BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

Scheme for co-ordinated admissions to secondary schools – Admissions Year 2023/24 (Admissions to year 7 in September 2023)

Introduction

The main purpose of the co-ordinated scheme is to ensure that every parent of a child living in Brighton & Hove who has completed a school preference form receives one offer of a secondary school place at the conclusion of the normal admission round for pupils transferring from primary to secondary school. The scheme is designed to foster clear communications on school admissions between the City Council, community schools, Academies (for the purposes of this document Free Schools are included as Academies), Cardinal Newman School, which as a voluntary aided secondary school acts as its own admission authority, and neighbouring Local Authorities (LAs) and admission authorities. It fulfils the requirements of the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co ordination of Admission Arrangements (England)) Regulations 2012 and more detailed arrangements set out in the School Admissions Code 2021.

The scheme does not affect the rights of the different admission authorities mentioned to set their own admission priorities and consider applications on the basis of those priorities. It is intended to set out a process and time scale for the exchange of pupil information between the parties to the scheme, resulting in the offer of a single school place. This should represent a preference listed by the parent/carer that it is possible to meet following the application of the admission priorities by this LA or by other admission authorities. Where it is not possible to allocate a place at any of the preferred schools for a child living in Brighton & Hove, a place will be offered at the nearest school to their home address within the city boundaries with a place available. This will not preclude parents from seeking an alternative place elsewhere if they are unhappy with the offer, nor will it prevent them from lodging an appeal with the admission authority for their preferred school.

All residents of Brighton & Hove should apply using the City Council's common application form (online or paper) even if they are seeking a place at a maintained school in the area of another Council.

The time scales set out in the scheme work towards the prescribed date (1st March or the first working day following 1st March where it falls at a weekend) on which secondary school place decisions must be notified to parents/carers. It will also be broadly in line with the time scales used by neighbouring LAs.

Key dates

- Online application facility available — 1 September 2022
- Notify year 6 parents of the need to apply — by 12 September 2022
- Distribution of admission booklets — on demand
- Closing date for applications — 31 October 2022

- Preference data exchanged with own admission authority schools (Cardinal Newman, King's, BACA & PACA) and neighbouring LAs — 20-27 November 2022
- Own admission authority schools provide LA with provisional ranking order of applicants. — 16 December 2022
- Consider qualifying late applications. — 22 January 2023
- Finalise allocations and exchange offer details with Own admission authority schools and neighbouring LAs — Between 31 January- 7 Feb 2023
- Notification e-mails sent to parents, decisions posted to applicants without an email address — 1 March 2023
- Deadline date for acceptance of places — 15 March 2023
- Deadline for appeals to be heard in the main round. — 30 March 2023

Process and detailed time scale

1. Information about the application process and how to apply will be distributed to parents via primary and junior schools at the beginning of September 2022.
2. Parents/carers will be invited to list 3 preferences for a school place ranked in order of priority. These may be at a City Community School, an Academy, a Free School or a voluntary aided secondary school, or any maintained school outside the City of Brighton & Hove. Those residents in the City must use the Brighton & Hove school admission to indicate their preferred schools, either the paper or online form. No other form of application will be valid. The LA allocates places on the basis of equal preference, and each preference listed will be prioritised in accordance with the published admission priorities for community and own admission authority secondary schools in the City. If it is possible to offer more than one place on the basis of those priorities, the one ranked higher on the application will be offered.

3. Parents and carers are strongly advised to apply online through the facility available on the Brighton & Hove City Council website. This will provide them with a response which confirms their preference listing and acts as proof of application. Alternatively, the paper form should be completed and returned to the child's primary or junior school in the City, or to the Admissions Team at Hove Town Hall **by 31 October 2022.** Applicants for Cardinal Newman and/or King's School will need to return their supporting information directly to the school as well as submitting an online application or paper form to the Council. If supporting information is returned to the Local Authority, the documents will be shared with these school.

4. Where, as part of its admission priorities a voluntary aided school, free school or academy within the City or beyond requires additional supporting information, such as a Supplementary Information form, or proof of denominational commitment, that form or proof should be completed and returned to the school by the same closing date. This is to ensure that

target dates for the exchange of pupil information between authorities and the notification date for parents/carers can be met.

