

# **Victoria Primary School - Admissions Policy**

## **Rationale**

The admissions policy enables a school to offer places to children in a fair and efficient way to meet the needs of the community. Equality of opportunity is paramount.

## **Aims**

- Serve the community.
- Fair allocation of places.
- Promote equality.

## **How parents can apply for their child to be admitted to our school**

Our school is an academy but the school determines the admission arrangements in agreement with the LA. The LA is therefore the 'Admissions Authority' for our school. The regulations for entry to each school, where the Admissions Authority is the LA, are published each year by the LA. Parents can receive a copy of these regulations directly from the LA.

The LA publishes a composite admissions prospectus each year, which gives information about how parents can apply for a place in the school of their choice. Parents have a right to express a preference for the school of their choice and they should do so on the application form. Expressing a preference does not, in itself, guarantee a place at this school. Application forms can be obtained from the Education Department of the LA and should be completed by the date stipulated on the forms. The school notifies parents about the school place as soon as all the applications have been considered.

In this area, children enter school in the academic year they become five. There is one admissions date per year, early in September (i.e. at the start of the school year). Therefore, parents who would like their child to be admitted to this school during the year their child is five should ensure that they complete the necessary application form by 15th January.

## **Admission appeals**

If we do not offer a child a place at this school, it is because to do so would prejudice the education of other children by allowing the numbers of children in the school to increase too much.

If parents wish to appeal against a decision to refuse entry, they can do so by applying to the LA. An independent appeals panel then meets to consider all appeals by parents who have been refused a place at our school and who wish to appeal against this decision. An appeals panel's decision is binding for all parties concerned. If the appeals panel decides that we should admit a child to our school, then we will accept this and continue to do all we can to provide the best education for all the children at our school.

## **The standard number**

The standard number is the number of children the school can accommodate. The standard number for our school is 45 for every new admission year. We have a priority area as defined by the LA. We keep this number under review and the governors will apply to change the number if circumstances allow.

**Priority Criteria:**

If the number of applications exceeds the number of available places in any year group then the following criteria are used to determine allocation of places.

1. Children living within the school's priority area with siblings already on roll.
2. Children living elsewhere with siblings already on roll.
3. Children living within the priority area.
4. Children living elsewhere.

**Appendix A: Victoria Primary School Nursery Admission Policy****Appendix B: Co-ordinated Admission Scheme – City of Bradford MDC****Appendix C: In-year Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme – City of Bradford MDC**

**Reviewed September 2018**

## **Appendix A - Victoria Primary School Nursery Admissions**

**Victoria Primary School criteria for nursery place and preference for a.m./p.m. session. This is managed by the school.**

- A Nursery Place:
1. Siblings.
  2. Place on list.
  3. Catchment area.
  4. Special Educational Needs. Refer to Inclusion leader.

### **Policy into Practice**

If these criteria are used we will be meeting the needs of the community and also have some flexibility to keep a balance of individuality within each session.

If one or more than one of the criteria are evident in B, the school can offer the choice of a morning or afternoon place. If not the allocation of a place will be at the discretion of school.

Wherever possible we would prefer to have siblings in separate sessions so their learning can be fully met.

### **Nursery Procedures**

- Letters offering a place sent to all children on waiting list in March to offer place.
- Liaison visit in May to confirm place and gather information.
- Sessions allocated taking into account home language, gender, specified need.
- The children come into nursery weekly over a short period.
- Depending on numbers there are two intakes per year i.e. September/January.

### **Conclusion**

*This policy will need to be regularly reviewed in light of legislation and developmental changes.*

**Co-ordinated Admission  
Scheme for the Bradford Metropolitan District Area**

**For applications made during the normal admissions round  
for Primary Schools  
2018-2019**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This scheme has been prepared in accordance with The Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 as amended by the Education Act 2002 and the School Admissions (Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) Regulations 2007 (as amended). The regulations state that all local authorities (LAs) must draw up a scheme which co-ordinates admission arrangements covering all maintained primary schools (but not special schools) in its area.

The co-ordinated scheme is designed to ensure that every parent of a pupil living in the Bradford district, who has applied for a primary school place during the normal admission round, receives an offer of one school place on the same day. All preferences must be expressed on a paper 'common application form' or by an online application via their local authority website and the offer of a place is the responsibility of the 'home LA'.

