

**Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for secondary schools
in 2005/06**

A Applications made in the main round

1. The County Council firmly believes in giving priority to first preferences. The application form invites parents to state their preferences to be given in order. The co-ordinated scheme is based on prioritising first preferences but it will be for individual admission authorities to determine the outcome of all preferences expressed for that school. The only valid preferences are those stated on the LEA preference form. Other admission authorities should note that they should not use any other application form and that a separate, additional form need only be provided where additional information is required to determine admission within their criteria. This form will be obtainable from and returnable to that admissions authority (aided schools).
2. The process will begin with the distribution of admissions booklets and preference forms early in September 2004. In July 2004 identification of children transferring to secondary school in September 2005 will take place with primary schools including any out area children. In September 2004 neighbouring authorities will be asked to supply names and addresses of East Sussex children attending schools in those authorities so the admissions form can be sent to the parents – those parents will also be advised that details about the admission arrangements can be obtained direct from that authority. Similarly East Sussex will advise neighbouring authorities of children who attend East Sussex primary schools but are not resident in the county.
3. The form enables parents to give up to three preferences whether those are for schools for which East Sussex LEA is the admissions authority, or where the governing body of an aided school is the admissions authority or schools outside the county (foundation, aided or community/voluntary controlled). The form should be completed and returned to the LEA. The closing date for applications will be 22 October 2004.
4. By 12 November 2004 the LEA will have determined the level of first preferences for each school. Where a community or voluntary controlled school has fewer first preferences than the published admission limit all those preferences will be offered places. Aided schools will be advised of the preferences received and where a school is undersubscribed the intention of the LEA to issue a letter at the appropriate time advising parents that their first preference will be met.
5. By 12 November 2004 the LEA will pass to Brighton and Hove, West Sussex and Kent (and any other LEA) the forms completed by parents which name a school as first preference in those areas. Forms will also be passed on for schools of second or third preference. Neighbouring LEAs will be advised as to whether the first preference school is over or undersubscribed as soon as possible after forms have been received from those authorities.
6. By 12 November 2004 the LEA will advise aided schools of details of applicants for their schools and, where there is oversubscription, send the forms of any expressed preference to the schools to enable them to apply their admissions criteria.

7. By 17 December 2004 aided schools will advise the LEA of their decisions. Each school will clearly identify any children not being offered places. For all children the school will advise the LEA of the status of each application against its admissions criteria. Each school will provide a detailed statement explaining how places have been allocated and (where appropriate) the reasons why all first preferences have not been met. This statement will be sent to parents with the allocation letter released on 1 March 2005.
8. By 17 December 2004 other LEAs will advise East Sussex LEA of decisions reached on out area applications. Where a preference is not being met it is expected that the other LEA will provide a statement as to why that preference cannot be met. That statement will be sent to parents on the allocation date.
9. By 17 December 2004 the LEA will have decided on preferences for East Sussex community and voluntary controlled schools.
10. By 7 January 2005 the LEA will recirculate forms to other admissions authorities where the first preference cannot be met and the second preference is for a school where the LEA is not the admissions authority.
11. By 14 January 2005 the LEA will be advised by other admissions authorities to whom forms were sent of the outcome of the second round of preferences.
12. By 28 January 2005 the LEA will finalise allocations to be made. During the period 21 to 28 January discussions will take place, where necessary, with other admissions authorities over any outstanding applications (the third round).
13. In the period 28 January to 11 February letters and lists will be prepared.
14. In the period 28 January to 11 February decisions will be made on applications covered by section B of the Co-ordinated Scheme.
15. Neighbouring authorities will be sent details of children living in their area for whom they will need to issue the allocation letter as places have been allocated in East Sussex schools.
16. In the week commencing 21 February letters and lists of children being allocated places will be released to secondary schools (where appropriate) for the schools to post on the allocation date. Primary schools will also be sent lists of the allocations being made under strict confidential cover.
17. Tuesday 1 March 2005 – allocation letters released. Where a preference is not being met a detailed statement will be enclosed with the letter explaining how places have been allocated. The letter will also advise parents of the right of appeal – where this is for a school for which the LEA is not responsible for admissions parents will be advised to contact that admissions authority direct to arrange an appeal if they wish to do so.

B Applications after the closing date but before the allocation date

1. It is recognised that applications will be received after the closing date (for example the family is new to the area), parents might not complete forms by the closing date (or not at all) or parents will wish to change their preference (for example a family house move). Such applications still need a response and this section of the Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme deals with applications received in these circumstances.

