



Co-ordinated In-Year Admissions Scheme 2026/2027

Nottingham City Council
February 2026

Foreword and Interpretation

Introduction

Applying for an in-year transfer

Information required by VA academies

Procedure

The single offer of a school place

Accepting the place offered

Preferences not met

Right of appeal

False information

Waiting lists

Team

School Admissions

Department

Service Delivery

Organisation

Nottingham City Council

Updated

February 2026

FOREWORD

This scheme is made in accordance with The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2021. This part of the scheme relates to in-year admissions only.

INTERPRETATION

In this scheme –

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

“VA schools” means schools that are voluntary aided schools

“Academy” means schools that have academy status

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

* community school - the LA

* VA or academy - the governing body of that school/academy

* OAA (own admission authority)

“SCAF” (School Common Application Form) supplied by the LA electronically or on paper

“admission arrangements” refer to 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/academy.

INTRODUCTION

For the 2025/2026 school year the local authority (LA) will be operating an in-year co-ordinated scheme relating to the admission of children through the in-year transfer process.

The in-year co-ordinated scheme for admission to any phase through the transfer application process is a mechanism to ensure that every parent/carer resident applying for a school in Nottingham city, has a uniformed and clear process for applying for a school place and to further support and enhance safeguarding processes between schools/academies and the LA.

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 regardless of the individual status of the schools they are requesting. Decisions will continue to be the responsibility of own admission authorities to issue.

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

- i. for community schools - the local authority;
- ii. for academies - the governing body of the academy;

The in-year admission round is the process by which:

- a) an application for the admission of a child new to the city or wishing to transfer to another school in the city is submitted in accordance with the requirements of the in-year scheme;
- b) an application is considered by the relevant admission authority for the school in determining, in accordance with the school’s published 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 by the relevant admission authority, no later than 15 school days from the date of application being received by the LA. In the case of an own admission authority, that decision is also shared with the local authority either using the provider portal or via School Numbers Live no more infrequently than weekly.

APPLYING FOR AN IN-YEAR TRANSFER

1. There will be a standard form, known as the School Common Application Form (SCAF).
2. The SCAF must be used by parents/carers applying for an in-year place for any school in Nottingham city to make up to four 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 wishing to apply for a place at a school in Nottingham city has access to the SCAF and prospectus (Going to School in Nottingham publication), including a copy of the in-year admissions scheme.
4. All four preferences will be treated equally by the LA and shared via the provider portal with any OAA's responsible for issuing their own decision.
5. Parents/carers are strongly encouraged to apply through the Council's website using the online admissions system.
6. Alternatively, if parents/carers wish to apply using a paper application form (SCAF), the SCAF should be returned to the **School Admissions Team, Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham NG2 3NG**.
7. Completed SCAFs, together with any additional information or documentation required by the admission authority, will be shared in its entirety.

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 SCAF and the school is nominated on it. Supplementary forms should be returned directly to the VA academy preferred.
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 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.
6. The LA will do all possible to ensure that any supplementary forms required by a VA academy are accessible as part of our application process. VA academies should make supplementary forms available, electronically preferably, for the LA to share as part of this coordinated process.

PROCEDURE

The LA will act as a clearing house for the allocation of places by the relevant admission authorities in response to SCAFs 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 **1st July (or next working day if a weekend or bank holiday)** the LA will open the in-year process for applications in respect of admission starting in the 2026/2027 academic year.
2. As soon as an application is received, it will be logged and made available via the provider portal within 1 school day of being received. That information will be available for all OAA's to see details of all the applications for a place at their school. The LA will also provide details of all applicants who have applied for their schools by use of the DfE common data sets and any supplementary information received.
3. All own admission authorities will then decide based on the list of new applications as well as those that may have already been refused and placed on the waiting list, who can be offered a place and who cannot. All applications should be ranked in accordance with the OAA's admissions criteria, not just those to whom places can be offered.
4. Decisions will then be issued by each OAA individually within 15 school days of it being received by the LA. The decision will be updated on the provider portal, so the LA have the information as required by the School Admissions Code.

THE SINGLE OFFER OF A SCHOOL PLACE

The LA will be the body that communicates decisions on behalf of any Nottingham city community school application. For any other school/academy, it will be for their admission authority to issue the decision in compliance with the School Admissions Code 2021.

1. Parents/carers will receive only a single offer of a place for admission to a school, wherever possible.
2. Where an offer has been made of a higher ranked preference, the LA may make the other preferences 'no longer required' in order to reduce children receiving multiple offers. The highest ranked preference should therefore become the single offer of a place.

This may be more challenging with OAA's issuing decisions directly to parent but using coordination and the provider portal, the LA will be better informed of outcomes on decisions and aim to streamline the process in the interest of reducing multiple offers and complying with the requirements of the School Admissions Code 2021.

ACCEPTING THE PLACE OFFERED

Places will be considered as automatically accepted; however, parents/carers should notify the LA if they no longer wish to accept the place at the offered school. Similarly, if an OAA is aware that a family no longer wish to take up the place offered, the LA must be informed with details as to why and if alternative education has been secured. This is to meet our safeguarding responsibilities as a LA. Places should only be withdrawn if alternative education has been secured, if there is concern over the child being at the address they have applied from or no further contact has been made, referrals to the appropriate service must be made.

PREFERENCES NOT MET (alternative offers)

1. Where this local authority is aware that no offer can be made, either for community schools on the application, or the OAA decisions, the LA will look to make an alternative offer. 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. By coordinating in this way, where a child has applied for several schools, both maintained and OAA or in the case of only making an OAA application but not received an offer, the child will be considered without a school place (WASP). In those circumstances, their case will be opened to the Fair Access and WASP processes to support the family in finding the next nearest, suitable alternative.
2. A determination of the nearest school 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 campus to a point at the child's home, both identified by the Local Land and Property Gazetteer.
3. 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 time of application.
4. 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 be deemed to be the address named on the Child Benefit letter. Informal residence agreements with family and friends will not be accepted unless there are exceptional circumstances, for which supporting evidence will be required.
5. In some instances, where all schools in the vicinity are oversubscribed, some consideration may need to be given to a school within reasonable travelling distance of the child's home. In law, a reasonable walking distance is up to 2 miles for children under the age of 8 years of age and up to 3 miles for children aged 8 years and over.

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*. Details of how to appeal must be communicated to applicants as part of the decision letter that is issued to them.

**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 year beginning with the date the last exclusion took place).*

FALSE INFORMATION

1. Where 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.

WAITING LISTS

1. The provider portal will support own admission authorities to maintain a waiting list for all applications received during the in-year admissions round where the number of applications has exceeded the number of available places in the year group. All applications and their decisions will be available on the round via the provider portal for OAA's to rank accordingly using filters, and to maintain the waiting list as necessary in accordance with their admissions arrangements.
2. 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. As applicants apply throughout the year and 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.
3. 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.