5. Parents are encouraged to apply online however If using an application form rather than online application parents and carers whose children attend maintained primary schools in the City are strongly advised to return the form via the school. Parents who prefer to post the form should understand that proof of posting is not proof of receipt, and they will not have confirmation of receipt in the same way as those applying online or returning the form to their child's school. All maintained junior and primary schools in the city will return secondary preference forms they receive to the LA as they are received, ideally scanned and sent by email. Schools should maintain a list to record the date on which each form was received, the school preferences, and if required will provide proof of receipt to the parent/carer. This ensures that on time applications and late applications are clearly recorded as such. It also provides assurance for parents should the school or the LA subsequently mislay the form.

No later than 27 November 2022.

- ❖ LA will identify the number of preferences (first, second or third) received for each school.
- ❖ Own admission authority schools will be provided with details of any parental preference where it gives the school as a preference (first, second or third) received by the LA. It will apply its oversubscription criteria to prioritise all preferences. Where pupils have an Education Health & Care Plan naming the school and must be offered a place this will be indicated. (These pupils must be given a place at the school in accordance with the SEN and Admissions Codes of Practice.)
- ❖ West and East Sussex and other LA's as necessary will be forwarded the details of preferences expressed for their schools by Brighton & Hove parents/carers (first, second and third). Where the pupil has an Education, Health & Care Plan this will be indicated.
- ❖ West and East Sussex will be asked to provide a list of pupils living in those areas who have expressed a preference for a Brighton & Hove school (first, second or subsequent).

No later than 16 December 2022

- ❖ Own admission authority schools will provide the LA with a list showing children in priority order for places at the school. The list will show which admission criterion was applied to each child. The school will advise the LA of such additional information as is necessary to inform parents of the reason for its decision when allocation letters and emails are sent on 1 March 2023.
- ❖ Brighton & Hove will apply its admission priorities to all preferences received for community schools, and where the children are resident in other LAs, will inform that LA.

Between 31 January and 7 February 2023

- Brighton & Hove will establish whether more than one offer could be made on the basis of the application of its own admission priorities and those of voluntary aided schools, free schools/Academies and other LAs. It will determine in each case which is the highest parental ranking.
- Final lists of school allocations will be prepared.
- Emails and letters to parents/carers will be prepared.
- Consideration will be given to late applications received before 22 January, as set out in Appendix A below.
- Neighbouring LAs will be sent final details of children living in their area offered a place at a Brighton & Hove school, and for whom they will need to send allocation letters.

1 March 2023
Online applicants will receive their decisions by e-mail. Letters will be sent only to parents/carers who do not have an email address. The LA email or letter to parents will contain the following:

- If they have not been allocated a school of preference, the reason why not.
- How places at all Brighton & Hove schools were allocated.
- Where it is an own admission authority school, the fact that the offer is made on behalf of the governing body of the school.
- Where it is a school maintained by another LA, the fact that the offer is made on behalf of that LA.
- The right of appeal to an independent panel, and how to arrange an appeal for a community school, a voluntary aided school, and in the case of Academies, Free schools and schools in other LA's, who to contact.
- Details about waiting lists and reallocation pools for preferences that could not be met.

15 March 2023
Parents and carers should accept offers of places by this date in order to allow schools and the LA ample planning time for the new intake. This does not affect their right to appeal if the place they are accepting is not their highest preference.

30 March 2023
Parents should also have exercised their right to appeal by this date if they want to be assured of having their appeal heard in the main round of appeals.

Proof of address
The LA may require parents/carers to provide proof of address if they apply for a place at a community school. Own admission authority schools may also request proof of address from their applicants.

Appendix A – Changes of address and late applications

New arrivals in the city

Parents/carers moving into the City in the course of the admission process who are making an application on the basis of their new address must provide evidence of either a tenancy agreement of six months or more or an exchange of contracts if they are purchasing a property. Applicants should return their preference form by the closing date if possible, especially if their move took place before the closing date, forwarding proof of the move at the earliest opportunity. If they provide the form and the evidence of the move by 22 January 2023 their application will be included in the main admissions round.

Late applications received before the 22 January 2023.

I. With the exception of families moving into the area and cases as described at V below, applications received after the closing date will not be considered by the LA until school allocations have been made for those received by the closing date. Any applications received for own admission authority schools will be forwarded to the school, which will decide whether or not to include the application in the main admission round.

II. Any preference forms for community schools received in respect of children in care will be included in the main admission round as valid first preferences at any time up to the allocation date on **8 February 2023**. Where such applications are received after that date, the LA will, if attendance at that school is seen as a necessity for the welfare of the child, seek to offer places at the school of first preference, if necessary negotiating with that school to admit beyond the published admission number in order to do so. If, however, it is acceptable to offer a place at a lower ranked school without going over numbers, the LA will discuss that possibility with the social worker for the child. Applications for own admission authority schools and schools in other LA areas for children in care will be considered in line with the admission arrangements for those schools and the requirements of the Admissions Code.

