

Co-ordination Scheme for Entry to Primary Schools in North Northamptonshire in 2025

Section 1 - Timetable for Primary Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for September 2025 intake

Date	Event
10 September 2024	Online applications open and information to parents/carers available on NNC website
12 December 2024	Reminder letter sent via schools to parents/carers of Year 2 children at infant schools advising them of the need to apply for a junior school place. Email also sent to schools to remind parents/carers of the need to apply for Reception.
15 January 2025	Closing date for applications (Statutory). Late applications, i.e., those received after midnight on 15 January 2025, will not be processed until additional rounds of allocations (see below)
11 February 2025	NNC sends applications to other Local Authorities (LAs) and Own Admission Authority (OAA) schools (if applicable)
15 February 2025	EHC team to have informed the School Admissions team about any pupils with an EHC Plan and details of the named school (Statutory)
28 February 2025	OAA schools send ranked lists to NNC (if applicable)
21 March 2025	NNC applies agreed Scheme for North Northamptonshire schools, informing other LAs of offers to be made to their residents
15 April 2025	Primary schools informed by NNC of the final allocations via S2S, which may include offers made to pupils living in other LAs
16 April 2025	National Offer Day - offers made to parents/carers by NNC
By 18 April 2025	Schools' final allocation lists (ATFs) uploaded onto the S2S secure site
7 May 2025	School Admissions begins to share late applications with other LAs
9 May 2025	Cut-off date for consideration for inclusion in first additional round of allocations
19 May 2025	1st additional round of allocations <i>begins</i> and may take several weeks. At the end of the round, parents & schools informed of new offers
13 June 2025	Cut-off date for consideration for inclusion in second additional round of allocations
23 June 2025	2nd additional round of allocations <i>begins</i> and may take several weeks. At the end of the round, parents & schools informed of new offers
4 July 2025	Cut-off date for consideration for inclusion in third additional round of reallocations
11 July 2025	3 rd additional round of allocations <i>begins</i> and may take several weeks. At the end of the round, parents & schools informed of new offers
18 July 2025	Where no previous application has been submitted, places at junior schools are allocated to children living in the North Northamptonshire Council area who are currently in infant schools. Letters sent to parents/carers to advise them of the places offered.
1 August 2025	Co-ordination of in-year application process commences

Section 2

Elements of the Scheme

2.1 Regulations

The School Admissions (Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations¹ (2008) require all local authorities (LAs) to have a scheme to co-ordinate admission arrangements for all publicly funded schools in its area (excluding special schools). The purpose of a co-ordinated scheme is to establish mechanisms for ensuring, as far as is reasonably practicable, that every parent of a child living within the LA who has applied for a school place in the normal admission round, receives an offer of a single school place on the same day, National Offer Day (16 April or the next working day). All mainstream state schools must comply with the agreed scheme.

2.2 Applying for a place in a Primary, Infant or Junior school

The normal point of entry to Primary or Infant school is Reception. The normal point of entry to Junior school is Year 3. The local authority (North Northamptonshire Council, (NNC) co-ordinates the process of allocating places to these year groups.

2.3 Application forms

The Common Application Form (CAF), whether online or paper, must allow parents to both apply for a Reception place at any Primary or Infant school (or Year 3 at Junior school) and to give reasons for their preferences. If parents apply directly to a school, the governing body/academy trust must inform the local authority. All applications for the point of entry at schools are co-ordinated by the local authority (NNC), up to and including 31 July.

2.4 Residence in another local authority

Parents resident in one local authority area who wish to apply for a Reception place at a Primary or Infant school, or Year 3 at a Junior school maintained by a different local authority, must apply using the CAF (online or paper) provided by the local authority in which they live (i.e., by the home local authority).

2.5 Exchange of information

Local authorities and admission authorities in the area must exchange information on applications received and potential offers to be made by the dates specified in the scheme (see Section 1). A maintaining local authority must inform the home local authority if it intends to offer a place at one of its schools to an applicant living in a different local authority area. Local authorities should exchange information on applications across their borders and seek to eliminate multiple offers across local authority borders wherever possible. The exchange of data must, where possible, be carried out using secure data protection systems.

2.6 Information for Parents

Please note that throughout this scheme, the term “parent” refers to individual parents as well as those with parental responsibility for the child, e.g., carers.

