

PROPOSED

CO-ORDINATED SCHEME FOR ADMISSIONS TO: LOWER, PRIMARY AND MIDDLE ACADEMIES AND SCHOOLS

ACADEMIC YEAR 2020/2021

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The School Standards and Framework Act 1998, as amended by the Education Act 2002 and supported by The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) Regulations 2014 requires Local Authorities to formulate a scheme for co-ordinating admission arrangements for all academies and maintained schools in their area.
- 1.2 A school is here defined as any academy or maintained community, foundation, trust, voluntary aided or voluntary controlled school in the Central Bedfordshire Council area.
- 1.3 Central Bedfordshire Council, acting as the Local Authority is the admission authority for all community and voluntary controlled schools. The admission authority for academies is the academy trust. For foundation, trust and voluntary aided schools, the admission authority is the governing body.
- 1.4 This scheme will apply to all lower, primary and middle academies and schools for admissions in the Central Bedfordshire Council area from September 2020.
- 1.5 Any reference to Central Bedfordshire is a reference to the administrative area of the unitary authority.
- 1.6 Central Bedfordshire Council uses the equal preference system to process admission applications, as outlined below:
 - 1.6.1 Stage 1

All first, second and third preference applications are considered equally against the admissions criteria. At this stage the Council does not distinguish between first, second and third preference applications. For example, if the school has 120 places and there are 150 first, second and third preference applications all are considered equally against the admissions criteria.

1.6.2 Stage 2

If a pupil qualifies for a place at more than one school the parent's highest ranked preference (i.e. first or second preference on the parent's application form) will be offered, and any lower ranking offers will be disregarded. For example a parent's first and third preferences might both qualify for a place, in which case the parent would be offered their first preference, leaving the place at the third preference school available for another pupil.

2. The Scheme

- 2.1. This scheme is for admissions in the normal year of entry for:
 - a) Lower Academies and Schools
 - b) Primary Academies and Schools
 - c) Middle Academies and Schools
- 2.2. There will be a standard form known as the Common Application Form (CAF) available for parents of children living in Central Bedfordshire to apply online or by completing a hard copy application form.
- 2.3. The CAF will be used for the purposes of admitting children into the first year of a:
 - Lower or Primary academy/school (Year R), or
 - Middle academy/school (Year 5).
- 2.4. The CAF will enable parents/carers to:
 - express a preference for up to 3 academies/schools
 - rank their preferences
 - give reasons for their preferences
- 2.5. Information will be provided on the admissions process in the form of the admissions booklet and will contain information on:
 - a) the academies and schools in Central Bedfordshire
 - b) dates of open evenings (where applicable)
 - c) published admission numbers and admissions criteria
 - d) how to complete an application
 - e) how places are allocated
 - f) timetable for the application and allocation process
 - g) school transport
 - h) who to contact for advice
- 2.6. **Admissions for the normal year of entry into a Lower or Primary Academy/School (Year R):**
 - 2.6.1 Parents of all children born between **01/09/15 and 31/08/16** and living in Central Bedfordshire will be able to apply for an academy or school place online or by completing a hard copy of the Common Application Form (CAF). The CAF will be available from any local lower or primary

academy/school, from the School Admissions Team or it can be downloaded from the Council website.

- 2.6.2 Parents of children living in Central Bedfordshire who wish to apply for a primary or lower academy/school in another Local Authority must apply online or complete the hard copy of the CAF.
- 2.6.3 Parents of children who do not live in Central Bedfordshire but who wish to apply for a place at a Central Bedfordshire school or academy must make their application to their home Local Authority.
- 2.6.4 **Deferred Entry:** Parents of children offered a place for admission in the reception year are offered a full time place to commence in the September following their child's fourth birthday. However parents may defer the admission of their child until later in the academic year or until their child becomes of statutory school age or request that their child takes up their place part time until they reach statutory school age. A place cannot be deferred beyond statutory school age nor beyond the academic year for which the place was offered. Therefore the following will apply, according to the child's date of birth for deferring entry to the Reception year:

