

ADMISSIONS PROCEDURE PART 1

1. Introduction

The Two Counties Trust (TTCT) is the Admission Authority for the schools within our Trust. As the Admission Authority, the Trust is responsible for setting the criteria for admissions, interpretation and management of the admissions process within the schools. Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire County Councils are the Co-ordinating Authority for admissions in Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. They provide support to the Trust, for maintaining oversubscription where more applications are received than there are school places available.

As the Admission Authority for all schools in the Trust, we need to ensure that the Trust's overriding ethos and values are at the heart of Admission Policies for our schools/academies.

The Two Counties Trust is a family of academies with a shared ethos, common values and collective goals. The Trust has a clear mission which is to transform the lives of children and young people and to release their potential through excellent education and the opportunity to acquire new skills. All schools within the Trust are united in their vision to rapidly improve the learning experience of their students and raise the aspirations of the local communities which they serve.

The admission arrangements for our schools reflect their own local communities and their distinctive and individual school ethos. Admission arrangements are governed by the School Admissions Code, which is published by the Department for Education.

The School Admissions Code recognises that schools within an Admission Authority's care may require different individual policies.

The requirements of the Code to ensure that admission policies are fair, easily understood and objectively followed also underpins our approach to admissions. Parents should be able to look at a set of admission arrangements and understand easily how places for that individual school are allocated.

2. Aims and Objectives

When considering admission of pupils into any of our schools, the following principles apply:

1. All applications are treated fairly.
2. No Two Counties Trust school/academy selects by ability.
3. Admissions will be dealt with as the individual school's admission policy states.
4. Appeals against refusals to admit a pupil will be dealt with by an Independent Appeal panel, duly constituted as required by the School Admissions Code, arrangements will be made by Derbyshire or Nottinghamshire County Council as appropriate.
5. The Two Counties Trust are inclusive and are committed to ensuring that the needs of every child on roll are met.

3. The Application Process

Parents apply for a place at our schools using Derbyshire or Nottinghamshire Admission Schemes, if they are a resident in Derbyshire or Nottinghamshire please apply to the Local Authority where you reside. Any parent living outside of these counties will need to apply to their own Local Authority. That Local Authority will then ensure that forms are sent to Derbyshire or Nottinghamshire for the co-ordinated response. Information about the admissions process and links to Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire County Council are found on the admission page of each school and by this link:

<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/education/schools/school-places/apply-for-a-school-place.aspx>

<https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/education/school-admissions>

Applications must be received by your home Local Authority by 31st October in the year before admission to be on time.

4. **Decisions**

Parents and carers are informed about school place decisions annually on the national offer date, on 1st March, or next working day, by your own Local Authority. In The Two Counties Trust, the Local Authority is also responsible for decisions about in-year applications for a school place. For in-year admissions, the Local Authority will confirm whether a place can be offered within 10 school days of receiving the application.

5. **School Transport**

The Two Counties Trust is not responsible for any decisions that relate to school transport and this is a matter for the local authority.

6. **Local Authority Obligations**

Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, along with other Local Authorities, must follow a specified timetable.

These are found on the Local Authority websites and contains information about the admission process, timetable, appeals process and other useful information.

<https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/media/1528493/secondary-guide-for-parents.pdf>

<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/education/schools/school-places/apply-for-a-school-place.aspx>

7. **Changing School**

When a child is applying for a place at any other time, because of a desire to change schools, house move or for some other reason, the Local Authority co-ordinates this process on behalf of The Two Counties Trust. These types of admissions are known as 'in year admissions'.

For any in-year admission, an application must be made to the Local Authority indicating the parent's choice of school. The school will be able to advise if places are available, whether the school is able to offer a school place and if not, what parents can do to appeal a decision. Further information can be found on each individual school website.

8. **How does the process work?**

By law every school must have a mechanism to deal with a situation when there are more applications than places. This involves setting priority criteria.

Children who have an Education Health Care Plan that names the school as part of the plan are automatically admitted. These children are not included in the priority criteria and the school offers them a place as this is required by law.

The number of places available in a school is indicated by its Planned Admission Number (PAN). When there are more applications than places, the priority criteria are applied in an objective and fair way. Initially a list is provided by Derbyshire or Nottinghamshire County Council. This is confirmed by the Local Governing Body (LGB) at each school, where authority is delegated to the LGB by the Trust.

9. **What is the Published Admission Number?**

The PAN is the number of children the school can accommodate on admission. This is set by law and is the number that the school considers it can teach in our schools in an effective manner.

10. **Fair Access Protocols**

Every school is obliged to take part in local fair access protocols. Fair access protocols exist for children who have no school place and who are at risk from missing education due to several factors. Fair access protocols work by a group of schools discussing who can best meet the needs of pupils who fall into this category. The fair access protocol procedure takes precedence over the waiting list.

