

## **Hertfordshire County Council's coordinated schemes of admission for first, primary, junior, middle, secondary, upper schools, academies (including free schools, studio schools and university technical colleges) for 2014/15**

**The schemes of coordination are set out below in accordance with the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 (SSFA), as amended.**

### **Definitions used in the schemes:**

“the LA” means Hertfordshire County Council acting in its capacity as local authority;

“the LA area” means the area in respect of which the LA is the local authority;

“home LA” means the LA in which the applicant is resident.

“maintaining LA” the LA where the school is located

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

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

“secondary education” has the same meaning as in section 2(2) 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 schools that are voluntary-aided schools;

“Foundation schools” means schools that have foundation status;

“Academy” means schools that have Academy status that are state funded, non fee paying schools set up under a Funding Agreement between the Secretary of State and an Academy Trust. In line with paragraph 4, footnote 3 of the School Admissions Code 2012, academies include free schools, studio schools and university technical colleges:

“admission authority” means, in respect of any school which is community or voluntary-controlled, the LA and, in respect of any school which is foundation, voluntary-aided school or Academy, the governing body of that school;

“the equal preference system” the scheme operated by Hertfordshire County Council, and required by the School Admissions Code, whereby all preferences listed by parents/carers on the common application form are considered under the over-subscription criteria for each school without reference to parental rankings. Where a pupil is offered a place at more than one school, the rankings are used to determine the single offer by selecting the one ranked highest on the common application form;

“the academic year” means a period commencing with 1 September and ending with the next 31 August.

“admission arrangements for the specified year” 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(s) during the specified year.

“application form” means the application form supplied by the LA electronically or on paper.

“In Year application” means any application for a school place that is received after completion of the normal admission round, or in subsequent years. (The “normal admissions round” ends on 31 August in the year of allocation)

“late admission” means any application for a school place that is received in the normal admissions round but later than the deadline date stated for receipt of on-time applications stipulated in the scheme.

School Admissions Code - refers to the Code published on 1 February 2012 .

The governing body or trust of each of the voluntary-aided, foundation school and academy (including free schools, studio schools and university technical colleges) will include in its admission arrangements for the specified year the provisions set out in the Schedules 1-3.

Foundation, voluntary-aided schools and academies are their own admitting authority and will apply their own admissions criteria to all applications. They will be responsible for organising and presenting admission appeals unless the governing body buys into HCC’s appeals services.

## **Schedule 1**

### **Primary Co-ordination**

#### **The application form**

1. The primary application form (PAF) will be supplied by Hertfordshire County Council. Parent/carers will be able to apply on-line for a school place, at [www.hertsdirect.org/admissions](http://www.hertsdirect.org/admissions) A paper copy of the application form will be included within the primary booklet and available on request.
2. The online application or paper form will be used for the purpose of admitting pupils at the normal point of entry into primary education. When an application is received, it is treated as representing the preference(s) from the parent/carer with parental responsibility. Only one application per child will be accepted
3. Applicants will be able to express a preference for four maintained first, infant, primary, middle or junior schools or academies within or outside Hertfordshire.
4. The application will –
  - (a) invite the parent/carer to apply for a place at their preferred schools or academies by completing the form and by naming four schools;
  - (b) invite the parent/carer to rank their preferred schools in the order in which they desire their child to receive an offer of a place at the respective schools;
  - (c) invite the parent/carer to give their reasons for each preference.
5. The online application system and paper form will also specify the statutory closing date and, for paper forms the location where it must be returned to.
6. The LA will make appropriate arrangements to ensure –
  - (a) That an online application form is available via [www.hertsdirect.org/admissions](http://www.hertsdirect.org/admissions)
  - (b) that a paper application form is available on request from the LA; and
  - (c) there is a written explanation of the key features of the co-ordinated admissions scheme and where further explanation about the scheme can be obtained.
7. The LA will take reasonable steps to ensure that all parents/carers of children of the appropriate age and resident in Hertfordshire receive details of how to apply and understand the process.

8. All preferences expressed on the Hertfordshire PAF (in electronic or paper formats) are valid applications. The form must be returned to the LA. Where an application for a Hertfordshire school is made by an out county resident on their home LA's form, this will also be considered to be a valid application. Hertfordshire will only accept a maximum of four preferences for Hertfordshire schools and academies from residents of other boroughs regardless of the number of preferences allowed by the home authority. Hertfordshire residents must use the Hertfordshire form and return it to Hertfordshire County Council whether their application is for Hertfordshire schools/academies or schools/academies in other LAs.

### **Supplementary Information Forms (SIFs)**

9. The admission authorities within Hertfordshire will not use supplementary information forms (SIFs) except where the information available through the primary application form is insufficient for consideration of the application against the published oversubscription criteria. Where supplementary information forms are used by the admissions authorities within this LA, the LA will seek to ensure that these only collect information which is required by the published oversubscription criteria, in accordance with paragraph 2.4 of the School Admissions Code
10. Where supplementary information forms are used by admission authorities in this LA, they will be available on this LA's website as well as the school website. Such forms will advise parents that they must also complete their home LA's application form. Hertfordshire's admission booklet and website will indicate which schools in Hertfordshire require supplementary information forms to be completed and where they can be obtained.
11. Where a school receives a supplementary information form, this LA will not consider it to be a valid application unless the parent/carer has also listed the school on their home LA's application form, in accordance with paragraph 2.1 of the School Admissions Code. Supplementary information forms should be returned direct to the school concerned. Any received by the LA will be date stamped and passed on to the school. In addition:
  - (a) The SIF must not request any information about the preference order for the school or ask for details of any other school the parent/carer may also have stated a preference for on the main application form.
  - (b) A parent/carer cannot be required to collect a SIF in person.
  - (c) The information requested on the SIF must not infringe any statutory right of the parent/carer or child.
  - (d) The SIF must comply with the School Admissions Code and must not ask for any information prohibited by paragraph 1.9. of the Code. In addition , the form must not ask for:

