

Leicester Scheme for the Admission Arrangements for Pupils to Schools 2022/23

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1 Introduction

- 1.1** This scheme for admission to school will ensure that every parent resident in Leicester who has applied on time for their child to start school, at the normal entry points, receives a single offer of a school place.
- 1.2** In order to provide every parent with an offer of one place Leicester City Council will be working collaboratively with the governing bodies of voluntary aided, free schools, trust schools and academies in the city and the neighboring local authority of Leicestershire.
- 1.3** Leicester City Council will be the only body to transmit a single school place offer to applicants residing in Leicester City.
- 1.4** The scheme for admission arrangements will not affect the duty of the governing bodies of academies, voluntary aided, trust and free schools to set and apply their own admission arrangements.
- 1.5** Children with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan are not covered by this scheme. They will be given priority admission over all others.
- 1.6** Parents can apply for a maximum of four preferences at any one time. For late changes of preference, see section 3.2

2 Applying for a school place (see Annex 1 and 2 – Timetables)

- 2.1** All applications from Leicester residents for admission to any school must be made on the online common application form at www.leicester.gov.uk/admissions
- 2.2** Parents of children attending Leicester primary, infant or junior schools will be given details of how to apply by their school, at the beginning of their final year. For those starting school in Reception, details are posted to early year settings.
- 2.3** Parents who reside outside Leicester should apply to their home authority i.e. the authority to whom they pay their council tax.
- 2.4** Leicester resident parents can state a maximum of three preferences, in their rank order, at any one time for any combination of the following schools:
 - Community
 - Voluntary Controlled
 - Voluntary Aided
 - Trust
 - Academy
 - Free School
- 2.5** In all cases the application must be received by the closing date of 31 October 2021 for admission to a Secondary School and 15 January 2022 for admission to start at a Primary, Infant or Junior School.

3 Late applications / changes of preference

- 3.1** For applications / changes of preference made after the closing date, the application may still be considered as on-time but only if there are good reasons for this and if it is submitted by 14 January 2022 for Secondary applications and 4 March 2022 for Primary, Infant or Junior applications.
- 3.2** Independent supporting evidence of the good reason must be provided, or it will be treated as late. This is also the closing date for parents to provide proof of address if they are to be considered from a new address in the first round of the allocation process.

4 Procedure

- 4.1** By December 2021 for Secondary applications and February 2022 for Primary, Infant and Junior School applications, Leicester City Council will send to other Leicester admission authorities and other LAs responsible for admission to any school stated on the application, details of the applicants for their schools.
- 4.2** The respective admission authorities will apply their published admission criteria to all applicants. Where a preference meets the criteria for a school the child becomes eligible for a provisional offer, subject to admission limits.
- 4.3** During December 2021 for Secondary applications and February 2022 for Primary, Infant and Junior applications, Leicester City Council will aim to have received from academies, free, trust and voluntary aided schools a list of children who have been ranked by the school.
- 4.4** By January 2022 for Secondary applications and March 2022 for Primary, Infant and Junior applications, Leicester City Council will:
- (a) make determinations on which provisional offers will be made
 - (b) inform other relevant LAs of those provisional offers.
- 4.5** Where Leicester City Council cannot make a single offer for any of the preferences expressed by a parent resident in Leicester, a place will be allocated to the child at the nearest Leicester school, starting with their catchment area school if this has available places.
- 4.6** During February 2022 for Secondary applications and March 2022 for Primary, Infant and Junior applications, Leicester City Council will inform the relevant LAs of any provisional offers for parents resident in their authority.

5. The offer of a place

- 5.1** National Offer Day is 1 March 2022 for Secondary applications and 18 April 2022 for Primary, Infant or Junior applications. Offers will be sent by email on National Offer Day to those who have elected to receive their offer by email. A paper copy of the offer will also be sent to all other applicants by second class post.

6 Applications outside of the normal admission round

- 6.1** Applications for admission to a Leicester school outside the normal admission round must be made on-line;
- 6.2** Applications to non-Leicester City Schools will need to be made directly to the home LA for the school.
- 6.3** Parents will be invited to state on the on-line application a maximum of four preferences for schools in their rank order. A parent can have a maximum of four preferences at any one time.
- 6.4** All admission authorities will be asked to consider the applications against their own oversubscription criteria.
- 6.5** The offer of a place at a Leicester City school will be made by Leicester City Council.

7 Right of Appeal

- 7.1** This process does not alter the parents' right to appeal. Any parent whose child is refused a higher ranked school place is entitled to appeal against the decision. This will be considered by an independent panel.

