In Year Co-ordinated Admission Scheme for the 2013-14 School Year

1. Participants in scheme

This scheme will apply to all applications from parents/carers for a place at an Academy or School in North Somerset.

North Somerset Council (NSC) is the Admissions Authority for all Community and Voluntary Controlled (VC) Schools.

The Governing Body is the Admissions Authority for Foundation and Voluntary Aided (VA) Schools. (Own Admission Authority Schools).

The Academy Trust is the Admissions Authority for Academy Schools. (Own Admission Authority Schools).

Please note that where the word “school” is used in the general sense within this document, it refers to either a school or an academy.

2. Making Applications

2.1 Parents/Carers may complete the North Somerset in-year application form to apply for a school place in North Somerset. The application form is available to download from the Council’s website www.n-somerset.gov.uk/admissions. Alternatively parents may contact the School Admissions and Transport Team: Tel 01275 884183.

2.2 Parent/Carers may name up to 3 schools in rank order on the application form. All preferences are treated equally regardless of rank.

2.3 The application form should be returned to the relevant admission authority of the 1st preference school (see Section 1 for details). The NSC address for Community and VC School applications is shown on the form. Applications for Academy, Foundation or VA Schools should be sent directly to the Academy or School (unless otherwise specified). Should any parents include on their application form a preference for an independent school, the independent school preference will be disregarded and remaining preferences for schools will be given a higher preference than that shown on the original application form.


3.1 Applications for all schools will be considered under an ‘equal preference’ system. All preferences (1st, 2nd or 3rd) will initially be considered equally regardless of ranking.
3.2 Own admission authority schools will not be passed applications if a higher named preference can be offered. For example when NSC receives an application form where a Community or VC school is named as a 1st preference and an Own Admission Authority School is named as a 2nd or 3rd preference, a copy of the application form will be passed to the School within 5 school days if the Community or VC school[s] cannot be offered.

3.3 Where NSC is able to offer a place at the first preference School, there will be no need to notify other admission authorities where their school is a lower preference.

3.4 When an Own Admission Authority School receives an application a copy of the application form will be passed to NSC within 5 school days.

3.5 When an Own Admission Authority School receives an application where another Own Admission Authority School is named as a lower preference, a copy of the application form will be passed to the lower preference School within 5 school days if the higher preference school is unable to offer a place.

4. **Offer of a school place**

4.1 Where a child can be offered a place at more than one school, the final offer will be the highest ranked school.

4.2 NSC will aim to notify parents of the result of their application within 10 school days for a Community or VC school.

4.3 Own Admission Authority Schools will inform the parents of the result of their application within 10 school days and at the same time notify NSC and where appropriate other admission authorities.

4.4 If a suitable place cannot be secured using the normal admission arrangements as the child meets the Council’s Fair Access criteria, a school place will be identified for the child by the Area Placement Panel in accordance with North Somerset’s Fair Access Protocol. The Fair Access Protocol does not override the right of Parents/Carers to state a preference for a school place.

4.5 In the case of parents/carers being refused a place at their preferred school(s), they will be informed of their right of appeal. Parents/carers will be advised who to contact to make an appeal (whether this is North Somerset Council or an own admission authority school). Parents/Carers still needing a place for their child at an alternative school should contact the School Admissions and Transport Team who can advise on available places.

5. **Vacancies arising during the school year**

5.1 Where a place at a preferred school cannot be offered, parents/carers will be able to request that their child’s name is placed on a list of those seeking a place at Community or VC school as follows:
a. For admissions into a school’s normal intake admission year group only (not including Year 12 admissions) NSC on behalf of Community and VC schools shall hold a list of those applicants seeking a place at their preferred school(s), until the last day of term 2 in 2013. All applications will be ranked in line with the authority’s new intake over-subscription criteria and allocations will be made in accordance with it. Priority will not be given on the basis of the date an application was added to the list.