- i. any personal details about parents or families , such as maiden names, criminal convictions or marital, (including marriage certificates) or financial status;
- ii. the first language of parents or the child;
- iii. details about parents' or children's disabilities, special educational needs or medical conditions,
- iv. parents to agree to support the ethos of the school in a practical way;
- v. both parents to sign the form, or for the child to complete the form

Collecting such information may suggest that it can be taken into account and therefore be misleading to parents

12. When a voluntary-aided, foundation school or academy has failed to obtain a SIF but there is a PAF, the application must proceed because an application has been made. Paragraph 4.3 of Section 86(2) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 requires the local authority and the governing body of a maintained school to comply with parental preference. Conversely, in circumstance where a SIF has been received by a voluntary-aided, foundation school or academy, the admission authority must be proactive in ensuring that there is a PAF for that application, in order that the application can be considered. PAFs received after the closing date will be late. If a SIF is not received the application can only be assessed in accordance with information available to the governing body from the LA application form and therefore may given lower priority in the school's admission arrangements.
13. The school's admission arrangements must be such as to enable relevant decisions to be made in line with the time table of this scheme.

### **Inter-LA co-ordination**

14. Hertfordshire will manage allocations in line with the Pan-London Coordinated Admissions System (this comprises of thirty nine local authorities in and adjacent to London). Application data relating to applications to schools in other LAs will be forwarded via S2S (S2S is a website designed to transfer data between LAs and schools securely).

15. Information will be exchanged via S2S or the Pan-London Register in order that each child receives the highest ranked school place possible. As far as reasonably practicable, all offers of primary school places (in Reception classes or at junior and middle schools) will be made on 16 April (or the first working day after 16 April). Allocations will be available online on the evening of 16 April for those who made online applications and allocation letters will be sent first class on 16 April to those making paper applications.

## **Processing of application forms**

16. Completed application forms, either online or paper, should be submitted to the home LA by the statutory closing date. Completed application forms received after the closing date will be considered after all on time applications. Late applications submitted with supporting evidence will be considered by a panel of officers and may be agreed as “on time” if received before the published “late” date.

17. This LA will process a maximum of four school preferences from parents/carers whose permanent home address is within this LA, and a maximum of four preferences on applications received from parents/carers resident outside this LA who have expressed a preference for maintained schools or academies within this LA. All completed application forms will be treated as a confidential communication. Voluntary aided, foundation schools and academies will, however, be provided with relevant details of those pupils for whom they are a preference. Ranking information will remain confidential until after allocation day.

## **Determining offers in response to the application form**

18. The LA will act as a clearing house for the allocation of places by the relevant admission authorities in response to the application form.

19. Where a foundation or VA school or academy is listed on the primary application form (as one of a maximum of four preferences for Hertfordshire schools) the LA will forward the appropriate details to the governing body. The admission authority for each school will then provide the LA with a list of all pupils, indicating the order in which places should be allocated under each criterion and will include only pupils for whom the home LA received an application form stating a preference for that school. This information will be provided to the LA by the specified date.

20. In any instance where a school or an academy in another LA is listed on the standard Hertfordshire form, details will be forwarded to that LA (via the PLR or S2S or alternative secure electronic transfer).

21. No decision by an admission authority on any preference received for the school or academy shall pay any regard to the ranking order expressed by the parent/carer.

22. During the allocation process, the LA will match the provisional allocations against each parent's/carer's ranking order and proceed as follows:

- i. When a parent/carer can be offered a place at the school or academy which they ranked first – the allocation will become firm. The LA will then withdraw any potential offer of a place for that parent/carer at lower ranked schools or remove the parent's/carer's preference from a school's continuing interest list (as appropriate).

- ii. When a parent/carer has not been provisionally allocated a place at the school or academy which they ranked first, but has been provisionally allocated a place at the school or academy which they ranked second – the LA will hold the provisional allocation at the second rank school/academy for that parent/carer, pending further iteration rounds, and will withdraw any provisional offer of a place for that parent/carer at lower ranked schools/academies or remove the parent's/carer's preference from the continuing interest list (as appropriate).
- iii. When a parent/carer has not been provisionally allocated a place at the school which they ranked first or second, but has been provisionally allocated a place at the school which they ranked third – the LA will hold the provisional allocation for that parent/carer, pending further iteration rounds and will withdraw any provisional offer of a place for that parent/carer at lower ranked schools or remove the parent's/carer's preference from the school's continuing interest list (as appropriate).
- iv. When a parent/carer has not been provisionally allocated a place at the school which they ranked first, second or third, but has been provisionally allocated a place at the school/academy which they ranked fourth – the LA will hold the provisional allocation for that parent/carer, pending further iteration rounds

23. When a provisional allocation is released, the LA will provisionally allocate the place to the next ranked applicant in accordance with the over subscription criteria for that school/academy. These processes will be repeated until the LA is unable to release any further provisional allocations and the process has reached a steady state. All allocations then in existence will become firm allocations of a place at the school/academy concerned and parents/carers will be offered those places accordingly. All parents/carers with unsatisfied preferences will be treated as having been refused a place by the admission authority for that school.

### **Late applications**

24. After on time applications have been dealt with and preferences allocated, late applications that can be allocated a ranked school will be processed. Finally, all Hertfordshire children whether on time or late who were not able to have a preference satisfied through the iterative process will be allocated a school place.

