



Learning & Skills Group Admission Arrangements 2016/17

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Introduction

This document is designed to fulfil the requirements of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, as amended by the Education Acts 2002 and 2005 and the Education and Inspections Act 2006, and subsequent School Admissions Regulations for the determination of admission arrangements. This policy applies to Shropshire community and voluntary controlled schools and to own admission authority schools who have determined to adopt Shropshire Council's arrangements.

Requirements of the Legislation

Consultation on admission arrangements is required every 7 years if no changes in the intervening period are proposed. Shropshire Council carried out consultation on its admission arrangements in 2012/13 and these have been determined annually by Cabinet. No changes are proposed to the arrangements for 2016/17 as such. However, one community school has requested a decrease to its Published Admission Number (PAN) and in these circumstances the School Admissions Code stipulates that the admission authority must formally consult on their complete admission arrangements.

Consultation must take place between 1 November 2014 and 1 March 2015 for 8 weeks. The arrangements will then need to be determined by Cabinet before 15 April 2015.

The co-ordinated arrangements are applicable to the admission of pupils to maintained schools in the relevant area, so that parents apply to their home local authority and receive one offer of a school place. The 'relevant area' for Shropshire is the whole of the County and at secondary level includes the Parish Councils of Bayton and Mable in Worcestershire, including the village of Clows Top (as part of the catchment area for the Lacon Childe School) and an area in Powys adjoining the Shropshire boundary to the east of the Offa's Dyke (as part of the catchment area for the Community College at Bishop's Castle).

(1) Admission Arrangements for 2016/17**Secondary**

The oversubscription criteria for rural secondary community and voluntary controlled schools in North and South Shropshire are as follows (schools that are an admission authority may have determined their own arrangements):

Children who have a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education Health Care Plan from Shropshire Council, which names the school which the child should attend because their needs can be met best by that particular school, will be offered places before other children. After that places will be offered up to the admission number in the following priority order:

Priority 1:

Priority will be given to children in public care, usually referred to as “Looked after Children” and children who were “Looked after” but ceased to be so because they were adopted as defined in the current School Admissions Code.

Priority 2:

Children living inside the catchment area will have next priority. If there are not enough places for all the children living in the catchment area, we will look at the following two criteria:

- 1) Priority will be given to children living within the catchment area who will have an older sibling of compulsory school age (11 – 16) at the school on the day they are due to start there.
- 2) After that, priority will be given to other children who live within the catchment area.

Priority 3:

After that, any places that are left will be offered to children who live outside the catchment area. If there are not enough places for all of them, we will look at the following two criteria:

- 1) Priority will be given to children living outside the catchment area who will have an older sibling of compulsory school age (11 – 16) at the school on the day they are due to start there.
- 2) Secondly, priority will be given to children living outside the catchment area without an older sibling at the school, but who have attended a publicly-funded primary school that lies within the secondary school’s catchment area, for more than a whole academic year immediately prior to transfer.
- 3) After that, priority will be given to other children who live outside the catchment area.

If, in any of the above priority categories, there are more applications than there are places available, priority will be given on the basis of distance measured as a straight line on a computerised mapping system between the home address and the nearest entrance gate of the school by pinpointing their eastings and northings. The shortest distance will be given priority. Where two addresses are within the same block of flats, the lowest number of flat or nearest the ground floor will be deemed to be the nearest in distance.

Please note that the oversubscription criteria for Shrewsbury Secondary Schools (set out below) are administered slightly differently to include a “nearest school” test. This is more fully explained with a diagram in the “Parents’ Guide to Education in Shropshire” booklet. (Schools that are an admission authority may have determined their own arrangements)

Children who have a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education Health Care Plan from Shropshire Council, which names the school which the child should attend because their needs can be met best by that particular school will be offered places before other children. After that places will be offered up to the admission number in the following priority order:

Priority 1: Priority will be given to children in public care, usually referred to as “Looked after Children” and children who were “Looked after” but ceased to be so because they were adopted as defined in the current School Admissions Code.

Priority 2: Children living inside the Shrewsbury catchment area who will have an older sibling of compulsory school age (11 – 16) at the school on the day they are due to start there.

Priority 3: After that, priority is given to children living within the Shrewsbury catchment area for whom the preferred school is their nearest school and this is checked through the “Nearest School” test. For the avoidance of doubt, we measure this as a straight line on a computerised mapping system between home and the nearest appropriate official entrance gate to the school site as compared with the straight line distance from other applicants’ homes to their nearest school.

Priority 4: After we have considered all applicants for whom the “Nearest School” test applies, all other applicants living within the Shrewsbury catchment area are determined on a proximity basis, between home and the nearest appropriate entrance gate of the school, the nearest being given priority.

