

Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for infant, junior & primary schools in the area of Sunderland Local Authority

Introduction

1. This scheme is made by Sunderland City Council under the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012 and applies to all Infant, Junior & Primary Schools in Sunderland.

The proposed Co-ordinated Admission scheme for Sunderland LA is set out below and complies with the changes introduced in the new School Admissions Code 2021.

A separate scheme exists in relation to secondary schools.

Interpretation

2. In this Scheme -

"the LA" means Sunderland City Council acting in their capacity as local authority;

"the LA area" means the area in respect of which the LA is the local authority;

"primary education" has the same meaning as in section 2(1) of the Education Act 1996;

"infant, junior & primary school" has the same meaning as in section 5(1) of the Education Act 1996;

"secondary school" has the same meaning as in section 5(2) of the Education Act 1996;

"school" means a community or voluntary school (but not a special school), which is maintained by the LA;

"voluntary controlled schools" means such of the schools as are voluntary controlled schools, where the LA sets the admissions criteria and offers places;

"VA schools" means such of the schools as are voluntary-aided schools;

"Academy" means such of the schools as have academy status:

"admission authority" in relation to a community or voluntary controlled school means the LA and, in relation to a VA or free school or academy means the governing body of that school;

"the specified year" means the school year beginning at or about the beginning of September 2026;

"admission arrangements" means the arrangements for a particular school or schools which govern the procedures and decision making for the purposes of admitting pupils to the school;

"parent/carer/carer" means any person who holds parent/carer responsibility as defined under the 1989 Children Act and with whom the child normally resides;

"casual admission" means any application for a place in the first year of primary education that is received after 11 May 2026, including those received during the academic year commencing in September 2026, and applications for a place in any other year group received at any time from the commencement of the Scheme; and

"eligible for a place" means that a child has been placed on a school's ranked list at such a point which falls within the school's published admission number.

Commencement and extent

This scheme applies in relation to the admission arrangements for the schools for admission year 2026-27 (the specified year).

The LA will include in its admission arrangements for the specified year the provisions set out in Schedule 1 to this scheme, or provisions having the same effect.

The governing body of each of the VA school and Academy will include in its admission arrangements for the specified year the provisions set out in the Schedule, so far as relevant to that school, or provisions having the same effect.

The Scheme

1. The Scheme shall be determined in accordance with the provisions set out in Schedule 1 and processed in accordance with the timetable set out in Schedule 2.
2. The Scheme shall apply to every infant, junior & primary school in the LA area as identified in Appendix 1 (except special schools) and shall take effect from 1 Aug 2026.
3. The Scheme will also include applications from parent/carers seeking admission to Sunderland schools who live within other LAs.

SCHEDULE 1

PART I - THE SCHEME

1. There will be a standard form known as the Application form (AF).
2. The AF will be used for the purpose of admitting pupils into the first year of primary education and for those transferring from infant to junior or primary schools in the specified year. The AF will also be used for any applications made for a "casual admission" into any year group in the admissions round leading up to, and during, the academic year 2026/27.
3. The AF must be used as a means of expressing up to 3 preferences for the purposes of section 86 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, by parent/carers wishing to express a preference for their child to be admitted to a school within the LA area (including VA schools and Academies).

4. The AF will -

- a. allow the parent/carer to express up to 3 preferences by completing the form, in rank order of preference,
- b. invite parent/carer to give their reasons for each preference,
- c. specify the closing date and where the application form must be returned, in accordance with paragraph 10.

5. The LA will make appropriate arrangements to ensure:

- a. that the AF is available on request from the LA and it is possible to apply on-line at www.sunderland.gov.uk/admissionsonline and
- b. that a written explanation of the co-ordinated admissions scheme will be available within the Admission to Primary Schools booklet.

6. The LA will take all reasonable steps to ensure that:

- a. every parent/carer resident in the LA area who has a child eligible to commence primary education and those transferring from infant to junior or primary schools receives a written explanation of how to apply; and
- b. every parent/carer whose application falls within the category of a casual admission receives a copy of the AF (and written explanation), on request, and understands the process.

