

**Gateshead Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme
Infant/Junior/Primary Schools
September 2020**

Introduction

1. This scheme is made by Gateshead Council under the Education (Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (Primary) (England) Regulations 2002 and applies to all Infant, Junior & Primary Schools in Gateshead.

Interpretation

2. In this Scheme -

'The LA' means Gateshead Council acting in their capacity as local authority.

'The LA area' means the area in respect of which the LA is the local authority.

'Primary education' has the same meaning as in section 2(1) of the Education Act 1996.

'Infant, junior & primary school' has the same meaning as in section 5(1) of the Education Act 1996.

'Secondary school' has the same meaning as in section 5(2) of the Education Act 1996.

'School' means a community or voluntary school (but not a special school), which is maintained by the LA.

'Academy' means such of the schools have 'academy' status.

'Voluntary controlled schools' means such of the schools as are voluntary controlled schools, where the LA sets the admissions criteria and offers places.

'VA schools' means such of the schools as are voluntary-aided schools.

'Admission authority' in relation to a community or voluntary controlled school means the LA and, in relation to a VA school or Academy means the governing body of that school.

'The specified year' means the school year beginning at or about the beginning of September 2020.

'Admission arrangements' mean the overall procedure, practices, criteria, and supplementary information which govern the procedures and decision making for the purposes of admitting pupils to the school;

'Home LA' means the local authority in which the child resides.

'CAF' means the common application form that must be used by the parent to apply for a school place for normal admission round first year of entry.

'Equal preference system' means all preferences for each school listed by parents on the common application form are considered against the oversubscription criterion without reference to the parental ranking nominated on the CAF. However, where a child may be potentially offered a place at more than one school nominated on their CAF, then the

rankings given on CAF will be used to determine the final single offer that will be made by selecting the school that was ranked highest on the CAF for which the child is eligible for an offer.

'Parent or Legal Guardian' means any person who holds parental responsibility, including carers, as defined under the 1989 Children Act and with whom the child normally resides.

'In Year Admissions' means any application for a place in any year group for Infant Junior or Primary school received during the academic year commencing in September 2020.

'Eligible for a place' means that a child has been placed on a school's ranked list at such a point, which falls within the school's published admission number or is eligible following determination under the Fair Access protocol.

Commencement and extent

This scheme applies in relation to the admission arrangements for schools and Academies for the admission year 2020/2021 (the specified year). The LA will include in its admission arrangements for the specified year the provisions set out in Schedule 1 to this scheme, or provisions having the same effect. The governing body of each of the VA schools and academies will include in its admission arrangements for the above year the provisions set out in the Schedule, so far as relevant to that school, or provisions having the same effect.

The Scheme

1. The Scheme shall be determined in accordance with the provisions set out in Schedule 1 and processed in accordance with the timetable set out in Schedule 2.
2. The Scheme shall apply to every infant, junior & primary school including academies in the LA area as identified in Appendix 1 (except special schools).
3. The scheme will also include applications from parents seeking admission to Gateshead schools who live within the following neighbouring LA's:
Durham, Newcastle, Northumberland, South Tyneside and Sunderland

We will also co-ordinate our admission process with any other admission authorities where relevant.

SCHEDULE 1 Part 1 - The Scheme

1. A standard application form known as the Common Application Form (CAF) will be used for applications to school for normal year of entry in the specified year. A standard application form known as 'School Transfer Form' will be used for 'In Year' applications made after the commencement of the academic year 2020.
2. The CAF will be used for admitting pupils into the first year of infant/junior/primary education in the academic year 2020/2021.
3. The CAF must be used as a means of expressing up to 3 preferences by parent's resident in the LA area wishing to express a preference for their child:
 - a) to be admitted to a school within the LA area
 - b) to be admitted to a school located in another LA's area
4. **The Common Application Form will -**
 - a) allow the parents to express up to 3 preferences by naming them in rank order of preference and where relevant for schools outside Gateshead LA area.
 - b) invite parents to give their reasons for each preference.
 - c) specify the closing date and where the application form must be returned, in accordance with paragraph 10.