Child born:	Term which place can be deferred until:
1 st September – 31 st December	Spring term (January)
1 st January – 31 st March	Summer term (April)
1 st April – 31 st August	Summer term (April)

2.7. Delayed admission for summer born children (those born between 1 April and 31 August).

- 2.7.1 Parents/carers can also request that their Summer born child is admitted to Reception in that year rather than to Year 1. However, parents/carers do not have the right to insist that their child is admitted to a particular age group, a decision will be made by the admission authority for the school in consultation with the Headteacher.
- 2.7.2 Parents/carers of Summer born children should make their application for a school place on the Common Application Form (CAF) by 15 January if their child will be 4 years old by 31st August of that year. They should make clear on the form that they wish to defer entrance to school for a year. They should apply for both entrance to their child's normal age group (Year R) and for entrance out of the year group.
- 2.7.3 In line with the School Admissions Code December 2014 ("the Code"), the Council, as the admission authority for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools, will consider a request on the basis of the individual circumstances of the case and the best interests of the child. To this end, the Council will liaise with the Headteacher and must take account of their professional opinion on the case. The Council will also take account of the parents'/carers' view. A written request, sent together with the CAF should be made by the parents/carers for the attention of the Admissions Manager

and should include the parents'/carer's reasons for the request, information regarding the child's academic, social and emotional development including any supporting evidence the parent deems relevant; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional and if applicable, details if the child was born prematurely including whether they would have been in a lower age group had they been born on their due date. Once determined, the decision will be communicated to the parent(s)/carer(s) in writing and will include the reasons for the decision.

- 2.7.4 For schools which control their own admissions (Foundation, Trust or Voluntary Aided), parents/carers need to make their request in writing, separately from the CAF, directly to the Headteacher and Governing Body of the school. The request should include such details as are outlined above. The Governing Body, along with the Headteacher, will then consider the request, making their decision on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child in accordance with the Code. For Academies, parents/carers need to make their request in writing directly to the Academy Trust via the Principal. Academies must also follow the Code in making a decision.
- 2.7.5 Where the parents'/carers' request for a school place outside the normal age group is successful, the parents/carers can withdraw their application for a place within the normal age group. They will have to make a fresh application during the admissions round the following year. Where the request for a place outside the normal age group is unsuccessful, they may decide to continue with their application for a place within the normal age group or may withdraw it and make an in year application for admission to year one for the September following the child's fifth birthday.
- 2.7.6 Where a parent has more than one preferred school in their application, the relevant admission authorities will each consider the request and make their decision individually. There is no guarantee that all will come to the same decision.
- 2.7.7 Again at a future application or transfer point the decision to admit a child out of their normal age group rests with the admission authority and there is no guarantee they will come to the same decision as an earlier authority may have.
- 2.7.8 As set out above, if a request is granted, the parent will need to make an application as part of next year's normal admission round and this will be processed within the normal allocation process. A place is never guaranteed at a particular school and in the case of oversubscription, places are offered in accordance with the school's oversubscription criteria. In short it would be delaying the application rather than an offer of a place.

2.8 Admission into the normal year of entry into a Middle/Extended secondary Academy/ School (Year 5)

- 2.8.1 Parents of all children living in Central Bedfordshire and attending a lower academy/school in the Local Authority area will receive the details about the transfer process and how to apply.
- 2.8.2 Parents of children attending a lower academy/school, in Central Bedfordshire who do not live in the Local Authority area must make their application to their home Local Authority.
- 2.8.3 Parents of children living in Central Bedfordshire but not attending a lower academy/school, in the Local Authority area and who wish to apply for a middle academy/school place may make their application online or obtain a hard copy of the CAF and the Admissions booklet from the School Admissions Team. The CAF and booklet are also available to download from the Local Authority website.