Parent/carers will be advised that they will receive no more than one offer of a school place and that:

- (i) a place will be offered at the highest ranking nominated school for which they are eligible for a place under the admission criteria; and

- (ii) explain that, if more than one school is nominated and no order of ranking is stated, or a wish expressed that they be ranked equally, the parent/carer will be regarded as having ranked the schools in the order appearing on the form (the first-mentioned being ranked the highest)

7. All preferences expressed on the AF are valid applications. The governing body of a VA school or the Trust Board/Governing Body of an Academy can require parent/carers who wish to nominate, or have nominated, their school on the AF, to provide additional information on a supplementary form only where the additional information is required for the governing body to apply their oversubscription criteria to the application. Where a supplementary form is required it must be returned to the LA, along with the AF, so that the relevant forms can be passed to the VA schools and Academies.

8. Where a school receives a supplementary form it will not be regarded as a valid application unless the parent/carer has also completed an AF and the school is nominated on it. Where supplementary forms are received directly by VA schools and Academies the school must inform the LA immediately so it can verify whether a AF has been received from the parent/carer and, if not, the LA will contact the parent/carer and ask them to complete a AF. Under the requirements of the scheme, parent/carers will not be under any obligation to complete an individual school's supplementary form where this is not strictly required for the VA governing body or Academy Trust Board to apply their oversubscription criteria.

9. Any school which operates criteria for selection by ability or aptitude must ensure that its arrangements for assessing ability or aptitude, to enable decisions to be made on nominations, conform with the timing requirements of the scheme as set out in Schedule 2.

Processing of AFs

10. Completed AFs are to be submitted to the LA by **Thursday 15 January 2026**. It will be the responsibility of parent/carer to ensure that AFs are returned directly or via nursery, infant or primary schools to the LA, in a paper format or on-line by the closing date.

Determining offers in response to the AF

11. The LA will act as a clearing house for the allocation of places by the relevant admission authorities in response to the AFs. The LA will only make any decision with respect to the offer or refusal of a place in response to any preference expressed on the AF where-

- (a) it is acting in its separate capacity as an admission authority, or
- (b) an applicant is eligible for a place at more than one school and is allocated a place at the highest ranked school, or
- (c) an applicant is not eligible for a place at any school that the parent/carer has nominated.

The LA will allocate places in accordance with the provisions set out in paragraph 17 of this Schedule.

12. Completed applications are to be submitted to the LA by the due date.

13. Completed applications that are received after the closing date will be considered on an individual basis, but the procedure must not prevent the proper processing, under the Scheme, of applications received on time.

14. The LA will process all applications. Any completed applications must be treated as a confidential communication between the parent/carer and the LA. All applications received by the closing date will be considered before any applications received after this closing date unless exceptional circumstances apply.

15. By 6 February 2026 the LA will notify the admission authority for each of the schools and academy of every nomination that has been made for that school, including all relevant details and any supplementary information received by this date which schools require in order to apply their oversubscription criteria.

16. By 6 March 2026 the admission authority for each school and academy will consider all applications for their school and apply the school's oversubscription criteria (if appropriate) and provide the LA with a list of all potential applicants sorted (if appropriate) according to the school's oversubscription criteria.

17. By 27 March 2026 the LA will match these lists against the ranked lists of the other schools nominated and:

- Where the child is eligible for a place at the parent/carer's first nominated school, that school will be allocated to the child.
- Where the child is not eligible for a place at the parent/carer first nominated school, they will be allocated a place at the school, which is the next highest ranked nominated school where the child is eligible for a place.
- Where none of the preferences can be met, the child will be offered a place at the nearest school with a vacancy. Places will be offered on the basis of distance from the centre of the home address to the main entrance of the school with priority being given to those living closest to the school. Distance is measured by the shortest safest walking distance, using a geographical information system (GIS). This uses Ordnance Survey maps and Land & Property Gazetteer (LLPG), which provides co-ordinates for every dwelling.

18. 30 March 2026 -The LA informs its infant, junior & primary schools of the pupils to be offered places at their schools.