Parents who live within the North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) area are encouraged to apply online.

The benefits of using the online application process are as follows:

1. Parents are less likely to make errors as the system guides them through the whole process;
2. Parents may change preferences up until midnight on the closing date;
3. On National Offer Day, parents will be able to log on to the system to find out which school has been allocated. A letter naming the allocated school will be posted on National Offer Day to all parents who applied using the paper application form;
4. Parents will receive an email with details of the school offered;
5. Parents will be helping to reduce paper usage if they apply online.

The 'Applying for a Primary School Place in North Northamptonshire 2025-26' composite prospectus will be available in PDF format on the School Admissions pages of NNC's website from 12 September 2024. Paper copies of the composite prospectus may be obtained by request from:

School Admissions
North Northamptonshire Council
Tithe Barn Office Block
Tithe Barn Road
Wellingborough
NN81BN

The prospectus contains important information about:

- How to apply online
- Primary, Infant and Junior schools in each area of North Northamptonshire
- How to complete a common application form
- The Published Admission Number (PAN) for each school
- The oversubscription criteria for all the mainstream state schools (primary, infant and junior) in the NNC area
- Whether individual schools were oversubscribed in September 2024
- Key dates in the application and allocation process
- Children with special educational needs
- Home-to-school transport
- The process for late applications
- Contact details for the NNC School Admissions Team

2.7 Parents living in the North Northamptonshire Council area wanting to complete a paper application form

Requests for paper application forms and composite prospectuses (for those who do not have access to the internet) should be made to the NNC School Admissions Team.

2.8 The Common Application Form (CAF)

The local authority must provide a common application form (CAF) that enables parents to express their preference for a place at any state funded school, with a minimum of 3 preferences in rank order, allowing them to give reasons for their preferences. While parents may express a preference for any state funded school – regardless of whether it is in the local authority area in which they live - admission authorities cannot give any guarantees that a preference will be met.

In NNC, parents are encouraged to apply online, wherever possible. It is the responsibility of all those making an application to ensure that they:

a) submit the application on time. They will receive an email which confirms that the submission has been successful. Every time a change is made to the application and every time an application is just opened to check it, the application must be re-submitted.

or

b) request confirmation of a paper application by emailing the School Admissions Team Admissions.NCC@northnorthants.gov.uk. It is not the responsibility of the School Admissions Team to send parents reminders to apply.

The application form (either online or paper) will ask the parent (the applicant) to provide the following information:

- The names of three schools listed in order of preference. If the applicant is resident in another local authority area where more than 3 preferences are permitted, NNC will allow the same number of preferences as permitted in home local authority
- Details of siblings (if relevant) who attend the preferred school/s
- Details of the child for whom the application is being made (address, date of birth, any relevant medical information or special social circumstances)
- Confirmation that the child has an EHC Plan (if applicable)
- Reasons for their preferences
- The name of the child's current school
- Details about the person completing the application (name, address, relationship to the child, contact details)

Paper applications

Parents using paper application forms will be required to return completed application forms to the School Admissions Team at North Northamptonshire Council by midnight on **15 January 2025**. Applications received after this date will be treated as late applications and will not be processed until after the on-time applications have been dealt with, i.e., after National Offer Day (16 April 2025). It is strongly recommended that parents use recorded delivery and obtain a receipt when posting their application forms.

When posting applications forms, parents are responsible for ensuring that they use the correct postage. Application forms posted before the closing date but *not received* by NNC until after the closing date, because of insufficient postage, will be treated as late.

Supporting documents

Online applications - Parents may submit supporting documentation online when they complete the application form (e.g., proof of a house move or evidence of a medical / social need).

Paper applications - Parents may post supporting information to the School Admissions Team at North Northamptonshire Council. Parents must include: the name of child, date of birth and the name(s) of the school(s) the parent is applying for.

If a house move takes place after the closing date, the school allocation will be based on the address the School Admissions team holds at the closing date for applications (15 January 2025).