Priority 5: After that, any places that are left will be offered to children who live outside the overall catchment area for Shrewsbury. If there are not enough places for all of them, we will look at the following two criteria:

Firstly, priority will be given to children outside the catchment area who will have an older sibling of compulsory school age (11 – 16) at the school on the day they are due to start there.

After that other children who live outside the catchment area.

If, in any of the above priority categories, there are more applications than there are places available, priority will be given on the basis of distance measured as a straight line on a computerised mapping system between the home address and the nearest entrance gate of the school by pinpointing their eastings and northings. The shortest distance will be given priority. Where two addresses are within the same block of flats, the lowest number of flat or nearest the ground floor will be deemed to be the nearest in distance.

Notes which apply to both sets of oversubscription criteria:

Very exceptionally, where a child has a particular health reason requiring them to attend a specific school, that child may be given a place before any of the children who qualify under Priorities 2 and 3 above. This will only be allowed if parents/carers can provide written evidence from a medical professional that in the view of the local authority attending that particular school is **essential** to the medical well-being of the child. The Council reserves the right to check the relevance of the medical condition.

Catchment area maps can be viewed on LocalView available from 'Maps' at the foot of the website www.shropshire.gov.uk or, in case of doubt, individual addresses can be checked by contacting the Admissions Team. Published admission numbers can be found in the Parents' Guide to Education booklet.

The definition of a sibling is the brother or sister, stepbrother or stepsister, half-brother or half-sister living at the same address as part of the same family unit and of compulsory school age (i.e. 5 – 16 years). Adopted and foster siblings are also included. Older siblings must still be attending the school on the date the younger sibling is due to start there. However, cousins or other relatives who take up residence in the home will not be given priority under the sibling criterion.

In the case of twins or triplets from the same address the school will endeavour to admit both or all siblings.

All applicants are required to give correct information about the genuine residential address of the child. This is normally expected to be with the parent/carer who has care of the child for the majority of the time (that is school time during the week in term time) but where care is shared equally, the home address will be determined by which parent receives the relevant Child Benefit.

In the event that two individual applications are exactly the same after all other criteria have been taken into account a tie breaker will be used. This will be by random allocation and overseen by an independent party not connected with the admissions process.

There is no cost associated with the admissions process to Shropshire Local Authority maintained schools.

Co-ordinated Admission Arrangements for 2016/17 – Secondary

Shropshire Council operates co-ordinated arrangements with other admissions authorities in Shropshire (such as academies) and all neighbouring English LA's. Welsh LAs are not currently part of the formal co-ordinated proposals; however, we communicate with Powys, Wrexham and Denbighshire over the allocation of places.

The Admissions Code of Practice requires LAs to use a national date of 1 March each year or next working day for allocating all secondary school places. Therefore the allocation date for 2016/17 will be **1 March 2016**. All parents living within Shropshire are required to use a common application process, which seeks three ranked preferences. All applications must be made to the home LA including applications to academies (which retain the responsibility for their own admission policy). Under the co-ordinated scheme, all Year 6 pupils only receive **one offer of a secondary place, on 1 March** (or next working day), **via their home LA and not from the LA in which the school is located**. Shropshire operates an equal preference scheme; therefore, where more than one school may have places available, applicants will be offered a place at the school which appears highest on their list of preferences. Parents from other neighbouring authorities may also apply to Shropshire schools, but must do so via their own Authority. Such applications will be notified to Shropshire and considered under the appropriate admissions criteria. The full timetable applicable to both schools and admissions authorities for the exchange of information is attached at Appendix A (subsequent years will be published on the website in advance of the relevant year).

Late Applications:

The online application facility will close at midnight on the closing date (31 October). If application forms are completed they must be returned to the child's primary school or direct to the LA by 31 October. It will not be possible to consider any late applications or changes to the original preferences where a school is oversubscribed, unless there are some exceptional circumstances, such as a house move or difficulties such as those caused by a family bereavement. Up until the beginning of February we shall endeavour to include such exceptions in the allocation process but no guarantees can be given. Any application received after the beginning of February will not be considered for over-subscribed schools but will be included on the waiting list after the allocation date, or if possible offered the nearest available Shropshire school to their home address.

Applicants who do not receive an offer for any of their preferred schools:

The LA endeavours to accommodate as many first preferences as possible. However, where this cannot be achieved the LA will consider the applicant's second preference, giving it equal weighting with all other first preferences for that school. If the second preference is also unavailable, then the third preference will be considered in the same way as above. Where there are a small number of applicants resident within the county who do not receive any of their preferred schools, they will be offered a place at the nearest school to their home address with places available within the LA. Parents or carers may then be responsible for their

child's transport arrangements as the offer of a place does not confer any right to free transport, eligibility for which is completely different to admission.

