



Wellfield School

Admission Policy

Updated:

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Chair of Governors:

Mrs S Saiger

Head Teacher:

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Durham Local Authority Co-ordinated Admission Scheme - Secondary Schools

1. What is the Policy about?

- 1.1 This scheme is made by Durham County Council under the Education (Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2008 and applies to all maintained secondary schools in County Durham.
- 1.2 The proposed Co-ordinated Admission Scheme for Durham Local Authority is set out below and complies with the changes introduced in the School Admissions Code 2009. The dates relating to the admissions process for the school year 2014/2015 are attached at Annex 1.
- 1.3 A separate scheme exists in relation to primary schools.

2. Interpretation

2.1 In this scheme:

- “The LA” means Durham County Council acting in its capacity as local education authority;
- “The LA area” means the area in respect of which the LA are the local education authority;
- “The schools” means all Community, Voluntary Aided or Foundation Secondary schools and Academies which are maintained by the LA;
- “Admission Authority” means the LA in respect of any of the schools which is a community or voluntary controlled school, and the Governing Body of the school in respect of a Voluntary Aided or Foundation School and Academies;
- “Parent” means any person who holds parental responsibility for a child and with whom the child normally lives;
- “Suitable school” means the nearest available school which offers an efficient full-time programme of education appropriate to the individual child’s needs in the view of the Authority;
- The Co-ordinated Admission Scheme will apply for the admission arrangements for the school year commencing September 2014;
- The LA will include in its admission arrangements for the 2014/2015 school year the provisions set out in the Schedule to this scheme;
- The Governing Body of each Voluntary Aided or Foundation School or Academy will include in its admission arrangements for the 2014/2015 school year the provisions set out in the Schedule to this scheme, so far as relevant to that school;
- The scheme shall apply to every secondary school in the LA area (except special schools).

3. The Scheme

- There will be a common application form supplied by the LA for the purpose of enabling parents living in County Durham to express up to three preferences for their child to be admitted to a Community and Voluntary Controlled secondary school, Voluntary Aided secondary school or Foundation school or Academy in County Durham or to a school or schools in another LA for the academic year 2014/2015.
- The common application form must be used as a means of expressing one or more preferences for the purposes of Section 86 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 by parents resident in the LA area wishing to express a preference for their child:
 - (a) to be admitted to a maintained secondary school within the LA area (including Voluntary Aided and Foundation schools and Academies);
 - (b) to be admitted to a school located in another LA's area (including Voluntary Aided and Foundation schools and Academies).
- The common application form will invite the parent to express up to three preferences including where relevant any schools outside the LA's area, in the rank order in which they wish their child to receive an offer of a place, and invite parents to give their reasons for each preference.
- The common application form will explain that the parent will receive no more than one offer of a school place. Furthermore, that places at any oversubscribed school will be offered on the basis of equal preference rank order and that where an offer is made it would be for the highest ranked school at which the LA as the admission authority, or on behalf of the admission authority of a Voluntary Aided or Foundation School, or Academy was able to offer a place. Annex 2 lists those Governing Bodies who are the Admission Authority for schools to which this scheme applies.
- The common application form will explain that where the LA could not offer a place at any of the preferred schools, the offer of a place will be made at the nearest school to the parental address that has a place available.
- The common application form will specify a closing date and where it must be returned. Governing Bodies of Aided or Foundation Schools or Academies, as the Admission Authority, must notify the relevant LA of any application made direct to them in error whether or not the parent lives in County Durham.
- The LA will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that a common application form is issued to the parent of every child living in County Durham who is due to transfer to secondary education in September 2014 and that the common application form is accompanied by a written explanation of the co-ordinated admission scheme.
- The common application form will include a supplementary section to be completed by parents who express a preference for a Voluntary Aided School to enable them to provide relevant additional information.

4. Processing of Application Forms

- Completed common application forms should be returned to the LA by 31 October 2014.
- Completed common application forms which are received for good reason after the closing date will be accepted provided they are received before 14 January 2015, the date the allocation procedures begin. Examples of good reason include: when a single parent has been ill for some time, or has been dealing with the death of a relative; a family has just move into the area or is returning from abroad (proof of ownership or tenancy of a County Durham property as the main property will be required in these cases). Other circumstances will be considered and each case decided on its own merits. Parents however must provide clear evidence for the LA to consider as to why they could not submit an application during the preference period. The determination of the LA will be final.

