

# MIDDLESBROUGH LOCAL AUTHORITY DRAFT SCHOOL ADMISSIONS ARRANGEMENTS PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS 2020/21

Text changes from previous year highlighted in yellow

This admission policy applies to all community schools in Middlesbrough (as listed in Proposed Admission Numbers document).

Schools that are their own admission authority such as Roman Catholic schools, Academies and Foundation schools are responsible for their own admission policies but will adhere to the timetables and procedures of the Local Authority (LA) as detailed in the Admissions Scheme.

## **Admission Numbers**

School admission numbers are set with regard to the physical capacity of each school. (See Proposed Admission Numbers document)

The admission number will apply to the relevant intake year only. (Reception year for primary schools and Y7 for secondary schools). The admission number will remain the same for the relevant year group throughout the progression of the year group through the school.

## **Application Procedures and Timetables**

It is proposed that the timetable, for both Primary and Secondary Admissions Schemes for 2020/21 is similar to previous years and takes into account the statutory dates in the School Admissions Code.

The full timetable for primary and secondary school admission arrangements is detailed in the LAs Admissions Scheme (separate document).

Parents/carers will be able to make on-line applications for admissions for the 2020/21 school year via the Middlesbrough Council web site [www.middlesbrough.gov.uk](http://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk).

### **i. Primary Schools**

Middlesbrough has a single admission date, with all reception pupils admitted full-time in September 2020. All children requiring a reception place at a school must apply for a place even if the child attends the school's nursery.

Parents can defer the date their child is admitted to school until later in the academic year or until the child reaches compulsory school age\*, but not beyond the beginning of the final term of the academic year. Parents can also request that their child takes up the place part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age.

\*A child reaches compulsory school age on the prescribed day following their fifth birthday. (Or on the fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day) The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August

In November 2019 notices will be displayed in public places such as libraries inviting parents/carers who attend private nurseries or do not attend any nursery, to register with the LA in order to receive a primary application pack.

Mid November 2019, parents/carers will be provided with an application pack, and invited to express up to three preferences for primary schools, including academies, voluntary aided schools, foundation schools and schools maintained by other Local Authorities.

Parents/carers will be requested to make their applications by a closing date of 15<sup>th</sup> January 2020. Every effort will be made by the Local Authority to ensure that applications are received by the closing date, **however the responsibility for applying remains with the parent / guardian.**

All applications will be processed in accordance with Middlesbrough's Co-ordinated Admission Scheme and all preferences are considered equally. Parents/carers will be informed of their child's allocated school place on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2020.

## **ii. Secondary Schools**

Early in September 2019, parents/carers of Year 6 pupils will be provided with an application pack and invited to express up to three preferences for secondary schools, including academies, voluntary aided schools and schools maintained by other Local Authorities.

Parents/carers will be requested to make their applications by a closing date of 31 October 2019. Every effort will be made by the Local Authority to ensure that applications are received by the closing date, **however the responsibility for applying remains with the parent / guardian.**

All applications will be processed in accordance with Middlesbrough's Co-ordinated Admission Scheme and all preferences are considered equally. Parents/carers will be informed of their child's allocated school place on 1st March 2020.

## **Over-Subscription Criteria – Community Schools**

Where more parents/carers have expressed a preference for a particular school than the admission number, the Local Authority must apply its over-subscription criteria in deciding which parents/carers preferences can be met. After the admission of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan where a particular school is named in the Statement or Plan, the over-subscription criteria for primary and secondary schools will be applied as follows;

