

Co-ordination Admission Schemes for the normal year of entry

Attached are the proposed co-ordinated schemes for primary and secondary admissions at the normal point of entry. The changes to both schemes are minimal.

Introduction

Local Authorities (LAs) are required each year to draw up a scheme for co-ordinating the normal admissions round to primary and secondary schools. The aim of the scheme is to ensure that all parents receive a single offer of a school place on the national allocation date. If the prescribed date falls on a weekend or bank holiday, offers are sent on the next working day.

The scheme proposed by the County Council will be the subject of consultation with all maintained schools in the county and neighbouring local authorities.

Secondary scheme 2017/18

Key dates

Admissions information made available	September 2016
Closing date for applications	31 October 2016
Exchange of preference data between local authorities	28 November 2016
Admission authorities in East Sussex to advise LA of ranked order	6 January 2017
Finalise allocations	6 February 2017
Letters released to secondary schools	22 February 2017
Letters posted first class by secondary schools	1 March 2017
Closing date for appeals	14 April 2017
'On time' appeals heard	April - June 2017

Applications made in the main round

1. The co-ordinated scheme is based on all preferences expressed by parents being treated equally but where more than one school can be offered, the highest possible school named by the parent will be allocated. It will be for individual admission authorities to prioritise all preferences expressed for their schools against the published admissions criteria, which they have consulted on and determined. Individual academies can agree that the Authority ranks applicants on the academy's behalf. This would be a traded service. The only valid preferences are those stated on the LA common application form which is available online or in hard copy. Other admission authorities in East Sussex must not use any other application form. A separate, supplementary information form can only be used where additional information is required to determine admission within their published criteria. This form will be obtainable from and returnable to that admissions authority (voluntary aided (VA) schools). A supplementary information form on its own is not a valid application. Applicants living outside East Sussex must use the common application form that is supplied by their home local authority.

2. The process will begin with the information on admission arrangements and methods of application being made available early in September 2016.
3. The LA application form enables parents to name up to any three maintained schools stated in order of preference. The form should be completed and submitted to the LA by the closing date of 31 October 2016.
4. By 28 November 2016, East Sussex will exchange preference data with any local authority where an application has been received.
5. By 6 January 2017, East Sussex schools that are their own admissions authorities will consider their applications, apply their published admissions criteria and provide the LA with a list of those applicants ranked accordingly.
6. By 20 January 2017, other local authorities will advise East Sussex of decisions reached on applications for their schools from East Sussex residents. East Sussex will apply its published admissions criteria to those schools where it is the admissions authority and determine the outcome of each preference expressed.
7. By 6 February 2017, the LA will match the ranked lists against the parental preferences to ensure only one place is allocated per child. Qualifying late applications received up to 1 February will be included in this process.

Where a child is –

- Eligible for a place at only one school given on the application form, that school will be allocated
 - Eligible for two or three schools, a place will be allocated at the highest-ranking school
 - Not eligible for a place at any of the named schools and the child lives in East Sussex, a place will be allocated at the nearest school to the home with a space.
8. In the period 6 February to 17 February 2017, letters will be prepared. The LA where the child lives will be responsible for sending letters to parents.
 9. In the week commencing 20 February 2017 letters for children being allocated places will be released to East Sussex secondary schools for the schools to post on the allocation date. Details of offers will also be made available to East Sussex primary schools.
 10. Wednesday 1 March 2017 – allocation letters posted by first class mail by the allocated secondary school. Applicants who have applied online will receive email notification of the outcome of their applications. Where a preference is not being met, information will be enclosed with the letter explaining to parents how places have been allocated at their preferred school(s). The letter will also advise parents of the right of appeal.

Applications received after 31 October 2016 but by 1 February 2017

1. If an application form is received after 31 October 2016, it will still be passed to the relevant admissions authority with a note that it has been received after the closing date. It will be for the admissions authority to decide how it wishes to respond to the application. This will continue up until 1 February 2017.

2. If an application is received after 31 October 2016 but before 1 February 2017, together with proof of a change of address* since the closing date, or proof of another good reason why it was not possible for the family to apply on time, it will be treated as on time in respect of community and voluntary controlled schools. If there is no proof, or the reason is not considered valid by the LA, the application will be treated as late. There is no right of appeal against the decision as to whether the application is treated as on time or late.
3. Applicants whose forms are received between these dates will be sent a letter on 1 March 2017. For applications received after 2 February 2017, we will aim to send a decision letter within 20 school days.

Changes of preference

1. Parents may change their preferences at any stage up to the closing date of 31 October 2016. After 31 October 2016, we will not allow preferences to be changed without good reason. The LA will judge each case on its merits but will only usually accept a change of preference where there has been a significant change of circumstances (such as a house move*) thus making the original preferences no longer practical. Parents will be required to put their reasons for changing their preferences in writing, and in all cases, supporting evidence will be required. If the change of preference is agreed, a decision will be sent on 1 March 2017 provided the request was received by 1 February 2017. Such applicants will be advised that they have the right of appeal if the revised preference cannot be met.

