

# Lincolnshire County Council

## Co-ordinated admissions scheme for admission to Primary, Infant and Junior Schools

2024 – 2025 academic year

### Introduction

This Scheme is formulated under Section 88 of the Standards and Framework Act 1998 and in accordance with the School Admissions Code (2021).

The Local Authority is responsible for co-ordinating admissions to Primary and Junior schools and therefore must formulate a scheme which;

- is agreed by all of the appropriate schools in the LA area;
- ensures that parents and schools are aware of the timescales of applications, offers and acceptances of school places in Lincolnshire.
- ensures that every parent/carer of a child resident in the LA area, who has submitted an application by the deadline outlined in this scheme, receives **one offer** of a school place on national offer day.
- indicates how a place will be allocated if none of the parental preferences can be met.
- indicates how late applications or applications to other year groups will be processed to ensure that places which become vacant are allocated effectively.

This scheme aims to minimise demands on all parties. Co-ordination in line with this scheme does not affect the right of individual admission authorities to set and operate their own admission arrangements but they will need to comply with the timescales below as far as possible to enable the LA to co-ordinate these admissions.

## **Applications**

Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) will put in place procedures that, as far as possible, ensure that all parents/carers living in Lincolnshire will be aware of the application process prior to making an application. Applicants will be required to declare that they have read the guide for parents and carers prior to submitting an application.

Parents/carers who live in the Lincolnshire **must** submit an application to Lincolnshire County Council if they require a place for their child in any state school as part of a routine admissions round, including schools in other local authorities, academies and free schools. Parent/carers living in another local authority area must apply to that authority.

All applications must be made online via the parent portal, by phone or on a paper application form. Schools must not accept applications directly from parents at any stage of the coordinated process.

## **Supplementary forms**

Where, as part of its admission arrangements, a school considers additional information not captured by the Common Application Form (CAF) for example regarding religion, pupil premium or medical support schools will have a supplementary Information Form (SIF) to capture the additional information.

Parents/carers may choose to complete this form to support their application but this does not constitute an application so parents must still submit an application to their Local Authority to apply for a school place. The supplementary form will be available from the school and from the schools website. It should be submitted directly to the school concerned.

Parent/Carers must still submit an application to the Local Authority to apply for a school place.

## **Expression of Preference**

Parents will be asked to name up to three preferred schools on their application form and to rank them in the order they would like them to be offered. Parents can list schools outside of Lincolnshire on their application and Lincolnshire LA will co-ordinate on their behalf with other LA's to process the application.

Schools must offer places to applicants in accordance with their admissions policy without reference to where the applicant has placed the school on the application form, therefore the preference number is not provided to the schools. The information about where the child has placed the school on their application form is used by the LA to ensure that any applicant is only allocated one offer in the event that more than one school can offer a place. There is no priority given to children who list a school first on their application form. Operation of first preference first arrangements is prohibited by the School Admissions Code.

The LA will allocate a place at the highest ranked school that is able to offer the child a place. If it is not possible to offer a parent one of their preferred schools, the admissions team will offer a place in the nearest Lincolnshire school to the child's home address with vacancies at the time of the allocation if the child resides in Lincolnshire and the LA has a responsibility with regard to the child's education.

## **Late applications**

### **Applications between 16 January – 9 February**

These will be accepted as 'on time' and ranked alongside other applicants. An offer will be made on 16 April 2024. If a parent attempts to revise an application after this date the change of detail will not be taken into account until the second round of allocations.

### **Applications made between 10 February – 17 May**

Parents who make a first application to the LA and those parents who make a revised application between 17 April and 17 May will receive an offer by 31 May.

Revised applications are made when a parent has received an offer of a school place but want to apply for a place at a different school(s) or their details have changed since the application was made and this will have a bearing on consideration of the oversubscription criteria. These applications will be treated on an equal basis with any late applications or applicants on a reserve list.

### **Applications made after 17 May**

These will be processed after 6 June and offers will be sent out on a weekly basis until the end of the admissions round.

### **Applications for children at a school nursery**

Attending a school nursery or playgroup does not guarantee a place at a school. Parents must apply for a place in Reception in line with the timescales in this scheme.

### **Applications to Junior schools at the start of Year 3**

Infant to junior transfer will be managed following the same timetable and processes as the intake to reception.

