



**Admission Arrangements for
Community and Voluntary
Controlled Schools
2012-2013**

POLICY DOCUMENT



Appendices

Appendix 1 – List of Blackpool Community, Voluntary Controlled, Voluntary Aided and Trust Schools

**Appendix 2 – Co-ordinated Scheme for Primary Admissions in Blackpool
2012-2013**

Appendix 3 – Timetable for Primary Co-ordinated Admissions 2012-2013

Appendix 4 – Co-ordinated Scheme for Secondary Admissions 2012-2013

Appendix 5 – Timetable for Secondary Co-ordinated Admissions 2012-2013

Blackpool Council Admissions Policy 2012-2013 For Community, Voluntary Controlled and Trust Schools

Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to those Blackpool Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for which Blackpool Council is the Admissions Authority. Blackpool Trust Schools have adopted this Policy.

The Governing Bodies of Voluntary Aided and Trust Schools in Blackpool are responsible for setting their own admissions criteria and for determining the allocation of school places in accordance with their published admission policy.

See Appendix 1 for a comprehensive list of all Blackpool schools, including their published admission numbers.

Legal Framework

In accordance with the provisions of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, the Education and Inspections Act 2006, the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2008 and the Schools Admissions (Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2008, Blackpool Council has formulated its admission policy for 2012-2013, and for subsequent years subject to any review, as it relates to Blackpool's Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools.

Co-ordinated Admission Arrangements

In accordance with the Education (Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) Regulations 2006, Blackpool's Co-ordinated Schemes for Primary and Secondary Admissions allows for an inter-Blackpool co-ordinated approach, which is also fully co-ordinated with Lancashire County Council.

Admission to nursery classes

This policy does not apply to children being admitted to nursery education, including nursery provision delivered in schools or co-located children's centres.

Primary schools with an attached nursery class

Where schools have a maintained nursery class attached, separate admission arrangements must be published for entry to the nursery.

The Headteacher and Governing Body manage admissions to a maintained nursery class on behalf of the Local Authority. Admissions are made with reference to criteria that give due priority to Children Looked After, children with specific educational, social or medical reasons for admission.

Where schools have a nursery attached as part of a Children's Centre, the Children's Centre admissions arrangements for entry to the nursery must be published.

Where schools have a private or voluntary provider nursery class attached, that provider should publish its own admission arrangements for entry to the nursery.

Attendance in any nursery class that is attached to a primary school, does not guarantee admission to the school for primary education. Likewise, schools cannot insist that parents attend any nursery class in order to guarantee admission to the school for primary education.

Admission details for other pre-school settings, including those for nursery aged children, is available from the Blackpool Family Information Service, telephone 0800 092 2332.

Starting Primary School

The Education Act 1996 states that a child is required to attend primary school from the start of term following his or her fifth birthday.

Blackpool's policy is that all children, whose fifth birthday falls within the academic year, may start school in the Autumn Term.

A child would be eligible for a place in a school reception class from the beginning of the Autumn Term if they were born on or between 1st September 2007 and 31st August 2008.

Deferred entry

Primary admission may be deferred by up to two school terms. Where parents wish to defer entry this must be agreed with the school and the Children, Adult and Family Services. Where deferred arrangements are agreed, school places will be reserved.

If a child has a fifth birthday during the Summer term and parents wish to defer entry until the September, they can opt to miss the reception year. School places cannot be reserved in these circumstances and parents would have to apply for a Year 1 place during the Summer term.

Infant class sizes

The Education (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations 1998 (SI 1998/1973) as amended by SI 2006/3409 prescribes that infant classes must not contain more than 30 pupils with a single qualified teacher.

Factors not taken into account in Blackpool's admission policy

Blackpool Council does **not** operate a 'catchment area' policy.

Blackpool Council does **not** operate a 'feeder school' system.

Applying for a school place

If the parent is a Blackpool resident, application must be made to Blackpool's School Admissions Team in the Children, Adult and Family Services. If a parent resides in the Lancashire County Council area or in any other area, application must be made to their "home" Local Authority.

Applications can be made online via the Blackpool Council website www.blackpool.gov.uk. A paper application form can also be completed, which will be available from Blackpool primary schools and the School Admissions Team.

Submission of a late application could reduce the chance of a place at a preferred school.

A pupil living in any part of Blackpool or outside of Blackpool may express a preference for a place at any of the schools for which the Blackpool Local Authority controls admissions.

Allocation of places

Blackpool Council operates an Equal Preference Scheme.

After the published closing date for the return of the admission applications, the Children, Adult and Family Services will complete the process of allocating school places to pupils.

Wherever possible, pupils will be allocated to a school in accordance with parental preference.

The limitation on this will be the statutory limitation contained in Section 86 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, which states that a Local Authority need not comply with parental preference, "if compliance with the preference would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources".

Parental preference will be met provided that the demand for places does not exceed the agreed admission number listed against the school.

Where demand for a school exceeds the available places the Local Authority will allocate places fairly and objectively using its published oversubscription criteria.

The criteria used to allocate places at oversubscribed schools is set out in this document.

Published Admission Numbers

The school's Published Admission Number (PAN) defines the number of pupils to be admitted to the school in the relevant year.

