



HALTON LOCAL AUTHORITY SCHEME: CO-ORDINATION OF ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS – 2009/10 ACADEMIC YEAR

- 1.0** This document is intended to fulfil the statutory requirements for admissions into reception classes in maintained infant and primary schools.
- 2.0** This Co-ordinated Primary Scheme applies to those schools detailed on pages 7 and 8 of this document.

Halton Borough Council (as the Local Authority - LA) is the Admission Authority for all community and voluntary controlled schools, and the Governing Body of each voluntary aided school is the admission authority for the school.

- 3.0** Halton residents (and any other parent wishing to seek admission to a Halton infant, junior or primary school) will be given the opportunity to complete a preference form and express a preference, with reasons, for up to 3 primary schools using this form. The LA must invite applications on the preference form and the preference form must comply with mandatory provisions and the requirements of the DfES School Admissions Code of Practice. This form is also available on-line and parents are encouraged to apply for a school place via the Halton Borough Council website at www.halton.gov.uk. Parents/carers should only complete one preference form and should only include preferences for Halton schools. If parents wish to apply for a school in another authority they should contact the relevant authority direct. Any preferences for schools in other authorities entered on the Halton form will be disregarded.
- 4.0** Where a Voluntary Aided School requires supporting information e.g. asking for a reference from a priest or other religious minister for a faith school, when applying for Catholic schools parents will only need to complete the information on the LA preference form and on the on-line form. For applications to Church of England voluntary aided schools parents will be required to complete the LA form (or on-line form) and also supply additional information on a supplementary form and must contact the Church of England voluntary aided school direct for this

form which should be completed and returned to the appropriate Church of England voluntary aided school. VA schools will need to inform parents of their requirements within their school's published admission arrangements.

5.0 The DfES issued a revised School Admissions Code of Practice which came into force on 28th February 2007 and admission authorities (the LA for community and voluntary controlled schools, and governing bodies for voluntary aided schools) **must** ensure that their determined admission arrangements comply with the mandatory provisions of the Code. In Halton an Equal Preference Scheme is operated. Within the equal preference scheme all preferences are considered against each school's published admission criteria. After all preferences have been considered if only one school named on the preference form can offer a place the LA will send out an offer of a place. If more than one school can offer a place parents will be offered a place at whichever of those schools is ranked highest on the preference form. This may not be the first preference school. If a school becomes oversubscribed then places will be allocated in accordance with the oversubscription criteria (see paragraph 7.0).

6.0 APPLYING FOR A PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACE IN HALTON FOR SEPTEMBER 2009

6.1 Halton LA publishes an "Admission to Primary School" booklet (a Composite Prospectus). The preference form will be contained within this booklet and the booklet will be issued to all Halton Primary Schools and will be available at Halton Direct Link Offices, Halton Libraries, on line via the council's website, and upon request from the Student Services Team. The booklet will be issued in **September 2008** and the on-line form will be available at the same time.

6.2 The preference form will seek three preferences in ranked order. The preference form must be returned to the Student Services Team within the Children & Young People's Directorate no later than **Friday 12th December 2008**. On-line forms must also be completed by this date.

6.3 Halton resident parents may request information (a prospectus) regarding schools in neighbouring local authorities but **must** complete their preferences on the relevant authority's form.

6.4 The Student Services Team will load all preferences onto the database and, week beginning **Monday 19th January 2009**, will forward all first, second, and third preference forms to all Voluntary Aided Schools where admission is being sought, whose governing bodies will be required to meet and determine which pupils will be admitted against their admission criteria. Governing bodies must treat first, second, and third preferences equally against their admissions criteria. Voluntary Aided schools will then be required to notify the Student Services Team

on **Monday 2nd February 2009** which pupils have been offered places and which have been declined.

6.5 When all preferences have been considered Halton LA will notify parents of their child's allocated Halton LA community, voluntary controlled or voluntary aided school. This notification letter will be sent on **Friday 13th March 2009** together with details of the appeal process if applicable.

7.0 OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

7.1 If a Halton community or voluntary controlled school becomes oversubscribed, places will be allocated in accordance with the following criteria:

- 1) Children in Public Care – children who are subject to a care order, or are accommodated by the Local Authority
- 2) Siblings – pupils with elder brothers or sisters including half brothers and sisters and unrelated children living together as part of the same household, already attending the school and expected to continue in the following year
- 3) Pupils living nearest to the school defined as a straight-line distance measurement from the child's permanent residence to the school.