2.9 Supplementary Information Forms (SIFs)

In some cases, admission authorities of some schools - Foundation, Voluntary Aided and Free schools and Academies - will need to ask for SIFs to be completed in order to process applications. The SIFs must only request additional information when it has a direct bearing on decisions about oversubscription criteria or for the purpose of selection by aptitude or ability. Places must be allocated on the basis of the oversubscription criteria only. Information about the schools which require a SIF can be found on the individual school's website and links to SIFs for schools which require them will be available on the NNC website from September 2024. Details of the admission arrangements for schools as well as the schools which require a SIF to be completed can be found NNC's composite prospectus 'Applying for a Primary School Place in North Northamptonshire 2025-26.'

Supplementary Information Forms must be returned to the preferred school by 15 January 2025 unless otherwise advised in the school's admission arrangements.

2.10 Applications for schools which are their own admission authorities (OAAs) - Foundation, Voluntary Aided, Free Schools and Academies

These schools are their own admission authorities, responsible for setting the admission arrangements for their schools and for deciding which children are allocated places. The School Admissions Team will ensure that parents' preferences are logged on the School Admissions database.

All applications received by the School Admissions team will be passed on to then Foundation, Voluntary Aided, Free schools and Academies by the date shown on the scheme timetable in Section 1 and the schools will be required to rank applicants as described in section 2.13. Parents who do not submit on time CAFs to the LA will not be included in the ranking lists with on-time applicants. The LA will check all OAA lists to ensure that this procedure is followed correctly.

2.11 Applications for schools outside situated outside NNC and applications for North Northamptonshire schools from families living in other LAs

Applications from residents in the North Northamptonshire Council area for schools in other LAs will be logged on the Admissions database and information relating to those preferences and any additional information will be electronically forwarded to the relevant maintaining local authority by the date shown on the scheme timetable in Section 1.

Similarly, the School Admissions Team will receive applications forwarded from other LAs for schools in North Northamptonshire. These will be added to the database and passed on to Foundation, Voluntary Aided, Free schools or Academies as appropriate. Regardless of the type of school, NNC will process all applications for places in mainstream schools in North Northamptonshire.

2.12 Multiple Applications

The School Admissions team can only process one application. If more than one application is made by the same applicant for a child prior to the closing date, only the latest-dated application form will be processed. Any previously submitted application forms will not be processed.

If an offer of a school place has already been made by the LA and the applicant has chosen to submit further applications, the latest-dated application will take priority over any previous applications.

If it is possible to offer a place at one of the preferences on the latest-dated application, an offer will be made and the previous offer will be withdrawn without further reference to the applicant.

Applicants seeking to withdraw applications must place their requests in writing (email/letter) to the School Admissions Team, prior to the subsequent allocation round.

Where there may be multiple applications from parents who are separated, parents will need to refer to section 2.23 of this scheme for further guidance.

2.13 How the co-ordination process produces the offer of a single school place

All schools have a Published Admissions Number (PAN). This is the number of school places available at the normal point of entry. Admission authorities (Local Authorities, Foundation, Voluntary Aided, Free schools and Academies) must process all the applications they receive and, if there are more applications than places available, they must apply the school's oversubscription criteria to all applicants. This process can be carried out by the School Admissions Team on behalf of Own Admission Authority schools as part of a Service Level Agreement (SLA). Any school wishing to use this service should inform the School Admissions team by 1 August in the year prior to the year of admission. School Admissions will always confirm all offers made with the school in question.

The local authority must allocate a place at the highest preference school where the child can be offered a place.

- If a child qualifies for a place at all 3 preference schools, the LA will offer a place at the school that is ranked highest on the CAF. The child's name will then be removed from the ranked list(s) at the lower preference schools where they qualified for a place so that other children may be offered a place at these schools.

- If a child can be offered a place at only one of their preference schools, they will be offered a place at that school regardless of the preference order on the common application form.
- If a child cannot be offered a place within the PAN of any of their preferred schools, the LA will offer a place at the nearest school with a place available (i.e., at the school nearest to the home address which has not reached the PAN and therefore has a place or places available at the time).
- If a child is offered a place at a school which was not their first preference, they can request to be added to the waiting list for any of the schools which was a higher preference than the school offered.
- Parents have the right to appeal against refusal of a place at any school for which they have applied, unless a higher preference has been allocated. Information about how to make an appeal is published on the NNC website.

All OAA schools are responsible for returning a ranked list of all applicants to the local authority by the date stated in the scheme timetable. Some schools will be oversubscribed, others undersubscribed. The surplus places at undersubscribed schools will be allocated to children who were unable to obtain places at their preferred schools.