When setting the Admission Number, the Local Authority has due regard to the available space within the school as defined by the school's net capacity.

Where a school is oversubscribed, the Local Authority's admission arrangements must specify how it will determine the allocation of places.

Governing Bodies of Voluntary Aided and Trust Schools in Blackpool are responsible for setting their own Admission Number.

Children with Statements of Special Educational Needs that name a school in the Statement

When a child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs that names a particular school in the Statement, all Admission Authorities are required by Schedule 27, Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 to admit the child to that school. Schools **must** admit these children whether they have places or not.

Siblings (including multiple births)

Where there are families of multiple births wanting admission and there is only a single place left within the admission number, then the Local Authority will exercise as much flexibility as possible (within the requirements of infant class size legislation in the case of admission to primary school).

If it is not possible to accommodate all children from multiple births at the same school, then a random allocation will be carried out. In the event of a random allocation, someone independent of the Children, Adult and Family Services and of the school, would supervise the process, and parents would be invited to attend.

Parents should pursue a place for the other children via the appeal route or consider an alternative school that may be able to accommodate all children.

Equal Preference Scheme

Blackpool Local Authority operates an 'Equal Preference Scheme', which the DfE considers maximises parental satisfaction with the admissions arrangements.

Parents are invited, for both primary and secondary schools, to express a preference, in priority order, for three schools, and to give reasons for their preference.

All preferences will be treated equally, initially, but if more than one school can potentially be offered, **a single offer will be for the school that the parent has ranked highest.**

The Local Authority will make a single offer of a school place in accordance with Blackpool's Co-ordinated Admission arrangements. See the relevant Co-ordinated admission scheme (**appendix 2 and 4**). The Local Authority will make the offer in writing on the published national offer date.

Expressing a preference does not guarantee that a parent will receive an offer of their highest ranked school. Furthermore, a small number of parents may not receive an offer of a place at a lower ranked school.

Over-subscription criteria

The school's Published Admission Number (PAN) determines the number of available places.

Where there are more preferences for a particular school than there are places available, the Local Authority employs its oversubscription criteria to objectively determine which children should be offered a place at that particular school.

In the event of the admission number being reached within any one of the oversubscription criteria in the order listed below, the distance criteria will be used as a 'tie breaker'. In the event of equal distance, a random allocation will be used to determine who takes priority for a place.

If a place cannot be offered at any one of the parent's preferred schools, a place will be offered at the nearest school with an available place.

The child's name will be added to a school's waiting list and parents will be advised of any schools at which there are vacancies.

The over subscription criteria is applied in the following order:

Children Looked After

Blackpool Council gives the highest priority to Children Looked After, as required by the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the Education (Admission of Looked After Children) (England) Regulations 2006.

A Looked After child is a child who is in the care of a Local Authority or provided with accommodation by that Authority, as defined in Section 22 of the Children Act 1989, at the time of application and allocation.

If a child ceases to be a Looked After Child after the application is made, this is regarded as a relevant change of circumstance.

Medical Conditions

Places will be given to children where they, or their parent(s)/carer(s), have a serious exceptional medical condition, where they contend that attendance at a particular school is appropriate.

Supporting evidence will be required. This must set out the particular reasons and the level of risk to the child or family's health as to why the school in question is the most suitable school, and the difficulties that would arise if the child had to attend an alternative school.

It should be noted that all schools can make provision for special educational needs, and can also manage common conditions e.g. asthma, epilepsy, diabetes.

There must be substantive medical evidence e.g. in the form of a letter from a specialist/consultant doctor (not a General Practitioner). Each case will be treated on merit, and the Local Authority may consult its own medical advisers to confirm no alternative school can be considered due to the reasons and level of risk. If no alternative school is suitable, only then will priority be given to the child for the preferred school.

It will not be possible to consider an application within this criterion if appropriate supporting evidence has not been produced at the time of application.

Social or welfare reasons for admission

Where there are exceptional sensitive individual and compelling family circumstances, which are directly relevant to the preferred school, these may also be considered at the time of application.

Requests for consideration within this criterion will require appropriate professional reports e.g. from a social worker, police officer or educational psychologist. The report must demonstrate exact reasons, and the impact on the child or family's circumstances as to why this is the only suitable school compared to other schools available. Only exceptional reasons directly relevant to a particular school will be considered. Priority will be given to the child for the preferred school only if the submitted report unequivocally proves the circumstances and demonstrates why an alternative school is unsuitable.

If supporting evidence is not provided, it will not be possible to consider the application under the social and welfare criterion.

All information which is submitted will be considered as being confidential.

Siblings

Priority will be given to brothers and sisters of children already attending the school at the time of application and who will still be attending at the time of admission.

This includes full brothers and sisters, half brothers and sisters, step brothers and sisters and foster brothers and sisters **who are living within the same family at the same address**.

Full brothers and sisters who **do not** live at the same address **will** still be given priority as a sibling.

Half, step and foster brothers and sisters who **do not** live at the same address will **not** be classed as siblings.

Distance criterion

Blackpool Council determines the distance from the applicant's home address to the school on the following basis.

The distance between the applicant's home and school is taken as a straight line between the Ordnance Survey address point of the applicant's home address and the main entrance of the school. The Ordnance Survey address point is a point within the boundary of the property and is usually located at its centre.

