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Coventry Secondary School Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme: 2020/21

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1. Introduction

The co-ordination scheme as detailed in this document applies to all Secondary academies and free schools (excluding special schools) in the Coventry area and shall take effect for the admissions process for the academic year 2020/2021. This is published in accordance with the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulation 2012 as amended by the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England)(Amendment) Regulations 2014.

Coventry City Council are the responsible authority for co-ordinating the arrangements for the admission of pupils to Secondary Schools in the Local Authority area.

2. Co-ordination

- 2.1 The School Organisation team on behalf of the Local Authority and other admission authorities in Coventry, will co-ordinate applications made during the main admissions round (for Year 7). Parents/carers living in Coventry will make an application to the Local Authority for any maintained school, academy or free school for a school place for their child in September 2020. The application process will be available online via the Local Authority website or via a paper common application form from September in the year before children are due to start Secondary school.
- 2.2 For those 14-19 academies, UTCs and Studio Schools across the region that admit pupils into Year 10, the School Organisation Team will co-ordinate applications made during the main admissions round where the academies are part of the co-ordination arrangements within their areas. The application process will be available online via the Local Authority website. Where the academies are not part of co-ordination arrangements, including WMG Academy Coventry, then applications must be made direct to the academy.
- 2.3 For the academic year 2020/2021 and subsequent years, applications made outside of the normal admissions round (In Year Applications) can be made via the online application process found on the Coventry City Council school admissions web pages.

3. Admission Authorities

- 3.1 There are 3 types of Secondary schools in Coventry: **Academies**, Catholic **Voluntary Aided** schools and **Free** schools. The arrangements for all these schools are co-ordinated by the Local Authority.
- 3.2 For academies and free schools their Trust or board of directors is the admissions authority. For Voluntary aided schools the governing bodies are the admissions authority.

4. Application process

- 4.1 The online application and the Common Application Form will be used as a means of expressing preferences for the purposes of Section 86 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, by parents resident in Coventry wishing to express a preference for

their child to be admitted to a community, voluntary controlled, voluntary aided, foundation or trust secondary school or Academy and free schools within Coventry or located in another Local Authority area.

4.2 When applying the parent will be able to:

- a) express **three** preferences including, where relevant, any schools outside the Local Authority's area, in rank order of preference.
- b) give their reasons for each preference.

4.3 The parent will receive no more than one offer of a school place and :

- (i) a place will be offered at the highest ranking nominated school for which they are eligible for a place; and
- (ii) if a place cannot be offered at a nominated school, a place will be offered at the nearest available school following consultation with own admission authorities where appropriate.

4.4 The Local Authority will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that:

- the online system and the Common Application Forms are available
- a written explanation of the co-ordinated admissions scheme is available on the Local Authority website and from the Local Authority.

4.5 The Local Authority will take all reasonable steps to ensure that every parent resident in the Local Authority area who has a child in Year 6 in a Coventry primary school receives information on the application process by 12 September 2019.

5. Supplementary Information Forms

5.1 All preferences expressed via the online process or on the Common Application Form are valid applications. Schools may request parents to provide additional information on a supplementary form for the governing body to apply their oversubscription criteria to the application. Details of schools using supplementary forms will be included in the admissions booklet on the city council website. If parents complete a supplementary form, this must be returned to the school.

5.2 Where a school receives a supplementary form from a Coventry resident it will not be regarded as a valid application unless the parent has also completed an online application or a Common Application Form and the school is nominated on it. Where supplementary forms are received directly by schools they must inform the Local Authority immediately so the Local Authority can verify whether an application has been received from the parent and, if not, contact the parent and ask them to complete one. Under the requirements of the scheme, parents will not be under any obligation to complete an individual school's supplementary form.

6. Processing of Applications

6.1 The closing date for applications is **31 October 2019**. Parents can complete the online application by this date. An email confirming receipt of the application will be received once the application has been submitted. Alternatively parents can return a completed Common Application Form to a Primary or Junior school or to the Local Authority by this date. The Local Authority will issue a receipt within 14 days for all Common Application Forms received. The receipt letter is the only valid proof that an application has been received by the Local Authority. Applications received after **31 October 2019** will be treated in accordance with the procedure for late applications

6.2 **By 1 November 2019** primary schools will forward all applications to the Local Authority.

