

# **PROPOSED SCHEME FOR THE CO-ORDINATED ADMISSIONS TO SCHOOLS AND ACADEMIES – SEPTEMBER 2020/2021**

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## **1. Relevant area**

- 1.1 In accordance with The Education (Relevant Areas for Consultation on Admission Arrangements) Regulations 1999, Birmingham Local Authority has determined its relevant area as that contained within the administrative area of the City of Birmingham. It is proposed that this arrangement will continue for 2020/2021.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 This scheme applies to all primary and secondary maintained schools, academies, free schools, university technical colleges, foundation, voluntary aided (excluding special schools) in Birmingham for the academic year 2020 / 2021 and is made under the provisions of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, as amended by the Education Act 2002, and The School Admissions (Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 2.2 The School Admissions and Fair Access Service, on behalf of the Local Authority and other admission authorities in Birmingham, will co-ordinate applications made during the normal admissions round (i.e. applications for Reception Year, Year 3 at a Junior School, Year 7 and, in the case of selected 14-19 Academies, Year 10). Parents/carers resident in Birmingham who are applying for a place for their child in September 2020 will make a single application to the Local Authority (School Admissions and Fair Access Service) for any Birmingham maintained school, academy or free school or any such school or academy in a neighbouring authority.
- 2.3 For the academic year 2020 / 2021 and subsequent years, subject to any review, applications made outside the normal admissions round (i.e. in-year applications) will be made directly to individual schools or academies.
- 2.4 Birmingham City Council is the relevant admission authority for all community and voluntary controlled schools within the City.
- 2.5 For academies and free schools (including Trust schools), their Trust or board of directors is the admissions authority. For Voluntary aided and foundation schools, governing bodies of such schools are the admissions authority.
- 2.6 Co-ordination schemes do not affect the rights and duties of the governing bodies of academies, free schools, university technical colleges, foundation, voluntary aided to set and apply their own admission arrangements and oversubscription criteria, but they must ensure that their own arrangements are compatible with the Local Authority's admission arrangements and co-ordinated scheme.

### **3. Admission Authority for each type of school in Birmingham**

There are a number of different school types in Birmingham:

Type of School	Who is the admission authority?
Academies (inc. Free Schools)	Academy Trust
Community Schools	Local Authority
Foundation Schools	Governing Body
Voluntary Aided Schools	Governing Body
Voluntary Controlled Schools	Local Authority

### **4. Parents' right to apply for a school**

- 4.2 Birmingham City Council, as a Local Authority, must enable parents and carers to say where they would prefer their child to go to school. The law does not give parents a right to “choose” which school their child will attend.
- 4.3 Subject to certain exceptions an admission authority must comply with any preference expressed by a parent/carers as to the school at which their child should be educated.

#### **Exceptions**

- 4.4 The law recognises that it may not always be possible to carry out parents' wishes, for a number of reasons:
- because this would “prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources”, e.g. because a particular school may be full (i.e., it has already admitted pupils up to the Published Admission Number for the child's year group);
  - because it is a selective (grammar) school and the child has not reached the required academic standard for entry to a selective school;
  - because the child has been permanently excluded from two or more schools and the most recent of the exclusions took place within the last two years;
  - because the school's statutory infant class size limit of 30 has been reached.

### **5. The application process for primary and secondary normal admission rounds**

#### **All rounds**

- 5.1 Applications made on behalf of children with an Education Health and Care Plan will be considered by the Special Educational Needs Assessment and Review Service (SENAR), in accordance with parental preference and each child's individual needs, taking account of

Birmingham City Council's inclusion policy and any consultation required with school governing bodies.

- 5.2 Birmingham Local Authority's School Admissions and Fair Access Service will obtain names of children who are looked after and will verify details for those applicants who indicate that their child was previously looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangement or special guardianship order) within the appropriate age range, from the Looked After Children Education Service (LACES). Places for these children will be considered in accordance with each school's admission criteria.