### **Children who have not been allocated a ranked school place in the iterative processes**

25. The LA will match:

- (a) those children of parents/carers resident in the LA area that require to be admitted in the specified year but have received no offer of a place under the above procedure, against

- (b) those schools that, on the basis of their PAN (or agreed intake number if higher than the PAN), have places remaining unfilled after the procedure above.

26. The criteria used by the LA for matching will usually allocate pupils to their nearest suitable community or voluntary controlled school with available places. Schools may be inside or outside Hertfordshire. Places may be allocated at voluntary aided, foundation school or an academy in liaison and agreement with those schools/LAs, regardless of the ethos of the school(s) concerned.

### **Notification to parents/carers**

27. The LA will communicate to all parents/carers resident within the LA who made an application notifying them of an offer of a place, either within the home LA or in another LA, and where relevant for schools within the LA, giving reasons why higher preferences were not offered. Allocation letters will only be sent to parents submitting a paper application form. Allocation information will be provided electronically (by email and/or via the online application system) for all online applicants.

28. When a parent is not offered a place at their first ranked school they will be offered :

- a. Information about their right of appeal against any refusal of a place
- b. Information about the continuing interest process
- c. Information about their individual child's application and school allocations.

29. In addition, for parents receiving a non-ranked school, a list of other Hertfordshire schools with places available in the relevant year group will be provided .

30. For parents making online applications this information will be available online at [www.hertsdirectc.org/admissions](http://www.hertsdirectc.org/admissions) Parents making a paper application will receive a hard copy of this information with their allocation letter.

### **Co-ordination after 1<sup>st</sup> March**

31. The School Admissions Code (page 32) clarifies that parents must continue to apply to their home local authority for "late" applications for the normal admissions round, i.e. between 1 March and 31 August in the allocation year). This will ensure that places which become available are re-allocated effectively and duplicate offers are avoided.

32. By 1 May Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) will request that parents resident in Hertfordshire accept or decline the offer of a place. Any information relating to the acceptance or the decline of places will be

forwarded to the relevant maintaining LA. Where such information is received from parents between 1 May and 31 August HCC will pass it to the maintaining LA as it is received.

33. After places have been offered, HCC will maintain CI lists for all community and voluntary controlled. Voluntary-aided, foundation schools and academies will maintain their own lists unless HCC has agreed to manage CI on the school's behalf. A child's position on a CI list will be determined by the admission criteria for the school concerned. Children will automatically be removed from CI lists at the end of the academic year.
34. Co-operation between admission authorities will ensure that each child is offered only one school and that school is the highest preference that can be offered.

### **In Year applications**

35. Applications made to a first, infant, primary, junior and middle school for a place other than at the normal time of entry for that school will be processed through the primary In Year admissions procedure (Schedule 3)

## Schedule 2

### Secondary and Upper Co-ordination (including Studio Schools and University Technical Colleges)

#### The application form

1. The secondary application form (or CAF – Common Application Form) will be supplied by Hertfordshire County Council. Parent/carers will be able to apply on-line for a school place, at [www.hertsdirect.org/admissions](http://www.hertsdirect.org/admissions). A paper copy of the application form will be included within the “Moving On” booklet and available on request.
2. The online application or paper form will be used for the purpose of admitting pupils into the first year of secondary or upper education in the specified year, or for studio schools and university technical colleges(UTCs), into Year 10. When an application is received, this is treated as representing the preference(s) from the parent/carer with parental responsibility. Only one application per child will be accepted
3. Applicants will be able to express a preference for four maintained secondary or upper schools or academies, studio schools or UTCs within or outside Hertfordshire
4. The application will –
  - (a) invite the parent/carer to apply for a place at their preferred schools or academies by completing the form in order of preference by naming four schools;
  - (b) invite the parent/carer to rank their preferred schools in the order in which they desire their child to receive an offer of a place at the respective schools;
  - (c) invite the parent/carer to give their reasons for each preference.
5. The online application system and paper form will also specify the statutory closing date and, for paper forms, the location to where it must be returned.
6. The LA will make appropriate arrangements to ensure –
  - (a) that an online application form is available via [www.hertsdirect.org/admissions](http://www.hertsdirect.org/admissions);
  - (b) that a paper application form is available on request from the LA; and

- (c) that there is a written explanation of the key features of the co-ordinated admissions scheme.
7. The LA will take reasonable steps to ensure that the parent/carers of children resident in the Hertfordshire LA area of the appropriate age receive details of how to apply and understand the process. This LA will advise home LAs of their resident pupils on roll in Hertfordshire's maintained primary schools who are eligible to transfer to secondary school in the forthcoming year.
8. All preferences expressed on the Hertfordshire application form (in electronic or paper formats) are valid applications. The form must be returned to the LA. Where an application for a Hertfordshire school is made by an out county resident on their home LA's form, this will also be considered to be a valid application. Hertfordshire will only accept a maximum of four preferences for Hertfordshire schools and academies from residents of other boroughs regardless of the number of preferences allowed by the home authority. Hertfordshire residents must use the Hertfordshire form and return it to Hertfordshire whether their application is for Hertfordshire schools/academies or schools/academies in other LAs.