## Primary and Secondary School Admissions

- i) 'Children looked after' (in public care), and children previously 'looked after', but ceased to be so because they were adopted\* immediately following having been looked after. (\* or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order). See Note 1
- ii) Pupils permanently resident in the Admission Zone, i.e. the address at which the child is registered for child benefit, who express a preference for that school (proof of address may be required). (See Child's Home Address section)
- iii) Pupils who will have a brother and/or step brother and/or sister and/or step sister or the child of the parent/carer's partner living at the same address attending the school in the September of admission.
- iv) Pupils with exceptional social and / or medical reasons for attending the school, which in the latter circumstances are substantiated by the LA medical advisors. A letter from the child's GP or other relevant professional such as a social worker must be submitted with the application. Social reasons do not include domestic arrangements such as parents working commitments or childcare arrangements. Exceptional circumstances such as parents who have a disability, which may mean their child must attend a particular school, will be considered. (In this instance a letter from the parent's GP or other relevant professional such as a social worker must be submitted with the application). The supporting letter should detail why the school (s) applied for is / are the only one (s) that can accommodate the child. See Note 2
- v) Pupils who reside closest to a particular school, measured in a straight line. The measure will be taken from the front door of the pupils' home to the main entrance of the school.

When distinguishing between pupils within the same criteria the pupil with the highest second criteria will be admitted i.e. a pupil living within the admission zone who has a brother or sister attending the school in the September of admission will have a higher criteria than a pupil who lives in the admission zone but does not have a brother or sister attending the school.

Note 1. Relevant evidence must be provided such as copy of the adoption certificate or court order plus details of when and where the child was in care and names and contact details of social workers involved.

Note 2. Full details must be submitted at the time of application. If you have any concerns or need any guidance about what might be classed as exceptional social or medical reasons, or what evidence may be submitted, please contact the Admissions Team to discuss the matter in confidence before you submit your application. Applications submitted with evidence appertaining to exceptional social and or medical reasons may be shared with and discussed at an admissions panel meeting which can include professionals such as a doctor, educational psychologist, social worker etc who will give opinions and make decisions on whether the application fits the criteria.

N.B. For primary schools attendance at a school nursery does not guarantee a place in the reception class of that school.

## **Twins or Multiple Birth Children**

If you have more than one child who are twins or part of a multiple birth going through the application process this year, you must make a separate application for each child and indicate on each online or paper form that your child has a sibling also going through the process. A place will be offered to the other child(ren) if one of your twins/multiple birth children is offered the last place available and you have applied to the same school for the other child(ren).

## **Late Applications**

Whilst every effort will be made to ensure parental applications are received by the published closing date, applications received after the closing date for oversubscribed schools will only be considered if there is evidence of a good reason for the lateness. Examples of good reasons may include when a single parent has been ill for some time, or a family has just moved into the area, or a family is returning from abroad.

Where families have moved to a new address after places have been allocated, preferences will only be agreed if places remain available in the preferred school. If the preferred school, including the admission zone school, is full, a place will be offered at the school closest to the home address with places available.

Any parent whose child has been refused a school place, for which they have applied, will be offered the right to appeal against the Authority's decision.

## **Allocation of Places, which become available before Appeal Hearings**

Where places become available prior to an appeal hearing, they will be allocated from the waiting list in accordance with the over-subscription criteria.

## **Waiting Lists**

Waiting lists will be maintained for those unsuccessful at gaining a place at their preferred school for admission to Reception Year (primary) and Year 7 (secondary). The waiting lists will be maintained until the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020, after which time they will close.

## **Admission of children below compulsory school age and deferred entry to school**

Children are entitled to a full-time school place in the September following their fourth birthday. Parents can defer the date their child is admitted to school until later in the academic year or until the child reaches compulsory school age\*, but not beyond the beginning of the final term of the academic year. Parents can also request that their child takes up the place part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age. This arrangement would be made with individual primary schools after the Local Authority has allocated a place by the normal admissions round.

Before deciding to delay a child's entry to school, we would recommend that parents visit the schools they are thinking of applying for. The teachers will be able to explain the provision on offer to children in the reception class, how it is tailored to meet the needs of the youngest pupils and

how the needs of these pupils will continue to be met as they move up through school. They may also be able to allay any concerns parents may have about their child's readiness for school.

\*A child reaches compulsory school age on the prescribed day following their fifth birthday. (Or on the fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day) The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August

### **Admission of children outside their normal age group**

In exceptional circumstances parents may seek a place for their child outside their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. In addition, the parents of a summer born child (i.e. a child born from 1 April to 31 August) may prefer not to send their child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and request that they are admitted out of their normal age group i.e. to reception rather than year 1.