Each LA is required to exchange information on preferences for a school outside the LA in which the pupil lives, with the 'home' authority. Bradford will co-ordinate with its neighbouring authorities: Kirklees, North Yorkshire, Calderdale and Leeds. There is an agreed timetable between the neighbouring authorities and own admission authority schools and academies within the Bradford Metropolitan District. The scheme requires that all primary school allocations must be communicated to parents on the national offer date which is 16 April (or the next working day) each year.

## 2. APPLYING FOR A SCHOOL PLACE

- a) All Bradford Metropolitan District Council (BMDC) residents must apply for any primary school maintained by BMDC, or any infant, primary or junior school in any other local authority on the **common application form**. Parents should apply online via the Bradford Council website, [www.bradford.gov.uk](http://www.bradford.gov.uk). Paper forms will be available from any Bradford primary, nursery school or the Admissions Team, Margaret McMillan Tower, Princes Road Bradford BD1 1NN from mid November. Parents of children resident within the Bradford district but attending a nursery school within another authority or attending any private pre-school setting will be sent admissions information by post (based on data provided by the relevant LA).
- b) Any parents applying for a church aided school or academy for faith reasons will need to fill in a **supplementary information form (SIF)** in addition to completing the common application form. This form is only to be used where additional information is required in order for the governing body to apply their admission criteria, ie faith grounds. Copies of supplementary forms are available from individual schools. The completed supplementary forms must be returned by the specified closing date to the relevant school. If a common application form has been completed but not a supplementary form, the preference is still valid and must be considered. Applicants who have not completed a supplementary form or who have done so but not provided the required evidence of their faith, would be ranked lower than those that have provided evidence of their faith. An application cannot be considered without a completed common application form.
- c) Dixons Music Primary require parents applying for one of the six music places to complete their supplementary information form which must be returned to the school by their specified closing date.
- d) Applicants for Bowling Park Primary School need to complete a supplementary information form to indicate which site they would prefer.
- e) For pupils resident in another LA, parents must apply online through their home LA or complete their paper application form which must then be returned to their home LA.
- f) The closing date for all applications is **15 January 2018**.
- g) It is the responsibility of each pre-school setting to distribute admissions information to parents of children attending their nursery. Primary schools should also contact any parent who has expressed

an interest in a reception place, whose child is not attending the nursery, informing them that information and forms are available from school and from the Bradford Council website.

- g) All early years providers must ensure that a child starting their nursery during the school year is given an application form to complete as online applications cannot be made after the closing date. All late applications must be forwarded to the Admissions Team as soon as possible.

### 3. PROCEDURE

#### Stage 1

- a) **Week beginning 13 November 2017**, summary information for parents and individually addressed letters to parents of nursery children will be distributed to all Bradford LA nursery, primary schools and early years settings. Parents will be required to apply online except in exceptional circumstances when a paper form will be available through the Admissions Team. It is the school or nursery's responsibility to ensure that these are given to all relevant aged pupils in their nursery. Full details of the admissions process and arrangements are in the 'Guide for Parents' which is available on the Bradford Council website.
- b) Parents may apply for up to **five** primary schools and must apply online or return the completed application form to their child's primary school, to their first preference school or to the Admissions Team by **15 January 2018**.
- c) Parents are required to return the completed supplementary information forms to the relevant school by **15 January 2018** (Dixons Music Academy's closing date may differ).
- d) Any supportive evidence regarding looked after or adopted children or from relevant professionals for children with social or medical needs must be sent to the Admissions Team by the closing date.

#### Stage 2

- a) By **Friday 9 February 2018**, the Admissions Team will forward preferences for schools within other LAs. Other LAs will send the Admissions Team preferences made by parents resident in their LA for a Bradford school. These details will be sent via the secure data transfer website.
- b) By **Friday 16 February 2018**, the Admissions Team will forward preferences (including those from out-of-authority pupils) to own admission authority schools for them to apply their admission criteria. The order of preference will not be included as this is not relevant when schools are applying their admission criteria. These details will be uploaded on to Bradford Schools Online for schools to view.
- c) By **Friday 2 March 2018**, each admission authority school will apply its own admission criteria and return to the Admissions Team a list of all applicants, in rank order, in accordance with the admission criteria. The information can be sent via the secure data transfer website or by email if password protected.

