

Appendix B

THE COORDINATED ADMISSIONS SCHEME FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE AREA OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL EDUCATION AUTHORITY

Introduction

- 1. The Buckinghamshire Coordinated Scheme for secondary school admission will be an Equal Preference Scheme with applied ranking at the stage of determining which shall be the actual offer when there is the potential of multiple offers.**

Interpretation

2. In this scheme:

“the LEA” means Buckinghamshire County Council acting in its capacity as the local education authority.

“the LEA area” means the area in respect of which the LEA is the local education authority.

“home LEA” means the LEA in which the applicant is resident.

“primary education” has the same meaning as in Section 2(1) of the Education Act 1996.

“secondary education” has the same meaning as in Section 2(2) of the Education Act 1996.

“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 any maintained school.

“grammar school” means a school selecting pupils solely on the basis of academic ability as determined by the Buckinghamshire selection procedure for community and voluntary controlled grammar schools or the procedure determined by the Governing Body of foundation or voluntary aided grammar schools.

“foundation school” means those of the schools which are designated foundation schools.

“voluntary aided (VA) school” means those of the schools which are designated voluntary aided schools.

“admission authority” in relation to a community or voluntary controlled school means the County Council and, in relation to a foundation or voluntary aided school means the Governing Body of that school.

“the specified year” means the school year beginning at or about the beginning of September. The first year of application being 2005.

“admission arrangements” mean the arrangements for a particular school or schools which govern the procedures and decision making for the purposes of admitting pupils to the school.

“casual admission” means any application for a school place in secondary education that is received after 1 September of the normal admission year or in subsequent years.

“eligible for a place” means that a child has been placed on the school’s ranked list at a position which falls within the school’s published admission number.

3. This scheme is pursuant to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (as amended by the Education Act 2002), and is for coordinating the arrangements for the admission of pupils to secondary schools in the LEA area.
4. This 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.
5. Subject to paragraph 6 below, the scheme shall apply to every secondary school in the LEA with the exception of special schools and shall take effect from September 2005.
6. Where boarding accommodation is provided for pupils at maintained schools, the scheme shall not apply to those places intended to admit pupils to the school as boarders, as determined under section 89A(2)(a) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. Admission arrangements for boarding at the Royal Grammar School are applied by the school.

SCHEDULE 1

PART 1 – THE SCHEME

Making an Application for a secondary school place at the normal time of entry

1. Parents who live in Buckinghamshire should complete the Buckinghamshire Secondary School Admission Application Form (BSAF). This will be available in the Guide for Parents on Admissions (the guide). There will also be the opportunity to complete an application on-line. The application form will collect basic data such as name, address and date of birth of the child. The BSAF must be used as the means of expressing preferences for the purposes of section 86 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 by parents resident in Buckinghamshire, wishing to express a preference for their child:
 - To be admitted to a maintained school within the LEA area; or
 - To be admitted to a maintained school within the area of another LEA.
2. The LEA will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that the guide and form are available on request from the LEA and from all primary and secondary schools in the LEA area.
3. All preferences expressed on the BSAF will be valid applications. The guide will also contain forms on which to give any supplementary information, which is required by the foundation or voluntary aided Buckinghamshire secondary schools. Only parents applying for these schools would be required to complete the supplementary forms.
4. The BSAF will:
 - a. Invite the parent to express up to 6 preferences by completing the form and include any maintained schools outside of the LEA area (where relevant).
 - b. Invite the preferences to be listed in ranked order;
 - c. Invite parents to give reasons for each preference.
 - d. Explain that parents will receive no more than one offer of a place, which will be:
 - i. The highest ranking school at which their child is eligible for a place; and
 - ii. If a place cannot be offered at any of the preferred schools, a place will be offered at the nearest Buckinghamshire maintained school with vacancies, for which the child is qualified; and
 - e. Specify the closing date for applications to be timely and where it should be returned.

5. Where a maintained school receives a supplementary form from a Buckinghamshire resident it will not be regarded as a valid application unless the parent has also completed a BSAF and nominated the school on it.
6. All completed BSAF and supplementary data forms should be returned to the Admissions Team at County Hall, by **22 October** of the relevant year. Any forms sent direct to a school must be forwarded to the LEA.

Selection by aptitude or ability

7. The LEA manages selection by ability for community and voluntary controlled grammar schools. Foundation or other grammar schools may also ask the LEA to manage the selection process on their behalf.
8. Any school applying selection by aptitude or ability as part of its admission arrangements must ensure that this complies with the timeline in Schedule 2. The admission authority must make it clear to parents that they are required to complete and return the application form expressing preferences before their child can complete testing.
9. No school should allow a child to undertake a selection test (for aptitude or ability) unless that school is one of the named preferences on the application form.
10. Parents may register their child for grammar school testing prior to completion of the application form but testing will not be completed until the preferences have been received on the BSAF or on the application form for the LEA in which the parent resides.
11. Parents will be notified of the outcome of testing for grammar school selection by **the last working day in November** of the relevant year, where the application has been within the normal timetable. This will include details of the appeal procedure where relevant. This information will not be made available to parents who have not completed the BSAF (or the form for their own LEA) and indicated a ranked school list.
12. Any change of preferences notified **after 14 November** will be considered as late preferences and processed after the timely applications in accordance with the timetable in Schedule 2.