7. Determining Offers

7.1 It should be noted that all children with an Education, Health and Care plan that names a school must be admitted to that school before all other applicants.

7.2 The Local Authority will act as a 'clearing house' for the allocation of places by the relevant admission authorities in response to the online applications or Common Application Forms. The Local Authority will only make a decision with respect to a preference expressed where:

(a) an applicant is eligible for a place at more than one school, or

(b) an applicant is not eligible for a place at any school that the parent has nominated.

7.3 **By 12 November 2019** Coventry Local Authority will exchange "unranked" preferences with other Local Authorities whose schools have been requested by Coventry parents.

7.4 **By 27 November 2019** the Local Authority will notify the admission authority for each of the schools of every application that has been made for that school, regardless of ranking, including all relevant details together with any evidence received by this date which schools require in order to apply their oversubscription criteria.

7.5 **By 18 December 2019** the admission authority for each school will consider all applications for their school, apply the school's oversubscription criteria (if appropriate) and provide the Local Authority with a list of those applicants ranked according to the school's oversubscription criteria. Where the number of applicants exceeds the number of places available at the school by a significant amount, the admission authority need rank only as many as it agrees with the Local Authority to be necessary, allowing for the fact that some of those who could be offered a place might be offered a place at another school.

7.6 The Local Authority will match this ranked list against the ranked lists of the other schools nominated and:

- Where the child is eligible for a place at only one of the nominated schools that school will be allocated to the child.
- Where the child is eligible for a place at two or more of the nominated schools, they will be allocated a place at whichever of these is the highest ranked preference.
- Where the child is not eligible for a place at any of the nominated schools, the child will be allocated a place at the nearest appropriate school with a vacancy following consultation with own admission authorities where appropriate.

7.7 **31 December 2019** will be the effective 'cut off' date for parents requesting Coventry schools to notify any changes (e.g. home address), which might materially affect their application.

7.8 In the week beginning **6 January 2020** the Local Authority will commence the exchange of information with other Local Authorities on potential offers of places in Coventry schools. Similarly other Local Authorities will notify Coventry Local Authority of potential offers available to Coventry residents.

7.9 In the weeks beginning **20 January 2020** and **3 February 2020** Coventry Local Authority and other Local Authorities will compare potential offers and provisionally allocate places. This information will then be exchanged between Local Authorities.

7.10 **By 12 February 2020** the Local Authority will complete the exchange of information with other Local Authorities and inform them of places in Coventry schools to be offered to their residents. Similarly other Local Authorities will notify Coventry Local Authority of places in their schools to be offered to Coventry residents.

8. Decision Letters

8.1 On **2 March 2020** letters will be posted to parents by second class post notifying them of the school place their child has been allocated. Emails will also be sent on this date to those parents who have applied on-line. Both will contain the following information:

- i) The name of the school at which a place is offered;
- ii) The reasons why the child is not being offered a place at each of the other schools nominated on the application;

- iii) Information about their statutory right of appeal against the decisions to refuse places at the other nominated schools;
- iv) Contact details for applicants to lodge an appeal when they have not been offered a place at a school.

9. Late Applications

9.1 The closing date for applications in the normal admissions round is **31 October 2019**. After that date, the Local Authority will continue to receive applications but these will be considered to be late and may not be processed until after **2 March 2020**. Parents will be advised in their receipt letter that this will be the case.

9.2 A link to the late application form will be available on the Coventry City Council admissions web pages from the **1 November 2019**.

9.3 All late applications and changes of preference made up to 2 weeks after the national offer day will then be considered in a further round of allocations of places

10. Waiting Lists

10.1 After the initial allocation of places on **2 March 2020**, schools will be responsible for maintaining their own waiting lists in conjunction with the Local Authority. Waiting lists must operate until **31 December 2020**. Parents, who wish for their children to continue to be considered for any places that might become available after this time will need to contact the School Organisation Team or check details directly with the school for arrangements to stay on the waiting list.

