

PRIMARY

**Proposed Co-ordinated Scheme for Primary School
Admissions for 2015/16**

Status: A259-13 Proposed Primary Co-ordinated Scheme 2015/16

Proposed Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for Primary schools within Wiltshire for year 2015/16

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 2015 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;

The definitions of “primary education”, “Primary education”, “primary school” and “Primary school” can be found in sections 2 and 5 of the Education Act 1996.

“school” means a community, (C) voluntary controlled, (VC) foundation (F) or voluntary aided (VA) school

“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 (C) or voluntary controlled (VC) 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 2015.

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

“first round application” 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 before the deadline of 15 January 2015.

“second or third round application” 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 on 15 January 2015.

“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.

Starting School

3. There is a legal entitlement for all three and four year olds to have access to 15 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 2015.

General Information

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 from 1 September 2014 up until the deadline of 15 January 2015.
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 co-ordinated 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 as they have their own discrete catchment area. 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 (F) or Voluntary Aided school (VA) can ask parents who have expressed a preference for their school on the PCAF, to provide additional information on a supplementary form but only if the additional information is required in order to apply their oversubscription criteria to the application.
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 by the deadline date.
12. The closing date for applications is **15 January 2015**. 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 2015 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 15 school days of posting their applications.

Shared Parental Responsibility

14. Where two (or more) adults both have parental responsibility for a child it is preferable that they should agree before submitting an application form which school(s) to name as their preference(s). In cases of dispute, or where two application forms are submitted, the LA will process the application received from the adult who has a residence order. If no such order has been made, preference will be given to the parent with whom the child is living for the majority of the school week.

If both parents are in dispute as to whom the child lives with the majority of the school week, , the LA will process the application received from the adult who is in receipt of the child benefit, if this is not available then the address used on the NHS card will be used.

In the event of a further dispute regarding the address used, parents may wish to take independent legal advice on whether they should seek a specific issue order from the court to decide on where the child is schooled. For in year transfer applications, until any such order is made, the placement will continue in the best interests of securing educational provision for the child with a minimum of disruption.

For year of entry, where possible, a place will be offered in accordance with the preferences to the parent who can provide evidence that they are in receipt of child benefit.

Applications for children of UK Service Personnel (UK Armed Forces)

15. 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.
16. An official letter, such as a posting note or letter of support from the commanding officer should be sent to the LA as soon as possible. This should include the relocation date and the unit postal address or quartering area address (the address of the closest house in the nearest 'quartering area').
17. Until a fixed address is available, the unit postal address or quartering area address will be used and a school place allocated accordingly.
18. The LA will not refuse a child of UK service personnel a place because the family does not currently live in the area, nor will it reserve blocks of places for these children.
19. Children will be considered to be siblings if any brother or sister is going to be attending a school. The sibling link will not apply if the child on roll is in Yr6. Their position on any waiting list will be set accordingly.
20. 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).

Armed Forces Personnel Relocating to Salisbury Plain - a Proposed Special Planning area for admissions

21. Leading up to September 2017 there is initiative to rebase serving armed forces personnel in Germany back to England. The Garrison towns around Salisbury Plain in Wiltshire will be target destinations for a significant proportion of these service families.
22. Wiltshire Council is proposing from September 2015 to declare the community areas of Amesbury and Tidworth a 'special planning area for Admissions'. The proposal is to give an admission priority to families of the troops rebasing to settlements around Salisbury Plain until 2017. Wiltshire Council is working closely with the Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS), a tri-service organisation funded by the MOD, to make the transition for children and families in Germany as smooth as possible and remove unnecessary complexity.
23. Wiltshire Council is proposing to add criteria 'H' to the oversubscription criteria for all community and voluntary controlled schools in the 'special planning area for admissions' and is requesting other admission authorities in the area to consider making similar arrangements.
24. The 'special planning area for admissions' will be kept under review by Wiltshire Council, including the option of extending the area to include Salisbury in subsequent years.

25. Applications for children of service personnel with a confirmed posting 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.
26. An official letter, such as a posting note or letter of support from the commanding officer should be sent to the LA as soon as possible. This should include relocation date and unit postal address or quartering area address (the address of the closest house in the nearest 'quartering area') in the 'special planning area for admissions'.
27. Until a fixed address is available, the unit postal address or quartering area address will be used and a school place allocated accordingly.
29. The LA will not refuse a child of UK service personnel a place because the family does not currently live in the area, nor will it reserve blocks of places for these children.
30. 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.
31. 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.

