

# Admission Arrangements Consultation 2026/2027: Response Report

Analysis and Responses

## Introduction

The Admission Arrangements Consultation for the academic year 2026/2027 represents a pivotal opportunity to review and refine the processes in relation to School Admissions and the procedures of Nottingham City Council as the admission authority for maintained schools. This report aims to provide a comprehensive response to the consultation, offering insights, evaluations, and any further recommendations based on feedback and thorough analysis.

## Background

The consultation process, initiated by the Service Delivery Lead for Education at Nottingham City Council in line with our statutory responsibilities, seeks to gather opinions and suggestions from various stakeholders, including parents, teachers, school staff, and community members. The objective is to ensure that the admission arrangements are fair, transparent, and conducive to the diverse needs of children and families living in Nottingham.

## Proposed Changes

### 1. Increase Secondary School Preferences

The consultation has highlighted the importance of promoting inclusion and diversity within the admission framework. It is essential to address the needs of students from different backgrounds, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), minority ethnic groups, and economically disadvantaged families.

### 2. Extend Waiting List Closing Date

Extending the waiting list for school applications by one month, closing at the end of June instead of May, to accommodate families moving into the area late and ensure fairer placement before the new academic year.

### 3. Year 6 Waiting List

Sibling priority in school admissions is a topic of significant concern for many families. The consultation has brought to light various perspectives on whether and how this priority should be maintained or adjusted to balance family convenience with broader educational equity.

## Stakeholder Feedback

During this consultation, we actively sought the perspectives of parents, carers, schools, children, and families across Nottingham to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive process. We published the consultation details prominently on our website, ensuring easy access for all community members. Additionally, we distributed the consultation materials to every school in the city, enabling them to share the information directly with parents of their students.

In addition, we collaborated with Nottinghamshire County Council, our neighbouring authority, as per expectation laid out in the School Admissions Code. This multi-faceted approach allowed the opportunity for diverse insights and feedback, reflecting the needs of the entire Nottingham community.

# Consultation Findings

## Proposal 1 - Increase in Secondary School Preferences

Responses:

- Yes: 22 respondents (81.5%)
- No: 5 respondents (18.5%)

Summary: The proposal is supported by the majority of the respondents. Of those raising concerns, they included concern for the distance of the available schools should someone preference up to 6 schools and that 6 was too much of a choice and that applicants often struggle to choose 4. The LA accept that preferencing six schools may be challenging but this is an option rather than compulsory. The proposal comes from greater demand for secondary school places and an increase in alternative offers being made where parental preference cannot be met. Increased preference numbers may help to give parents a greater choice of school of their preference before the LA look to make an alternative offer if necessary. There is no requirement for parents to use all the preferences, but under the proposal, they can do if they wish, up to 6 schools.

## Proposal 2 - Extension of Waiting List Closing Date

Responses:

- Yes: 27 respondents (100%)
- No: 0 respondents (0%)

Summary: All respondents agreed with the proposal to extend the waiting list closing date.

## Proposal 3 - Introduction of Waiting List for Year 6 Applicants

Responses:

- Yes: 25 respondents (92.5%)
- No: 2 respondents (7.5%)

Summary: The proposal saw an overwhelming majority of respondents agree with the introduction of a Year 6 waiting list. The two negative responses did leave comments such as one from a Nottingham city Headteacher, who stated that moves in Year 6 have implications on exams amongst other things and should not be encouraged. The LA however contend that the volume of new families moving into the city in Year 6 and are left without a school place are further disadvantaged by the absence of a waiting list to help them secure a place at a preferred school. Whilst we continue to discourage any in-year transfer at such an important phase of primary education, the proposal is there to help address the disadvantage of those arriving in Nottingham without a school place.

## Further responses:

Nottinghamshire County Council responded with some very helpful comments in relation to precedent set previously. These were not in relation to the proposals but instead to the tie-breaker criteria, selection from applicants of multiple births and in relation to alternative offers for late applications. The comments were accepted and the arrangements have been changed for clarification. These amendments did not constitute further changes, rather amendments for clarification purposes.

## **Demographic:**

The respondents come from 4 representatives of city schools and 22 identified as a parent/carer of a young person in Nottingham city. One respondent identified as both. We did not collect further information from the respondents.

## **Conclusion**

The Admission Arrangements Consultation for 2026/2027 has provided valuable opportunity for children, families and stakeholders across Nottingham city to have their say. By incorporating their feedback and implementing recommended changes for important clarification, we continue to create an admission process that is fair, transparent, and inclusive that meets the needs of our communities. This report serves to indicate from the responses collected that the proposals are welcomed and supported.

## **Appendix**

- Summary of Consultation Responses