#### Stage 3

- a) By **Friday 9 March 2018**, in the first cycle of exchange of information, the Admissions Team will have:
- notified other LAs whether a place can be offered in a Bradford school to applicants resident in their LA;
  - received information from other LAs regarding offers of places to a Bradford resident;
  - made provisional decisions based on information from other admission authorities and the ranked order of schools applied for. Where a child is eligible for a place at more than one school, they will be offered the one ranked higher on the application form.
- b) By **Thursday 22 March 2018**, in the final exchange of offers with other LAs, places will be allocated for all Bradford district pupils, including those not given any of their preferred schools.

- c) By **Friday 13 April 2018**, pupil allocation lists will be available on Bradford Schools Online for primary schools to view.
- d) On **16 April 2018** parents who applied online will receive emails confirming their allocated school. All other applicants will receive a letter through a school nursery or through the post.
- e) On **16 April 2018** any applicant requiring a letter should receive the offer in writing. Children attending a maintained school nursery will receive the letter via the school, if one is required. All other letters will be posted to the child's home address. Where the allocated school is not the highest ranked school, the letter will explain the reasons why. The letter will also inform parents about the waiting lists and their statutory rights of appeal against the decisions to refuse places at their preferred schools.
- f) By **30<sup>th</sup> April 2018**, parents must accept the place offered by completing and returning an acceptance slip to the allocated school. Waiting list forms must be returned to the Admissions Team by the same date.
- g) **Tuesday 15 May 2018**, deadline by which parents should return appeal forms.
- h) **June – July 2018** appeal hearings take place between.

#### **4. LATE APPLICATIONS AND CHANGES OF PREFERENCE**

Where circumstances justify a late application, those submitted before 9 February 2018 will be dealt with as those received on time. Any form received by primary schools after this date should be date stamped and returned to the Admissions Team as soon as possible. Once parents have made their five preferences, they cannot be changed without a genuine reason for doing so, for example if the family has recently moved address.

Once preferences have been sent to other admission authorities and LAs (after 9 February 2018), late applications and justifiable changes of preferences will be considered after all those that were received on time.

After allocations have been completed, an unsuccessful application or dissatisfaction with the allocated school will not be considered reasons to allow further applications to be made during the 'normal admissions round', ie until 31 August each year. However, parents may submit a late application for an under-subscribed school or where a parent has applied for less than five schools, late applications up to a total of five preferences will be accepted.

#### **5. WHERE PREFERENCES CANNOT BE MET**

In the event that an offer cannot be made for any of the preferences expressed by a parent resident in the Bradford LA area, a place will be allocated to their child at another school with places available. This may include church schools. We decide which is the most appropriate alternative school taking into consideration all children without a school place and available bus routes.

#### **6. WAITING LISTS**

##### **Community schools**

The Admissions Team will maintain waiting lists for all community and voluntary-controlled schools until the end of the 2018-2019 academic year. Parents can request that their child is placed on the waiting list for any of the schools for which they have applied.

A vacancy occurs when the allocated number falls below the published admission number for that school. Places will be allocated from the waiting list in accordance with the admission criteria and not

when a name is entered on the list. It is possible for names to fall down the list if other names are added from later applicants who rank higher on the admission criteria.

### **Voluntary-aided, Foundation, Trust schools and Academies**

The School Admissions Code states that waiting lists must be maintained at least until the end of the Autumn term. Once the allocation letters have been sent out by the Admissions Team on behalf of all admission authorities, any questions about waiting lists should be made to the relevant school. If there is pupil movement after allocations have been made and voluntary-aided, foundation schools and academies are able to offer additional places, they **must** inform the Admissions Team. It is for each admission authority to determine whether they will maintain waiting lists beyond the Autumn term.

By agreement, the Admissions Team will maintain waiting lists for voluntary-aided, foundation, trust schools or academies if requested to do so.

## **7. RIGHT OF APPEAL**

- a) Any parent whose child has been refused a place at any of the schools applied for, has the right to appeal against that decision to an independent appeal panel. Parents cannot appeal for schools for which no application has been made or for changes of preferences that have not been permitted.
- b) A parent who applies late and is refused their preferred school has the right of appeal. Whilst we will endeavour to process all appeals as soon as possible, applications and/or appeals received after the relevant deadline dates may not be heard until after the start of the academic year.
- c) Repeat appeals will not be considered for the same school within the same academic year unless there has been a significant change in circumstances such as a house removal. Repeat appeals are authorised by senior officers within the Admissions Team or the relevant governing body (for own admission authority schools).

