

Gateshead Secondary School Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme September 2027

Introduction

This Scheme is made by Gateshead Council under the Education (Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (Secondary) (England) Regulations 2002 and applies to all Secondary schools in Gateshead.

Interpretation

In this Scheme

'The LA' means Gateshead Council acting in their capacity as local authority.

'The LA area' means the area in respect of which the LA is the local authority.

'Primary education' has the same meaning as in section 2(1) of the Education Act 1996.

'Secondary education' has the same meaning as in section 5(2) of the Education Act 1996.

'Primary school' has the same meaning as in section 5(1) of the Education Act 1996.

'Secondary school' has the same meaning as in section 5(2) of the Education Act 1996.

'School' means a community, foundation or voluntary school (not a special school) which is maintained by the LA.

'Foundation school' means such of the schools as are foundation schools.

'VA schools' means such of the schools as are voluntary-aided schools.

'Academy' means such of the schools have academy status.

'CTC' means City Technology College (Emmanuel College in Gateshead).

'Admission authority' in relation to a community or voluntary controlled school means the LA and, in relation to a VA school or Academy means the governing body of that school.

'The specified year' means the school year beginning at or about the beginning of September 2027.

‘Academic year’ means a period commencing 1 September and ending 31 August.

‘Admission arrangements’ means the overall procedure, practices, criteria, and supplementary information which govern the procedures and decision making for the purposes of admitting pupils to the school.

‘CAF’ means the common application form that must be used by the parent to apply for a school place for the normal admission round (first year of entry).

‘Home LA’ means the local authority in which the child resides.

‘Equal preference System’ means all preferences for each school listed by parents on the CAF are considered against the school’s oversubscription criterion without reference to the parental ranking nominated on the CAF. However, where a child may be eligible for a place at more than one school ranked on their CAF, then the rankings given will be used to determine the final single offer that will be made by selecting the school that was ranked highest on the CAF for which the child is eligible for an offer.

‘Parent or Legal Guardian’ means any person who holds parental responsibility, including carers, as defined under the 1989 Children Act and with whom the child normally resides.

‘In-Year Admissions’ means any application for a place in any year group for secondary school received during the academic year commencing in September 2027.

‘Eligible for a place’ means that a child has been placed on a school's ranked list at such a point which falls within the school's published admission number or is eligible following determination under the Fair Access protocol.

Commencement and extent

This scheme applies in relation to the admission arrangements for the schools and Academies for the admission year 2027/2028 (the specified year). The LA will include in its admission arrangements for the specified year the provisions set out in Schedule 1 of this scheme, or provisions having the same effect. The governing body of each VA school will include in its admission arrangements for the specified year the provisions set out in the Schedule, so far as relevant to that school, or provisions having the same effect.

The Scheme

The Scheme shall be determined in accordance with the provisions set out in Schedule 1 and processed in accordance with the timetable set out in Schedule 2.

The Scheme shall apply to every secondary school in the LA area including academies, as identified in Appendix 1 (except special schools and Emmanuel College).

The Scheme will also include applications from parents seeking admission to Gateshead schools who live within the following neighbouring LA’s:

Durham, Newcastle, Northumberland, South Tyneside and Sunderland.

We will also co-ordinate our admission process with any other admission authorities where relevant.

SCHEDULE 1

Part 1 -The Scheme

1. A standard application form known as the Common Application Form (CAF) will be used for applications to school for the normal year of entry in the specified year. A standard application form known as an 'In-year school transfer application form' will be used for 'in-year' applications made after the commencement of the academic year in September 2027.
2. The CAF will be used for the purpose of admitting pupils into first year of secondary education in the academic year 2027/2028.
3. The CAF must be used as a means of expressing up to 3 preferences by parent's resident in the LA area wishing to express a preference for their child to:
 - a) be admitted to a school within the LA area
 - b) be admitted to a school located in another LA's area
4. **The Common Application Form will:**
 - a) allow parents to express up to 3 preferences by naming them in rank order of preference and where relevant for schools outside Gateshead LA area.
 - b) invite parents to give their reasons for each preference.
 - c) specify the closing date and where the application form must be returned, in accordance with paragraph 10.
5. **The LA will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that:**
 - a) the CAF is available on request from the LA and on-line at www.gateshead.gov.uk until the closing date and;
 - b) every parent resident in the LA area who has a child eligible to commence secondary education receives a written explanation of how to apply and an explanation of the key features of the admission procedures and co-ordinated admission scheme and has access to the CAF on-line and paper copy (on request only).
 - c) every parent whose application falls within the category of an 'in-year' admission is made aware of how to access the in-year school transfer form and an explanation of the in-year school transfer procedures.