Distances are measured automatically using the Council's Geographic Information System.

Priority will be given to pupils for whom the preferred school is their nearest school.

Where there is more than one application from a postal address contained within a block of flats, priority will be given to the applicant residing in the lower storey flat.

If the Local Authority is unable to determine eligibility on distance, i.e. two or more addresses are equal distance from the school, a random allocation will be carried out. In the event of a random allocation, someone independent of the Children, Adult and Family Services and of the school, would supervise the process, and parents would be invited to attend.

NB. The shortest safe walking route continues to be a consideration for transport purposes.

Late applications

Applications received after the published closing date will be treated as late applications.

Only in exceptional circumstances, and where appropriate evidence is provided, will those applications received after the closing date, but before offers of places have been made, be considered concurrently with those applications received on time.

The circumstances that might justify a late application include, but are not restricted to, the illness of a single parent/carer, which might have reasonably impinged upon their ability to submit an application on time.

For under subscribed schools it may be possible to consider late applications up to the school's published admission number.

Any late applications for Voluntary Aided Schools will be referred to the School Governing Body for the necessary consideration in liaison with the Local Authority.

Change of preference

Parents may not change their preference once the closing date has passed, unless there is a significant reason for doing so, for example a house move. Any requests must be made in writing, with evidence to demonstrate the reasons.

Waiting lists

The School Admissions Team will establish and maintain a waiting list for each school for which it is the admissions authority. The waiting list will be maintained until the end of the Autumn Term in the admission year.

Parents/carers may request that their child's name is placed on the waiting list for any school that is ranked higher than the one they have been offered. Parents may also request that the child is placed on the waiting list for a school that was not an original preference.

If a vacancy occurs, which will take the school below its published admission number, the place will be filled from the waiting list.

In accordance with the DfE School Admissions Code, places on the waiting list are maintained according to the pupil's priority against the school's admission criteria, not simply the length of time that they have been on the waiting list. A new applicant, who has a higher priority according to the admission criteria, would be ranked higher than those that have been on the list for some time.

Parents who intend to appeal against the Local Authority's decision not to offer a place at a preferred school(s) should do so irrespective of having their child's name placed on the waiting list. For those parents who proceed to an independent appeal, no consideration is given to the child's position on the waiting list.

Appeal arrangements

Any parent whose child is not offered a school place for which they have expressed a preference has the right to appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel.

Parents can also appeal for a school that was not an original preferred school.

Parents who intend to appeal for a Community or Voluntary Controlled school must complete a Blackpool Council Appeal Form. This form should also be completed when appealing for a Trust school as Blackpool Trust schools have delegated the responsibilities relating to appeals to the Local Authority.

Parents who wish to appeal for a place in a Voluntary Aided should contact the school direct to request an appeal form.

Fraudulent applications

Where the Local Authority discovers that a child has been allocated a place as the result of an intentionally misleading application from a parent, for example, where a false address has been provided, then the Local Authority is required to withdraw the offer of the place. The application will then be considered afresh and a right of appeal offered if a place is refused.

Admission to Blackpool Schools after 1st September

All parents requesting a school place, either because they are new to Blackpool, or because they are wishing to transfer schools within Blackpool, are required to complete an In-Year Application Form, allowing them to express up to three preferences. The admission of all students to Blackpool schools will be co-ordinated by the Children, Adult and Family Services, in line with recent changes in legislation.

In-Year Fair Access Protocol

Blackpool Council operates an In-Year Fair Access Protocol, which ensures that access to education is secured quickly for children who have complex needs, and to ensure that all schools in the area admit equally under these arrangements.

APPENDICES

BLACKPOOL COMMUNITY, VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED, VOLUNTARY AIDED AND TRUST SCHOOLS

Community Primary Schools	Admission Number
Anchorsholme Primary School	90
Unity College (Primary Provision)	60
Boundary Primary School	60
Claremont Primary School	60
Devonshire Primary School	60
Hawes Side Primary School	90
Kincraig Primary School	30
Layton Primary School	90
Marton Primary School	60
Mereside Primary School	30
Moor Park Primary School	60
Norbreck Primary School	90
Revoe Community Primary School	60
Roseacre Primary School	90
Stanley Primary School	90
Thames Primary School	60
Waterloo Primary School	90
Westcliff Primary School	30
Voluntary Controlled Primary School	
Bispham Endowed C of E Primary School	60

Voluntary Aided Primary Schools	Admission Number
Baines Endowed Church of England School	70
Christ the King Catholic Primary School	30
Holy Family Catholic Primary School	30
Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Primary School	30
St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School	30
St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School	30
St John's Church of England Primary School	30
St John Vianney Catholic Primary School	60
St Kentigern's Catholic Primary School	30
St Nicholas' Church of England Primary School	60
St Teresa's Catholic Primary School	30

Community Secondary Schools	Admission Number
Unity College	95
Bispham High School Arts College	220
Highfield Humanities College	224

Voluntary Aided Secondary Schools	Admission Number
St George's School A Church of England Business & Enterprise College	190
St Mary's Catholic College	210

Trust Secondary Schools	Admission Number
Collegiate High School, A Raising Aspirations Trust	210
Montgomery High School, A Language College & Full Service School	290
Palatine Community Sports College	175

**CO-ORDINATED ADMISSIONS SCHEME FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS
IN BLACKPOOL 2012/13**

(PROPOSED SCHEME)

1. Introduction

The aim of Blackpool's co-ordinated primary school admissions scheme is to provide a fair and transparent route for the consideration of parental preferences in accordance with legislation and the Department for Education (DfE) School Admissions Code.