5. **The LA will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that:**
- a) the CAF is available on request from the LA and on-line at www.gateshead.gov.uk until the closing date and;
 - b) every parent resident in the LA area who has a child eligible to commence primary education and those transferring from infant to junior school receives a written explanation of how to apply and an explanation of the admission procedures and coordinated admission scheme and has access to the CAF on-line and paper copy (on request only).
 - c) every parent whose application falls within the category of 'in year' admission receives a copy of the School Transfer Form and an explanation of the admission procedures and co-ordinated admission scheme.
6. **The LA will take all reasonable steps to ensure that:**
- (i) applicants will receive no more than one offer of a school place and
 - (ii) a place will be offered at the highest ranked school for which they are eligible under the admission criteria; and
 - (iii) if more than one school is nominated and no order of ranking is stated, or a wish expressed that they be ranked equally, the parent will be regarded as having ranked the schools in the order appearing on the form (the first-mentioned being ranked the highest); and
 - (iv) if a place cannot be offered at any nominated school, a place will be offered at an alternative school.
7. All preferences expressed on the CAF are valid applications. The governing body of an academy or VA school can require parents who have nominated their school on the CAF, to provide additional information on a supplementary form only where the additional information is required for the governing body to apply their oversubscription criteria to the application. Where a supplementary form is required it will be sent to the parents by the governing body for completion and returned to the school.
8. Where a school receives a supplementary form, it will not be regarded as a valid application unless the parent has also completed a CAF and the school is nominated on it. Where supplementary forms are received directly by the school then the school must inform the LA immediately, so it can verify whether a CAF has been received from the parent and, if not, the LA will contact the parent and ask them to complete a CAF. Under the requirements of the scheme, parents must not be under any obligation to complete an individual school's supplementary form where this is not required for the academy governing body to apply their oversubscription criteria.
9. Any school which operates criteria for selection by ability or aptitude must ensure that its arrangements for assessing ability or aptitude, to enable decisions to be made on nominations, conform to the timing requirements of the scheme as set out in Schedule 2 (no School in Gateshead operates criteria for selection-based ability or aptitude).

Submitting Applications (CAF)

10. Completed CAFs must be returned to the LA by 15 January 2020. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that CAFs are returned to the LA, on-line or paper copy by the closing date.

Determining offers in response to the Common Application Form

11. The LA will act as a clearing house for the allocation of places by the relevant admission authorities in response to the CAF's received. The LA will only make any decision with respect to the offer or refusal of a place in response to any preference expressed on the CAF where:
- (a) it is acting in its separate capacity as an admission authority, or

- (b) an applicant is eligible for more than one place and is allocated a place at the highest ranked school, or
- (c) an applicant is not eligible for a place at any school that the parent has nominated.

The LA will allocate places in accordance with the provisions set out in paragraph 17 of this Schedule.

12. Completed application forms must be returned to the home LA by the closing date of 15 January 2020.
13. Completed application forms that are received after the closing date will be considered as 'late' unless exceptional circumstances apply except that the procedure must not prevent the proper processing under the Scheme of those application forms received on time refer to paragraph 23 in part 2 of this scheme.
14. The LA will process all application forms. Any completed application forms must be treated as a confidential communication between the parent and the LA. All ranked applications received by the closing date will be considered before any ranked applications received after the closing date unless exceptional circumstances apply.
15. **By 31 January 2020** the LA will notify the admission authority for each of the schools of every nomination that has been made for that school. Where parents have nominated a school outside the Gateshead LA area, then Gateshead LA will also notify the relevant maintaining authority by this date.
16. **By 2 March 2020** the admission authority for each school will consider all applications for their school and apply the school's oversubscription criteria (if appropriate) and provide the LA with a list of all potential offers in ranked order according to the school's oversubscription criteria.
17. **By 9 March 2020** the LA will match the above lists against the ranked lists of the other schools nominated and:
 - Where the child is eligible for a place at the parents' first preference school, that school will be allocated to the child.
 - Where the child is eligible for a place at only one of the preferred schools, a place at that school will be offered.
 - Where the child is eligible for a place at two or more of the preferred schools, they will be offered a place at the school that is ranked the highest on the CAF for which they are eligible and any lower offered will be disregarded.
 - Where the child is not eligible for a place at any of the ranked schools, the child will (if places are still available) be allocated a place at the Community catchment school, or if this is not available at the next nearest appropriate Community school with a vacancy, measured as the crow flies from the centre of the parental residence to the main entrance of the school.
 - The LA will allocate a school place to those pupils who have not submitted a CAF after all other pupils who submitted a CAF have been considered. The LA will allocate a place at the appropriate community catchment school or if this is not available at the next nearest appropriate community school, with a vacancy, measured, as the crow flies, from the centre of the parental residence to the main entrance of the school,

18. **By 13 March 2020** the LA will provide other LA's with a first indicative list of offers and refusals for Gateshead schools for children resident in their LA areas.
19. **By 9 April 2020** the LA will inform its infant, junior & primary schools and academies of the pupils to be offered places at their schools.