After National Offer Day (15 January 2023), the local authority will publish details on the website showing how places were allocated at all schools in the authority.

OAA schools using random allocation as a tie-breaker, or as one of their oversubscription criteria, must send ranked lists of applicants to the School Admissions team. The ranked list must include all children in the individual bands and not just those ranked up to the school's PAN.

All schools which are their own admission authority must return the ranked allocation lists to the School Admissions Team by the date shown in the scheme timetable in Section 1.

For local authority schools (Community and Voluntary Controlled schools), the School Admissions Team will be responsible for applying the oversubscription criteria if the number of applications exceeds the Published Admission Number (PAN) of the school.

Where it is not possible to offer a place at any of the preferred schools, a place will be allocated at the school closest to the home address where places are available at the time of allocation. Some children in this situation will be eligible for assistance with transport. Parents will be referred to the school travel assistance pages of NNC's website.

A single place will be identified for each child by the end of this co-ordination process.

When schools have more applications than places available, places will only be allocated up to the limit of the school's PAN. In the case of OAA schools - Foundation, Voluntary Aided, Free schools and Academies - the admission authorities of these schools **must** notify their local authority if they intend to increase the school's PAN and reference to the change should be made on the school's website. Where further capacity is required to provide every child with a school place, the local authority will consult relevant schools to reach an agreement.

2.14 Protocol for children with Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans

Applications for places in mainstream schools from children who have EHC Plans are processed by the EHC team, not by the School Admissions team. Reviews of EHC Plans, discussions with parents about preference and placement enquiry procedures, will all be undertaken by the EHC team at NNC. Placement decisions will be made by the date shown on the scheme timetable in Section 1. The admission of children with EHC plans, where the school is named in the plan, will take priority over all other children.

The EHC Team will inform parents of the school allocated for their child on or around or around the date shown on the scheme timetable in Section 1. There may be circumstances where pupils have not been informed of the school allocated by this date. In these cases, schools may be required to admit children over PAN.

The offer of a school place will be made by the EHC Team who will also amend the EHC plan accordingly.

2.15 Notification of offers to all schools or other Local Authorities

As part of the co-ordination process, other LAs will be informed electronically by the date shown on the scheme timetable in Section 1 of any offers of school places that NNC can make to their residents.

All schools, including Foundation, Voluntary Aided and Free schools or Academies, will be informed of the final offers (which may include offers made to pupils living in other LAs) by the date shown in the scheme timetable in Section 1. In the normal admissions round, offers of primary places must be sent by the home local authority and schools must not contact parents about the outcome of their applications until after these offers have been received.

2.16 Late applications

Every effort will be made to encourage parents to complete application forms by the closing date of **15 January 2025**. If an application form is received *after 15 January 2025*, it will not be possible to consider it until all the on-time applications have been processed. Late applicants will not receive an offer of a school place on National Offer Day (16 April or the next working day). Late applications will be considered from the relevant additional round of allocations, the date of which is published in the composite prospectus - 'Applying for a Primary School Place in North Northamptonshire 2025-26' and in the scheme timetable in Section 1.

In NNC's co-ordinated scheme, parents/carers will not be allowed to have more than three live primary or secondary preferences at any point in time, prior to the offer date. Parents will not be allowed to change the order or schools listed as preferences after the closing date. After this date, changes to preferences must be made on a late application form which will be processed in the further rounds of allocation (see Section 1).

NNC will forward any late applications for OAA schools directly to the schools for their consideration (by the agreed timelines in the scheme). If places are not available at the preferred school, the School Admissions Team must be informed by the school so that a place can be offered at an alternative school with places available. If the alternative school is its own admission authority, details of the application will be sent to the school before an allocation is made by the local authority.

N.B. The co-ordinated process in North Northamptonshire continues up to and including 31 July of each year. From 1 August, the in-year process commences.

2.17 Right to appeal

Parents have the right to appeal against refusal of a place at any school for which they have applied. When an admission authority informs a parent of a decision to refuse a place, it **must** include the reason why admission was refused; information about the right to appeal; the deadline for lodging an appeal and the contact details for making an appeal. Parents **must** be informed that, if they wish to appeal, they **must** set out their grounds for appeal in writing. Admission authorities **must not** limit the grounds on which appeals can be made.

