

Darlington Local Authority

Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for Infant, Junior and Primary Schools in Darlington

Introduction

1. This scheme is made by Darlington Local Authority under the Education (Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (Primary) (England) Regulations 2002 and applied to all maintained primary schools in the Darlington area.
2. The proposed co-ordinated scheme below is for the academic year 2010/11 it takes into account changes introduced in the Schools Admissions Code of Practice in February 2009 and shall apply to every primary school in Darlington Authority area (except Beaumont Hill special school) and will take effect from September 2010.

Interpretation

In this scheme –

“the LA” means Darlington Borough Council acting in their capacity as 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 education” has the same meaning as in section 2(2) of the Education Act 1996;

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

“primary 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;

“foundation schools” means such of the schools as are foundation schools;

“VA schools” means such of the schools as are voluntary-aided schools;

“admission authority” in relation to a community or voluntary controlled school means the LA and, in relation to a foundation 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 2010;

“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 education that is received after 1 September 2010; and

“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.

The scheme

1. 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.
2. Subject to paragraph 6, the scheme shall apply to every infant and primary school in the LA area (except special schools) and shall take effect from September 2010.

SCHEDULE 1**PART I - THE SCHEME**

1. There will be a standard form known as the Primary School Admission Form 2010/11 (PSA) supplied by Darlington LA.
2. The PSA will be used for the purpose of admitting pupils into the first year of primary education in the specified year in Darlington. There will be a separate PSA for children applying for a place at a junior school in Darlington.
3. The PSA 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 wishing to express a preference for their child to be admitted to a school within Darlington LA area (including VA and foundation schools) and other LAs.
4. The PSA will invite parents to express up to 5 preferences by completing the form and explain that the parent will receive no more than one offer of a school place in Darlington Borough from Darlington Local Authority and that:
 - (i) 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. Places will be offered up to the admission number. The single offer will be made by the LA as the admissions authority or on behalf of the admission authority of a VA school. (Appendix 1 lists those governing bodies who are the Admission Authority for schools to which this scheme applies).
 - (ii) if a place cannot be offered at a nominated school, then the parent/carer will be offered a place at the nearest school to the parental address that has available places.
 - (iii) specify the closing date and where it must be returned, in accordance with paragraph 8. Governing Bodies of Aided Schools, 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 Darlington.
5. The LA will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that the PSA is available on request from any Nursery, Infant or Primary School or from the LA and that the PSA is accompanied by a written explanation of the co-ordinated admissions scheme.
6. The LA will take all reasonable steps to ensure that every parent resident in the LA area who has a child whose date of birth falls between 1st September 2005 and 31st August 2006, receives a copy

of the PSA (and a written explanation).

7. Children whose date of birth falls between 1st September 2002 and 31st August 2003 and attend a Darlington Infant School will be sent a PSA to complete for a Yr3 place at a Junior school. PSAs will be available on request for any other child(ren) wishing to apply for a Yr3 place at a junior school.
8. All preferences expressed on the PSA are valid applications. The governing body of a Foundation or VA school can require parents who wish to nominate, or have nominated, their school on the PSA, to provide additional information, where information is required for the governing body to apply their oversubscription criteria to the application. Where additional information is required it must be returned to the Local Authority, along with the PSA.

Processing of PSAs

9. The closing date for applications is 13th November 2009. Completed PSAs are to be returned to the LA.
10. PSAs received after the closing date but before Friday 15th January 2010 will be considered by the Authority if there are exceptional/individual circumstances which prevented the submission of the PSA by the stated deadline. 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 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.
11. By 27th November 2009 the LA will provide primary schools in Darlington who are their own Admission Authority with a list of all applicants who have submitted a preference for their school, so they may apply their oversubscription criteria if applicable.

Determining offers in response to the PSA

12. The LA will act as a clearing house for the allocation of places by the relevant admission authorities in response to the 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 PSA where it is acting in its separate capacity as an admission authority.
13. By 22nd January 2010 the admission authority for each school will have considered all applications for their school. They will then provide the LA with a list of the applicants ranked according to the school's

oversubscription criteria who may potentially be offered a place at the school up to the PAN.