10.2 Waiting lists are kept in oversubscription criteria order and this is the basis for deciding where a child is placed on a list. The date of application does not affect the position on a waiting list.

11. Admission of children outside their normal age group

11.1 Paragraph 2.17 of the **School Admissions Code** allows parents to request that their child is educated outside of their normal age group; for example, if their child is gifted or talented or has experienced problems such as ill health.

11.2 Where a parent/carer seeks a place for their child outside their normal age group they must notify their intention on the application. Parents/carers will then be contacted to discuss the matter further as each case will be considered individually on the circumstances of each case and in the child's best interests. There are no guarantees that such applications will be agreed. Parents will be provided with a letter setting out the decision on their application and the reasons for the decision. Details of how applications are considered are included within individual school policy arrangements.

12. Timetable

Secondary Admissions Co-ordinated Admissions scheme

Birth Range	01/09/2008 – 31/08/2009
National closing date for receipt of applications	31 October 2019
Data exchange with other Local Authorities	12 November 2019
Unranked preferences sent to Coventry Admission Authorities for 'Ranking'	27 November 2019
Ranked lists returned to LA from Coventry Admission Authorities	18 December 2019
Deadline for parents requesting Coventry schools to notify the LA of any changes (eg: home addresses)	31 December 2019
1 st Data exchange of potential offers with other Local Authorities	Week commencing 6 January 2020
Further data exchanges of potential offers with other Local Authorities	From 20 January 2020 – 3 February 2020
Final offer exchange with other Local Authorities	12 February 2020
Offer day – Emails and letters sent (via second class post)	2 March 2020

13. In Year Application Process

13.1 The Local Authority co-ordinates in year admissions for all voluntary aided schools and academies/free schools within Coventry unless the school has indicated otherwise in their admission arrangements. Contact School Organisation Team for the most up to date information.

13.2. Applications are made on a standard on-line application form for in-year school admissions. Applicants for some faith schools will need to complete a supplementary information form but only if they are applying on priority faith grounds. Further information is available from the School Organisation Team. Admissions decisions by own admission authority schools will be made within 10 school days in most circumstances. Decision letters will be issued by the Local Authority on behalf of all schools within the co-ordinated scheme in line with the timings published on the city council website and these will include appeal information where an application was unsuccessful.

13.3 Waiting lists for all Coventry schools will be notified to the Local Authority. Voluntary Aided schools/Academies/free schools will be responsible for maintaining their own lists in conjunction with the Local Authority. Parents, who wish for their children to continue to be considered for any places at these schools after 31 December 2020 will need to contact the School Organisation Team or check details directly with the school for arrangements to stay on the waiting list.

13.4 For those pupils attending a Coventry secondary school who wish to transfer to another Coventry secondary school, parents/carers will be asked to meet with the headteacher or other appropriate member of staff to discuss the reason for transfer. This will provide the school with an opportunity to identify any issues that may be capable of resolution and that may negate the necessity for a school transfer. This will ensure that changes of school are not undertaken hastily and without discussions with the parent/carer as to the likelihood of educational disadvantage to the pupil that may arise from transfer. The headteacher will seek to resolve any issues that may be causing parents/carers to seek a transfer. Where the parent/carer does complete a transfer form and returns this to the school, the school staff will complete the school section of the form providing details so that the application can be processed as a standard admission or referred to fair access arrangements as necessary.

14 Fair Access Protocol

14.1 All Coventry schools are required to sign up to an in-year fair access protocol. The aim of this protocol is to reduce the time that vulnerable children spend out of school and to ensure that vulnerable children are admitted to Coventry schools on a fair basis, making sure that no school is asked to take a disproportionate number of pupils presenting with challenging behaviour or who have been excluded. Any children that are considered to require a school place through this protocol will be given priority over those on waiting lists and can be admitted to schools even when the school is full.

Further details of the protocol are available from the Inclusion and Attendance team webpages at www.coventry.gov.uk/attendanceandinclusion