### **Supplementary Information Forms (SIFs)**

9. The admission authorities within this LA will not use supplementary information forms (SIFs) except where the information available through Hertfordshire's secondary transfer application form is insufficient for consideration of the application against the published oversubscription criteria. Where supplementary information forms are used by the admissions authorities within this LA, the LA will seek to ensure that these only collect information which is required by the published oversubscription criteria, in accordance with paragraph 2.4 of the School Admissions Code.
10. Where supplementary information forms are used by admission authorities in this LA, they will be available on this LA's website as well as the school website. Such forms will advise parents that they must also complete their home LA's application form. Hertfordshire's admission booklet and website will indicate which schools in Hertfordshire require supplementary information forms to be completed and where they can be obtained.
11. Where a school receives a supplementary information form, this LA will not consider it to be a valid application unless the parent/carer has also listed the school on their home LA's Application Form, in accordance with paragraph 2.1 of the School Admissions Code. Supplementary information forms should be returned direct to the school concerned. Any received by the LA will be date stamped and passed on to the school. In addition:
- a) the SIF must not request any information about the preference order for the school or ask for details of any other school the parent/carer may also have stated a preference for on the main application form.

- b) A parent/carer cannot be required to collect a SIF in person.
- c) The information requested on the SIF must not infringe any statutory right of the parent/carer or child

d)The SIF must comply with the School Admissions Code and must not ask for any information prohibited by paragraph 1.9 of the Code. In addition the form must not ask for:

- i. any personal details about parents or families , such as maiden names, criminal convictions or marital, (including marriage certificates) or financial status;
- ii. the first language of parents or the child;
- iii. details about parents' or children's disabilities, special educational needs or medical conditions,
- iv. parents to agree to support the ethos of the school in a practical way;
- vi. both parents to sign the form, or for the child to complete the form

Collecting such information may suggest that it can be taken into account and therefore be misleading to parents

12. When a voluntary-aided, foundation school or academy has failed to obtain a SIF but there is an LA application form the application must proceed because an application has been made. 4.3 of Section 86(2) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 requires the local authority and the governing body of a maintained school to comply with parental preference. Conversely, in circumstance where a SIF has been received by a voluntary-aided, foundation school or academy, the admission authority must be proactive in ensuring that there is a HCC application, in order for the preference to be considered. Applications received after the closing date will be late. If a SIF is not received the application can only be assessed in accordance with information available to the governing body from the LA application form and therefore may given lower priority in the school's admission arrangements.

13. The school's admission arrangements must be such as to enable relevant decisions to be made in line with the time table of this scheme

### **Inter-LA co-ordination**

14. The LA will manage allocations in line with the Pan-London Co-ordinated Admissions System (this comprises of thirty nine local authorities in and adjacent to London). Application data relating to applications to schools in other English LAs will be forwarded via S2S (S2S is a website designed to transfer data between LAs and schools securely).

15. Information will be exchanged by LAs via S2S or the Pan-London Register in order that each child receives the highest ranked school place possible.
16. As far as reasonably practicable, all offers of a secondary school places will be made on 1 March (or the first working day after 1 March). Allocations will be available online on the evening of 1 March for those who made online applications and allocation letters will be sent first class on 1 March to those making paper applications.

### **Boarding places**

17. The schools with boarding places need to determine a set of admissions arrangements which include both day and boarding places. Schools with boarding places need to provide the LA, as the co-ordinating authority, with the names for those places in addition to those for the day places.

### **Processing of application forms**

18. Completed application forms, either online or paper, should be submitted to the home LA by the statutory closing date. Completed application forms received after the closing date will be considered after all on time applications. Late applications submitted with supporting evidence will be considered by a panel of officers and may be agreed as “on time” if received before the published “late” date.

19. The LA will process a maximum of four preferences from parents/carers whose permanent home address is within this LA, and a maximum of four preferences on applications from parents/carers resident outside this LA who have expressed a preference for maintained schools or academies within this LA. All completed application forms must be treated as a confidential communication. Voluntary aided, foundation schools and academies will, however, be provided with a list of relevant details of those pupils for whom they are a preference. Ranking information will remain confidential until after allocation day.

### **Determining offers in response to the application form**

20. The LA will act as a clearing house for the allocation of places by the relevant admission authorities in response to the application form.
21. Where a foundation, voluntary aided school or academy is listed on the secondary application form (as one of a maximum of four preferences for Hertfordshire schools), the LA will forward the appropriate details to the governing body. The admission authority for each school will then provide the LA with a list of all pupils indicating the order in which places should be allocated under each criterion and will include only pupils for whom the home LA received an application form stating a preference for that school. This information will be provided to the LA by the specified date.

22. In any instance where a school or an academy in another LA is listed on the standard Hertfordshire form, details will be forwarded to that LA (via the PLR or S2S or alternative secure electronic transfer).
23. No decision by an admission authority on any preference received for the school or academy shall pay any regard to the ranking order expressed by the parent/carer.
24. During the allocation process, the LA will match the provisional allocations of places against each parent's/carer's ranking and proceed as follows:
- i) when a parent/carer can be offered a place at the school or academy which they ranked first – the allocation will become firm. The LA will then release any potential offer of a place for that parent/carer at lower ranked school/academy or remove the parent's/carer's preference from the continuing interest list (as appropriate).
  - ii) when a parent/carer has not been provisionally allocated a place at the school or academy which they ranked first, but has been provisionally allocated a place at the school or academy which they ranked second – the LA will hold the provisional allocation at the second rank school/academy for that parent/carer, pending further iteration rounds, and will release any provisional offer of a place for that parent/carer at lower ranked schools/academies or remove the parent's/carer's preference from the continuing interest list (as appropriate).
  - iii) when a parent/carer has not been provisionally allocated a place at the school or academy which they ranked first or second, but has been provisionally allocated a place at the school/academy which they ranked third – the LA will hold the provisional allocation for that parent/carer, pending further iteration rounds or remove the parent's/carer's preference from the continuing interest list (as appropriate)
  - iv) when a parent/carer has not been provisionally allocated a place at the school which they ranked first, second or third, but has been provisionally allocated a place at the school which they ranked fourth – the LA will hold the provisional allocation for that parent/carer, pending further iteration rounds
25. When a provisional allocation is released, the LA will provisionally allocate the place to the next ranked applicant in accordance with the over-subscription criteria for that school/academy. These processes will be repeated until the LA is unable to release any further provisional allocations and the process has reached a steady state.
26. All allocations then in existence will become firm allocations of a place at the school or academy concerned and parents/carers will be offered those places accordingly. All parents/carers with unsatisfied preferences will be

treated as having been refused a place by the admission authority for that school.