All parents seeking places for their children at a junior school must apply under the coordinated timetable below, irrespective of whether their child currently attends an infant or a primary school - there is no automatic transfer to the junior schools.

Parents of children in year 2 at an Infant school may also request a place in year 3 of a Primary school as part of the revised co-ordinated round and hold the place until September. These applications will be processed in line with the co-ordinated timescales above.

Details on how to apply for primary schools as part of the co-ordinated round will be available on the Lincolnshire County Council website.

## Processing Applications

The LA uses electronic communication with other LAs, admission Authorities and schools to coordinate admissions. Access to application data will be available to schools online through this system and schools use it to rank applications according to their oversubscription criteria and communicate with the LA's admissions team. Deadlines for receipt of information are detailed below.

### Annual Cycle

<b>Deadline Dates</b>	<b>Summary of Action</b>	<b>Details of action</b>
October 1 2022	Consultation on changes to admission policies for all admission authorities can begin.	Admission authorities publish any changes to their admission arrangements on their website and consult with all relevant parties.
January 31 2023	Consultations on any changes to the policy of any admission authority are completed.	Admission authorities complete consultation on any proposed changes to their policies.
By Feb 28 2023	Admission policies are formally determined.	Admission authorities determine an admissions policy for the 2024/2025 school year, considering responses to consultation if appropriate.  The LA notifies the Secretary of State that agreement has been reached on a coordinated scheme.  Schools place appeals timetable on their website.
By March 15 2023	Admissions authorities must send their determined admissions arrangements to the LA and place on their website.  LA places a notice on its	Objections to a schools determined arrangements can be made to the Schools Adjudicator up until 15 May.

	website indicating where all admission arrangements can be found.	
By 1 August 2023.	Own admissions authorities must provide information by 1 August each year to detail how in year applications will be co-ordinated.	Information to be present on the Local Authority and schools website by 31 August.
By 8 September 2023.	Composite prospectus published on website with all other relevant information	Parents can attend open days to look around schools
Nov 15 2023	Application process opens for primary, infant and junior applications and information and guidance is made available to parents via schools and early years providers	LA advertises the availability of information including the application process.
Jan 15 2024	National closing date for applications.	This is the national closing date but Lincolnshire County Council allows parents to apply until February 9. The admissions portal may not be available for short periods whilst the team process applications but applications can be made by paper form if necessary.
Jan 26 2024	LA ensures all application data is available to Lincolnshire schools.	Schools access applications to their school and begin ranking. Schools can access information about Lincolnshire applicants as soon as they are added to the system or after the LA has downloaded the online applications.
Feb 5 – 23 2024	Co-ordination of applications with other LA's.	LAs exchange relevant application details with other LA's
Feb 9 2024	Late applications can be accepted up to this date.  Schools confirm initial checks of data completed.  The system is closed and no further changes can be accepted for any	Any application received by this date will be co-ordinated alongside the other applicants. Schools have completed their checks of the applications received so far.  Anyone who applies after this date will have to do so on a paper form or by telephone. Parents are notified that their application is late and will

	reason.	be processed by 31 May.
Feb 23 2024	Schools confirm correct ranking of their applications against their oversubscription criteria.	Schools rank all applications against their oversubscription criteria online via electronic system and confirm to LA that this is complete.
March 8 2024	LA carries out initial allocation of offers.	LA locks database and does the first allocation run. Where pupils have more than one offer, the LA allocates the school the parents have ranked highest and fills any vacancy with the pupil ranked next by the school.
March 12 - 31 2024	LA continues to co-ordinate between LA's to ensure children receive one offer of a school place.	LA will send second round of data by no later than 25 March. LA allocates schools to pupils living in Lincolnshire who have not been offered places in any of their preferred schools.
April 8 2024	LA finalises allocations ready for notification to schools and parents.	LA makes final adjustments after receiving information from other LA's
April 15 2024	Schools informed of final allocations.	Schools check final allocations through the electronic system.
April 16 2024	National offer day  Parents can lodge appeals from this date.	LA posts offers to parents and releases offers online to those who applied online.  Parents will be able to lodge appeals online and via paper form.
April 17 2024	Parents can submit new applications or revised application online.	Admission authorities and schools start to process late and revised applications. No offer will be made until after the deadline of the second round.
May 6 2024	LAs exchange offer responses with other LA's	LAs adjust ranked list to take account of any refusals
May 14 2024	Administrative deadline of 20 school days for receipt of appeals to ensure all appeals for the same school are	Appeals must be received by midnight on this date to be classed as 'on time' and then must be heard within 40 school days of this date.