### Starting Reception Class

- 5.3 If a child attends a nursery class, this does not mean that he or she will automatically get a place in the primary or infant school to which the nursery is linked or attached. Parents with children in a nursery class must apply for a Reception Class place at the school in the same way as other parents
- 5.4 By law, parents must ensure that their children are receiving suitable full-time education at the beginning of the term after their 5th birthday. However, in Birmingham, children are admitted to Reception Class in the September at the start of the academic year in which they reach five years of age.
- 5.5 Parents may, however, defer their child's admission to primary or infant school until later in the school year, but not beyond the beginning of the first academic term after the child's fifth birthday (the time when the child reaches compulsory school age) and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year of which the offer was made. Alternatively, a parent has the right for their child to be admitted on a part-time basis during the Reception Class year but not beyond the point that they reach compulsory school age. In both cases above a school place is held for the child until they take it up.
- 5.6 A child who reaches the age of five during the 2020/2021 summer term would reach compulsory school age in September 2021. However, it is not possible to accept a place in the Reception Class for September 2020 but defer the child's admission until the beginning of the 2021/2022 academic year, and if a child did not take up their place in a Reception Class in 2020/2021 a separate in-year application would need to be made for the child to enter the school in Year 1.
- 5.7 Parents of children who reach the age of five during the summer term of the 2020/2021 academic year who are considering deferring their child's admission to primary or infant school until the beginning of the 2021/2022 academic year should note that, as the overwhelming majority of children in Birmingham start school at the start of the

academic year in which they reach the age of five, it is likely that some or all of the parents' preferred schools will not have vacancies in their child's year group if they apply for a place in Year 1 (these places having been allocated to children who started school the previous year).

- 5.8 On very rare occasions, for example due to a child's ill health, premature birth or children born in the summer, parents/carers may believe it to be in their child's best interests to be admitted to Reception Class rather than Year 1, outside their child's normal age group. These requests will be considered by the admission authority of the school(s) and a decision made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and also in the best interests of the child concerned. **Parents do not have the right to insist that their child is admitted to a particular age group including reception.**
- 5.9 Where a parent wishes to request admission out of the normal age group for their child, they should still make an application for their child's normal age group at the usual time. At the same time, the parent should submit their request for their child to be admitted out of their normal age group to the relevant admission authority, (this is BCC for all community and voluntary controlled schools), together with supporting evidence.
- 5.10 Admission authorities must make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking into account the parent's views; information about the child's academic, social and emotional development; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional; whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group; and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if were not for being born prematurely. They must also take into account the views of the head teacher of the school concerned. When informing a parent of their decision on the year group the child should be admitted to, the admission authority must set out clearly the reasons for their decision. The admission authority must ensure that the parent receives the response to their request before primary national offer day.
- 5.11 If the request is agreed, the application for the normal age group may be withdrawn and the parent must make a new application for a place in Reception Class as part of the main admissions round the following year. 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 1 for the September following the child's fifth birthday.
- 5.12 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.

- 5.13 Parents have the right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied but cannot appeal if they are offered a place but not in their preferred age group.
- 5.14 In October 2019, the local authority will write or make arrangements to inform parents/carers of children who are on roll at a community or private nursery, via the nursery advising them of how to apply for a Reception Class place online and of where to view the primary prospectus.
- 5.15 The statutory closing date is 15 January 2020. Applications received after this date will be treated in accordance with the procedure for late applications. Proof of address may be required to be provided to the School Admissions and Fair Access Service.
- 5.16 Parents will be allowed to express up to three preferences for their child to be admitted to any maintained primary or infant school or academy or free school inside or outside the Birmingham Local Authority area.
- 5.17 Applications made online will receive an immediate email confirmation when the application is submitted as long as an email address is provided.
- 5.18 Data will be exchanged with other admission authorities and other local authorities as detailed in Section 7.
- 5.19 The School Admissions and Fair Access Service will send details of any siblings included in a parent's application to schools and academies for verification.
- 5.20 The School Admissions and Fair Access Service will compare ranked parental preferences for each school. All ranked preferences will be given equal consideration against schools' admission criteria. If the child ranks sufficiently highly within the admission criteria for two or more schools and could therefore potentially be offered a place at either school, the school the parent ranked highest as a preference will be offered.
- 5.21 Children who live in Birmingham that have not been offered one of their parents' three preferences, following consultation with another admission authority if appropriate, will be offered a place at one of their closest Birmingham all state funded primary or infant schools with a vacancy.
- 5.22 Primary / infant schools will verify the child's date of birth at either the time of acceptance of the offer or at the school's induction day. Offers will be conditional on providing valid proof of date of birth.

### Transfer from Infant School to Junior School (Year 2 to Year 3)

- 5.23 if a child attends an infant school, it is necessary for the child to transfer to a different school for his/her junior education.
- 5.24 In October 2019, parents/carers with a child in Year 2 at an infant school will be sent a letter via the school advising them how to apply online for a Year 3 place at a junior school or any other junior school. The same timetable and process as Reception Class admissions above will be used. Parent/carers can express up to three preferences in total, however they must consider that applying for a junior school other than the school that is linked to their child's current infant school, means that their child is less likely to be offered a place at that school, as children that already attend the linked infant school get higher priority for a place at that Junior School.
- 5.25 Applications made online will receive an immediate email confirmation when the application is submitted as long as an email address is provided.
- 5.26 If a child attends a primary school (rather than an infant school) it is **not** necessary to apply for him / her to transfer at the end of Year 2.