b. After the last day of term 2 in 2013 for admissions into a school’s normal intake admission year group(s) (not including Year 12 admissions) NSC shall not keep a list of applicants seeking a place. Parents may request that NSC ensures that their child is considered for any vacancy that may arise at their preferred North Somerset Community and VC school(s). However it will not keep waiting lists as such. NSC will record the name of children whose parent(s) request for them to be considered for a vacant place at a school or apply for a place at a school. The name of the child will be kept up to the last day of the term only. Parents will have to contact NSC again if they still wish to be considered for a place during each subsequent term. If a vacancy arises, the authority will allocate the school place in accordance with the above In-Year over-subscription criteria. Priority will not be given on the basis of the date a child’s name was recorded by NSC.

c. For all other year groups (not including years 12 and 13), NSC will not keep waiting lists as such. Parents may request that NSC ensures that their child is considered for any vacancy that may arise at their preferred North Somerset Community and VC school(s). NSC will record the names of children whose parent(s) request for them to be considered for a vacant place at a school or apply for a place at a school. The name of a child will be kept up to the last day of the term only. Parents will have to contact NSC again if they still wish to be considered for a place during each subsequent term. If a vacancy arises, the authority will allocate the school place in accordance with the In-Year over-subscription criteria.

d. If children are not on the Council’s database the parents may be asked to complete an application form before being added to a waiting list.

e. Any application where an application/appeal is outstanding will be considered for a vacancy at a North Somerset school along with those children whose names have been recorded by NSC as requesting/applying for a place. Names of children whose cases have been heard but dismissed by an independent appeal panel will be recorded by NSC as requesting a place for the remainder of the term in which the appeal was heard.

f. Children who are the subject of a direction by a council to admit or who are allocated a school place in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol for school places, will take priority over those on a waiting list or those whose names have been given to the NSC.
g. When a vacancy occurs in a term the waiting list for that term should be used (along with any applications received by NSC) even if it is being filled after the end of that term.

5.2 Where an application is received the child’s name will be retained on the list for the period specified by the admission authority. If a place becomes available at a school, the place will be offered in accordance with the published oversubscription criteria and not the length of time a child’s name has been on a list. Parents will be expected to notify the appropriate admission authority if they wish for their child to remain on the list. Every effort will be made to contact applicants on the list using the last contact details provided by the applicant. For Community and VC Schools, where a response to an offer has not been received within 10 school days, the offer will be withdrawn and the available place offered to the next child on the waiting list to qualify for the available place.

5.3 Own Admission Authority Schools will be required to provide information about the availability of school places to NSC upon request.

5.4 Own admission authorities may also maintain a similar list. Any vacancies will be filled in criteria order. For a school’s intake year group(s) own admission authorities will also maintain a waiting list, in criteria order until at least the last day of term 2 2013. Own Admission Authority schools will provide details of their waiting lists to NSC. Governing Bodies/Academy Trusts of own admission authority schools may if they wish delegate responsibility for maintaining their waiting list to NSC however legal responsibility for it would remain with the Governing Body/Trust.

5.5 Children who are the subject of a direction by a council to admit or who are allocated to a school in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol must take precedence over those on a waiting list.

6. General Information

6.1 The Council reserves the right to require documentary evidence of the genuineness of a family address and if this is not produced, the Council reserves the right to make its own enquiries.

6.2 The child’s normal permanent home address where he or she lives with his or her parents or legal guardians will be used to decide where the child lives. If parents or guardians plan to move documentary evidence will be required.

6.3 Examples of evidence that may be acceptable to determine a child’s address are:

i. A solicitor’s letter confirming exchange of contracts and a completion date for a property which is being purchased or a property which is being sold.

ii. A copy of a signed rental agreement or a solicitor’s letter if moving to a council or rented property and proof of your sale or Notice to Quit on your current/previous property.
iii. A copy of a council tax bill or utility bill such as water, gas or electricity in your name for your newly owned or rented property together with proof of your sale or Notice to Quit on your current/previous property.

iv. If you are moving in with a relative a letter from them will be required confirming the date you will be moving in together with a copy utility bill showing their name and address. A solicitor’s letter will also be required confirming that completion of contracts has taken place on your sale or Notice to Quit on your current/previous property.