The scheme enables parents of all pupils living within Blackpool who require a primary school, to complete a single application (either on-line or on a paper form) expressing up to three preferences for admission to all primary schools both within Blackpool and also in the neighbouring authority area. An opportunity will be given for parents to state their reasons for this preference.

All preferences will be considered equally and where more than one primary school could be offered the priority order in which the parents expressed their preferences will be used to determine which single primary school offer is made.

Following consideration of expressed preferences, the Local Authority (LA) will issue to parents living within Blackpool the offer of one primary school on behalf of all admission authorities operating the co-ordinated scheme.

In the event that any parent's preferred primary school cannot be offered, the Local Authority (LA) will ensure that an alternative primary school offer is made.

The scheme seeks to preserve the powers and responsibilities of individual admission authorities to determine and apply their published admissions policies, but enables decisions to be taken within a co-ordinated framework. It is recognised that for the scheme to operate successfully, it will be important for admission authorities to work together closely, share information when required and strictly adhere to the agreed timescales.

2. The Offer of a Place

In accordance with legislation the Blackpool scheme will ensure that parents only receive one school offer.

The scheme aims to ensure that each preference is considered equally and that parents receive their highest priority school. Where multiple offers of a school place can be made, the Local Authority (LA) will refer to the priority order of the schools identified by parents on their application. The offer that is the highest ranked preference will be confirmed.

Where a place cannot be offered at a parent's preferred primary school the LA will ensure that an alternative school offer is made.

3. Processing of Preference Forms

3.1 Stage 1 - Expression of preferences

During week commencing **Monday 5th September 2011**, admissions information and application forms will be available from all Blackpool primary schools and Blackpool Council buildings.

Parents can access the on-line system at www.blackpool.gov.uk/schooladmissions

Parents living outside of Blackpool will be sent copies of admission information on request from the School Admissions Team. These parents will be advised to complete either an on-line or paper application form for their home authority.

The school admission information for parents will include the following:

- (a) details of the operation of the qualifying scheme for the co-ordination of primary admission arrangements both within Blackpool and with the neighbouring authority;
- (b) an explanation of the admission arrangements for all Blackpool maintained primary schools;
- (c) the timescale for each stage of the admissions process;
- (d) information on the number of applications received for places at each school the previous year, the number which were successful and the criteria under which they were successful;
- (e) where possible additional information to help parents assess realistically their likelihood of obtaining a place at their preferred schools, and describing the risk of unrealistic preferences and the consequences of ranking preferences in a certain way.

The information will also contain details about how to apply on-line for a school place and a hard copy of the common paper admissions application form on which Blackpool residents may apply for primary schools for their children. Primary schools in neighbouring authority areas should also be included by Blackpool residents on their application.

On-line and paper applications can be supplemented (but not replaced) by a school's own supplementary information form. This allows individual voluntary aided (church) schools to be able to consider an application on faith grounds in accordance with that school's admissions policy.

Where a parent lists a Voluntary Aided school on their application, they may also wish to complete the school's supplementary information form and return it to the school. The school will retain the supplementary information form and match it with details sent to the school from the LA. A supplementary form is not a legal requirement. It is, however, necessary for any applicant who wishes their application to be considered against the school's faith admission criteria. It will be the responsibility of the parent to complete either an on-line or a paper application form and to liaise with voluntary aided schools direct about their supplementary form.

Consideration of preferences and the allocation of places cannot be made without

the completion of either an on-line application or a paper application form.

Parents will be invited to state on their primary school application up to three preferences in priority order and an opportunity will be given for parents to state their reasons for those preferences. All parental preferences will be considered equally by individual admission authorities and the LA will co-ordinate the process to ensure a single primary school offer for each pupil.

Parents should be encouraged to use the on-line application system. This is secure, provides a quick e-mail acknowledgement of receipt of an application and allows earlier notification of a school offer.

Completed paper applications must be returned to the School Admissions Team, Progress House, Clifton Road, Blackpool FY4 4US.

All parents must complete an application by **Sunday 15th January 2012**.

3.2 Stage 2 - Circulating of Preferences

Blackpool maintained primary schools must forward any completed paper application forms that they have received, to the School Admissions Team immediately.

Details of all the preferences will be entered into the Blackpool's admissions database.

Voluntary Aided primary schools will be given details of all applications for the school, but will not be informed of the school's priority order on each parent's application.

Voluntary Aided schools must consider all on-line and paper applications, even where applicants have decided not to complete a supplementary form.

No pupil whose parent has completed only the supplementary information form should be considered for a school place unless they have also completed either an on-line or a paper application. Where this has happened schools may seek advice from the School Admissions Team.

The LA will also, at this time, commence processes relating to verifying looked after children, siblings and medical, social, welfare issues for oversubscribed Community and Voluntary Controlled schools. The on-line system will allow primary schools to have input into this during the period of application although final verifications are only possible after the closing date (as applicants can amend their application up to this date).

