

# WNC Primary Co-ordinated Scheme for admissions in September 2025

## Section 1

### Timetable for Primary Co-ordinated Scheme for September 2025 intakes

Date	Event
10 September 2024	Online applications open and information to parents/carers available on WNC website
12 December 2024	Reminder letter sent via schools to parents/carers of Year 2 children at infant schools advising them of the need to apply for a junior school place. Email also sent to schools to remind parents/carers of the need to apply for reception.
15 January 2025	<b>Closing date for applications</b> (statutory). Late applications, i.e. those received after midnight on 15 January 2025, will not be processed until additional rounds of allocations (see below)
11 February 2025	WNC sends applications to other Local Authorities (LAs) and Own Admission Authority (OAA) schools (if applicable)
15 February 2025	EHC team to have informed the School Admissions team about any pupils with an EHC Plan, and details of the named school (statutory)
28 February 2025	OAA schools send ranked lists to WNC (if applicable)
21 March 2025	WNC applies agreed Scheme for West Northamptonshire schools, informing other LAs of offers to be made to their residents
15 April 2025	Primary schools informed by WNC of the final results via S2S, which may include offers made to pupils living in other LAs
16 April 2025	<b>National Offer Day</b> - offers made to parents/carers by WNC
By 18 April 2025	Schools final allocation lists (ATFs) uploaded onto the S2S secure site
7 May 2025	School Admissions begins to share late applications with other LAs
9 May 2025	Cut-off date for consideration for inclusion in first round of reallocations
19 May 2025	First round of reallocations begins (process can take a number of weeks and parents/schools informed at end of round of new offers)
13 June 2025	Cut-off date for consideration for inclusion in second round of reallocations
23 June 2025	Second round of reallocations begins (parents and schools to be informed at end of round of new offers)
4 July 2025	Cut-off date for consideration for inclusion in third round of reallocations
11 July 2025	Third round of reallocations begins (parents and schools to be informed at end of round of new offers)
18 July 2025	Where no previous application has been submitted, places at junior schools are allocated to children living in the West Northamptonshire Council area who are currently in infant schools. Letters sent to parents/carers to advise them of the places offered.
1 August 2025	Co-ordination of in-year application process commences

## Section 2

### Elements of the Scheme

#### 2.1 Regulations

The School Admissions (Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations (2008) require all local authorities (LAs) to have a scheme to co-ordinate admission arrangements for all publicly funded schools in its area (excluding special schools). The purpose of a co-ordinated scheme is to establish mechanisms for ensuring, as far as is reasonably practicable, that every child living within the LA who has applied for a school place in the normal admission round, receives an offer of a single school place on the same day – National Offer Day (16 April or the next working day). All schools **must** comply with the agreed scheme.

#### 2.2 Applying for a place in a primary, infant or junior school at the normal point of entry

The normal point of entry to primary or infant school is reception. The normal point of entry to junior school is year 3. The LA co-ordinates the process of allocating places at these schools in these year groups.

#### 2.3 Information for parents

Please note that throughout this scheme, the term “parent” refers to both individual parents as well as those with parental responsibility for the child, e.g. carers.

The ‘Applying for a Primary School Place in West Northamptonshire for 2025-26’ composite prospectus will be available in PDF format on the School Admissions pages of WNC’s website from September 2024. Alternatively a hard copy can be obtained by contacting the School Admissions team.

The prospectus contains information about:

- How to apply online
- Key dates for the application and allocation process
- Primary, infant and junior schools in each area of West Northamptonshire
- The Published Admission Number (PAN) for each school
- Each school’s oversubscription criteria
- Whether individual schools were oversubscribed for September 2024
- Children with special educational needs
- Home-to-school transport
- The process for late applications

#### 2.4 Application forms

The Common Application Form (CAF) allows parents to apply for a reception place at any primary or infant school, or year 3 at junior school, and to give reasons for their preferences. If parents apply directly to a school, the governing body/academy trust must inform the LA and parents should be advised to complete a CAF. **All** applications are co-ordinated by the LA (WNC) up to and including 31 July 2025.