6.4 An admission authority reserves the right to withdraw an offer of a school place in certain limited circumstances. Examples include:

i. Where a parent has given fraudulent or intentionally misleading information such as a false address.

ii. Where a parent has not responded to an offer within the deadline set by the NSC.

iii. Where a higher preference school has been offered or where the highest preference school on the latest application has been able to be met.

iv. Where the offer was made as a result of an administrative error.

6.5 Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs [SEN] are dealt with through the SEN Code of Practice and their placement is determined through the statutory assessment process or an annual review of their statement. All schools are consulted before being named on a pupil's Statement and schools have the opportunity to draw attention to any difficulties arising from oversubscribed year groups. If a particular school is named on a Statement this will take priority over the Admissions Criteria, although, wherever possible the place will be offered within the Admission Number for the school.

7) Unless a satisfactory reason is given, places must normally be accepted i.e. the child must commence attending the school, by the start date specified in any letter from NSC or an own admission authority school offering a place at a school. This will normally be within 14 days (or possibly 28 days for those moving house), of the date of the letter. However NSC or school may specify a date within a different time period if it thinks appropriate, for example where it is decided for admission to be at the start of a term. Parent’s notification of the acceptance of an offer of a school place should be received by NSC or school within 2 weeks after the date of an offer.

8) Where a place can be offered NSC or an own admission authority school will notify the parents accordingly and the child should start at the school by the date indicated in the offer letter. Any request for an extension beyond the required start date will be considered by NSC or school on its individual merits. Where NSC considers that exceptional circumstances exist, places may be accepted after the specified start date, depending on the circumstances of the
case. An example of exceptional circumstances may be where United Kingdom (UK) Service Personnel or other Crown Servants are returning to the UK. Places offered may be reserved for a child and/or his/her brother or sisters beyond the specified start date if parents are waiting for the outcome of an application or an appeal for a school place for their child before deciding to accept a place(s) or not.

9) Except for deferred entry for Reception Year Group children, applications will not normally be considered until approximately 35 days for those moving house and 21 days for those not moving house, in advance of the date when the place is required. However applications for admission in September 2014 will be considered from 1 July 2014.

10) Where these arrangements refer to ‘children applying’ it means parent(s) applying on behalf of children.

11) NSC and schools reserve the right to withdraw an offer of a school place where the offer was the result of an administrative error, or where parents give intentionally misleading or fraudulent information, such as a false claim to residence at a particular address which effectively denied a place to a child with a stronger claim. Where before offers are made, an application is deemed to be fraudulent or intentionally misleading the application will be considered on the basis of the correct information. Where parents do not respond to an offer of a place or to any subsequent reminder to reply within a further 7 days, the offer may be withdrawn and the place offered to another applicant. It is the parent’s responsibility to inform NSC or schools if their contact details change after making an application.

12) Where a parent applies more than once, the most recent of the applications is deemed to be the appropriate one. The earlier application(s) will normally be withdrawn.

13) Where the requested school preference(s) cannot be offered to parents of North Somerset children, they will be offered an alternative school place and will be informed of their right to have their case considered by the independent Appeal Panel.

14) Applicants for the Reception Year have the option to delay their child’s admission until the term following the child’s 5th birthday (either term 3 or 5). If/once admission is agreed, parents should contact the school’s Head Teacher to arrange a delayed entry if required. Parents can request that their child takes up their place on a part-time basis until their child reaches compulsory school age.

15) Applications will be accepted for children who meet one or more of the following:

   i. are resident in the UK

   ii. hold full British Citizen Passports
iii. are from countries whose passports have been endorsed to show that they have the right to abode in this country.

iv. are from the European Economic Area (EEA).

Applications for children who do not meet one of the above will usually not be accepted until the child is in this country. Those who live outside of the United Kingdom (UK) and are wishing to attend a North Somerset school should apply directly to NSC or own admission authority schools. However, applications for children who do meet one of the above will not be accepted until the child is in this country.

16) Applicants may be asked to confirm that the child(ren) is a resident of an EEA country. Applicants for children from non-EEA countries may be required to provide copies of the child’s and/or their passport and/or visa in order to confirm that they are entitled to receive state funded education in this country.