### **Late applications**

27. After on time applications have been dealt with and preferences allocated, late applications that can be allocated a ranked school will be processed. Finally, all Hertfordshire children whether on time or late who were not able to have a preference satisfied through the iterative process will be allocated a school place.

### **Children who have not been allocated a ranked school in the iterative processes**

28. The LA will match:

- (a) those children of parents/carers resident in the LA area that require to be admitted in the specified year but have received no offer of a place under the above procedure, against
- (b) those of the schools that, on the basis of their PAN (or agreed intake number if higher than the PAN), have places remaining unfilled after the procedure above.

29. The criteria used by the LA for matching will usually allocate pupils to their nearest suitable community or voluntary controlled school with a place available. Schools may be inside or outside Hertfordshire. Places may be allocated at voluntary aided, foundation schools or academies in liaison and agreement with those schools/LAs, regardless of the ethos of the school (s) concerned.

### **Notification to parents/carers**

30. The LA will communicate to all parents/carers resident within the home authority who made an application notifying them of an offer of a place, either within the home LA or in another LA, and, where relevant, giving the reasons why higher preferences were not offered. Allocation letters will only be sent to parents submitting a paper application form. Allocation information will be provided electronically (be email and/or via the online application system) for all online applicants.

31. When a parent is not offered a place at their first ranked school or academy they will be offered with :

- a. Information about their right of appeal against any refusal of a place
- b. Information about the continuing interest process
- c. Information about their individual child's application and school allocations.

32. In addition, for parents receiving a non-ranked school, a list of other Hertfordshire schools with places available in the relevant year group will be provided .
33. For parents making online applications this information will be available online at [www.hertsdirectc.org/admissions](http://www.hertsdirectc.org/admissions) Parents making a paper application will receive a hard copy of this information with their allocation letter.

### **Co-ordination after 1<sup>st</sup> March**

34. The School Admissions Code (page 32) clarifies that parents must continue to apply to their home local authority for “late” applications for the normal admissions round, i.e. between 1 March and 31 August in the allocation year). This will ensure that places which become available are re-allocated effectively and duplicate offers are avoided.
35. By 15 March Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) will request that parents resident in Hertfordshire accept or decline the offer of a place. Any information relating to the acceptance or the decline of places will be forwarded to the relevant maintaining LA. Where such information is received from parents between 16 March and 31 August HCC will pass it to the maintaining LA as it is received.
36. After places have been offered, HCC will maintain CI lists for all community and voluntary controlled. Voluntary-aided, foundation schools and academies will maintain their own lists unless HCC has agreed to manage CI on the school’s behalf. A child’s position on a CI list will be determined by the admission criteria for the school concerned. Children will automatically be removed from CI lists at the end of the academic year.
37. Co-operation between admission authorities will ensure that each child is offered only one school and that school is the highest preference that can be offered.

### **In Year applications**

38. Applications made to a secondary or upper school or academy, studio school or UTC for a place other than at the normal time of entry to that school will be processed through the secondary In Year admissions procedure (Schedule 3).

### **Schedule 3**

#### **Scheme for the coordination of In Year pupil admissions to all community and voluntary controlled schools in Hertfordshire for the 2014/15 academic year**

Own admitting authority schools and academies may “opt in” to full coordination as outlined below, which will include the following:

- Receiving and responding to all applications in writing within 10 school days.
- Answering queries (phone email and in writing) about the application and timescale for response
- Ensuring (within the scheme) duplicate allocations are not made
- Following up duplicate allocations made by schools operating outside the scheme
- Ensuring parents are informed in writing of their right to appeal when a place is not available

In addition for schools that have the same or similar rules to HCC:

- Ranking applications in accordance with the school's oversubscription criteria (if required)
- Answering queries (phone, email & in writing) about the school's admission arrangements and allocations. HCC In Year admissions literature will reflect the fact that queries about allocations should be directed to HCC.
- Maintaining the school's CI list and allocating places when available

The cost of In Year coordination for academies for 2014/15 will be:

- £350 for first, infant, junior, primary and middle schools
- £700 for secondary, upper, studio schools and UTCs

Alternatively, to allow the LA to ensure :

- Parents seeking school places in Hertfordshire:
  - can access clear, simple and consistent information and advice on the In Year application process
  - can obtain a school place quickly and easily
- Vulnerable families are supported and are not disadvantaged in the application process, and
- Children without school places are identified quickly and school places offered

own admitting authority schools and academies must:

- Provide information on the availability of places in each year group at the school or academy to allow the LA to provide parents with accurate vacancy information (mandatory requirement). Vacancy information is provided on SEAM which must be updated weekly. Schools without access to SEAM must provide this information via secure email.
- Accept applications on the LA application form (it is a mandatory requirement for LAs to provide an In Year application form). Application information will be made available through SEAM.
- Notify the LA of the outcome of every application received (mandatory requirement). This will allow the LA to ensure that duplicate offers are prevented and children without a school place are identified quickly. If SEAM is adapted to allow own admission authority schools to input application and allocation information direct for 2013 onwards, schools will be expected to notify the LA of applications and allocations via SEAM.
- Inform parents in writing of their right of appeal (mandatory requirement)