2. **First applications for an East Sussex school** – These applications relate to new families to the area where it can reasonably be assumed that an application could not have been made by the closing date. If a family proposes to move to East Sussex it will only be determined through the Co-ordinated Scheme where the applicant can provide proof of ownership or tenancy on an East Sussex property (exchange of contracts or signed tenancy agreement of one year or more). If an applicant cannot provide that detail they will be expected to make application on the preference form of the home authority in which they currently live.
3. If the application form is received by 12 November 2004 it will be passed on to the admissions authority (if the LEA is the admissions authority it will be taken into account in the main round of applications).
4. If the form is received after 12 November it will still be passed to the admissions authority with a note that it has been received after that date. It will be for the admissions authority to decide how it wishes to respond to the application. It is expected that any application received after 12 November will be allocated a place at an undersubscribed school unless that is an unreasonable distance – unreasonable distance being defined as the statutory walking distance for school transport or a situation where the LEA would incur additional transport costs which prejudice the efficient use of resources. In this situation the LEA reserves the right to displace a first preference with an application received after the closing date. This will continue up until 1 March 2005.
5. Any late applicant will receive a letter on 1 March 2005 provided the application has been received by 11 February 2005. The LEA will ensure that any late application received between 12 November 2004 and 11 February 2005 is allocated a place but this is likely to be at the nearest school to the home with places available (unless unreasonable distance applies). For applications received after 11 February 2005 but before 1 March 2005 allocation letters will be released as soon as possible after 1 March.
6. **Late applications** – These relate to applications from parents where it could reasonably be assumed that an application could have been made by the closing date. These applications will be processed in the same way as new applications received after the closing date as described in paragraphs 2 to 5 above.
7. **No application form received by 1 March 2005** – It is recognised that for some children an application form will not be submitted. Such children will be allocated a place at the nearest school where a place is available (if that school is not one where the LEA is the admissions authority it is expected that the appropriate admissions authority will allocate a place provided that all stated preferences for the school have been determined). Such parents will be advised of the allocation of school on 1 March 2005.
8. **Changes of preference** – Some parents may wish to change preference after the closing date due to a change of circumstances. It is discretionary as to whether to accept such a change of preference. The LEA will judge each case on its merits but the general principle will be to only accept a change of preference where there has been a house move, or a significant change of circumstances thus making the original preference no longer practical. Any change of preference received by 11 February will have a decision conveyed on 1 March and such applications will be advised that they do have the right of appeal against the revised preference not being met. If the revised preference is for an undersubscribed school every attempt will be made to allocate a place at that school by 1 March.

C Application Forms received after 11 February 2005

1. Applications will continue to be received after the allocation date. Only those preferences expressed on the LEA application form will be valid. Where the preference is for a community or voluntary controlled school the LEA will determine the preference but if all places are allocated a place will be allocated at the nearest school with a place available (if that is an aided school the LEA will ask the school whether a place can be allocated). Any refused preference will be advised of the right of appeal. If the preference is for an aided school the LEA will pass the form to the aided school for a decision. The school must then advise the LEA within fourteen days as to whether a place can be allocated so the LEA can formally advise the parent of the decision.
2. Where the stated preference is for a school in a neighbouring authority the application form will be passed to that authority for a decision to be made within 14 days. Once that authority has advised East Sussex of the decision the parent can be informed.
3. Where applications are received after the beginning of term it will be for the admissions authority to handle the application and to inform the parent of the decision. The Co-ordination Scheme will end on the first day of the autumn term.

D Appeals

1. Appeals must be lodged within fourteen days of the allocation letter being sent on 1 March 2005. The appeal must be against any refused preference, thus if a parent puts on the appeal form a school which did not feature as a preference on the original application form an appeal will not be arranged. Parents will be required to complete another admissions form to reflect their new preference(s).
2. Parents requesting an appeal will be entitled to fourteen days' notice of the date of the appeal. Papers relevant to the appeal will be sent seven days before the hearing. The Code of Practice on appeals suggests that should be heard within six weeks of the allocation letter being released. The County Council will take all practicable and reasonable steps to ensure that the guidance is met, but cannot guarantee this, as it is dependent on the volume of appeals to be heard.
3. The LEA must be advised of the outcome of all appeals.

E Waiting lists

1. Each admissions authority will operate waiting lists so that it is clear as to which child will be offered any place which becomes vacant. Such waiting lists will be constructed on the closing date for appeals to be lodged (15 March 2005). The waiting list will reflect the admissions criteria. The LEA must be notified by admissions authorities of any places which are subsequently allocated from the waiting list. It remains for the LEA to offer places to parents when places become available and are allocated from the waiting list whether the admissions authority is the LEA, an aided school in East Sussex or a school in a neighbouring authority.
2. Waiting lists will operate until the end of the 2005/06 school year in respect of year 7 admissions.

F Casual admissions

1. These are applications received after the first day of term and outside of the co-ordinated scheme.
2. Applications during the year should continue to be made on the LEA application form. These should then be returned to the authority responsible for the admission arrangements. Any authority refusing an application should advise the LEA of the decision so the LEA can consider allocating an alternative school. The admissions authority should, at the same time, notify the parent of the decision, provide details of the appeals procedure and advise the parent that the form has been passed to the LEA so a school place can be allocated.

The same arrangements will apply to age groups other than the normal point of entry group. This includes admissions to schools which provide for students in years 12 and 13.