## **8. IN-YEAR APPLICATIONS AND TRANSFERS**

- a) 'In-year applications' are defined as applications for admission to Reception which are submitted on or after the first day of the school year of admission, or applications for any other year group.
- b) A separate co-ordinated scheme for in-year admissions sets out this process, however all Catholic schools and some Church of England VA schools deal with their own in-year applications.
- c) Parents who wish their children to go to a different school once he or she has started should discuss this with the child's current headteacher. Transfers can only normally take place at the start of a full term, unless there are special reasons.

## **9. FAIR ACCESS PROTOCOL**

Each LA must have a Fair Access Protocol, agreed with the majority of schools in its area to ensure that outside the normal admissions round, unplaced children, especially the most vulnerable, are offered a place at a suitable school as quickly as possible. The Fair Access Protocol also ensures that all schools admit their fair share of children with challenging behaviour and who are vulnerable. In these circumstances, all schools may admit above their PAN but must not breach class size unless it is an exception, as outlined in the Code. The operation of the Fair Access Protocol is outside the arrangements of co-ordination and is triggered when a parent of an eligible child has not secured a school place under normal in-year admission procedures, even following the outcome of an appeal. The protocol can be viewed on the Bradford Council website.

## PRIMARY SCHOOL ADMISSIONS TIMETABLE 2018-2019

Application process opens  
**Monday 13 November 2017**

Closing date for applications  
**Monday 15 January 2018**

Details of applications sent to other local authorities  
**By Friday 9 February 2018**

Details of applications for Bradford district VA, foundation and academies sent to relevant schools  
**By Friday 16 February 2018**

VA, foundation schools and academies to provide the Admissions Team with ranked lists of offers  
**by Friday 2 March 2018**

First cycle of exchange of potential offers with other local authorities  
**by Friday 9 March 2018**

Final exchange of provisional allocations with other local authorities  
**by Thursday 22 March 2018**

List of allocated pupils available on BSO (confidential until national offer day, 16 April)  
**By Friday 13 April 2018**

Online applicants receive an email confirming allocated school  
**Monday 16 April 2018 ('national offer day')**

Paper applicants receive an allocation letter via primary /nursery schools or Royal Mail  
**Monday 16 April 2018**

Deadline for return of acceptance slips/ waiting list forms  
**Monday 30 April 2018**

Closing date for return of appeal forms  
**Tuesday 15 May 2018**

Appeal hearings take place  
**June – July 2018**

Waiting lists are closed  
**31 July 2019**

**In-year Co-ordinated  
Admissions Scheme**

**For applications and mid-term transfers during  
the school year for all schools in the Bradford  
Metropolitan District Area  
2018-2019**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Although there is no legal requirement to co-ordinate in year admissions, the Local Authority will continue to do so for all community and voluntary-controlled schools and any own admission authority school that wishes to participate in co-ordination. The In Year Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme explains this process and is reviewed annually.

An 'in-year admission' is defined as admissions to a school outside the normal transfer times or for a year group that is not the normal year of entry. For community and voluntary controlled schools, Bradford LA will co-ordinate admissions. The scheme does not apply to nursery schools, special schools or sixth form applications.

## 2. APPLICATION FORMS

- 2.1 Bradford District residents who wish to apply for a community or voluntary-controlled school must complete the **common in year application form**. Applications for own admission authority schools (voluntary-aided, foundation, trust schools and academies) for which the LA administer their in year applications, should also be made using the LA's application form. The in year application form is available from the Admissions Team at Margaret McMillan Tower, Princes Way Bradford BD1 1NN. A copy of the form can also be downloaded from the Council's website ([www.bradford.gov.uk](http://www.bradford.gov.uk)).
- 2.2 Parents/carers will be asked to give reasons why they wish their child to transfer. The form also lists the Fair Access categories and the parent is required to tick any that apply to their child. Where a parent has requested a transfer of school within the Bradford district or from another authority but has not moved house, the child's current school must complete Part 2 of the form which asks for further information on the child to establish whether the transfer request should be dealt with through the Fair Access Protocol. If Part 2 is not completed, the form will be returned to the parent for them to discuss the transfer with the current school before it will be processed.
- 2.4 Parents must return the completed application form to the Admissions Team. If any community or voluntary-controlled school receives an application or a request for a place direct from the parent, whether the school has places or not, the application should be forwarded to the Admissions Team.
- 2.6 Applications for any Catholic school, Feversham Primary Academy, Idle CE and Shipley CE primary schools, must be made on the individual school's application form which are available from the school and returned directly to the school.
- 2.7 In accordance with the School Admissions Code, these schools **must** inform the LA's Admission Team of every application made for their school and the outcome of the application.

