

**SOMERSET LOCAL AUTHORITY  
CO-ORDINATED PRIMARY ADMISSION SCHEME**

**FIRST ADMISSION TO A PRIMARY, INFANT OR  
FIRST SCHOOL AND TRANSFER TO A JUNIOR  
OR MIDDLE SCHOOL IN SEPTEMBER 2013**



**1. This scheme applies to:**

All Somerset County Council maintained Primary, Infant, First, Junior and Middle schools including Voluntary Controlled (VC), Community (C), Voluntary Aided (VA), Foundation (F), Academy (A) and Free Schools, except for Special Schools.

**2. This scheme explains:**

Important information concerning the process for admission to the reception year of a Primary, First or Infant school, year 3 of a Junior school and year 5 of a Middle school in September 2013. This scheme should be read in conjunction with the school admission arrangements published by Admission Authorities.

Please refer to the glossary for a description of all technical terms used throughout this document.

**3. Useful Contacts:**

The 'Local Authority Placements and Entitlement Team'  
Telephone Somerset Direct on 0845 4564038  
[schooladmissions@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:schooladmissions@somerset.gov.uk)

Local Authority School Appeals Coordinator  
01823 358298  
[appealcoordinator@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:appealcoordinator@somerset.gov.uk)

Local Authority Home to School Travel Advice Team  
0845 3459155

[www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk](http://www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk)

Somerset Choice Advice Service

01823 356903

[HLeach@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:HLeach@somerset.gov.uk)

#### **4. Useful links:**

Office of the Schools Adjudicator; <http://www.education.gov.uk/schoolsadjudicator/>

Department for Education; <http://www.education.gov.uk/>

[School Admissions Code;](#)

#### **5. Co-ordination Procedure**

The Local Authority (LA) is the Admission Authority for all Voluntary Controlled (VC) and Community (C) Schools, The Governing Body is the Admissions Authority for a Foundation (F), Voluntary Aided (VA), Academy (A) or Free School.

All LAs are required to operate a scheme of co-ordination. This involves LAs exchanging applications with other LAs and Admission Authorities where the school applied for is not in the home authority area. It is the home LAs responsibility to notify the applicant of the decision taken.

From September 2012, Somerset LA will make available a Composite Prospectus booklet 'A Guide For Parents'. This sets out the primary admission application process and a range of information about all maintained (state funded) schools in Somerset which may be useful when completing application forms.

The Composite Prospectus is available on the Somerset County Council website at [www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions) or in paper format from the LA Placements and Entitlement Team (contact details at the beginning of this document). Parents are responsible for ensuring they access this information in appropriate time to make a school place application by the published deadline.

For children resident in Somerset, details of the on-line application process are available on

the website. The on-line application process enables the applicant to receive an email acknowledgment and decision. Applications must be made to Somerset regardless of the location of the preferred school. The CAF (common application form) is also available on the SCC website or in the Composite Prospectus booklet. Where an applicant chooses to post a CAF, it is advisable to obtain proof of posting.

Applicants can express up to three preferences for schools, regardless of location and may provide reasons for these preferences. Any additional information to support a section of the application form must be provided only on a formal Supplementary Information Form (SIF) and must be submitted by the deadline. These are made available by each Admission Authority and can be obtained from the SCC website, relevant school office or in the Composite Prospectus.

Somerset LA must exchange application information with other LAs and admission authorities where the preferred school is not a Somerset school. This exchange of information will take place on the dates indicated in the 2013 primary admissions timetable – see section 6.

Admission Authorities are responsible for applying their published admission arrangements to every application received for their school(s) and allocate places up to the Published Admission Number. If there are more applications received than places available at a particular school, the Admission Authority must apply oversubscription criteria to decide which children can be allocated a place within the Published Admission Number. Where the Admission Authority is not the LA, school governors must provide the LA with a list of proposed allocations.

Where applicants have expressed more than one school, the LA must consider the admission authority allocations for each preferred school and then offer a place on behalf of the Admission Authority at the highest preference school, at which a place is available. A national process known as 'Equal Preference with Ranking' must be used to determine this.

Where it is not possible to offer a place at any of the applicant's preferred schools, the LA will provide a refusal letter with details of a process by which applicants can appeal against the Admission Authority decision. Appeals are heard by Independent Appeals Panels whose decision is binding.

Applications for primary phase admission cannot be made directly to a school. If a school receives an application in error, they must inform their LA as soon as possible. Applications

received by Somerset LA in error from parents living outside of Somerset will be forwarded as soon as possible to the home Authority concerned.

Applications must be received by 23.59 hours on 15 January 2013 in order to be considered as an 'on-time' application. Applications received after this deadline will be treated as 'late applications' and cannot be administered until all 'on time' applications have been dealt with, by which time places at the preferred school may no longer be available. It will not be for the LA to prove that the form was received on-time, the burden of proof will fall to the parent.

