

**NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
PRIMARY CO-ORDINATED ADMISSIONS SCHEME**

SECTION 1 - Timetable for Primary co-ordinated Admissions for September 2019

DATE	EVENT
10 th September 2018	Online applications open and Information to parents/carers
11 th December 2018	Generic reminder letter sent via school to schools for parents/carers of Infant school children, advising of need to apply for a place. Email sent to schools to remind parents/carers of the need to apply.
15 th January 2019	Closing date for applications (5.00pm) (Statutory) Applications received after this date will not be processed (until additional rounds of allocations – see below)
6 th February 2019	Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) sends applications to other LAs and Own Admission Authority schools by 5.00pm
15 th February 2019	Special Educational Needs Team (SEN) must have informed Admissions re. pupils with Statement of the school / EHC plan named on their Statement. (Statutory)
27 th February 2019	Own Admission Authority schools send ranked lists to NCC by 5.00pm
12 th March 2019	NCC applies agreed scheme for County's schools, informing other LAs of offers to be made to their residents by 5.00pm
12 th April 2019	Schools informed by NCC of the final results via S2S, which may include offers made to pupils living in other LAs by 5.00pm
16 th April 2019	Offers made to parents/carers by NCC (Statutory)
By 18 th April 2019	Schools emailed and final allocation lists (ATFs) uploaded onto the S2S secure site.
25 th April 2019	Start to share late applications received with Own Admission Authority schools and other LAs, with a weekly update of the number of late applications received
10 th May 2019	Cut off date for consideration for inclusion in first round of reallocations
21 st May 2019	Deadline by which all appeal forms must be submitted by 5.00pm
13 th June 2019	Cut off date for consideration for inclusion in second round of reallocations
27 th June 2019	Cut off date for consideration for inclusion in third round of reallocations
23 rd July 2019	Appeals lodged before the closing date of 21 st May 2019 (5.00pm) will be heard by this date (within 40 school days from the closing date).
20 th May 2019 17 th June 2019 1 st July 2019	Additional rounds of allocations start dates for considerations
11 th July 2019	Places allocated to Northamptonshire children currently in Infant school who have not submitted an application. Letters sent to parents/carers to advise of the places offered.
1 st August 2019	In-Year Co-ordination commences

SECTION 2 - Elements of the Scheme

Northamptonshire County Council – NCC

Local Authority – LA

(Common) Application Form – CAF, also known as a preference form

2.1 Regulations

The School Admissions (Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) Regulations 2007 require Local Authorities (LAs) to have a scheme covering every maintained school (but not special schools) in its area. The purpose of a co-ordinated scheme is to establish mechanisms for ensuring, as far as reasonably practicable, that every parent of a child living within the LA who has applied for a school place in the normal admission round receives an offer of one, and only one, school place on the same day. All schools must comply with the scheme.

2.2 Application forms

The online common application form (also known as the preference form) or paper common application (or preference) form must allow parents to apply for any primary school, and to give reasons for their preferences. If parents apply directly to a school, the governing body **must** inform the Local Authority. All applications are co-ordinated by the County Council up to and including 31st July.

2.3 Residence in another local authority

Parents resident in one particular Local Authority (LA) who wish to apply for a place at a primary school maintained by a different LA must apply through the common application form (or online preference form) to the LA in which they live (i.e. their home Local Authority).

Parents can apply for any school in any LA. However, it does not matter which local authority a school is in, **the application must be made to the local authority where the child lives**.

2.4 Exchange of information

Local authorities and admission authorities in the area must exchange information on applications made and potential offers by the dates specified in the scheme. A maintaining Local Authority (where the school is) must inform the home Local Authority (where the child lives) if it intends to offer a place at one of its schools to a parent living in a different Local Authority area. Local authorities should exchange information on applications across their borders and seek to eliminate multiple offers across Local Authority borders wherever possible. The exchange of data must, where possible, be carried out using secure data protection systems. Any school unable to access their secure data may contact their IT provider, Capita, or email into Admissions for support.

2.5 Information for Parents

Please note that throughout this scheme the term “parent” refers to both individual parents as well as those with parental responsibility for the child e.g. carers.

