

**THE COORDINATED ADMISSION SCHEME FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS  
IN THE AREA OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL LOCAL AUTHORITY  
FOR 2012 ADMISSIONS**

**Introduction**

**It is a statutory requirement of the Admissions Code that the LA formulates a scheme for consultation. The draft scheme of co-ordination is set out below.**

**Timetable of Secondary Schools Coordinated Admission Scheme - 2012 entry**

2 September <b>2011</b>	Deadline for registration for the 11+ tests to be tested in a timely manner
16 September	Final registration date for 11+ testing (except movers).
6 October	Test 1 (earliest date for children to be tested in LA schools)
12 October	Test 2 (earliest date for children to be tested in LA schools)
24-27 October	Test sessions for non-school testing (these are the ONLY dates for timely applications).
31 October	Closing date for application form to be returned to County Hall Admissions & Transport Team (5pm) or online application to be submitted by midnight.
11 November	Final date for return of application form for agreed special cases to be considered timely. Any applications or changes of preference received after this date and before 1 January 2011 will be processed for release on 1 March but will be processed after the timely applications. Latest date for parents who are moving into a catchment area to provide proof and be considered in-catchment for the first allocation round. (Some foundation and voluntary-aided schools may set a different date) Latest date for footpath database update requests to be submitted for inclusion.
25 November	Publication of results of selection testing for timely applicants.
5 December	Applications for schools in other LAs sent to those LAs
10 December	Details of timely applications forwarded to foundation and voluntary-aided schools.
1 January <b>2012</b>	Applications received after this date will not be processed until after 1 March 2012.
4 January	Selection appeals start.
13 January	Foundation and voluntary aided schools send LA ranked list of

	applicants.
1 - 14 February	Multiple exchanges of information with other LAs
14 February	Final cycle of results sent to other LAs
23 February	Details of children to be offered places in their school sent to schools
1 March	Offers posted to parents
14 March	Parents to confirm acceptance of offer, waiting list requests and transfer appeal requests.
May	Start of transfer appeals

### **Interpretation**

1. In this scheme:

“the LA” means Buckinghamshire County Council ( BCC) acting in its capacity as the local authority.

“the LA area” means the area in respect of which the LA is the local authority.

“home LA” means the LA in which the applicant is resident.

“primary education” “secondary education” “primary school” “secondary school” have the same meaning as in Section 2(1), 2(2), 5(1), and 5(2) respectively in the Education Act 1996.

“school” means a community, foundation or voluntary-aided school (but not a special school) which is maintained by the LA.

“school place” means a place at any academy or school covered by this scheme.

“grammar school” means a school selecting pupils solely on the basis of academic ability as determined by the Buckinghamshire selection procedure for community and voluntary-controlled grammar schools or the procedure determined by the Governing Body of foundation or voluntary-aided grammar schools.

“Academy” means a publicly funded independent local school that provides a free education. An Academy is an all ability school established by sponsors from business, faith or voluntary groups working with partners from the local community. Academies are required by their funding agreements to participate in local schemes.

“foundation school” means a maintained school including trust schools which is designated as a foundation school

“voluntary-aided school” means a maintained school which is designated as a voluntary-aided school.

“partner school” an independent school within or close to Buckinghamshire or a maintained school outside Buckinghamshire where the 11+ testing process is followed in full.

“admission authority” in relation to a community or voluntary-controlled school means the LA and, in relation to an Academy, foundation or voluntary aided school means the governing body of that school.

“the equal preference scheme” the scheme operated by Buckinghamshire County Council whereby all preferences listed by parents/carers on the common application form are considered under the oversubscription rules for each school without reference to parental rankings. Where a pupil can be offered a place at more than one school, the rankings are used to determine the single offer by selecting the one ranked highest on the common application form.

“the relevant year” means the school year beginning at or about the beginning of September 2012.

“admission arrangements” mean the arrangements for a particular academy, school or schools which govern the procedures and decision making for the purposes of admitting pupils to the academy or school.

“application form” and “common application form” means the application form/process supplied by the LA electronically ( via an online portal) or on paper.

“eligible for a place” means that a child has been placed on an academy or school’s ranked list at a position which falls within the published admission number.