8 Waiting lists

- 8.1** Leicester City Council will establish a waiting list for each school where the number of applications for those schools has exceeded the places available in their intake year.
- 8.2** The waiting lists will be established on the offer day and be maintained up to the end of the academic year of application. The waiting list will be ranked according to each admission authority's oversubscription criteria. We will only add a child's names to a school's waiting list where we have not been able to offer a higher preference. The waiting lists for voluntary aided, academy, trust and free schools will continue to be held by those individual schools from the allocation date. These schools may continue to operate their waiting lists past the end of the academic year. The LA will cease to maintain a waiting list after the end of the academic year for the schools that they are the admission authority for. Parents will be asked to state in writing if they wish their child's name to be included on any waiting list(s) for the next academic year.
- 8.3** This waiting list position may go up or down as the waiting list is ordered in accordance with the published admissions criteria and not the length of time an applicant is on the list.

9 Information required by free, voluntary aided and academy schools

- 9.1 Free, voluntary aided and academy schools may require additional information which is not contained on the on-line application and may relate to the church or religious observance / worship for which the child is a member.
- 9.2 In addition to the on-line application each free, voluntary aided and academy school may have their own supplementary information form for prospective applicants to complete. Details are provided in the school's own prospectus.
- 9.3 These supplementary information forms are **not** application forms for admission to a free, voluntary aided or academy school. The forms will be labelled as an important part of the admission process as they are **essential** to enable these schools to apply their own criteria. Schools requiring additional information should make it very clear that receipt of such a form does not constitute an application.
- 9.4 Parents who intend to express a preference or preferences for a free, voluntary aided or academy school must follow the procedure set out below:
- (a) obtain a copy of the supplementary information form from the free/voluntary aided/academy school(s) for which they intend to express a preference on the common application form. Schools may include this form in their prospectus pack, and it should also be available from the LA or school's website.
 - (b) complete the supplementary information form(s)
 - (c) complete the on-line application at Leicester.gov.uk/admissions by the 31 October 2021 for Secondary Transfer and 15 January 2022 for First Time Admissions and transfer from Infant to Junior Schools
 - (d) return the **supplementary information form(s)** to the preferred voluntary aided/academy or free school(s) by 31 October 2021 for secondary transfer and 15 January 2022 for First Time Admissions and transfer from Infant to Junior Schools
- 9.5 The supplementary information provided by parents will be used by the free/ voluntary aided/academy school in applying their admission criteria. This information would be over and above the standard information supplied through the on-line application.
- 9.6 Where a supplementary information form is not submitted to the free/ voluntary aided/academy school in support of the on-line application, it may affect the consideration of the preference expressed by the governing body of that school.

10 Applying for places at sixth form

10.1 Children and their parents applying for sixth form places may use the common application form, although if they are already on the roll of the school, they are not required to do so in order to transfer into year 12. Admission authorities can, however, set academic entry criteria for their sixth forms, which must be the same for both external and internal places.

11 Admission of children outside of their normal age group (includes Summer Born Children)

11.1 The School Admissions Code requires school admission authorities to provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. However, a child is not required to start school until they have reached compulsory school age following their fifth birthday. Parents can delay their child's start in school until they are of compulsory school age.

11.2 Additionally, parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group either because they are a Summer Born child or for another reason.

11.3 Children born from the beginning of April to the end of August reach compulsory school age on 31 August and are recognised as Summer Born children. Parents can request that a first-time admission Summer Born child starts a reception place one year later than their normal year group. It is likely that most requests for children to be admitted out of their normal year group will come from parents of children born in the later summer months or those born prematurely.

11.4 Parents are encouraged to visit the schools to which they intend to apply. Teachers will be able to explain the provision on offer to the children in the reception class, how it is tailored to meet the needs of the youngest children, and any other support that is available. They may also be able to allay any concerns a parent may have about their child's readiness for school or help a parent consider whether a child needs more time to develop before starting school.

11.5 If a parent of a summer born child makes a request for delayed entry, the admissions authority is responsible for making the decision about whether the child should be admitted out of their normal age group.

This will require the admission authority to take account of the child's individual needs and abilities and to consider whether these can best be met in reception or year one. In effect, this means that the authority is making a decision about whether it would be in the child's best interest to miss the reception year.

It will also involve taking account of the potential impact on the child of being admitted to year one without first having completed the reception year. The views of the head teacher will be an important part of this consideration.

As part of the decision making process, admission authorities are required to consider:

- Parent's views
- Information about the child's academic, social and emotional development
- Where relevant, the child's medical history and views of a medical professional
- If the child is moving, or going to move, from an infant to a junior school or a primary to secondary school or has just moved into your area, the year group they have been educated in up to that point
- If the child was born prematurely, what age group the child would have fallen in, if the child had been born on time.
- The view of the head teacher

This could include looking at evidence or issues such as:

- Any evidence from a health or social care professional who is involved in the care or treatment of the child for example speech and language therapist, occupational therapist, social worker, paediatrician.
- The view of any nursery or other early years setting the child attends and any records of the child's development.
- Whether the child's premature birth has caused health problems or developmental delays that mean the child would benefit from a delayed school start.
- The progress the child has made in an early years setting, including the rate of progress.
- What can the nursery setting provide the child that a reception class would not?