5. Determining offers in response to the application form

- The LA will make the offer of a school place to the parent of every child living in County Durham transferring to secondary education in September 2014 who applies for a place at a maintained school.
- The LA will determine the potential offer of a place for community and voluntary controlled secondary schools in County Durham in its capacity as the Admission Authority **having no regard to order of preferences**. For Voluntary Aided or Foundation Schools (where appropriate), or schools in another Local Authority, the relevant Admission Authority will inform Durham LA of the potential offer of a place. Durham LA will then be responsible for making the offer of a place in accordance with paragraphs 4 and 15 of this Scheme.
- By 26 November 2012, the LA will provide the Admission Authority for each of the schools indicated on the common application form with a copy of the application form, **excluding parental preference information**.
- By 14 January 2015, the Admission Authority for each school will provide the LA with a list, in rank order, in accordance with their admission criteria of all pupils who applied for a place at the school, indicating those who can be offered a place and those (if any) who cannot. The LA will then match this ranked list against the ranked lists of the other schools nominated.
- By 28 January 2015, the LA will match the provisional offers of places against each parent's ranking and proceed as follows:
 - Where the child is eligible for a place at only one of the preferred schools, a place at that school will be offered to the child.
 - Where the child is eligible for a place at two or more of the preferred schools, they will be offered a place at whichever school is the highest ranked.
 - Where none of the preferences can be met, the child will be offered a place at the nearest suitable school with a place available.
- No later than 14 January 2015 the LA will inform other LAs of places in County Durham Schools to be offered to their residents and on 18 February 2015 the LA will inform its secondary schools of the pupils to be offered places at their schools.

- On 1 March 2015, the LA will write to all parents in County Durham to whom the offer of a place can be made, notifying them of the offer of a place at:
 - (a) one of the preferences on the common application form; or
 - (b) the nearest appropriate and/or suitable school with places available
- The LA's letter will ask parents to confirm their acceptance of the place and inform them that if they are not satisfied with the offer of a place they have the right of appeal if they so wish including contact details for the LA (and those nominated Voluntary Aided and Foundation Schools and Academies where they could not be offered a place, so that they can if they wish lodge an appeal with the Governing Body). The letter will also give parents the opportunity of having their child's name placed on the waiting list for a place at the preferred school(s). The letter will also state, where relevant, why a place could not be offered at a higher ranked school.
- Parents will be sent a reminder letter 2 weeks after the offer date (1 March 2015) allowing a further 7 days to respond to the request that they confirm their acceptance of the place. This date is also the deadline for parents who wish to appeal against the offer of a place save for specified circumstances.
- On 28 March 2015 the LA will reallocate any places that may have become available since 1 March 2015 giving priority to parents as follows:
 - those who have not yet been offered any school place, for example applications which were received late for good reason (see paragraph 10 of this Scheme); then
 - those who have been offered a school place but not at any of the schools they nominated on the common application form and a place has become available at a school the parent nominated on the common application form; then
 - those who have been offered a school place but who ranked the school at which a place has now become available higher on the common application form than the school at which they were offered a place on 1 March 2014; and then
 - applications which were received late for no good reason.

6. Waiting Lists

- Parents may ask for their child's name to be kept on a waiting list to be offered places if they become available after 28 March 2015 at any school to which they have expressed a preference on the common application form. The waiting lists for all Community and Voluntary Controlled schools will be maintained by the LA (and by the School in the case of Aided and Foundation schools and Academies, where appropriate) and any places which become available will be offered strictly in accordance with the published admission criteria of the appropriate admission authority. Waiting lists will be maintained throughout the school year.

7. Late Applications

- Applications received after the closing date of 31 October 2014 will be considered and, as far as possible, will be offered a school place on 1 March 2015.
- Where an application has not been received by 1 March 2015, the LA will offer a place at the nearest school with places available.

- For applications received between 1 March 2015 and the end of the Summer term 2015, offer/refusal letters will be sent out within 14 days of the LA receiving the application form and a reminder issued after 7 days. Applications must be made directly to the LA who will make appropriate arrangements to issue a common application form which must be completed and returned to the LA. Any parent approaching a school direct must be referred to the LA. The LA will enter the details on to its central database, issue a copy of the application form to the relevant admission authority, and, after discussion and agreement with the relevant admission authority, offer a place at the school highest in the parent's order of rank that has a place available, or if this is not possible, at the nearest appropriate and/or suitable school that has a place available.

