

Darlington Local Authority**Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for Schools in Darlington****Introduction**

1. This scheme is made by Darlington Local Authority under The School Admissions (Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2008 and applied to all schools in the Darlington area.
2. The co-ordinated scheme is for the academic year 2011/12 and shall apply to every school in Darlington Authority area (except Beaumont Hill special school) and will take effect from September 2011.
3. The scheme is determined in accordance with the provisions set out in Schedule 1 and processed in accordance with the timetable set out in Schedule 2.

Interpretation

4. In this scheme –

“the LA” means Darlington Borough Council acting in their capacity as a local authority;

“the LA area” means the area in respect of which the LA are the local authority;

“primary education” has the same meaning as in section 2(1) of the Education Act 1996;

“primary school” has the same meaning as in section 5(1) of the Education Act 1996;

“secondary education” has the same meaning as in section 2(2) of the Education Act 1996;

“secondary school” has the same meaning as in section 5(2) of the Education Act 1996;

“school” means a community, foundation or voluntary school (but not a special school) which is maintained by the LA;

“admission authority” in relation to a community or voluntary controlled school means the LA and, in relation to a Foundation, Academy or VA school means the governing body of that school;

“the specified year” means the school year beginning at or about the beginning of September 2011;

“admission arrangements” means the arrangements for a particular school or schools which govern the procedures and decision making for the purposes of admitting pupils to the school;

“in-year admission” means any application for a place in the first year of primary or secondary education that is received after 1 September 2011;

“eligible for a place” means that a child has been placed on a school’s ranked list at such a point which falls within the school’s published admission number;

“nearest appropriate school” is defined as a school closest to the home address that has places available”.

Schedule 1

PART I - THE SCHEME

1. There will be 3 standard application forms supplied by the Local Authority for parents living in the Darlington area who wish to express a preference(s) for a school in the Authority area or to a school(s) in another LA area using the appropriate form. The forms will be known locally as the Secondary School Admission Form (SSA), the Primary School Admission Form (PSA) and the In-Year Admission Form (IYAF)
 2. The SSA will be used for the purpose of admitting pupils into the first year of secondary education in the specified year.
 3. The PSA will be used for the purpose of admitting pupils into the first year of primary education in the specified year.
 4. The IYAF will be used for the purpose of admitting pupils into any year group of statutory education in the specified year after September of the normal year of entry.
 5. The forms 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(ren):
 - a. to be admitted to a maintained school within the LA area (including Voluntary Aided, Foundation and St Aidan's Church of England Academy);
 - b. to be admitted to a school located in another LA's area (including VA, Foundation schools and Academies).
 6. The forms will invite the parent to express up to three preferences (five for primary at the normal point of entry) and give their reasons for each preference by completing the form and explain that the parent will receive no more than one offer of a school place and that:
 - a. all preferences expressed will be considered on an equal weighting basis but where a child is eligible for more than one place it will be the highest ranked school for which they are eligible that they will be offered by the LA as the admissions authority, or on behalf of another LA, and admission authority of a VA, Foundation school and St Aidan's Church of England Academy;
 - b. if a place cannot be offered at a nominated school, then the parent will be offered a place at the nearest alternative school that has places available.
 - c. at the normal point specify the closing date and where it must be returned, in accordance with paragraph 12.
 7. The LA will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to issue a SSA/PSA to every child living in the Darlington area who is due to transfer to secondary/primary education in September 2011 and the SSA/PSA is accompanied by a written explanation of the co-ordinated admissions scheme.
 8. The LA will ensure that a supplementary form will be available from the LA for parents to complete who express a preference for a VA school to enable them to provide relevant additional information.
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9. All preferences expressed on the forms are valid applications. The governing body of a VA school can require parents who wish to nominate, or have nominated, their school on the SSA/PSA, to provide additional information on a supplementary form only where the additional information is required for the governing body to apply their oversubscription criteria to the application. Where a supplementary form is required it must be returned to the LA, along with the SSA/PSA.