### Transfer from Year 6 to Secondary School

- 5.27 At the end of the Summer Term 2019, Birmingham Local Authority will invite parents of children who will transfer to secondary education in September 2019 to complete an online application form. The online system will be available from September 2019.
- 5.28 All parents will be required to make an application to the Local Authority in which they live. By the second week in July 2019, all maintained primary and junior schools, academies and free schools and, where possible, the majority of independent primary schools in Birmingham, will be forwarded a letter for them to distribute to their Year 5 children living in Birmingham, inviting their parents/carers to make their application for a secondary school place online. Birmingham Local Authority's prospectus will be available to view on the Birmingham City Council's website.
- 5.29 Parents of children who live in Birmingham but whose children attend a primary school outside Birmingham will be advised to make their application online by 31 October 2019.
- 5.30 Online applications will be accepted up until 31 October 2019, which is the statutory deadline for the submission of applications. Applications received after this date will be treated in accordance with the procedures for late applications as detailed in Section 8.
- 5.31 Applications to sit any selective or assessment tests are to be made via separate forms, to be returned by dates specified by the admission authority for the school concerned (i.e., the governing body of a

foundation or voluntary aided school or Academy Trust for academies and free schools). No other separate application form will be required by admission authorities in Birmingham; however, some voluntary controlled schools (particularly those with a religious character) have a Supplementary Information Form, which needs to be completed to determine which category a child should be placed in. These schools will be listed in Birmingham Local Authority's prospectus on the School Admissions website.

- 5.32 Parents may express up to six preferences for their child to be admitted to any maintained school, Academy or Free School inside or outside Birmingham Local Authority.
- 5.33 Applications made online will receive an immediate email confirmation when the application is submitted as long as an email address provided.
- 5.34 Data will be exchanged with other admission authorities and other local authorities as detailed in Section 7.
- 5.35 The School Admissions and Fair Access Service will compare ranked parental preferences for each school. All ranked preferences will be given equal consideration against schools' admission criteria. If the child meets the admission criteria for two or more schools and could therefore potentially be offered a place at either school, the school the parent ranked highest as a preference will be offered.
- 5.36 Children who live in Birmingham who have not been offered one of their parents' six preferences, following consultation with another admission authority if appropriate, will be offered a place at one of their closest Birmingham Local Authority maintained secondary schools or academies or free schools with a vacancy.

Year 10 (in the case of 14-19 academies)

- 5.37 At the start of the Autumn Term 2019, parents who wish to make an application for their child to transfer to Year 10 at selected 14 -19 Academies in September 2020 will be able to make their application online. The online system will be available from September 2019.
- 5.38 Some 14-19 Academies in Birmingham will not be part of the co-ordinated scheme, details will be published in Birmingham's composite prospectus of which academies this affects. For these academies parent/carers will need to apply directly to them.
- 5.39 Applications to sit any selective or aptitude tests are to be made via separate forms, to be returned by dates specified by the Academy concerned.
- 5.40 Parents may express up to three preferences for their child to be admitted to any 14 - 19 Academy inside or outside of the Birmingham Local Authority area.



- 5.41 Applications made online will receive an immediate email confirmation when the application is submitted as long as an email address provided.
- 5.42 Data will be exchanged with other admission authorities and other local authorities as detailed in Section 7.
- 5.43 The School Admissions and Fair Access Service will compare ranked parental preferences for each Academy. All ranked preferences will be given equal consideration against Academies' admission criteria. If the child meets the admission criteria for two or more 14 - 19 Academies and could therefore potentially be offered a place at either Academy, the Academy the parent ranked highest will be offered.
- 5.44 Children who live in Birmingham who have not been offered one of their parents' three preferences will continue to have a place at their current school and they will be added to the Academies' waiting lists and their parents/carers informed of their right of appeal.

## **6. Determining the offer of school places**

- 6.1 In determining applications for school places admission authorities must usually comply with parental preference.
- 6.2 in accordance with Section 86 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, with the exception of designated grammar schools, all maintained schools and Academies that have enough places available must offer a place to every child that has applied for one, without condition or the use of any criteria.