8. In-Year Admissions

- Applications received after 1 September 2014, and for places in year groups other than the normal year of entry to secondary school will be treated as In-Year admissions.
- The common In Year application form will request details from the current school and parent including reason for transfer and will specify where it must be returned. Governing Bodies of Aided and Foundation Schools and Academies, as the Admissions Authority must notify the relevant LA of any application made to them whether or not the parent lives in County Durham.
- For parents of children who live in another Local Authority area who have applied for an In Year place in a County Durham School – the Home Authority (LA) must contact the Maintaining Authority (Durham) to ascertain the availability of a place. The Home Authority (LA) would then confirm the offer of a place to the parent, with a copy of the offer to the Maintaining Authority (Durham).
- The LA will make an offer of a place in respect of completed In Year application forms for children living in County Durham. For parents of children who have applied for an In Year school place in another LA area – the Home Authority (Durham) must contact the Maintaining Authority (Other LA) to confirm the availability of a place. The Home Authority (Durham) would then confirm the offer of a place to the parent, with a copy of the offer to the Maintaining Authority (Other LA).
- Secondary In Year Admissions will be administered by the Pupil Casework Team, Children and Young People's Services, who will advise parents of availability of places, send out In Year application forms and confirm an offer of a place to parents (if resident in County Durham), school and, if appropriate, other Local Authority.
- The LA will inform parents who have not been offered a place into the school of their choice that they have the right to appeal if they wish including contact details for the LA (and those Voluntary Aided or Foundation schools or Academies where they could not be offered a place), so they can if they wish lodge an appeal. Appeals for Voluntary Aided and Foundation Schools or Academies (where appropriate) must be submitted to the relevant Governing Body.
- Parents may ask for their child's name to be kept on a waiting list, to be offered places if they become available at any school to which they have expressed a preference on the In Year Application Form. The waiting list for all Community and Voluntary Controlled schools

will be maintained by the LA (and by the School for Aided and, where appropriate, Foundation schools) and Academies and any places which become available will be offered strictly in accordance with published admission criteria of the appropriate admission authority. Waiting lists will be maintained throughout the school year.

- The In Year Admission protocols must be followed (ANNEX 3 and 4).

Timetable for Admissions to Secondary Schools - September 2014

By 13 September 2014	Information Booklet and Common Application Form issued to parents
31 October 2014	Closing date for return of forms to the LA from relevant infant/junior/primary schools
26 November 2014	LA sends copies of Application Forms to Voluntary Aided, Foundation Schools or Academies (where appropriate) and neighbouring LAs.
14 January 2015	Voluntary Aided, Foundation Schools or Academies (where appropriate) and Admission Authority for neighbouring LA schools provide the LA with ranked list of applicants. <i>(On-going exchange of information between admission authorities)</i>
28 January 2015	LA allocates places in accordance with paragraph 15 of the Schedule and informs other LAs of places in County Durham to be offered to their residents.
18 February 2015	LA informs its secondary schools of the pupils to be offered places at their schools.
1 March 2015	LA makes offer to parents.
15 March 2015	Deadline for parents to accept the offer of a school place.
28 March 2015	Any places that become available are offered to parents in priority order in accordance with paragraph 20 of this Scheme.

ANNEX 2

The Governing Bodies of the RCVA Schools listed below are Admission Authorities to which this scheme applies:

- St Bede's Catholic Comprehensive
- St Bede's RCVA Comprehensive
- St John's RCVA Aided Comprehensive
- St Leonard's RC Comprehensive

The Governing Body of the Foundation Schools listed below are the Admissions Authority to which this scheme applies:

- The Hermitage School
- Sunnyside Community College for Maths and Computing
- Greenfield School Community and Arts College
- Woodham Community Technology College

IN YEAR TRANSFERS BETWEEN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

The LA and Durham secondary schools have had an agreed protocol regarding In Year transfer of pupils since September 2002. This is to ensure best advice to parents, careful consideration of the issues and effective management of the process.

The protocol requires that a LA/Head Teacher/Parent Conference will be convened at the current school for such pupils by any party. This is to be held within 15 working days of the concern arising. The purpose is to provide the parent with Best Advice including consideration of what added value there would be in effecting a transfer and focusing on resolving underlying issues.

A leaflet for parents "Why Change Schools?", available from the Pupil Casework Team, Children and Young People's Services, County Hall, Durham, DH1 5UJ is designed to assist the parent in considering the best interests of the pupil and it sets out requirements about school attendance during the process of decision-making.

This Transfer Protocol does not apply to children with Statements of Special Educational Needs as the statutory SEN process and requirements apply.

In Year Secondary School Transfers - Funding

The LA arranges for the transfer of funding (AWPU), for the remainder of the year, from the previous school to the receiving school, on a pro rata basis.