### **Commencement and Extent**

2. Applications made to a secondary school for a place other than at the normal time of entry to that school will be processed through the In-year Admissions Scheme.
3. Foundation Schools, Voluntary Aided Schools and Academies are their own admitting authority and will apply their own admission rules to all applicants. They will be responsible for presenting their case at appeal.
4. Local authorities and Governing bodies may not refuse to admit children to any relevant age group on the basis of ‘prejudice to efficient education or the efficient use of resources’ unless the number of expressed preferences exceeds the Published Admission Number (PAN).
5. Admission authorities will not exceed PANs without agreement with the LA or unless there are exceptional circumstances that require an agreed alternative approach, for example exceeding the PAN for certain schools in an area to ensure every child receives an initial application.

6. Any secondary school which operates criteria for selection by ability or aptitude must ensure its arrangements for assessing ability or aptitude enable decisions to be made on nominations in line with the timing requirements of this scheme.
7. The scheme shall apply to every secondary school in the LA with the exception of special schools and shall take effect from September 2012. This includes applications for boarding places at The Royal Grammar School, and to any educational establishment designated as an Academy.

## **PART 1 – THE APPLICATION FORM**

Buckinghamshire County Council will operate a co-ordinated scheme for secondary school admission that takes into account the different admission rules operated by individual admission authorities for some secondary schools and academies. The scheme will be an **Equal Preference Scheme**.

8. Parents can apply on line or, if they are unable to apply on line then they can complete an application form.
9. The phased admissions process for secondary admissions will be used for the purpose of admitting pupils into the first year of secondary education in the specified year. For all Buckinghamshire secondary schools this is admission into Year 7. All admissions to statutory school year groups will be dealt with via the in-year admissions process. Sixth form admissions are dealt with by schools separately.
10. Parents who live in Buckinghamshire should apply to Buckinghamshire.
11. The application process will collect basic data such as name, address and date of birth of the child either via an online or paper form. The process must be used by parents resident in Buckinghamshire, wishing to express a preference for their child:
  - To be admitted to a maintained school or academy within the LA area; or
  - To be admitted to a maintained school or academy within the area of another LA.
12. All preferences expressed will be valid applications. The parents' guide will also indicate where voluntary aided and foundation schools require further supplementary forms to be completed for certain rules. Only parents applying for these Buckinghamshire schools may need to complete the supplementary forms, although schools in other LA areas may require them. All completed supplementary forms should be returned to the school concerned.
13. The application process will:
  - a. Invite the parent to express **up to** six school or academy preferences in rank order of preference.
  - b. Invite parents to give reasons for each preference;
  - c. Explain that parents will receive no more than one offer of a place,
  - d. Explain that, where such an offer is made, it will be for the highest ranked school or academy at which their child is eligible for a place; and
  - e. Specify the closing date for applications and where it should be returned.
  - f. Explain that parents must complete only one form/online process

14. The LA will make appropriate arrangements to ensure:
  - a. That an online application form is available via [buckscc.gov.uk/schooladmission](http://buckscc.gov.uk/schooladmission)
  - b. That a paper application form is available on request from the LA and from all primary and secondary schools in the LA area; and
  - c. That there is a written explanation of the key features of the co-ordinated admissions scheme in the parents guide which will be made available on line, in full, with a leaflet summary being provided to all parents.
15. Where a school receives a supplementary form from a Buckinghamshire resident it will not be regarded as a valid application unless the parent has also completed an application via their home LA and the school is given as one of their preferences. Under the requirements of the scheme, parents will not be under any obligation to fill in an individual school's supplementary form where this is not strictly required for the governing body to apply their admission rules. The information required on the supplementary form must comply with the limitations set out in the current Admissions Code.
16. The on-line portal will close at **midnight on 31 October 2011**. All written applications should be returned to the Admissions Team at County Hall, by **5.00pm on 31 October 2011** or, if returning the forms to the child's primary school (Buckinghamshire maintained schools only), by **9.00am on 21 October 2011**. Applications received after the closing date will be late.
17. The LA will process all applications which will be treated as confidential information. VA and Foundation schools will, however, be provided with a list of relevant details for those pupils for whom they are a preference.
18. Where a voluntary aided, foundation school or academy is listed on the application, the LA will forward the appropriate details to the Governing Body. The admission authority for each school will then provide the LA with a list of all pupils including the order in which places should be allocated under each criterion (this list to include only those pupils whom the LA has received an application form). This information to be provided to the LA by the specified date.
19. All ranked applications received by the deadline will be considered before any ranked applications received after this date.
20. After all on time applications have been dealt with, the next stage will be to consider all the late applications that can be allocated a school that they have ranked. Finally all Buckinghamshire children whether on time or late who were not able to have a preference satisfied will be allocated a school place.