Decisions in connection with applications received by the deadline will be notified to applicants on 19 April 2013. On line applicants will receive an email on that date, and applicants who chose to apply using the paper CAF will be sent a 2<sup>nd</sup> class letter posted on that date.

Decisions for late applications received by 23:59 hours on 14 May 2013 will be notified to applicants on 14 June 2013. Applicants will be sent a 2<sup>nd</sup> class letter posted on that date. All applications received after 14 May 2013 will processed as they are received and decisions notified within 14 school days of receipt of application.

Any change of preference submitted online or by paper application on or before the published deadline date will over-ride any previous applications.

After the outcome date, if a change of preference is received and can be met, the previously offered place will be automatically withdrawn.

## 6. Coordination Timetable for Primary Admission applications

### Starting at a Primary, Infant, First school, or transferring to a Junior or Middle School in September 2013

Date	Action	Action By
12 September 2012	Primary Scheme – Starting School booklets and application forms made available. Letter and flier sent to parents/carers of all children on the Local Authority system	Local Authority (LA)
29 October – 02 November 2012	Half Term	
24 December 2012 – 04 January 2013	Christmas holiday	
<b>15 January 2013</b>	<b>Closing date for submission of completed application forms.</b> (To be submitted by 23.59 hours)	<b>Parents/carers</b>

February 2013	Exchange initial allocation information.	LAs/Voluntary Aided, Foundation Schools, Academies
11 February – 15 February 2013	Half Term	
17 February 2013	From this date schools can request number of preferences received by published closing date	LAs/Voluntary Aided, Foundation, Free school, Academy Trust/Governing Bodies
12 March 2013	Apply over-subscription criteria and determine initial allocations, producing ranked list.	LAs/Voluntary Aided, Foundation, Free school, Academy Trust/Governing Bodies
29 March – 12 April 2013	Easter Holiday	
10 April 2013	2nd exchange of information, confirming offers and refusals to be made.	LAs/Voluntary Aided, Foundation Schools, Free schools, Academies
17 April 2013	Community and Voluntary Controlled Secondary and Upper schools will be notified of final intended allocations.	Somerset LA
<b>19 April 2013</b>	<b>Outcome date – offer and refusal letters sent out by email and 2<sup>nd</sup> class post</b>	<b>Somerset LA</b>
by 3 May 2013	Parents to confirm how they intend to proceed (accept offer, appeal decision or make new application)	Parents/carers
Within 40 days of receipt of appeal application	Appeals hearing in connection with 'on time' application will be completed	LAs/Voluntary Aided, Foundation Schools, Free schools, Academies

## 7. Glossary of Terms

Admission Arrangements	The overall procedure, practices and oversubscription criteria used in deciding the allocation of school places including any means used to determine whether a school place is to be offered.
Admission Authority	The body responsible for setting and applying a school's admission arrangements. For community or voluntary controlled schools, the LA is the admission authority; for foundation, voluntary aided, free schools or Academy schools, the governing body of the school is the admission authority.
Catchment area	A geographical area, from which children may be afforded priority for admission to a school. A catchment area is part of a school's admission arrangements and must therefore be consulted upon,

	determined and published in the same way as other admission arrangements.
Children in Care (Looked after Child)	A 'looked after' child or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order. 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 (see the definition in Section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989).
Choice Advice Service	An independent service commissioned by local authorities to support the families who most need help during the admissions round to make the best and most realistic choice of secondary school for their children. Choice Advisers assist parents through the decision making process but must not take the decision for them.
Common Application Form	The form parents complete and submit to local authorities listing their preferred choices of schools when applying for a school place for their child as part of the local co-ordination scheme during the normal admissions round. Parents must be allowed to express a preference for a minimum of three schools on the relevant common application form as determined by their local authority. Local authorities may allow parents to express a higher number of preferences if they wish. Often called a CAF.
Co-ordinated Scheme	Co-ordinated schemes must be consulted upon across all relevant admission authorities and determined in the year prior to which they are to apply. All local authorities are required to coordinate primary and secondary admissions for all schools in their area. Although individual admission authorities rank all applicants in order of priority for admission, offers are sent out by the local authority on 1 March for secondary pupils and on an agreed date for primary pupils.
Cyclical Admissions	Is the phrase used to describe the annual process administered to allocate all First Admission to school and Transfer between phases of education.
Deferred Entry	Where the admission authority for a primary school offers places in reception classes before the children are of compulsory school age, the Secretary of State requires the Admission Authority to offer parents/carers the option of deferring their child's entry until later in the school year if they are summer born. Somerset operates a Deferred Entry Scheme that enables parents/carers of children born between 1 April and 31 August to defer entry for the autumn term. Their child(ren) may then start school in the following January. Where a parent chooses to defer entry, their child will always join their chronological age year group.
Distance Measurements	For the purpose of measuring home to school distance, all calculations will be measured using a straight-line measurement from the address point of the home to the address point of the school using the LA's GIS mapping system. (Address Point is a dataset that uniquely defines and locates residential, business and public postal addresses in Great Britain. It is created by matching information from Ordnance Survey digital map databases with more than 27 million addresses recorded in the Royal Mail). In the case of multi-level dwellings such as flats, the staircase will be included in the distance measurement.
DfE	Department for Education
Eligible for a place	This means that a child has been placed on a school's ranked list at such point which falls within the school's published Admission