Transfer between Local Secondary Schools - LA/School Protocol agreed 2002

1. Clarity regarding availability of places:
 - Head Teachers must always inform the LA about any potential student movement i.e. admissions or transfers both in and out-County. This will ensure the LA has accurate data regarding the availability of places.
 - The LA advises about admissions in accordance with admission criteria.
2. More detail to be requested by the LA on the Transfer form from the current school and parent e.g.
 - Behaviour
 - Exclusions
 - Attendance
 - PSPs
 - Other agency involvement (tick list)
 - Court order/Bail?
 - Courses currently being followed and exam boards if applicable
 - Assessment data.
3. Parents who request a place in a County Durham School as a result of a house move will receive notification of an offer of a place and confirmation of the offer will also be sent to the school.
4. Only the LA will issue transfer request forms to parents.
5. A “Why Change Schools?” information leaflet for parents has been produced by the LA and held in schools to be given to parents making enquiries. To include for example:
 - Issues re the best interest of child
 - Until transfer completed donor school responsible. The pupil remains on roll and should be attending school.
6. A LA/Head Teacher/Parent Conference will be convened at the current school for those pupils if requested by any party. To be held within 15 working days of concern arising. The purpose is to provide the parent with Best Advice including consideration of what added value there would be in effecting a transfer and focusing on resolving underlying issues.
7. In cases of continued difficulty the LA/schools will discuss whether or not any further action might be appropriate.

Over Subscription Criteria for Community and Voluntary Controlled Secondary Schools

When there are more requests for places than those available, the following criteria will be used to allocate places strictly in order of priority:

- Children in public care
- Medical Reasons
- Pupils with very exceptional medical factors directly related to school placement
- Family Links
 - Pupils who have a brother or sister already attending the school who is expected to be on roll at the school at the time of admission
- Applicants to their nearest School
 - Those children who have applied for a place at the nearest school to their home address measured by the shortest walking route
- All other applicants
- Tie-breaker
 - Where the school is oversubscribed within any of the above categories the following tiebreakers will be applied:
 - For those children who have applied for a place at the nearest school to their home address (category 4), priority will be given to those who would otherwise have to travel the furthest distance to the next nearest school.
 - For other children (category 5), priority will be given to those children who live nearest to the school applied for
- In the unlikely event of the school being oversubscribed within categories 1, 2 or 3 tiebreaker (b) will apply.

Footnote1: 'School' means any community and voluntary controlled or Foundation secondary school or a DFE maintained Academy in County Durham. Distance will be measured by the shortest walking route. Those parents who live in County Durham and have children in year 6 in primary schools maintained by Durham County Council will be told which school is nearest to their home address according to the official measuring system. The same information will be provided for any other applicant on request.

Sixth Forms – Community and Voluntary Controlled Secondary Schools

- Applications for Year 12
 - Some County Durham secondary schools offer sixth form of study for students. The majority of the sixth form students transfer from Year 11, but places are available for external students.
 - The entry requirements for sixth forms are largely dependent on the course of study that a student wishes to access. They are the same for internal and external students. Details of specific entry requirements and courses available may be obtained from the school. The availability of courses is dependent upon the number of applicants and the financial sustainability of the course and the Governing Body of the school determines this.

Entry requirements and oversubscription criteria, priority will be given to:

- Students who have attended the school in the previous academic year (during Year 11) and who satisfy the school's entry requirements* for the course available and then,
- All other students of the relevant age who satisfy the school's entry requirements* for the course available.

Where the school is oversubscribed within either of the above categories the

following will be applied, strictly in order of priority:

- Children in public care (Looked After)
- Students who will have a brother or sister at the secondary school during the coming academic year.
- All other students.
- Distance from home to school measured by the shortest walking route, with those living nearest the school receiving priority.

Applicants refused admission to a sixth form are entitled to an appeal to an independent appeals panel.

*The entry requirements are:

- To study 4 or more AS optional subjects in Year 12 the student must have achieved 5 or more GCSEs (or equivalent) at grade C or above (including Maths and/or English as appropriate) and achieve the individual specific subject or course academic entry requirements.
- To study fewer than 4 AS subjects and/or level 3 vocational courses the student must have achieved 5 or more GCSEs (or equivalent) at grade C or above and achieve the individual specific subject or course academic entry requirement
- To study a Level 2 vocational course the student must have achieved at least 4 GCSEs (or equivalent) at Grade D or above and meet the individual specific subject or course academic entry requirement.