National Offer Day

20. On or around 16 April 2020

Parents will be notified by email if they applied online that they are being offered a place at the allocated school. A letter will also be posted to all applicants, including those that applied online informing them of the school place allocated.

This letter will give the following information:

- The name of the school at which a place is offered;
- The reasons why the child is not being offered a place at any of the other higher ranked schools nominated on the CAF;
- Information about their statutory right of appeal against the decisions to refuse places at the other nominated schools and waiting list procedures;
- Inform parents of the date they should accept the school place offered.
- Invite parents to write to the LA if they want to be considered for any places that might become available in the re-allocation process on 11 May 2020 for those schools nominated on the CAF at which they were refused a place.
- Contact details to obtain an appeal form for higher ranked schools on the CAF for which they were not offered a place.

The letter will not inform parents of places still available at other schools.

21. **30 April 2020** - the deadline for parents to accept the place offered. If parents do not respond by this date it will be assumed that they have accepted the place, however the LA will continue to pursue parents for written confirmation of acceptance.

Where parents have not returned their acceptance slip for oversubscribed schools the LA will give the parent a further opportunity to respond however, the LA will explain that the offer may be withdrawn if they do not respond.

22. Waiting Lists and reallocation of places 11 May 2020

The LA will maintain waiting lists for all oversubscribed schools in Gateshead.

Parents may request in writing for their children to be placed on a waiting list at any school at which they have been refused a place. Parents may be informed of the position their child occupies on the list, however individual positions may change on a regular basis due to the addition or deletion of children to the list or changes in the admission criteria applied to individual applications.

A child's position on any waiting list will be determined using the admission criterion for the school in question. However, children who are the subject of a direction to admit by the LA or who have been referred for admission and have been allocated a place through the Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over any child on the waiting list.

The LA will maintain waiting lists for all oversubscribed schools in Gateshead. Voluntary Aided schools and Academies will inform the LA where children shall be placed on the waiting list for their respective schools.

If vacancies occur after 16 April 2020 the first allocation of places will take place on 11 May 2020 for all relevant schools followed by subsequent allocations, if found to be necessary, at weekly intervals.

Where a child may be eligible for an offer from more than one school waiting list then the offer made will be for the school that was ranked highest by the parent on the CAF.

On 11 May 2020 the LA reallocates any places that have become available since 16 April 2020 in accordance with the school's admission criteria. The waiting list will be compiled from those children whose parent/carer has written to the LA requesting to be placed on the waiting list for the school in question. This list will include the following children:

- Those who applied late after 15 January 2020 but before 16 April 2020 and who did not receive an offer for a school choice which was ranked higher on the CAF than the school they were offered. Such applicants may be placed on the waiting list for all schools nominated on the CAF at which they have been refused a place.
- Those who have not been offered a place at any of the schools they nominated on the CAF.
- Where a parent has been offered a place at a school which they did not nominate on the CAF, they may be placed on the waiting list for all schools they did nominate on the CAF.
- Those who have been offered a place at a school nominated on the CAF but were refused a place at a school ranked higher on the CAF than the school they were offered.
- Parents who have submitted a new application (accepted for exceptional reasons only i.e. moved house into the area) for consideration including those for children in public care as defined by the admission policy and children requiring placement through the Fair Access protocol.

Parents who write to request a new school not originally named on the CAF following the allocation date on 16 April 2020 and who do not have exceptional reasons as described above will NOT be placed on the waiting list for that new school until 18 May 2020, this is after the first reallocation of places on 11 May 2020.

From 18 May 2020 the waiting list will be opened to all new requests.

Part 2 - Late Applications

- 23.** The closing date for applications in the normal admissions round is **15 January 2020**.

As far as is reasonably practicable applications for places in the normal admissions round that are received late for exceptional reasons will be accepted provided they are received by 10 February 2020. Examples of what will be considered as a valid exceptional reason include: where a family has just moved into the area or is returning from abroad (proof of ownership or tenancy of a Gateshead property will be required in these cases). Other circumstances will be considered, and each case decided on its own merits.