- 6. The LA will take all reasonable steps to ensure that:**
- (i) applicants will receive no more than one offer of a school place and;
 - (ii) a place will be offered at the highest ranked school for which they are eligible under the admission criteria; and
 - (iii) If more than one school is nominated and no order of ranking is stated, or a wish expressed that they be ranked equally, the parent will be regarded as having ranked the schools in the order appearing on the form (the first-mentioned being ranked the highest); and
 - (iv) if a place cannot be offered at any nominated school, a place will be offered at an alternative school where possible.
- 7.** All preferences expressed on the CAF are valid applications. The governing body of an academy or VA school can require parents who nominate their school on the CAF, to provide additional information on a supplementary form, only where the additional information is required for the governing body to apply their oversubscription criteria to the application. Where a supplementary form is required, it will be sent to the parents by the governing body for completion and returned to the school.
- 8.** Where a school receives a supplementary form, it will not be regarded as a valid application unless the parent has also completed a CAF, and the school is nominated on it. Under the requirements of the scheme, parents must not be under any obligation to complete an individual school's supplementary form where this is not strictly required for the governing body to apply their oversubscription criteria.
- 9.** Any school which operates criteria for selection by ability or aptitude must ensure that its arrangements for assessing ability or aptitude, to enable decisions to be made on nominations, conform to the timing requirements of the scheme as set out in Schedule 2. (please note, no Community or Voluntary Aided School in Gateshead operates criteria for selection-based ability or aptitude).

Submitting Applications (CAF)

- 10.** Completed CAF's must be returned to the LA by 31 October 2026. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that CAFs are returned directly to the LA, on-line or in a paper format by the closing date.

Determining offers in response to the Common Application Form

- 11.** The LA will act as a clearinghouse for the allocation of places by the relevant admission authorities in response to the CAF's received. The LA will only make any decision with respect to the offer or refusal of a place in response to any preference expressed on the CAF where:
- (a) It is acting in its separate capacity as an admission authority, or
 - (b) An applicant is eligible for more than one place and is allocated a place at the highest ranked school or
 - (c) An applicant is not eligible for a place at any school that the parent has nominated.

The LA will allocate places in accordance with the provisions set out in paragraph 18 of this Schedule.

12. Completed application forms must be returned to the home LA by the closing date of 31 October 2026.
13. Completed application forms, that are received after the closing date will be considered as **LATE** unless 'exceptional circumstances' apply, except that the procedure must not prevent the proper processing under the Scheme, for those application forms received on time.
14. The LA will process all application forms. All ranked applications received by the closing date will be considered before any ranked applications received after this closing date unless exceptional circumstances apply.
15. **By 20 November 2026** the LA will notify the admission authority for each of the schools of every nomination that has been made for that school. Where parents have nominated a school outside the LA area, then the LA will also notify the relevant maintaining authorities by this date.
16. **By 8 January 2027** the admission authority for each school will consider all applications for their school and apply their oversubscription criteria (if appropriate) and provide the LA with a list of all potential offers in ranked order according to their oversubscription criteria.
17. **By 5 February 2027** Gateshead LA will provide neighbouring LA's information of school offers to be made at Gateshead schools for applicants living in their LA and vice versa. This notification process will continue until all offers are finalised.
18. **By 12 February 2027** the LA will match the above lists against the ranked lists of the other schools nominated and:
 - Where the child is eligible for a place at the first preference school, that school will be allocated to the child
 - Where the child is eligible for a place at only one of the preferred schools, a place at that school will be offered to the child.
 - Where the child is eligible for a place at two or more of the preferred schools, they will be offered a place at the school that is ranked the highest on the CAF for which they are eligible, and any lower offers will be disregarded.
 - Where the child is not eligible for a place at any of the ranked schools, the child will be allocated a place at their catchment school (if places are still available), or if this is not available, a place where possible, will be offered at the next nearest community school with a vacancy, measured as the crow flies from the parental residence to the main entrance of the school.
 - Where possible, the LA will allocate a school place to those pupils who have not submitted a CAF after all other pupils who submitted a CAF have been considered. The LA will allocate a place at the catchment school or if this is not available at the next nearest community school, with a vacancy, measured as the "crow flies" in a straight line from the parental residence to the main entrance of the school.
19. **On 22 February 2027** the LA informs its secondary schools of the pupils to be offered places at their school.