Parents are encouraged to apply online wherever possible. Requests for paper application forms (for those who do not have access to the internet) should be made to the WNC School Admissions team and parents are recommended to use recorded delivery when posting a completed application form to the School Admissions team. Please note, WNC does not accept responsibility for applications received after the closing date due to parents using insufficient postage.

Applications received after 15 January 2025 will be considered late applications and will not be processed until after National Offer Day (16 April or the next working day).

Parents can submit any additional paperwork (e.g. proof of a house move) electronically or by post to the School Admissions team at WNC, clearly stating the name of child, date of birth and the name(s) of the school(s) that are being applied for.

#### 2.5 Applications for academies, foundation, voluntary aided and free schools

The LA applies the oversubscription criteria and ranks applicants for some own admission authority (OAA) schools but if the school applies their own criteria, applications will be sent to OAAs by the date shown on the scheme timetable in Section 1 and schools will be asked to rank applicants as described in 2.11.

## **2.6 Residence in another LA**

Parents residing in one LA who wish to apply for a reception place at a primary or infant school, or year 3 at a junior school located in a different LA, must apply using the CAF (online or paper) for the LA in which they live (i.e. their home LA).

## **2.7 Applications for schools outside the LA**

Parents residing in the WNC area should use the WNC CAF even if the schools for which they wish to apply are in a different authority. On receipt, applications for schools outside the WNC area will be logged on the Admissions database and information relating to those preferences and any additional information will be electronically forwarded to the relevant maintaining LA by the date shown on the scheme timetable in Section 1.

## **2.8 Exchange of information**

LAs must exchange information on applications received and potential offers to be made by the dates specified in the scheme (see Section 1). A maintaining LA must inform the home LA if it intends to offer a place at one of its schools to an applicant living in a different LA area. LAs should exchange information on applications across their borders and seek to eliminate multiple offers across LA borders wherever possible. The exchange of data must, where possible, be carried out using secure data protection systems.

## **2.9 Supplementary Information Forms (SIFs)**

If additional information is required by the admission authority of an academy, foundation, voluntary aided or free school in order to apply its oversubscription criteria, this will be detailed in their admission arrangements and in the specific section about that school in the LA's composite prospectus. Parents may be required to complete a SIF. Links to SIFs for schools requiring them will be available on the WNC website from September 2024. Alternatively, contact details for each school are included in the LA's prospectus so parents may contact schools directly to obtain a SIF. **SIFs must be returned to the preferred school by 15 January 2025 unless otherwise stated in the schools' admission arrangements.**

## **2.10 Multiple Applications**

If more than one application is made for a child prior to the closing date, only the latest dated application form will be processed. Any previously submitted application forms will not be processed.

If an offer of a school place has already been made by the LA and the applicant has chosen to submit further applications to be processed in reallocation rounds, the latest-dated application will take priority over any previous applications. If it is possible to offer a place at one of the preferences on the latest-dated application, an offer will be made and the previous offer will be withdrawn without further reference to the applicant. Applicants must place any requests to withdraw applications in writing to the School Admissions team (by letter or email) prior to the reallocation round.

Where there may be multiple applications from parents who are separated, parents will need to refer to section 2.22 of this scheme for further guidance.

## **2.11 How the co-ordination process produces the offer of a single school place**

All schools have a Published Admissions Number (PAN). This is the number of places available at the normal point of entry. Admission authorities must consider all the applications they receive and, if there are more applications than places available, they must apply their oversubscription criteria to all applicants. This process can be carried out by the School Admissions team on behalf of OAA schools as part of a Service Level Agreement (SLA). Any school wishing to use this service should inform the School Admissions team by 1 August in the year prior to the year of admission. School Admissions will always confirm any offer made with the school in question.