19. On 16 April 2026 parent/carer will be notified whether they are being offered a place. The following information will be provided:

- The name of the school at which a place is offered;
- The reasons why the child is not being offered a place at any of the other higher ranked schools nominated on the AF;
- Information about their statutory right of appeal against the decisions to refuse places at the other nominated schools;
- Explain that the child will be considered for any places that might become available in schools they ranked higher than the school they are offered, in the re- allocation process after 11 May 2026.
- Contact details for the schools (in the case of nominated VA schools and Academies where they were not offered a place), so that they can lodge an appeal.

The letter will not inform parent/carer of places still available at other schools.

20. 6 May 2026: the deadline for parent/carer to accept the place offered. If they do not respond by this date it will be assumed that they have accepted the place, however the LA will continue to pursue parent/carer for written confirmation of acceptance for oversubscribed schools.

Re-allocation Lists (Waiting lists) 11 May 2026

21. Children will be considered under the re-allocation process for any places if they become available after **16 April 2026** at any school they have ranked higher on their AF than the school they were offered. Where a parent/carer has been allocated a place at their second preference school, they may be placed on the re-allocation list of their first preference but not their third and so on. Where a parent/carer has been offered a place at a school, which they did not nominate on their AF, they may be placed on the list of all the schools they did nominate on their AF.

Where a parent/carer receives a place at their highest ranked school, they will not normally be considered for re-allocation, nor will they be offered a place at any other school simply because it has places available.

Where there are more applicants than places available, then the priorities used within the school's admission criteria will be applied to all applicants according to ranking.

22. 11 May 2026: The LA begins to re-allocate any places that may have become vacant since 16 April and in accordance with the school admission criteria which will include following:

- those who have not been offered any school place, for example, late applications from parent/carer who have just moved into the area and have not been offered a school place; and
- those who have subsequently expressed a preference for a new school not originally expressed on the AF which will be ranked lower than any other previous preferences ranked on the AF.

PART II - LATE APPLICATIONS

23. The closing date for applications in the normal admissions round is **15 January 2026**. As far as is reasonably practicable applications for places in the normal admissions round that are received late 'for a good reason' will be accepted provided they are received **before 6 March 2026**, the date the allocation procedures begin. Examples of what will be considered as good reason include: when a lone parent/carer has been ill for some time, or has been dealing with the death of a close relative; a family has just moved into the area or is returning from abroad (proof of ownership or tenancy of a Sunderland property will be required in these cases). Other circumstances will be considered and each case decided on its own merits.

LATE APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AFTER 6 MARCH 2026

24. Applications received after **6 March 2026**, which are not deemed as exceptional will be considered as late and will not be processed until after **16 April 2026**.

APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AFTER 16 APRIL 2026 BUT BEFORE 6 MAY 2026

25. Applications made direct to any school on the AF must be forwarded to the LA immediately. Where only the supplementary form is received the school must inform the LA immediately so it can verify whether an AF has been received from the parent/carer and, if not, contact the parent/carer and ask them to complete an AF. The LA will enter the details onto its central database and, after consultation with the relevant admission authority, offer a place at the school highest in the parent/carer's order of preference that has a vacancy or if this is not possible, at the nearest appropriate school with a vacancy (as defined in paragraph 17).

APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AFTER 11 MAY 2026

26. Applications received after 11 May 2026, and for places in year groups other than the normal year of entry to infant, junior & primary schools will be treated as casual admissions. These applications should be made on the AF and sent to the LA, which will

- determine any application for a community or controlled school for which it is the admission authority; and
- if the application is for a voluntary aided or academy refer the application to the governing body of the school, which will make a determination and notify the LA in advance of their notification to the parent/carer. Parent/carers who are refused admission must be offered a right of appeal.

27. If any parent/carers approach voluntary aided or free schools or academies directly about a casual admission, the governing body must ensure that the parent/carer completes an AF (if they have not already done so). The AF should be sent to the maintaining LA as soon as practically possible, along with the governing body's decision on the application. The governing body will notify the LA of its decision in advance of notifying the parent/carer and, if the parent/carer is refused a place, the right of appeal must be offered.