All preferences will be circulated between admission authorities **by Friday 24th February 2012**.

Voluntary Aided Schools will be sent all relevant details and any supplementary forms received by this date which they will require in order to apply their own oversubscription criteria.

Where parents have requested a school outside of Blackpool, the LA will also notify the relevant authority/authorities and forward to them details of the application together with any supporting information provided by the parent(s).

The maintaining authority will notify Blackpool of the details of any applications which they have received which include Blackpool primary schools as parental preferences.

3.3 Stage 3 - First Sort

By **Friday 16th March 2011** each Blackpool Voluntary Aided school will return a list to the School Admissions Team, of all applicants, ranked in accordance with the school's admissions policy. This list will be used to establish the initial offers and to compile a waiting list from which places will be offered should vacancies subsequently occur. The lists from the Governing Bodies of Voluntary Aided schools will therefore need to take into account the need for offers to be manipulated in accordance with the agreed equal preference scheme and each parent's priority order of preferred schools.

The LA will then:

- (a) consider those pupils who could be offered more than one school. Where the LA is aware that more than one offer of a primary school place could be made, reference will be made to the parents' original order of priority on their original application. The school which is listed highest in priority on the parents' application be deemed to be the school which will be offered;
- (b) consider those children who do not currently have the offer for their first priority school and ensure that their second and third priority schools are considered and, where possible, an offer is made;
- (c) where none of the parent's preferred primary schools can be offered, the LA will offer a place at the nearest suitable school with an available place. The nearest suitable school will be established by measuring the shortest straight line route between the child's home and the school.

3.4 Stage 4 – Notifying of offers

By **Friday 30th March 2012**, the LA will forward to Blackpool Voluntary Aided schools, a list of all pupils who will be offered a place at the school.

The LA will inform neighbouring authorities of any Blackpool pupils who could have been offered a school in their area, but where an alternative school is to be offered in accordance with the parents' preference priority. Blackpool will be informed by the neighbouring authority of any Blackpool pupils who are to be offered places in schools within their area.

Blackpool will inform the neighbouring authority of pupils living outside Blackpool who could be offered places in Blackpool schools. Where the pupil could also be offered a school in their home authority, the home authority scheme will determine which offer should be made.

On **Monday 23rd April 2012**, the LA will issue a letter to every parent in Blackpool who completed an application on behalf of all Blackpool maintained primary schools, to inform them of their allocated primary school place. If the offer is made on behalf of another admission authority, this will be made clear.

Where the initial offer is not for a parent's first priority primary school this will be made clear and the reasons why a place at the school could not be offered will be given. In these cases the offer letter will also include advice about waiting lists and rights of appeal.

4. Late Applications

Any application received by a primary school after the closing date of **Sunday 15th January 2012**, should be date stamped, receipted and returned to the School Admissions Team.

Application forms received after the published closing date, will only be considered at that time if the following conditions apply:

- (a) if the number of preferences received for a school is below the published admission number or:
- (b) there are extenuating circumstances justifying a late application, for example, parent/carer illness which required hospitalisation for the major part of the period between the publication of the brochure and the closing date for applications.

The onus will be placed upon individual applicants to provide the necessary evidence to support an exceptional case for late application.

All other late applications will only be considered after all other requests for places have been considered.

5. Waiting Lists

Waiting lists for all Blackpool primary schools will be initiated in the week following the offer letters being sent. Parents/carers may request that their child's name be placed on the waiting list(s) for any schools that were ranked higher than the school that has been offered. Parents may also request that a child is placed on the waiting list for a school that was not an original preference.

If a vacancy occurs, which will take a school below its published admission number, the place will be filled from the waiting list.

In accordance with the DfE School Admissions Code, places on the waiting list are maintained according to the pupil's priority against the school's admission criteria, not simply the length of time that they have been on the waiting list. A new applicant, who has a higher priority according to the admission criteria, should be ranked higher than those that have been on the list for some time.

The School Admissions Team will continue to compile and manage waiting lists until the end of the Autumn Term.

Voluntary Aided primary schools will maintain their own waiting lists in accordance with the school's admissions policy, so parents will have to contact the school direct to ascertain the position on the waiting list.

6. Applications received after 1st March 2012 but before the end of August 2012

The LA will continue to co-ordinate admission arrangements on behalf of all Blackpool

maintained schools for the new Reception intake, until the end of August 2012. Applications made direct to any Blackpool maintained school within the scheme, must be forwarded to the LA immediately.

Where only a supplementary form is received, the school must inform the LA so that it can verify whether either an on-line or a paper application form has been received from the parent and if not, to contact the parent and ask them to complete an application.

The LA will enter the details onto the central admissions database and after consultation with the relevant admission authorities, will offer a place in accordance with the agreed scheme.

If none of the parent's preferences can be met, the nearest suitable school with a place available will be offered and waiting list and appeals information will be provided.

