

## **The Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for Peterborough Maintained Primary Schools for September 2017**

### **1) Introduction**

All local authorities are required by section 88M of the Schools Standards & Framework Act 1998 and the co-ordination regulations to have in place each year a scheme for co-ordinating admission arrangements for maintained schools (including academies, but excluding maintained special schools and maintained nursery schools) within their area. Co-ordination schemes are intended to simplify the admissions process whilst reducing the likelihood of any child being left without a school place. Co-ordination establishes a mechanism that ensures that, as far as is reasonably practicable; every parent of a child living in a local authority area who has applied to a maintained school is sent a single offer of a school place by their local authority. The Department for Education's Code of Practice and the School Admissions Code applies.

Co-ordination schemes do not affect the rights and duties of the governing bodies of voluntary aided and foundation schools to set and apply their own admission arrangements and oversubscription criteria, nor for academies and free Schools to agree their own arrangements with the Secretary of State. Admission authorities do not have to determine the same or similar oversubscription criteria, but must ensure that their own admission arrangements are compatible with, and do not undermine, the co-ordination scheme for their area.

### **2) Oversubscription Criteria**

Under the co-ordinated scheme, Peterborough City Council will set and apply the oversubscription criteria for all maintained and voluntary controlled schools. Academies, voluntary aided, free and foundation schools continue to set and apply their own oversubscription criteria.

### **3) Aims of the Primary Scheme**

- To meet all statutory requirements relating to the co-ordinated admissions process
- To ensure that the needs of the child and the wishes of the parent(s) are the prime considerations
- To ensure that as many parents as possible gain a place for their child at one of their preferred schools
- To ensure that every child living in the city council area who has applied for a school place in the normal admission round is issued with an offer letter on the agreed offer letter date
- To specify how late applications should be dealt with and how applications that fall outside of the normal admission round should be dealt with
- To ensure that all parties to the admissions process work together to achieve the above aims, within the limits of the legislation relating to school admissions

### **4) The Scheme**

- The city council will work with all other admission authorities within the Peterborough City Council area and any other local authorities to ensure that a fair and transparent system for the allocation of school places is achieved.
- The city council will adhere to the timetable for the relevant admission round as set out in Appendix 1
- The city council will produce a primary admissions information booklet providing information to parents about the admissions process, the application procedure and containing information relating to every Peterborough maintained primary, infant and junior school. This booklet will be available on the city council website.
- The city council requires parents to apply on-line (unless this proves impossible).
- The city council will produce a common application form upon request enabling a parent to apply for a place at a secondary school of their choice (including those outside Peterborough).
- All applications must be submitted to the city council by the published closing date in order to be treated as 'on-time'.

- All preferences will be treated equally
- The admissions team will co-ordinate the allocation process
- The city council will notify parents who live in the Peterborough area, and have applied for a school place, of an offer of a single school place on the published allocation date
- The city council will set out a procedure for determining any application made outside of the normal round (the In-Year process).

## **5) The Process of Allocation**

### **5.1 Normal admission round**

This scheme will apply to those children whose parents are seeking a school place for the school's initial year of entry for the start of the relevant autumn term; that is, either Reception Year (for all infant and primary schools) or Year 3 (for all junior (KS2) schools) – the normal admission round.

This scheme will apply to all admission authorities in Peterborough.

### **5.2 Common Application Form and the Admissions Information Booklet**

In trying to encourage the use of the on-line facility we will limit the availability of a common application form; instead signposting the on-line access to as many applicants as possible.

The city council will inform all nursery settings that the application window is now open and the Admissions Information Booklet is available, in order for them to inform all children registered with them who are due to start school in the following September. Hard copies of the Admissions Information booklets will be available from Peterborough Direct at Bayard Place, Broadway, Peterborough and will also be available on the council's website.

The on-line facility or the common application form (whichever used) will collect the basic pupil/parent data required for processing the application. It will allow up to 3 preferences to be expressed, ranked in order of preference, with reasons for the preferred choice. Completed paper application forms should be returned to the city council.

### **5.3 On-line Applications.**

The on-line facility is available at: [www.peterborough.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.peterborough.gov.uk/admissions)

**NB Only on-line on-time applications will be processed.**

### **5.4 Verification of Data**

Parents may be asked to provide proof of address by the city council at the data processing stage.

### **5.5 Supplementary Information Form (SIF)**

Admission authorities other than the city council may have their own Supplementary Information Form (SIF) for the collection of any necessary additional information from parents to enable them to apply the school's oversubscription criteria. This will include any criteria relating to church attendance.

Information on which schools may require a SIF will be provided in the Primary Admissions Information booklet and on the city council website.