## **Application**

1. There will be a single common In Year application form for In Year applications to community and voluntary controlled schools. The form will be available from the Hertfordshire County Council website, and on request from the Customer Service Centre. Notes of guidance explaining the operation of the co-ordinated scheme and advice on completing the application will be available with the form. The In Year application form will be the only acceptable form of application for schools and academies taking part in In Year coordination.
2. The application form will allow parents, inside and outside Hertfordshire to express a preference for up to four Hertfordshire schools in ranked order. In the event of parents applying for more than one school, the ranked order of parental preferences will remain confidential to the LA prior to allocation, but may be made available at appeal.
3. A separate individual application form will be made available for applications to schools operating outside the coordinated scheme. This will also be available on the hertsdirect website and from the CSC. Schools operating outside HCC's scheme must accept applications on the LA form (and/or via SEAM) but may also use the school's existing supplementary information form (SIF). If a school receives an application on the LA form (and/or via SEAM) but needs additional information to fully assess the application, the parent should be asked to complete the school's SIF
4. Schools that ask parents to complete SIFs are identified in the booklets, Moving On and Under 11s which are published annually by Hertfordshire County Council and also in the In Year Admissions school directories.

5. Families living overseas, but intending to move to Hertfordshire or back to an existing Hertfordshire address, may apply for a Hertfordshire school place on the Hertfordshire In Year form. However, the address used to process the application must be the address that the child is actually resident at, at the time of application. The Hertfordshire address will not be used until the LA/school has received proof that the child is resident at that address.
6. Hertfordshire parents wishing to apply for a place at a maintained school or academy in a different authority must use that authority's In Year application form.
7. HCC will liaise closely with other admission authorities regarding applications and allocations. If HCC receives an application for a school or academy that has not "opted in" to the county's in year process that application will be forwarded direct to the school (via SEAM) and the parent informed. That school or academy must then notify the LA of the outcome of the application and inform the parent of their statutory right of appeal.
8. All admission authorities will remain responsible for allocation decisions and ranking all children from whom applications have been received in order of priority on the continuing interest list. Own admitting authorities may request that HCC undertakes this administration on their behalf if the school/academy has adopted HCC's oversubscription criteria ( or similar).
9. Where possible applications will be processed, and offers made, within 10 school days of receipt of the HCC In Year form. Schools operating outside HCC's scheme should inform parents of the outcome of their application, and the right of appeal in writing if the application is unsuccessful, to similar timescales.
10. Places at community and voluntary controlled schools, and other schools or academies operating within the scheme, will be offered by the LA, in accordance with a school's continuing interest list, as vacancies arise.
11. In the event of a parent applying for multiple schools where more than one school has a place available in the relevant year group, the LA will offer a place at the highest ranked school with a place available and send a copy of the offer letter to the school.
12. If a place could be offered at a school within the scheme and a place has already been offered by a school outside the scheme ( or vice versa) HCC officers will contact the family to ascertain which is the preferred school.
13. A place will be considered to be available (unless otherwise indicated) at a preferred school if the number on roll in the relevant year group does not meet or exceed the published admissions number (PAN),

## Processing Applications

14. The LA will co-ordinate applications to, and the offer of places for, residents inside and outside Hertfordshire, for all community and voluntary schools and any voluntary aided, foundation schools or academies that have “opted in” to the scheme.
15. Upon receiving a completed application form, the LA will contact the relevant school(s) to confirm their current numbers on roll\*.
16. Following receipt of number on roll information\*, if the school(s) indicates that the number on roll in the relevant year group is lower than the published admissions number (PAN), the LA will consider a place available at that school, unless otherwise indicated.
17. In the case of multiple applications, the LA, using preference rankings will match the allocation of places against the applicant’s ranking upon receipt of number on roll information. The following will then apply:

Where a parent’s first preference can be met: A place will be allocated at the first preference school and the LA will then not consider any applications for schools at second preference or below.

Where a parent’s first preference cannot be met but the second preference can be met: A place will be allocated at the second preference school. The application for the first preference school will be formally refused and parents advised of the continuing interest process and their right of statutory appeal. The LA will not consider an application to a third or fourth preference school where one exists.

Where a parent’s first and second preferences cannot be met but the third preference can be met: A place will be allocated at the third preference school. The application for the first and second preference schools will be formally refused and parents advised of the continuing interest process and their right of statutory appeal. The LA will not consider an application to a fourth preference school where one exists.

Where a parent’s first, second and third preferences cannot be met but the fourth preference can be met: A place will be allocated at the fourth preference school. The application for the first, second and third preference schools will be formally refused and parents advised of the continuing interest process and their right of statutory appeal.

Where none of the parent’s preferences can be met: The applications for all preferred schools will be formally refused and the child placed on any continuing interest list (if one exists) and the parent advised of their right of statutory appeal (see paragraph 4.4.4 below)

## **Allocation of Places**

18. The LA will write to all parents who have submitted an In Year application form, no later than five school days from the receipt of number on roll information from the relevant school(s).
19. In the case of more complex applications, it may not be possible to comply with the above timescales in all instances.
20. If an offer of a place is declined the LA will inform the school concerned.
21. If pupils can not be offered a place at any of their preferred schools:
  - the LA will offer a place at the nearest school (within the scheme) with a place available;
  - the LA may advise parents if places are available at schools or academies that are closer to the parents home than the school offered;
  - the LA will not offer a place at an alternative school to pupils already on roll at a Hertfordshire school (unless the child/family has moved house).
22. Children will only be entitled to transport if they are offered a place at the nearest school with an available place that is over statutory walking distance (regardless of whether or not the “nearest” schools is part of the coordinated In Year scheme and whether an application has been made).