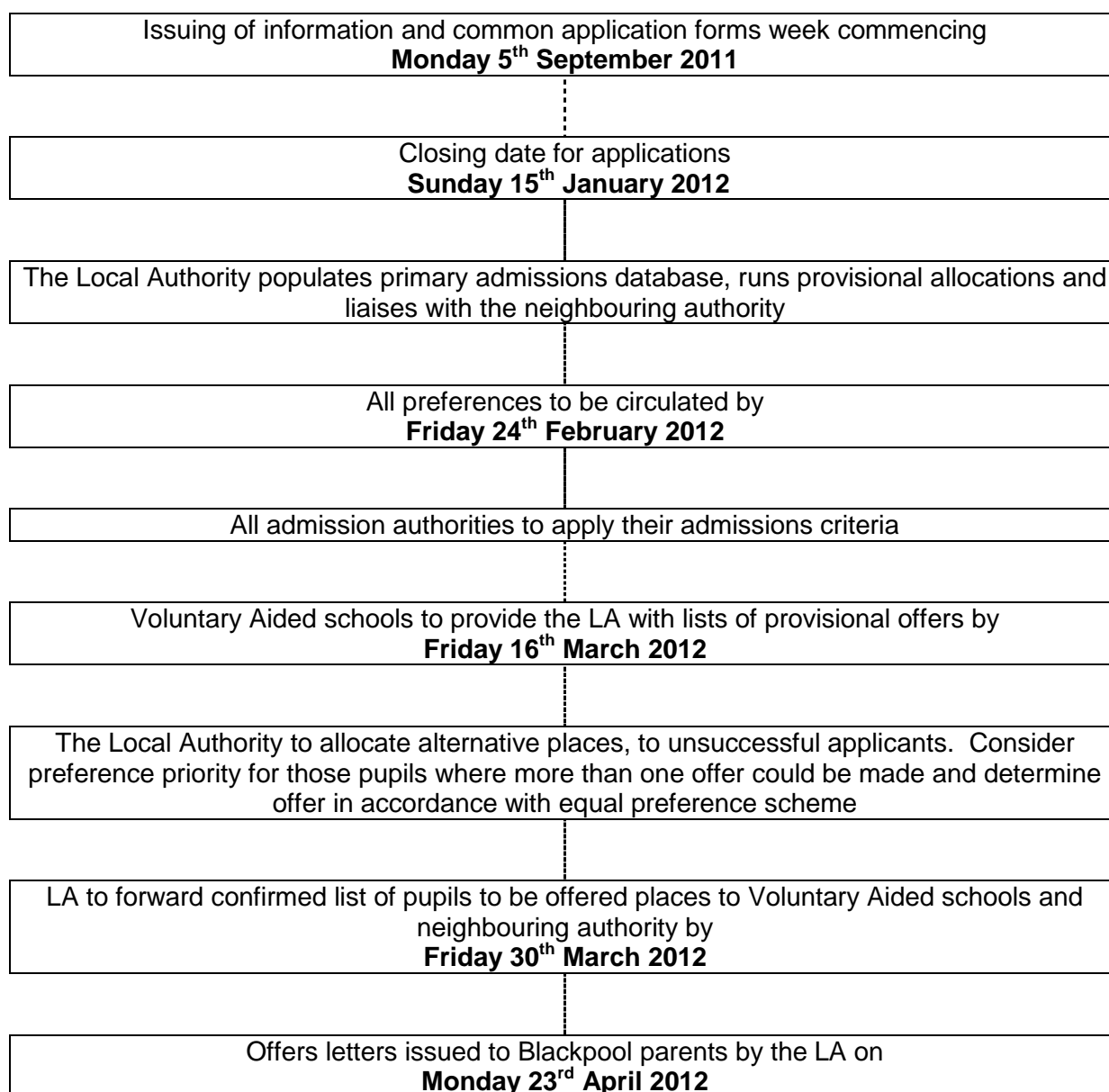
7. Appeals

Where the LA as the admission authority, or on behalf of another admission authority which is party to the scheme, notifies parents that none of their preferred schools can be offered, they will also inform parents of their right of appeal.

Parents wishing to appeal for a Community or Voluntary Controlled school may request an appeal form from the School Admissions Team. This form should also be requested if appealing for a Trust school (Blackpool Trust schools currently delegate appeal related responsibilities to the Local Authority).

Appeal forms for Voluntary Aided schools can be obtained direct from the relevant school.

**CO-ORDINATING SCHEME FOR PRIMARY ADMISSIONS - 2012/13
T I M E T A B L E**



**CO-ORDINATED ADMISSIONS SCHEME FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS
IN BLACKPOOL 2012/13**

(PROPOSED SCHEME)

1. Introduction

The aim of Blackpool's co-ordinated secondary school admissions scheme is to provide a fair and transparent route for the consideration of parental preferences in accordance with legislation and the Department for Education (DFE) School Admissions Code.

The scheme enables parents of all pupils living within Blackpool who are transferring to secondary school, to complete a single application (either on-line or on a paper form) expressing up to three preferences for admission to all secondary schools both within Blackpool and also in the neighbouring authority area. An opportunity will be given for parents to state their reasons for this preference.

All preferences will be considered equally and where more than one secondary school could be offered the priority order in which the parents expressed their preferences will be used to determine which single secondary school offer is made.

Following consideration of expressed preferences, the Local Authority (LA) will issue to parents living within Blackpool the offer of one secondary school on behalf of all admission authorities operating the co-ordinated scheme.