## 3 NUMBERS ON ROLL

All schools and academies are required to communicate the availability of places to the LA's Admission Team when requested to do so. Admission officers will request updated numbers on roll in each year group from all schools on a regular basis, ie fortnightly. This will enable the Admissions Team to offer accurate advice to parents on the availability of school places in their area. In addition, schools should routinely inform the Admissions Team each time a child leaves the school and whether children allocated have been admitted.

## 4 APPLICATION PROCEDURES

### 4.1 Applications for community and voluntary-controlled schools

- 4.1.1 The LA's Admissions Team (as the Admissions Authority for community and voluntary-controlled schools) will determine whether an applicant can be offered a place in any of these schools. If there are more applications than places available in the year group, the Admissions Team will consider the

application against its published 'oversubscription criteria'.

- 4.1.2 Where a community or voluntary-controlled school is ranked higher on the application form and a place can be offered, the Admissions Team will aim to process the application within **20** school days from receipt of the form.
- 4.1.3 If more than one school listed can be offered, the applicant will be offered a place at the school ranked highest on the application form.
- 4.1.4 If none of the schools listed can be offered, a place will be offered at an alternative available school, unless the child's current school is within a reasonable distance. If this is the case, no other school will be offered.
- 4.1.5 Where any school has **more than two places** in the relevant year group and the parent has approached the school directly, the child may be admitted and the school then send notification of the application and the start date to the Admissions Team, if the school knows there is no waiting list. If only one place is available or there is a waiting list, the school **must** contact the Admissions Team to establish whether there are any other applicants waiting to be processed.

#### **4.2 Applications for own admission authority schools for whom the LA co-ordinates admissions**

- 4.2.1 The Admissions Team will forward details of the application to the relevant school. This will be done within 15 days of receipt of the application and where the school is ranked higher than a community or voluntary-controlled school that could be offered.
- 4.2.2 The governing body (or delegated persons to determine the application), as the admission authority, will determine whether the applicant can be offered a place at their school. If, at any one time, there are more applicants than there are places in the year group, the school's oversubscription criteria must be used to determine who will be offered the place.
- 4.2.3 Following receipt of the application, the school must inform the Admissions Team whether the applicant can be offered a place within a maximum of **five** school days. (If the year group is full, the school should inform the Admissions Team immediately.) The applicant may be kept on the school's waiting list if one is maintained.
- 4.2.4 Following receipt of the school's decision, the Admissions Team will write to the parent informing them of the outcome of their application within **five** school days. An offer of an alternative school will be made where appropriate.
- 4.2.5 Where any school has **more than two places** in the relevant year group and the parent has approached the school directly, the child may be admitted and the school then send notification of the application and the start date to the Admissions Team, if the school knows there is no waiting list. If only one place is available or there is a waiting list, the school must contact the Admissions Team to establish whether there are any other applicants waiting to be processed.

#### **4.3 Applications for Catholic schools and other own admission authority schools dealing with their own in year admissions**

- 4.3.1 Applications should be made on the school's own in year application form.
- 4.3.2 Once any application has been considered by the school, the Admission Team **must** be notified of the details and outcome of the application.
- 4.3.3 Where a place is not available, the school must send details to the Admissions Team who will then offer an alternative school.

#### 4.4 Applications for schools in other local authorities

- 4.4.1 Parents resident in the Bradford district who wish to apply for a school maintained by another local authority must make direct contact with the relevant authority. Parents will be informed of the outcome of their application either by the relevant authority or school.
- 4.4.2 Residents in another local authority who would like their child to attend a school in the Bradford LA must complete a Bradford in year application form. Parents will be informed by the Admissions Team.
- 4.4.3 Bradford will accept applications from other LA's where parents are yet to move into the local area, in order to facilitate the allocation of a school place in a timely manner. If parents living in Bradford who are moving to other LA's wish to make their applications through Bradford LA we will facilitate this, however it may be quicker for parents to approach those LA's directly as not all LA's co-ordinate In Year applications.