Parents who live within Northamptonshire are encouraged to apply online. The system will be available through a link at www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/admissions

The benefits of using the online process are as follows:

1. Parents are less likely to make errors as the system guides them through the whole process;
2. Parents will receive email confirmation that their application has been properly submitted;
3. Parents are able to change preferences up to 5pm on the closing date;
4. On the day of allocation, parents are able to log on and obtain knowledge about their allocated school place. Parents using the paper format are informed of their allocated place via the post and do not have this information until the day they receive their letter from the LA;
5. Parents are contributing to a greener environment.

The 'Applying for a Primary School Place in Northamptonshire' booklet will be available in PDF format on the website: www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/admissions.

Paper copies of the booklet can be obtained by request from:
School Admissions
One Angel Square, Angel Street
Northampton NN1 1ED

The booklets will contain information about:

- How to apply online;
- A list of primary schools by local area;;
- How to complete a preference form;
- The published admission number for each school;
- Each school's oversubscription criteria;
- Information as to whether individual schools were oversubscribed in September 2018;
- Key dates for the application and allocation process;
- Information relating to children with special educational needs;
- Home-to-school transport information;
- Where to access further information;
- Details regarding late applications;
- Contact details for the NCC School Admissions Team

2.6 Parents living in Northamptonshire wishing to complete a paper application

Parents who are unable to complete an online application can collect/request a paper preference form and booklet directly from the NCC School Admissions Team.

2.7 The Common Application Form (also known as a preference form)

Parents are encouraged to apply online wherever possible. It is the responsibility of all those making the application to ensure they submit the application on time. It is not the responsibility of the admission team to send reminders to parents.

The application form (either online or paper) will ask the parent to:

- Express up to three preferences. (If the applicant is resident in a neighbouring authority whereby more than 3 preferences can be expressed, any preferences for Northamptonshire Schools will be treated in line with the child's home local authority);
- List their preferences in rank order;
- Give details of siblings who will still be attending one of the preferred schools in September 2019;
- Give details of the child for whom the application is being made (address, date of birth, any relevant medical information or special social circumstances);
- Indicate if the child has a Statement of special educational needs;
- Give any reasons for their preferences;
- Name the current school (for infant to junior school transfers);
- Give details about the person completing the application (name, address, relationship to the child, contact details).

If additional information is required by the governing body of a Foundation, Voluntary Aided school, Free School, or Academy in order to apply its oversubscription criteria, this will be detailed in the specific section about that school in the booklet. Schools' supplementary information forms (SIFs) will be available on the NCC website. Alternatively, contact details for each school will also be included in the booklet so parents can obtain any SIFs required from the schools directly. **Supplementary information forms must be returned** to the preferred school by the **15th January 2019**.

Parents who are using the paper application form will be required to return the completed preference form, to the School Admissions Team at Northamptonshire County Council, One Angel Square, Angel Street, Northampton, NN1 1ED by 5 p.m. on 15th January 2019. Applications received after this time and date will be considered as late applications and will not be processed until after the on time applications have been dealt with. It is strongly recommended that parents use recorded delivery and obtain a receipt when posting their application. Northamptonshire County Council does not accept responsibility for applications that are received after the closing date due to parents using insufficient postage and a surcharge being in place.

If applying online, parents can submit any additional paperwork (e.g. proof of a house move or evidence of a medical / social need) electronically, or post to the School Admissions Team at Northamptonshire County Council, One Angel Square, Angel Street, Northampton, NN1 1ED, clearly stating the following: name of child, date of birth and the school name(s) that the parent is applying for. If a house move takes place after the closing date, the school allocation will be based on the address we hold at the closing date.

2.8 Applications for Foundation, Voluntary aided, Free Schools and Academies

NCC's School Admissions Team will ensure that all parents' preferences are logged on the CAPITA ONE Admissions database. The School Admissions Team will send a list of all applications received, including any supplementary information, to the relevant Foundation, Voluntary aided schools, Free Schools, and Academies.

Applications will be sent to Foundation, Voluntary aided schools, Free Schools and Academies by **6th February 2019 (by 5.00pm)**. Schools will be asked to rank the applicants as described in section 2.11.

