

## LINCOLNSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### SCHEME FOR CO-ORDINATED ADMISSIONS TO PRIMARY SCHOOLS – 2019 to 2020

#### **1. General**

The regulations require applications for primary schools to be co-ordinated and the Local Authority (LA) is responsible for drawing up a scheme covering every maintained school and academy (including Free schools) in its area. The statutory requirements include, for example:

- A common timetable for all schools and admission authorities in the LA area.
- Co-ordination between all primary schools within the LA and between other LAs.
- A common application for all schools that allows parents to express up to three preferences.
- Common dates to assist the smooth operation of the scheme.
- Parents to receive a single offer on 16 April or nearest working day.
- That the notification of offers is made by the LA and not the school.

Neighbouring LAs are required to share information in order to manage applications to schools in other LAs. Where a place is available in another LA, offers will be made by the 'home' LA to ensure that a single offer is made to each pupil.

#### **2. Aims of the Scheme**

1. To meet the relevant Government regulations in respect of coordinated admission arrangements and to comply with the Admissions Code.
2. To make sure that the needs of the child and the wishes of the parent are the prime considerations.
3. To make sure that as many parents as possible gain a place for their child in the highest preference school available consistent with the scheme.
4. To make sure that every parent of a child living in Lincolnshire who has applied for a school place in the normal admissions round

receives an offer of one, and only one, school place on the same day.

5. To indicate how a place will be allocated if none of the parent's preferences can be met.
- 6 To indicate how late applications should be addressed and also how applications which fall outside the normal admissions round will be managed.
7. To make sure that the scheme minimises the administrative demands on schools and allows effective communication with them and neighbouring LAs.
8. To give details of how the scheme will operate after 16 April to make sure that places that become vacant are reallocated effectively.

### **3. Expression of Preference**

Parents will be asked to name three preferred schools and to rank them in order. Schools must rank all applicants without reference to the parental ranking. The LA will allocate a place at the highest ranked school that is able to offer the child a place. If it is not possible to offer a parent one of their preferred schools, they will be offered a place in the nearest school to their home with vacancies at the time of the allocation

### **4. Application Forms**

All applications must be made online or by a common application form. Schools must not accept applications direct from parents at any stage of the coordinated process. The online and paper forms will also allow the inclusion of most of the supplementary data required by the LA, other admission authorities and schools. Some schools may request additional evidence to support the reasons for parents applying under certain criteria such as religion or medical. Schools will not receive a physical copy of the form, nor should they request information from parents that is not relevant to the application. The full application contains the rank order of preferences, which individual schools are not entitled to have under the Data Protection Act. The online system may only be available to on-time applicants, parents may have to submit all late and revised applications using the paper form.

### **5. Communications**

The LA will use electronic communication with other LAs, admission authorities and schools. Access to application data will be available to schools online and, in order to allow for the allocation system to work effectively schools can use this web access to rank applications and communicate with the LA's admissions team. Schools will not see the parents' rank order of preference as this forms no part of their admission policy. Schools must not seek to obtain this information direct from parents.

## 6. The Admissions Process – Annual Cycle for Primary Schools

The dates will be adjusted annually to coincide with the nearest appropriate working day.

<b>Deadline Dates 2018/19</b>	<b>Summary of Action</b>	<b>Details of Action</b>
October 1 2017	Consultation on changes to admission policies for all admission authorities can begin.	Admission authorities publish any changes to their admission arrangements on their website and consult with all relevant parties. Own admission authority schools may choose to follow the LAs consultation dates as below and submit their proposed arrangements to the LA to publish and publicise on their behalf.
Nov 6	Local Authority to begin consultation on changes to local admission scheme and admission policy.	Any proposed changes to the LAs admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools are placed on the School Admission consultation website. The co-ordinated admission scheme is also placed on the School Admission website. Consultation lasts for 6 weeks.
January 31 2018	<p>Consultation on the scheme for the next admissions cycle are completed and the scheme is agreed.</p> <p>Consultation on any changes to the policy of any admission authority are completed.</p>	<p>The scheme is available for consultation. It is agreed by all admission authorities or, if not, referred to the Secretary of State.</p> <p>Admission authorities complete consultation on any proposed changes to their policies.</p>
Feb 28	Admission policies determined and Secretary of State notified of agreement on a co-ordinated scheme.	Admission authorities consider any feedback and determine a final policy and publish it. The determined policy may be referred to the Adjudicator. The LA must notify the Secretary of State that agreement has been reached on a scheme.
March 15	LA places a notice on its website indicating where all admission arrangements can be found.	Objections can be made to the determined arrangements up until 15 May.
May 25	Information changes received from schools.	Deadline for information from schools to update oversubscription criteria and contact details for 'Going to School in Lincolnshire'.