2.9 Admission of children outside their normal age group

- 2.9.1 Parents who want their child to transfer to the next phase of school out outside of their normal age group must make the request in sufficient time for it to be considered before the application deadline.
- 2.9.2 Where the preference is for a Community or Voluntary Controlled school the request should be made in writing for the attention of the Admissions Manager. The Council will liaise with the Headteacher accordingly and will support their professional opinion on the case. The request should include the parent's reasons for the request, information regarding the child's academic, social and emotional development, including any supporting evidence the parent deems relevant and whether the child has previously been educated outside their normal age group. Once determined the decision will be communicated to the parent(s)/carer(s) in writing and will include the reasons for the decision.
- 2.9.3 For own admission schools (Foundation, Trust or Voluntary Aided) parents/carers need to make their request in writing to the Headteacher and Governing Body of the school who will then consider the request, making their decision on what they determine as in the best interests of the child. For Academies parents/carers need to make their request in writing to the academy trust via the Principal.
- 2.9.4 Requests which have been granted must be followed up by a formal application using the appropriate paper CAF within the admission timetable. The application will be considered within the normal allocation process under the relevant admission criterion.

3. Timetable for admissions into Lower, Primary and Middle academies and schools

Lower/Primary:

- 3.1. In **September 2019**, the Local Authority admissions booklet and the CAF will be available to parents of children living in Central Bedfordshire. Parents of children who do not live in Central Bedfordshire must apply to their home Local Authority.
- 3.2. Completed online applications and CAFs are to be submitted to the School Admissions Team by **15 January 2020**. Parents of children who do not live in Central Bedfordshire must have applied to their home Local Authority by this date.

Middle transfer:

- 3.3. In **September 2019** information is sent to parents of all children in Year 4 attending a lower academy/school in the Local Authority area. Parents of children who do not live in Central Bedfordshire will be advised to contact their home Local Authority in order to make their application.
- 3.4. Completed online applications are to be submitted and hard copies of the CAF are to be returned to the School Admissions Team by **15 January 2020**. Parents of children who do not live in Central Bedfordshire must have applied to their home Local Authority by this date.

Lower, Primary and Middle admissions

- 3.5. By **7 February 2020** all preferences will be logged on the database and the School Admissions Team will notify the admission authority for each academy, foundation, trust school or voluntary aided school of every nomination that has been made for that academy or school. Applications for places in other Local Authority academies/schools are sent to those authorities.
- 3.6. By **6 March 2020** the admission authority for each academy, foundation, trust or voluntary aided school will consider all applications, apply their oversubscription criteria and provide the School Admissions Team with a list of those applicants ranked according to their oversubscription criteria. All preferences will be ranked equally against the admissions criteria.
- 3.7. The School Admissions Team will process the ranked lists against the ranked lists of other academies and schools nominated and:
 - where the child is eligible for a place at only one of the nominated academies or schools, that academy or school will be allocated to the child.
 - where the child is eligible for a place at two or more of the nominated academies or schools, they will be allocated a place at whichever of these is the highest ranked preference

- 3.8. Between **9 March 2020 and 20 March 2020** information will be exchanged with other Local Authorities on potential offers (i.e. a Central Bedfordshire child applying for a place in another Local Authority area or a child from another Local Authority applying for a place at a Central Bedfordshire academy or school) to determine the allocation of a place at the highest ranked preference.
- 3.9. Where the child is not eligible for a place at any of the nominated academies or schools, the child will be allocated a place at the nearest appropriate academy or school with a vacancy, but only if the child is resident in Central Bedfordshire. If the child does not reside in Central Bedfordshire, parents will be invited to request a place at any of the academies or schools that still have vacancies, after the allocation process. Priority will always be given to those parents who have expressed a preference for a particular academy or school over those who have not.
- 3.10 On **9 April 2020** all middle academies and schools will have access to details of the pupils to be offered places via the web based School Admissions Module.
- 3.11. On **16 April 2020** the School Admissions Team will notify parents of children living in Central Bedfordshire of the outcome of their application, including those who have applied for a place in another Local Authority academy or school. Parents of children who do not live in Central Bedfordshire will be notified by their home Local Authority.
- 3.12 By **30 April 2020** parents are to notify School Admissions Team of their rejection of the place offered if this is no longer required. If parents do not respond by this date it will be assumed that they have accepted the place.
- 3.13 By **30 April 2020** parents who have applied on time and want to change their preference from their original offer need to have submitted a change of preference by this date.