#### **Arrangements for 11+ selection procedure**

21. The LA manages selection by ability for community and voluntary controlled grammar schools. Foundation grammar schools and, for 2012, grammar schools that have become academies may also adopt the LAs selection procedure and ask

the LA to manage the selection process on their behalf. They will be asked to confirm this in writing before the tests commence.

22. Children attending Buckinghamshire maintained schools are automatically registered for selection testing unless their parents confirm in writing that they do not want their child to sit the test. Parents of children at independent schools or attending primary schools outside of Buckinghamshire should register their child for grammar school testing by 2 September 2011 (to undertake the procedure in the normal timeline) and at the very latest by 16 September 2011, to ensure testing can be completed during the autumn term.
23. Children attending schools other than Buckinghamshire Maintained Schools or 'Partner school' (from 2011 intake these are the only automatically agreed test centres), will be tested during October half term 2011 (24 -28 October inclusive). Children will be offered two dates within this period. They may be on consecutive days but not two tests on any one day. One alternative date will be offered only where parents are able to confirm exceptional circumstances (family holidays are not exceptional). Children who do not attend on the specified dates with no reasonable explanation will be deemed withdrawn from the 11+ testing.
24. Parents will be notified of the outcome of testing for grammar school selection on **25 November 2011**, where the application has been within the normal timetable, or as soon as practicable after this date where testing was completed later.
25. As far as is reasonably practicable applications for places in the normal admission round that are received late for a good reason will be accepted provided they are received before **11 November**. Examples of what will be considered as good reason include: where a single parent has been ill or has been dealing with the death of a close relative; a family, including service family or crown servant has recently moved into the area or is returning from abroad. Other circumstances will be considered and each case decided on its own merits. Late preferences will be processed after the timely applications in accordance with the timetable in Schedule 2.
26. The tests used will be Verbal Reasoning Tests (VRT) designed, marked and standardised by NFER/GL Assessment for the County Council.
27. Adaptations to the testing process will be considered prior to the child being tested where an application has been made on behalf of a child who is considered by their parent to be 'disabled' under the terms of the Equalities Act 2010. The written case will be considered by Special Access Panel, comprising of expert professionals within Special Educational Needs, Educational Psychology and Headteaching. Example adaptations may be the use of enlarged or re-coloured test materials, the use of a reader or amanuensis, the provision of extra time or, in a small number of cases, where the pupil is severely visually impaired such that enlarged tests are insufficient for their needs, an alternate testing regime may be agreed on the advice of the Specialist Teaching Service. Full details are available on request.
28. Before taking the actual tests children will work through familiarisation material and three practice tests. Schools may determine the optimum time for using this with

their children. Identical packs are provided for parents of children who attend central testing.

29. Children will then take two actual Verbal Reasoning Tests. This will normally be during the first half of the autumn term including the half term break for children schooled outside Buckinghamshire. Once marked and standardised the better of the VRT scores will be the one used to determine whether the child has achieved a qualification for a grammar school.
30. The outcome of the testing will be sent to schools and parents in accordance with the dates published above. The qualifying mark is expected to be a score of 121 in the higher of two tests. Parents will be told of their right to appeal against non-qualification for their child.

### ***Processing the applications***

31. Exchange of information with other neighbouring LAs will be completed on a mutually agreed timeline.
32. Where a foundation school, academy or voluntary-aided school is listed on the application form, the LA will forward appropriate details to the Governing Body. Where a school in another LA is listed on the application form details will be forwarded to that LA.
33. By **10 December 2011** the LA will notify the admission authority for each voluntary - aided, Academy or foundation school of the timely preferences expressed for the school. Each admission authority will then apply its own admission rules to the list of applicants for the school or academy. Officers of Buckinghamshire County Council will be doing this for its community and voluntary-controlled schools, the governing body for each academy, foundation or voluntary-aided school will manage this for their school, and return a ranked list of children, based on the admission rules for the academy or school to the LA. Applicants deemed qualified by a Selection Appeal will be considered by grammar schools along with pupils who achieved a qualifying score
34. By **13 January 2012** the admission authority for each academy or school will consider all applications for their academy or school, apply the admission rules (if appropriate) and provide the LA with a ranked list.
35. The LA will act as a clearing-house for the allocation of places by the relevant admission authorities. The LA will only make any decision with respect to the offer or refusal of a place in response to
  - Any preference expressed where it is acting in its separate capacity as an admission authority, or
  - If an applicant is eligible for a place at more than one school, or
  - Where an applicant is not eligible for a place at any school that the parent has nominated.

