority directly to apply.
46. Where a 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.
47. Where the LA receives an in year application form expressing a preference for a Academy, Foundation or VA school the application will be forwarded to the school within 5 school days of receipt.
48. For an Academy, 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.
49. In all cases, 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.
50. If an application has been passed on to a selective school, it is recognised that such a school will not be able to make a response to the LA until after the result of an appropriate selection test has been received. The selective school will inform the LA of the outcome of the application as soon as practicable after the result of any selection test is known. A decision letter will be sent out by the LA and will provide information, if appropriate, about the statutory right of appeal.



51. 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.
52. In accordance with paragraph 2.21 /2.22 of the School Admissions Code the Local Authority is required to provide parents on request the availability of school places within its area. All schools must provide the LA with this information. This must be done on a monthly basis with the first return to be sent by 6 September 2013.

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

53. Applications for transfer for VC & C schools will be considered a maximum of one traditional term in advance. Where early applications are received for VC & C schools the Local Authority will advise the parent that their application will not be considered until a specified later date.
54. Applications for transfer for VA & F schools and Academies will be forwarded when received directly to the schools named for consideration in accordance with the schools own admissions policy.

### **Children from overseas**

55. 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.
56. 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**

57. 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:-
- a) *Children attending PRUs or Alternative Provision who are ready to be reintegrated back into mainstream education but into a different school from the one originally attended;*
  - b) *Children who were permanently excluded from their last maintained school placement and who are ready for re-integration to an alternative school.*

- c) *Children known to the police or other similar agencies, where there has been active involvement in the past six months;*
- d) *Children returning from the criminal justice system who are registered with the Youth Offending Team;*
- e) *Children with a history of serious attendance problems, who have been out of education for longer than one new term;*
- f) *Children withdrawn from schools following fixed term exclusion, who have been out of education for longer than one school term;*
- g) *Children with special educational needs, but who do not have a statement (normally those on School Action), who have been out of education for longer than one new school term;*
- h) *Other children who have been out of education for longer than one new school term;*
- i) *Children with disabilities or medical conditions which have already impacted on their attendance or participation at school;*
- j) *Children on the at-risk register, whose move either within or from outside the County requires a change of school;*
- m) *Children who are carers;*
- n) *Children of Gypsies, Roma, Travellers*
- o) *Children of asylum seekers and refugees who have been in the UK less than two years and need a supported entry to school. The need for a supported entry does not include language support where this is the only support required and must be substantiated by professional evidence. Examples of the type of circumstances that might demonstrate a need for a supported entry are where such a child requires specific emotional or behavioural support by the school;*
- p) *Homeless children who have been placed in temporary housing;*
- q) *Children of UK service personnel and other Crown Servants, where a change of location ordered by the service leads to a need for a change of school.*
- r) *Children with unsupportive family backgrounds for whom a place has not been sought*

\* 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. Other local authorities have the power to direct a Wiltshire school to admit a child in their care if the school is best suited to his or her needs.

58. 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.

## **Service Families**

59. Applications for children of service personnel with a confirmed posting to the county, or crown servants returning from overseas to live in the county, will be considered in advance of the family moving into the county if necessary. Where possible, an application must be included in the normal admission round.

60. An official letter, such as a posting note or letter of support from the commanding officer, should be sent to the local authority as soon as possible. This should include

the relocation date and Unit postal address or quartering area address (the address of the closest house in the nearest 'quartering area').

61. Until a fixed address is available, the Unit postal address or quartering area address will be used and a school place allocated accordingly.
62. The local authority will not refuse a service child a place because the family does not currently live in the area, and will not reserve blocks of places for these children.
63. Children will be considered to be siblings if any brother or sister is going to be attending a school. Their position on any waiting list will be set accordingly.
64. All applications will be dealt with in accordance with these admission arrangements. If a reasonable alternative cannot be offered, the child may be admitted as an 'excepted pupil' under the School Admissions (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations 2012.

### **Admitting in area children above PAN**

65. Wiltshire Council will always try and allocate a space at a child's designated school whenever this is possible. We cannot reserve places at any school nor can we guarantee that a space will be available at the designated school. Having enough spaces in schools for local children is a service priority for the School Buildings and Places team.
66. The local authority has responsibility for the strategic management of school places across the county and has to ensure admissions do not compromise its ability to provide efficient and effective use of resources. It is often more economic to admit local children to their designated school because this does not incorporate an additional transport cost which would be required were an alternative school to be allocated.
67. For some schools, the next nearest school does not provide a reasonable alternative because it is beyond the statutory walking distance or the route to it is unsafe or there is no available transport. Any children who move into these areas might have to be admitted to the designated school despite any existing pressures upon it.
68. It may not always be possible to find a space at the designated school if this is already oversubscribed. In area children will be given priority on any waiting list. If the designated area school is unable to accommodate any more children within the year group then the Council will allocate an alternative school which will be the next nearest school which has available places.
69. Transport would be made available for any children who had to be allocated a school because their designated school was full and the school that has been allocated is outside of the statutory safe walking distance for the age of the child.

## **Appendix: 2014/15 Timetable for Primary Co-ordination (WILTSHIRE)**

<b>15 January 2014:</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>
10 February 2014:	Details of applications which include preferences for schools in other LAs to be sent to those LAs.
24 February 2014:	Details of applications to be sent to Foundation, VA schools and Academies.
28 February 2014:	The LA will provide a final list to Foundation, VA Schools and Academies. This will include out of county preferences.
13 March 2014:	Foundation, VA schools and Academies to provide the LA with ranked lists of applicants.
01 April 2014:	The LA will inform other LAs of any offers of places at Wiltshire schools to be made to applicants resident in their areas.
14 April 2014:	By this date the LA will provide schools which details of those children to be offered places at the school.
<b>16 April 2014:</b>	<b>Notification letters despatched and sent to parents.</b>
30 April 2014:	Last date for offers to be accepted by parents. Acceptances sent to LA.
12 May 2014:	The LA will send list of pupils accepting a place to every maintained school.
16 May 2014:	All Schools must inform the LA of any places that have been accepted directly via the school.
W/C 19 May 2014:	LA to send out chaser letters to all parents that have not yet responded informing them that, should they not accept then place will be withdrawn.
W/C 02 June 2014:	Final letter sent to parents who have not responded informing them offer is being withdrawn.
13 June 2014:	Second round of offer letters will be sent out by LA
30 August 2014	LA will send out a list to all maintained schools showing the pupils expected to join the school at beginning of 2014/15 school year.