All OAA schools are responsible for returning a ranked list of all applicants to the LA by the date stated in the scheme timetable (unless they have an SLA with School Admissions agreeing they will carry out this process on their behalf). Some schools will be oversubscribed, others undersubscribed. The surplus places at

undersubscribed schools will be allocated to children who were unable to obtain places at their preferred schools.

Schools using random allocation as a tie-breaker, or as part of their oversubscription criteria, must send lists which include the names of all applicants in their randomised ranked order to the School Admissions team. The ranked list must include all children and not just those ranked up to the school's PAN. This procedure will enable the School Admissions team to identify why a place has been refused.

For LA schools (community and voluntary controlled schools), the School Admissions team will be responsible for applying the oversubscription criteria if the number of applications exceeds the PAN of the school.

The LA must allocate a place at the highest preference school where the child can be offered a place. If a child is eligible for a place at more than one school, the applicant's order of preference will be considered and the highest preference will be offered.

- If a child qualifies for a place at all 3 preference schools, the LA will offer a place at the school that is ranked highest on the CAF. The child's name will then be removed from the ranked list(s) at the lower preference schools where they qualified for a place so that other children may be offered a place at these schools
- If a child can be offered a place at only one of their preference schools, they will be offered a place at that school regardless of the preference order on the common application form
- If a child cannot be offered a place within the PAN of any of their preferred schools, the LA will offer a place at the nearest school with a place available (i.e. the nearest school which has not reached their PAN and therefore has a place/places available at the time)
- If a child is offered a place at a school which wasn't their first preference, they can request to be added to the waiting list for any of the schools which was a higher preference than the school offered.
- Parents have the right to appeal against refusal of a place at any school for which they have applied, unless a higher preference has been allocated. Information about how to make an appeal is published on the LA's website.

Where it is not possible to offer a place at any of the preferred schools, a place will be allocated at the school closest to the home address where places are available at the time of allocation. Some children in this situation will be eligible for assistance with transport costs. Parents will be referred to the school travel assistance pages of WNC's website.

A single place will be identified for each child by the end of this co-ordination process. When schools have more applications than places available, places will only be allocated up to the limit of the school's PAN. The admission authorities of OAA schools **must** notify their LA of their intention to increase the school's PAN and reference to the change should be made on the school's website. Where further capacity is required to provide every child with a school place, the LA will consult relevant schools to reach an agreement.

The LA will publish details of how places were allocated on its website after National Offer Day.

## **2.12 Protocol for children with Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans**

Reviews of EHC Plans, discussions with parents about preference and placement enquiry procedures, will all be undertaken by the EHC team at WNC. Placement decisions will be made by the date shown on the scheme timetable in Section 1. The admission of children with EHC plans, where the school is named in the plan, will take priority over all other children.

The EHC team will inform parents of the school allocated for their child on or around or around the date shown on the scheme timetable in Section 1. There may be circumstances where parents have not been informed of the school allocated by this date and/or a school has not yet been named. In these cases, schools may be required to admit children over PAN if it is subsequently named on a child's EHCP.

The offer of a school place will be made by the EHC team who will also amend the EHC plan accordingly.

## **2.13 Notification of offers to all schools or other Local Authorities**

As part of the co-ordinated process, other LAs will be informed electronically by the date shown on the scheme timetable in Section 1 of any offers of school places that WNC is able to make to their residents. All schools, including OAA schools, will be informed of the final offers, which may include offers made to pupils

living in other LAs, by the date shown in the scheme timetable in Section 1. Schools **must not** communicate with parents until *after* the offer from WNC has been sent on National Offer Day.

## **2.14 Applying for a place in a Junior School**

The normal point of entry to junior schools is year 3 and the LA co-ordinates the process of allocating places to these schools in this year group.

Parents of children who are in year 2 at an infant school and who want them to attend a year 3 in a junior school in September 2024 need to apply for year 3 places in junior schools using the Common Application Form.

