
2017/2018 SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

**Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor Cyndi Hughes,
Children and Young People Portfolio**

**Responsible Director – Suzanne Joyner,
Director of Children and Adults Services**

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek Members' approval for the Local Authority's admission arrangements for the 2017/2018 academic year for all maintained schools in the Borough.

Summary

2. In line with the School Admissions Code, an Admission Authority is required to annually determine the admission arrangements used to allocate places for schools for which it is the admission authority **Appendix 1**.
3. Once approved, there is a statutory duty on the Local Authority to forward a Co-ordinated Admission Schemes for both primary and secondary schools for the 2017/2018 academic year **Appendix 2** and must inform the Secretary of State by 28 February 2016.

Recommendation

4. It is recommended that Members:-
 - (a) consider and determine them as final Darlington Local Authority's admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools; and
 - (b) adopt the Co-ordinated Admission Schemes for both primary and secondary applications for the 2017/18 academic year.

Reasons

5. The recommendation is supported by the following reasons :-
 - (a) The Authority is under a statutory duty to determine admission arrangements for primary school for which it is the admission authority for the academic year 2017/2018.

- (b) If the co-ordinated scheme is not approved and returned to the DfE by the 28 February 2016 the Secretary of State may impose a scheme on the Authority.

Suzanne Joyner
Director of Children and Adults Services

Background Papers

School Admissions Code – issued December 2014

Melanie Stainthorpe: Extension 5908

S17 Crime and Disorder	Not relevant to this report
Health and Well Being	Offering a school place to meet parental preference and close to a child's address enhances safeguarding and provides security for the child.
Sustainability	Darlington's communities are enhanced through the provision of school places to meet locality needs.
Diversity	There are a range of schools in Darlington with Governance ranging from Community Schools to Voluntary Aided, Foundation and an Academy. Parents have a wide choice of schools to match the diverse needs of a pluralistic community.
Wards Affected	The admissions criteria affects children living in all wards across Darlington
Groups Affected	Parents, Pupils, Schools, Neighbouring Authorities, other Admission Authorities.
Budget and Policy Framework	There are no budget implications. This paper proposes an admissions policy to be adopted for the 2017-18 academic year.
Key Decision	This is a key decision as it affects more than one ward in Darlington.
Urgent Decision	For the purposes of call in this matter does not represent an urgent decision.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	Provision of an Admissions Policy ensures sufficient places are available in each community so that children can attend a school of their choice.
Efficiency	The Admissions Policy and management of school places ensures that the Local Authority complies with statutory guidance on Surplus Places. This enables parents to have a choice in a school place but ensures resources are not wasted and school budgets are not overcommitted.

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

6. The Local Authority acts as a 'clearing house' for all applications for a place at a school in Darlington at the normal point of entry (September). This is part of a co-ordinated scheme where the Local Authority is the admissions authority for community and voluntary controlled schools and acts on behalf of the admission authority of voluntary aided schools, foundation and Academies in the Borough. Co-ordination also includes the offering of places to children who are resident in Darlington but have stated a preference for a school in another LA area. The Authority will make a single offer of a school place each academic year, to parents who have expressed a preference for their child to be admitted to a maintained school within Darlington. Although all applications will be considered on an equal weighting basis, should a child be eligible for a place at more than one school, parents/carers are requested to rank their order of preference on the 'Primary/Secondary School Application Form 2017/18' in order that only one offer will be made. The relevant admissions oversubscription criteria will be applied to all schools that are oversubscribed.
7. The equal preference system operates to give parents choice in their selection of schools, allocating their highest ranked preference wherever possible.
8. Attached at Appendix 2 is the Co-ordinated Admission Scheme for both primary and secondary school applications.
9. As in the previous year the admissions oversubscription criteria for community and voluntary controlled primary schools will be:
 - (a) Looked After Children
 - (b) Medical Reasons
 - (c) Family Links
 - (d) Rural
 - (e) Distance

Full details of the admission arrangements are provided in Appendix 1.
10. Where a child has undergone statutory assessment and an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC) has been issued, the plan will name the school the child should attend. All schools are obliged to admit the child in accordance with the plan.
11. Once approved, there is a statutory duty on the Local Authority to forward the Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme to the Department for Education (DfE) before 28 February 2016. If this does not happen the Secretary of State may impose a scheme on the Authority.