SIFs and any other requested information (supporting letters etc.) should be returned to the relevant schools and not to the city council.

Admission authorities must supply a copy of the SIF to the city council, to be posted on the city council's website.

Schools must make copies of their SIF available to parents in hard copy and on their school website.

### **5.6 Late Applications**

Any application for the normal admission round received after the published deadline (15<sup>th</sup> January) will be deemed 'late'.

Late applications will be dealt with after all on-time applications have been processed and places allocated. The late allocations are processed in batches and are allocated on a monthly basis.

### **5.7 Processing Applications**

The city council will co-ordinate all applications and the offer of places for all school places in the Peterborough area (being the admissions authority for all community and voluntary controlled schools and acting as a co-ordinator for all other admission authorities within the Peterborough local authority area).

## **5.8 Request to Change Preferences**

No changes can be made to applications after the deadline date has passed, unless there is a genuine reason for the change (such as a change of address or siblings have changed schools). A second deadline date (see Annex 2) applies for such changes.

## **5.9 New Applicants**

Applications submitted after the closing date because of a move into the area will be treated as an 'on-time' application as long as an application had made on-time to their previous local authority. The new application would have to be received by the second deadline date (see Annex 2)

## **5.10 All Preferences Equal**

Parental preferences will be ranked by the relevant authority within the Peterborough area according to the oversubscription criteria for the relevant school. The order of preference will not affect this ranking as the system operated is one where 'all preferences are equal'.

## **5.11 Allocation of Places**

The city council, using preference and oversubscription criteria rankings (including those supplied by the voluntary aided, academy, free and foundation schools), will allocate places according to each parent's preference ranking, as follows:

- Where a parent's first preference can be met, a place will be allocated at that school. The city council will then 'discard', i.e. not consider, any lower ranked preferences.
- Where a parent's first preference cannot be met, but the second preference can, a place will be allocated at the second preference school. The first preference application will be placed on the waiting list at that school and ranked according to their oversubscription criteria. The third preference will be 'discarded' i.e. not be considered.
- Where a parent's first and second preference cannot be met, but the third preference can, a place will be allocated at the third preference school. The application for the first and second preference will be placed on the waiting list for those schools and ranked according to their oversubscription criteria.
- Where none of the parent's preferences can be met, a place will be allocated at the next nearest school to the home address with available places (as long as the child resides in the Peterborough area). The application for the first, second and third preferences will be placed on the waiting lists for those schools and ranked according to their oversubscription criteria.

## **5.12 Distance Measurements**

Distance is measured using the council's Geographic Information System (GIS) from the Ordnance Survey (OS) seed point located at the child's home address to the OS seed point (or a specified point(s)) for the school, using a straight line.

It may be necessary to use other OS maps or on-line resources for any home address outside of the Peterborough local authority area not covered by the council's GIS system.

In the case of flats, the priority is that of floor level i.e. ground, first, second etc. in that order.

In cases of exactly the same measurement where no differentiation can be established, a lottery will be used to decide the allocation of the place.

## **5.13 Co-ordination with Other Local Authorities**

The city council will, wherever possible, take account of higher preference offers that can be made by another local authority.

## **5.14 Offer Letters**

Parents will receive one offer of a school place. Offer letters will provide parents with the reasons for refusing their child at their first, second or third preference schools (if applicable). It will explain that they have the right to appeal against those refusals.

## **5.15 Reply to an offer**

Parents are required to accept/refuse the allocation of a school place within two weeks of the offer letter being received.

**Parents should not refuse the offer of a place unless they are certain of a place at an alternative school.** (This does not remove a parent's right of appeal, but should ensure that all children have a school place.)

### **5.16 Refusing an offer**

If an offer is refused (or not replied to), the place **will** be withdrawn and offered on to the person at the top of the waiting list.

## **6) Waiting Lists**

Waiting lists for all oversubscribed community schools will be maintained by the city council. (Waiting lists for schools that are their own admissions authority will be maintained by the school). Waiting lists are held in strict oversubscription criteria order. Applicants will be ranked according to each individual school's oversubscription criteria and the city council will continue to allocate places from those lists if spaces become available.

After the offer date there will be no distinction between 'on-time' and 'late' applications on waiting lists.

If an offer of a school place is declined (or the place removed because no response was received), the city council will offer-on that place to the first person on the waiting list (held in accordance with the school's oversubscription criteria).

Schools must advise the city council when a place becomes available. The city council will then offer the place to the child who is at the top of the waiting list.