Where no application is received for a known child at a local primary school, that parent will be informed by letter that no school place has been allocated, and will be asked to inform the LA of what arrangements they are intending to make for their child. Admissions Advisers will try to make contact to discuss options. Where no response is received, we may follow this up by a home visit by an Education Welfare Officer.

Unsuccessful Applicants:

Where applicants cannot be offered their first preference they will be sent an appeal form. If they are not satisfied with the place offered they will be able to request an appeal and pending the appeal their name will be included on a waiting list. Applicants who no longer wish to accept places offered will also be asked to notify the LA of their intention to decline an offer by the response date and inform the LA of the educational arrangements they are making for their child. Applicants who were too late to be included in the main allocation process and were not able to be offered a school place will be included in the waiting list. The re-allocation of any vacancies to people on the waiting lists will commence in late March. Where a place becomes available the same oversubscription criteria will be used. Where applicants requesting an appeal are residents in a neighbouring authority, that authority will be informed if a place can be offered.

Right of Appeal:

After the review, those on the waiting lists who cannot be offered a place can proceed to the appeal stage. Appeals will be heard by an independent panel within 40 school days. The decision of the panel is binding on all parties. Where appeals from parents resident in neighbouring authorities are upheld, the relevant LA will be informed.

Waiting Lists:

After appeals, the waiting list, held in order of oversubscription criteria, continues to operate for the first term of the academic year of admission. The following parents will be automatically included on a waiting list, unless they specifically decline:

- Parents who have been unsuccessful at the main round of appeals for admission at the start of Year 7 (secondary school).
- Any new applicants for such places who have moved into the oversubscribed school's area subsequent to the date of appeals for these places.

If any vacancies arise, places will be offered to applicants included on the waiting list in strict accordance with normal published oversubscription criteria. If a place can be offered the applicant will be expected to take up the place within 6 weeks or by the start of the next half term, whichever is the earliest date. If an offer of a place is refused, the name will be removed from the waiting list. At the end of first term of

the academic year of admission, the local authority will cease to operate a waiting list. Any further new applications will be treated as mid-term admission applicants.

Fraudulent or Misleading Information

See page 11.

Primary

All children in Shropshire are entitled to start school in the September following their fourth birthday. Parents may also defer entry to school until later in the year or until their child reaches compulsory school age (the term following their child's fifth birthday) or elect for their child to attend part-time. Where summer born children defer entry to September they will usually be admitted into Year 1 (not Reception) and will need to make a separate application. Previous applications cannot be held over into a different academic year.

A separate application must be made to transfer from nursery to primary school.

For entry to school in 2016/17, the national offer day for primary school applications for all English local authorities will be **18 April 2016**.

The oversubscription criteria for all Community and Controlled Primary Schools for 2016/17 are as follows. (Schools that are an admission authority may have determined their own arrangements):

Children who have a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education Health Care Plan from Shropshire Council, which names the school which the child should attend because their needs can be met best by that particular school will be offered places before other children. After that places will be offered in the following priority order:

Priority 1:

Priority will be given to children in public care, usually referred to as "Looked after Children" and children who were "Looked after" but ceased to be so because they were adopted as defined in the current School Admissions Code.

Priority 2:

Children living inside the catchment area will have next priority. If there are not enough places for all the children living in the catchment area, we will look at the following two criteria:

- 1) Priority will be given to children living within the catchment area who will have an older sibling at the school on the day they are due to start there.
- 2) After that, priority will be given to other children who live within the catchment area.

Priority 3:

After that, any places that are left will be offered to children who live outside the catchment area. If there are not enough places for all of them, we will look at the following two criteria:

- 1) Children living outside the catchment area who will have an older sibling at the school on the day they are due to start there.
- 2) After that other children who live outside the catchment area.

For admission purposes all distances are measured by the Admissions Team as a straight line distance on a computerised mapping system between the home address and the nearest entrance gate of the school by pinpointing their eastings and northings. The shortest distance being given priority. Where two addresses are within the same block of flats, the lowest number of flat or nearest the ground floor will be deemed to be the nearest in distance.

Notes:

Very exceptionally, where a child has a particular health reason requiring them to attend a specific school, that child may be given a place before any of the children who qualify under Priorities 2 and 3 above. This will only be allowed if parents/carers can provide written medical evidence that in the view of the local authority makes attending that particular school essential to the medical well-being of the child. The Council reserves the right to check the relevance of the medical condition.

