

CO-ORDINATED ADMISSION SCHEME

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

SEPTEMBER 2008

Introduction

1. The 1998 Act, as amended by the Education Act 2002, has introduced new statutory requirements for every Local Authority (LA) to draw up a scheme covering every maintained school in its area. To comply with these new regulations, Stockton-on-Tees LA has drawn up a full co-ordinated admissions scheme for Primary and Secondary school admissions for September 2008.

The scheme also complies with the changes introduced in the new School Admissions Code written to reflect the new legislation laid out in the Education & Inspections Bill 2006.

Interpretation

2. In this scheme:

“the LA” means Stockton on Tees Borough Council acting in their capacity as local education authority;

“the LA area” means the area in respect of which the LA are the local education authority.

“primary education” has the same meaning as in section 2(1) of the Education Act 1996;

“secondary education” has the same meaning as in section 2(2) of the Education Act 1996;

“primary school” has the same meaning as in section 5(1) of the Education Act 1996;

“secondary school” has the same meaning as in section 5(2) of the Education Act 1996;

“school” means a community, foundation or voluntary school (but not a special school) which is maintained by the LA;

“VA schools” means such of the schools as are voluntary-aided schools;

“admission authority” in relation to a community or voluntary controlled school means the LA and, in relation to a VA school means the governing body of that school;

“the specified year” means the school year beginning at or about the beginning of September 2008;

“admission arrangements” means the arrangements for a particular school or schools which govern the procedures and decision making for the purposes of admitting pupils to the school within the normal round of admissions;

“casual admission means any applications received for those primary or secondary schools whose normal age of entry is other than 5 or 11.

“nearest appropriate school” is defined as the school closest to the home address with places, unless your child is a baptised Catholic then a place would be offered at the nearest Roman Catholic School with places.

Applying for a school place

3. There will be a standard form known as the Common Application Form (CAF) which will be used for the purpose of admitting pupils into the reception class for primary school and the first year of secondary education in the specified year and separate form (Transfer Request form) for any applications made for a “casual admission” into any year group during the academic year 2008/09.

4. The CAF must be used as a means of expressing one or more preferences for the purposes of section 86 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, by parents resident in the LA area who wish to express a preference for their child –
 - (a) to be admitted to a school within the LA area (including VA schools).
 - (b) to be admitted to a school located in another LA's area (including VA schools and Academies).
5. The CAF will –
 - (a) invite parents to express three preferences by completing the form including, where relevant, any schools outside the LA's area, in rank order of preference;
 - (b) invite parents to give their reasons for each preference.
 - (c) Specify the closing date and where it must be returned.
6. The LA will make appropriate arrangements to ensure:
 - (a) that the CAF is available on request from the LA; and
 - (b) that a written explanation of the scheme is available from the LA and on their website.
7. All preferences expressed on the CAF are valid applications. The governing body of a VA school can require parents who wish to nominate, or have nominated, their school on the CAF, to provide additional information on a supplementary form only where the additional information is required for the governing body to apply their oversubscription criteria to the application. Where a supplementary form is required, this will be requested after the VA schools have received information from the LA about who has applied for their schools. Information requested should be returned by the parent to the individual school.
8. Where a school receives a supplementary form it will not be regarded as a valid application unless the parent has also completed either the Stockton on Tees CAF or, if resident in another area which has a CAF, their home area's common application form, and the school is nominated on it. Where supplementary forms are received directly by VA schools the school must inform the LA immediately so it can verify whether a CAF or neighbouring area's CAF has been received from the parent and, if not, contact the parent and ask them to complete one. In these circumstances, the school should also send the LA a copy of the supplementary form if so requested. Under the requirements of the scheme, parents will not be under any obligation to complete an individual school's supplementary form where this is not strictly required for the governing body to apply their oversubscription criteria.

Processing of CAFs

9. Completed CAFs should be returned to the LA:
 - (a) for secondary schools by the **26 October 2007** in the self addressed envelope provided. The LA will enter information for all the schools within the Borough onto their system and forward information for applications to VA schools at the latest by the **14 November 2007**.
 - (b) for primary schools by the **25 January 2008** in the self addressed envelope provided. The LA will enter information for all the schools within the Borough onto their system and forward information for applications to VA schools at the latest by **8 February 2008**.

Allocation of places

- 10 Places will be allocated using the Equal Ranking Scheme for Primary and Secondary by all admission authorities within Stockton on Tees.

SECONDARY ADMISSIONS - Determining offers in response to the CAF

12. The LA will act as a clearing house for the allocation of places by the relevant admission authorities in response to the CAFs. The LA will only make any decision with respect to the offer or refusal of a place in response to any preference expressed on the CAF where
- (a) it is acting in its separate capacity as an admission authority; or
 - (b) an applicant is eligible for a place at more than one school, or
 - (c) an applicant is not eligible for a place at any school that the parent has nominated.
13. **By the 14 November 2007** the LA will notify the admission authority for each of the schools of every application that has been made for that school. Where parents have requested a place at a school outside of the LA area, the information will be forwarded to the relevant authority/authorities.
14. **By 10 January 2008** - VA schools, other LAs and Academy, inform LA of allocation of places for all applications received in the priority order of their admission policy. Any applications which are refused also need to be listed in order of priority.

The LA compares lists and considers all preferences from the parent and if first preference is refused, look to see where 2nd or 3rd preferences can be accommodated. The lists will be sent back to the VA schools for their approval before finalising allocations.