Parents will be asked to confirm that they wish to stay on a school's waiting list when accepting an offer of a place at a lower ranked school. A child's details will not be added to a school's waiting list if a higher preference school has been offered. Refusal of a place when offered will automatically remove them from the waiting list.

If a child's name stays on the waiting list and a place can be offered at a higher preference school, the original offer will be withdrawn at the same time as the new offer is made (as the child will not have been placed on roll at the school and we are obliged to meet a parent's highest preference).

After the offer date, if a parent wishes their child to be considered for an alternative school, a new application form must be completed listing the new order of preferences.

Children who are the subject of a direction by the city council to admit or who are allocated a place to a school in accordance with the Fair Access Protocol, will take precedence over those on any waiting list.

## **7) In-Year Admissions**

A separate scheme exists for In-Year co-ordination and is available on the council's website.

## **8) Appeals**

All parents have the right of appeal. Appeals are co-ordinated by the relevant admissions authority. For all community and voluntary controlled schools the city council will deal with appeal requests. Requests for appeal forms for school places at academies, foundation free and voluntary aided schools should be made to the relevant school.

## **9) The School Admissions Code**

All admission authorities are reminded that they **must** take full account of the requirements of the School Admissions Code and other relevant legislation relating to admissions.

## **10) Non-compliant Admissions Arrangements**

The local authority must refer an objection to Schools Adjudicator if they are of the view or suspect that the admission arrangements that have been determined by other admission authorities are unlawful. Anyone who considers that any maintained school or academy's arrangements are unlawful, or not in compliance with the Code or relevant law relating to admissions, can make an objection to the Schools Adjudicator.

## **11) Early Admission to Primary School**

The city council expects children to attend school within their relevant age group. As the normal admission arrangements provide for admission from the beginning of the Reception Year, admission any earlier would be exceptional.

Where the evidence from educational psychologists, early years providers and others, as appropriate, support a request to start school early, it will be considered. Any request agreed could, but not automatically, mean that the child will transfer to secondary school a year early. It is possible that, if circumstances are appropriate, the pupil will have to remain at primary school and transfer with the relevant age group.

Any request agreed will be included along with the other applications for a particular school. The receiving school's oversubscription criteria, the Planned Admission Number (PAN) and Infant Class Size Legislation will apply. Any agreed early admission will not have entitlement above any other application by virtue of being an exceptional application.

The parent has a right to appeal any decision made.

## **12) Deferred or Delayed Admission to Primary School**

The city council expects children to attend school within their relevant age group. Parents can request that the date their child is admitted to school is deferred until later in the year or until the term in which the child reaches compulsory school age. They can also request that their child takes up the place part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age. Each case would be considered on its own merits.

New amendments to the School Admissions Code allow for 'summer-born children' to delay entry to school by a whole school year. Where a parent would like to delay admission to primary school this will be considered. Parents need to apply in the relevant year cohort for such a deferment.

Any request agreed will be included along with the other applications for a particular school. The receiving school's oversubscription criteria, the Planned Admission Number (PAN) and Infant Class Size Legislation will apply. Any agreed early admission will not have entitlement above any other application by virtue of being an exceptional application.

The parent has a right to appeal any decision made.

## **13) Admission to Nursery School Classes**

The city council does not co-ordinate admission to its nursery school classes. Applications should be made to the school concerned.

## **14) Children of UK Service Personnel (UK Armed Forces)**

The city council will allocate a place(s) in advance for those families with a confirmed posting to this area. The city council will also ensure that these arrangements support the Government's commitment to removing disadvantage for service children.

## **15) Children from Overseas**

The city council will treat applications for children coming from overseas in accordance with European Union law or Home Office rules for non-European area nationals.

## Annex 1 Definitions

### Parent

For the purposes of admissions, the Department for Education's definition of parent is as follows:  
*'A parent is any person who has parental responsibility or care of the child'.*

This is the person who would normally be in receipt of any child benefit on behalf of the child. Where parents share responsibility for a child on a 50/50 basis, it may mean that a court order is required to define who the dominant carer is.

### Siblings

For the purposes of admissions, the Department for Education's definition of sibling is as follows:

*'Sibling refers to brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or the child of the parent/carer's partner, and in every case, the child should be living in the same family unit at the same address'.*

Every effort will be made to ensure that brothers or sisters (as in the definition above) and those from multiple births can attend the same primary school, understanding that the city council must comply with the Education (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations 1998. Details are as follows:

- where twins\* apply to their catchment area school and there are no class size restrictions, both children are offered places
- where twins\* apply to their catchment area school and infant class size restrictions do apply, that both children are offered places and are subject to the 'exception rule' of oversubscription to an infant class size of 30
- out of catchment twins are considered as separate applicants unless they cannot both be offered places at their catchment area school
- families will always be offered a school that can accommodate both twins
- admission authorities record when they have over-admitted for a twin and inform any appeal panel that may later question why a year group is over its published admission number
- parents, if faced with a choice over which twin takes up an offer, can opt for the admission authority to make the decision or make the decision themselves. If the parent wishes the admission authority to make the decision, this will be done by lottery.