Children who have a statement of special educational needs will be allocated a place at the school named in the statement.

If oversubscription occurs within any one of the above criteria, places will be allocated on distance grounds, i.e. living nearest to the school defined as a straight-line distance measurement from the child's permanent residence to the school. A geographical information system to determine distance is used.

Where applications are received for twins, triplets etc, the LA will apply the oversubscription criteria and will oversubscribe the school if a family would otherwise be separated. Parents and schools should note that this does not apply to key stage one (infant classes) where statutory class size limits apply.

The address to be used in measuring distance for the purpose of allocating school places will be the child's permanent address. Where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility the LA will use the address of the person receiving Child Benefit for allocation purposes. Parents may be required to submit evidence of Child Benefit upon request from the LA. The above criteria will apply without reference to the Halton Borough Council boundary.

Where applications are received from families of UK Service personnel and other Crown servants, school places will be allocated to children in advance of the approaching school year if accompanied by an official MOD, FCO or GCHQ letter declaring a return date with full address details and providing they would meet the criteria when they return to the UK.

If none of the parent's preferences can be met, in accordance with the DfES School Admissions Code of Practice, Halton LA will allocate a school unless there are insufficient places remaining in the authority. In Halton, a place will be allocated at the nearest school to the home address measured in a straight-line distance measurement from the child's permanent residence to the school. This does not affect parent's rights to appeal for a place at the school(s) they have been refused.

8.0 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

8.1 LATE APPLICATIONS FOR HALTON PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Late applications for places at Halton Local Authority maintained community or voluntary controlled schools will only be considered in limited circumstances. These may include when a single parent has been ill for some time, or a family have just moved into the area, or a family are returning from abroad – providing applications are received before offers of places are made. If the late application is received after places have been allocated and the school(s) are oversubscribed, the child will be placed on the waiting list, the child's position on the waiting list being determined by the admission policy. Parents have the right of appeal if admission is refused and details on the appeal process are given in paragraph 10.0.

If parents are making a late application to a voluntary aided school the school will advise how this will be dealt with.

It will be necessary for the applicant to provide the appropriate evidence to support an exceptional case for late application.

8.2 CHANGE OF PREFERENCE

If parents decide to change their preference after the closing date they will need to complete another preference form. If places have already been allocated the Council may not be able to meet the change of preference.

8.3 CHANGE OF ADDRESS

If a pupil moves house after the closing date of 12th December 2008 parents must notify the Student Services Team immediately and request a new preference form (evidence of house move may be required). The preference form must be completed and returned as soon as possible. If there is a place available at the school a place will

be offered. If the year group is oversubscribed then parents will be offered the right of appeal and any other preferences will be considered.

8.4 WITHDRAWAL OF OFFER OF A SCHOOL PLACE

Halton Borough Council reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a school place in limited circumstances. These may include where a fraudulent/intentionally misleading preference form is received claiming a false sibling or false residence.

8.5 WAITING LISTS

Waiting lists will be held for oversubscribed LA maintained community and voluntary controlled primary schools. The waiting list will comprise of those pupils refused admission to the school(s) of preference. This list will be maintained from the time of initial allocation until 3 weeks into the Autumn Term, at which point the waiting list will cease. If a place becomes available at an oversubscribed school, the place will be reallocated in accordance with the published over-subscription criteria detailed above. Parents should be aware that their child's place on the waiting list might alter, either up or down, dependent upon the movement of other applicants. The waiting list forms part of the co-ordinated scheme, therefore applications received upto the end of the third week into the Autumn Term will be considered within the scheme, following which any applications received after this date will be dealt with as a mid-year admission and the application should be made direct to the school.

9.0 MID YEAR ADMISSIONS

The Council is prepared to consider requests for transfers between schools other than at normal admission times, and parents seeking transfer should ask the child's current school to issue them with a transfer form, thereby enabling parents to outline the reasons for the transfer request. This will then be forwarded to the Student Services Team for monitoring purposes, who will forward the form to the proposed admitting school. Parents are, however, advised as a first step, to discuss their child's progress with the head teacher of the child's present school, and parents should not remove their child without first securing admission to another school. Transfers are normally made at the beginning of a term. If the year group is full, parents will be offered the right of appeal.