Parents of children in year 2 at an infant school should not apply for a place in year 3 at a primary school on the Common Application Form as this form is only used for applications to schools for the normal point of entry. Year 3 is **not** the normal point of entry for a primary school. Instead, applications for a place in year 3 in a primary school for September 2024 should be made on an in-year application form in accordance with the LA's in-year process from June 2024.

## **2.15 National Offer Day**

The School Admissions team will notify all on-time applicants of their school offer on National Offer Day (16 April or the next working day) by email (for all online applicants) or by post (a first class letter will be sent to all applicants who submitted a paper application). This communication will include notification of the school place that has been offered and, if necessary, information about how to appeal against the decision not to offer a place at a particular school. Breakdowns of how places were allocated in accordance with each school's oversubscription criteria will be published on the WNC website. Links to this page will be provided on all offer emails and letters.

The School Admissions team will assume that the place has been accepted unless communication from the parent is received to advise to the contrary.

## **2.16 Rejection of a school place**

Parents will be required to notify the School Admissions team in writing (by email or letter) if they **do not** propose to accept the school place offered. These places will then be reallocated during the rounds of reallocation.

OAA schools must inform the School Admissions team if they are notified by a parent that the school place is being rejected so that the School Admissions team has an accurate picture of the available school places prior to the reallocation dates. Schools should not reallocate these places themselves. Instead, they will be reallocated during the LA's rounds of reallocation.

## **2.17 Late applications**

Every effort will be made to encourage parents to complete application forms by the closing date of **15 January 2025**. If an application form is received *after* midnight on 15 January 2025, it will not be considered until all the on-time applications have been processed. Late applicants will not receive an offer of a school place on National Offer Day (16 April or the next working day). Late applications will be considered from the relevant reallocation date published in the scheme timetable in Section 1.

Parents will not be allowed to change the order or schools listed as preferences after the closing date. After this date, changes to preferences must be made on a late application form and will be processed in the further rounds of allocation (see Section 1).

For OAA schools applying their own criteria, WNC will forward any late applications directly to the schools for their consideration (by the agreed timelines). If places are not available at the preferred school, the School Admissions team must be informed by the school so that a place can be offered at an alternative school with places available.

NB: The co-ordinated process in West Northamptonshire continues up to and including 31 August of each year. From 1 September, the in-year process commences.

## **2.18 Right to appeal**

Parents have the right to appeal against refusal of a place at any school for which they have applied. Parents will be advised of the appeal process on their allocation email/letter.

The admission authority must establish an independent appeals panel to hear the appeal. The panel will decide whether to uphold or dismiss the appeal. Where a panel upholds the appeal the school is required to admit the child.

## **2.19 Waiting lists**

Parents who have been refused a place at a school (this could either be on National Offer Day or after making a late application) may wish to place their child's name on a waiting list. Parents must contact the School Admissions team in order to request that their child's name is added to a school's waiting list. Following Primary National Offer Day, there will be no distinction drawn on school waiting lists between on-time and late applications: all applications will be ranked in accordance with schools' oversubscription criteria.

The School Admissions team will hold a waiting list for every school until 31 August 2025. From this point, OAA schools managing their own in-year admissions will maintain their own waiting list which must be kept until at least 31 December in the Offer year. The School Admissions team will retain a waiting list for all community and voluntary controlled schools and all OAA schools opting into the in-year co-ordination scheme until 31 December. Following this date, waiting lists will be cleared. If parents still wish their child's name to remain on the new waiting lists which will be established for the following term, they will need to request this in writing (via email) to the School Admissions team. A new application is not required. Waiting lists will be cleared each term, so if a parent wishes to remain on a waiting list for a whole academic year, they would make a request in writing to the School Admissions team by 31 December and 31 March. A new application form is required for a new academic year.

## **2.20 Rounds of reallocations**

Any remaining places or places that become available after National Offer Day will be allocated in rounds of reallocation (see timescales in Section 1) by the School Admissions team. In each round of reallocations, each school's oversubscription criteria will be applied to its waiting list to determine who should be allocated any available places. The LA continues to co-ordinate the allocation of places at all schools up to and including 31 July. This requires all schools which are their own admission authority choosing to apply their own oversubscription criteria to ensure clear and up-to-date communications with the School Admissions team regarding the ranking lists for each round of allocations.

