

**SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL
THE CO-ORDINATED SCHEME FOR YEAR R ENTRY TO INFANT/PRIMARY
SCHOOLS**

SCHOOL YEAR 2014/15

1. INTRODUCTION

This scheme details proposals for the co-ordinated admission arrangements for infant and primary schools in Southampton. The proposed scheme is in accordance with the School Admissions (Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2008 and the School Admissions Code (2012).

2. BACKGROUND

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 2008 set a duty on Local Authorities (LAs) to formulate a scheme covering every maintained school in their area, to co-ordinate the admissions process for primary intakes.

Once a LA has formulated a scheme for its area, it must pass the scheme for review to the Admission Forum. The LA must then consult all other admission authorities in the area who it proposes should adopt the scheme.

3. THE SCHEME

The purpose of the co-ordinated admission scheme is to establish mechanisms for ensuring that every parent of a child living in the LA area who has applied for a school place in the 'normal admissions round' receives an offer of one, and only one, school place on the same day. Schemes should also address how late applications will be handled. Co-ordinated schemes are an administrative process to make school admissions easier, more transparent and less stressful for parents.

The Southampton City Council co-ordinated scheme for infant/primary schools aims to encompass all the Voluntary Aided (VA) schools in its area. The School Admissions Code requires that *all schools* in the LA's area operate the 'equal preference' allocation criterion. Parents must apply for places in different LAs via their Home LA, using the application form for that LA, so there is a requirement for LAs to exchange data.

The co-ordinated scheme has been broken down into the following headings:

- Data capture
- Brochures and application process
- Closing date
- Processing of applications
- Late applications
- Decision letters

4. DATA CAPTURE

In June 2013 “rising 4” data will be downloaded, by the Admissions Team, from the Early Years modules of the ONE database and a list of rising 4 children will be obtained from Southampton City Primary Care Trust (SCPCT). Any children who appear on the SCPCT list but not in the early years module will be entered on the database.

5. BROCHURES AND THE APPLICATION PROCESS

- A letter giving advice to parents for children in the transfer group, about online applications and use of forms, will be sent to parents in late August/early September 2013
- The composite prospectus will be available on line at the Southampton City Council website from no later than 12 September 2013.
- Online application commences 9 September.
- Parents of children living outside the city but wishing to apply for a place at a Southampton LA school must apply via their Home LA.
- Parents who live in the city who wish to apply for a place at a school in another LA area (e.g. Hampshire) must apply through the Southampton Admissions processes

6. CLOSING DATE

The closing date for applications will be 15 January 2014. This date is set in the regulations. Online applications will come direct to the Admissions Team..

7. PROCESSING OF ON-TIME APPLICATIONS

Own Admission Authority School applications –the data on any application form that mentions an own admission authority school regardless of the ranking of the school on the form will be sent to the VA school no later than 5 p.m 28 February 2014

Community/VC School applications – paper applications will be input onto the One database in order that initial allocations can be made on an equal preference basis.

By 5 p.m. Friday 21 March 2014, own admission authority schools will advise the Admissions Team of the rank order against their criteria of all the applications referred to them.

In the event that more than one place can be offered, e.g. at a VA school and a Community/VC school or at two Community/VC schools, the place that will be offered will be the one that is highest preference in the application.

For example, if the Community/VC school is 1st preference and the VA school is 2nd preference but both schools can offer a place, the place will be offered at the Community/VC school. However, if the VA school is the higher preference then the place will be offered at this school. In the case of two Community/VC places being available for offer, the offer will be made for the higher preference school. The Admissions Team will advise the VA schools of any children who are offered places at higher preference schools.

8. LATE APPLICATIONS

Any application submitted after the closing date will be treated as a late application. These will not be processed until after the on-time applications.

9. UNPLACED CHILDREN

Any child who remains unplaced after their application has been processed, either because they failed to get into any school requested or did not complete a form, will be offered a place at their catchment school, if places are still available. If there are no places available at their catchment school, they will be offered a place at the nearest school with places available to their home address. Distance to the home address will be measured by public roads and footpaths.

10. DECISION LETTERS

All parents/carers resident in Southampton will be notified of the outcome of their application on 16 April 2014. Southampton LA will make the offer of places at those schools (Community/VC) where it is the admission authority and will also offer on behalf of the governing bodies of VA schools where it is not the admission authority. Email notifications will also be sent to those parents who applied online. Applicants who are not offered their first preference school will receive a formal letter from the Admissions Team giving the reasons for refusal and guidance on how to appeal

Parents who receive an online notification will be able to accept their offer of a school place online. Those parents who receive a decision letter will also receive a reply slip that parents must complete to accept the place offered to them. The Admissions Team will notify own admission authority schools of any places they have offered that have been refused so that alternative offers can be made, if necessary. Parents will be offered the right of appeal against a refusal of a place as laid down in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, as amended by the Education Act 2002, and supporting regulations.

11. DATA TO SCHOOLS

Data will be provided to schools regularly from 7 May 2014 through to July 2014. The Admissions Team will work closely with schools to ensure that they have as much data as possible on potential numbers of reception class starters as soon as is possible. From 16 April 2014, schools will receive student data in the form of lists showing who has been allocated places at their schools either on line or otherwise electronically.

12. SUMMARY

This proposed scheme encompasses all the elements of the co-ordinated admissions scheme outlined in the law. A timetable showing how the process would work for the September 2014 intake is attached at the annexe.

CO-ORDINATED INFANT/PRIMARY SCHOOLS ADMISSIONS SCHEME

TIMETABLE FOR 2014/15

DATE	ACTIVITY
June 2013	Admission Team obtains details of “rising 4” children. Transfer group of all eligible children set up in the ONE database
Mid – August 2013	Letters outlining application procedure sent to all parents in the transfer group; letters advise parents to make online applications, or to use paper forms where they cannot.
Early September 2013	Parents collect admission brochures and blank application forms from any infant or primary schools.
9 September 2013	Online application window opens.
15 January 2014	Closing date for online applications and paper forms.
21 February 2014	Admissions Team sends details of all on time applications to other LAs if necessary
28 February 2014	Admissions Team sends details of all relevant applications to own admission authority schools in Southampton
21 March 2014	Own admission authority schools return ranked applications details to the Admissions Team
16 April 2014	Parents advised by letter and email from the Admissions Team of the result of their application.