**In the case of house moves, proof of ownership or tenancy on an East Sussex property (such as exchange of contracts or signed tenancy agreement of one year) is required if an address is to be used for the purpose of allocating a school place. If an applicant cannot provide evidence, the application cannot be accepted.*

2. There is no right of appeal where the LA does not accept the change of preference.

No application form received by 1 February 2017

No secondary transfer places will be allocated unless a completed application form has been received.

Applications received on or after 1 March 2017

1. Only preferences stated on the LA application will be valid. If the preference is for an 'own authority' school, the LA will pass details to the school for a decision. The school must then advise the LA within fourteen days as to whether a place can be allocated so the LA can formally advise the parent of the decision. Where the preference is for a community or voluntary controlled school, the LA will determine the outcome. If there are no places available at one of the preferred schools a place will be allocated at the nearest school with a place available (if the identified school is its own admissions authority the LA will ask the school whether a place can be allocated). We will aim to process late applications within twenty school days. Any refused preference will carry the right of appeal.
2. Where the preference is for a school in a neighbouring authority, details will be passed to that authority for a decision to be made. Any authority refusing an application should advise the LA of the decision so the LA can consider allocating an alternative school.

3. The Co-ordinated Scheme will end on 31st August each year. Applications received after this date will be processed by individual schools.

Appeals

1. Parents must be allowed at least twenty school days from the date of notification that their application was unsuccessful to prepare and submit their written appeal. The appeal must be against any refused preference, thus if a parent puts on the appeal form a school which did not feature as a preference on the original application form an appeal will not be arranged.
2. Parents submitting an appeal will be entitled to at least ten school days notice of the date of the appeal. Papers relevant to the appeal will be sent seven working days before the hearing. Appeals must be heard within forty school days of the deadline for lodging appeals. Appeals for late applications will be included with those being heard for the same admission round wherever possible. If this is not possible, they must be heard within thirty school days of the appeal being lodged.
3. The LA must be advised of the outcome of all appeals.

Waiting lists

1. The LA will operate waiting lists for community and voluntary controlled schools so that it is clear as to which child will be offered any place which becomes vacant. Such waiting lists will be operational after the closing date for appeals to be lodged. The waiting list must reflect the admissions criteria. The LA must be notified by admissions authorities of any places that are subsequently allocated from the waiting list. Until co-ordination ends, it remains for the LA to offer places to parents when places become available and are allocated from the waiting list whether the admissions authority is the LA or not.
2. Waiting lists will operate until the end of Term 2, 2017 for Year 7 admissions.

Primary scheme 2017/18

Key dates

Admissions information made available	September 2016
Closing date for applications	15 January 2017
Preferences for each school established	27 January 2017
Exchange of preference data between local authorities	10 February 2017
Admission authorities in East Sussex advise LA of ranked order	17 March 2017
Finalise allocations	31 March 2017
Letters released to primary schools	10 April 2017
Letters posted first class by primary schools	17 April 2017
Closing date for appeals	19 May 2017
Appeals heard	June/July

Applications made in the main round

1. The co-ordinated scheme is based on all preferences expressed by parents being treated equally but where more than one school can be offered, the highest possible school named by the parent will be allocated. It will be for individual admission authorities to prioritise all preferences expressed for their schools against the published admissions criteria, which they have consulted on and determined. Individual academies can agree that the Authority ranks applicants on the academy's behalf. This would be a traded service. The only valid preferences are those stated on the LA common application form which is available online or in hard copy. Other admission authorities in East Sussex must not use any other application form. A separate, supplementary information form can only be used where additional information is required to determine admission within their published criteria. This form will be obtainable from and returnable to that admissions authority (voluntary aided (VA) schools). A supplementary information form on its own is not a valid application. Applicants living outside East Sussex must use the common application form that is supplied by their home local authority.
2. The process will begin with the information on admission arrangements and methods of application being made available early in September 2016.
3. The LA application form enables parents to name up to any three maintained schools stated in order of preference. It should be completed and submitted to the LA by the closing date of 15 January 2017.
4. By 27 January 2017 East Sussex will exchange preference data with any local authority where an application has been received.
5. By 10 February 2017 East Sussex schools that are their own admission authorities will consider all applications for their school, apply their published admissions criteria and provide the LA with a list of those applicants ranked accordingly.
6. By 17 March 2017 other local authorities will advise East Sussex of decisions reached on applications for their schools from East Sussex residents. East Sussex will apply its

published admissions criteria to those schools where it is the admissions authority and determine the outcome of each preference expressed.

7. By 31 March 2017, the LA will match the ranked lists against the parental preferences to ensure only one place is allocated per child. Qualifying late applications received before 17 March will be included in this process.

