

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

SECTION 1

Timetable for Secondary co-ordinated admissions for September 2019

DATE	EVENT
10 th September 2018	Online applications open and information to parents / carers.
10 th October 2018	Generic reminder letters sent via schools for parents of primary/ junior school children, advising of need to apply for a place. Email sent to schools to remind parents of the need to apply.
31 st October 2018	Closing date for applications (5.00pm) (Statutory) Late applications received after this date will not be processed (until additional rounds of allocation – see below)
23 rd November 2018	Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) sends applications to other LAs and Own Admission Authority schools by 5.00pm
11 th January 2019	Own Admission Authority schools send ranked lists to NCC by 5.00pm
6 th February 2019	NCC applies agreed scheme for County's schools, informing other LAs of offers to be made to their residents by 5.00pm
15 th February 2019	SEN must have informed Admissions re. pupils with Statement of the school named on their Statement (statutory)
25 th February 2019	Schools (secondary) informed by NCC of the final results, which may include offers made to pupils living in other LAs by 5.00pm
1 st March 2019	Offers made to parents / carers by NCC and primary schools informed via S2S (Statutory)
By 4 th March 2019	Schools emailed and final allocation lists (ATFs) uploaded onto the S2S secure site
8 th March 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
28 th March 2019	Cut off date for consideration for inclusion in first round of reallocations
29 th March 2019	Deadline by which all appeal forms must be submitted by 5.00pm
2 nd May 2019	Cut off date for consideration for inclusion in second round of reallocations
30 th May 2019	Cut off date for consideration for inclusion in third round of reallocations
18 th June 2019	Appeals lodged before the closing date of 29 th March 2019 (5.00pm) will be heard by this date (within 40 school days from the closing date).
27 th June 2019	Cut off date for consideration for inclusion in fourth round of reallocations
16 th April 2019 7 th May 2019 4 th June 2019 2 nd July 2019	Additional rounds of allocations will start on these dates
11 th July 2019	Places allocated to Northamptonshire children currently in primary school who have not submitted an application. Letters sent to parents to advise of the places offered
1 st August 2019	In Year co-ordination commences

SECTION 2 - Elements of the Scheme

2.1 Regulations

The School Admissions (Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) Regulations 2007 require local authorities 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 practical, 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 application form or paper common application form must allow parents to apply for any secondary 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 neighbouring authority

Parents resident in one local authority who wish to apply for a place at a secondary school maintained by another local authority must apply through the common application form (or online application form) for the local authority in which they live (their home local authority).

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 must inform the home local authority 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.

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 being encouraged to apply online.

The benefits of using this process are as follows:

1. Parents are less likely to make errors as the system guides through the whole process
2. Parents are able to change preferences up to 5pm of the closing day.
3. On the day of allocation parents are able to log on and obtain knowledge about their allocated school place. Parents using the paper format have their allocated place posted out and do not have this information until the following day.
4. Parents are contributing to a greener environment

The 'Applying for a Secondary 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 secondary schools by local area
- How to complete a preference form
- The published admission number for each school
- Each schools 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 Admissions Team

2.6 Parents living in Northamptonshire wanting 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

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, receive a submission confirmation email every time a change is made to the application or request a receipt by including a stamped addressed envelope with their paper application. It is not the responsibility of the admissions team to send reminders to parents.

The application form (either online or paper) will ask the parent for the following information:

- 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 remain at 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 current school

- 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 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 forms 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 supplementary forms required from the schools directly. Supplementary forms must be returned to the preferred school by the **31st October 2018**.

Parents applying using the paper form will be required to return the completed application form, to the Admissions Team at Northamptonshire County Council, One Angel Square, Angel Street, Northampton, NN1 1ED by **31st October 2018 (5.00pm)**. It is strongly recommended that parents include a stamped addressed envelope in order to receive confirmation of receipt of the form. Northamptonshire County Council cannot 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) electronically, or post to the Admissions Team at Northamptonshire County Council, One Angel Square, Angel Street, Northampton, NN1 1ED clearly stating name of child, date of birth and the school name that the parent is applying for. If a house move takes place after the closing date, the school allocation will be based on the old address.

2.8 Applications for Foundation, Voluntary Aided Schools and Academies

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

Applications will be sent to Foundation, Voluntary Aided schools and Academies by **23rd November 2018 (by 5.00pm)**. Schools will be asked to rank applicants as described in 2.10. Any parent who has not submitted a common application form to the LA must not be considered in the ranking lists with on time applicants. The LA will check all OAA lists to ensure this procedure is followed.

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

Applications for schools in other LA's will be logged on the ONE Admissions database system and information relating to that preference and any supplementary information will be electronically forwarded to the relevant maintaining local authority on **23rd November 2018 (by 5.00pm)**

Similarly, NCC Admissions Team will receive applications forwarded from neighbouring LA's. These will be recorded and passed to Foundation, Voluntary Aided schools or Academy if appropriate. If the application is for a Community or Voluntary Controlled school, the Admissions Team will consider eligibility alongside other applicants.

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 schools and Academies must consider all applications and if there are more applications than places available then apply their oversubscription criteria. If the school is oversubscribed they must produce an intake list in rank order which must include all those who have expressed a preference for the school. The ranked list must be returned to NCC Admissions Team. This process can be carried out by the School Admissions Team as part of a Service Level agreement. If any school wishes to opt for this service please contact school the admissions team as soon as possible. No offers will be made without referring to the appropriate school.