14. The LA will match each admission authority list against the lists of the other schools nominated on the PSA. Where a child is eligible at only one of their preferred schools, places will be offered up to the PAN of the school. If they are not provisionally offered a place they will be offered a place at the nearest suitable school with available places.
15. Where a child is eligible for a place at more than one of their preferred schools, it will be the highest ranked school for which they are eligible that they will be offered, this will be up to the PAN of the school.
16. By 19th February 2010 the LA will have informed its primary schools of the pupils to be provisionally offered places at their schools and inform other LA's of places offered in Darlington schools to their residents.
17. March 17th 2010 The LA will send a letter making the offer of a primary/infant/junior school place to the parent of every child who has applied for a school in Darlington Authority regardless of what Authority the child is living in. This letter will give the following information:
 - (ii) the name of the school at which a place is offered;
 - (iii) the reasons why the child is not being offered a place at another school(s) nominated on the PSA;
 - (iv) information about their statutory right of appeal against the decisions to refuse places at the other nominated schools;
 - (v) contact details for the school and LA (and those nominated foundation and VA schools where they were not offered a place, so that they can lodge an appeal with the governing body);
 - (vi) where the child has been refused a place at a nominated foundation or VA school, an invitation for the child's name to be added to the waiting list (if operated). For community and voluntary controlled schools, the LA will operate a waiting list until the end of the Autumn term 2010, to fill places that may become available at the beginning of the school year. This is only applicable to pupils entering school at Reception Year.
18. Parents will have seven working days to respond, from the date of the offer letter, as to whether they are accepting the school place offered. The LA will then look to withdraw the offer.

PART II - LATE APPLICATIONS

PSAs received after Friday 13th November 2009 (late applications) will be considered only in exceptional circumstances, e.g. families who have moved into the area after the closing date (refer to 9) Those late applications will be considered up to and including Friday 15th January 2010.

In any other circumstances 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 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 then they must complete the 'options' form that will be attached to their offer/refusal letter issued in March 2010.

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 Community & Voluntary Controlled schools for Reception year pupils only until the end of December 2010. Thereafter normal transfer/in-year admission arrangements will operate.

If a parent/carer did not initially apply for a school but then wishes to do so then they must apply. In the case of a VA school the parent/carer must contact the school direct for an application. For community and voluntary controlled schools then the parent/carer must complete the section on the 'options' form. Names can be then be added to a waiting list using the oversubscription criteria.

PART IV – IN-YEAR ADMISSIONS

Applications received after 1st September 2010 and for places in year groups other than the normal year of entry will be treated as in-year admissions. The LA does not operate waiting lists for any community or voluntary controlled schools. See separate scheme.

SCHEDULE 2**Timetable of co-ordinated scheme**

Consultation with Governing Bodies on Admissions Policy 2010/11	Autumn Term 2008
Consultation with Admissions Forum	By February 2009
Consult with other Admission Authorities and neighbouring LA's	By March 2009
Results of consultation reported to members and policy agreed and sent to DCSF	By 15th April 2009
Primary Brochures 2010/11 issued	w/c 8th September 2009
Closing date for receipt of primary applications	Friday 13th November 2009
Provide admission authorities a list of all applicants for their school	By 27th November 2009
Admission authorities to provide a list of children whom places are to be offered to in ranked according to the school's oversubscription criteria	By 22nd January 2010
Inform schools of final list of children they will be receiving	By 19th February 2010
Offer letters sent to parents from the LA and acting on behalf of VA schools	17th March 2010
Admission Appeals (if necessary)	May/June 2010

PRIMARY SCHOOLS ADMISSIONS 2010/11

School	Age Range	Current Admission Number	Proposed Admission Number
Abbey Infant*	4-7	90	90
Abbey Junior*	7-11	90	90
Alderman Leach Primary	4-11	45	60**
Bishopton Redmarshall CE Primary	4-11	15	15
Cockerton CE VA Primary	4-11	30	30
Corporation Road Primary	4-11	45	45
Dodmire Primary	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	75
Heighington CE Primary	4-11	34	40
High Coniscliffe CE (Cont) 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	35	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

**An application has been made for approval to change the admission number of this school.

Darlington Local Authority Admissions Criteria - Primary Education

(i) Looked After Children

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

(iii) Medical Reasons

Pupils 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).

(iv) Family Links

Either (a) Pupil's 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 (see family links explanation)

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

(v) Distance

Pupils 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. Furthermore, in connection with pupils who are transferring from a Darlington Infant to Junior school, those pupils who are attending an associated school are to be given priority over pupils from other schools. (To remain consistent the LA uses a Geographical Information System to measure all distances).

Distance Tie Breaker

In the event of a tie-break, the LA will carry out a thorough investigation, which may involve an officer walking the route using a pedometer. 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/carer 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 only suitable school and the difficulties it would cause if their child had to travel to another school. The LA will make contact with the District Medical Officer for independent information regarding their child's condition. The LA will 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 married/co-habiting and children live together in the same household.

- They are children of the same household.

Appendix 1

The Governing Bodies of the Voluntary Aided Schools, 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