2.9 Applications for schools in other Local Authorities (LAs) and applications for Northamptonshire schools from families living in other local authorities

Applications from Northamptonshire residents for schools in other LAs will be logged on the ONE Admissions system and information relating to those preferences and any supplementary information will be electronically forwarded to the relevant maintaining Local Authority on **6th February 2019 (by 5.00pm)**.

Similarly, NCC School Admissions Team will receive applications forwarded from other LAs where applications have been made for schools in Northamptonshire. These will be recorded and passed on to Foundation/Voluntary Aided/Free schools or Academies as appropriate. If the application is for a Community or Voluntary Controlled school, the School Admissions Team will process the applications.

2.10 Multiple Applications

If more than one application is made for a child prior to the closing date (by the same applicant), only the latest dated application form will be processed. Any previously submitted application forms will not be processed.

If a school place offer has already been made by the LA and the applicant has chosen to submit further applications, the latest-dated application will take priority over any previous applications.

If it is possible to offer a place at one of the preferences on the latest-dated application, an offer will be made and the previous offer will be withdrawn without further reference to the applicant.

Applicants must place any requests to withdraw applications in writing to the Admissions Team (by letter or email) prior to the reallocation round.

2.11 How a single offer will be determined from those eligible for places

Foundation, Voluntary Aided, Free schools and Academies must consider all the applications they receive and, if there are more applications than places available, they must apply their oversubscription criteria. This process can be carried out by the School Admissions Team as part of a Service Level Agreement (SLA). If any school wishes to opt for this service please contact school the school admissions team as soon as possible. No offers will be made without referring to the relevant school.

If a school is oversubscribed, the school must apply its oversubscription criteria to all applicants and produce a list, in ranked order, which must be returned to School Admissions Team on the agreed date.

It may be that some children, determined to be eligible for admission to a preferred school, will be allocated places at alternative schools for which they are also eligible and which have been placed **higher in the ranked order of parental preference**.

Where appropriate, spare capacity/places, are then filled by the School Admissions Team. This will be done according to the ranking of eligibility undertaken by the Foundation, Voluntary aided, Free schools or Academies and in line with the ranking of parental preference.

If an application for a school place is unsuccessful, the Local Authority will publish information on its website detailing how places at all schools were allocated. Parents (and in some circumstances children) have the right to appeal against an admission authority's decision to refuse admission, and details of how to do so will also be published on the Local Authority website.

Schools using **random allocation** as a tie breaker, or as part of their oversubscription criteria, must send lists to the school admissions team which includes the names of all applicants in ranked order. They must include all those ranked in the individual bands and not just a list those ranked up to the number of pupils to be allocated. This will also enable the School Admission Team to identify why a place has not been allocated and include this in the reasons sheet which are sent to parents on allocation day.

Schools which have faith-based oversubscription criteria must also send full ranked lists to the school admissions team clearly showing why children have been refused so that reason sheets can be sent to parents on allocation day.

Ranked allocation lists must be returned by all schools which are their own admission authority to NCC School Admissions Team by **27th February 2019 (5.00pm)**.

For Community and Voluntary Controlled schools, the School Admissions Team will apply the oversubscription criteria if there are more applications than the published admission number for the school.

If a pupil is deemed to be eligible for places in more than one school, the allocation will be determined by considering which school is ranked highest in the preferences made by the parent.

If none of the parents' preferences can be met, a place will be allocated at the nearest school to their home address with places available at time of allocation. Some pupils in this situation will be eligible for assistance with transport costs. Parents will be referred to the information at: <http://www3.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices/children-families-education/schools-and-education/school-transport/Pages/default.aspx>

A single place will be identified for each child by the end of this co-ordination process. Wherever possible, when schools have more eligible applications than places available, places will only be allocated up to the limit of the published admissions number (PAN). The admission number will only be exceeded in **exceptional circumstances**. In the case of Foundation, Voluntary Aided schools, Free schools and Academies the published admission number should only be exceeded following agreement with the Local Authority. Where further capacity is required to provide every child with a school place, a discussion will be held with the relevant schools to reach an agreement.

