

NORTHUMBERLAND

Northumberland County Council

Proposed coordinated admissions scheme for maintained schools including academies 2018/19

Note: The status of some schools listed in this document may be subject to change as a consequence of academy conversion or school organisational changes.

Introduction

All Local authorities are required by the School Admissions (Co-ordination of Admissions Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012 to have a scheme in place each year for co-ordinating admission arrangements for all maintained schools and academies (except special schools and nursery schools) within their area. The scheme has to comply with the provisions of the School Admissions Code 2014.

Coordination schemes are intended to simplify the admissions process whilst reducing the likelihood of any child being left without a school place. Coordination establishes a mechanism that ensures as far as is reasonably practicable that every parent of a child living in a local authority (LA) who has applied to a maintained school is sent a single offer of a school place by their LA.

Coordination schemes do not affect the rights and duties of the governing bodies of voluntary aided and foundation schools to set and apply their own admissions arrangements and oversubscription criteria, nor for academies to agree their own arrangements with the Secretary of State. Admission authorities do not need to determine the same or similar oversubscription criteria, but must ensure that their own admission arrangements are compatible with and do not undermine the coordination scheme for their area.

The following coordinated admission scheme for Northumberland County Council will apply to the admission arrangements for the school year beginning September 2018

Interpretation and glossary

In this Scheme –

"The LA" is Northumberland County Council acting in its capacity as a local (education) authority.

"The LA area" means Northumberland.

"School" means a community, voluntary controlled, foundation or voluntary aided school (but not a special school) which is maintained by the LA.

"Academy" means a state funded non fee paying independent school set up under a Funding Agreement between the Secretary of State and the proprietor of an Academy (most commonly and hereafter referred to as an Academy Trust). Academy Funding Agreements require them to comply with the Code and the law relating to admissions, though the

Secretary of State has the power to vary this requirement where there is a demonstrable need. Academies include free schools and studio schools.

"Admission authority" in relation to a community or voluntary controlled school means the LA and, in relation to a foundation or voluntary aided school or an academy, means the governing body of that school.

"The specified year" is the school year beginning in September 2018.

"Admission arrangements" are the determined arrangements which govern the procedures and decision making for the purpose of admitting pupils to a particular school or academy.

"Late application" means any application for a place in the first year of entry to the school that is received after the closing date for applications.

"Parent or carer" means any person who (as defined in the 1989 Children Act) holds parental responsibility for a child and with whom the child normally lives.

"Home authority" is the LA that a parent resides in.

The scheme

The scheme will apply to all first, primary, middle, secondary and high schools and academies in the LA area (except special schools and nursery schools) and shall take effect from 28 February 2017.

Under the coordinated scheme, Northumberland County Council will set and apply the oversubscription criteria for all community and voluntary controlled schools in the area. The governing bodies of voluntary aided and foundation schools and academies will set and apply their own oversubscription criteria.

The LA will work with all other admission authorities within Northumberland and with other relevant local authorities to ensure that a fair and transparent system for the allocation of places is achieved.

The normal admissions round

The scheme will apply to all children whose parents are seeking a school place for the school's initial year of entry for the start of Autumn term 2018 (whether or not it is their age cohort). The initial years of entry are:

School type or name Initial year of entry

<i>First and primary schools</i>	<i>Reception</i>
<i>Middle schools</i>	<i>Year 5</i>
<i>Secondary schools</i>	<i>Year 7</i>
<i>High schools</i>	<i>Year 9</i>

There will be a common application form available for all applicants, which will be available online and as paper version. Online applications are encouraged as parents receive an immediate response to their application.

The common application form must be used by parents who live in Northumberland as a means of expressing up to three preferences for a school place for their child. All preferences expressed on the form are valid applications. Preferences should be ranked in the order of preference. Reasons to support each preference can be included on the either form.

The form will specify the closing date and where the application form must be returned to.

Completed forms must be returned to the LA before the closing date.