17) Where a school wishes to admit a child as part of a Negotiated Transfer, they should inform the Learning Support Service and the School Admissions and Transport Team of NSC. When wanting to make such a transfer permanent, the school or parent should apply to the School Admissions and Transport Team.

18) For school admission purposes NSC and own admission authority schools will consider the child’s home address to be the place where the child permanently and ordinarily resides for the majority of the time. This would normally be the same address as the person who has parental responsibility for the child as their main carer. It will not include the address of a child that is different from his/her parents where the move to this address is expressly linked to obtaining a school place.

19) Where parents do not live together and the child spends equal amounts of time with both parents, NSC and own admission authority schools will consider the home of the parent who made the application to be the child’s home.

NSC and own admission authority schools will not accept more than one address as the child’s home address. The terms of a residency order may clarify the home address. Where necessary to determine which address to recognise and in the absence of a residency order, NSC and own admission authority schools will consider the home address to be with the parent with primary day to day care and control of the child. In reaching this decision, evidence may be requested to show for example the address to which any Child Benefit is paid and from which the child is registered with a medical GP. Any other evidence provided by parents will also be considered in reaching a decision on the home address for admissions purposes. This may be necessary for instance where parents do not agree on the child’s home address. Parents are urged to reach agreement but where they do not, NSC and own admission authority schools will determine the home address.

20) NSC or own admission authority schools may undertake rigorous residency checks and reserves the right to request independent confirmation of the child’s place of residence. Parents may be asked to supply such documentation to support their application as deemed appropriate by NSC or
own admission authority schools, for example a Child Benefit Book or a letter from the Inland Revenue may be required.

21) Applications for all school places should be made and signed by a person with parental responsibility for the child as defined in the Children Act 1989. Applicants will be asked to confirm that they have parental responsibility the child on their application form. If applicants do not have parental responsibility, the person completing the form should send an accompanying letter (in paper or electronic format) explaining the reasons why they are applying rather than a person with parental responsibility. Any evidence to support the case should accompany the letter. The reasons will be considered by NSC or own admission authority schools and if deemed acceptable, the application will be processed accordingly. If not deemed acceptable, the application will be returned for the signature of a person with parental responsibility for the child.

22) Where parents share parental responsibility for a child and two applications are received for the one child from his/her parents, NSC or own admission authority schools will ask the parents to determine which application it should consider and which application should be withdrawn. This is because NSC will offer only one school place to a child at any one time. If parents cannot agree, they should resolve the issue through the court system, for example to obtain a ‘Specific Issues Order’ which specifies which parent has responsibility to make decisions on school preferences. However, in the absence of any Order the decision as to which application should be accepted will be determined by drawing lots. Whichever parent’s application is accepted, the address the child spends the majority of his/her time, will be the one considered by NSC or own admission authority schools to be the home address.

23) Exclusions issues:

Although pupils who have been permanently excluded from another mainstream school have the right, as with all other pupils, to be considered for entry to the school of their parents’ choice, an exception is made for pupils who have been permanently excluded from two different schools within a two year period. A parent can still express a preference for a school place, but the requirement to comply with that preference is removed for a period of two years from the date on which the latest exclusion took place. This does not apply to: children with statements of special education needs; children who are below compulsory school age when excluded; children who were reinstated following a permanent exclusion; and children who would have been reinstated following a permanent exclusion had it been practicable to do so. The authority may refuse to admit a child who has been excluded twice, or in the case of a community or voluntary controlled school, the governing body may appeal against the decision of the local council as the admission authority to admit the child. The parents normal right of appeal against a decision to refuse not to admit their child to a particular school is suspended for 2 years, from the second or any subsequent exclusion.

24) For UK Service Personnel and other Crown Servants, where possible, places may be allocated in advance of the pupils return to the UK provided the MOD, FCO or GCHQ have provided a letter declaring a return date and residency placement. Places may be offered and reserved up to one term in advance of the place being required.
25) NSC and own admission authority schools reserves the right to check that applicants who have previously lived abroad are eligible to receive education in this county. Such applicants may be required to produce their passport and/or their child’s passport before the application is considered.