2.12 Protocol for children with Statements of Special Education Needs / EHC Plans

EHCP reviews, discussions with parents about preference and placement enquiry procedures, will all be undertaken by the SEN team at NCC. School placement decisions will be taken by **15th February 2019**. The admission of children with EHC plans to the school named on the EHC plan will take priority over all other children.

The EHC Team will inform parents of the school allocated for their child on or around the **15th February 2019**. There may be circumstances where pupils have not been informed of the school allocated by this date. In these cases, schools may be required to admit children over PAN.

The offer of a school place will be made by the SEN Team who will also amend the child's EHC plan accordingly.

2.13 Notification of offers to all schools or other Local Authorities

Other LAs will be informed electronically by **12th March 2019 (5.00pm)** of any offers of school places that NCC is able to make to their residents. All schools including Foundation, Voluntary Aided, Free Schools and Academies will be informed of the final offers, which may include offers made to pupils living in other LAs by **12th April 2019 (by 5.00pm)**. Schools **must not** communicate with parents until after the offer from NCC has been sent.

2.14 Late applications

Every effort will be made to encourage parents to complete preference forms by the closing date of **15th January 2019 (5.00pm)**. If a preference form is received after 15th January 2019 (5.00pm) it will not be possible to consider it until all the other applications (which have been received on time) have been processed. Please note: late applications will be considered on the reallocation dates as published in the 'Applying for a Primary School Place in Northamptonshire' booklet.

In the co-ordinated system in Northamptonshire, parents/carers will not be allowed to have more than three live primary or secondary preferences at any point in time, prior to the offer date. Parents will not be allowed to change the order or schools listed as preferences. Changes to preferences (after the closing date) must be made on a late application form and will be processed in the further rounds of allocation (see page 1 for date).

For Foundation, Voluntary Aided, Free schools and Academies, NCC will forward late applications directly to the schools for consideration by the agreed timelines in the coordinated scheme. If places are not available, School Admissions must be informed by the school and School Admissions will offer a place at the school which is nearest to the child's home address and has places available. If that school is its own admission authority details of the applicant will be sent to the alternative school before an allocation is made by the LA.

N. B. Co-ordination by the Local Authority continues up to and including 31st July of each year. After 1st August the In-Year process commences.

2.15 Right to appeal

When an admission authority informs a parent of a decision to refuse their child a place at a school for which they have applied, it **must** include the reason why admission was refused; information about the right to appeal; the deadline for lodging an appeal and the contact details for making an appeal. Parents **must** be informed that, if they wish to appeal, they **must** set out their grounds for appeal in writing. Admission authorities **must not** limit the grounds on which appeals can be made.

The admission authority **must** establish an independent appeals panel to hear the appeal. The panel will decide whether to uphold or dismiss the appeal. Where a panel upholds the appeal the school is required to admit the child.

2.16 Waiting lists

Parents who have been unsuccessful in being offered a place for their child at a school either following allocations, after appeals or following the late applications process, may wish to place their child's name on a waiting list. Parents must contact the School Admissions Team in order to request that their child's name is added to the waiting list. Following the Primary National Offer Date, there will be no distinction drawn on school waiting lists between on time and late applications. All applications will be ranked in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

For schools which are their own admission authority – e.g. Academies, Foundation, Voluntary Aided and Free schools - parents need to contact the individual schools directly to ask for information on the waiting list policy for the school.

If a place becomes available, the school's oversubscription criteria will be applied to determine who, from the waiting list, should be allocated the vacant place. Any places that become available after the initial allocation will be re-allocated on a monthly basis (details available on the School Admissions website) by the School Admissions Team. **The Local Authority continues to co-ordinate the allocation of places at all schools up to and including 1st August.** This requires all schools which are their own admission authority to ensure clear and up to date communications with the School Admissions Team regards the ranking lists for each allocation process. No allocation will be made by the School Admission Team without prior agreement with the individual admission authority

For every over-subscribed Community and Voluntary Controlled school, the School Admissions Team will retain a waiting list until the end of the Autumn term 2019 (31st December). Following this date, waiting lists will be ended. If parents still wish their child's name to remain on the new waiting lists which will be established for the following term, they will need to request this in writing to the NCC School Admissions Team. Waiting lists will be refreshed at the start of every term; therefore, if a parent wishes to remain on a waiting list for a whole academic year, they would be required to write to school admissions in January and following the Easter break. (April/May).

