

## **DERBY CITY COUNCIL**

### **CO-ORDINATED SCHEME FOR ADMISSION TO PRIMARY SCHOOL FOR THE 2011/12 ACADEMIC YEAR**

#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The School Standards and Framework Act 1998, as amended by the Education Act 2002, introduced a new statutory requirement for every Local Authority to draw up a scheme covering every maintained school (but not special schools) in its area. Regulations also require Authorities to exchange specified information with their neighbours. The purpose of a co-ordinated scheme is to establish mechanisms for ensuring, as far as reasonably practical, that every parent of a child living within that authority who has applied for a school place in the normal admission round receives an offer of one, and only one, school place on the same day. Applications will be assessed by using the address the child resides at at the closing date.
- 1.2 The duty to comply with parental preference will not be affected by co-ordinated admission arrangements, except where more than one place could be offered, nor will the co-ordinated scheme affect the rights and duties of governing bodies of voluntary aided and foundation schools to set and apply their own admission arrangements and over subscription criteria. The scheme is an administrative process to make admission to school easier, more transparent and less stressful for parents, as all applications to Primary Schools, both transfers and in-years are made through one body

#### **2. Main Obligations of the City Council & other Admission Authorities**

- 2.1 Regulations required applications for all primary schools within a Local Authority's area to be co-ordinated from September 2006 intakes onwards. This scheme covers intakes for the academic year 2011/12 into Foundation Stage 2 classes (Reception) at infant and primary schools and for Y3 transfers to junior schools and Hardwick Primary school, Dale Primary and St John Fisher Catholic Primary School and for all in-year applications to Primary Schools.
- 2.2 Parents must be invited to express their preferences, for schools on a common application form, which the authority should provide and make available to all parents resident in its area. Applications will only be considered on the common application form. The common application form can be supplemented (but not replaced) by additional forms where particular schools in the area might need extra information, e.g. to assess denominational commitment. The City Council must ensure that the Common Application Form enables parents to:
- Express their preferences; and
  - Give their reasons for applying for their preferred schools.

2.3 Full details of the co-ordinated scheme must be included in the City Council's composite prospectus.

2.4 The Common Application Form should be returned to Derby City Council for residents within Derby. Derby schools that receive direct applications in error must inform the Admissions Team at Derby City Council. Parents cannot change their preferences after the closing date, unless parents have changed address or have had a move fall through – proof will be required.

### **3. Administration of the scheme**

3.1 Derby City Council's form invites all parents resident in Derby to name their preferred school(s) by 15 January 2011. Parents may express a preference for up to three schools. If there are three preferences, they must be ranked by the parent. It is made clear that parents should name the school(s) at which they wish their child to be considered for a place including community, voluntary controlled, foundation or voluntary aided schools. Although parents must rank their preferences, all preferences will be treated as equal by admissions authorities in applying their own admissions policies. Ranking only applies when more than one school can offer a place as a means to decide which school should be offered, i.e. the school with the highest ranking by the parent which can offer a place will be the school offered. Attendance at a Nursery school does not automatically transfer to the school's infant department and attendance at an Infant School does not automatically transfer to a Junior School. Applications have to be made in both instances.

3.2 Derby residents who wish to apply for a school within the area of another Local Authority should still use the Derby City common application form.

3.3 By 7 February 2011 Derby City Council will send to other local authorities details of applications for schools in their authority. By 18 February 2011 Derby City Council will send to other admission authority schools details of applicants for their schools. Any additional information received by the other admissions authorities direct (e.g. proof of religious commitment) can be treated in the same way as that received via Derby City Council once it has been established that this only relates to applications which are mentioned and ranked on Derby City Council's form.

3.4 Derby City Council applies its own admission criteria to requests for places in its community and controlled schools.

3.5 The other admission authorities apply their admission criteria, and send the Admissions Team, by 11 March 2011 a list indicating the order in which all children for whom application to the school has been made have priority by reference to the over-subscription criteria.

3.6 By 18 March 2011, data will be exchanged again with other local authorities and Derby City Council then compares the lists from all schools in its area. Where it is the case that a child is eligible for more than one provisional offer of a place, the parent will be offered the higher ranked of those provisional offers as determined by their stated preferences on the common application form.

3.7 Derby City Council then adjusts the list for any other school for which a preference was expressed by that parent, moving another child, who was previously not eligible to be allocated a potential place up the list to a provisional place, which has been vacated.

3.8 Where the Authority cannot make a single offer for any of the preferences expressed by a parent resident in Derby, a place will be allocated to the child at the normal area school (if places are available) or next nearest Derby primary school, with places available, to their normal place of residence.

3.9 By 31 March 2011, all local authorities will have exchanged final data.

3.10 On or around 9 May 2011 Derby City Council writes to resident parents who filled in an application form to tell them of the allocated school place. Where the school in question is its own admission authority, the Council must state that the offer is being made on behalf of that school's governing body.

3.11 Late applications received after the closing date will only be considered alongside on-time applications if there is a significant reason, (eg single parent ill for some time) and documentary evidence is provided to the satisfaction of the City Council.

Any other applications will be considered to be late and will not be dealt with until places have been allocated to those who met the deadline.

#### Applications received after 9 May

These will be dealt with in the order they arrive. Allocations will only be made where spare places exist.

3.12 Admission applications received after the normal admission round, or for years other than the normal year of entry, will be handled, in the order they arrive, as quickly as possible if places are available. All the provisions of this scheme (excluding the timetable) apply for all applications received.

## **4. Waiting Lists**

The Authority will establish a waiting list for all Derby Primary Schools where the number of applications has exceeded the number of places available. Names of children will automatically be placed on the waiting list for a school where they have been refused a place where it ranked above that at which a place has been offered to the parent. A vacancy arises only when the number of offers to a particular school falls below the Published Admission Number. The waiting list will be established on the offer day and be maintained until the end of the Autumn Term. After this date the lists will be sent to the individual voluntary aided and foundation schools, although not all schools will continue with the waiting list. The Council will continue to maintain the waiting lists for community and controlled schools. Priority on the waiting list is determined according to the over-subscription criteria for that school. Following the offer day, should an application be received for a school where the pupil has a higher priority for a place at the school as determined by the criteria, they will be placed on the waiting list above those with a lower priority.

## **5. Right of Appeal**

Any parent whose child is refused a school place for which they have applied has the right to an independent appeal for the school(s) ranked higher than their final offer. Lower ranked applications will be withdrawn.

**NB:** Please note that all the dates and processes contained in this scheme are subject to alteration due to the implementation of any subsequent School Admissions Code which would supersede this scheme.