In the event that any parent's preferred secondary school cannot be offered, the Local Authority (LA) will ensure that an alternative secondary school offer is made.

The scheme seeks to preserve the powers and responsibilities of individual admission authorities to determine and apply their published admissions policies, but enables decisions to be taken within a co-ordinated framework. It is recognised that for the scheme to operate successfully, it will be important for admission authorities to work together closely, share information when required and strictly adhere to the agreed timescales.

2. The Offer of a Place

In accordance with legislation the Blackpool scheme will ensure that parents only receive one school offer.

The scheme aims to ensure that each preference is considered equally and that parents receive their highest priority school. Where multiple offers of a school place can be made, the Local Authority (LA) will refer to the priority order of the schools identified by parents on their application. The offer that is the highest ranked priority will be confirmed.

Where a place cannot be offered at a parent's preferred secondary school the LA will ensure that an alternative school offer is made.

3. Processing of Preference Forms

3.1 Stage 1 - Expression of preferences

During week commencing **Monday 5th September 2011**, the LA circulates admissions information and details of how to apply for school places to the parents of all Year 6 pupils attending Blackpool maintained primary schools who are due to transfer to secondary schools in September 2012.

Parents of Blackpool children who do not attend Blackpool maintained primary schools can obtain copies of this information from any Blackpool Council building. They can also access the on-line system at www.blackpool.gov.uk/schooladmissions.

Parents living outside of the Blackpool will be sent copies of admission information on request from the School Admissions Team. These parents will be advised to complete either an on-line or paper application form for their home authority.

The school admission information for parents will include the following:

- (a) details of the operation of the qualifying scheme for the co-ordination of secondary admission arrangements both within Blackpool and with the neighbouring authority;
- (b) an explanation of the admission arrangements for all Blackpool maintained secondary schools;
- (c) the timescale for each stage of the admissions process;
- (d) information on the number of applications received for places at each school the previous year, the number which were successful and the criteria under which they were successful;
- (e) where possible additional information to help parents assess realistically their likelihood of obtaining a place at their preferred schools, and describing the risk of unrealistic preferences and the consequences of ranking preferences in a certain way.

The information will also contain details about how to apply on-line for a school place and a hard copy of the common paper admissions application form on which Blackpool residents may apply for secondary schools for their children. Secondary schools in neighbouring authority areas should also be included by Blackpool residents on their application.

On-line and paper applications can be supplemented (but not replaced) by a school's own supplementary information form. This allows individual voluntary aided (church) schools to be able to consider an application on religious or ability grounds in accordance with that school's admissions policy.

Where a parent lists a Voluntary Aided school on their application, they may also wish to complete the school's supplementary information form and return it to the school. The school will retain the supplementary information form and match it with details sent to the school from the LA. A supplementary form is not a legal requirement. It is however necessary for any applicant who wishes their application to be considered against the school's denominational or ability admission criteria. It will be the responsibility of the parent to complete either an on-line or a paper application form and to liaise with voluntary aided schools direct about their supplementary form.

Consideration of preferences and the allocation of places cannot be made without the completion of either an on-line application or a paper application form.

Parents will be invited to state on their secondary school application up to three preferences in priority order and an opportunity will be given for parents to state their reasons for those preferences. All parental preferences will be considered equally by individual admission authorities and the LA will co-ordinate the process to ensure a single secondary school offer for each pupil.

Parents should be encouraged to use the on-line application system. This is secure, provides a quick e-mail acknowledgement of receipt of an application and allows earlier notification of a school offer.

Completed paper applications must be returned to the School Admissions Team, Progress House, Clifton Road, Blackpool FY4 4US.

All parents must complete an application by **Monday 31st October 2011** (this national closing date is a new requirement of the School Admissions Code).

3.2 Stage 2 - Circulating of Preferences

Blackpool maintained primary schools must forward any completed paper application forms that they have received, to the School Admissions Team by **Friday 4th November 2011**.

Primary schools **must not** forward parents' applications direct to any secondary schools. Nor must they under any circumstances inform secondary schools about the priority order of parents' preferences.

Details of all the preferences will be entered into the Blackpool's admissions database.

Voluntary Aided and Trust secondary schools will be given details of all applications for the school, but will not be informed of the school's priority order on each parent's application.

Voluntary Aided and Trust schools must consider all on-line and paper applications, even where applicants have decided not to complete a supplementary form.

No pupil whose parent has completed only the supplementary information form should be considered for a school place unless they have also completed either an on-line or a paper application. Where this has happened schools may seek advice from the School Admissions Team.

The LA will also, at this time, commence processes relating to verifying looked after children, siblings and medical, social, welfare issues for oversubscribed Community and Voluntary Controlled schools. The on-line system will allow primary schools to have input into this during the period of application although final verifications are only possible after the closing date (as applicants can amend their application up to this date).

By **Friday 25th November 2011** the LA will notify the admission authority for each schools of every nomination that has been made for that school.

Voluntary Aided Schools will be sent all relevant details and any supplementary forms received by this date which they will require in order to apply their own oversubscription criteria.

Where parents have requested a school outside of Blackpool, the LA will also notify the relevant authority/authorities and forward to them details of the application together with any supporting information provided by the parent(s).