If a place becomes available at any school and is offered to a child (from the waiting list) who is receiving assistance with transport to an alternative school, this assistance may cease if the parent does not accept the place on offer. Parents will be referred to the transport policy found at: <http://www3.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices/children-families-education/schools-and-education/school-transport/Pages/default.aspx> for more information.

Where the Governing Body/Academy Trust, rather than the County Council, is the Admission Authority, parents will be asked to contact the school directly for information about the waiting list policy for the school.

2.17 School Placement Offers

The School Admissions Team will notify all on-time applicants of their school offer on **16th April 2019** in the form of an email for all online applicants and a letter (first class) for all applicants who submitted a paper application. The communication will include information regarding how school places have been allocated in the County and, if necessary, how to appeal. School Admissions will assume that the place has been accepted unless communication from the parent is received to advise to the contrary.

2.18 Applying for a place in a junior school

The normal point of entry to junior school is Year 3 and the LA co-ordinates the process of allocating places to these schools.

For children who are in Year 2 at an infant school, and parents want them to attend a junior school in Year 3 in September 2019, parents need to apply for places in junior schools using the Common Application Form (preference form).

Parents should not apply for a place in Year 3 at a primary school on the application form as this application will not be processed as part of the LA's co-ordinated scheme.

As Year 3 is not the normal point of entry for a primary school, any applications for a place in Year 3 in a primary school in September 2019 will be considered to be 'In-year' applications and will be processed in accordance with the LA's In-year process.

In-year applications may be made up to one month from the date that the place is required e.g. if a place is required in September 2019, applications for a Year 3 place at a primary school should be made from June 2019.

2.19 Rejection of a school place

Parents will be required to notify the relevant admission authority in writing (or by email) if they do not propose to accept the school place offered. These places will then be reallocated following the process as set out in 2.13 & 2.14.

NCC is the admission authority for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools. The governing body/Academy Trust is the admission authority for Foundation, Voluntary Aided, Free schools and Academies. Schools which are their own admissions authority must inform the School Admissions Team as soon as a place is rejected in order that School Admissions can have an accurate picture of the available school places for the reallocation dates.

2.20 Definition of a sibling link for community and voluntary controlled schools and split families

For Community and Voluntary Controlled schools, a sibling link is defined as the following:

Pupils who will have a brother or sister continuing at the school at the time of transfer of the younger child.

The definition of a brother or sister (sometimes referred to as a “sibling”) is:

Definition of ‘sibling’:

- A brother or sister sharing the same parents;
- A half-brother or half-sister, where two children share one common parent;
- A step-brother or step-sister, where two children are related by a parent’s marriage or partnership.
- Adopted or fostered children.

A brother or sister must be living at the SAME address when the application is made. If there is any discrepancy between sibling addresses, parents will be asked to provide proof of both children’s home address.

If a child lives for part of the week with one of the separated parents and for the rest of the week with the other parent, the address used for allocation purposes will be the address where the child spends the majority of the school week (Sunday night to Thursday night). If the child spends equal amounts of time between two addresses, parents must agree to nominate the address which should be used. The School Admissions Team reserves right to ask for proof of home address. If parents cannot agree, and multiple applications are received with conflicting addresses and/or preferences, all applications will be suspended until such time that both parents can agree on the nominated address and preferences for the child.

Where parents are separated and have not shared information about the preference process, we will use the following procedure if we get a request for information:

1. We will write to both parents to confirm their ‘rights’ to view data.
2. If rights are confirmed, we will send a copy of the application to the requester.

There may be a charge for this service.

2.21 Children who are part of a multiple birth group

Under paragraph 2.15 (g) of The School Admissions Code, infant class size restrictions may be exceeded where a child who is part of a multiple birth group is allocated as the 30th pupil. The admission number will be exceeded to accommodate the other children from this birth group. These children will remain an ‘excepted pupil’ for the time they are in an infant class (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2) or until class numbers fall back to the current infant class limit.

