



Qualifying Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for Secondary Schools 2026/2027

Nottingham City Council
September 2024

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| Team | School Admissions |
| Department | Access and Inclusion |
| Organisation | Nottingham City Council |
| Updated | September 2024 v1.2 |

FOREWORD

This scheme is made under Section 89 of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 and in accordance with The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012. This part of the scheme (part 2) relates to transfers from junior/primary school to secondary school only. (Part 1 of the scheme relates to first admission to infant or primary school and transfer from infant to junior school; and part 3 relates to in-year admissions only [i.e. transfers outside the normal admission rounds]).

The co-ordinated scheme applies to the schools listed below:

Academies

Bluecoat Aspley Academy, Bluecoat Beechdale Academy, Bluecoat Trent Academy, Bluecoat Wollaton Academy, The Bulwell Academy, Djanogly City Academy, Ellis Guilford, Farnborough Academy, Fernwood School, Nottingham Academy, The Nottingham Emmanuel School, Nottingham Girls' Academy, Nottingham University Academy of Science and Technology, Nottingham University Samworth Academy, The Oakwood Academy, Park Vale Academy, The Trinity Catholic School and The Wells Academy.

Free School

Bluecoat Trent Academy and Nottingham Free School

INTERPRETATION

In this scheme –

“the LA” means Nottingham City Council acting in its capacity as local authority;

“Academy” means schools that have academy status;

“Free school” means schools that have free school status;

“admission authority” means in respect of any school which is a:

- community school - the LA and,
- in respect of a free school or academy - the governing body of that school/academy;

“SCAF” means the School Common Application Form supplied by the LA electronically or on paper;

“admission arrangements” means the arrangements for a particular school/academy or schools/academies which govern the procedures and decision-making for the purposes of admitting pupils to the school(s)/academy.

INTRODUCTION

For the 2026/2027 school year the LA will be co-ordinating the admission to secondary school arrangements with Nottinghamshire County Council who shares a border with Nottingham City.

The co-ordinated scheme for admission to secondary school is a mechanism to ensure that every parent/carer resident in Nottingham who has applied for a secondary school place for their child in the normal admission round receives a single offer of a school place on the National Offer Day of 1 March (or next working day after this date).

The purpose of this scheme is to co-ordinate the arrangements for the admission of pupils to secondary schools in the area.

The co-ordinated scheme is an administrative process which is intended to make admission to school easier, more transparent, and less stressful for all parents and carers. It allows applicants to apply online or on one common application form.

Eligibility for admission to a school is determined by the respective admission authority. These are:

- i. for the community school - the local authority;
- ii. for free schools - the governing body of the school;
- iii. for academies - the governing body of the academy;
- iv. for schools in Nottinghamshire County Council's area for voluntary aided and trust schools and academies - it is the governing body of that school/academy; for community schools - it is Nottinghamshire County Council.

The normal admission round is the process by which:

- a) an application for the admission of a child to a relevant age group at a school is submitted in accordance with the requirements of a qualifying scheme;
- b) an application is considered by the relevant admission authority for the school in determining, in accordance with the school's admission arrangements, the order of priority in which the application is ranked; and
- c) a determination relating to that application is communicated to the parents/carers on the offer day.

APPLYING FOR A SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACE

There will be a standard form, known as the School Common Application Form (SCAF).

2. The SCAF must be used by parents/carers resident in Nottingham City to make up to six preferences in rank order and give reasons for their preferences. Parents/carers are strongly encouraged to name the maximum number of preferences allowed to increase their chances of being offered a place at one of their named schools.
3. The LA will take all reasonable steps to ensure that every parent/carer resident in Nottingham City who has a child in year 6 has access to a copy of the SCAF and composite prospectus (Going to School in Nottingham publication), which includes a summary of the co-ordinated admissions scheme.
4. All six preferences will be treated equally by the LA.
5. Parents/carers resident in Nottingham City are strongly encouraged to apply through the Council's website using the online admissions system.
6. Alternatively if parents/carers resident in Nottingham City wish to apply using a paper application form (SCAF), the SCAF should be returned to the **School Admissions Team, Education Hub, Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham NG2 3NG**.
7. Completed SCAFs, together with any additional information or documentation required by the admission authority, must be returned by the national closing date of **31 October**.
8. Applications from parents/carers not resident in Nottingham City must be made on the relevant online or paper application form available from their home local authority. Where this LA receives a paper SCAF from a parent/carer not resident in Nottingham City, the parent will be advised to apply directly to their home authority.