\* for 'twins' read 'all siblings of a multiple birth'

### Home Address (main dwelling)

The home address is that where the child is currently living at the time of the deadline for applications, unless proof of a future move has been confirmed. This future move must be confirmed either by a tenancy agreement (of at least 6 months) or an exchange of contracts, with an occupancy date that is before the date of allocation.

The home address is the address of the parent with whom the child normally resides. Where children spend time with parents at more than one address, the address used to allocate a school place will be the one at which the pupil spends the majority of school nights. Where children spend equal amounts of school nights with both parents, the address used will be the one most advantageous to the application. **This clause is not applicable to arrangements made with other extended family or non-family members.**

### Looked After Children

A 'looked after child' is a child who is (a) in the care of the city council, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in the exercise of their social service functions (see the definition in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989). For those 'who were looked after (previously looked after children) but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order' are covered by definitions in the Adoption of Children Act 2002, the Children Act 1989 and the Adoption Act 1976.

## Annex 2

### Primary Admissions - Reception Year and Year 3 Intake

#### 7 Timetable for September 2017

Date	Action
7 September 2016	Autumn Term starts
<b>From 12 September 2016</b>	Primary admissions information booklet available on-line. On-line application facility opens
September/October 2016	Local authority begin to receive and process applications
24 to 28 October 2016	Half term
1st week of December 2016	Email to infant schools requesting they chase up parents to return their application forms for Year 3 places
1st week of December 2016	Press release alerting parents to the deadline for applications to be received
21 December 2016 to 4 January 2017	Christmas holidays
<b>15 January 2017</b>	Closing date for all applications (to be classed as 'on-time')
From 16 January 2017	Any applications received from this date will be clearly marked/noted as 'late' and dealt with accordingly
20 January 2017	Schools to have completed all necessary checks
27 January 2017	All EHCP and ETCiC children to have been nominated schools
27 January 2017	Final date for data exchange with other local authorities
<b>10 February 2017</b>	Final date for consideration of new applicants to Peterborough or any change of address requests (the second deadline date)
10 February 2017	Voluntary aided, foundation, free and academy schools, to have applied their own oversubscription criteria and ranked the preferences received.
15 February 2017	All EHCP children for Infant to Junior transfer to have their plans finalised with named schools.
20 to 24 February 2017	Half term
By 31 March 2017	Final data exchange with other local authorities
4 April 2017	Final offers reviewed by schools and any anomalies highlighted
7 April to 26 April 2017	Easter holidays
<b>17 April 2017</b>	<b>National Offer date</b> <b>(National offer date is normally 16 April but that is a Sunday)</b> <b>(NB Any letters to be sent will be posted on this day)</b>
1 May 2017	Any offers not responded to or formally accepted either with us or with the schools directly will be removed
<b>w/c 8 May 2017</b>	Late allocation and/or second allocation date, for those applications received by 5 May 2017.
24 May 2017	Deadline for parents to return appeal papers to Legal Department (20 school days after allocation date) – the deadline date
29 May to 2 June 2017	Half term
w/c 12 June 2017	Late allocation and/or third allocation date, for those applications received by 9 June 2017.

w/c 10 July 2017	Late allocation and/or fourth allocation date, for those applications received by 7 July 2017.
20 July 2017	Deadline for appeals to have been heard (40 school days from deadline date)
20 July 2017	End of Summer term

## **Annex 3**

### **Other Primary School Admission Authorities within Peterborough Local Authority Boundary**

#### **Foundation Schools**

Orton Wistow Foundation Primary School

#### **Primary Academies**

Bishop Creighton Academy

Dogsthorpe Academy

Fulbridge Academy

Hampton College

Highlees Academy

Newark Hill Academy

Ormiston Meadows Academy

Stanground St John's C of E Primary School

Thomas Deacon Junior Academy

Welland Academy

West Town Primary Academy

#### **Voluntary Aided Schools**

All Saints C of E Junior School

Peakirk-cum-Glinton C of E Primary School

Saint Augustine's C of E Junior School

St John's C of E Primary School

St Michael's C of E Primary School

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School

Sacred Heart RC Primary School

William Law C of E Primary School

#### **Voluntary Aided Academies**

The King's (The Cathedral) School