It is not necessary for a child to have medical or special educational needs in order for it to be in their interests to start reception age 5. Equally, there will be circumstances in which it is better for a child with developmental delay to start school before compulsory school age so that they are in a school where they can fully access the support available.

All schools and teachers are trained to teach children with special educational needs and schools must use their best efforts to make suitable provision available for all pupils who have SEN or a disability as set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 Years.

Where a parent is seeking to delay admission because they are worried that their child may have a learning difficulty or a disability that will make school more challenging for them, it is important for them to meet with the school's SENCo who will be able to describe the school's approach to helping children with SEN and disability.

11.6 The submission of evidence by parents

Parents are expected to provide the admission authority with information in support of their request – since without it they are unlikely to be able to make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case. This should demonstrate why it would be in the child's interests to be admitted to reception rather than year one.

In some cases, parents may have professional evidence that it would be appropriate for them to submit this, for example, when a child receives support from a speech and language therapist. However, there is no expectation that parents will obtain professional evidence that they do not already have. Admission authorities must still consider requests that are not accompanied by professional evidence. In such cases the supporting information might simply be the parent's statement as to why they have made their request. A lack of professional evidence, or limited evidence, does not mean that requests will be refused outright.

In some cases, parents may make a request for delayed entry as their child is undergoing assessment for an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Evidence that this is ongoing, along with the professional evidence in support of an EHCP, should be sufficient to make a decision. There is no requirement for an EHCP to be finalised before a decision is made.

- 11.7** When applying for delayed entry, parents are required to make an application for their child's normal age group at the usual time, but can also submit a request for admission outside the normal age group at the same time

We will ensure that the parent receives the response to their request before primary national offer day.

If their request is agreed, the application for the normal age group will be withdrawn before a place is offered. If the request is refused, the parent must decide whether to accept the offer of a place for the normal age group (with the option of deferring entry to later in the school year or part time attendance initially), or to refuse it and make an in year application for admission to year one for the September following the child's fifth birthday.

Where a parent's request is agreed, they must make a new application for a school place during the main admissions round the following year.

Although it is best for parents or carers to make a request for delayed entry alongside an application for a school place in the normal admissions round, we accept that this is not always possible. We will therefore still consider a request where the parent requests admissions outside the application is made outside of the published deadlines.

- 11.8** As children whose school start has been delayed move through the system, they will reach transition points. For children who have attended an infant school, this will be when they move up to junior school. For other children, this will be when they reach secondary age. Parents will need to apply once again for an outside normal year group place alongside an application for a school place and should do so when their child's 'correct' cohort are making applications for a school place. This means that for a summer born child who started in reception a year later than is usual, parents would apply for a secondary school place and for an out of year group place when the child is in year 5 rather than year 6.

Admission authorities must consider these requests in the same way as the original request but must also take into account the fact the child has been educated in a different year group up until this point.

- 11.9** Parents who are refused a place at a school for which they have applied have the right of appeal to an independent admission appeal panel. They do not have a right of appeal if they have been offered a place and it is not in the year group they would like. However, they may make a complaint. All schools have a duty to consider complaints about the school and must have a published complaints procedure in place. Leicester City Council also has a complaints procedure.
- 11.10** For details on the process involved and to notify the Council of your wish for your child to enter a year outside of their normal age group please contact the Admissions Service;

Email us on: admissions.online@leicester.gov.uk

Ring us on: 0116 454 1009 (option 1)

12 Social and medical criteria

- 12.1** For an application to be considered under the social medical criterion, applicants must complete a separate application form and, along with this, provide written evidence. Examples of the written evidence we would consider are:
- a) Supporting documentation from a medical professional
 - b) Supporting information provided by a social worker
 - c) Supporting information provided by a Police officer
 - d) Court order
- 12.2** In each case, the connection between a child's need and the specific school must be made and applicants must clearly demonstrate why this one specific school can meet the child's needs in a way that no other school can. Evidence relating to the social or medical circumstances of the parent can be considered, but only if this impacts on the child and their need to attend one specific school.
- 12.3** Evidence must be provided by the application deadline (31 October for Secondary Transfer or 15 January for Reception and Junior Transfer). Any evidence submitted following the application deadline will not be considered until after National Offer Day (in March for Secondary Transfer and in April for Reception and Junior Transfer. See the Primary/Secondary admission pages for current dates).
- 12.4** Priority under this criterion can only be given for one specific school but we still recommend that applicants list four schools on their application form to maximize your chances of securing one of their preferences. If an applicant seeks to apply the criteria for more than one school, by definition, it is not only one school that can meet the need and this criterion would not apply. We may have to share the information provided with the offered school.
- 12.5** There will be a two-stage assessment process for eligibility under this criterion.