10. Where a school receives a form in error it should inform the maintaining LA, whether the parent lives in that area or not, so that the home LA can ensure that a form is received with preferences and ranking.

11. Where a school receives a supplementary form from a Darlington resident it will not be regarded as a valid application unless the parent has also completed the appropriate form and the school is nominated on it. Where supplementary forms are received directly by a VA school, the school must inform the LA immediately so it can verify whether the appropriate form has been received from the parent and, if not, contact the parent and ask them to complete a form. Under the requirements of the scheme, parents will not be under any obligation to complete an individual school's supplementary form where this is not strictly required for the governing body to apply their oversubscription criteria.

Processing of SSA/PSAs

12. The closing date for secondary applications is 31st October 2010 and primary applications 15th January 2011. Completed SSA/PSAs are to be returned to the LA.

13. SSAs received after the closing date but before Friday 14th January 2011 will be considered by the Authority if there are exceptional/individual circumstances which prevented the submission of the SSA by the stated deadline. The same will apply for PSAs but consideration will be given up to and including Friday 28th January 2011. Consideration will be given to families who have moved into the area, single parents who have been ill for some time or for parents who have been dealing with the death of a close relative. All must provide clear evidence for the LA to make a decision to accept their application. All SSA/PSAs will be considered on an individual basis, if the reason given is unacceptable then the application will be considered after the applications received by the deadline and the decision of the LA will be final. This allows for co-ordination between other LA's and admission authorities.

14. For secondary school applications by 19th November 2010 where parents have nominated a school outside the LA area, the LA will notify the relevant authority(s).

15. For primary school applications by 4th February 2011 where parents have nominated a school outside the LA area, the LA will notify the relevant authority(s).

16. For secondary school applications by 26th November 2010 the LA will notify the admission authority for each of the schools of every nomination that has been made for that school, including all relevant details and any supplementary forms received by this date, which schools require in order to apply their oversubscription criteria.

17. For primary school applications by 11th February 2011 the LA will notify the admission authority for each of the schools of every nomination that has been made for that school, including all relevant details and any supplementary forms received by this date, which schools require in order to apply their oversubscription criteria.

Determining offers in response to the SSA/PSA

18. The LA will act as a clearing house for the allocation of places by the relevant admission authorities in response to the SSA/PSAs. The LA will only make any decision with respect to the offer or refusal of a place in response to any preference expressed on the SSA/PSA where it is acting in its separate capacity as an admission authority or an applicant is not eligible for a place at any school that the parent has nominated.

19. By 7th January 2011 VA, Foundation, Academies and other LA's will have considered all applications for their secondary schools. They will then provide the LA with a list of those applicants ranked according to the school's oversubscription criteria who may potentially be offered a place at the school up to the PAN. Applicants that are refused also need to be listed in order of oversubscription criteria. The LA will compare the lists from all admission authorities against the schools nominated on the SSA. Where the child is eligible for a place at only one of the nominated schools that school will be provisionally allocated to the child.

20. By 18th March 2011 VA, VC, Foundation and other LA's will have considered all applications for their primary schools. They will then provide the LA with a list of those applicants ranked according to the school's oversubscription criteria who may potentially be offered a place at the school up to the PAN. Applicants that are refused also need to be listed in order of oversubscription criteria. The LA will compare the lists from all admission authorities against the schools nominated on the PSA. Where the child is eligible for a place at only one of the nominated schools that school will be provisionally allocated to the child.

21. Where a child is eligible for a place at more than one school, then a place will be provisionally offered at the highest ranked school for which they are eligible.

22. Where the child is not eligible for a place at any of the nominated schools, the child will be provisionally allocated a place at the nearest appropriate school with a vacancy.

23. The LA will consult with all relevant admission authorities until the allocation of places is resolved.

24. By 11th February 2011 the LA will negotiate with other LA's to finalise offer of places and by 18th February 2011 the LA will inform its secondary schools of the pupils to be offered places at their schools.