10.0 ADMISSION APPEALS

Parents who are not offered a place at any of their preferred LA maintained community, voluntary controlled or voluntary aided schools have a right of appeal to an independent appeals panel under section 94 of the School Standards & Framework Act 1998. Appeals must be

submitted in writing but parents have the right to present their case to the panel in person. The Chairman of the appeal panel will be a lay-person having no connection with the LA. Other members of the panel will be suitably experienced persons.

Parents should note that the law requires that no 5, 6, or 7 year old in an infant class should be in a class of more than 30 pupils. Parents will have a right of appeal but an appeal panel can only uphold this appeal if it is satisfied that:

- a) the decision was not one which a reasonable admitting authority would make in the circumstances of the case, and/or
- b) that the child would have been offered a place if the admission arrangements had been properly implemented.

The decisions of independent appeals panels are binding on the LA and on the school's governing body.

Applications for admission to Aided Church schools will be referred to the Admissions Committee of the governing body of the school concerned. The LA, acting on behalf of the governors, will notify parents of the result of their application. If the application is not approved parents will be notified of their statutory right of appeal.

11 ADMISSION OF VULNERABLE CHILDREN

The DfES has issued guidance which has statutory force including the School Admissions Code of Practice (2007), Improving Behaviour and Attendance: Guidance on Exclusion from Schools and PRUs (2006), and Guidance on Hard to Place Pupils (2004) that requires Admission Forums to broker protocols for the admission of vulnerable children. The revised DfES School Admissions Code of Practice changes the name of the Hard to Place Protocol to the "In Year Fair Access Protocol". The LA is currently reviewing this protocol and will be communicating with schools regarding any changes.

Halton Local Authority has, through consultation, determined that Children in Public Care will be given first priority for admission to all community and voluntary controlled schools. Voluntary Aided Schools have, through their Diocesan Authority, received confirmation that these pupils should also be given priority in their school's admissions arrangements.

Children in Public Care who require admission to a school outside the normal admissions round will normally be offered a place at the nearest appropriate school. Arrangements are already in place for a child in public care to be admitted to the nearest appropriate school regardless of whether the school is oversubscribed. The Admissions Forum will monitor the number of this type of admissions to schools.

COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED SCHOOLS TO WHICH THIS SCHEME APPLIES:

The figure in brackets denotes the school's proposed Published Admission Number for 2009 but may later as a result of the School Reorganisation Programme.

All Saints Upton C E Voluntary Controlled Primary (30)
Astmoor Primary (25)
Beechwood Primary (15)
Brookvale Primary (40)
Castleview Primary (20)
Daresbury Primary (15)
Ditton C E Voluntary Controlled Primary (30)
Ditton Primary (60)
Fairfield Infant (80)
Fairfield Junior (80)
Farnworth C E Voluntary Controlled Primary (56)
Gorsewood Primary (30)
Hale C E Voluntary Controlled Primary (25)
Halebank C E Voluntary Controlled Primary (15)
Hallwood Park Primary (25)
Halton Lodge Primary (30)
Hillview Primary (30)
Lunts Heath Primary (45)
Moore Primary (30)
Moorfield Primary (45)
Murdishaw West Community Primary (30)
Oakfield Community Primary (40)
Palace Fields Primary (40)
Pewithall Primary (30)
Simms Cross Primary (40)
The Brow Community Primary (25)
The Grange Infant (60)
The Grange Junior (60)
The Park Primary (20)
Victoria Road Primary (40)
West Bank Primary (30)
Westfield Primary (25)
Weston Primary (15)
Weston Point Primary (20)
Windmill Hill Primary (15)
Woodside Primary (30)

VOLUNTARY AIDED SCHOOLS TO WHICH THIS SCHEME APPLIES:

CHURCH OF ENGLAND:

Runcorn All Saints' CE Aided Primary (20)
St Berteline's CE Aided Primary (43)
St Mary's CE Aided Primary (35)

CATHOLIC:

Our Lady Mother of the Saviour Catholic Primary (30)
Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Catholic Primary (30)
St Augustine's Catholic Primary (15)
St Basil's Catholic Primary (60)
St Bede's Catholic Infant (60)
St Bede's Catholic Junior (60)
St Clement's Catholic Primary (30)
St Edward's Catholic Primary (20)
St Gerard's Roman Catholic Primary & Nursery (25)
St John Fisher Catholic Primary (30)
St Martin's Catholic Primary School (30)
St Michael's Catholic Primary (35)
The Holy Spirit Catholic Primary (20)