The maintaining authority will notify Blackpool of the details of any applications which they have received which include Blackpool secondary schools as parental preferences.

3.3 Stage 3 - First Sort

By **Friday 16th December 2011** each Blackpool Voluntary Aided school will return a list to the School Admissions Team, of all applicants, ranked in accordance with the school's admissions policy. This list will be used to establish the initial offers and to compile a waiting list from which places will be offered should vacancies subsequently occur. The lists from the Governing Bodies of Voluntary Aided schools will therefore need to take into account the need for offers to be manipulated in accordance with the agreed equal preference scheme and each parent's priority order of preferred schools.

The LA will then:

- (a) consider those pupils who could be offered more than one school. Where the LA is aware that more than one offer of a secondary school place could be made, reference will be made to the parents' original order of priority on their original application. The school which is listed highest in priority on the parents' application be deemed to be the school which will be offered;
- (b) consider those children who do not currently have the offer for their first priority school and ensure that their second and third priority schools are considered and, where possible, an offer is made;
- (c) where none of the parent's preferred secondary schools can be offered, the LA will offer a place at the nearest suitable school with an available place. The nearest suitable school will be established by measuring the shortest straight line route between the child's home and the school.

3.4 Stage 4 – Notifying of offers

By **Monday 30th January 2012** the LA will forward to Blackpool Voluntary Aided schools, a list of all pupils who will be offered a place at the school.

The LA will inform neighbouring authorities of any Blackpool pupils who could have been offered a school in their area, but where an alternative school is to be offered in accordance with the parents' preference priority. Blackpool will be informed by the neighbouring authority of any Blackpool pupils who are to be offered places in schools within their area.

Blackpool will inform the neighbouring authority of pupils living outside Blackpool who could be offered places in Blackpool schools. Where the pupil could also be offered a school in their home authority, the home authority scheme will determine which offer should be made.

Blackpool will send all schools the final pupil allocation list by **Wednesday 8th February 2012**.

On **Thursday 1st March 2012**, the LA will issue a letter to every parent in Blackpool who completed an application on behalf of all Blackpool maintained secondary schools, to inform them of their allocated secondary school place. If the offer is made on behalf of another admission authority, this will be made clear.

Where the initial offer is not for a parent's first priority secondary school this will be made clear and the reasons why a place at the school could not be offered will be given. In these cases the offer letter will also include advice about waiting lists and rights of appeal.

4. Late Applications

Any application received by a primary school after the closing date of **31st October 2011** should be date stamped, receipted and returned to the School Admissions Team.

Application forms received after the published closing date, will only be considered at that time if the following conditions apply:

- (a) if the number of preferences received for a school is below the published admission number or:
- (b) there are extenuating circumstances justifying a late application, for example, parent/carer illness which required hospitalisation for the major part of the period between the publication of the brochure and the closing date for applications.

The onus will be placed upon individual applicants to provide the necessary evidence to support an exceptional case for late application.

All other late applications will only be considered after all other requests for places have been considered.

5. Waiting Lists

Waiting lists for all Blackpool primary schools will be initiated in the week following the offer letters being sent. Parents/carers may request that their child's name be placed on the waiting list(s) for any schools that were ranked higher than the school that has been offered. Parents may also request that a child is placed on the waiting list for a school that was not an original preference.

If a vacancy occurs, which will take a school below its published admission number, the place will be filled from the waiting list.

In accordance with the DfE School Admissions Code, places on the waiting list are maintained according to the pupil's priority against the school's admission criteria, not simply the length of time that they have been on the waiting list. A new applicant, who has a higher priority according to the admission criteria, should be ranked higher than those that have been on the list for some time.

The School Admissions Team will continue to compile and manage waiting lists until the end of the Autumn Term.

Voluntary Aided secondary schools will maintain their own waiting lists in accordance with the school's admissions policy, so parents will have to contact the school direct to ascertain the position on the waiting list.

6. Applications received after 1st March 2012 but before the end of August 2012

The LA will continue to co-ordinate admission arrangements on behalf of all Blackpool maintained schools for the new Year 7 intake, until the end of August 2012. Applications made direct to any Blackpool maintained school within the scheme, must be forwarded to the LA immediately.

Where only a supplementary form is received, the school must inform the LA so that it can verify whether either an on-line or a paper application form has been received from the parent and if not, to contact the parent and ask them to complete an application.

The LA will enter the details onto the central admissions database and after consultation with the relevant admission authorities, will offer a place in accordance with the agreed scheme.

If none of the parent's preferences can be met, the nearest suitable school with a place available will be offered and waiting list and appeals information will be provided.

7. Appeals

Where the LA as the admission authority, or on behalf of another admission authority which is party to the scheme, notifies parents that none of their preferred schools can be offered, they will also inform parents of their right of appeal.

Parents wishing to appeal for a Community school may request an appeal form from the School Admissions Team. This form should also be requested if appealing for a Trust school (Blackpool Trust schools currently delegate appeal related responsibilities to the Local Authority).

Appeal forms for Voluntary Aided schools can be obtained direct from the relevant school.

**CO-ORDINATING SCHEME FOR SECONDARY ADMISSIONS - 2012/13
T I M E T A B L E**