Applications for Children from overseas

32. Children who hold a full British Citizen passport or children whose passport has been endorsed to show they have the right to 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.
33. Applications on behalf of children currently living outside the UK will be considered but until the child/ren 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 an application is made to an oversubscribed school.

The Application Process

First Round Applications for Reception 2015 Intake (applications received before the deadline of 15 January 2015)

34. The LA will act as a clearing house for the allocation of places by the relevant admissions 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.
35. The process by which the LA will allocate places is explained at paragraphs 37- 44.
36. **15 January 2015 Closing date for all Common Application Forms to be received by the School Admissions Team at County Hall. Applications received by this date will be classed as first round applications.**
37. **By 10 February 2015** where parents have nominated a Primary school outside the LA area, the LA will notify the relevant LA.
38. **By 24 February 2015** the LA will notify all F and VA schools and Academies of every preference that has been expressed for that school.
39. **By 13 March 2015** all F and VA 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.
40. 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.
41. 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 if places are available 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.
42. **By 1 April 2015** the LA will inform other LAs of any places in Wiltshire schools which will be offered to their residents.
43. **By 14 April 2015** the LA will inform Wiltshire schools of the pupils to be offered places at their schools.
44. On **16 April 2015 (National Offer Date)** letters will be despatched to all parents who submitted an application by 15 January 2015 offering a place at one school.
45. These offer letters will give the following information:
 - a. the name of the school at which a place is offered;
 - b. the reason 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.
46. **30 April 2015** is the deadline for parents to accept the place offered. Parents should contact the school to confirm if they are accepting the place or the LA if they wish to decline the place.

Second Round Applications for Reception 2015 Intake (applications received between 16 January 2015 and 23 April 2015)

47. Second round applications, i.e. those received between 16 January 2015 and 23 April 2015 for the Reception Intake round will not be considered until after all first round on time applications have been processed. Second round applications will be considered together with any applicant previously refused a place in the first round and if necessary will be prioritised using the oversubscription policy in place at the time.

The LA will contact all Foundation, Aided schools and Academies named as a preference on the 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 if places are available, unless an alternative place is available within the safe statutory walking distance from their home address. The process explained in 48-51 will be followed:

48. By **12 May 2015** Details of second round applications received between the 16 January 2015 and 23 April 2015 to be sent to Academies, Foundation and Voluntary Aided Schools.
49. By **22 May 2015** Academies, Foundation and Voluntary Aided Schools should provide the LA with a ranked list of second round applications.

On receipt, the LA will match the returns from all schools and will make an allocation of one place for each applicant:

- 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.
50. **15 June 2015** the LA will send out the second round offers for applications received between 15 January 2015 and 23 April 2015.
51. **30 June 2015** is the last date for offers to be accepted by parents. Parents should contact the school if accepting the place and the LA if declining the place.

Third Round Applications for Reception 2015 Intake (applications received after 23 April 2015)

52. Third round applications, i.e. those received after 23 April 2015 for the Reception Intake round will not be considered until after all the second round applications have been processed. Third round applications will be considered together with any applicant previously refused a place and if necessary will be prioritised using the oversubscription policy in place at the time.

The LA will contact all Foundation, Aided schools and Academies named as a preference on the 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 if a place is available, unless an alternative place is available within the safe statutory walking distance from their home address. The process explained in 53 - 56 will be followed:

53. Applications received after the 23 April will be considered in date order of receipt and will be looked at after 30 June 2015 (i.e. once the second round of applications have been processed).
54. Any applications received by the LA after 23 April 2015 will be dealt from 30 June 2015, with allocations to a single school being made and offer letters sent out from the LA as soon as is practically possible.
55. For applications received after 23 April 2015 naming an Academy, Foundation or Voluntary Aided School, the governing body must confirm to the Local Authority if a place can be offered within 10 days of receipt.
56. Any applications received by any school should be forwarded to the LA within 5 days of receipt.

Applications for Reception 2015 Intake (applications received after 24 July 2015)

57. Any applications received by the LA after 24 July 2015 which expresses 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 for in year applications will apply.

Final List of expected reception pupils to schools

58. On or before 31 August 2015 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 2015/16 school year.

Admitting in - area children above Published Admissions Number (PAN)

59. 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.

60. The LA 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 children to their designated school because this does not incorporate an additional transport cost which would be required were an alternative school be allocated.
61. For some schools, the next nearest school does not provide a reasonable alternative because it is beyond the statutory walking distance or the route 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.
62. 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 LA will allocate an alternative school which will be the next nearest school which has available places.
63. 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. All other entitlements will be dealt with by the Passenger Transport Team.