INFORMATION REQUIRED BY VA ACADEMIES

1. Voluntary aided academies may require parents/carers who have expressed a preference for the school on the SCAF, to provide additional information which is not contained on the SCAF. Additional information can be requested on a supplementary form; this should only be necessary where the additional information is required for the governing body to apply their oversubscription criteria to the application.
2. A supplementary form is not regarded as a valid application form unless the parent/carer has also completed the appropriate home local authority SCAF and the academy is nominated on it. Supplementary forms should be returned directly to the VA academy preferred. The LA will send to each VA academy weekly a list of SCAFs received preferencing that academy and the academy must inform the LA if a supplementary form has been received for any pupil not included on the weekly list.
3. Where a supplementary form is not submitted to the relevant VA academy in addition to the SCAF, it is very likely to affect the consideration by the governing body of that academy of the preference expressed.
4. The governing body of a voluntary aided academy may determine whether or not to obtain a copy of the supplementary form where the parent/carer has failed to submit one with their SCAF.

5. When a VA academy has failed to obtain a supplementary form but there is a SCAF, the application must proceed because a valid application has been made.

PROCEDURE

The LA will act as a clearing house for the allocation of places by the relevant admission authorities in response to SCAs received. Except where acting in its separate capacity as an admission authority for community schools, the LA will not be making any decision with respect to the offer or refusal of a place in response to any application form.

1. By **18 August 2025** the LA will make the application process open to Nottingham city residents. The LA will distribute application information via primary schools to parents/carers resident in Nottingham City early in the beginning of term **September 2025**.
2. The closing date for applications is **31 October each year**.
3. By **10 November 2025** the LA will send to other local authorities details of the applicants who have applied for schools in their area.
4. By **1 December 2025** the LA will send to the admission authority of each Nottingham City school details of the applicants who have applied for a place at their school. The LA will also provide details of all applicants who have applied for their schools by use of DfE common data sets and any supplementary information received.
5. In considering applications for admission to Nottingham City schools the order of ranking as stated on the SCAF **will not** be revealed.
6. For all preferences stated on any completed common application form received, the respective admission authorities will apply their published admission criteria.
7. By **15 December 2025** the LA will have received from other admission authorities in Nottingham City a list of children who can be offered a place and those who cannot. All applications should be ranked, not just those to whom places can be offered.
8. By **19 January 2026** the LA will compare the list of provisional offers for Nottingham City schools/academies against the list of provisional offers from Nottinghamshire County Council and other admission authorities and:
 - a) determine which provisional offers will be made to Nottingham City residents taking account of the ranking of the preferences on the SCAF;
 - b) inform Nottinghamshire County Council, other local authorities and other admission authorities of those provisional offers which are to be accepted and of those which are not to be accepted.
9. Where it is the case that a child is eligible for more than one provisional offer of a secondary school place, the parents/carers will be offered the highest ranked of those provisional offers as indicated on the SCAF.
10. At the end of the first cycle of determining provisional offers, it will be possible to identify those schools which are undersubscribed or oversubscribed. For undersubscribed secondary schools, it will have been possible to have met all preferences.

11. By **9 February 2026** the LA will have received from other admission authorities of Nottingham City schools a list of children who can be offered a place and those who cannot following the 1st cycle, together with a waiting list.
12. In order to complete allocations to oversubscribed schools, a second cycle of the process will be undertaken.