### **Children with challenging behaviour and those who have been excluded twice**

- 6.3 Admission authorities must not refuse to admit children in the normal admissions round on the basis of their poor behaviour elsewhere. Where a child has been permanently excluded from two or more schools there is no need for an admission authority to comply with parental preference for a period of two years from the last exclusion. The twice excluded rule does not apply to children who were below compulsory school age at the time of the exclusion, children who have been re-instated following a permanent exclusion (or would have been had it been practicable to do so), and EHC plans.

**7. Timetable for primary and secondary normal admissions rounds for 2020/2021**

<b>Timetable for primary and secondary normal admissions rounds for 2020/2021</b>				
	<b>Reception</b>	<b>Junior (Yr 2- 3)</b>	<b>Secondary (Yr 6 –7)</b>	<b>Year 10 (14-19 academies)</b>
<b>Birth range</b>	01/09/15-31/08/16	01/09/12-31/08/13	01/09/08-31/08/09	01/09/05-31/08/06
<b>Final closing date for receipt of applications</b>	15 January 2020	15 January 2020	31 October 2019	31 October 2019
<b>Data exchange with other Local Authorities</b>	31 January 2020	31 January 2020	15 November 2019	15 November 2019
<b>Unranked preferences forwarded to Birmingham Admission Authorities</b>	10 February 2020	10 February 2020	25 November 2019	25 November 2019
<b>Sibling reports sent to schools and academies</b>	10 February 2020	10 February 2020	25 November 2019	25 November 2019
<b>Ranked preferences from Birmingham Admission Authorities and sibling reports from community schools/academies to be returned to Birmingham LA</b>	28 February 2020	28 February 2020	16 December 2019	16 December 2019
<b>Offer exchange with other Local Authorities</b>	9 March 2020 23 March 2020 30 March 2020	9 March 2020 23 March 2020 30 March 2020	13 January 2020 20 January 2020 27 January 2020 10 February 2020	10 February 2020
<b>Offer day – letters posted</b>	16 April 2020	16 April 2020	2 March 2020	2 March 2020
<b>Acceptance of any offer should be made by this date</b>	30 April 2020	30 April 2020	16 March 2020	16 March 2020
<b>Any appeal should be received by this date. (20 school days following notification that application was unsuccessful)</b>	18 May 2020	18 May 2020	30 March 2020	30 March 2020
<b>Appeals received on-time should be considered by this date (40 school days)</b>	20 July 2019	20 July 2019	22 June 2020	22 June 2020

## 8. Late applications

- 8.1 Applications received after the statutory closing dates (31 October 2019 for Secondary and 14-19 Transfers and 15 January 2020 for Reception and Year 2-3 Transfers will only be considered after applications received on time.
- 8.2 Birmingham City Council is unable to consider any late applications with exceptional circumstances as on time after the 11 November 2019 for Secondary and 14-19 Transfers and after 27 January 2020 for Reception and Year 2-3 Transfers, as the council will be exchanging data with other admission authorities, including neighbouring councils, as part of the coordinated admissions scheme. Birmingham City Council will only consider applications received after the closing date as on time if there were exceptional reasons which prevented the parent/carer from applying by the closing date:
- A child and the person with parental responsibility have moved home.
  - Where the local authority has contacted that parent/carer regarding the information contained within their application, for example, an incomplete application or potentially misleading information requiring further investigation
- 8.3 If you feel you meet the exceptional circumstances as above, you must submit your late application together with evidence of your exceptional circumstances to Birmingham Local Authority for Secondary and 14-19 Transfers between 1 November 2019 and 11 November 2019 and for Reception and Year 2-3 Transfers between 16 January 2020 and 27 January 2020.

### **Important:**

- 8.4 Your evidence must be marked **Exceptional Reasons** along with your online application reference number e.g. **330-2020-09-E-897451** and you **must** explain your exceptional reasons and attach any relevant documents, if applicable e.g. proof of address as you have just moved to the City. **We can only consider applications submitted as late but with exceptional circumstances if the above process is fully adhered to.**
- 8.5 Applications made on or after the start of the Autumn Term 2020 will need to be submitted to their preferred school as in year applications.

## 9. Foundation, trust and voluntary aided schools

- 9.1 For each voluntary aided and foundation school (including Trust schools), the Governing Body is the admission authority and decides its own published oversubscription admission criteria.

## **10. Academies and Free Schools**

- 10.1 Admission arrangements for academies and free schools are approved by the Secretary of State for the Department for Education as part of an Academy's Funding Agreement, which requires compliance with admissions legislation and relevant Codes.