	heard at the same time	
May 17 2024	Deadline for late and revised applications to be received to be processed within next offer round.	All late and revised applications received for Lincolnshire schools by this date will be notified of their offer result in week commencing 27 May. LA will co-ordinate late and revised applications with other LA's but cannot guarantee the response time.
By 31 May 2024	Late and revised application offers will be sent to parents.  Waiting list data is available	Lincolnshire will inform parents of the outcome of their revised applications.  Parents can find out their child's position on the waiting list of a school.
May 18 – August 31 2024	Applications processed and offers made on a weekly basis until end of formal co-ordinated cycle.	Any applications received after 31 August will be processed as mid-year admissions in accordance with the process below.  Waiting lists are passed to schools.
December 31 2024	Waiting lists must be held for Reception until this date.	Some schools may hold these lists longer. Contact the school for more information.

### **Accepting offers**

Parents do not need to take further action after national offer day to accept the offer made. Acceptance is assumed and parents need only take action if they wish to decline the offer, for example if moving out of the county or attending independent school. Where offers are made after the second round of allocations, parents should contact the school admissions team to indicate which offer they would like to accept. More information is contained in the 'multiple offers' section below.

### **Appeals**

In all cases where a place is refused parents will be advised of their right to appeal. Appeals should be lodged before the deadline above to ensure that they are heard with other children who have also been refused for that school and will be heard within 40 school days of that deadline. Appeals can still be lodged after this date but it cannot be guaranteed that these will be heard alongside other applicants for the same school or in some cases, by the end of the school term. Admissions authorities will clearly display on their website the process by which a parent can appeal for a school place.

All other admission authorities must notify the school admission team of any places allocated on appeal at their school(s) so that the LA can co-ordinate admissions effectively.

### **Reserve Lists**

After the initial allocation of places, schools operate a waiting list, which LCC call a reserve list. You will automatically be added to the schools reserve list if you have been refused admission as part of the normal admissions round. The list is held in accordance with the schools oversubscription criteria.

Children will be added to the waiting list alongside any children who submit a revised application or apply late. Details of a child's position on the list will be available after the second round of allocations as it will not be accurate before that date as late applicants and changes of circumstances will not have been updated.

When a place becomes available after the second round of allocations, the place will be allocated from the reserve list. Reserve lists will be held by the School Admissions Team until 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024, then they will be passed to the schools who will hold them until at least 31 December 2024. Some schools may hold the lists longer. You should contact the school for more information.

### **Parental Disputes**

If one or more application is received for a child and there is dispute about the address, preferences or preference order on the application, the applications will be withdrawn until there is agreement. Parents will not be able to exercise their right of appeal until an application has been processed. The child will be reported to the inclusion and attendance team as a child missing education if no application is accepted by the 31<sup>st</sup> August of the admitting year.

### **Withdrawing Offers**

An admissions authority reserves the right to withdraw an offer of a school place where the place has been obtained on the basis of fraudulent or intentionally misleading information and this has denied another child a place. A place can also be withdrawn if it is not accepted within a reasonable time. In all cases where a place is being withdrawn due to lack of response from parent, the admissions authority will contact the parent detailing a date on which the place will be withdrawn if not accepted. In all cases, following an offer of a school place, the decision to withdraw the place will be made by the admissions authority concerned.

### **Multiple Offers**



Where a situation arises where a parent receives more than one offer, for example where a place is offered on appeal or from a waiting list after the second round of allocations, if parents do not respond to indicate which offer they would like to accept within a reasonable time of the allocation then the place offered at the lower preference school will be withdrawn. In all cases the school admissions team will contact parents to state a deadline by which confirmation must be received before withdrawal of any offers made.

### **Admission of children outside of their normal age group**

Parents can seek a place outside of their normal age group for example if a child is gifted and talented, has experienced ill health or summer born children.

Lincolnshire County Council will co-ordinate these requests but the decision whether to agree the request lies with the admissions authority. These schools must make decisions in line with their admissions arrangements and the School Admissions Code (2021). In all cases, an agreement to allow a request does not guarantee a place as the school must consider the application alongside others applying in that admissions round.