The form will be accompanied by an explanation of the coordinated admissions scheme. This will explain that:

- i) the parent/carer will receive one single offer of a school place
- ii) all preferences will be treated equally
- iii) a place will be offered at the highest ranked school for which the child is eligible for a place under the admission criteria
- iv) if more than one school could offer a place, the parent/carer will be regarded as having ranked the schools in the preference order appearing on the form
- v) if a place is unable to be offered at a preferred school, a place will be offered at an alternative school.

The LA will take all reasonable steps to ensure that every parent resident in their area who has a child due to start primary education or is in their last year of first, primary or middle school is made aware of the procedures for applying for a school place and has access to a copy of the form and supporting guidance.

Verification of data

Parents may be asked to provide proof of address by the LA or by other admission authorities.

Supplementary information

Admission authorities can require parents to provide additional information where such information is required for the governing body to apply its oversubscription criteria.

Any requested information should be returned by the dates stated in order to be considered as part of the application.

Submission dates

The application period for both reception and transfers will open from 11 September 2017. This is the date from which parents can apply online or request a paper form.

31 October 2017, midnight, is the deadline for parents to apply to the LA for a place in a middle, secondary or high school or academy.

15 January 2018, midnight is the deadline for parents to apply to the LA for a place in a reception class.

It is the responsibility of parents or carers to ensure that applications are returned directly to the home LA by the closing date.

Late applications

Any application for the normal admissions round received after the deadline will be deemed "late".

Late applications will be dealt with after all on-time applications have been processed and places allocated. Late applicants will not be made an offer on National Offer Day. They will be offered as part of the second waiting list process once offers have been accepted.

Only in exceptional limited circumstances will late applications be considered at the same time as applications submitted on time.

These include:

- The illness/death of a close relative such that making an application during the application period was not possible.
- A move into Northumberland from outside the area after the deadline date. Confirmation of the new address must be provided (in the form of an exchange of contracts or a tenancy agreement).
- Where there has been a delay in the LA receiving the application due to an administrative error.
- Other circumstances will be considered and each case decided on its own merits.

Documentary evidence should be provided with the application to verify the circumstances which caused the application to be late. If evidence cannot be provided, the application will not be considered as an exception.

The LA will determine whether the late application is considered as an exception.

24 November 2017 is the deadline for asking for a late application for a place in a middle, secondary or high school or academy to be considered as an on time exception.

2 February 2018 is the deadline for asking for a late application for a reception place to be considered as an on time exception.

Changing preferences

No changes will be accepted to applications after the deadline date has passed, unless there is a genuine reason for the change, such as a change of address or siblings have changed schools. The deadlines and evidence requirements are the same as for exceptional late applications. If these are not met, the request will not be considered as an exception.

Any request to change preferences will cancel out and replace the previous application. If submitted after the deadline date, and not agreed by the LA as an exception, this means the original application will be withdrawn by the LA, processed as late, and no offer will be made on National Offer Day.

Places will be offered as part of the second waiting list process.

No form received

Where no form is submitted for a child known to the LA, a place will be offered at the nearest Northumberland school to the home address with a vacancy, measured in a straight line using an electronic map measurement system. This may be a community, voluntary controlled, foundation or voluntary aided school or academy, if the admission authority agrees. Where no form has been submitted, places will not be offered on National Offer Day.

They will be offered as part of the second waiting list process.

Processing applications

After the closing date the LA will forward details of relevant applications received on time to other admission authorities in its area and to other LAs if a preference is made for a school in another area. Late applications will be shared with other admission authorities after offer day.

Parental preferences will be ranked by every admission authority strictly according to the oversubscription criteria for the relevant school. The ranked lists will be returned to Northumberland LA by the specified date detailing how the oversubscription criteria have been applied to the list.

The order of school preference listed on the application form will not affect these rankings.

Completed application forms will be treated as a confidential communication between the parent and the LA.