Liaison will take place with VA's and other LAs/CTC until the allocation of places is resolved for each application, as required.

15. **By the 15 February 2008** - the LA will match ranked lists for all schools and:
- where the child is eligible for a place at only one of the nominated schools, that school will be allocated to the child;
 - where the child is eligible for a place at two or more of the nominated schools, they will be allocated a place at whichever of these is the highest ranked preference.

Where the child is not eligible for a place at any of the nominated schools, they will be offered a place at the nearest appropriate school with a vacancy.

16. **On 1 March 2008** the LA will post letters (2nd class post) to parents to let them know which school has been allocated to their child. The letter will also tell them of their statutory right to appeal if they have been refused a place at their preferred school.

Parents will be asked to return their appeal forms to the appropriate admission authority e.g. Community Schools to the LA (Democratic Services) and VA Schools to the individual school.

(Letters will be posted out on the 29th February due to 1st March not being a working day.)

PRIMARY ADMISSIONS - Determining offers in response to the CAF

17. The LA will act as a clearing house for the allocation of places by the relevant admission authorities in response to the CAFs. The LA will only make any decision with respect to the offer or refusal of a place in response to any preference expressed on the CAF where
- (d) it is acting in its separate capacity as an admission authority; or
 - (e) an applicant is eligible for a place at more than one school, or
 - (f) an applicant is not eligible for a place at any school that the parents has nominated.

18. Week commencing 3 December 2007 – Packs for admission to Primary School will be distributed to all parents. Applications are to be made on common application form and all applications returned to LA. The LAs system for online applications will become 'live' from the 3 December to midnight on the 26th January 2008.

19. Closing date for return of CAFs and online applications – 26th January 2008

20 Week ending 8th February 2008 – the LA will notify the admission authority for each of the schools of every application that has been made for that school. Where parents have requested a place at a school outside of the LA area, the information will be forwarded to the relevant authority/authorities.

After 8th February – All VA schools make arrangements to gather information required from parents and set up admission committees for allocation of places.

21 20 March 2008 VA schools inform the LA of allocation of places for all applications received in the priority order of their admission policy. Any applications which are refused also need to be listed in order of priority.

The LA compares lists and considers all preferences from the parent and if first preference is refused, look to see where 2nd or 3rd preferences can be accommodated. The lists will be sent back to the VA schools for their approval before finalising allocations.

Liaison will take place with VA schools until the allocation of places is resolved for each application, as required.

21. By the 28th March - the LA will match ranked lists for all schools and:

- where the child is eligible for a place at only one of the nominated schools, that school will be allocated to the child;
- where the child is eligible for a place at two or more of the nominated schools, they will be allocated a place at whichever of these is the highest ranked preference.

Where the child is not eligible for a place at any of the nominated schools, they will be offered a place at the nearest appropriate school with a vacancy.

23. On the 13 April 2008 the LA will post (2nd class) out a letter to parents informing them of their allocated school. The letter will tell them which school has been allocated and their statutory right to appeal if they have been refused a place at their preferred school.

Parents will be asked to return their appeal forms to the appropriate admission authority e.g. Community Schools to the LA (Democratic Services) and VA Schools to the individual school.

NO CAF RECEIVED BY THE LA

24. Where no CAF is submitted for primary or secondary school, the child will be offered a place at the nearest appropriate school with a vacancy.

LATE APPLICATIONS

25. CAFs received after the closing date will be dealt with after all the other applications have been looked at unless there is a good reason, e.g. if a family moves into the area. If that is the case, the application can be considered along with all of those that came in on time as long as the allocations have not been completed.

The LA will continue to co-ordinate applications for admission in September 2008 for any late applications received eg after the closing date and post offer date, up until the start of that school year.

WAITING LISTS

26. The LA will maintain a waiting list for all oversubscribed maintained Stockton on Tees Schools. The waiting list will be open for Secondary schools for 2 weeks into the Autumn Term of September 2008 and for Primary schools, for 2 weeks into the Spring Term in January 2009. Places will be allocated, if they become available, in accordance with the published oversubscription criteria.
27. Where the LA is able to offer a place to a non-Stockton on Tees child from the Waiting List, we will liaise with the home LA.

SECONDARY AND PRIMARY CO-ORDINATED ADMISSIONS

TIMETABLE 2008/09

SECONDARY

Wc 10 September 2007	CAFs and other information to parents
26 October 2007	Closing date for return of CAFs
14 November 2007	Lists of applications sent to VA schools and other LAs received by home LA.
10 January 2008	VA schools and other LAs inform LA of their allocations as well as list of pupils who have been refused places with reasons. Liaison between admission authorities to resolve offers
15th February 2008	Finalise allocations and further liaison as necessary
1st March 2007	Letters posted (2 nd class) to all parents of those resident in home LA area of allocated schools. <i>(Letters posted on 29 February due to 1 March no working day)</i>
End April 2007	Appeal hearings arranged.

PRIMARY

WC 3 December 2007	CAFs and other information to parents
25 January 2008	Closing date for return of CAFs and online applications.
8 February 2008	Lists of applications sent to VA schools.
20 March 2008	VA schools inform LA of their allocations as well as list of pupils who have been refused places with reasons. Liaison between admission authorities to resolve offers
28 March 2008	Finalise allocations and further liaison as necessary
12 April 2008	LA post (2 nd class) out allocation letters sent out to all parent offering places and refusals giving reasons and right of appeal.
End of May 2008	Appeal hearings arranged.