Changing of preferences received after 15 January 2020

- 24.** Parents submitting requests to change their preferences, from those originally ranked on the CAF, will be classed as late applications and may only be considered if 'exceptional circumstances' apply such as those examples described in paragraph 23 above. If no such exceptional circumstances apply the LA will continue to proceed with those original preferences ranked on the CAF for the purposes of the allocation of places on the 16 April 2020. In these circumstances such applications may only be considered if vacancies exist after all on time applicants who have ranked the school on their CAF have been allocated a place.

Late applications received after 10 February 2020

25. Applications received after 10 February 2020, will be classed as late and will not be processed until after 16 April 2020. Parents will, nevertheless, receive an offer of a school place on 16 April 2020 according to the terms of this scheme.

No application received by 16 April 2020

26. Where no CAF is submitted the child will, on 16 April 2020, be offered a place at their catchment school if there are places available. If no places are available at the catchment school, a place will be offered at the next nearest school with places available, measured, as the crow flies, from the centre of the parental residence to the main entrance of the school. The LA will be aware which parents this applies to as a result of liaison with nursery school and private providers.

New applications received after 16 April but before 11 May 2020

27. Applications made direct to the school must be forwarded to the LA immediately. The LA will offer a place on 11 May 2020 in accordance with the scheme, at the school ranked highest on the CAF at which there is a vacancy, or if this is not possible, at their community school, or if this school is also full at the next nearest community school measured as the crow flies from the centre of the parent residence to the main entrance of the school. However please note that new applications submitted during this period from parents who have already submitted a CAF in the normal admission round will not be considered until 18 May 2020 in accordance with paragraph 22 above.

Applications received after 16 April 2020 but before 31 August 2020

28. The LA will continue to co-ordinate admissions to all relevant schools in Gateshead up to 31 August 2020.

Applications received after **16 April 2020**, for first year of entry must be made on the CAF and sent to the LA, who will:

- Determine any application for a community school for which it is the admission authority and
 - If the application is for a voluntary aided school, refer the application to the governing body of the school, which will make a determination and notify the LA of their decision. The LA will notify the parent. Parents who are refused admission will be offered a right of appeal and informed about the waiting list procedures.
 - If any parents approach an academy or voluntary aided school directly about a casual admission, the governing body must ensure that the parent completes a CAF (if they have not already done so). The CAF should be sent to the maintaining LA as soon as practically possible, along with the governing body's decision on the application. The governing body will notify the maintaining LA of its decision who will inform the Parent and, if the parent is refused a place, the right of appeal will be offered.
 - Please note, new applications/requests submitted after 16 April 2020 from parents who have already submitted a CAF in the normal admissions round and do not have exceptional reasons may not be considered until 18 May 2020 in accordance with paragraph 22 above.
29. The LA will keep track of any pupils who apply for admission from 16 April 2020 but before 31 August 2020 and intervene as appropriate to ensure that they are allocated a school place without undue delay.

Part 3 - In Year Applications

30. 'In Year' applications are those applications received after 31 August 2020 for places in any year group requesting admission during the academic year 2020/2021.
31. Parents should apply for a place in a Gateshead school directly through Gateshead LA.

In Year applications must be made on the Gateshead School Transfer Application Form. 'In Year' applications are those applications received after 31 August 2020 for places in any year group

requesting admission during the academic year 2020/2021. Please note that parents who have been refused a place in the normal allocation round for the first year of entry to primary, infant or junior schools for admission from 2020 and have been refused a place by the independent appeal panel may not reapply for the same year of entry unless they can demonstrate there has been a significant and material change in their circumstances that relate to the question of admission.

- 32 Gateshead's School Transfer Form is available from the Education Support Service, Dryden Centre, Evistones Road, Gateshead, NE9 5UR or online at www.gateshead.gov.uk.
- 33 Gateshead Local Authority will process all School Transfer forms for Gateshead schools and inform parents of the outcome of their application even if the school is a voluntary aided school or academy.
- 34 The local authority is unable to process applications for schools where the date that the school place is required from, is more than 6 weeks from the date of the application (Service and Crown personnel are exempt).
- 35 Children must be resident in the country before a School Transfer Form can be considered (Service and Crown personnel are exempt).
- 36 School places cannot be allocated based on intended future changes of address unless a house move has been confirmed through the exchange of contracts or a rental agreement. The admission authority reserves the right to seek further documentary evidence to support the claim to residence.