July 13	Complete update of all information to parents.	Update all information for 'Going to School in Lincolnshire'. Update all transfer letters, common application forms and guidance to parents and schools. Booklets and forms go to printers. Website updated as necessary. Academies to provide all necessary information.
Nov 14	Information and guidance to parents are made available to all early years' providers and primary schools. Online application system opens or forms can be requested from the Local Authority.	LA makes sure all relevant documentation is distributed. LA issues press release and advertises the availability of information and application forms.
Jan 15 2019	Closing date for all applications.	Parents fill in one application naming and ranking their preferred schools Parents submit their online application or return the forms direct to LA in pre-paid envelope.
Feb 4 – Feb 22	'Home' LA sends information to other LAs.	LAs exchange relevant application details and resolve any instances of duplication.
Feb 15	The system is locked down and no further changes can be accepted for any reason.	Anyone who applies after lock down is notified their application is late and will be dealt with week commencing 22 May.
Feb 28	All necessary preparation for allocation is completed. Schools rank preferences.	LA records details of applications on computer system. Schools have access via the web to their applications. Schools verify and rank using their oversubscription criteria. This will be done as quickly as possible after 15 January.
Mar 1	All schools to notify the LA if they want to over offer above PAN.	Schools must send an email to confirm how many children they will admit. Places will be offered from the school's reserve list.
March 5	LA runs first allocation routine.	LA checks the rankings, runs the initial allocation routine making sure the parents receive the highest ranked offer possible.
March 11 – 29	LA exchanges details of offers to neighbouring LAs.	The LA identifies all places offered to children not living in Lincolnshire and sends details to the child's 'home' LA
April 5	LA finalises allocations ready for notification to schools and parents.	LA allocates places following exchange of data with other LAs and produces offer letters
April 16	LA offers one school place to each applicant.	The LA posts first-class the offer of a school place to parents who applied on a paper form or parents access offer online and respond. The offer letter will explain the appeal process.

April 30	All acceptances or refusals returned to the LA.	Parents return acceptance /refusal letters in pre-paid addressed envelope or confirm acceptance/refusal online. LA records all acceptances and refusals. Schools can monitor process online.
May 3	LAs exchange results of acceptances and refusals.	LA adjusts lists to take account of any refusals.
May 16	Deadline for late and revised applications for the next offer round.	All late and revised applications received by this date will be notified of their offer result from 22 May.
May 21	Administrative deadline of 20 school days for receipt of appeals to ensure all appeals for the same school are heard on the same day.	Appeals must be heard within 40 school days from this date.
May 22	LA offers places to any late and revised applicants week commencing and LAs exchange results from this date.	LA and schools together attempt to allocate children whose parents have not applied in time, who are late arrivals in the area and those who have made a revised application. LA sends updates to other LAs.
May 27	Main allocation process ends and all further applications dealt with on a weekly basis.	LA processes all further applications as and when received and offers places on at least a weekly basis.
Aug 31	End of annual Coordinated Admissions cycle.	Any applications received after this date are managed under the mid-year scheme.

## **7. Late Applications between 15 January and 15 February**

Where an application is accepted after 15 January schools will be informed of the late application and they can check the ranking, most of which will be done automatically.