Processing the applications

13. Where a foundation school or voluntary aided school is listed on the application form, the Admissions Team will forward appropriate details to the Governing Body, including the relevant supplementary material. Where a school in another LEA is listed on the application form details will be forwarded to that LEA.

14. At this stage the admission authority would not be made aware of the position of their school on the parent's ranked list, unless ranking is one of the oversubscription criteria for that authority.
15. Each admission authority will then apply its own oversubscription criteria to the list of applicants for the school. Buckinghamshire County Council will be doing this for its community and voluntary controlled schools, the Governing Bodies for the foundation and voluntary aided schools. Each authority will then return to the LEA a ranked list, based on admission criteria for the school, of children who could potentially be offered a place at the school. Grammar schools would only consider suitably qualified applicants. Each school will also send a waiting list ranked on admission criteria. The length of the waiting list to be used in the iterative process will be agreed with each school.
16. The date for return of the school lists will be established by agreement each year in accordance with the timetable in schedule 2.
17. The County Council will then scrutinise the lists and where a child could potentially be offered more than one school, the potential offer will be the school placed higher on the parental BSAF form.
18. This process would be continually repeated, until all multiple offers are resolved, as an iterative process, as detailed in paragraphs 19 to 24 below.

Determination of the place to offer

19. Where a child is provisionally allocated a place at the school ranked first, this will become the firm offer. The pupil's name will then be removed from lists for other schools, and a child from each of those schools' waiting lists will be added to their offer list. Other children will move one place higher up the waiting list for the school.
20. Where a child is not allocated a place at the first ranked school but is provisionally allocated a place at a school they ranked second, this will be held provisionally pending further rounds in which it may become possible to give a higher preference. Provisional allocations to other schools lower on the parent's ranked list would then be withdrawn from those lists enabling other children to move up the lists.
21. Where a child is provisionally allocated a place at his or her third ranked school but not at the first or second preferences, this will be held provisionally pending further rounds. Provisional allocations to lower ranked schools will be withdrawn and other children will move up those lists.

22. The above steps 19 -21 will be repeated for all nominated preferences until it is not possible to offer any higher ranked school at any subsequent iteration.
23. Schools will be able to have information in real time on how the applications for the school are progressing by access to a website.
24. Once all iterations are complete, all allocations then in existence become the firm offer.
25. Children who remain on the waiting list for a school will be treated as being refused a place by the admission authority.
26. Parents will have the right to appeal to an independent Appeal Panel if they so wish.

Children who have not been allocated a place in the iterative process

27. Buckinghamshire resident children will be offered a place at the nearest school with a vacancy for which they are appropriately qualified. This will be based on the shortest designated route. Non-Buckinghamshire children will be managed by their own LEA.

Buckinghamshire parents who are also applying for schools outside Buckinghamshire

28. The LEA will take part in the Pan London Coordinated Admissions Scheme, which will also supply the necessary software. The Equal Preference Scheme is the one preferred by the group.
29. We will coordinate with another admission authority to determine a single offer, where the other LEA is operating a similar equal preference scheme.
30. Other LEAs will also be applying their schemes. If an LEA notifies Buckinghamshire that it can offer a place to a Buckinghamshire resident, we will compare this place with the possible offer of a Buckinghamshire school and the parent's highest preference will be the one that becomes the actual offer.

Parents applying for a place in Buckinghamshire schools from out of the county

31. Such applications will have been made on the home LEA application form and details forwarded to the Buckinghamshire LEA.

The offer

32. The County Council will notify all Buckinghamshire schools of the details of the children who will be offered a place at the school before offer letters are sent, in accordance with the timetable in Schedule 2.
33. The County Council will send out all offer letters to Buckinghamshire parents. This will make clear where the offer is being made on behalf of the Governing Body of a foundation or voluntary aided school or another LEA.
34. If it is potentially possible to offer a Buckinghamshire place to a non-Bucks resident, we will coordinate with the home LEA, to determine a single offer, where the other LEA is operating a similar equal preference scheme.
35. If it is potentially possible to offer a Buckinghamshire place to a resident of an LEA operating a 'first preference' scheme we will notify the parents direct of a Buckinghamshire place that could be offered. Parents will have 2 weeks in which to accept or reject the offer.
36. The offer date will be **1 March of the relevant year**. Offers will be posted on the last working day of February. The offer letter will give details of:
 - The name of the school offered;
 - The reasons why the child is not being offered a place at each of the other schools nominated; and
 - The date by which the place must be accepted.