4. Late Applications

- 4.1 The national closing date for applications in the normal admissions round is **15 January 2020**. Applications received after this date will be considered late and will be processed after the initial allocation of places.
- 4.2. Late applications received from 16 January until 30 April will be processed as part of the initial late allocation round and will be logged onto the database by **1 May 2020**.
- 4.3. The School Admissions Team will notify the admission authority for each academy, foundation, trust and voluntary aided school of every nomination that has been made for that academy or school by **1 May 2020**.

- 4.4. Applications for places in other Local Authority academies or schools will be sent to those authorities by **1 May 2020**.
- 4.5. By **8 May 2020** the admission authority for each academy, foundation, trust and voluntary aided school will consider all their initial late applications for their academy or school, apply their oversubscription criteria and provide the School Admissions Team with a list of those applicants ranked according to their oversubscription criteria. All preferences will be ranked equally against the admissions criteria.
- 4.6. The School Admissions Team will process the ranked lists against the ranked lists of other academies or schools nominated and:
 - where the child is eligible for a place at only one of the nominated academies or schools, that academy or school will be allocated to the child.
 - where the child is eligible for a place at two or more of the nominated academies or schools, they will be allocated a place at whichever of these is the highest ranked preference.
- 4.7. Information will be exchanged with other Local Authorities on potential offers (i.e. a Central Bedfordshire child applying for a place in another Local Authority area or a child from another Local Authority applying for a place at a Central Bedfordshire academy or school) to determine the allocation of a place at the highest ranked preference.
- 4.8. Where the child is not eligible for a place at any of the nominated academies or schools, the child will be allocated a place at the nearest appropriate academy or school with a vacancy, but only if the child is resident in Central Bedfordshire. If the child does not reside in Central Bedfordshire, parents will be invited to request a place at any of the academies or schools that still have vacancies, after the allocation process. Priority will always be given to those parents who have expressed a preference for a particular academy or school over those who have not.
- 4.9. On **21 May 2020** the School Admissions Team will post letters to parents of children living in Central Bedfordshire notifying them of the outcome of their Middle School applications, if part of the initial late allocation round, including those who have applied for a place in another Local Authority academy or school where the result of this decision has been received by the timescales outlined above.
- 4.10. On **1 June 2020** the School Admissions Team will post letters to parents of children living in Central Bedfordshire notifying them of the outcome of their Lower and Primary School applications, if part of the initial late allocation round, including those who have applied for a place in another Local Authority academy or school where the result of this decision has been received by the timescales outlined above.

- 4.11. Late applications received on or after the 1 May will be processed from **22 May 2020 for Middle school applications** and **1 June 2020 for Lower and Primary school applications**.

5. Waiting Lists

- 5.1. Pupils not offered a place at their highest preference academy or school or at any of their preferred academies or schools are kept on a waiting list maintained by the admission authority to be re-allocated if places become available. Waiting lists will be maintained until **the end of the academic year for 2020/21** for Community and Voluntary controlled schools. Waiting lists for academies and schools who are their own admission authority (Foundation, Trust and VA) may operate different waiting list arrangements. Allocation will be on the basis of the published oversubscription criteria. Priority will not be given to children based on the date their application was received or when their name was added to the list. Looked after children, previously looked after children, and those allocated a place at the school in accordance with the Fair Access Protocol, will take precedence over those on a waiting list.