This second cycle of allocations will deal with waiting lists for oversubscribed schools where vacancies have arisen as a result of point 7 above. The waiting list will comprise of:

- a) applicants for whom it has not been possible to make any provisional offer;
 - b) all applicants with a provisional offer ranked lower than that of the oversubscribed school for which a preference has also been expressed.
13. By **16 February 2026** the LA will:
 - a) update the list of offers for oversubscribed schools;
 - b) notify Nottinghamshire County Council where the offer is to be made to a resident of their area;
 - c) update the list of offers for other admission authorities of Nottingham City schools;
 - d) receive information from Nottinghamshire County Council of any places which they can offer to a Nottingham City resident as a result of the second cycle under their co-ordinated scheme;
 - e) make determinations on which provisional offers will be made to Nottingham City residents taking account of:
 - i) offers from Nottinghamshire Council County; and
 - ii) the waiting list for places at schools;
 - f) amend the list of offers for each oversubscribed school to take account of point d) above;
 - g) inform Nottinghamshire Council County and other admission authorities of which offers are to be confirmed for places in their schools which are to be accepted and of those which are not.

THE SINGLE OFFER OF A SCHOOL PLACE

The LA will be the body that communicates decisions to Nottingham City residents as follows:

- a) on behalf of academies and free schools;
 - b) on behalf of any school maintained by another local authority.
1. Parents/carers will receive only a single offer of a place for admission to a school.
 2. Where there is only one school for which a preference can be met, a place will be offered at that school.
 3. Where there are two or more provisional offers which could be made, the ranking of the expressed preferences as listed on the SCAF will be used to determine which of those provisional offers is the highest and which will become the single offer of a place.

4. Where any maintaining LA has notified this LA that a child resident in Nottingham City is to be granted a place in a school outside of Nottingham City or Nottinghamshire, this LA will have regard to this information when determining which school the single offer of a place shall be for. This means that if a child resident in Nottingham City has been offered a school place by another LA, this LA may determine that this constitutes a single offer of a school place and this LA may make no offer of a school place for that child.
5. The single offer of a place will be communicated to parents/carers on the national offer day. Emails/letters to parents/carers will contain the following information:
 - the name of the school/academy at which a place is offered;
 - a request to confirm whether the applicant wishes to accept the place offered;
 - the outcome of each of the other preferences made on the SCAF;
 - information about the right of appeal against the decision to refuse places at the other school/academy preferences made on the SCAF;
 - contact details for lodging an appeal.
6. Prior to national offer day all schools within Nottingham city will have access to a list of those children whose parents/carers have been offered a place at the school for their child.

ACCEPTING THE PLACE OFFERED

Parents/carers should notify the LA of their decision to accept the place offered within 14 days of receipt of their offer of a school place. Failure to do so may result in the place being withdrawn.

PREFERENCES NOT MET (alternative offers)

1. Where this local authority cannot make a single offer for any of the preferences expressed by a parent/carer resident in Nottingham city, where it is possible to do so, a place will be allocated to the child at the next nearest available Nottingham city community school or academy if this is the nearest school/academy where places remain. This is in line with 2.11 of the School Admissions Code that states “If the local authority is unable to offer a place at one of the parents’ preferred schools it must, if there are places available, offer a place at another school”.
2. An allocated (alternative) place will be determined after all preferences for schools where the LA is the admission authority have been determined, and will be communicated to parents/carers on the national offer day.
3. Where no preference has been made by the closing date, an allocated (alternative) place will be determined after the national offer day, wherever possible.
4. A determination of the nearest school/academy will be made by reference to the distance measured using a computerised mapping system (GIS) by means of a straight line from a point at the school/academy campus to a point at the child’s home, both identified by the Local Land and Property Gazetteer.
5. The child’s ordinary place of residence will be deemed to be the residential property at which the child normally and habitually resides with the person or persons having parental responsibility for the child at the closing date for the receipt of the SCAF, i.e. 31 October.
6. Where parental responsibility is held by more than one person and those persons reside in separate properties, the child’s ordinary place of residence will be deemed to be that property at which the child normally and habitually resides for the greater part of the week including weekends. If the child lives at two separate properties for an equal length of time, the ordinary place of residence will need to be agreed by parents in order for an alternative offer to be considered. Informal residence

agreements with family and friends will not be accepted unless there are exceptional circumstances, for which supporting evidence will be required.

