

**NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL
DECISION**

**DECISION OF: COUNCILLOR JAN BARBER, EXECUTIVE MEMBER
FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SERVICES
WITH ADVICE FROM: SHEILA SMITH, DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE AND
COMMUNITIES
DIRECTORATE: PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES**



DECISION NO: PC56 (2017-18 SCHEME)

**SUBJECT: SECONDARY COORDINATED SCHOOLS ADMISSION SCHEMES FOR
2019-20**

KEY DECISION: YES

BACKGROUND:

The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012 requires all admission authorities to consult on the Coordinated Admission Scheme.

DECISION:

The Secondary Coordinated Admission Scheme is accepted and adopted by the Authority.

REASONS:

Each Local Authority has a duty to set a Secondary Coordinated Admission Scheme.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED:

It is a legal requirement to have coordinated scheme.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

No direct financial implications to the council of adopting this policy.

Costs

None.

Funding

None.

LEGAL POWERS AND IMPLICATIONS

Regulations 26 to 32 and Schedule 2 of the School Admissions Regulations 2012 cover the requirements for such schemes.

CONSULTATION

Details of the proposed North Somerset Secondary Coordinated Admission Scheme for 2019-20 school year have been circulated to the following groups for consultation:

- North Somerset Councillors
- Local Members of Parliament
- Head Teachers and Chair of Governors of all mainstream schools in North Somerset
- Neighbouring Local Authorities
- The Diocese of Bath and Wells, the Clifton Diocese and the Methodist Church
- Armed Forces Advice and Support in North Somerset
- Travellers Advisory Service
- The general public via: newsletters of all mainstream schools in North Somerset, NS Life, North Somerset Council's website, Facebook and twitter, notification to all Early Years settings.

No responses to the consultation were received.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Legal requirement to be set. Failure to set would mean we are in breach of the school admissions code.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

Have you undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment? No

This scheme allows the council to co-ordinate admission arrangements for all publicly funded schools within our area and sets out the process and timescales for this.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

The council has a duty to formulate and publish the co-ordinated admission arrangements for all publicly funded schools within their area.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

SIGNATORIES:

DECISION MAKER(S):

Signed: *Andrew J. Bell*

Title: *Exec. Member for CYP*

Date: *19.2.18*

WITH ADVICE FROM:

Signed: Sheila Smith

Title: Director, People & Communities

Date: 19.2.18

Footnote: Details of changes made and agreed by the decision taker since publication of the proposed (pre-signed) decision notice, if applicable:

**Secondary Coordinated Admission Scheme
for new intake admissions (not including Sixth
Form) for 2019-20 School Year**

Key: School = a school, an academy or a year 10 intake provision

All Secondary schools/academies and year 10 intake provisions, within North Somerset are participants within this Scheme.

1. By 12 September 2018 - the Composite Prospectus (parent guide book) and the application form will be available. North Somerset parents will be able to express up to three preferences, and give reasons for their preferences, for a new intake admission place at any maintained Secondary, Upper (with an entry age after 11) or Year 10 intake school in England for their child. All preferences should be made in rank order on the North Somerset Council application form and submitted by (23:59 hours) on 31 October 2018 in order to be considered in the first round of school place allocations.

Parents of children in other council areas should apply for places at any school via their home council. All preferences (1st, 2nd and 3rd etc) will be initially considered equally regardless of ranking.
2. By 9 November 2018 North Somerset Council will send to other councils, details of applications for their schools.
3. By 23 November 2018 North Somerset Council will send in confidence to own admission authority schools within North Somerset details of all applications for their schools. Schools will not reveal this information to parents until after the offer date. The order of the applicant's preferences will not be revealed.
4. Own admission authority schools in North Somerset will apply their over-subscription criteria and will notify North Somerset Council, by 11 January 2019, the rank order of applications for places at their school.
5. By 8 February 2019 North Somerset Council will send to other councils lists of initial outcomes of applications made by their residents for schools in North Somerset.
6. Once initial outcomes from other local authorities have been received, North Somerset Council will then determine the highest preference school that can be offered for each applicant. Where a child qualifies for a place at more than one school, only the highest preference school will be allocated. If no preference can be offered North Somerset Council will determine the school to be allocated for North Somerset Council residents. Only one offer of a school place will be made per child.
7. By 18 February 2019 North Somerset Council will send to other councils the intended final lists of pupils to be allocated places.
8. By 1 March 2019 North Somerset Council will send to all schools in North Somerset the intended final lists of pupils to be allocated places. Schools must not notify parents of the results of the application process.