6. In-year Admissions (applications received on or after 1 September)

- 6.1. An in-year admission is an application made for a child to be admitted outside of the co-ordinated admissions scheme for the normal year of entry or for another year group within an academy/school.
- 6.2. The local authority will co-ordinate in-year applications for community and voluntary controlled schools as the admission authority for those schools.
- 6.3. The local authority will co-ordinate in-year applications made for academies and own admission authority schools (Foundation, Trust and Voluntary-Aided schools) who opt-in to the local authority's scheme for in-year admissions.
- 6.4. The Local Authority will make an application form available to enable parents to apply for an in-year place at any academy or school within the Local Authority area, which will enable parents to express a preference for up to 3 academies or schools and to rank their preferences. The form will be available on the Local Authority website as an e-form or can be downloaded or a hard copy can be obtained from the School Admissions Team.
- 6.5. The application will be dealt with by the local authority for those schools which are community or voluntary controlled schools or those academies and own admission authority who have opted in to the local authority's in-year co-ordination scheme.
- 6.6. Any application received by the School Admissions Team for an academy or own admission authority school who has opted out of the local authority's in-year co-ordination scheme will be forwarded to that academy or school to process.

- 6.7. All Academies and own admission authority schools who deal with their own in-year admissions (i.e. opted out of the in-year co-ordination scheme) will be required to determine the child's application and notify the parent and local authority of the outcome.
- 6.8. Pupils not offered a place at a community or voluntary controlled school or at an academy or own admission authority school which has opted in to the local authority's in-year co-ordination scheme will be kept on a waiting list which will be maintained for the academic year of admission. Academies and own admission authority schools who have opted out will have their own waiting list arrangements. In all cases where a place cannot be offered parents will have the right of appeal.
- 6.9. If all of the preferred academies and schools are full and the pupil lives in Central Bedfordshire, a place will generally be offered at the nearest academy or school with places available, unless the child is already attending a local school or academy.
- 6.10. Any place offered is usually expected to be taken up by the child within 4-6 weeks or by the start of the next school term.
- 6.11. Details of the community and voluntary controlled schools and those academies and own admission authority schools who have opted-in to the in-year co-ordination scheme and those who have opted out can be obtained from the School Admissions Team at www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/admissions.

**Timetable for Co-ordinated Admissions to:
Lower, Primary and Middle Schools and Academies for academic year 2020/21**

September 2019	Information about the Starting School and Middle Transfer process issued.
15 January 2020	National closing date for receipt of applications.
7 February 2020	By this date details of applications to be sent to academies, foundation, trust and voluntary aided schools. Applications for places in other Local Authority academies and schools sent to those authorities.
6 March 2020	By this date, academies and foundation, trust and voluntary aided schools provide the School Admissions Team with ranked lists of applicants.
11 March – 20 March 2020	Between these dates information to be exchanged with other Local Authorities on potential offers.
9 April 2020	Information on pupils to be offered places will be available to schools and academies via the School Admissions Module.
16 April 2020	Notification to be sent to parents living in Central Bedfordshire on the offer made to their child.
30 April 2020	Date by which parents reject the offer of a place if not required.
1 May 2020	Late applications received between 16 January and 30 April 2020 will be logged onto the database by this date.
1 May 2020	The School Admissions Team will notify the admission authority for each academy, foundation, trust and voluntary aided school of every nomination that has been made for that school or academy and applications for places in other Local Authority academies/schools will be sent to those authorities.
21 May 2020	Notification to be posted to parents living in Central Bedfordshire who have submitted a late Middle School application that qualifies for consideration in the initial late allocation round.
22 May 2020	Late Middle School applications received on or after 1 May will be processed from this date.
1 June 2020	Notification to be posted to parents living in Central Bedfordshire who have submitted a late Lower and Primary School application that qualifies for consideration in the initial late allocation round.
2 June 2020	Late Lower and Primary School applications received on or after 1 May will be processed from this date.