An enclosed leaflet will also give information about the procedure for waiting lists and the statutory right to appeal and the steps to take. The acceptance of offers or the submission of an appeal should be notified to the LEA by parents **within 14 days**.

Late applications

37. Late applications received after the **22 October** (normal closing date) will only be considered during the core processing time if they are received by **14 November** (final date) and such applications will only be processed where there was good reason for the late application e.g. a house move.
38. Applications received after the final date will not be processed until after the timely applications have been allocated.

39. Applications received after **1 January** of the relevant year will not be processed until **after 1 March**. They will then be processed in batches on a monthly basis.

Waiting lists

40. Children who have not been allocated a place at a preferred school for which they are appropriately qualified may have their name placed on the waiting list for the school. The waiting list will be ranked in accordance with the school's oversubscription criteria.

41. The County Council will maintain waiting lists until the autumn half-term of the relevant year. After this time they will be maintained by the school and parents will be advised to contact the school direct to remain on the waiting list.

Right to appeal

42. Parents of children who do not qualify for a grammar school will have the right to appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel. These 'selection appeals' will take place commencing in **January**.

43. Parents who wish may appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel for a place at a different school. These 'transfer appeals' will take place after **1 April** of the relevant year.

PART II – CASUAL ADMISSIONS: LATE TRANSFER PROCEDURE AFTER NORMAL DATE OF TRANSFER

1. Composite prospectuses (parent guides) will be sent out by the receiving school or the LEA within 5 working days of receipt of the request.

Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools

2. Parents will be required to complete the BSAF and return it to the LEA.
3. Where the application is for a grammar school, testing, if agreed on the basis of the child's school report, will be undertaken on the first available testing sessions. Children may only be considered for a grammar school if they are deemed qualified by either:
 - Achieving a qualifying score in the tests; or
 - An Independent Appeal Panel deems the child to be appropriately qualified.
4. Where the LEA and the school agree that there is a vacancy, and there is no child on the waiting list with a higher priority, a place will be offered. If this is not possible other schools nominated on the BSAF form will be considered in preference order.
5. Where one or more schools nominated on the preference list is a foundation or voluntary aided school the LEA will liaise with the school and forward the application where appropriate.
6. If no place is available at a school on the preference list, and the child is a Buckinghamshire resident, then a place will be offered at the nearest appropriate school with a vacancy.
7. Children who have not been offered a place at a preferred school for which they are appropriately qualified may have their name placed on the waiting list for the school. The waiting list will be ranked according to the school's oversubscription criteria.
8. Parents will receive an offer letter detailing the place to be offered and the reasons why a higher nominated school could not be offered (where appropriate). Parents will be told of the right of appeal to the independent appeal process where appropriate.

Foundation or Voluntary Aided Schools

9. Where a foundation or voluntary aided school receives a direct application and there is a vacancy with no other child on the waiting list with a higher priority, the place can be offered. In the case of a grammar school the child would have to have qualified, according to the school's own late admission qualifications. The parent will be

required to complete the BSAF and receive an appropriate offer letter from the school. If other maintained schools are listed on the BSAF as alternative preferences then a copy should be forwarded to the County Council to manage admission to an alternative school if necessary.

10. Where the school does not have a vacancy, or there are other children with a higher priority on the waiting list, the parents should:

- Receive an appropriate refusal letter explaining why a place was not offered;
- Be referred back to the LEA;
- Be given information on the right to an Independent Appeal Panel hearing; and
- Be offered the option of a place on the waiting list.

SCHEDULE 2

Timetable of Secondary Schools Coordinated Admission Scheme 2005

The timetable will be the subject of annual consultation

15 October 2004	Selection tests for Buckinghamshire grammar schools completed for most children in Buckinghamshire primary schools and in partner schools.
22 October:	Closing date for Buckinghamshire Secondary Application Form to be returned to County Hall Admissions Team.
14 November	Final date for return of Buckinghamshire Secondary Application Form for agreed special cases to be considered timely. Final date for changes of preference to be accepted as timely. Any applications or changes of preference received after this date will not be processed until after the timely applications.
19 November	Applications for schools in other LEAs sent to those LEAs.
26 November	Details of applications forwarded to foundation and voluntary aided schools.
29 November	Publication of results of selection testing for timely applicants.
2 January 2005	Applications received after this date will not be processed until after 1 March.
3 January	Selection appeals start.
10 January	Foundation and voluntary aided schools send LEA ranked list of applicants.
31 January	First cycle of results notified to other LEAs
7 February	Second cycle of results notified to other LEAs
15 February	Final cycle of results sent to other LEAs
22 February	Details of children to be offered places in their school sent to schools
28 February	Offers sent to parents for delivery 1 March
4 April	Start of transfer appeals