The admission authority **must** establish an independent appeals panel to hear appeals. The panel will decide whether to uphold or dismiss the appeal. Where a panel upholds the appeal, the school is required to admit the child.

2.18 Waiting lists

The School Admissions Code requires admission authorities to maintain a clear, fair, and objective waiting list until *at least* 31 December of each school year of admission. NNC will maintain waiting lists for its schools – Community and Voluntary controlled schools - for the whole of the academic year. Each child added will require the list to be ranked again in line with the published oversubscription criteria. Priority will not be given to children based on the date their application was received, or their name was added to the list. Looked after children or previously looked after children allocated a place at the school in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over those on a waiting list.

The School Admissions team of the local authority (NNC) administers the waiting lists for all year groups for all Community and Voluntary Controlled schools. In addition, The School Admissions team administers the waiting lists for some OAA school, at their request.

Parents who have been refused a place at a school (this could be after National Offer Day, after an unsuccessful appeal or after making a late application) are entitled to place their child's name on a waiting list. Parents must contact the School Admissions Team to request that their child's name is added to the school's waiting list. After the Primary National Offer Day, applications, whether on time or late, will be processed in the same way.

If a place becomes available, the school's oversubscription criteria will be applied to the children on the waiting list to determine who should be allocated the available place. Any places that become available after the initial allocations will be reallocated in the additional rounds of allocation (see Section 1). The local authority continues to co-ordinate the allocation of places to the year of entry at all schools up to and including 31 July. This requires all OAA schools to ensure that there is prompt, clear and regular communication with the School Admissions Team regarding the ranking lists for each round of allocations. No allocation will be made by the School Admission Team without prior agreement with the individual admission authority.

For over-subscribed Community and Voluntary Controlled schools, the School Admissions Team will retain a waiting list until the end of the 2025 Autumn term (31 December). Waiting lists will be cleared after 31 December and will be re-established at the beginning of the Spring term. Waiting lists will be held until the end of the school term in which parents applied and they will then be cleared before the start of the next term. Parents who would like their child's name to remain on the waiting list in the following term must request this by emailing/writing to the School Admissions Team before the start of the next term. They will need to provide the child's full name, date of birth and address to Admissions.NCC@northnorthants.gov.uk

Parents will be required to complete a new application form if they want their children to remain on a school's waiting list in the following academic year, as the application will then be for a different year group.

For OAA schools (i.e., Foundation, Voluntary Aided, Free schools and Academies) which manage their own waiting lists, parents may need to contact the individual schools directly to ask for information about the school's waiting list policy.

2.19 Applying for a place in a Junior School

The normal point of entry to Junior Schools is Year 3 and the LA co-ordinates the process of allocating places to these schools in this year group.

Parents of children who are in Year 2 at an Infant school and who want them to attend a Year 3 in a Junior in September 2025 need to apply for places in Junior schools using the Common Application Form.

Parents of children in Year 2 at an Infant school should not apply for a place in Year 3 at a **Primary** school on the Common Application Form, as this form is only used for applications at the normal point of entry to a school. As Year 3 is **not** the normal point of entry for a Primary school, any applications for a place in Year 3 in a Primary school for September 2025 should be made on an in-year application form, in accordance with the LA's in-year process.

In-year applications for a Year 3 place at a Primary school should be made from June 2025.

2.20 National Offer Day

The School Admissions Team will notify all on-time applicants of their school offer on National Offer Day (16 April or the next working day) by email (for all online applicants) or by post (a first-class letter will be sent to all applicants who submitted a paper application). The communication will include information about how to find out how school places have been allocated in the North Northamptonshire Council area and, if necessary, information about how to appeal. In addition, breakdowns to show how places were allocated in accordance with each school's oversubscription criteria will be published on the NNC website. Links to this page will be provided on all offer emails and letters.

The School Admissions Team will assume that the place has been accepted unless communication from the parent is received to advise to the contrary.

2.21 Rejection of a school place

Parents will be required to notify the relevant admission authority and the School Admissions Team in writing (by email or letter) if they **do not** propose to accept the school place offered. These places will then be reallocated following the process as set out above in 2.13. Places will not be removed until the School Admissions Team has been advised by the parent that they have secured an alternative school place for their child.