#### 5 OFFERS OF SCHOOL PLACES

- 5.1 Where the application is for a community, voluntary-controlled school or another admission authority school that the LA is co-ordinating admissions for, the Admissions Team will write to parents informing them of the result of their application. Parents will be given the opportunity to place their child on a waiting list and informed of their right of appeal if not given their preferred school.
- 5.2 When a school has been allocated, the Admissions Team will inform the relevant school by email that the offer has been made the same day.
- 5.3 Parents will be required to complete and return an acceptance slip to the school within **seven** school days of the decision letter being sent. The school must contact parents to chase up any non-returns, or parents who have failed to make an appointment or agree a start date. If a parent refuses the offer it may result in the place being withdrawn unless the parent has submitted an appeal. In this case, wherever possible, the offer will remain until the outcome of the appeal is known. If an appeal for the preferred school is refused, the case may be referred to the Education Welfare Service.
- 5.4 Where the application is for a Catholic school or an own admission authority school that is dealing with its own in year admissions, they **must** confirm the offer in writing **and** inform the LA's Admissions Team immediately.

#### 6 ADMISSION TO SCHOOL

Once a school place has been determined and the allocated school informed, the pupil should be admitted to the school within the following timescales:

**i) Pupils new to the district or who have moved house**

Pupils new to the Bradford district or who have had a significant house move (two miles under the age of eight, three miles over the age of eight) should normally be admitted to school within ten school days of the offer being made.

**ii) Pupils transferring from another local school**

The authority's **'Mid Term Transfer Policy'** which is attached to this document, states that pupils who are transferring from one local school to another may only do so at the beginning of a new term. Therefore, in the case of such applicants, the offer of the school place will be from the start of the following term after the application has been made unless in exceptional circumstances the child may be admitted sooner by agreement between the schools and the Admissions Team. Year group numbers will be amended to take into account the allocation and the reserved place.

#### 7 WAITING LISTS

Parents can request that their child is placed on a waiting list for their preferred school(s). The Admissions Team will maintain waiting lists for all year groups for community and voluntary-controlled schools until the end of the school year in which the application was received (for primary schools) and the end of the term (for secondary schools).

Schools which are their own admission authority may choose to keep waiting lists or not. All waiting lists must be maintained in the order of the oversubscription criteria unless a place is requested through the Fair Access Protocol. If places become available during the year, all offers must be made in accordance with the Mid Term Transfer Policy.

## **8 CHILDREN WITH A STATEMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OR EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CARE PLAN**

Applications for these children will be dealt with by the Special Educational Needs Team (01274 435750) who will liaise with parents and schools to determine which schools can meet the child's needs.

## **9 FAIR ACCESS PROTOCOL**

All LA's **must** have a Fair Access Protocol (FAP), agreed with the majority of schools in its area to ensure that outside the normal admissions round, unplaced children, especially the most vulnerable, are offered a place at a suitable school as quickly as possible. The FAP ensures that all schools admit their fair share of children with challenging behaviour and children who arrive outside the admissions round who may have difficulty securing a school place. In these circumstances, all schools may be asked to admit above their published admission number. The operation of the FAP is triggered when a parent of an eligible child has not secured a school place under normal in-year admission procedures, even following the outcome of an appeal.

Due to pressure on school places in some areas of the district, a number of applications are dealt with through the FAP. Schools dealing with their own in year admissions must refer unsuccessful applications to the LA's Admission Team as soon as possible as the application may need to be dealt with through the FAP. **All** schools must participate in admitting children through the FAP.

### Pupil Mid-Term Transfer Policy

#### 1. Introduction

This policy clarifies the roles of headteachers and the Local Authority when parents make a request to change school during the school year and sets out the process for dealing with such requests.

The aim of this policy is to enhance pupil progress by encouraging a considered approach to changes of school and provides a framework for the exchange of pupil information. The majority of pupil transfers take place for legitimate reasons, such as a change of address and the aim is not to inhibit parents' rights to express a preference for another school in appropriate circumstances.