Catchment area maps can be viewed on LocalView available from 'Maps' at the foot of the website www.shropshire.gov.uk or, in case of doubt, individual addresses can be checked by contacting the Admissions Team. Admission numbers can be found in the Parents' Guide to Education booklet.

The definition of a sibling is the brother or sister, stepbrother or stepsister, half-brother or half-sister living at the same address as part of the same family unit and of compulsory school age (i.e. 5 – 16 years). Adopted and foster siblings are also included. Older siblings must still be attending the school on the date the younger sibling is due to start there. However, cousins or other relatives who take up residence in the home will not be given priority under the sibling criterion.

In the case of twins or triplets from the same address the school will endeavour to admit both or all siblings.

In the event that two individual applications are exactly the same after all other criteria have been taken into account a tie breaker will be used. This will be by random allocation and overseen by an independent party not connected with the admissions process.

There is no cost associated with the admissions process to Shropshire Local Authority maintained schools.

Co-ordinated Admission Arrangements for 2016/17 – Primary

Shropshire Council operates co-ordinated arrangements with other admissions authorities in Shropshire (such as academies) and all neighbouring English LA's. Welsh LAs are not currently part of the formal primary co-ordinated proposals.

The national allocation date across England for 2016/17 will be **18 April 2016**. All parents living within Shropshire are required to use a common application process, which seeks three ranked preferences. All applications must be made to the home LA including applications to academies (who have responsibility for their own admission policy). Under the co-ordinated scheme, all children applying for Reception places in Infant and Primary Schools and Year 3 in Junior Schools receive only **one offer, on 16 April** (or next working day), **via their home LA and not from the LA in which the school is located**. Shropshire operates an equal preference scheme; therefore, where more than one school may have places available, applicants will be offered a place at the school which appears highest on their list of preferences. Parents from other neighbouring authorities may also apply to Shropshire schools, but must do so via their own authority. Such applications will be notified to Shropshire and considered under the same admissions criteria. The full timetable applicable to both schools and admissions authorities for the exchange of information is attached at Appendix A (subsequent years will be published on the website in advance of the relevant year).

Late Applications:

The online application facility will close at midnight on the closing date (15 January). If application forms are completed they must be returned to the child's primary school or direct to the LA by 15 January. It will not be possible to consider any late applications or changes to the original preferences where a school is oversubscribed, unless there are some exceptional circumstances, such as a house move or difficulties such as those caused by a family bereavement. Up until mid-March we shall endeavour to include such exceptions in the allocation process but no guarantees can be given. Any application received after mid-March will not be considered for over-subscribed schools but will be included on the waiting list after the allocation date, or if possible offered the nearest available Shropshire school to their home address.

Applicants who do not receive an offer for any of their preferred schools:

The LA endeavours to accommodate as many first preferences as possible. However, where this cannot be achieved the LA will consider the applicant's second preference, giving it equal weighting to all other first preferences for that school. If the second preference is also unavailable, then the third preference will be considered in the same way as above. Where there are a small number of applicants resident within the county who do not receive any of their preferred schools, they will be offered a place at the nearest available school to their home address within the LA, however no free school transport will be offered unless the school offered is either the catchment area school or the nearest school to the home address and it is more than 2 miles distant.

Unsuccessful Applicants:

Where applicants cannot be offered their first preference they will be sent an appeal form. If they are not satisfied with the place offered they will be able to request an appeal and pending the appeal their name will be included on a waiting list. Applicants who no longer wish to accept places offered will also be asked to notify the LA of their intention to decline an offer by the response date and inform the LA of the educational arrangements they are making for their child. Applicants who were too late to be included in the main allocation process and were not able to be offered a school place will be included in the waiting list. The re-allocation of any vacancies to people on the waiting lists will commence at the beginning of May. Where a place becomes available the same oversubscription criteria will be used. Where applicants requesting an appeal are residents in a neighbouring authority, that authority will be informed if a place can be offered.

Right of Appeal:

After the review, those on the waiting lists who cannot be offered a place can proceed to the appeal stage. Appeals will be heard by an independent panel within 40 school days. The decision of the panel is binding on all parties. Where appeals from parents resident in neighbouring authorities are upheld, the relevant LA will be informed.

Waiting Lists:

After appeals, the waiting list, held in order of oversubscription criteria, continues to operate for the first term of the academic year of admission. The following parents will be automatically included on a waiting list, unless they specifically decline:

- Parents who have been unsuccessful at the main round of appeals for admission at the start of Reception (Infant and Primary schools) and Year 3 (Junior schools).
- Any new applicants for such places who have moved into the oversubscribed school's area subsequent to the date of appeals for these places.