Schools which are their own admissions authority must inform the School Admissions Team as soon as a place is rejected so that the School Admissions Team has an accurate picture of the availability of school places prior to the reallocation dates.

2.22 Definition of a sibling and sibling link for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools

Some schools give priority to children whose brother(s) or sister(s) are already on roll at a preferred school (this is called a sibling link). A sibling is defined as a child's brother or sister. NNC's definition of 'sibling' for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools states that a sibling must be living at the same permanent address and as part of the same family unit (one or two parents plus children) to qualify for a sibling link and includes:

- half-brothers and half-sisters
- step-brothers and step-sisters
- adopted children
- children in foster care
- children living in the same family unit, even if they are not biological brothers and sisters – for example when the parents are not married/in a civil relationship.

Cousins are not regarded as siblings.

The sibling link will only be valid if the sibling will be attending when the child applying starts school. This means that it will not count as a sibling link if a child wants a place in a Primary school, but their brother is in Year 6 and will therefore have left the school when the child applying starts at the school.

Some admission authorities have different definitions of a sibling and sibling link. Parents are advised to check the information in the LA's composite prospectus or in the school's admission arrangements available on the school's website to see what the school's definition is.

2.23 Parents who do not live together

NNC's definition of a child's home address states that when parents live separately and the child spends time with each parent, the home address will be treated as the place where the child sleeps for most of the school week (i.e., Sunday night – Thursday night inclusive).

If the child spends equal amounts of time at two addresses, the parents must agree which address they wish to be used as the child's main address.

Other admission authorities may have different definitions of a child's home address. Parents are advised to check the school's individual admission arrangements on their website or in the LA's composite prospectus.

Documentary evidence of ownership or rental agreement may be required, together with proof of actual permanent residence at the property concerned.

The LA can only process one application form. Where parental responsibility is shared, and where the adults with parental responsibility live at different addresses, it is important for the adults to agree which schools they wish to apply for, prior to making the application.

If multiple applications are received for the same child with conflicting address and/or preferences, or if the School Admissions team is made aware of a dispute between two parents, all applications will be placed on hold and will **not** be processed until:

- a new single application is made, signed by all parties; or
- written agreement is provided from both parents indicating which application they have agreed on; or

- a court order is provided confirming which parent's application carries precedence.

If no agreement can be made, parents are recommended to seek legal advice. If an agreement cannot be reached before the closing date, this may affect the chances of a child being allocated a place at their preferred school/s.

Further information on parental responsibility can be found on the [DfE website](#)

2.24 Children who are part of a multiple birth group

In accordance with paragraph 2.16 (g) of the School Admissions Code (2021), if the last child to be admitted to a particular school is from a multiple birth group, all other children in the group will be offered places at the school, even if it means exceeding the Published Admission Number. This will also apply to siblings in the same year group.

These children will remain as 'excepted pupils' for the time they are in an infant class (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2) or until class numbers fall back to the current infant class limit. Own admission schools may have their own policy in place concerning multiple births and parents should check by visiting the school's website.

2.25 Random allocation

Random allocation, when used as a tie-breaker within an oversubscription criterion for a Community or Voluntary Controlled school, will be observed by an independent person (not employed by the local authority or with a connection to the school). This is to ensure that the process is administered correctly.

If a place is allocated from the waiting list after the initial round of allocations, and the tie-breaker is used, a new round of random allocation will be performed but not observed.

2.26 Definition of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children ('Children in Care')

The highest priority in the oversubscription criteria for all schools must be given to 'looked after children' and 'previously looked after children'. A 'looked after child' 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 (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school.

'Previously looked after children' are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order). This includes children who appear, to the admission authority, to have been in state care outside England prior to adoption.

2.27 Summer born children

Children born between 1 April and 31 August (inclusive) are known as summer born children. These children do not reach Compulsory School Age (CSA) until a full year after they would normally have started school in Reception, the point at which other children in the age range are beginning Year 1.

If a parent has made the decision that they feel it is not in their child's best interests to start school before the child reaches CSA, they may be happy for their child to enter straight into Year 1 to join their peers. In this case, they would need to apply for a Year 1 place at their preferred schools at the end of the academic year in which the rest of their child's normal year group are finishing Reception.