## **8. Applications made between 16 February and 16 May**

Parents who make a first application to the LA between 16 February and 16 May and those parents who make a revised application between 16 April and 16 May will be sent an application form to fill in, which will be returned to the LA to be processed in accordance with the details in the annual cycle above.

Revised applications are made when a parent has received an offer of a school place but now want to apply for a place at a different school or schools. These applications will be treated on an equal basis with any late applications.

A place will be offered from 22 May at the highest ranked preferred school, provided that the child meets the oversubscription criteria and there is a place available. Parents will be advised of their right to appeal against the decision of an admission authority to refuse admission on the grounds that it is full. The school will be informed immediately of any allocation made and it will ask the LA to make an offer on its behalf.

## **9. Applications made between 17 May and 31 August**

Parents who apply to the LA after May 16 will be informed which schools have places and, if applicable, to which they would be eligible to receive free home to school transport, subject to application. They will be sent the common application form to fill in and advised of their right to appeal against the decision of an admission authority to refuse admission on the grounds that it is full. The form will be returned to the LA and a place will be offered at their preferred school (provided there is a place available). The school will be informed immediately.

If parents attempt to apply to a school directly, the school should ask them to request a common application form by telephoning 01522 782030. If the school has a place available it should ask the LA to offer the place immediately.

## **10. Mid-year applications**

Lincolnshire County Council operates non-statutory coordination of these applications.

Parents may apply online at [www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/schooladmissions](http://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/schooladmissions) or obtain a paper form from 01522 782030.

All Lincolnshire schools may choose to accept direct applications from parents.

If a school is contacted by the parent/carer and they are unable to offer a place, the parent/carer must be advised to contact the school admission team, who will organise a central mid-year admission application. If the school has places they must check with the school admission team that there are no other outstanding cases before making an offer of a school place. Details must be passed to the school admission team in order that a formal offer letter can be sent. Schools must meet the mandatory requirements of the School Admission Code with respect to any mid year applications.

## **11. Appeals**

All other admission authorities must notify the school admission team of the results of their appeals so that they can reallocate any places that are created in other schools.

## **12. Applications to junior schools at the start of Year 3**

Infant to junior transfer will be managed following the same timetable and processes as the intake to reception.

All parents seeking places for their children at a junior school must apply under the coordinated timetable, irrespective of whether their child currently attends an infant or a primary school. This is because there is no automatic transfer to the junior schools.

Parents of children in year 2 at an infant school may request a place in year 3 of a primary school. This is because these children must leave the infant school at the end of year 2. These applications will be regarded as part of the

co-ordinated scheme and if there are places in the preferred primary school they will be allocated. This means the places are reserved until the start of term in September.

### **13. Nursery applications to reception**

All children in a nursery class or playgroup must apply for a place in reception through the co-ordinated admission scheme.

### **14. Admission of children outside their normal age group**

Parents of gifted and talented children, or those who have experienced problems or missed part of a year (for example due to ill health), can seek places outside their normal age group.

Admission authorities must make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case. These applications are considered by schools along with all other applications for the preferred cohort and following the same timetable. Schools may refuse an out of cohort place. In some cases schools may agree to admit the child out of cohort, but the child may still not gain a place because they do not rank highly enough on application of the oversubscription criteria.

Parents will receive the outcome of their application on offer day along with all other applicants for that cohort. The exception to this is where there is agreement that a summer born child can start reception a year late, the school admissions team will inform these parents as soon as the information is available and discontinue the application for the date of birth cohort. Parents must then apply again in the admissions round relating to their preferred cohort, such applications will be subject to the relevant oversubscription criteria on an equal basis with all other applicants. If no preferred school can offer a place parents may have to make a midyear application for the date of birth cohort. The home local authority will make sure that parents are informed of their statutory right to appeal. This right does not apply if parents are offered a place in another year group at the school. Parents resident in other Local Authority areas should note that in Lincolnshire it is always the preferred schools that make decisions on these requests and that their home Local Authority cannot make this decision.

FOR DETERMINATION