25. By 25th March 2011 the LA will negotiate with other LA's to finalise offer of places and by 31st March 2011 the LA will inform its primary schools of the pupils to be offered places at their schools.

26. Where no SSA/PSA was received, an offer of a place will be made at the nearest appropriate school with vacancies, to the permanent home address of the child.

27. On 1st March 2011 for secondary places and on 18th April 2011 for primary places, parents will be notified that they are being offered a place at an allocated school. The letter will give the following information:

- a. the name of the school at which a place is offered whether it be an offer by the LA or on behalf of another admission authority;
- b. the reasons why the child is not being offered a place at each of the other schools nominated on the SSA/PSA;

- c. information about their statutory right of appeal against the decision to refuse places at the other nominated schools;
- d. contact details for the school and LA (and those nominated VC, Foundation, VA or Academy schools where they were not offered a place, so that they can lodge an appeal with the governing body);
- e. where the child has been refused a place at a nominated Foundation, VA, VC or Academy school, an invitation for the child's name to be added to a waiting list. The LA will operate a waiting list until the end of December 2010, to fill places that may become available in the first term of the school year. For Community and Voluntary Controlled schools for which the LA is the admissions authority, this is only applicable to pupil's entering school at Reception or Year 7.
- f. what to do if the place offered is in another LA;
- g. what to do if an offer was not made at the preferred school which was within another LA, who to contact and the timescale in which to do so.

28. Parents will have 14 working days to respond to the offer letter to accept the school place offered. The LA will then look to withdraw the offer.

PART II - LATE APPLICATIONS

- a) SSAs received after Friday 31st October 2010 (late applications) will be considered only in exceptional circumstances, e.g. families who have moved into the area after the closing date (refer to 13). These late applications will be considered up to and including Friday 14th January 2011.
- b) PSAs received after Saturday 15th January 2011 (late applications) will be considered only in exceptional circumstances, e.g. families who have moved into the area after the closing date (refer to 13). These late applications will be considered up to and including Friday 28th January 2011.
- c) In any other circumstances SSA/PSAs received after the closing date (late applications) will be held on a waiting list for consideration once the process has been applied to those applications who had submitted forms by the required deadline.

PART III - WAITING LISTS

- a) A child's position on a waiting list(s) will be determined by the oversubscription criteria for the relevant admission authority. If a parent/carer wishes to add their child's name to a waiting list for a school that they were refused a place at, then they must complete the 'options' form that will be attached to their offer/refusal letter.
- b) Vacancies often arise at short notice and those on the waiting list should be prepared to take up a place as soon as it occurs. Places will not be held for later consideration. The LA will maintain waiting lists for schools for Reception and Year 7 pupils only, until the end of December 2011. Thereafter normal transfer/in-year admission arrangements will operate, though VA schools may continue to operate a waiting list.
- c) If a parent/carer did not initially apply for a school but now wish to do so then you must apply. Parent/carers must complete the section on the 'options' form indicating their wish to apply for an alternative school place. An offer or refusal letter will then be sent along with a supplementary form if applicable. Names can be then be added to a waiting list using the oversubscription criteria.

PART III – IN-YEAR ADMISSIONS

Applications received after 1st September 2011 and for places in year groups other than the normal year of entry will be treated as in-year admissions.

Parents who are new to the Authority will be directed to the LA who in turn will send out an IYAF for completion with a required response within 5 working days to the LA. Parents can then be contacted again if no IYAF is returned and EWS informed.

Where a parent is wishing to transfer their child to another school in Darlington they can obtain an IYAF from their current school, where a meeting must take place before the IYAF is forwarded to the LA for processing.

Processing of In-Year Admission Forms

All completed IYAFs are to be returned to the LA.

On receipt of the IYAF the LA will ascertain the availability of places if a stated preference is for a school maintained by another admission authority, in Darlington or in another LA area.