### **Early transfer**

Those applying to attend school earlier than their age related cohort should do so within the timescales outlined in this document for their preferred cohort providing any supporting evidence that they wish to be considered. If this is agreed and a place is offered, parents can decide whether to accept the place or reapply in the next round with their age related cohort.

### **Late Transfer**

Those requesting to enter a school later than other applicants of their chronological age should apply with their chronological age group detailing their request and providing any supporting evidence they wish to be considered.

Parents may be informed of whether an admissions authority agrees that they believe it is in a child's best interest to be educated out of their chronological age before national offer day. This is not an offer of a school place. The offer process will be in line with the co-ordinated scheme.

If a school agrees to the request, this will entitle parents to reapply in the preferred year group. If schools do not agree, parents may decide to continue with their existing application or withdraw their application and apply for a place in their chronological cohort through the in-year system at a later date.

If a parent is entitled to reapply this does not guarantee a place at the school. If no school who has agreed to the out of cohort request is able to offer a

place, the school admissions team will offer a place at the closest school to the child's home address with places available in the chronological age group. Therefore it would be for parents to revise their application, in the same way as detailed in this document, if they wish for alternative schools to consider the request.

In all cases where a place is refused, parents will be advised of their right of appeal. An appeal is for a place in a school rather than in a particular year group. If a school does not agree to the request but offers a place in another year group the parent does not have a right to appeal.

### **Applications from UK service personnel and returning crown servants.**

This applies if the parent is a serving member of the armed forces or is a crown servant returning from abroad.

Applications will be coordinated through Lincolnshire LA if the family has either;

- A confirmed posting order or official letter with a unit address or quartering address within Lincolnshire.
- A confirmed posting order to the UK and confirmed address in Lincolnshire to which they are returning before the end of October of the admitting year.

Consideration of the address accepted for implementing the oversubscription criteria may differ as the policy of each school will be followed.

If the move is not due to an official posting then the application should be made to the child's current home LA or will be considered in line with the 'children from overseas' section below.

If none of the schools listed on the application form can offer a place, Lincolnshire County Council will offer the closest Lincolnshire school to the address accepted on the application form if the accepted address is in Lincolnshire. If the address accepted is outside of Lincolnshire, no alternative school will be offered as it is for the child's home LA to offer an alternative placement.

In order to remove disadvantage to families of service personnel who apply after the initial allocation of places has occurred (Late applicants), the school admissions team will approach the schools listed on the application to consider whether the school wish to offer a place to the child even if the published admissions number has been met or the school is full. These decisions will be made by the individual admissions authorities concerned in line with their admissions procedures for forces applicants and will be clearly communicated to parents. In all cases, if a place is refused, parents will be notified of their right of appeal.

**Children from overseas.**

For coordinated admissions, the admissions team will process applications from overseas applicants in line with European Law and Home Office rules for non EEA nationals. Lincolnshire County Council will accept an application for routine admissions within the same timescales above. The address used for the purposes of a schools oversubscription criteria will be their current overseas address. The school admissions team will not allocate an alternative school if parental preference cannot be met.

**In-year applications**

Lincolnshire County Council operates non-statutory coordination of these applications. Those who would like a school place in Lincolnshire may apply online using the Lincolnshire parent portal on the LCC website or obtain a paper form from 01522 782030. Those who would like places in schools outside of Lincolnshire should apply to the LA in which the school is situated.

All Lincolnshire schools may choose to accept direct applications from parents. If the school do refuse or accept a child directly, they must provide the details of the child to the Local Authority. If a school is contacted by the parent/carer and they are unable to offer a place to a child without a school place, the parent/carer must be advised to contact the school admission team who will co-ordinate a central in-year admission application.

If Lincolnshire have a duty to educate the child and they are not attending a school within a reasonable distance of their home, then the admissions team will allocate a place at the closest school with spaces available if none of the parental preferences can be met. It is for the parent to provide information which establishes the duty to educate the child. Information about what is required to establish this duty will be clearly communicated to parents.

Details of schools operating within Lincolnshire County Council in year co-ordination will be displayed on the Lincolnshire County Council Website by 31 August as required by the School Admissions Code (2021).

**Date Determined – TBC.**