Responding to School Transfer Forms

- 37 If the school transfer application form is for a Voluntary Aided school, the Local authority will refer the application to the Governing Body of the school. In the case of applications for schools outside Gateshead, the LA will request that parents apply directly to the relevant admission authority. We do not process 'in year' application forms for schools outside Gateshead.
- 38 All primary schools within Gateshead must respond to the Local Authority (LA) within 10 days of receiving the School Transfer Form, informing the LA of the availability of a place. If there is a place available parents must be notified within 10 days from the date the application was received.
- 39 Where places are not available at the highest ranked school the LA will co-ordinate with the second and third preference schools until a place can be offered at one of the preferences subject to the availability of places and admission criteria.
- 40 If a pupil is not on the roll of a Gateshead school and a place cannot be offered at any of the nominated schools, the parent will be informed of places available at other schools in the area.
- 41 If there are more applications than places available, the published oversubscription admission criteria must be applied.
- 42 Pupils will only be refused a place at a school if one of the statutory reasons in the school admissions code applies.
- 43 Pupils should not be placed outside the normal age group without written recommendation from a professional within Care, Wellbeing and Learning at Gateshead Council. This could include an Education Psychologist, a Professional Officer working with Gifted and Talented children etc.

- 44 The LA will keep track of any pupils who apply for ‘in year’ admissions and intervene as appropriate to ensure that they are placed in a school without undue delay particularly in respect of Children in Care and disadvantaged children moving into the area i.e. Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children.

Determining Offers in response to the School Transfer Form

- 45 Pupils living in Gateshead and applying for a school in the area (including Voluntary Aided Schools and Academies) The LA will notify the parent verbally if a place is available for Schools and Academies in Gateshead. However, if a place is not available the parent will be notified of this in writing.
- 46 **Pupils living in Gateshead applying for a school out of the area.** The home authority (Gateshead) will request that the parent refers directly to the relevant admission authority to process their request and follow their ‘in year’ application process.
- 47 **Pupils living outside Gateshead applying to a Gateshead school.** The home authority must ask the parent/carer to contact Gateshead LA to complete a School Transfer Form to confirm the availability of a place. Gateshead LA will liaise with the parents regarding the outcome of their request.
- 48 **Acceptance of a school place.** Parents will be expected to contact the school offered to accept or decline the offer within 2 weeks. Failure to do so may result in the school place being withdrawn and offered to the next child on the waiting list if appropriate.
- 49 **Waiting Lists.** The LA will hold the waiting list for oversubscribed Gateshead schools. If your child is refused a place at the school you requested, you may request that your child's name is placed on the waiting list for this school. The LA will maintain school waiting lists for reception class until the end of December 2020, following this date they will be sent to the individual schools to maintain. A child's position on a waiting list will be determined using the admission criterion for the school in question however children who are the subject of a direction to admit by the LA or who have been referred for admission and have been allocated a place through the Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over any child on the waiting list.

Timescales for processing ‘In Year’ Applications

School Transfer form received by the Education Support Service	Process commences unless place is not required until a date more than 6 school weeks away (extended for children of service personnel and crown servants).
Within 5 school days of receipt of application	The LA notifies the Governing Bodies of any request for a place at their school
Within 10 school days of the school being notified of the request	The Governing Bodies of any requested school must respond to the Education Support Service regarding the availability of places
Within 20 school days of receipt of application by the Education Support Service	The Education Support Service will notify the parent by telephone if a place is available at their requested school. If a place is not available the parent will be notified of this in writing, including information about appeals and waiting lists, where appropriate.
Within 2 weeks of the date of a school place being offered	The school must receive confirmation of acceptance of the place from the parent.

SCHEDULE 2

Timetable of Primary Co-ordinated scheme 2020 First Year of Entry

Monday 9 September 2019:	Common Application Form made available to parents online or paper copy (on request only). Schools/Academies receive information letters for distribution to parents.
Wednesday 15 January 2020:	On-Line applications or paper form to be submitted to the LA.
Friday 31 January 2020:	Details of applications to be sent to VA schools and other LA's.
Monday 2 March 2020:	VA schools provide the LA with ranked lists of applicants.
Friday 13 March 2020:	The LA will provide other LA's with an indicative list of offers for relevant children.
Thursday 9 April 2020:	By this date the LA will notify schools/Academies which parents have been offered places at their schools.
Thursday 16 April 2020:	Notifications sent to parents.
Thursday 30 April 2020:	Last date for offers to be accepted by parents.
Monday 11 May 2020:	Any places that have become available are reallocated to parents in accordance with paragraph 22 of schedule 1 of this scheme.

Waiting lists maintained by the LA until end of the autumn term December 2020