## **Applications to Middle Schools**

23. Middle schools in Hertfordshire (4 schools in Royston, Buntingford and Puckeridge) traditionally lose a number of children at the end of year 6 as some families seek places, at the time of secondary transfer, into the two-tier system. Once secondary transfer allocations are known (1 March in the transfer year) middle schools are well informed about the number of vacancies they will have from September as their existing pupils accept/reject the offered secondary school place. Middle schools, in liaison with HCC and in-line with the other requirements of this scheme, may allocate year 7 places from the start of the summer term (1 April) based upon the number of their existing year 6 pupils who have accepted secondary school places for September.

## **Post Allocation**

24. Parents will be expected to contact the allocated school to accept/decline the offered school place within a maximum of 10 school days.
25. Schools are expected to contact parents within 10 school days of the allocation to arrange a start date/induction meeting. Every effort must be made by the school to contact the parent. If the parent fails to respond, within 10 school days of the allocation, the place can be withdrawn and reallocated. Schools must confirm, via SEAM, the child's on roll date within 20 school days of the allocation.

26. The child should be on roll at the school and attending within 20 school days of the allocation. (Alternatively, the child may remain on the roll of their current school).

### **Appeals**

27. In the event of a school or an academy refusing to allocate a place the LA (for community and voluntary controlled schools and on behalf of the governing bodies of own admission schools and authorities who have opted in to the scheme) will inform the parent/carer of their statutory right of appeal and the continuing interest process.

28. Any appeal lodged will be against the admission authority and not the LA, unless relating to a community or voluntary controlled school within Hertfordshire. The LA will provide the admission authority at that time with details of the preference expressed by parents.

### **Continuing Interest Lists**

29. The LA will establish standard protocols for the maintenance of continuing interest lists that all schools will be expected to adhere to.

30. Continued Interest (waiting lists) for all community and VC schools will be held and administered centrally by the Admissions Team for all year groups and will be ordered in accordance with the published admissions criteria for the respective school.

## **Explanatory notes for the admission arrangements for community and voluntary-controlled schools in Hertfordshire for 2014/15**

The following explanation of terms used in the admissions rules applies:

### **Children in public care (children looked after):**

Places are allocated to children in public care according to Part 3 of the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2008. These children will be prioritised under rule 1.

Highest priority will also be given to children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a residence order or a special guardianship order.

A “child looked after” is a child who is

- a) in the care of a local authority, or
- b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (section 22(1) of The Children Act 1989)

Adopted – under the terms of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (section 46)

Residence Order – under the terms of the Children Act 1989, section 8 defines a residence order as an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live

Special guardianship order – under 14A of The Children Act 1989, an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child’s special guardian or guardians.

Children in the process of being placed for adoption are classified by law as children looked after providing there is a Placement Order and the application would be prioritised under Rule 1.

Children who were not “looked after” **immediately** before being adopted, or made the subject of a residence order or special guardianship order, or whom were adopted prior to the enactment of the 2002 Act **will not** be prioritised under rule 1. Applications made for these children, with suitable supporting professional evidence, can be considered under rule 2

### **Rule 2: Children for whom it can be demonstrated that they have a particular medical or social need to go to the school:**

Rule 2 applications will only be considered at the time of the initial application, unless there has been a significant and exceptional change of circumstances within the family since the initial application was submitted.

All schools in Hertfordshire have experience in dealing with children with diverse social and medical needs. However in a few very exceptional cases, there are reasons why a child has to go to one specific school.

Few applications under **Rule 2** are agreed.

All applications are considered individually but a successful application should include the following:

- a. Specific recent professional evidence that justifies why only one school can meet a child's individual needs, and/or
- b. Professional evidence that outlines exceptional family circumstances making clear why only one school can meet the child's needs
- c. If the requested school is not the nearest school to the child's home address clear reasons why the nearest school is not appropriate
- d. For medical cases – a clear explanation of why the child's severity of illness or disability makes attendance at only a specific school essential.

Evidence should make clear why only one school is appropriate. Applications under Rule 2 can only be considered when supported by a recent letter from a professional involved with the child or family. For example, a doctor, psychologist or police officer. The supporting evidence needs to demonstrate why only one named school can meet the social/medical needs of the child.

### **Definition of sibling:**

A sibling means the sister, brother, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, or child of the parent/carer or partner, and in every case living in the same house from Monday to Friday.

Where a place is obtained and the child admitted to the school and it is subsequently identified that this place was gained fraudulently, there will be no sibling connection available to subsequent children from that family.

### **Multiple births:**

Hertfordshire County Council (HCC), as the admission authority will admit over the school's published admission number when a single twin/multiple birth child is allocated the last place at a school. Where we are not the

admitting authority we would request the school take in the subsequent child(ren) in line with the school's own admission arrangements.

With regard to twins/multiple births and random allocation, it would not be appropriate to admit the subsequent child(ren) where only one is allocated a place under random allocation. This is based on the fact that any such action would compromise the "random" element process

### **Home address:**

The address provided should be the child's current permanent address at the time of application. 'At the time of application' means the closing date for applications.

The application can only be processed using one address. If the child lives at a different address from the parent/carer Monday to Friday, the Parental Responsibility Order or Residence Order for the person the child lives with must be provided.