	Number (AN) or Indicated Admission Number (IAN). A place could be offered to this child.
Equal Preference with Ranking	This approach requires the Local Authority to rank all applications against the published over-subscription criteria for the school concerned and where schools are over subscribed, places will be allocated up to the published admission number in strict priority order. Where more than one school can be offered, the highest ranked preference will be allocated.
Governing Bodies	School governing bodies are bodies corporate responsible for conducting schools with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement. Governing bodies have three key roles: setting strategic direction, ensuring accountability, and monitoring and evaluation.
Home Address	<p>The home address is very important, as school places are allocated on the basis of the home address of each child. A child's home address is considered to be where the child spends the majority of their time with parents or carers.</p> <p>Documentary evidence of home ownership or suitable rental agreement may be required, together with proof of permanent residence at the property concerned. Places cannot be allocated on the basis of an intended future address, unless the house move can be confirmed through the formal 'exchange of contracts' or the signing of a minimum of a six month tenancy agreement. The Local Authority reserves the right to seek further documentary evidence to support a claim of residence.</p> <p>An address used for childcare arrangements cannot be used as a home address for the purpose of applying for a school place. Fraudulent claims relating to the home address of a particular child may lead to the withdrawal of any offer of a school place.</p> <p>The LA Placements and Entitlements Team, County Hall, Taunton must be notified of any change of address during the admissions procedure.</p>
Home Local Authority	A child's home local authority is the local authority in whose area they live.
Infant Class Size Exceptions	Infant Class Size Regulations permit children to be admitted as exceptions to the infant class size limit. These are set out in paragraph 2.15 of the School Admissions Code 2012.
Infant Class Size Limit	Section 1 of the SSFA 1998 limits the size of an infant class (i.e. a class in which the majority of children will reach the age of 5, 6, and 7 during the school year) to 30 pupils per qualified school teacher.
In-year admissions	A term to describe the process of enrolling a child at a school into an established year group during the academic year.
LA	In this policy, this means Somerset County Council acting in their capacity as Local Authority
LA area	In this policy, this means the geographical area in which Somerset County Council is the Local Authority. This is the county of Somerset.
Net Capacity	The capacity of a school is the number of pupil places available. The net capacity is intended to provide a single, robust and consistent method of assessing the capacity of schools.
Oversubscription	The list of criteria an admission authority must adopt for its

Criteria	school(s) which are used only when the school is oversubscribed to determine which children will be offered a place.
Oversubscription	Where a school has a higher number of applicants than the school's published Admission Number.
Parent/Carer	Natural parents, whether they are married or not, any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person. Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person (having care of a child or young person means that a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child is considered to be a parent in education law).
Phased/Staggered Entry	To help children settle smoothly into school, some schools operate different start dates for children entering reception classes. This is known as "Phased or Staggered Entry". All children should start school within the first ten days of term, but may attend on a part time basis until the autumn half term. After the fourth week of term the school will provide a minimum average of 2.5 hours per day. In exceptional circumstances - for children not of statutory school age - this minimum level of attendance may continue and the LA will consult with parents/carers, health visitors and other professionals to accommodate children for whom continued part-time school attendance may be beneficial.
Published Admission Number	The number of school places that the admission authority must offer in the year of entry of a school for which it is admission authority.
Preferred school	In this policy, this means a school for which a parent has made an application, otherwise called expressing a preference for a school.
Reception Class	In Somerset, children may start school in the September following their fourth birthday. However, legally a child must be receiving full time education at the start of the school term following their fifth birthday. Admission to Somerset schools takes place once per year in September unless parents have entered into a formal deferred entry arrangement with the Authority.
Relevant Age Group	The age group to which children are normally admitted. Each relevant age group must have admission arrangements, including an admission number attached. Some schools (for example schools with sixth forms which admit children into the sixth form) have more than one relevant age group.
School	In this policy, this means a LA maintained school providing education to children of statutory school age, other than a special school
Sibling	For the purpose of admissions, Somerset LA defines a sibling as a child living at the same address as a half or full brother or sister, an adoptive brother or sister or children of the same household. Children will only meet the siblings criterion when they will have a brother or sister (using above definition) on roll at the school they are applying for at the time of admission. E.g. a Year 6 sibling on roll at a Primary school or a Year 11 sibling at a Secondary phase school at the time of application will not be counted.
Statement of Special Educational Need (SEN)	A legal document issued by the local authority specifying the particular needs, resources and provision required to support the child, and can include a named school that is suitable for providing education for that child.