28. The LA will keep track of any pupils who apply for casual admissions and intervene as appropriate to ensure that they are placed in a school without undue delay, particularly in respect of looked after children.

Waiting lists for normal year of entry

29. Waiting lists for schools should be kept until **31 December 2026** for Community schools. Academies and Aided schools may hold their waiting lists for up to one academic year but this will be confirmed within their admission criteria.

SCHEDULE 2

Timetable of co-ordinated scheme

15 January 2026:	Application forms, together with any supplementary forms (as required) to be returned to the LA.
6 February 2026:	Details of applications to be sent to VA schools and Academies.
6 March 2026:	VA schools and Academies provide the LA with lists of potential applicants.
27 March 2026:	The LA will match the ranked lists of all the schools and allocate places in accordance with paragraph 17 of Schedule 1.
30 March 2026:	By this date the LA will notify schools which parent/carer have been offered places at their schools.
16 April 2026:	Notifications sent to parent/carer.
6 May 2026:	Last date for offers to be accepted by parent/carer.
11 May 2026:	Any places that have become available will start to be allocated to parent/carer in priority order in accordance with paragraph 22 of Schedule 1.

CO-ORDINATED ADMISSIONS SCHEME – INFANT, JUNIOR & PRIMARY SCHOOLS**Admission Authorities in the Area of Sunderland to which the Scheme applies****The Scheme applies to the Governing Body/Trust Board as the Admissions Authority for the following Academies:**

Academy 360	Portsmouth Road Sunderland SR4 9BA
Barnes Infant Academy	Mount Road Sunderland SR4 7QF
Barnwell Academy	Whitefield Estate Houghton-le-Spring DH4 7RT
Benedict Biscop CE Academy	Marcross Drive Sunderland SR3 2RE
Bexhill Academy	Bexhill Road Sunderland SR5 4PJ
Burnside Academy	Burnside Estate Houghton-le-Spring DH4 5HB
Christ's College	Nookside Sunderland SR4 8PG
Dame Dorothy Primary School	Dock Street Sunderland SR6 0EA
Diamond Hall Infant Academy	Well Street Sunderland SR4 6JF
Diamond Hall Junior School	Well Street Sunderland SR4 6JF
Dubmire Primary Academy	Britannia Terrace Houghton-le-Spring DH4 6HL
East Herrington Primary Academy	Balmoral Terrace Sunderland SR3 3PR
Eppleton Academy Primary	Church Road Hetton-le-Hole DH5 9AJ
Farringdon Academy	Archer Road Sunderland SR3 3DJ
Fatfield Academy	Southcroft Washington NE38 8RB

Fulwell Infant School Academy	Ebdon Lane Sunderland SR6 8ED
Gillas Lane Primary Academy	Seaton Avenue Houghton-le-Spring DH5 8EH
George Washington Primary School	Wellbank Road Washington NE37 1NL
Hasting Hill Academy	Tilbury Road Sunderland SR3 4LY
Hetton Lyons Primary Academy	Four Lane Ends Hetton-le-Hole DH5 0AH
Highfield Academy	Fordfield Road Sunderland SR4 0DA
Hill View Infant Academy	Helvellyn Road Sunderland SR2 9JJ
Hill View Junior Academy	Queen Alexandra Road Sunderland SR2 9HE
Holley Park Academy	Ayton Road South Washington NE38 0LR
John F Kennedy Primary School	Station Road Washington NE38 7AR
Newbottle Primary Academy	Houghton Road Houghton-le-Spring DH4 4EE
New Penshaw Primary	Langdale Road Houghton-le-Spring DH4 7HY
New Silksworth Infant Academy	Blind Lane Sunderland SR3 1AS
New Silksworth Junior Academy	Blind Lane Sunderland SR3 1AS
Oxclose Primary Academy	Brancepeth Road Washington NE38 0LA
Plains Farm Academy	Tudor Grove Sunderland SR3 1SU
Redby Primary Academy	Fulwell Road Sunderland SR6 9QP
Ryhope Infant School Academy	Shaftesbury Avenue Sunderland SR2 0RT