Determining offers

The LA will act as a clearing house for the allocation of places by the relevant admission authorities. The LA will only make a decision on the offer or refusal of a place in response to any preference expressed on the form where:

- it is acting in its separate capacity as an admission authority, or on behalf of another admission authority that has delegated its role to the LA, or
- an applicant is eligible for a place at more than one school, or
- an applicant is not eligible for a place at any school that the parent has nominated.

The LA, using preference data and oversubscription criteria rankings (including those from own admission authority schools and academies), will allocate places according to each parent's preference ranking as follows:

- Where a parent's first preference can be met, a place will be allocated at that school. The LA will not consider any lower ranked preferences.

- Where a parent's first preferences cannot be met, but a lower preference can, a place will be allocated at the lower preference school. Any higher preference applications will be placed on the waiting list for that school(s) and ranked according to the oversubscription criteria.

Any preferences ranked lower than the preference offered will not be considered.

- Where none of the parent's preference can be met, a place will be allocated at the nearest school with available places based on the straight line distance from home to school. The applications for preferred schools will be placed on the waiting lists for those schools and ranked according to their oversubscription criteria.

Distance measurements

Distances are measured using the Council's electronic map measuring system in a straight line distance from the front door of the home to the main gate of the school.

Offers

Parents will receive one offer of a school place. Parents who applied online can log in on National Offer Day to find out their allocated school.

Parents who submitted a paper application will be posted a letter on National Offer Day. Information will not be given out over the telephone.

If a parent was refused a place at a preferred school, the letter or email (depending on how parent applied for their place) will explain why the place was refused and that the parent has the right of appeal.

Responding to offers

Parents are required to respond to the LA regarding the offer of a school place to either accept or refuse it within two weeks of National Offer Day. If the parent does not confirm to the LA that they accept the place, the LA may remove the place and reallocate it to another child.

Parents should not refuse a place unless they are certain of a place at an alternative school. This does not remove the parent's right of appeal.

If a parent wishes their child to be considered for an alternative school(s) after offer day, a new application must be completed listing the new order of preferences. This will cancel out and replace the previous application. Parents are only allowed a maximum of three active preferences in any local authority at one time.

Waiting Lists

Children will be kept on a waiting list for any school ranked higher on their form than the school at which they were offered a place.

For example, where a parent has been allocated a place at their second preference school, they may be placed on the waiting list of their first preference school but not their third.

Where a parent has been offered a place at a school they did not nominate on their form, they will be placed on the waiting list of all the schools they did nominate, and considered for places at those schools if any become available.

Waiting lists will be kept by all admission authorities until at least **31 December 2018**. The waiting list will be maintained strictly in accordance with the oversubscription criteria and if a place becomes available this will be offered to the child ranked highest on the list. Places on waiting lists will change over time as new applications are received.

When any place in a school is refused, the LA will reallocate that place to the child at the top of the waiting list for that school.

There will be three waiting list phases when places will be reallocated after national offer day:

- i. First waiting list process will reallocate places that have become available since offer day. Only applications received on time are included in this process.
- ii. Second waiting list process will reallocate places that have become available since first waiting list process. Late applications and late changes to preferences are included at this stage.
- iii. Following the second waiting list process, places will be re-allocated as and when they become available.

Appeals

All parents have the right of appeal if refused a place at a school. Appeals are coordinated by the relevant admission authority. Appeals will be heard by an independent appeals panel and if the panel uphold the appeal, the decision is legally binding on the admission authority and they must admit the child. Very few appeals are upheld.

Applying for a year outside the child's age group

The LA expects children to attend school within their relevant age group. Where a parent would like to delay admission to reception by a whole school year this will be considered by the appropriate admission authority if it is supported by evidence from appropriate professionals.

Any request to transfer to middle, secondary or high school a year early or late would be considered and decided at the discretion of the admission authority.

Any request agreed will be included along with all other applications for a school place at a particular school in the process of determining allocation of places.

Full time reception places are available from the September following a child's fourth birthday.

Parents can request that the date their child is admitted full time is deferred until the term after which their child reaches compulsory school age (age 5).