III. Applications received after the closing date but before the 22 January 2023 will be sent a letter or email allocating a school place on 1 March 2023 or as soon as possible after that date if the volume of late applications is high. Applications received after this date will be sent an allocation letter or email as soon as possible after 1 March 2023.

IV. Parents/carers living in the City who change a preference as a result of a change of address within the city, and who submit the new application and evidence of the address change will have that change considered in the main round of allocations if it is received by **22 January 2023**. They will have to provide evidence of the address change. Those applications received after that date will be considered as late applications.

V. Other late applications where there is good reason for the delay will be considered in the main round of allocations if received by **22 January 2023** where independent evidence is given by a third party (usually a professional source such a doctor or social worker) to support the reason for the delay.

Late applications received after the 22 January 2023.

I. Where an application is received after the allocation date, from a parent/carer living in the City, they must use the Brighton & Hove online application service or paper preference form. If the preference(s) is for a community school, the LA will allocate a place if the school remains under subscribed. If the school(s) is fully subscribed, a place will be allocated at the nearest school to the home address that has a vacancy. Brighton & Hove will seek to make a decision as soon as possible after receiving the application. Where a preference is given for a free school, an Academy, Cardinal Newman School or a school in a neighbouring LA, the form will be passed to that admission authority for a decision. They will be asked to reach a decision within fourteen days of receiving the application. Brighton & Hove will endeavour to send a decision to the parent /carer as soon as possible once it has either reached a decision or been informed of a decision by the other admission authority.

II. If a change of preference or preference order is received following the decision letter on 1 March 2023 and the home address has not changed (and there has been no other relevant change of circumstances), that changed preference will not be considered until July 2023. This allows reasonable time for the consideration of late first applications and the operation of the reallocation pool where places have been offered and refused.

III. All applications received after the beginning of the autumn term will be regarded as in-year applications and outside this admission round.

Re-allocation Pool

I. Brighton & Hove will operate a re-allocation pool system for its community schools. The ranking of re-allocation pools will be based on the Brighton & Hove admission criteria. All children will be automatically placed in the re-allocation pool for all un-met first preferences for community schools. Parents/carers will be asked to indicate if they also wish to be placed in the re-allocation pool for a different preferred school when the allocation emails and letters are sent on 1 March 2023. Places will be offered to children from the pool as soon as a place becomes available at an over subscribed school and the admission priorities have been applied. This LA will notify other LAs as appropriate if it offers a place from the pool at a Brighton & Hove school to a pupil living outside the City. The pool will operate until the 31st December.

II. Own admission authority schools (BACA, PACA, Cardinal Newman and Kings) and other local authorities will operate their own waiting list/reallocation arrangements. If they are able to place a child resident in Brighton & Hove in one of their schools, they are asked to notify this LA at the earliest opportunity.

III. Parents/carers wishing to keep their child's name in the reallocation pool beyond the 31st December must inform the LA. They must renew the position on the reallocation pool each term thereafter.

School Admission Appeals

I. Parents/carers wishing to appeal against the LA's or a voluntary aided school's decision not to offer a place at a preferred school should do so in writing or using the online appeal facility by 30 March 2023 if they want to be assured of having their appeal heard in the main appeal round.

II. The LA will not arrange an appeal or ask an own admission authority school to arrange an appeal for a school that was not included on the original application. It will only arrange an appeal for a school that was listed as a preference, as it will not have given a decision to the parent/carer for schools not included on the application. If a parent/carer wishes to receive a decision for a school not included in their original preference, and thus acquire a right of appeal, they must complete a further application. However, unless there is a change of address or other change of circumstances leading to the change of preference this new form will not be considered until July 2023.

III. Parents/carers will receive 10 school days notice of the date of the appeal hearing and will receive copies of any documentation relating to the appeal 7 days in advance of the hearing.

IV. Whilst the City Council, other LAs and the Governing Bodies of Academies and voluntary aided schools will make every effort to hear appeals within 40 school days of the deadline for submitting appeals, as suggested in the Appeals Code, they cannot guarantee this time scale. The volume of appeals to be heard and the availability of the appeal panel members, who are volunteers, will have a direct affect on the timing of the appeal hearings.

V. Appeals for late applications and school transfers outside the normal admission round will be arranged as soon as practicable after the decision to refuse a preference has been conveyed to the parent/carer or if appropriate to the student, and in any case within 30 school days of the appeal being lodged.