Where a child is –

- Eligible for a place at only one school given on the application form that school will be allocated
 - Eligible for two or three schools, a place will be allocated at the highest-ranking school
 - Not eligible for a place at any of the named schools and the child lives in East Sussex, a place will be allocated at the nearest school to the home with a space.
8. In the period 1 April 2017 to 10 April 2017 letters will be prepared. The LA where the child lives will be responsible for sending letters to parents.
 9. On 10 April 2017 letters for children being allocated places will be released to East Sussex primary schools for the schools to post on the allocation date.
 10. 17 April 2017 – allocation letters posted by first class mail by the allocated primary school. Applicants who applied on line will receive email notification of the outcome of their applications. Where a preference is not being met, information will be enclosed with the letter explaining how places have been allocated at their preferred school(s). The letter will also advise parents of the right of appeal.

Applications received after 15 January 2017 but by 31 March 2017

1. If an application form is received after 15 January 2017, it will still be passed to the relevant admissions authority with a note that it has been received after that date. It will be for the admissions authority to decide how it wishes to respond to the application. This will continue up until 31 March 2017.
2. If an application is received after 15 January 2017 but before 17 March 2017, together with proof of a change of address* since the closing date, or proof of another good reason why it was not possible for the family to apply on time, it will be treated as on time in respect of community and voluntary controlled schools. If there is no proof, or the reason is not considered valid by the LA, the application will be treated as late. There is no right of appeal against the decision as to whether the application is treated as on time or late.
3. Applicants whose forms are received between these dates will be sent a letter on 17 April 2017. For applications received after 31 March 2017, we will aim to send a decision letter within 20 school days.

Changes of preference

1. Parents may change their preferences at any stage up to the closing date of 15 January 2017. After 15 January 2017, we will not allow preferences to be changed without an exceptional reason. The LA will judge each case on its merits but will only usually accept a change of preference where there has been a significant change of circumstances (such as a house move*) thus making the original preferences no longer practical. Parents will be required to put their reasons for changing their preferences in

writing, and in all cases, supporting evidence will be required. . If the change of preference is agreed, a decision will be sent on 17 April 2017 provided the request was received by 31 March 2017. Such applicants will be advised that they have the right of appeal if the revised preference cannot be met.

**In the case of house moves, proof of ownership or tenancy on an East Sussex property (such as exchange of contracts or signed tenancy agreement of one year) is required if an address is to be used for the purpose of allocating a school place. If an applicant cannot provide evidence, the application cannot be accepted.*

2. There is no right of appeal where the LA does not accept the change of preference.

No application form received

1. No Reception or junior transfer places will be allocated unless a completed application form has been received.

Applications received on or after 31 March 2017

1. Only preferences stated on the LA application will be valid. If the preference is for an 'own authority' school, the LA will pass details to the school for a decision. The school must then advise the LA within fourteen days as to whether a place can be allocated so the LA can formally advise the parent of the decision. Where the preference is for a community or voluntary controlled school, the LA will determine the outcome. If there are no places available at one of the preferred schools a place will be allocated at the nearest school with a place available (if the identified school is its own admission authority the LA will ask the school whether a place can be allocated). We will aim to process late applications within twenty school days. Any refused preference will carry the right of appeal.
2. Where the preference is for a school in a neighbouring authority, the details will be passed to that authority for a decision to be made. Any authority refusing an application should advise the LA of the decision so the LA can consider allocating an alternative school.
3. The Co-ordinated Scheme will end on 31 August each year. Applications received after this date will be processed by individual schools.

Appeals

1. Parents must be allowed at least twenty school days from the date of notification that their application was unsuccessful to prepare and submit their written appeal. The appeal must be against any refused preference, thus if a parent puts on the appeal form a school which did not feature as a preference on the original application form an appeal hearing will not be arranged.
2. Parents submitting an appeal will be entitled to at least ten school days notice of the date of the appeal. Papers relevant to the appeal will be sent seven working days before the hearing. Appeals must be heard within forty school days of the deadline for lodging appeals. Appeals for late applications will be included with those being heard for the same admission round wherever possible. If this is not possible, they must be heard within thirty school days of the appeal being lodged.
3. The LA must be advised of the outcome of all appeals to other admission authorities.

Waiting lists

1. The LA will operate waiting lists for all community and voluntary controlled primary, infant and junior schools so that it is clear which child will be offered any place which becomes vacant. Such waiting lists will be operational after the closing date for appeals to be lodged. The waiting list must reflect the admissions criteria. The LA must be notified by admissions authorities of any places that are subsequently allocated from the waiting list. Until co-ordination ends, it remains for the LA to offer places to parents when places become available and are allocated from the waiting list whether the admissions authority is the LA or not.

Waiting lists will operate until the end of Term 2, 2017.

Admission of summer born children to Reception classes.

Parents of summer born children who are due to start in reception can request that their child starts on a part-time basis or joins Reception later during the school year.

However, parents can also request that their child starts in Reception in the September following their fifth birthday (i.e. when they would normally be starting Year 1). Parents making such a request should do so during the normal admission round.

The Authority will consider these requests on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration the child's academic, social and emotional development together with the Headteacher and parent's views. If the request is refused but the child is offered a place in the school (but not the preferred year group) the parent would not have the right of appeal.

If the request is agreed, parents will need to be clear that this does not mean the child will remain in the year below their chronological age group for all of their school career, particularly on transfer to secondary school