## **11. Selective schools**

- 11.1 The selection of children for admission to grammar schools in Birmingham is by reference to ability and for this purpose there are tests held in the Autumn Term of the 2019/20 academic year for admission to these selective secondary schools in September 2020.
- 11.2 Arrangements relating to selective testing for admission to Bishop Vesey's Grammar School and Sutton Coldfield Grammar School for Girls are made jointly with The Schools of King Edward the Sixth in Birmingham. This will be known as "The Grammar Schools in Birmingham"
- 11.3 The Grammar Schools in Birmingham shall consist of the following schools:
- Bishop Vesey's Grammar School
  - King Edward VI Aston School
  - King Edward VI Camp Hill School for Boys
  - King Edward VI Camp Hill School for Girls
  - King Edward VI Five Ways School
  - King Edward VI Handsworth Boy's School
  - King Edward VI Handsworth Girl's School
  - Sutton Coldfield Grammar School for Girls
- 11.4 Parents will be required to complete a test registration form to sit the selective test for a school that forms part of The Grammar Schools in Birmingham.
- 11.5 Pupils will only be required to sit one test to be considered for a place at a school that forms part of The Grammar Schools in Birmingham. Parents must also name any school(s) in The Grammar Schools in Birmingham on their Local Authority Preference Form to be considered for a place there.
- 11.6 Details and application dates will usually be publicised widely within the City from May each year. The closing date for applications to sit the test is 28 June 2019. No late applications to sit the test will be accepted. The test will take place in early September 2019.
- 11.7 Admission authorities for grammar schools must inform parents of the outcome of selection tests prior to the final closing date for applications each year, so that parents can make an informed decision as to whether they should name a selective school as one of their preferences.

## **12. The application process for in-year admissions**

- 12.1 In-Year applications may arise for a number of reasons, for example, where a family has moved to Birmingham or if a parent/carer wishes to move their child from one school to another at a time outside the normal admissions round.
- 12.2 The local authority and all schools will work together to coordinate in-year applications.
- 12.3 The local authority will enable parents to complete an application for a school place and will provide details of schools with places available.
- 12.4 In the first instance, parents will be requested to make applications directly to the school(s) concerned. Outside the normal admissions round, parents/carers can apply for a place for their child at any time and to any school.
- 12.5 The law relevant to admissions to state schools and academies provides that they must, on receipt of an in-year application, notify the local authority of both the application and its outcome, this will also allow the local authority to keep up to date with figures on the availability of school places in Birmingham.
- 12.6 Parent/carers who live in Birmingham who have not been offered their preferred school will be advised of their right of appeal and be added to the schools waiting list. In-Year waiting lists for community, voluntary controlled, voluntary aided, foundation schools, academies and free schools in Birmingham will be maintained by the schools. The Local Authority may require sight of the waiting lists at these schools, in order to determine that the co-ordinated scheme is operating effectively.
- 12.7 Children who are not offered a place at any of their preferred schools, will be offered a place at a Birmingham Local Authority maintained school, academy or free school near to the child's home address, that has a vacancy.
- 12.8 The Local Authority will be informed by schools and academies of any child who has not taken up a school place so that appropriate action can be taken.
- 12.9 Children who live in Birmingham whose parents have refused the school place offered may be issued with a formal notice advising of their legal requirement to ensure that their child is in receipt of a suitable education whether in school or otherwise.
- 12.10 Where a child is not receiving suitable education, further action may be taken against a parent under Birmingham Local Authority's School Attendance process.

### **13. Fair Access Protocol**

- 13.1 The current Fair Access Protocol was implemented in January 2018.
- 13.2 The operation of the Fair Access Protocol is outside the arrangements of co-ordination and is triggered when a parent of an eligible child has not secured a school place under the in-year admission arrangements.
- 13.3 Fair Access Protocols exist to ensure that unplaced children outside the normal admissions round, especially the most vulnerable, are offered a suitable school as quickly as possible and to ensure that all schools in an area admit their fair share of children with challenging behaviour.
- 13.4 In the event of a governing body refusing to admit a pupil with challenging behaviour outside the normal admissions round, even though places are available, a referral will be made to the Local Authority for action under the Fair Access Protocol.
- 13.5 This provision will not apply to a looked after child, a previously looked after child or EHC plan naming the school in question, as these children must be admitted.
- 13.6 All admission authorities must participate in the Fair Access Protocol in order to ensure that unplaced children are allocated a school place quickly. There is no duty for local authorities or admission authorities to comply with parental preference when allocating places through the Fair Access Protocol.