If a parent wishes their child to be admitted outside their normal age group then this must be made clear on their application to the Local Authority for a school place. Relevant information must be submitted with the application such as information about the child's academic, social and emotional development, this should include third party evidence such as medical history and the views of a medical professional and / or information from previous educational establishments or any other information the parent think is relevant.

The application will be considered by the LA and /or the admissions authority of the school/schools to which the application is made. (Please note that the Local Authority can only make decisions for Community schools, any school which is an Own Admission Authority School such as Foundation Schools, Academies and Voluntary Aided schools will be responsible for their own decisions.) A decision will be made as to whether the child can be admitted to that school outside the normal age group. If the school refuses to admit the child outside the normal age group relevant reasons will be provided. Parents have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied. This right does not apply if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.

The details regarding 'summer born children' may be subject to review at a later date. Changes to the Admissions Code in December 2014 included information about children being able to defer their child's reception place for one year. The Minister for State Schools, Nick Gibb MP, issued a letter dated 8<sup>th</sup> September 2015 outlining the Governments position of amending the School Admissions Code further and a further consultation on changes to the Admissions Code may follow which may in turn lead to changes to this policy. The current procedure for 'summer born children' is detailed below.

Parents of summer born children must apply for a reception place for their child at the usual time, but must make clear on the application that they wish to admit their child outside of the normal age group, i.e. a year later, providing evidence as detailed above. The request must be made by the primary applications closing date (15<sup>th</sup> January 2020), any requests received after this date will not be considered. If the request is refused, parents must decide whether to accept the offer of a place for the normal age group, or to refuse it and make an in-year application for admission to Year 1 for the September following the child's 5<sup>th</sup> birthday. If the request is agreed by the preferred school/schools then the application for reception will be withdrawn before a place is offered. The parent must then make a new application as part of the main admissions round the following year, the application will be processed as normal and places will be allocated at schools according to the schools' oversubscription criteria.

Parents should be aware that schools and admission authorities cannot be required to honour a decision made by another school or authority on admission out of the normal age group, if a place is not available at the school/schools that have agreed to the request, other schools may insist the child is admitted to the correct year group. This may also apply to children moving later in their school life from primary school to secondary school, if the child is due to move into Y7 (the first year of secondary school), the secondary school may insist the child be admitted to the correct year group according to their date of birth.

If you would like to discuss this further, please contact the School Admissions Team or the Head Teacher of the schools you may be interested in applying for.

### **Child's Home Address**

A child's home address, for the purpose of School Admissions, is considered to be the parents or legal carers permanent address. If parents do not live together and your child lives for periods of time with each parent, the home address will be the one where the parent receiving the Child Benefit lives.

Proof of address may be required (see below for details of evidence which may be requested).

Parents must not give the address of child minders, grandparents or other family members or friends who may share in the care of the child.

If parents move house during the application and allocation process, parents must inform the School Admissions section immediately as this could have an effect on which school the child is allocated. Proof of address move will be required; two pieces of evidence must be submitted such as Child Benefit Letter, Child Tax Credit letter, Council Tax bill, tenancy agreement, solicitor's letter confirming house sale, bank and credit card statements. The child's address used in the allocation process will be the address at the time of the place allocations (places will be finalised several weeks before offer letters are due to be issued to parents, if you are moving house around this time, please contact the Admissions team for guidance). It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that the School Admissions Team are provided with the correct address and / or any address change details with any relevant evidence.

The LA will not consider temporary addresses as being the parental address. This means that if, for example, you live temporarily with other family members or move to temporary accommodation for any reason, the parental address will remain at the address at which you were living before the temporary move took place.

### **Choice Adviser**

The Local Authority has a Choice Adviser who is independent of the admissions process and will be able to offer advice to parents on the admissions process. The Choice Adviser can be contacted on 01642 201872.