## **2.21 Child's home address**

Unless otherwise stated in a school's admission arrangements, the child's home address is defined as the address at which the child normally resides with their parent/carer on the closing date for applications (15 January).

When we refer to a child's home address, we mean the permanent residence of the child. This address should be the child's only or main residence which is;

- owned by the child's parents/carers, or
- leased to or rented by the child's parents/carers under a lease or written rental agreement of not less than six months' duration.

Places cannot be allocated on the basis of an intended future change of address unless house moves have been confirmed through the exchange of contracts or signing of a formal lease.

Other admission authorities may have different definitions of a child's home address. Parents are advised to check the school's individual admission arrangements on their website or in the LA's composite prospectus.

Documentary evidence of ownership or rental agreement may be required together with proof of actual permanent residence at the property concerned.

## **2.22 Parents who do not live together**

WNC's definition of a child's address states that when parents live separately and the child spends time with each parent, the home address will be treated as the place where the child sleeps for most of the school week (i.e. Sunday night – Thursday night inclusive).

If the child spends equal amounts of time at two addresses, the parents must agree which address they wish to be the child's main address.

The LA can only process one application. Where more than one adult shares parental responsibility and if the adults live at different addresses, it is important that an agreement be reached on which schools to apply for, prior to making the application.

If multiple applications are received for the same child with conflicting addresses and/or preferences, or the School Admissions team is made aware of a dispute between two parents, all applications will be placed on hold and will **not** be processed until:

- a new single application is made, signed by all parties; or
- written agreement is provided from both parents indicating which application they have agreed on; or
- a court order is provided confirming which parent's application carries precedence.

If no agreement can be made, parents are recommended to seek legal advice. If an agreement cannot be reached before the closing date, this may affect the chances of a child being allocated a place at their preferred school/s.

Further information on parental responsibility can be found on the [DfE website](#)

## **2.23 Children who are part of a multiple birth group**

Under paragraph 2.16 (g) of The School Admissions Code (2021), infant class size restrictions may be exceeded where a child who is part of a multiple birth group is allocated as the 30<sup>th</sup> pupil. For community and voluntary controlled schools, the admission number will be exceeded to accommodate the other children from this birth group. These children will remain as 'excepted pupils' for the time they are in an infant class (reception, year 1 and year 2) or until class numbers fall back to the current infant class limit. Own admission schools may have another policy in place.

## **2.24 Random allocation**

Random allocation, when used, will be observed by someone independent of the school.

## **2.25 Definition of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children**

The highest priority in the oversubscription criteria for all schools must be given to 'looked after children' and 'previously looked after children'.

A 'looked after child' is a child who, at the time of making an application to a school, is:

- a) In the care of a local authority, or
- b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in exercise of its social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989)

Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they:

- a) were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see Section 12 adoption orders) or the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see Section 46 adoption orders), or
- b) became subject to a child arrangements order (as defined in Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 and as amended by Section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014), or
- c) became subject to a special guardianship order (see Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 which defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

This includes children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

## **2.26 Sharing information with schools**

When sharing information regarding the co-ordinated scheme with schools, WNC will:

- Supply information about what is required in the co-ordination process;
- Provide useful tips to schools;
- Be clear about the dates when information should/must be returned to the LA.

If schools already have a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the School Admissions team, the team will carry out the agreed work and will share with the school the outcome of applications made to the school by sending out lists of successful applicants.

Schools wishing to establish an SLA for elements of the co-ordination process should contact the School Admissions team as soon as possible to discuss their requirements.

## **2.27 Relevant Area**

In accordance with The Education (Relevant Areas for Consultation on Admission Arrangements) Regulations 1999, WNC has determined its relevant area as West Northamptonshire and all adjoining local authorities.