#### 2. Background

There is an expectation that pupils will remain at school for the usual period of time and only change schools at the end of the primary phase. Both primary and secondary schools liaise closely to ensure smooth transition and pastoral arrangements are aimed at providing pupils with continuity between phases. However, many schools in the Bradford District experience high levels of pupil mobility during the school year which impacts on the attainment and achievement of pupils and on school staff in terms of induction, administration and tracking pupils' progress. This mobility undermines the pupil's continuity of progress and that of other pupils when school staff have to manage pupils leaving or joining classes mid-year. It can also impede financial and staff planning.

There is evidence that mid-year movement is often disruptive to the statutory SEN process. This is particularly important during a child's early years at school, when the first steps towards assessing educational needs are taken. If this process is delayed because of changes of school, the result is often a lack of appropriate support throughout the remaining phase of education.

#### 3. Legal Framework

Under the Schools Standards and Framework Act (1998) as amended by the Education Act 2002, a parent has the right to express a preference for a place at a school at any time. The LA (or in the case of VA, foundation schools and academies, the governing body) has a legal duty to comply with the parents' preference to admit the pupil on to the school roll, unless to do so would 'prejudice the provision of efficient education, or efficient use of resources'. This means that the school must admit the pupil unless that particular year group is at or above the published admission number.

While it is essential that children who have no school place are found one quickly, section 433 of the Education Act 1996, permits deferment of admission until the start of a school term, subject to certain exceptions (see paragraph 5). This would particularly be the case where requests for school transfer has been made that do not involve a house move or where there is no need for an immediate move (see exceptions below). In such cases, schools can arrange for a child to start at the beginning of the next term. This does not conflict with the parent's right to 'express a preference', but does allow schools to manage the movement of pupils transferring mid-year.

The LA also has powers to direct admission to a foundation or voluntary-aided school in its area and can refer matters to the Secretary of State for consideration in relation to academies.

#### 4. School Transfer Process

Any in-year admission request (whether the child is already attending a Bradford District school or is new to the area) shall be co-ordinated by the local authority. An *'In Year Common Application Form'* is available from the Admissions Team or can be downloaded from the Bradford Council website and must be returned to the Admissions Team.

For applications where no house move has taken place (or one less than two miles for under eight years, and three miles for over eight years of age), parents will be required to ask the child's current school to complete part two of the application form. This section asks for information such as attendance, reasons for the transfer request and other factors which may have affect the child's education and therefore the suitability of a school place. If the form is returned without part two completed and no house move has taken place, the form will be returned to the parent for them to forward to the child's current school.

The information provided by the current school will assist in determining whether the transfer request should be dealt with under the Fair Access Protocol and/or by LA officers to determine whether the transfer request comes under one of the exceptions given below.

If the preferred school has places in the appropriate year group and is not a Fair Access case, the Admissions Team will inform parents that a place is offered and arrangements can then be made for the admission to take place at the start of the next school term.

## **5. Exceptions**

Mid-term transfer of a pupil may only take place sooner than the start of the next term, if:

- the headteachers of the current **and** receiving schools agree that it is in the best interests of the pupil that transfer should take place sooner;
- the pupil has moved house to live more than three miles from the present school (if the pupil is aged over eight years) or over two miles (if the pupil is aged under eight years);
- the pupil has been unable to transfer at the start of the term as a result of illness or for other reasons beyond the parents' control;
- the admission is into Year 7 and Reception only, where a place becomes available from the waiting list during the autumn term only;
- it has been determined that the admission of the pupil comes under the 'Fair Access Protocol' or other significant circumstances apply which identify the child as vulnerable; and
- the admission is due to a successful appeal heard by an independent appeals panel.

When a request for transfer has been agreed and the offer of a place made, the receiving school must liaise with the current school regarding the agreed admission date and pupil data.

For pupils with a Statement of special educational needs, parents have the right to request the LA substitute the name of the maintained school in the Statement. The LA must comply with the request of change of school in certain circumstances and usually only following an annual review, an amendment to the Statement or appeal to the SEN Tribunal. Should parents of a pupil with a Statement contact a school directly, the headteacher should contact a SEN officer for advice.

## **6. Information for parents**

Guidance notes that accompany the 'in-year common application form' informs parents of the detrimental affects that changing schools has on their child's progress and that such decisions should not be taken without careful consideration. Governors may wish to add similar statements to their school booklets and websites.