

GUIDANCE NOTES IN-YEAR SCHOOL ADMISSIONS PROCESSES FOR 2016

Advice to Parents

All preferences are treated equally and the Local Authority will offer the highest preference that is able to be offered. Therefore parents should rank the schools in order of **their** preference.

It is advisable to use all the preferences (3) and make one of the preferences the Priority Area school (applicable from primary applicants only) and, one preference where vacancies have been shown on the vacancy grid published online at www.ealing.gov.uk/inyearadmissions

If the Local Authority is unable to offer a preferred school after 4-6 school weeks, the applicant will be offered a place at the nearest school that has an available vacancy. Therefore it is important that they make realistic preferences by checking available vacancies and for primary applicants identifying the Priority Area school.

Application Forms (Online and Hard Copy)

Please encourage parents to apply online except for parents who have a child who has a statement of special educational needs (SEN) or an education, health and care (EHC) plan (who must contact their SEN Officer), parents who wish to apply to independent schools, and parents who wish to apply for schools located outside of the borough of Ealing.

The online application is available for all UK residents who wish to apply for Ealing schools and can be accessed at: www.ealing.gov.uk/inyearadmissions

There is no cut-off date for in-year applications; however offers will only be communicated during term time. Weekly cut off times apply during term time of 4pm each Friday.

If a parent is unable to apply online they can request a paper copy at Perceval House. The school can also contact their in-year admissions contact to request copies electronically to be printed at the school or a limited number of forms can be posted to the school.

The following schools do not currently participate in the co-ordinated in-year admissions scheme and parents must apply direct to: Twyford CE High School, William Perkin CE High School, The Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School, and St Gregory's Catholic Primary School.

Supplementary Documents

The in-year admissions team require proof of the pupil's date of birth and will accept one of the following:

- A copy of the pupil's passport
- A copy of the short or long birth certificate
- A copy of the UKBA Identity Card.

We will also require proof of the parent/carer's address and will accept one of the following documentation:

- Current year's council tax bill
- Recent child benefit or child tax credit letter
- Letter confirming entitlement to benefits (housing, income support, Jobseekers etc.)
- Tenancy agreement from a registered lettings agency
- Private tenancy agreement **with** copies of **2** bills/documents.
- Letter from social services, or the National Asylum Support Service (NASS), or the United Kingdom Border Agency (UKBA) or housing department confirming placement at your address

If the parent is renting shared accommodation or living with family or friends and are unable to provide any of the above we will accept the following documents as evidence:

- Written confirmation from the landlord/registered tenant that the parent is living at the address, the date the applicant family moved in and how long they intend to stay **with** copies of **2** bills/documents in the parent's name at this address.

Acceptable bills/documents to provide **with** a tenancy agreement or written confirmation from the landlord/registered tenant (not sufficient on their own).

- Bank statement/credit card statement
- Mobile phone bill
- Utility bill (e.g. gas/electric/water)
- Wage slip

Schools must obtain proof of date of birth and proof of address for their admission file as the in-year admissions team cannot guarantee the receipt of such documents during the admission process.

School Offers

A weekly vacancy return is expected from all Ealing schools to the contact in in-year admissions.

The in-year admission team allocate places to schools participating in the co-ordinated in-year admission scheme on a weekly basis during term based on the vacancies returned by the school weekly. The published school admission criteria will determine the priority of applicants on a waiting list and the vacancy will be allocated to the pupil at the top of the list.

For confirmed Previously Looked After Children, the in-year admissions team will contact the school liaison about the admission.

Non-preference allocations also called 'no choice allocations' will be determined by distance and availability which is individual from applicant to applicant. This type of allocation is undertaken if a pupil is out of school for 4-6 school weeks from receipt of their in-year application.

Successful applicants are sent a formal offer letter with advice to contact the school they are offered.

Details of offers are published on the School Admissions Database (SAM) accessible by the school admission administrators. Schools are expected to contact successful applicants showing as 'Place Offered' and arrange the admission ideally within 10 school days but no more than 4 school weeks.

Schools should not wait for 'Place Accepted' status before contacting parents as we have found parents are more likely to contact the school than confirm their decision with the Local Authority. Should a parent contact the school to accept, the school must have the parent complete a school reply slip which must be returned to the in-year admissions team (internal post or electronically) to ensure the decision is logged with the team.

Offers are available for 10 school days; a further 5 consecutive day grace period is extended to the applicant allowing time to return a firm decision.

In line with the School Admissions Code an offer cannot be withdrawn unless:

- a) The parent/carer has written their intention to decline the offered school.
- b) The parent/carer does not contact us after 10 school days + 5 consecutive days with their decision.
- c) An administration error has been made by the in-year admissions team.

The Local Authority has a duty to track pupils into education, therefore when there are grounds to withdraw an offer, further investigation must be undertaken to determine the education arrangements for a child before the offer is withdrawn.

The school should make every effort to determine a pupil's destination, as you are often the first contact the parent makes upon receipt of an offer letter and parents are more likely to divulge information from this contact. By not obtaining this information there will be a delay in releasing the vacancy.

The school must inform the in-year admissions team of start dates for new in-year transfers as well as declines you may receive direct from the parent/carer.

Should the school not be able to contact a parent/carer

Telephone all available telephone numbers provided on SAM, try and contact the applicant at different times of the day, if they do not return any messages left and

you are unable to get in touch with them send an appointment letter in the post and retain a copy for your records.

Should the applicant fail to arrive for their appointment you can either send a further letter arranging an alternative appointment or arrange for your EWO to pay a home visit. You can also request assistance from your in-year admissions contact to assist in contacting the parent.

This information must be recorded on the Children Missing Education Reasonable Enquiry Form that can be provided to the Children Missing Education Lead if all steps have been undertaken and you have not been able to arrange the placement for pupil or determine their current education destination.

Assisting parents with the application process

If parents have literacy difficulties, please ensure that any application form that is completed by you on the parents'/carer's behalf is signed or marked by them.

Faith Schools

Parents/carers who apply to these schools need to fill in the school's own supplementary information form as well as the common application form. This is explained in the prospectus but it would be helpful if parents/carers could be reminded of this procedure as many parents/carers miss out each year by not completing the supplementary form and the priest's reference form.