

Derbyshire's Co-ordinated Admission Scheme Procedure for In-Year Admissions to Derbyshire Schools

1. Introduction

In-year admissions relate to applications by parents to move their child to another school other than at the normal point of entry e.g following a change of address. These are also known as “casual” or “admissions outside of the round”.

The revised version of the *Schools Admissions Code* which came into force in February 2012 removed the requirement for local authorities to co-ordinate in-year admissions for the offer year 2013/14 and all subsequent years. The *Code* does however still require:-

- Local Authorities to provide on request information to parents about the availability of places in schools within its area, and provide a suitable form for parents to complete when applying for a school place at any school (2.21).
- Own admission authority schools to, on receipt of an in-year application, notify the local authority of both the application, and its outcome, to allow the local authority to keep up to date figures on the availability of places in the area. The admission authority must also inform parents of their right to appeal against the refusal of a place (2.22).

The requirement for parents to make in-year applications through their home authority will cease at the end of the 2012/13 academic year. However, in Derbyshire, it has been agreed that the Authority will continue to co-ordinate applications for all schools in the County, although with slightly more flexibility to the previous arrangements, by giving schools an option to accept approaches direct from parents.

Admissions to nursery schools and classes and admissions into years 12 and 13 are excluded from the arrangements and applications should continue to be made direct to the school.

It is important schools follow this procedure so that all applications are treated fairly and consistently, ensuring that no child is disadvantaged or becomes lost to education. The *School Admissions Code* requires that if places are available at a school, they should be allocated as quickly as possible. The following information describes how the procedure between schools and the Authority will operate.

2. Procedure

Applications will fall into two categories:

(i) Direct to the Admissions and Transport Team

or

(ii) Approaches Direct to Schools

i) Applications Direct to the Admissions and Transport Team

- Applications should be made on the common application form. Parents can apply online at www.derbyshire.gov.uk/admissions or by phone to Call Derbyshire on 01629 533190 or on a paper form (AF5) available for download from the website or direct from the Admissions and Transport Team. Parents are invited to express preferences for 3 schools.
- Applications will be acknowledged by the Admissions and Transport Team.
- Applications will be subject to scrutiny to determine whether they meet the criteria for consideration under the Fair Access Protocol (this does not override a parents right to pursue a place at a particular school).
- The Admissions and Transport Team will log the application on the Admissions System and the preferred schools advised by email that they can view the details on the Schools Access Module (SAM).
- If a child is currently attending a Derbyshire school the application will also be shown on the leavers screen of the appropriate in-year admission round on SAM (unless the parent withholds their consent).
- Schools may notify the Admissions and Transport Team of oversubscription in individual year groups and, by agreement, applications may be refused without the school considering the individual request. Schools will still be advised of requests and can view the details on SAM.
- Schools must consider requests and inform the Admissions and Transport Team within 5 school days whether or not a place is available.

School Response - Place Available

- Where a place is available at one or more of the preferred schools the Admissions and Transport Team will write to the parent offering the highest priority school available and confirm with the school(s) if a place is required or not.
- Parents will be advised in the offer letter to contact the school within the next 10 school days to confirm that they are taking up the place and agree the starting arrangements.

- The offer letter will also confirm the date by which the child must be admitted. Where the application is on the basis of a house move the letter will state that the child must be admitted within 10 school days of the parents contacting the school and for cases that do not involve a house move the start date will be the start of the next term.

School Response - No Place Available (Refusal)

- Where a request is refused the reason for the refusal in accordance with the *School Admissions Code* must also be confirmed to the Admissions and Transport Team. The reason for refusal is required for inclusion in the decision letter to parent.
- The Admissions and Transport Team will write and notify the parent of the refusal of their preference(s).
- In all cases where a preference is refused the parent will be informed of their right to an independent appeal.
- Where no place can be offered and the child has no current school place the Admission and Transport Team will ensure that a place is secured either through the appeals process, by the parent expressing further preferences or placement through the Fair Access Protocol where appropriate. This to be done in liaison with the Education Welfare Service.

(ii) Approaches Direct to Schools

Schools who wish to accept approaches for places direct from parents should deal with requests as follows:-

School Decision – Place Available

- The school verbally confirms to the parent the offer of a place.
- The school either faxes or emails the Admissions and Appeals Team to advise them of the verbal offer with the following details:-

Child's name
 Child's address
 Child's date of birth
 Year group admitted to
 Starting date

NB for security reasons emails must only be sent from schools' EMBC address.

- The Admissions and Transport Team will log the application and write to the parent confirming the offer of a place.

- In situations where there are only one or two places remaining in the particular year group, the school should first check with the Admissions and Transport Team that there are no application requests pending/outstanding before making a verbal offer.

School Decision – No Place Available (refusal)

- The school verbally confirms to the parent that a place is not available.
- The school either faxes or emails the Admissions and Transport Team to advise them of the verbal refusal with the following details:-

Child's name
 Child's address
 Child's date of birth
 Year group
 Current school
 Reason for refusal

NB for security reasons emails must only be sent from schools' EMBC address.

- The Admissions and Transport Team will log the application on the Admissions System.
- The Admissions and Transport Team will write to the parent confirming the refusal and inform them of their right to an independent appeal.
- Where a child has no current school place the Admission and Transport Team will ensure that a place is secured either through the appeals process, by the parent expressing further preferences or placement through the Fair Access Protocol where appropriate. This to be done in liaison with the Education Welfare Service.

3. Waiting Lists

- The Authority will not maintain waiting lists for in-year admissions for community and controlled schools.
- Own admission authority schools may choose to maintain waiting lists for in-year admissions. Priority on the waiting list is determined according to the school's oversubscription criteria.
- Where own admission authority schools do maintain waiting lists it is the responsibility of the school to communicate with parents where places become available. Schools should inform the Admissions and Transport Team where offers are to be made from the waiting list.
- Parents already on the waiting list and wishing to place their child's name on the list for the next academic year should be advised to make a new application in the term preceding the new academic year to update their application details and confirm their continuing interest.

- Children allocated to a school in accordance with the Fair Access Protocol must take precedence over other children on the waiting list.

4. Missing Children

- If for any reason a parent(s) does not contact a school within the 10 days or the child does not start at the school on the agreed date, the school must notify the Admissions and Transport Team within 5 school days or immediately if there are safeguarding concerns. This is essential to enable the Authority to fulfil its duty of care and track the educational placement of the child and ensure that they do not become missing from education.

5. Other Relevant Protocols

Specific protocols and procedures apply for groups of children including as follows:-

- Children with a Statement of Special Educational Need or Education Health Care Plan
- Fair Access children including Managed Moves

The admission of children from these groups falls outside the above arrangements other than in respect of section 4 – Missing Children.

6. Contacting the Admissions and Transport Team

Email: admissions.transport@derbyshire.gov.uk

Telephone: 01629 537479

Write: Derbyshire County Council
Admissions and Transport Team
Children's Services Department
School Road
Chesterfield
Derbyshire
S41 8LJ