Processing of IYAFS from date of receipt will normally take 2 days.

Determining offers in response to the IYAF

Where an applicant has been deemed to be 'hard to place' then the application, along with a referral form, will be forwarded to the Pupil Placement Panel for consideration under the Fair Access Protocol.

For all other applications the relevant admissions criterion will be applied if there are more applicants than available places.

The LA will act as a clearing house for the allocation of places by the relevant admission authorities in response to the IYAFs. The LA will only make any decision with respect to the offer or refusal of a place in response to any preference expressed on the IYAF where it is acting in its separate capacity as an admission authority or an applicant is not eligible for a place at any school that the parent has expressed a preference for.

Where a child is eligible for a place at more than one school, then a place will be provisionally offered at the highest ranked school for which they are eligible.

Where the child is not eligible for a place at any of the preferred schools, the child will be provisionally offered a place at the nearest appropriate school with a vacancy.

The offer/refusal letter will be issued by the home LA on behalf of another admission authority. The letter will give the following information:

- a. the name of the school at which a place is provisionally being offered whether it be an offer by the LA or on behalf of another admission authority;
- b. a date and time for an appointment at the school;

- c. the reasons why the child is not being offered a place at each of the other schools nominated on the IYAF;
- d. information about their statutory right of appeal against the decision to refuse places at the other nominated schools;
- e. contact details for the school and LA (and those nominated Foundation, VA or the Academy school where they were not offered a place, so that they can lodge an appeal with the governing body);
- f. what to do if the place offered is in another LA area;
- g. what to do if an offer was not made at the preferred school which was within another LA and who to contact.

Parents will have seven working days to respond to the offer letter to accept the school place offered. The LA will then look to withdraw the offer.

The LA does not operate waiting lists for any community or voluntary controlled schools. Schools, which are their own admission authority, may do so. Parents should contact the school direct. No offers will be made off a waiting list by a school.

PART I – IN-YEAR TRANSFERS

If a child already attends a Darlington mainstream school and wishes to transfer to another, they must in the first instance, discuss the transfer with the current school that the pupil attends. If they then still wish for the transfer to proceed, PART C of an in-year transfer request form should be completed by the school and issued to the parent who will then forward to the LA. Should there be a vacancy in an alternative school requested by the parent, an appointment will be arranged at the school the child wishes to transfer to and the with the transfer request form will be forwarded. If the transfer is still appropriate a start date will be agreed.

Should the school that the child wishes to transfer to have reached or exceeded its admission limit, then the parent has the right to appeal against the decision to refuse a place at the school. All in-year transfer forms must be sent to the LA including those for children wishing to transfer to an oversubscribed VA, Foundation or Academy school for community and voluntary aided schools.

The LA will write to parents informing them of their right to appeal and if parents wish to proceed, issue appeal papers.

The Education Act 1996 permits admission authorities to defer admission of a child to the start of a school term if there is no need for an immediate move, in order to minimise disruption to their own child and other children's education.

For VA, Foundation and St Aidan's Church of England Academy the transfer request form will be forwarded direct to the school, which must then inform parents of their right to appeal.

Distance Tie Breaker

In the event of a tie-break in any oversubscription criteria, distance will be the deciding factor, which may involve an officer walking the route using a pedometer. Where a single place remains and the next child to be offered is a twin or other multiple birth, then the LA will use its discretion in deciding whether to offer over the PAN.