- Children subject to a Child in Need Plan or a Child Protection Plan at the point of being referred to the Protocol.
- Children living in a refuge or in safe accommodation at the point of being referred to the Protocol.
- Children from the criminal justice system, or in alternate provision who need to be reintegrated into mainstream education.
- Children who have been permanently excluded but are deemed suitable for mainstream education.
- Children with special educational needs (but without an Education, Health and Care plan), disabilities or medical conditions.
- Children who are carers.
- Children of, who are, Gypsies, Roma, Travellers, refugees, and asylum seekers.
- Children who have been refused a school place on the grounds of their challenging behaviour and referred to the Protocol in accordance with paragraph 3.9 of the admissions code.
- Children for whom a place has not been sought due to exceptional.
- Children who have been out of education for four or more weeks where it can be demonstrated that there are no places available at any school within a reasonable distance of their home. This does not include circumstances where a suitable place has been offered to a child and this has not been accepted.

Each Local Authority maintains their own fair access protocol. Decisions will be made according to the relevant protocol for where the school is based.

11. **Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

The Two Counties Trust does **not permit** the refusal of an application for admission to one of its school/academies solely because it is believed that the school cannot cater for the child's special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Pupils with educational needs and/or disabilities but no Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) are dealt with through the normal admissions policy. Schools cannot refuse to admit a pupil because he/she does not have an EHCP or is assessed for one.

The Trust Board is required by section 324 of the Education Act 1996 and Children and Families Act 2014 section 33 to admit to a school a child with an Education, Health and Care Plan which names the school. This is not an oversubscription criterion. Schools must admit children with EHCPs which name the school whether there are places available in the school or not, unless it would be incompatible with efficient education of others, or the efficient use of resources. Efficient education means providing for each child or young person a suitable, appropriate education in terms of their age, ability, aptitude and any special needs they may have. (SEN Code of Practice 2015 paragraph 9.79)

12. **Withdrawing Offers**

A Two Counties Trust school or academy can withdraw offers of places in certain circumstances. An offer of a place will be withdrawn when a parent has not responded to an offer within a reasonable period of time, usually 21 days from the date of that offer. The offer can also be withdrawn if the basis of the offer was either a fraudulent or misleading application.

13. **Late Applications**

The Two Counties Trust, working with Derbyshire County Council and Nottinghamshire County Councils, may accept late applications for first time admission. The LA will consider late applications where the applicant can provide evidence that the reason for lateness was beyond the applicant's control. An Independent Appeal Panel may take a different view at a later stage in the process. Examples of reasons for a late application are:

- Family returning from abroad.

- Lone parent has been ill for some time.
- Family moving into Derbyshire or Nottinghamshire from another area.
- Other exceptional circumstances.

Whilst every case is treated on its own merits, evidence to explain why the application is late will be required in every instance. An application that is accepted as being late, but with justifiable reason, will be included in the first cycle of allocations and the parents will be notified on the national offer day.

14. **Waiting Lists**

The Local Authority maintains a waiting list for all schools, however, the Admission Authority is responsible for that list until the end of the first term, 31st December. The waiting list is established after National Offer Day. New applicants are added to the waiting list. The waiting list is ranked in accordance with the school's oversubscription criteria irrespective of the date an application was made. The list is made up of children whose parent/carers have applied for a place at the school and been unsuccessful. When a place becomes available the next child on the list will be offered the space. If that family does not require the place, it will pass to the next child and so on. The waiting list is 'dynamic' however, this means that late applications are treated equally according to the over-subscription criteria which can affect the ranking of an earlier application.

After the waiting list has been exhausted, places will be allocated on application and if a space is available, following the standard in-year admission procedures.

15. **Multiple Births**

Where one child of a multiple birth is admitted, the other child/children will also be admitted.

16. **Admission of children outside of their normal age range**

Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health.

To request a delayed entry parents are required to make an application for their child's admission to their normal age group at the usual time in accordance with this policy and at the same time to submit a request for admission out of the normal age group. Further information about this process will be provided to parents upon their request for admission outside of the normal age group.

Decisions will be made based on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will take into account parents' views, information about the child's academic, social and emotional development, where relevant their medical history and any views of a medical professional, whether they have previously been educated outside of their normal age group and whether they may have fallen in to a lower age group if the child was not born prematurely. The views of the Headteacher of the school concerned must be taken in to account. It will be for the Admission Authority of the preferred school to decide whether to admit the child out of the normal age group. The Trust as the Admission Authority will make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the child's best interests, and will bear in mind the age group the child has been educated in up to that point.

17. **Children of UK Services Personnel and other Crown Servants**

Such children must be allocated a place in advance, dependant on an official government letter declaring a relocation date and intended address. If the applicant would meet the oversubscription criteria on relocation.

A unit postal address must be accepted, or if appropriate a 'quartering area' address in the absence of a new home postal address.

18. **Appeals**

For first time admissions, the Local Authority will confirm whether a place has been awarded each year in March prior to the start of the academic year in which the child will start at the school.

For in-year admissions (up to 3 months in advance for Crown Servants only), the school will confirm whether a place can be offered, within ten school days of receiving the application. If an application for a school place is unsuccessful, then parents have the right of appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel. Part Two of this policy contains more information for parents about how to appeal for a place at that school, Part 2 is located on individual school website.

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Document management

Review cycle:	Every year
Next review due:	September 2021
Policy owner	Governance & Compliance Officer