Summer Born Children

The parents of a summer born child, i.e. a child born between 1 April and 31 August, may request that the child be admitted out of their normal age group, to the reception class in the September following their fifth birthday and that that the child will remain in this cohort as they progress through school.

Parents who want to make this request should make an application for their child's normal age group at the usual time. The application to the local authority should include this request and in addition it should be made in writing to the headteacher of the school. The local authority will liaise with the school who will make its decision about the request based on the

circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child. In addition to taking into account the views of the headteacher, who has statutory responsibility for the internal organisation, management and control of the school, the local authority will take into account the views of the parents and of appropriate medical and education professionals.

Parents will be informed of the outcome of the request before primary national offer day.

If the request is agreed, the application for the normal age group may be withdrawn before a place is offered. If the request is refused, the parent must decide whether to accept the offer of a place for the normal age group, or to refuse it and make an in year application for admission to year one for the September following the child's fifth birthday.

Where a parent's request is agreed, they must make a new application as part of the main admissions round the following year.

One admission authority cannot be required to honour a decision made by another admission authority on admission out of the normal age group. Parents, therefore, should consider whether to request admission out of the normal year group at all their preference schools, rather than just their first preference schools.

If child who has not reached compulsory school age has been allocated a Reception place and their parent or carer wishes to delay their child's entry to school, the place will be held open. The place must be taken up in the term in which the child reaches compulsory school age.

Shared responsibility

Where two adults have shared responsibility for a child, they should agree before submitting the application which schools to name as their preferred schools. In cases of dispute, or when two application forms are submitted, the LA will process the application received from the adult with whom the child is living the majority of the school week.

The address shown on the child benefit notification letter will be taken as evidence of residency. If that is not available, then the address showing on the NHS medical card can be used.

Children from overseas

Children who hold a full British Citizen passport or children whose passport has been endorsed to show they have the right of abode in the UK are entitled to apply for a place at a maintained school. The passport or visa may be requested for inspection before an offer of a place can be made. The LA will allocate a place in advance for families of UK service personnel and Crown Servants with a confirmed posting to the area, where they are moving to the area outside of the normal admission round.

Applying for places outside of the normal transfer times

Parents with children of school age who move into Northumberland and require a school place outside of the normal transfer times should contact the Admissions Team if they require advice on schools with places.

Parents who want a place in a Northumberland school will need to complete the LA's In Year application form and return it to the LA Admissions Team. Parents are allowed to name three preferred schools on the form.

Places cannot be allocated on the basis of intended future changes of address unless house moves have been confirmed, for example through the exchange of contracts or the signing of a formal lease agreement. Documentary evidence to support the new address will be required.

In Northumberland, the local authority manage the in year admissions for the majority of schools, however some academies allocate their own in year admissions directly. The LA will forward the application on to the school and the school will inform the parent if they are able to offer a place. If no place is available at a preferred school, the LA will make Northumberland residents an offer of an alternative school.

The child is expected to take up the offer and attend the allocated school within 10 school days of being made an offer, or the offer may be withdrawn.

Coordination timetable for transfer to middle, secondary or high school in 2018 (including academies)

DATE	EVENT
11 September 2017	Application process opens online for 2018/19
Midnight 31 October 2017	Closing date for all applications to be received by the LA
24 November 2017	Last date for any late applications to be submitted and be considered as exceptions
24 November 2017	Applications for own admission authority schools and academies in Northumberland will be forwarded to those admission authorities and applications stating preferences for schools in other LAs will be forwarded to those LAs
12 January 2018	Academies, foundation and voluntary aided schools to provide the LA with their ranked lists of applicants, including details of how the oversubscription criteria were applied
26 January 2018	The LA will inform other LAs of any offers of Northumberland schools to be made to applicants resident in their areas.
28 February 2018	The LA will inform Northumberland schools of children to be offered places at their schools
1 March 2018	National Offers Day
15 March 2018	Date for parents to accept or refuse offers of a place
20 March 2018	Reallocate spaces that have become available since offer day.
3 April 2018	Deadline for parents to respond to offers from first waiting list process