SCHEDULE 2

Timetable of Secondary co-ordinated scheme

Consultation with Governing Bodies on admissions policy 2011/2012	Autumn Term 2009
Consultation with Admission Forum	By February 2010
Consult with other admission authorities and neighbouring LA's	By 1st March 2010
Results of consultation reported to members and policy agreed. Send scheme to DCSF	By 15th April 2010
Secondary Guide for Parents 2011/12 issued	w/c 6th September 2010
Parent open days/evenings for Secondary Schools	20th Sept 2010 to 1st Oct 2010
SSA's to be returned to the LA by	Sunday 31st October 2010
Exchange of forms to other LA's	By 19th November 2010
Inform Carmel school, Hurworth school and St Aidan's Academy of all applications made and forward supplementary forms	By 26th November 2010
Darlington admission authority schools to send LA their ranked list of offers	By 7th January 2011
Negotiation with other LA's to finalise offer of places	By 11th February 2011
Inform schools of the final offer list including children offered places residing other LA's	By 18th February 2011
Offer Letters from this LA including offers on behalf of admission authority schools in Darlington and other LA's	1st March 2011
Admission Appeals (if necessary)	May/June 2011

Timetable of Primary co-ordinated scheme

Consultation with Governing Bodies on admissions policy 2011/12	Autumn Term 2009
Consultation with Admission Forum	By February 2010
Consult with other admission authorities and neighbouring LA's	By 1st March 2010
Results of consultation reported to members and policy agreed. Send scheme to DCSF	By 15th April 2010
Primary brochures 2011/12 issued	w/c 6th September 2010
PSA's to be returned to this LA by	15th January 2011
Exchange of forms to other LA's	By 4th February 2011
Inform VA primary schools of all applications made and forward supplementary forms	By 11th February 2011
Primary admission authority schools to send this LA their ranked list of offers	By 18th March 2011
Negotiation with other LA's to finalise offer of places	By 25th March 2011
Inform schools of the final offer list including children offered places residing other LA's	By 31st March 2011
Offer Letters from this LA including on behalf of VA schools in Darlington and offers on behalf of other LA's	Monday 18th April 2011
Admission Appeals (if necessary)	June/July 2011

SECONDARY SCHOOLS 2011/12

School	Age Range	Current Admission Number	Proposed Admission Number
Branksome Comprehensive	11-16	180	180
Carmel RC College	11-16	180	180
Haughton Community School	11-16	180	180
Hummersknott School & Language College	11-16	240	240
Hurworth School, Maths & Computing College	11-16	127	127
Longfield Comprehensive	11-16	180	180
St Aidan's Church of England Academy	11-16	140	140

Darlington Local Authority Admissions Oversubscription Criteria - Secondary Education

(i) Looked After Children

A "looked after" child is a child who is in the care of Darlington local authority or provided with accommodation by that Authority.

(ii) Medical Reasons

Pupils with very exceptional medical factors directly related to school placement. Applications under this criterion should be supported by written evidence from a doctor (see explanation).

(iii) Family Links

Pupils who have a brother or sister already attending the school and who are expected to be on roll at that school at the time of admission (see explanation).

(iv) Associated Transport

Pupils who live in an area from which the Authority provides designated transport to the preferred school in order to limit travel costs (see transport section for designated areas).

(v) Distance

Pupil's who live nearest the preferred school measured from the front door of the home address (including flats) to the main school gate, by the shortest walking route judged to be safe (lighting at regular intervals and paved/tarmaced). This will be based on the child's permanent home address. (To remain consistent the LA uses a Geographical Information System to measure all distances).

Tie Break

In the event of a tie-break in any oversubscription criteria, distance will be the deciding factor, which may involve an officer walking the route using a pedometer.

Multiple Births

Where a single place remains and the next child to be offered is a twin or other multiple birth, then the LA will use its discretion in deciding whether to offer over the PAN.

Medical Criterion

If a parent states a preference for a school and indicates their reason for doing so is 'medical', then they will be required to send a supporting letter from a professional practitioner. The supporting evidence should set out the particular reasons why the school in question is the most suitable school and the difficulties it would cause if their child had to travel to another school. The Authority reserves the right to make contact with the District Medical Officer for independent information regarding the child's condition. The LA may also seek advice from other qualified professionals, e.g. Psychologists or other specialists where necessary.