9. On 1 March 2019 North Somerset Council will inform North Somerset residents, whose application has been accepted as on-time, of the result of their application.
10. The acceptance or refusal of an offer of a school place should be returned by the applicant by 15 March 2019.
11. Only applications classed as having been submitted on-time will be considered in the first round of school place allocations. Applications received after the closing time and date will not be considered in the first round of allocations unless North Somerset Council considers there is an extenuating reason(s) for allowing them to be accepted as on-time and the application was received before North Somerset Council has sent details of applications to other councils.

Examples of an extenuating reason may include the following:

(i) The child is from a family of a Crown Servant or of UK Service Personnel and the MOD, FCO or GCHQ has provided a letter declaring a return date and residency area.

(ii) The application was late due to significant health/medical reasons and independent confirmation of this is provided.

(iii) The child is or becomes a 'Child in Care'.

12. Late applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application after the first round of allocations has been completed.

Details of:

- all other late applications
- on-time applicants still seeking a place at their preferred schools
- of offered places not accepted by applicants,

will be exchanged between councils up to and including 16 April 2019, to enable the next round of allocations to be completed by week commencing 29 April 2019.

13. The co-ordinated admissions process will continue to be operated, with application data being exchanged with other councils as necessary, for all applications received up to and including 31 August 2019.

The stated dates for sharing data between councils and schools and for sending offer/refusal letters to parents are intended target dates. It may not be possible for the data to be exchanged or letters to be sent on those actual dates.

14. For the 2019-20 school year, entry to **Year 7** in schools in North Somerset is for children born between 01/09/07 and 31/08/08 and entry to **Year 10** is for children born between 01/09/04 and 31/08/05.

15. Applications will be accepted for children who meet one or more of the following:
 - they are resident in the UK
 - they hold full British Citizen Passports
 - they are from countries whose passports have been endorsed to show that they have the right to abode in this country

- they are from the European Economic Area (EEA).

Those who live outside of the United Kingdom (UK) and are wishing to attend a North Somerset school should apply directly to North Somerset Council. However applications for children who do not meet one of the above will not be accepted until the child is in this country.

Parents of children moving from within the United Kingdom into North Somerset, making a late application and wishing to be considered as on time must have at least made an original application to their previous home Council by the closing time and date. The application will be processed with the original preferences.

16. Some schools may require additional supporting information to enable them to consider applications under a specific criterion. Where applicants are required to provide additional information, it may be provided separately from the application but should be submitted by the closing time and date to be considered in the first round of allocations.

Parents, whose application includes preferences for different schools that require additional information, should ensure that copies of such additional information are submitted to each individual school as necessary.

If parents are applying for schools in other council area(s), they should contact that council or the school to find out where such information should be submitted.

North Somerset Council will endeavour to forward any additional information it receives in error, to North Somerset schools or other councils, but cannot guarantee to do so.

Parents should check the admission arrangements of each school they are applying for to see if any additional information is required and the address where it should be sent.

17. Applications, confirmation of new addresses and any changes to applications, submitted by post but received one working day after the closing date will be deemed to have been submitted on-time.

It is recommended that some form of proof is provided, to confirm an application/change(s) was submitted on time. For example a Post Office document that confirms it was posted by 23:59 hours on 31 October 2018.