27 March 2018	Deadline for late applications and late changes to be considered in second waiting list process
May – July	Appeals are heard

Coordination timetable for Reception places 2018

DATE	EVENT
1 November 2017	Application process opens online for 2018/19
Midnight 15 January 2018	Closing date for all application forms to be received by the LA
2 February 2018	Last date for any late applications to be submitted and considered as Exceptions
5 February 2018	Applications for own admission authority schools and academies in Northumberland will be forwarded to those admission authorities and applications stating preferences for schools in other LAs will be forwarded to those LAs
2 March 2018	Academies, foundation and voluntary aided schools to provide the LA with their ranked lists of applicants, including details of how the oversubscription criteria were applied
10 March 2018	The LA will inform other LAs of any offers of Northumberland schools to be made to applicants resident in their areas
25 March 2018	The LA will inform Northumberland schools of children to be offered places at their schools
16 April 2018	National offer day for places.
2 May 2018	Date for parents to accept or refuse the offer from offer day
8 May 2018	First waiting list process will be run to reallocate spaces that have become available since offer day.
15 May 2018	Deadline for late applications and late changes to be considered
June/July	Appeals are heard

List of Northumberland Schools covered by the 2018/19 scheme

All Northumberland County Council community and voluntary controlled schools

VA Middle Schools

Dr Thomlinson Church of England Middle School
Belford St Mary's Church of England Middle School
St Benedict's Roman Catholic Middle School
St Joseph's Roman Catholic Middle School

Trusts

Ashington Learning Partnership Trust

Bothal Primary School
Central Primary School

North Pennine Learning Partnership Trust

Haydon Bridge High School

Academies (secondary)

Bede Academy – North Site
Berwick Academy
Cramlington Learning Village
Northumberland Church of England Academy (all-age)
Pax Christi Catholic Partnership, St Benet Biscop Catholic Academy
Queen Elizabeth High School, Hadrian Learning Trust
The Blyth Academy
The King Edward VI School

Haltwhistle Community Campus Upper School
Hexham Middle School, Hadrian Learning Trust
Meadowdale Middle School
Morpeth Newminster Middle School
Morpeth Chantry Middle School
Pax Christi Catholic Partnership, St Peter's Catholic Academy

VA and Foundation Schools

Bellingham Middle School

Bedlington Whitley Memorial Church of England First School
Bellingham First School
Broomhaugh Church of England First School
Chollerton Church of England First School
Corbridge St Helen's Church of England First School
Harbottle Church of England First School

Holy Island Church of England First School
Holy Trinity Church of England First School
Hugh Joicey Church of England First School
Humshaugh Church of England First School
Longhorsley Church of England First School
Morpeth All Saints Church of England First School
St Aidan's Roman Catholic First School
St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic First School (Berwick)
St Mary's Roman Catholic First School
St Robert's Roman Catholic First School
Thropton Village First School
Tritlington Church of England First School
Wark Church of England First School
Whitley Chapel Church of England First School

Ellingham Church of England Primary School
Embleton Vincent Edwards' Church of England Primary School
Greenhead Church of England Primary School
Henshaw Church of England Primary School
Newbrough Church of England Primary School
Richard Coates Church of England School
St Bede's Roman Catholic Primary School
St Michael's Church of England Primary School
St Paul's Roman Catholic Primary School (Alnwick)
St Wilfrid's Roman Catholic Primary School
Warkworth Church of England Primary School
Whalton Church of England Primary School
Whitfield Church of England Primary School

Haydon Bridge High School
Bellingham Community Middle School
Ashington High School

Academies (first/primary)

Bede Academy – South site
Northumberland Church of England Academy
Haltwhistle Community Campus Lower School
Blyth Malvins Close Academy
Blyth Morpeth Road Academy
Blyth Croftway Academy
Pax Christi Catholic Partnership, St Paul's Catholic Academy (Cramlington)
St Matthew's Roman Catholic Primary Academy

Free Schools

Cramlington Village Primary School