If any vacancies arise, places will be offered to applicants included on the waiting list in strict accordance with normal published oversubscription criteria. If an offer of a place is refused, the name will be removed from the waiting list. At the end of first term of the academic year of admission, the local authority will cease to operate a waiting list. Any further new applications will be treated as mid-term admission applicants.

Fraudulent or Misleading Information

See page 11.

(2) Admission arrangements for school sixth forms

Shropshire Council has delegated responsibility to schools for admission to sixth forms. Individual policies are attached and available on the schools' own websites.

(3) Mid-term /In-year Admissions:

Shropshire LA has delegated responsibility to schools for in-year admission applications (after first term of entry). Parents and carers can apply for a place for their child at any time to any school. The LA can inform parents of where places might be available but application should be made directly to the school on a mid-term application form. Forms can be obtained from any Shropshire school, or printed from Shropshire Council's website (www.shropshire.gov.uk/admissions) or a hard copy can be sent by second class post from the School Admissions Team.

Schools must inform the LA of all applications received and their outcome to allow the LA to keep up to date figures on availability of places. If there are more applications than places available schools will apply the oversubscription criteria as listed above. If refusing an application, an admission authority (such as academies and aided schools or the LA for community and controlled schools) must inform parents of their right to appeal against the refusal.

The Governing Body of a foundation or voluntary aided school may require parents who make an application to provide supplementary information in order to apply their own admissions policy. Where supplementary information is required it must be returned along with the application form so that all information can be considered by the relevant admissions authority.

Some applications may be considered under the Fair Access Protocol. Applications such as those from traveller families or from Forces applicants, who meet the criteria for consideration under this protocol, will be offered a place at a suitable school without delay.

Appeals

Where applicants cannot be offered their preferred school they will be informed of the right to appeal. Where application is refused for an academy, the Academy Trust is responsible for arranging the admission appeal although they may ask another body to carry out some or all of the functions on their behalf. The earliest possible date for an appeal will be offered. Appeals are generally held on one day each month, and an appeal date must be offered within 30 schools days of the appeal being lodged, but generally it takes up to 4 weeks to set up an appeal. Where an appeal is upheld or where a parent is informed that the school has a place available, the pupil would be expected to commence at the school within 6 weeks or by the start of the next half-term (whichever is the earliest) in which the place is offered, otherwise the offer of a place can be withdrawn by the admission authority. Mid-term or in-year admissions will not normally be accepted where this is for a place more than one term ahead. The only exception to this would be parents who are applying for a boarding place at Thomas Adams School and where parents are going abroad so that it may be necessary to make arrangements early in the academic year.

Fraudulent or Misleading Information

All applicants are required to give correct information about the genuine residential address of the child, which is normally expected to be with the parent/carer who has

care of the child for the majority of the time (that is, school time during the week in term time). In cases of equal shared care, the recipient of Child Benefit will be the deciding factor. When someone owns a property and comes to live with a relation, the substantive home address will be used to allocate a place and not that of the relation. Trial separation may not be accepted as proof of a permanent move. Addresses may be checked when deemed necessary, especially for oversubscribed schools. Parents/carers might be required to provide evidence that the residential address is genuine and council tax records may be verified. On occasions a home visit may be made by an officer from the Local Authority. Where a house move is made, applicants are required to produce a letter of confirmation from their solicitor that contracts have been exchanged or provide a copy of a signed tenancy agreement for a minimum period of 6 months. Short-term tenancy agreements may not be acceptable where the substantive parental address has not been sold at the time of allocation. Where any information regarding a home address is found to be fraudulent or misleading the Local Authority has the right to withdraw the offer of a school place even if the child has been admitted to the school.

(4) Admission Numbers 2016/17 onwards

Current admission numbers are shown in the Parents' Guide to Education in Shropshire 2015/16 booklet and the following schools have proposed changes for 2016/17 as follows:

Proposal for <u>Reduction</u> in PAN	School Type	Existing PAN	New PAN	+ / -
Trinity CE Primary School, Ford	VC	25	23	-2

Following changes introduced by the School Admissions Code 2012, admission authorities are not required to consult where they propose to increase a Published Admission Number (PAN). The proposed increases to PAN listed below are therefore given purely for information and are not subject to consultation.

Declaration of <u>Increase</u> in PAN	School Type	Existing PAN	New PAN	+ / -
Thomas Adams School	VC	203	208	+5
Selattyn CE Primary School	VC	12	13	+1

(5) Catchment Area Changes

There are no proposed changes to designated catchment areas.

Appendix:

Timetable of admissions dates