South Hylton Primary School	Union Street Sunderland SR4 0LS
Springwell Village Primary School	Westfield Crescent Gateshead NE9 7RX
Town End Academy	Borodin Avenue Sunderland SR5 4NX
Valley Road Academy	Corporation Road Sunderland SR2 8PL

The Scheme applies to the Governing Body as the Admissions Authority for the following Voluntary Aided Schools:

English Martyrs RC Primary School	Redcar Road Sunderland SR5 5AU
Northern Saints CE VA Primary School	Rotherham Road Sunderland SR5 5QL
Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Primary School	Station Road, Penshaw Houghton-le-Spring DH4 7JZ
St Anne's RC Primary School	Hylton Road Sunderland SR4 9AA
St Bede's RC Primary School	Hampshire Place Washington NE37 2NP
St Benet's RC Primary School	Fulwell Road Sunderland SR6 9QU
St Cuthbert's RC Primary School	Grindon Lane Sunderland SR4 8HP
St John Bosco RC Primary School	Bradford Avenue Sunderland SR5 4JW
St John Boste Catholic Primary School	Castle Road Washington NE38 0HL
St Joseph's RC Primary School	Rutland Street Sunderland SR4 6HY
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School Washington	Village Lane Washington NE38 7HU
St Leonard's RC Primary School	Tunstall Village Road Sunderland SR3 2BB

St Mary's RC Primary School	Meadowside Sunderland SR2 7QN
St Michael's Catholic Primary School	Durham Road Houghton-le-Spring DH5 8NF
St Patrick's RC Primary School	Smith Street Sunderland SR2 0RQ

Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools where the LA is the Admission Authority:

Albany Village Primary School	Albany Village Washington NE37 1UA
Barmston Village Primary School	Barmston Centre Washington NE38 8JA
Barnes Junior School	Mount Road Sunderland SR4 7QF
Bernard Gilpin Primary School	Hall Lane Houghton-le-Spring DH5 8DA
Biddick Primary School	Kirkham Washington NE38 7HQ
Blackfell Primary School	Knoulberry Washington NE37 1HA
Broadway Junior School	Springwell Road Sunderland SR4 8NW
Castletown Primary School	Grange Road Sunderland SR5 2QB
Easington Lane Primary School	South Hetton Road Houghton-le-Spring DH5 0LH
East Rainton Primary School	School Road Houghton-le-Spring DH5 9RA
Fulwell Junior School	Sea Road Sunderland SR6 9EE
Grange Park Primary School	Swan Street Sunderland SR5 1EA
Grangetown Primary School	Spelterworks Road Sunderland SR2 8PX
Grindon Infant School	Gleneagles Road Sunderland SR4 9QN

Hetton Primary School	Moorsley Road Hetton-le-Hole DH5 9ND
Hudson Road Primary School	Villiers Street South Sunderland SR1 2AH
Hylton Castle Primary School	Cramlington Road Sunderland SR5 3QL
Lambton Primary School	Lambton Village Washington NE38 0PL
Marlborough Primary School	Marlborough Road Washington NE37 3BG
Mill Hill Primary School	Doxford Park Sunderland SR3 2LE
Richard Avenue Primary School	Richard Avenue Sunderland SR4 7LQ
Rickleton Primary School	Vigo Lane Washington NE38 9EZ
Ryhope Junior School	Shaftesbury Avenue Sunderland SR2 0RT
Seaburn Dene Primary School	Torver Crescent Sunderland SR6 8LG
Shiney Row Primary School	Rear South View Houghton-le-Spring DH4 4QP
Southwick Primary School	Shakespeare Street Sunderland SR5 2JX
St Paul's CE Controlled Primary School	Waterworks Road Sunderland SR2 0LW
Thorney Close Primary School	Torquay Road Sunderland SR3 4BB
Usworth Colliery Primary School	Manor Close Washington NE37 3BL
Wessington Primary School	Lanercost Washington NE38 7PY
Willow Wood Community Primary School	Redcar Road Sunderland SR5 5PA