Family Links

Children have a family link if:

- They are half brother or full brother or sister.
- They are adoptive brother or sister.
- Their carers are co-habiting and children live together in the same household.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS 2011/12

School	Age Range	Admission Number	Proposed Admission Number
Abbey Infant*	4-7	90	90
Abbey Junior*	7-11	90	90
Alderman Leach Primary	4-11	60	60
Bishopton Redmarshall CE (controlled) Primary	4-11	15	15
Cockerton CE VA Primary	4-11	30	30
Corporation Road Primary	4-11	45	45
Dodmire School	4-11	75	75
Firth Moor Primary	4-11	45	45
Gurney Pease Primary	4-11	30	30
Harrowgate Hill Primary	4-11	75	90
Heathfield Primary	4-11	60	60
Heighington CE Primary	4-11	40	40
High Coniscliffe CE (controlled) Primary	4-11	15	15
Holy Family RC VA Primary	4-11	30	30
Hurworth Primary	4-11	30	30
Mount Pleasant Primary	4-11	30	30
Mowden Infant*	4-7	60	60
Mowden Junior*	7-11	62	62
North Road Primary	4-11	60	60
Red Hall Primary	4-11	30	30
Reid Street Primary	4-11	60	60
Skerne Park Primary	4-11	45	45
Springfield Primary	4-11	30	30
St Augustines' RC VA Primary	4-11	30	30
St Bede's RC VA Primary	4-11	30	30
St George's Primary	4-11	45	45
St John's CE (Aided) Primary	4-11	30	30
St Teresa's RC VA Primary	4-11	40	40
Whinfield Primary	4-11	90	90

*Associated schools

Darlington Local Authority Admissions Oversubscription Criteria - Primary Education

(i) Looked After Children

A “looked after” child is a child who is in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by that Authority in accordance with Section 22 of the Children’s Act 1989(b)

(ii) Medical Reasons

Children with very exceptional medical factors directly related to the school placement. Applications under this criterion should be supported by written evidence from a doctor (see explanation).

(iii) Family Links

Either (a) Children who have a brother or sister already attending the preferred school and who are expected to be on the roll at the time of admission;
Or (b) In the case of associated schools a family link would exist if a brother or sister would be expected to be on roll of either school at the time of admission (see family links explanation)

(iv) Associated Schools

Pupils who are transferring from a Darlington Infant to a Junior school will be given priority over pupils from other schools.

(v) Distance

Children who live nearest the preferred school measured from the front door of the home address (including flats) to the main school gate, by the shortest walking route judged to be safe (lighting at regular intervals & paved/tarmac). This will be based on the permanent home address of the child. (To remain consistent the LA uses a Geographical Information System to measure all distances).

Tie Break

In the event of a tie-break in any oversubscription criteria, distance will be the deciding factor, which may involve an officer walking the route using a pedometer.

Multiple Births

For multiple births where only 1 place remains, then through consultation with the parent/carers, the place will be offered to the chosen child.

Medical Criterion

If a parent states a preference for a school and indicates their reason for doing so is ‘medical’, then they will be required to send a supporting letter from a professional practitioner. The supporting evidence should set out the particular reasons why the school in question is the most suitable school and the difficulties it would cause if their child had to travel to another school. The Authority reserves the right to make contact with the District Medical Officer for independent information regarding the child’s condition. The LA may also seek advice from other qualified professionals, e.g. Psychologists or other specialists where necessary.

Family Links

Children have a family link if:

- They are half brother or full brother or sister.

- They are adoptive brother or sister.
- Their parents are co-habiting and children live together in the same household.

The Governing Bodies, which are Admission Authorities for the purposes of this scheme, are:

Cockerton CofE Primary
Holy Family RC Primary
St Augustine's RC Primary
St Bede's RC Primary
St George's CE Primary
St John's CE Primary
St Teresa's RC Primary
Carmel RC College
Hurworth School Maths & Computing College
St Aidans' Church of England Academy