26) Council: Unless stated otherwise within this document, references to ‘Council’ mean North Somerset Council.

27) Where a school is full in a year group and NSC or own admission authority schools receive an application from a family that is changing address, the application will only be considered from the proposed new address provided NSC or own admission authority schools has received suitable confirmation of the new address. Some examples of suitable confirmation are: proof of exchange of contracts and a completion date, a signed letting agreement, or a letter from an employer or Service person’s commanding officer, confirming details of the relocation. Applicants may also be required to provide proof that they have left their previous property, for example a final account utility bill. If unable to provide confirmation of the proposed address, the application will only be considered from the present address providing the child can attend the requested school(s) from the present address.

Offer of alternative places:

28) For Infant, Junior and Primary schools,

   a. Where applicants do not qualify for the school(s) they have applied for, the alternative school offered will be, if the child lives in North Somerset, the nearest school within or outside North Somerset, to the child’s home address (as at the time allocations are being made) with a place available as measured by safe walking route. Where there is no safe walking route available it will be measured by the shortest route. This may be a State Maintained North Somerset Community, VC or VA school (excluding Catholic schools) or a school within another council (where the admission authority has agreed to accept children who have been refused other schools).

   b. Where there are more children than places remaining at the nearest school, priority will be given to those living closest to the school. Remaining applicants will then be offered the next nearest school with a place available. Once that school becomes full, any remaining applicants will then be offered the next nearest school with a place available and so on. The distances will be measured by the shortest route.

   c. The alternative school offered may not be the nearest one available, if after having had regard to any reasons expressed by the parent for their (unsuccessful) preferences and the council’s admission arrangements, NSC felt it was appropriate to offer a different alternative school.

   d. If no preferred school in North Somerset can be offered for a child living in another council area, NSC will not look for an alternative school place. The child’s home council will offer an alternative school place.
e. If children within the same family and within the same school age range) are offered places at different schools NSC will endeavour to also reserve places for the children at a school that can accommodate all of the children (NB paired infant/first and junior schools are treated as being one school).

29) **For Secondary schools,**

   a. Where children who reside in North Somerset do not qualify for any of the schools they applied for, the alternative school offered will be (in order) either:

      i. the school whose First Geographical Area includes the child’s home address* provided there is a place available**.

      ii. the nearest school either within or outside North Somerset**, to the child’s home address* with a place available** as measured by the safe walking route. Where there is no safe walking route available it will be measured by the shortest route.

* or independently confirmed new address if moving house.

**A place may not be available at an own admission authority school that has not agreed to accept all children who have been refused a place(s) at other school(s).

b. For all secondary schools, where there are more children than places remaining at the First Geographical Area school or the nearest school, priority will be given to those living closest to the school. Remaining applicants will then be offered in the same order as above, the next nearest school with a place available. Once that school becomes full, any remaining applicants will then be offered the next nearest school with a place available and so on. The distances will be measured by the shortest route.

c. The alternative school offered may not be the allocated in this way, if after having had regard to any reasons expressed by the parent for their (unsuccessful) preferences and NSC admission arrangements, NSC felt it was appropriate to offer a different alternative school.

d. If no preferred school in North Somerset can be offered for a child living in another council area, NSC will not look for an alternative school place. The child’s home council will offer an alternative school place.

Whilst NSC will process applications in accordance with this policy it will exercise discretion and may deviate from it in exceptional circumstances where it feels it is appropriate to do so.
30. These arrangements apply as far as possible to all children including those considered to be from vulnerable groups in the NSC Fair Access Protocol. Parents of such children should complete the In-Year application form as the protocol will only be used if a suitable place can not be secured using the normal admission arrangements. These applications may be given priority over all other applicants except for those who meet criterion of Children in Care or children who were previously in Care but immediately after being in Care became subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order.

It should be noted that this is a working document and is subject to alteration at anytime to reflect any changes in legislation, case law, Council policy or to ensure legal compliance.