7. In some instances, where all schools/academies in the vicinity are oversubscribed some consideration may need to be given to a school/academy within reasonable walking distance of the child's home. In law, a reasonable walking distance is up to 3 miles for children over the age of 8 years of age.

LATE APPLICATIONS

1. The LA and other admission authorities within Nottingham City may be willing to accept applications which are received late for good reason. These are considered on a case by case basis whilst ever it is practical to do so. Examples of late applications may be:
 - a family returning from abroad;
 - a lone parent/carer who has been ill for some time;
 - a family moving into Nottingham City from another area; or
 - other exceptional circumstances.

Details of the exceptional circumstances must be given in writing and attached to the SCAF. Each case will be treated on its merits.

2. Any preference received by the LA after the closing date and considered to be with good reason for being late and, where appropriate, with the agreement of the relevant admission authority, will be included in the first cycle of allocations and parents/carers will be notified on the national offer day.
3. All other late applications and any under point 1 above, received by the LA too late to be considered as on time will be dealt with after the offer day.
4. Other circumstances which will be considered as late applications include:
 - a) where a parent/carer has been allocated a place on the national offer day and they decline that place and require a place at a school ranked lower on the original SCAF. The parent/carer must notify the LA of this request;
 - b) where a parent/carer has been allocated a place on the national offer day and they decline that place and require a place at a school not named on the original SCAF. The parent/carer will be required to make an application for any school not named on the original SCAF.
5. Applications made after the closing date and up to the start of the academic year for admission to school in the intake year (year 7) by a Nottingham City resident must be made on a SCAF and will still be co-ordinated within the provisions of this scheme.
6. Applications received from the start of the academic year onwards will be considered as an 'in-year' transfer and will be dealt with under the co-ordinated in-year admissions scheme for those schools/academies that opt to continue with the LA's co-ordinated in-year admissions scheme. For those schools/academies that opt out of the LA co-ordinated in-year admissions scheme, applications received from the start of the academic year onwards should be sent directly to the school/academy applied for to be considered as an 'in-year' transfer.

RIGHT OF APPEAL

Any parent/carer whose child is refused a place at a school for which they have applied has the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel*.

**Except where their child has been permanently excluded from two or more schools and where at least one of those exclusions took place after 1 September 1997. (This applies to a twice excluded pupil for a period of two years beginning with the date the last exclusion took place).*

WAITING LISTS

1. The LA will maintain a waiting list for maintained schools until the end of May in the academic year, as per Nottingham City Council's Admission Arrangements where the number of applications received during the normal admissions round has exceeded the number of available places. The LA will then maintain waiting lists in conjunction with own admission authorities in Nottingham city from the offer day until the start of the academic year after which date the relevant admission authorities will maintain their own waiting lists until at least until 31st December or later in accordance with their own arrangements.
2. The waiting list for each oversubscribed school/academy will comprise of:
 - a) those applicants with a single offer of a school place ranked lower than that of the school for which the waiting list refers;
 - b) those applicants who have made a written request to the LA for their child's name to be placed on the waiting list of a school ranked lower than the school for which they have received the single offer of a school place.
3. Being on a waiting list should not raise undue expectations about the likelihood of being offered a place in due course. Where a waiting list is used, the school's published admission policy should make clear that these children will be ranked in the same order as the published oversubscription criteria. If late applicants have a higher priority under the oversubscription criteria, they will be ranked higher than those who may have been on the list for some time.
4. Where school places become vacant before any admission appeals are heard, admission authorities should fill these vacancies from any waiting list. Placing a child's name on a waiting list does not affect the parent/carer's right of appeal against an unsuccessful application.

FALSE INFORMATION

1. Where, under the scheme, the offer of a place is found to be based on fraudulent or intentionally misleading information on the application, which effectively denied a place to a child with a stronger claim to the place at the school, the offer of a place will be withdrawn where this provision is included in the respective admission arrangements of the relevant admission authority.
2. Where the place or an offer has been withdrawn, the application will be reconsidered, and the usual statutory right of appeal made available if a place is subsequently refused.