2.22 Definition of looked after children

The highest priority in the oversubscription criteria for all schools must be given to ‘looked after children’ and all previously looked after children. A ‘looked after child’ is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school.

Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order).

2.23 Applications to defer entry to reception for summer born children

Northamptonshire County Council provides for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. Some parents / carers may feel their child is not ready to start school at this point. The School Admissions Code (Dec 2014) allows parents to request to defer the date their child is admitted to school until later in the school year, but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age (paragraph 2.16 b) of the Code). Children can also attend part-time until later in the school year, but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age. (2.16 c).

In addition, for summer born children (born 1st April – 31st August) paragraph 2.17 of the School Admissions Code states that parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group and may request that their child is admitted to reception rather than year 1.

The following process will be followed for requests to defer entry to reception for a whole school year for Northamptonshire schools:

1. Parents of summer born children who could start school in September 2019, but wish to delay applying for a Reception place, should make their request (to a school's admission authority) before 1st December 2018. This is to enable sufficient time for requests to be processed and, where a request is not agreed, for the family to have adequate time to make an application for a place for September 2019, before the closing date of 15th January 2019.
2. Parents/carers should indicate clearly their 3 preferred schools in order of preference, e.g.
School a
School b
School c
3. Parents/carers should submit their reasons (with evidence from an appropriate professional) for wishing to delay applying for a Reception place, including confirmation of agreement to the proposal from the Head teacher of their preferred school. On receipt of the supporting evidence, and on the recommendation of the Head teacher, NCC School Admissions will write to the parent/carer to confirm whether an application can be made in the following year. The letter will highlight the potential risks/impact of making a delayed application which may include the following:
 - Whilst one school may agree to a delayed application, there is a chance that your child will not be allocated a place at that school due to places being allocated to other children up to the school's published admission number (PAN) in accordance with the oversubscription criteria;
 - The application will be processed as part of the normal admissions round in the following year, according to the oversubscription criteria of each school stated as a preference. No additional priority will be given to the applicants and, therefore, the applications may not be successful for the preferred school(s);
 - The local authority will make every effort to allocate a Reception place (rather than a Year 1 place). However, it may not be possible to allocate a Reception place at the parent's preference or at the local school. This is because the local authority is not always the admissions authority and some schools, which are their own admission authority, may not agree to the delayed entry;

4. If the request is not agreed, the parent will receive a letter from the admission authority of the school providing reasons for refusal;
5. A parent/carer may still change their mind regarding delaying entry by a whole school year and may apply by the national closing date for primary school admissions (15th January) in the normal admissions round for starting in the September following their child's fourth birthday. This will provide two options to the parent/carer: a) they can consider deferring the child's start date in Reception until later in the school year or b) they can discuss part time arrangements with the allocated school, as detailed in paragraph 2.16 of the Admissions Code. If an application is then received by the 15th January the parent's previous request to delay until the following year would no longer apply. Applications received after 5pm on 15th January (the closing date) will be treated according to the current NCC late application policy;
6. A copy of the letter sent by NCC to the parent/carer will be sent to the Head teacher of the school(s) concerned;
7. A parent/carer who chooses to delay entry by a whole school year will need to apply for a school place in the admissions round for the following year;
8. If a child is given an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) after an agreement has been made with School Admissions to delay an application for a place in Reception, the Plan will override any agreement made and will specify which school the child will attend.

If a parent who has applied by the statutory national closing date (15th January) later changes their mind and wishes to defer their child's entry to reception, they should discuss this and other options with the Head teacher of the allocated school. Requests to defer will not be agreed if the sole reason is due to the parent not receiving an offer of one of their preferred schools.

Appendix 1

When sharing information regarding the coordinated scheme with schools, the LA will:

- supply information about what is required in the co-ordination process;
- provide useful tips to schools and
- be clear about the dates when information should/must be returned to the LA.

If schools already have a service level agreement (SLA) in operation with the school admissions team, the team will carry out the agreed work and will share with the school the outcome of applications made to the school by sending out lists of successful applicants to the relevant schools.

Schools wishing to purchase service level agreements (SLAs) during the co-ordination process should contact the school admissions team as soon as possible to discuss their requirements.