If a parent feels it would be in their child's best interests to enter Reception at this point, however, the School Admissions Code (2021) allows parents/carers of summer born children to request that they are admitted outside their normal age group, into Reception rather than Year 1.

It should be noted that this is a "request" and parents do not have the right to insist that their child is admitted to a particular age group. The admission authority of the school is responsible for making the decision on which year group a child should be admitted to when the child is of CSA.

Paragraph 2.19 of the School Admissions Code (2021) requires that, in any circumstance where a parent/carer requests their child is admitted out of their normal age group, the admission authority of the preferred school must make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case and in the best

interests of the child concerned. This will require the admission authority to take account of the child's individual needs and abilities and to consider whether these can best be met in Reception or Year 1. It will also involve taking account of the potential impact on the child of being admitted to Year 1 without first having completed the Reception year. The views of the head teacher must be taken into account.

Parents/carers of summer born children who could start school in September 2025, who wish to delay applying for a Reception place to start in September 2025, should make their application for a Reception place for their child's normal year of entry before the deadline **on 15 January 2025**. They should also make their request for admission to their preferred schools out of the normal age group by the same date: **15 January 2025**. This is to enable sufficient time for requests to be processed prior to National Offer Day (16 April or the next working day). Requests to delay applying will still be considered after this date, however.

If an admission authority agrees to the parent's request, their application for the normal age group will be withdrawn before a place is offered for the normal year of entry and they must make a new application for that school as part of the main admissions round in the following year. One admission authority cannot be required to honour a decision made by another admission authority on admission out of the normal age group. Parents/carers should therefore consider whether to request admission out of the normal year group at all their preference schools, rather than just their first preference school.

The admission authority for all Community and Voluntary Controlled schools is NNC, whereas the admission authority for Foundation, Voluntary Aided and Free schools or Academies, is either the Governing Body (VA and Foundation Schools) or the Academy Trust (Academies and Free Schools).

If parents have listed more than one preferred school on their application form, they must make the request to delay their child's Reception application to each of the schools. They should then only apply for a place in Reception the following year at schools whose admission authorities have agreed to the delay.

The following steps will be required depending on the type of school they are applying for.

A. If the preferred school is a Community or Voluntary Controlled school:

1. Parents/carers make a formal written request (with reasons for the request) to School Admissions at NNC (as this is the admission authority for these schools);
2. Parents/carers can supply School Admissions with supporting information from a professional and/or Early Years practitioner, if available, at the point of request;
3. School Admissions will consult with the Head teacher of the preferred school and take into consideration any evidence supplied in order to make a decision.

B. If the preferred school is a Foundation, Voluntary Aided, Free school or an Academy (or your preferred school is a Community or Voluntary Controlled school outside Northamptonshire):

1. Parents/carers make a formal written request (with reasons for the request) to the preferred school;
2. Parents/carers can supply the school with supporting information from a professional and/or Early Years practitioner, if available, at the point of request;
3. The preferred school will then approach their admission authority with the reasons and evidence supplied by the parents/carers so that a decision can be made (by the admission authority) in consultation with the Head teacher of the school;
4. Following their decision, the admission authority should then inform the parents/carers of their decision in writing, giving detailed reasons if the request is refused.
5. If they agree to the request, the request and written confirmation from the admission authority of the preferred school that they agree to the parent's/carer's request to delay their application to Reception for a year, must be sent to School Admissions at NNC by either the parent or the school so the Admissions database can be adjusted to accept a Reception application for the following year.

What happens next?

A. If the admission authority of a school agrees to the parents/carers request to delay applying for a Reception place for a year:

- School Admissions will write to the parents/carers confirming that an application for **that school** can be made in the following year. A copy of the letter sent by School Admissions to the parents/carers will also be sent to the Head teacher of the school(s) concerned;
- If parents/carers have made an application for Reception in the normal year of entry, this application will be withdrawn and a place will not be offered on National Offer Day (16 April or the next working day);
- Parents/carers will then need to submit an application for the schools whose admission authorities have agreed to the delay for Reception the following year;
- Parents/carers should only apply a full year later for a Reception place at schools whose admission authorities have agreed to a delayed application for their child;
- The new application will be processed as part of the normal admissions round in the following year, according to the oversubscription criteria of each school stated as a preference;
- While a school may agree to a delayed application, there is no guarantee that the child will be allocated a place at that school in the following admissions round as other children may have a higher priority within the school's oversubscription criteria. No additional priority will be given to an applicant applying under the summer born policy, nor will they be penalised;
- If it is not possible to offer a place at one of the preferred schools, the Local Authority will make every effort to allocate a Reception place (rather than a Year 1 place) at an alternative school. However, because NNC is not the admissions authority for all schools, a school approached as an alternative school would have to agree to the delayed entry;
- If the Local Authority is unable to offer a place at one of your preferred schools, it **may** not be possible to offer a place in Reception at another school (if they do not agree to a delayed application). In this case, the child would be offered a place at a school in Year 1 at the nearest school to their home address with a place available.