18. **Home Address**

North Somerset Council will consider the child's home address to be the place where the child permanently and ordinarily resides for the majority of the time in which they will be living at the closing date. This would normally be the same address as the person who has parental responsibility for the child as their main carer.

An address used for childcare arrangements cannot be used as the home address. The address of a child that is different from his/her parents where the move to this address is expressly linked to obtaining a school place will not be accepted.

Where parents do not live together and the child spends equal amounts of time with both parents, North Somerset Council will consider the home of the parent who made the application to be the child's home.

North Somerset Council will not accept more than one address as the child's home address.

If multiple applications are received for one child, parents will be asked to reach a mutual agreement. If parents cannot reach a mutual agreement within a reasonable timeframe, North Somerset Council will request to see a residency order which may clarify the home address. In the absence of any residency order, North Somerset Council will consider the home address to be the parent with the primary day to day care and control of the child. In reaching this decision, North Somerset Council may request evidence from parents. Examples of evidence would be to show to which address any Child Benefit is paid, or which address is registered with a medical GP. An evidence provided by parents will also be considered in reaching a decision on the home address for admissions purposes. This may only be necessary for instance where parents do not agree on the child's home address. Parents are urged to reach agreement but where they do not, North Somerset Council will determine the home address.

19. Where the child temporarily resides away from his/her parents in a different council area, the council where the child would usually reside with his/her parents will continue to be the home council.

Whilst the place of residence of the child for the first round of allocations would normally be his/her physical place of residence as at closing time and date for applications, it should be noted that in certain circumstances and acting in the interests of the child North Somerset Council will reserve the right to exercise discretion and may use an alternative place of residence*, for example where a child is temporarily living away from his/her parent's home and the new temporary place of residence is the home where the child is likely to be living whilst attending school.

*If necessary this would be determined by North Somerset Council.

20. **Change of Address**

Parents must inform North Somerset Council if they change address as soon as possible or any offer of a place may be withdrawn. If a change of address may occur after the closing time and date (and before the start of term 1), and independent confirmation is submitted by the closing time and date, it will be considered in the first round of allocations.

Examples of independent confirmation of a change of address are:

- a solicitor's letter confirming the exchange of contracts with a completion date
- a tenancy agreement signed by both parties
- a utility bill dated within three months prior to submission.

If the child is from a family of a Crown Servant or of UK Service Personnel, a letter from the MOD, FCO or GCHQ declaring a return date and residency area.

Applicants may also be required to provide proof that they have left the previous property, for example by supplying a final account utility bill.

If a new address is not accepted for a round of allocations, where none of the parental preferences can be offered, the alternative school offered will be based on the new address (providing details and independent confirmation of it are received before that round of allocation of places has been finalised).

Where a change of address is from one council area to another, the council of the new home address, will normally then be the home council. The new home council will then process the application and notify the parents of the outcome.

21. Changes to an application

If after an application has been made, the School Admissions Team is made aware that a child:

- is, was or has become a Child in Care
- has an appropriate brother sister/link
- or any other detail that may affect the application of over-subscription criteria (not including changes of address),

the School Admissions Team will endeavour to include the information in the first round of allocations. However this may not be possible if the allocation process has reached a stage where it would not be practical to include such information. In particular, it may not be considered by own admission authority schools if they have already ranked their applications. It is ultimately the responsibility of parents to provide all details relevant to their application. Where North Somerset Council has been informed by other councils of applications or changes in preferences/addresses/application details that have been received after the closing time and date and the other council have accepted the application as on time, these will be included in the first round of allocations. However, this may not be possible if the allocation process has reached a stage where it would not be practical to include such information. In particular, it may not be considered by own admission authority schools if they have already ranked their applications.

