



## **Co-ordinated Scheme for Primary School Admissions for 2010/11**

**Status : Draft**

# **Draft Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for Primary schools within Wiltshire for year 2010/11.**

## **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 2010 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 County 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 2010

“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 between noon 20 November 2009 and 22 July 2010;

“additional application” means any application for a place in the intake year of primary education that is received after 22 July 2010 or 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 12 and a half 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

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 2009 up until the deadline of noon 20 November 2009.
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 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. 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.

10. 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.
11. The closing date for applications is **noon on 20 November 2009**. 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 20 November 2009 will be treated as late applications.
12. 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.

**13. 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**

14. 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.
15. The process by which the LA will allocate places is explained at paragraphs 19 -20.
16. **By 25 November 2009** where parents have nominated a Primary school outside the LA area, the LA will notify the relevant LA. Details of applications to selective schools in Wiltshire will be sent to those schools.
17. **By 7 December 2009** the LA will notify all Foundation and VA schools of every preference that has been expressed for that school.
18. **By 11 January 2010** 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 considered as exceptional as outlined in paragraph 29 and those resident in other LA areas.

19. **By 20 January 2010** 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.
20. 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.
21. 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.
22. **By 29 January 2010** the LA will inform other LAs of any places in Wiltshire schools which will be offered to their residents.
23. **By 1 February 2010** the LA will inform Wiltshire schools of the pupils to be offered places at their schools.
24. **On 4 February 2010** letters will be despatched to all parents who submitted an application form by noon on 20 November 2009 offering a place at one school.
25. 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.
26. **19 February 2010** 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.
27. **By 5 March 2010** 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**

28. 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.

29. Only in exceptional circumstances such as those listed here will a late application be considered at the same time as applications received by the deadline of noon 20 November 2009

- a. The illness/death of a close relative such that meeting the deadline was not possible.
- b. Where there has been a change of family circumstances after the deadline date which has a significant effect on the preferences given on the original application. (If this is a house move this must have been completed with an exchange of contracts before noon 8 Jan 2010.)
- c. A move into Wiltshire from outside the county after the deadline date but before noon 8 January 2010. Confirmation of the new address (in the form of an exchange of contracts or a tenancy agreement) must be provided before noon on 8 January 2010.
- d. Service Personnel moving to a Wiltshire address after the deadline date. A posting notice must be provided before noon 8 January 2010.
- e. Any application for a Wiltshire school from outside the county which was lodged before the closing date of the home authority.
- f. Where there has been a delay in the LA receiving the application due to an administrative error by a school or/and DCE staff.
- g. Where a common application form has not been received by the LA but the parent can provide proof of postage – NB the return of a tear off slip to the present school will not constitute a proof of postage.
- h. Where written evidence from a specialist (such as the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service) is available showing that it would be detrimental to the family unit to split siblings;
- i. Where a Wiltshire resident submits a valid application prior to the deadline naming a selective school(s) outside Wiltshire and subsequently wishes to change these preferences to name a non selective school(s).

Such late applications can only be considered if they are received by the LA before noon on 8 January 2010.

Documentary evidence should be provided with the application (or at the latest by noon 8 January 2010) to verify the circumstances which caused the late application to be made. If evidence cannot be provided, the application will not be treated as an exception.

30. Any applications received by a maintained school after noon 20 November 2009 should be sent to the LA on receipt.

### **Applications Received between noon 20 November 2009 and 4 February 2010**

31. Any late applications (except those covered by paragraph 32) received by the LA will not be considered before 5 February 2010. All applications received between 20 November 2009 and 4 February 2010 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.

32. For any applications received by 4 February 2010, the LA will send out a list to any foundation or voluntary aided school named as a preference **on or before 12 February 2010**. VA and F schools should return a confirmation as to whether or not a

place can be offered for each applicant. If more than one application has been received then a ranked list will be returned to the LA **by 9 March 2010**.

33. The LA will then 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.

34. 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.

35. On or before 31 March 2010 letters will be despatched by the LA to all parents who submitted an application form which was received between noon on 20 November 2009 and 4 February 2010. The letter will offer a place at one school.

### **Applications received after 4 February 2010**

36. Any applications received by the LA for a maintained school received after 4 February 2010 will be dealt with as soon as possible with allocations to a single school being made and offer letters sent out from the LA on or before set points: 21 May, 25 June and 23 July.

37. 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.

38. Any late applications received by the LA after 22 July 2010 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.

39. On or before 31 August 2010 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 2010/11 school year.

### **Additional or In Year Applications (for years outside the normal intake year for the school)**

40. The LA will make available copies of the Admissions Guide and PCAF through all primary and Primary schools and on request from County Hall.

41. All applicants for any school place must complete an application form which should be returned to the LA. The applicant may or may not live in Wiltshire.

42. Where any maintained school receives an additional application form expressing a

preference for that school the form should be forwarded to the LA within 5 school days of receipt.

43. Where the LA receives an additional application form expressing a preference for a Foundation or VA school the application will be forwarded to the school within 5 school days of receipt.
44. 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 15 school days of the date on which the information was received by the school.
45. A decision letter will be sent out by the appropriate admission authority within twenty school days of receiving the application form and this will provide information, if appropriate, about the statutory right of appeal.
46. 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**

47. 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. Following this the process described above (paragraphs 43 – 46) will be applied.

### **Children from overseas.**

48. 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.
49. 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**

50. 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.

51. 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: 2010/11 Timetable for Primary Co-ordination (WILTSHIRE)**

<b>20 November 2009:</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>
25 November 2009:	Details of applications which include preferences for schools in other LAs to be sent to those LAs. Details of applications to selective schools in Wiltshire sent to those schools.
7 December 2009 :	Details of applications to be sent to Foundation and VA schools.
8 January 2010:	Last date for any exceptional applications to be considered.
11 January 2010:	Final list sent out from LA to all admission authorities.
20 January 2010:	Foundation and VA schools to provide the LA with ranked lists of applicants.  Between 27 January and 1 February, the LA will match the ranked lists of all the schools and allocate places (as described at paragraph 20).
29 January 2010:	The LA will inform other LAs of any offers of places at Wiltshire schools to be made to applicants resident in their areas.
1 February 2010 :	By this date the LA will provide schools which details of those children to be offered places at the school.
<b>4 February 2010:</b>	<b>Notification letters despatched and sent to parents.</b>
19 February 2010 :	Last date for offers to be accepted by parents. Acceptances sent to LA.
5 March 2010:	The LA will send list of pupils accepting a place to every maintained school.
9 March 2010:	LA notified by schools of decisions regarding applications received after deadline and before 4 February 2010.
31 March 2010:	Notification letters sent out by LA for all applications received between deadline and 4 February.
21 May, 25 June, 23 July 2010:	Further notification letters sent out by LA.
23 July 2010:	After this date separate admission authorities will send out notification letters.
31 August 2010	LA will send out a list to all maintained schools showing the pupils expected to join the school at beginning of 2010/11 school year.