12.6 During the first stage the application will be considered by the admissions team to establish whether the following criteria, as outlined in section 12.2, is met.

1) Clear reason provided why only the chosen school can meet child's needs in the way that no other school can; and

2) Supporting evidence provided, in with section 12.1

3) Request made no later than the closing dates, in line with section 12.3

If applicants meet the eligibility for stage 1, the application will be considered during the second stage by a panel of senior officers. If they do not meet the criteria, the application will be considered as a normal application and considered under the usual admission rules. There is no right of appeal if an application has not met the social and medical criterion, but parents will have their usual right of statutory appeal for a school place.

12.7 During the second stage, a panel of senior officers will determine whether the evidence provided is sufficiently compelling to meet the above requirements. You will be notified of the panel's decision in writing and the letter will indicate which criterion we will use to process your application. All Leicester City schools have experience in dealing with children with diverse social and medical needs, and so your case must be clearly exceptional in order to be considered under this criterion.

12.8 It is expected that the following groups of children will usually meet this criterion if the relevant evidence can be provided:

1) Children who are the subject of child protection plans and where the requested school is necessary to avoid the abuser.

2) Children of parents/carers who are fleeing domestic violence and where the requested school is necessary to avoid the abuser, whose application is verified by a senior social worker or who meet Leicester City Council's procedures for housing reallocation for recognized domestic violence.

12.9 There is no separate right of appeal if an application has not met the social and medical criterion, but parents will have their usual statutory right of appeal for a school place. Full details of the appeals process can be found on our website at www.leicester.gov.uk/admissions.

Annex 1: Provisional Timetable for Secondary Admissions

Transfer process

31 October 2021

Closing date for applications

November 2021

LA to send applications to academies, free aided schools and other LAs.

December 2021

Academies, free and aided schools return ranked lists to Leicester City Council.

1 March 2022

Leicester schools informed by Leicester City Council of the final results, which may include offers to pupils living in other LAs.

1 March 2022

Offers sent to parents by Leicester City Council

Annex 2: Provisional Timetable for Primary Admissions

Transfer process

15 January 2022

Closing date for applications

February 2022

LA to send applications to academies, free aided schools and other LAs

February 2022

Academies, free and aided schools return ranked lists to Leicester City Council.

18 April 2022

Leicester schools informed by Leicester City Council of the final results, which may include offers to pupils living in other LAs

18 April 2022

Offers sent to parents by Leicester City Council

Annex 3: Definitions

1 Looked After and Previously Looked After Child:

A 'looked after child' is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions at the time of making an application to a school. Previously looked after children are children who were looked after but ceased to be so because immediately after they were looked after they were adopted or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order.

2 Siblings:

By siblings we mean a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, foster brother or sister or a child of the parent/carers partner and in every case the child must be living in the same family unit at the same address. Private fostering arrangements are not counted for admissions purposes.

3. Home / Permanent Address:

This is the child's current permanent address at the time of application. In the case of split households, it is the address of the person who receives the Child Benefit. 'At the time of application' means the closing date for applications (31 October 2021 for Secondary Applications and 15 January 2022 for Primary, Infant and Junior applications). Informal accommodation arrangements with family and friends are not accepted unless there are very special circumstances and supporting proof is required. An address used for childcare arrangements cannot be used as the home address for the purpose of applying for a school place.

4 Distance Measurement:

Distance is measured on a straight-line basis using a geographical information system measuring from the GEO code reference point for the child's home address to the GEO code reference point for the school. A GEO code is a position on a map.

5 Tiebreaker:

In the event that two applicants within a category live exactly the same distance from the school and only one place remains, the place will be offered to one applicant on the basis of lots drawn by an officer of the city council who is not involved in the administration of school admissions.

6 Multiple Births:

If the final place available at a school is offered to a twin or triplet and the remaining sibling/s would ordinarily be refused, places will be offered to the remaining sibling/s at the same school.

Trust, voluntary aided, free and academies operate their own oversubscription criteria and they are explained in each school's individual arrangements.

7 Deferred Entry:

By law, a child must be in receipt of full-time education from the start of the school term following their fifth birthday - this is called compulsory school age. Delaying a child's entry into school is called 'deferred entry'. Parents/carers can request to defer their child's entry to school to any date up until they are of compulsory school age. Parents/carers should apply for a place for their child in the normal way. Parents/carers can also request that their child takes up a place part time until they reach compulsory school age.

8 Summer Born Children:

Children born from the beginning of April to the end of August are known as Summer Born Children. They become of compulsory school age at the start of the term following their fifth birthday.