N.B. If the admission authority of a school rejects the parents/carers request to delay applying for a Reception place for a year:

- Parents/carers will receive a letter from the admission authority of the preferred school providing reasons for refusal.
- Assuming an application for a Reception place for the normal year of entry was submitted on time (by 15 January 2025), parents/carers will receive an offer of a school place on National Offer Day (16 April or the next working day).
- Parents/carers then need to decide if they will accept the place offered for their normal year of entry on National Offer Day or decline that place and apply for Year 1 place for the following September when their child is compulsory school age. If a parent/carer chooses to decline the place, they must put this in writing to the School Admissions Team (information about how to do this will be included in the offer email);
- Parents/carers who have not applied for a Reception place in their normal year of entry will need to apply as soon as possible if they decide that they would prefer their child to start in Reception rather than waiting until they reach Compulsory School Age and start school in Year 1. Applications received after the deadline on 15 January 2025 will be classed as late applications (see our website for more information on late applications).

2.28 Summer born children continuing at current nursery setting

Parents/carers of summer born children have the option for their children to stay in an Early Years setting rather than starting school. Children can attend an Early Years setting until the end of the Funding Block (Term) in which they turn 5. To ensure that the Early Years setting can secure the funded place for ~~your~~ your child/children for September 2025, parents/carers must notify their Early Years setting before the end of the Spring Funding Block (Term) 31 March of the year in which they would normally be starting school. The Early Years setting can then consider the number of children at the setting when allocating places for September 2025. If parents/carers do not notify their Early Years setting until after nursery allocations have been released, nursery schools and classes will be under no obligation to offer a place above their normal intake number. Children can, of course, be considered for a place through the normal waiting list process.

2.29 Admission of children out of their normal year group (out of cohort)

North Northamptonshire Council's policy is for children to be educated within their correct chronological year group where possible, with the curriculum differentiated as necessary to meet the needs of individual children. This is in line with DfE guidance which states that "in general, children should be educated in their normal age group".

Parents/carers may, however, seek a place for their child out of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. In addition, the parents of a summer born child may choose not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to reception rather than year 1. They must put their request in writing to the School Admissions Team (for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools) and directly to the school for schools which are their own admission authority, at the time of application.

The admission authority of the school will consider the request and make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of:

- the parents/carers views;
- information about the child's academic, social and emotional development;
- where relevant, the child's medical history and the views of a medical professional;
- whether the child has previously been educated out of their normal age group;
- whether the child may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely;
- the views of the Head teacher of the school concerned.

The admission authority of the school MUST set out clearly for parents the reasons for their decision about the year group a child should be admitted to.

Parents/carers do not have a right to appeal if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.

Schools for which the local authority is not the admission authority may have a different process. Please check individual schools' admission arrangements directly with the schools or on their websites to ensure you are following the correct procedure.

Please see further information in the School Admissions Code (2021) about the admission of children outside their normal age group.

2.30 Sharing information with schools

When sharing information regarding the co-ordinated scheme with schools, the local authority (NNC) will:

- Supply information about what is required in the co-ordination process;
- Support schools in the co-ordinated process;
- Be clear about the dates when information should/must be returned to the LA.

If schools already have a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the School Admissions Team, the team will carry out the agreed work and will share with the school the outcome of applications made to the school by sending out lists of successful applicants.

Schools wishing to establish a Service Level Agreement (SLA) for the co-ordination process should contact the School Admissions Team as soon as possible to discuss their requirements.

2.31 Relevant Area

The relevant area for schools in North Northamptonshire is the area comprising North Northamptonshire and all adjoining local authorities.