The Transfer Application Process

Transfer Applications for year groups other than Reception 2015 Intake.

All transfer applications for all year groups, to Wiltshire Schools, should be submitted directly to Wiltshire Council. If a parent wishes to apply for a transfer to a school in another Local Authority then they should apply directly to the authority in which the school is situated in. The transfer application process for Wiltshire Schools is explained below.

64. The LA will make available copies of the Admissions Guide and CAF through all primary and secondary schools and on request from County Hall.
65. All applicants who wish to apply for a school place must complete an application form which should be returned to the LA, once completed by the current school. The applicant may or may not live in Wiltshire.
66. Should a parent living in Wiltshire wish to apply for a school in another authority, they must contact that authority directly for details on how to apply.
67. Where a school receives an in year application form expressing a preference for that school the form should be forwarded to the LA within five school days of receipt.
68. Where the LA receives an in year application form expressing a preference for an VC or C school the application will be forwarded to the school within five school days of receipt.
69. Where the LA receives an in year application form expressing a preference for an Academy, F or VA school the application will be forwarded to the school within five school days of receipt.

70. For an Academy, F 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 of which the information was received by the school.
71. In all cases, Wiltshire Council will aim to send a decision letter out within 20 school days of receiving the application form and this will provide information, if appropriate, about the statutory right of appeal.
72. 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.
73. The Local Authority will maintain waiting lists for all year groups for VC & C schools.
74. The school/academy will maintain waiting lists for all year groups for A, F & VA schools.
75. In accordance with paragraph 2.21/2.22 of the School Admissions Code the LA 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 termly basis with the first return to be sent by 6 September 2015.

Applications for transfer at a future date

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

Proof of address

78. The LA reserves the right to ask parents for proof of their address. If the parents' current address is different to that held on the LA's computerised system the LA may ask parents to provide proof of the new address if one is indicated. Acceptable proof of address includes:

A copy of your Council Tax Bill

A solicitor's letter stating contracts have been exchanged and specifying a completion date

A signed and dated tenancy agreement plus proof of residency (e.g. copy of a recent utility bill)

If parents fail to provide proof of a new address, the LA will use the old address for admission purposes. If parents notify the LA that they will be moving house, even if they provide the relevant proof of that address, they must move into that property by no later than the end of the first term following the notification. The LA reserves the right to check that parents are living in the address indicated within that timescale. If parents are not living there, the applications will be investigated and the allocated place may be withdrawn.

Fair Access Protocol

79. All Wiltshire 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. Further information on the In Year Fair Access Protocol, as well as a copy of the protocol, can be viewed at www.wiltshire.gov.uk

Appendix: 2015/16 Timetable for Primary Co-ordination (Wiltshire)

- 15 January 2015:** Closing date for all Common Application Forms to be received by the School Admissions Team at county Hall. Applications received by this date will be classed as first round applications.
- 10 February 2015: Details of applications which include preferences for schools in other LAs to be sent to those LAs.
- 24 February 2015: Details of applications to be sent to F, VA schools and Academies of all first round applicants.
- 13 March 2015: F, VA schools and Academies to provide the LA with ranked lists of all first round applicants.
- Between 13 March and 1 April the LA will match the ranked list from all schools and allocate places.
- 1 April 2015: 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 2015: By this date the LA will provide schools with details of those children to be offered places at the school.
- 16 April 2015:** Notification letters despatched and sent to parents for all first round applicants.
- 30 April 2015: Last date for first round offers to be accepted by parents. Parents should contact the schools if they are accepting the place and the LA if they are declining the place. Parents should contact Wiltshire if they wish to accept a place in another LA.
- 12 May 2015: Details of second round applications to be sent to F, VA schools and Academies of all second round applicants.
- 22 May 2015: F, VA schools and Academies to provide the LA with ranked lists of all second round applicants.
- 15 June 2015: **Notification letters despatched and sent to parents for all second round applicants.**
- 30 June 2015: Last date for second round offers to be accepted by parents. Parents should contact the schools if they are accepting the place and the LA if they are declining the place. Parents should contact Wiltshire if they wish to accept a place in another LA.
- 30 June 2015: Applications received after the 23 April will be considered in date order of receipt and will be looked at from today. Applications will be dealt with as soon as possible with allocations to a single school being made and offers being sent out by the LA as soon as practically possible.
- 31 August 2015: On or before the 31 August the LA will send out a list to all schools showing the pupils expected to join the school at the beginning of the 2015/16 school year.