22. Changing preferences (altering the order of preferences is also considered as a change of preferences):

i) before the closing date for applications

Any change in preference will over-ride all previous applications. The most recent application submitted prior to the closing date and time will be the only one considered.

ii) after the closing date, but before North Somerset Council has sent details of applications to other councils

Changes of preference(s) will not be accepted for the first round of allocations unless North Somerset Council consider there are extenuating reasons for allowing it to be treated as on time. Otherwise only the original application will be considered in the first round of allocations. The revised application will not be considered unless the parent confirms that their on time application can be withdrawn. Parents are able to revise their preferences when they are notified of the outcome of their original application.

iii) after North Somerset Council has sent details of applications to other Councils but before offers have been made

Changes will not be accepted for the first round of allocations. The preferences on the on time application will still be considered in the first round of allocations unless the parent confirms that the application can be withdrawn. Parents are able to revise their preferences when they are notified of the outcome of their on-time application. Any new preferences would be considered in subsequent rounds of allocations and the previously offered school place will be withdrawn.

iv) after offers have been made

If a parent wishes to change their preferences after having received an offer based on a previous application, the parent may reject the offer made and submit a new application which will be considered in the next round of allocations. The new application will be treated as a late application. This applies even if the offered school was not one of the parent's original named preferences.

The place that has been rejected by the parent submitting the new application will not be kept open for their child and may be offered to other applicants in the next round of allocations. There is no guarantee that a parent submitting a new application will be successful in obtaining any of the new preferences as this will depend on school place availability at the time of the allocation round.

23. Where North Somerset Council receives an application that has not been fully completed with all of the information necessary to enable the application to be considered, North Somerset Council may contact the parent to request the outstanding information. Applicants may be asked to provide documentation, for example a copy of a recent gas or electricity bill, to prove that they reside at their stated home address.

If the required information/documentation is not provided, the application may not initially be considered in the first round of allocations.

If places are refused at parents preference(s) school a place would then be allocated at an alternative school.

24. Applications must be made and signed by a person with parental responsibility for the child. If applicants do not have parental responsibility, the person completing the form should send an accompanying letter (in paper or electronic format) explaining the reasons why they are applying rather than a person with parental responsibility. Any evidence to support the case should accompany the letter. The reasons will be considered by North Somerset Council and if deemed acceptable, the application will be processed accordingly. If not deemed acceptable, the application will be returned for the signature of a person with parental responsibility for the child.

Where parents share parental responsibility for a child and two applications are received for the one child from his/her parents, North Somerset Council will ask the parents to determine which application it should consider and which application should be withdrawn. This is because North Somerset Council will offer only one school place to a child at any one time. If parents cannot agree, they should resolve the issue through the court system, for example to obtain a 'Specific Issues Order' which specifies which parent has responsibility to make decisions on school preferences. However, in the absence of any Order, the decision as to which application should be accepted will be determined by drawing lots. Whichever parent's application is accepted, the address the child spends the majority of his/her time, will be the one considered by North Somerset Council to be the home address.

25. North Somerset Council will withdraw an offer for a school in limited circumstances. Examples may be where it was offered in error or where it can be shown that the offer was obtained on the basis of a fraudulent or an intentionally misleading application, which effectively denied a place to a child with a stronger claim. Where before offers are made, an

application is deemed to be fraudulent or intentionally misleading the application will be considered on the basis of the correct information.

If a child or parents move address but the parents do not inform North Somerset Council, this may be deemed to be intentionally misleading and any place offered may be withdrawn if it has denied another child a place.

Notification from parents of acceptance of an offer of a place must be received by North Somerset Council within 14 days of the date of the offer of a place. Where parents do not respond to an offer of a place or to any subsequent reminder to reply within a further 7 days, the offer may be withdrawn and the place offered to another applicant. It is the parent's responsibility to inform North Somerset Council if their contact details change after making an application.

If children do not commence attendance at school at the start of the term arranged for their child to commence, and the school is not given a satisfactory reason for the absence the place may be withdrawn and if applicable will be offered to another applicant.

26. Where applicants do not qualify for any of their preferred school(s), the alternative school offered will normally be either:

i) the First Geographical Area school (if applicable) for the child's home address, provided there is a place available

ii) the nearest school to the child's home address, with a place available as measured by the shortest walking route.

