

School Admissions Briefing

EAP – Education, Skills and Employment 22
November 2022

School Admissions team

- Building new team for NNC
 - School Admissions Manager
 - Senior Admissions Officers
 - Supervisory Admissions Officers
 - School Admissions Officers
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- 15 in total
 - Main task = to ensure that school age children have a school place

Northamptonshire – Composite prospectus



NNC is the admission authority for North Northamptonshire

- Schools have '**admissions authorities**' which are responsible for setting the admission arrangements for its schools (PAN/ Oversubscription criteria etc.)
- Types of schools – Community, Voluntary controlled (VC), Voluntary aided (VA), Foundation, Academy, Free Schools
- NNC, the local authority, is the admission authority for Community and Voluntary (VC) schools in North Northamptonshire Other schools – Governing body for VAs and Foundation schools; Academy Trust for Academies and Free Schools
- The School Admissions team administers the admission arrangements for its schools on behalf of the council and undertakes LA duties under school admissions law

Legal basis

- SSFA (1998), as amended;
- Admission authorities are bound by the **School Admissions Code** (2021) and the School Admission Appeals Code (2022);
- Applies to all maintained schools;
- Academies are required by their funding agreements to comply with the Code and the law relating to admissions - Secretary of State can vary this requirement where there is demonstrable need.

LA – Several hats:

NNC is:

- **Admission authority** for Community and VC schools
- **Responsible for the co-ordination** of applications to both maintained schools and academies / Free Schools at points of entry –
Reception, Year 3, Year 7 and Year 12
- Responsible for ensuring that children of school age have a school place

School Admissions – what do we do?

- Co-ordinated Schemes
- In-year scheme
- Fair access
- School Admission Appeals
- Consultation/ Determination/composite prospectus
- LA annual report to the Schools Adjudicator

The application process

- 3 preferences in rank order
- Equal preferencing
- Closing dates
- Offer dates
- Appeals

Oversubscription criteria

- Admission authority sets the oversubscription criteria for its school – needed when more applicants than places available
- PAN = minimum number of children must admit if enough apply

No definitive list of criteria. Usually:

- looked after/ previously looked after children
 - sibling
 - staff child
 - distance from the school.
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- Place offered at the highest preference – or, nearest school with a place available

Co-ordinated schemes

Apply to:

- Primary, Infant and Junior
- Secondary
- Points of entry – starting at the school in the lowest year group:
Reception/ Year 3/ Year 7
- Schemes open ~10 Sept 2022
- Secondary national closing date – **31 October 2019**
- Primary + Junior – national closing date – **15 January 2020**

Co-ordination

- Statutory responsibility of the LA
- Apply to LA where you live
- LAs co-ordinate applications for schools in their area

- National Offer Day – secondary – **1 March 2020**
- National Offer Day - primary/junior – **16 April 2020**

Applications

- Vast majority are online applications
- Paper forms available
- Online – receive email
- Paper – receive letter

Number of applications

When we were the county council:

- In 2018/19 the School Admissions Team processed the following number of applications for entry in September 2019:
 - 10,259 secondary
 - 10,215 primary
- and
- 10,012 in-year applications during the academic year

In-year applications

- Applications made throughout the year- to any year group.
- Huge increase in number of IY applications s in last 9 years (N'hants)
- 2013/2014 – 7, 012
- 2018/2019 – 10,012
- 2019/2020 ~ 8,000 (Covid)
- 2020/2021 ~ 8,000 (Covid)
- **2021/2022 – 11,036**

NNC in 2021/22

- In the first full year as a unitary authority, we processed:
 - 'coordinated' applications:
 - Reception – **4541**
 - Junior – **1155**
 - Secondary - **4560**
 - In-year applications: **4,849** – 50% in the summer term
 - Fair Access cases: **23** in 2013/14; **184** in 2021/22

IY challenges

- NCC co-ordinates for most secondary schools (3 do their own) - scheme
- All except one of the state secondary schools in Northamptonshire are academies /free schools
- Schools - some reluctance to share information about numbers on roll
- LA can refer academies/free schools to Secretary of State – lengthy
- August holidays – issues with contacting schools for decisions
- Pressure on school places – in-year application increase
- EHE – new pattern emerging
- Complaints increasing
- NEW SCHOOL ADMISSIONS CODE (2021)

Fair Access

- Fair Access Protocol (FAP) – new SA Code
- Unplaced children
- Most are secondary FAPs – points system used to identify the next school due to take a FAP child
- FA panel meetings - monthly
- Large increase in the number of children placed via FAP – from **23** in 2013/14 to (NCC) – to **184** in 2021/22

School Admission Appeals

- Parents/carers are entitled to appeal if they are refused a place
- The appeals team organises the appeal – clerk/panel/venue
- **Appeal** – opportunity for the independent panel to make a place available. The panel balances arguments; decision binding
- The School Admissions Team provides Presenting Officers for Community and VC school admission appeals – and offers this service to academies/Free Schools who want to commission the LA to present at appeals on their behalf

Consultation and Determination

People age faster than others when they work in School Admissions!

We experience 2 years at same time – the offer year and the determination year.

Consultation – changes to admission policies (or not consulted in the last 7 years)

Determination – all admission policies MUST be determined annually by February 28

Compliance – role of LA in ensuring that admission arrangements of all schools comply with the SA CODE (2021).

Any questions?

- Please get in touch any time if you have any queries or concerns
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