### ***Determination of the place to offer***

**The LA will allocate places in accordance with the provisions set out as follows:**

36. Where a child can be allocated a place at the academy or school ranked first, this will become the firm offer. The pupil's name will then be removed from lists of schools ranked lower and further offers made to those schools where possible from their waiting list.
37. Where a child is not allocated a place at the first ranked school or academy but is provisionally allocated a place they ranked second, this will be held provisionally pending further rounds in which it may become possible to give a higher preference. The same process as explained under 36 would be followed regarding the offer of any places released at lower preference schools.
38. The above steps 36-37 will be repeated for all nominated preferences until it is not possible to offer any higher ranked school or academy as a result of repeating the process.
39. Once all repetitions (iterations) of the allocation round are complete, all allocations then in existence become the firm offer.
40. For each preference, children who remain unallocated at this point in the process will be treated as being refused a place by the admission authority.

### ***Children who have not been allocated a place in the iterative process***

41. The LA will match those children of parents/carers resident in the LA area that have applied for a school or academy for which they are qualified and have not been offered a place. This allocation process will be based on the shortest designated route. The school allocated will be notified to parents in the way described below.
42. The admission authority for the school will consider each of the children notified for a place at the school on the same basis as if the LA's notification were an application (or preference) made by the child's parent/carer falling within section 86 of the 1998 Act.
43. Further rounds of this procedure may be undertaken if necessary.
44. The LA will also write to any child known to it where no preference has already been expressed, inviting a preference and indicating those schools in the county where vacancies still exist following the completion of the allocation. This includes where a child is not qualified for a grammar school but only grammar schools have been applied for.

***Buckinghamshire parents who are also applying for schools outside Buckinghamshire***

45. We will coordinate with other LAs to determine a single offer. This coordination will continue past the initial allocation as far as possible. Other LAs will also be applying their schemes. If an LA notifies Buckinghamshire that it can offer a place to a Buckinghamshire resident, we will compare this place with the possible offer of a Buckinghamshire school and the parent's highest preference will be the one that becomes the actual offer.

### ***Parents applying for a place in Buckinghamshire schools from out of the county***

46. Such applications will have been made on the home LA application form and details forwarded to Buckinghamshire County Council.

### ***The offer***

47. The LA will notify all Buckinghamshire academies and schools of the details of the children who will be offered a place at the school before offer letters are sent, in accordance with the timetable in Schedule 2.

48. The LA will send out all offer letters to Buckinghamshire parents. It will be clear if the offer is being made on behalf of another admission authority.

49. If it is possible to offer a Buckinghamshire place to a non-Buckinghamshire resident, we will coordinate with the home LA, to determine a single offer.

50. Offers of school places will be **posted** on **1 March 2012**. The offer letter and linked information will give details of:

- The name of the school or academy offered;
- The reasons why the child is not being offered a place at each of the other schools nominated; and
- The date by which the place must be accepted.

The acceptance of offers or the submission of an appeal should be notified to the LA by parents **within 14 days**. This can be done through the on line application portal.

### ***Late applications***

51. As far as is reasonably practicable applications for places in the normal admission round that are received late for a good reason will be accepted provided they are received before **11 November 2011**, and such applications will only be processed where there was good reason for the late application e.g. a severe illness of single parent or if a single parent can show they were not in the country during the relevant period, service family or crown servant move into the area or where there has been a postal dispute. Late preferences will be processed after the timely applications in accordance with the timetable in Schedule 2.

52. Applications received after the final date will not be processed until after the timely applications have been allocated.

53. Applications received after **1 January** of the relevant year will not be processed until **after 1 March**. They will then be processed in batches on a regular basis, as indicated in detail within the timeline in the 'Guide for Parents'.

### ***Waiting lists***

54. Children who have not been allocated a place at a preferred school or academy for which they are appropriately qualified may have their name placed on the appropriate waiting list. The waiting list will be ranked in accordance with the academy or school's admission rules. Parents are expected to reaffirm their wish to remain on the waiting list at regular intervals

55. Two weeks after the beginning of term, intake waiting lists are transferred to the in-year admissions process. Parents are expected to reaffirm their wish to remain on the waiting list at regular intervals.

### ***Right to appeal***

56. Parents of children who do not qualify for a grammar school education will have the right to appeal to an independent appeal panel. These 'selection appeals' will take place commencing in **January 2011**.

57. Where parents wish to appeal to an independent appeal panel for a place at a different school, these 'transfer appeals' will take place between April and the end of term 2011.