If there are reasons why the child is not living at the same address as the parent (for example, if the parents/carers do not live together), both parent/carers must declare this in a letter sent with the application.

If the child regularly lives at more than one address Monday to Friday, the address provided should be the address where the child spends the majority of their time. Both parent/carers must declare this individually in a letter sent with the application.

If an address is disputed the address where child benefit/child tax credit is paid will be used.

### **Home to school distance measurement for purposes of admissions:**

A 'straight line' distance measurement; from the address point of the child's home supplied by NLPG (National Land and Property Gazetteer) to the address point of the school is used in all home to school distance measurements for community and VC schools in Hertfordshire.

### **Definition of "nearest school" for secondary/upper admissions**

For co-educational community schools, under rule 4 the "nearest school" is "the nearest Hertfordshire maintained school or academy that is non-faith, co-educational, and non-partially selective (note-non-partially selective means that the school does not offer any places based on academic ability.)"

Co-educational schools/academies which select partially on ability are:

Dame Alice Owens  
Parmiters  
Queens  
Rickmansworth  
St Clement Danes

For all co-educational community schools apart from Kings Langley School this definition applies to rule 4.

For Kings Langley School for rule 4 the “nearest school”, in addition to the above definition, must be in priority area 6b.

For allocations to community single-sex schools under rule 4 the “nearest school” is defined as either the nearest Hertfordshire maintained school or academy that is non-faith, single-sex and non-partially selective and catering for children of the appropriate gender.

For co-educational community schools, under rule 6 the “nearest school” is “the nearest maintained school or academy that is non-faith, co-educational, and non-partially selective (note-non-partially selective means that the school does not offer any places based on academic ability) either inside or outside Hertfordshire.

### **Applications from children from overseas**

All children of compulsory school age (5 to 16 years) in the UK have a right of access to education. However, where a child is in the UK for a short period only, for example less than half a term, it may be reasonable to refuse admission to a school.

Children who hold full British Citizen passports (not British Dependent Territories or British Overseas passports), have a passport endorsed to show a right of abode in the UK or are European Economic Area nationals normally have unrestricted entry to the UK.

An application for a school place will only be accepted for such children currently overseas if, for In Year applications, proof is provided that the child will be resident in Hertfordshire within two weeks. In Year allocations are made on the assumption that the child will accept the school place and be on roll within that timescale.

For the transfer processes, applications will not normally be accepted from overseas addresses. For these processes Hertfordshire will not allocate a school place to a child not currently resident in the UK. The exception to this is children of UK service personnel where HCC will allocate a place in advance of the family arriving in the area provided the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date and a Unit postal address or quartering area address when considering the application against their oversubscription criteria. This **must** include accepting a Unit postal address or quartering area address for a service child.

If an applicant owns a property in Hertfordshire but is not living in it, perhaps because they are working abroad at the time of application, the Hertfordshire address will **not** be accepted for the purposes of admission until the child is resident in the county.

Other children from overseas do not generally have automatic right of entry to the UK. An application for a school place will not therefore be accepted until they are resident in the UK. Proof of residency such as an endorsed passport or entry visa will be required with the application.

### **Age of Admission and Deferral of Places**

Hertfordshire County Council's policy is that children born on and between 1 September 2009 and 31 August 2010 would normally commence primary school in Reception in the academic year beginning in September 2014.

All Hertfordshire infant, first and primary schools provide for the full-time admission of all children offered a place in the Reception year group from the September following their fourth birthday. If a parent wants a full-time place for their child from September (at the school at which a place has been offered) then they are entitled to that full-time place.

Parents can request that the date their child is admitted to school is deferred until later in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age. In these situations schools will "hold" a child's school place until that child starts full-time. Parents can also request that their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age.

Legally, children do not have to be in full-time education until they have reached compulsory school age (the term following their fifth birthday). For summer born children this is almost a full school year after the point at which they could first be admitted. Where summer born children defer their entry until they reach compulsory school age, a place will be held open but they will enter the school in Year 1 instead of reception.

Any parents interested in taking up a part-time place or deferring entry should contact the individual school(s) to discuss further. When considering requests the school will take into account the individual circumstances of the child. Where a parent of a 'summer-born' child (01 April – 31 August inclusive) wishes their child to start school in Reception in the autumn term following their fifth birthday, they will need to submit a request for their child to be placed out of their chronological year group (see "Children Out of Year Group" below).

### **Children Out of Year Group**

Hertfordshire County Council policy is for children to be educated within their correct chronological year group, with the curriculum differentiated as necessary to meet the needs of individual children. If parents/carers believe their child(ren) should be educated in a different year group they must, at the time of application, submit supporting evidence from relevant professionals working with the child and family stating why the child must be placed outside their normal age appropriate cohort.

The County Council will decide whether the application will be accepted on the basis of the evidence submitted. There is no guarantee that an application will be accepted on this basis. If the application is not accepted this does not constitute a refusal of a place and there is no right to an independent statutory appeal.

The governing body of schools responsible for their own admissions (Academies, voluntary aided and foundation schools) are ultimately responsible for making this decision for applications made to their school.

### **Nursery Provision**

Some schools have a nursery unit or deliver pre-school nursery education. The admission arrangements detailed in this document do not apply for those being admitted into any nursery or pre-school provision. The responsibility for admission into nursery provision lies with the governing body of the school where the school offers such provision, although the county council does a host an online system for nursery applications.

Parents of children who are admitted to a nursery provision at a school must apply in the normal way for a place at the school if they want their child to transfer to the reception class. Attendance at the nursery or co-located children's centre does not guarantee admission to the school