Where there are more children than places remaining at the First Geographical Area school or the nearest school, priority will be given to those living closest to the school by shortest route.

The school may be a North Somerset school (excluding Catholic schools), or a school within another council area.

After having had regard to any reasons expressed by the parent for their preferences, North Somerset Council may decide it is appropriate to offer a different alternative school to the nearest one with a space. For example, if the nearest school was incompatible with the parent's religious convictions.

If the child does not live in North Somerset, their home Council is responsible for ensuring that they are allocated a school place.

Where pupils do not qualify for any of the places at a Year 10 intake schools that they have applied for and they are currently attending at a North Somerset secondary school, they will not be offered an alternative school. They will be able to remain at their current school.

If pupils are not currently attending a North Somerset secondary school and are refused a place in year 10 intake, parents will need to submit an in year application to express preference(s) for secondary school(s).

27. For North Somerset children the application form is available for submission using the online system on the North Somerset Council website or in paper form. See below for details:
- North Somerset Council, People and Communities, School Admissions Team,
Town Hall, Walliscote Grove Road, Weston-super-Mare, BS23 1UJ
Tel No: 01275 884 078 / 014
Email: admissions@n-somerset.gov.uk
Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/admissions
28. If applicable, a governing body/academy trust of an own admission authority school must notify North Somerset Council of their intention to admit above their Admission Number in good time to allow the council to deliver those co-ordinated arrangements.
29. Whilst North Somerset Council will process applications in accordance with this scheme it will exercise discretion and may deviate from it in circumstances where it feels it is appropriate to do so. This will normally be in exceptional circumstances.
30. Governing Bodies/Academy Trusts of own admission authority schools may delegate the functions of determining the order of priority of applications, maintaining their waiting list and/or considering applications to North Somerset Council. However legal responsibility for fulfilling their statutory functions would remain with the Governing Body/Academy Trust.
31. Within this Scheme:
- a) Direct line: is where distances are measured in a straight line between the address point of the child's home and the main entrance marker for the school, indicated on North Somerset Council computerised system(s). Unless stated otherwise where the direct line distances are equal, the ranking of applications will be determined by drawing lots.
 - b) Where an applicant lives in a flat or other multi-home dwelling, the address point of the building will be used if it is not possible to determine the address point of the applicant's home.
 - c) Shortest walking route: is the shortest available walking route between the child's home address and the nearest entrance to the school site. North Somerset Council use the road and footpath network as defined by Ordnance Survey to calculate the route. The distance is calculated from the point on the road and footpath network which is closest to the child's home as indicated on the North Somerset Council computerised mapping system and does not include the distance between the property and the road.
 - d) If it is not possible to measure a distance on North Somerset Council computerised system(s), North Somerset Council will use an alternative computerised system.
32. Council: Within this document references to 'Council' mean either North Somerset Council or any local Council. 'Home Council' means the Council within which the child and/or parent(s) live.
33. Parent: This includes all of those people, including carers, who have parental responsibility for a child as set out in the Children Act 1989. All references within this document to parent(s) therefore include carers.

34. Nearest School:

Unless stated otherwise;

i) the distances used to determine the nearest school will be measured in a direct line. If direct line distances are equal the nearest school will be determined by drawing lots.

ii) the nearest school is the nearest appropriate one. An appropriate school is defined as a maintained school, not private or fee charging, (excluding Catholic schools) that is appropriate to the child's age on joining the school.

Timetable for Coordinated New Intake Primary Admissions for 2019-20

**Closing time and date for submission of applications for new intake
admissions to applicant's home Council
By 23:59 hours on 31 October 2018**

Offers of a school place made for North Somerset pupils 1 March 2019

**Parents requested to reply to offers made by
15 March 2019**

**Appeals heard
From May 2019**

**Child begins school
September 2019**

It should be noted that this Scheme is subject to alteration to reflect any changes in legislation, case law, council policy or to ensure legal compliance.