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

Where appropriate, spare capacity can then be filled by the Admissions Team, this will be done in accordance to the ranking of eligibility previously completed by Foundation, Voluntary Aided schools or Academies and in line with the ranking of parental preference. This is why all applicants are required to be ranked, not just those up to the PAN. (published admissions number)

All Foundation, Voluntary Aided schools and Academies must return ranked lists to the school admissions team by the agreed date, **clearly showing where the school is oversubscribed if appropriate**. Schools using random allocation as a tie breaker or part of their criteria **must** send lists to school admissions team including the names of all applicants in ranked order.

*Code states; Parents, and in some circumstances children, have the right to appeal against an admission authority's decision to refuse admission. **The admission authority must set out the reasons for the decision, that there is a right of appeal and the process for hearing such appeals.** 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.*

Where a school uses Faith grounds as part of the criteria, schools must clearly show why a child has been refused to enable this to be included in the letter on allocation day.

Ranked allocation lists must be returned to NCC Admissions Team by **11th January 2019 (by 5.00pm)**.

For Community and Voluntary Controlled schools, the 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 parents' preferences.

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. 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 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. In the case of Foundation, Voluntary Aided 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 appropriate school to reach an agreement.

2.12 Protocol for children with Statements of Special Education Needs

Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) reviews, discussions with parents about preference and placement enquiry procedures, will all be undertaken by NCC. Placement decisions will be taken by **15th February 2019**. The admission of children with special educational needs to the school named on the Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) will take priority over all other children.

The EHCP Team will inform parents of the school allocated for their child by **15th February 2019**. Pupils not informed by this date may be required to be taken over PAN.

2.13 Notification of offers to all schools or other Local Authorities

Other LA's will be informed electronically by **6th February 2019 (5.00pm)** of any offers of a school place that NCC are able to make to their residents. All schools including Foundation, Voluntary Aided Schools and Academies will be informed of the final offers, which may include offers made to pupils living in other LA's by **25th February 2019 (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 **31st October 2018 (5.00pm)**. If a preference form is received after **31st October 2018 (5.00pm)** it will not be possible to consider it until all the other applications (received by the closing date) have been processed. Note; late applications will be considered on the reallocations dates as advertised.

Once an application form has been received, where parents request a further preference to be added or the order of preferences to be changed after the closing date, such a change will be treated as a new, late application. No parent will be allowed to have more than three live primary or secondary preferences at any point in time during co-ordinated prior to the offer date. Parents will not be allowed to change the order of their preferences after the closing date.

For Foundation, Voluntary Aided Schools and Academies, NCC will forward applications direct to the schools for consideration by the agreed timelines within the coordinated scheme. If places are not available NCC must be informed by the school and will offer a place at the nearest available school with places. 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.

Note, coordination by the Local Authority continues up to and including 31st July of each year. After 1st August In Year processes commence.

2.15 Waiting lists

Parents who have been unsuccessful in being offered a place for their child at the school either following allocations, after appeals or following late applications may wish to place their child's name on this waiting list. 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. Parents must contact the Admissions Team in order to request that their child's name is added to the waiting list. Any places that become available after the initial allocation will be re-allocated on a monthly basis in the further rounds of allocation (details available on the Admissions Website) by the Admissions Team.

Following the National Offer Date there will be no distinction drawn on school reserve lists between on time and late applications. All applications will be ranked according to the oversubscription criteria.

For every over-subscribed Community and Voluntary Controlled school the Admissions Team will retain a waiting list until the end of the Autumn term 2019 (**31st December**). Following this date, waiting lists will be destroyed. If parents wish to remain on waiting lists for this period they will need to request this in writing to the NCC 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 one 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>

Where the Governors, rather than the council, are the Admission Authority, parents will be asked to contact the school directly for their waiting list policy.

2.16 School Placement Offers

The School Admissions Team will notify all on-time applicants of their school offer on **1st March 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.

2.17 Rejection of a school place

Parents will be required to notify the relevant admission authority, which are NCC Admissions Team in relation to Community and Voluntary Controlled schools and direct notification to a Foundation, Voluntary Aided school or Academy 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 2.14.

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

For community and voluntary controlled schools, 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:

- 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. The partners must have co-habited in a permanent exclusive relationship (as if they were husband and wife or civil partners) for a minimum of 2 years.
- 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 between separated parents, the address used for allocation purposes will be the address where the child spends the majority of the week. If the child spends equal amounts of time between two addresses, parents must agree and nominate the address they wish to be used. The Admissions Team reserve 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.

2.19 Children who are part of a multiple birth group

Our twins policy does not entitle applicants to gain their first preference but does, where possible, entitle them to be kept together if they so wish. This may not be their first preference and indeed may be at a different school altogether.

If parents make a preference for a school which uses random allocation as part of its oversubscription admission criteria, there is a chance that only one child will be allocated a place at the school. This could mean that twins, or other multiple birth groups, are allocated places at different schools.

2.20 Random allocation

Random allocation which is used as a tiebreaker within an oversubscription criteria for a community or voluntary controlled school will be observed by an independent person (not employed by the local authority or with a connection to the school). This is to ensure that the process and set up is performed correctly.

If a place is allocated from the waiting list after the initial round of allocations, and the tie breaker is used, a new round of random allocation will be performed but not observed.

2.22 Definition of looked after children

Highest priority in the oversubscription criteria for all schools will be given to 'looked after children' and children who were 'looked after', but ceased to be so because immediately after being 'looked after' became subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order (on approval and adoption of the new School Admissions Code, currently under consultation).

Appendix 1

The Local Authority will, when sharing information regarding the coordinated scheme with schools, supply information on what is required, useful tips and dates for return back to the LA.

If schools have a service level agreement in operation with the admissions team, the team will carry out the specified work and share with the school the outcome and lists as appropriate.

Schools wishing to purchase service level agreements during the process should get in contact with the admissions team as soon as possible.