National Offer Day

20. On or around 1 March 2027 parents will be notified by email if they applied online that they are being offered a place at the allocated school. A letter will also be posted to Gateshead residents on or around this date informing them of the school place allocated this includes those that applied online. This letter will give the following information:

- The name of the school at which a place is offered
- The reasons why the child is not being offered a place at any higher ranked school nominated on the CAF
- Information about their statutory right of appeal against the decisions to refuse places at the other nominated schools and waiting list procedures
- Contact details to obtain an appeal form for higher ranked schools on the CAF for which they were not offered a place

The letter will not inform parents of places still available at other schools.

22. Waiting Lists and reallocation of places 9 April 2027

The LA will maintain waiting lists for all oversubscribed schools in Gateshead.

All applicants refused a school place will automatically be placed on the waiting list for any school at which they have been refused. Parents may be informed of the position their child occupies on the list, however individual positions may change on a regular basis due to the addition or deletion of children to the list or changes in the admission criteria applied to individual applications.

A child's position on any waiting list will be determined using the admission criterion for the school in question however children who are the subject of a direction to admit by the LA or who have been referred for admission and have been allocated a place through the Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over any child on the waiting list. Voluntary Aided schools will inform the LA where children shall be placed on the waiting list for their school. Parents, who wish to go on waiting lists for any school operating 'random allocation' in Gateshead as their tie breaker, should be clear that any single place that becomes available at such schools will be subject of a separate random selection process within each oversubscription category within the policy.

If vacancies arise at oversubscribed schools after 1 March 2027 the first allocation of places will take place on 9 April 2027 followed by subsequent reallocations, if found to be necessary, at weekly intervals.

Where a child may be eligible for an offer from more than one school waiting list then the offer made will be for the school that was ranked highest by the parent on the CAF.

The waiting list will initially be compiled from those children who have been refused a place on 1 March 2027. This list may include the following children:

- Those who applied late after 31 October 2026 but before 1 March 2027 and who did not receive an offer for a school choice which was ranked on the CAF. Such applicants may be placed on the waiting lists for all schools nominated on the CAF at which they have been refused a place.

- Where a parent has been offered a place at a school, which they did not nominate on the CAF they may be placed on the waiting list for all the schools they did nominate, on the CAF.
- Those who have been offered a place at a school nominated on the CAF but were refused a place at a school ranked higher on the CAF than the school they were offered. For example, where an applicant has been allocated a place at their second ranked school, they may be placed on the waiting list of their first ranked school but not their third and so on.
- Parents who have submitted a new application (accepted for exceptional reasons only i.e., moved to a new house into the area) for consideration including those for children in public care ('Looked After' children as defined in the admission policy) and children requiring placement through the in-year Fair Access protocol.

Parents who write to request a new school not originally named on the CAF following the allocation date on 1 March 2027 will not be placed on the waiting list for that new school until 16 April 2027, this is after the first reallocation of places on 9 April 2027.

From 16 April 2027 the waiting list will be opened to all new requests.

Part 2 –Late Applications

- 23.** The closing date for applications in the normal admissions round is **31 October 2026**.

As far as is reasonably practicable applications for places in the normal admissions round that are received late for exceptional reasons only may be accepted, provided they are received by 1 January 2027. Examples of what will be considered as a valid reason include: a family that has just moved into the area or is returning from abroad (proof of ownership or tenancy of a Gateshead property will be required in these cases) or for UK service personnel who have been relocated and have an intended address. Other circumstances will be considered, and each case is decided on its own merits based on the evidence provided.

Change of Preferences received after 31 October 2026

- 24.** Parents submitting requests to change their preferences, from those originally ranked on the CAF, will be classed as 'late' and may only be considered if exceptional circumstances apply such as those examples described in paragraph 23 above. If no such exceptional circumstances apply the LA will continue to proceed with the original preferences ranked on the CAF for the purposes of the allocation of places on the 1 March 2027. In these circumstances such applications may only be considered if vacancies exist after all on time applicants who have ranked the school on their CAF have been allocated a place.

Late Applications received after 1 January 2027

- 25.** Applications received after 1 January 2027 will not be considered until after 1 March 2027. Parents will, if possible, receive an offer of a school place on 1 March 2027 according to the scheme.

No application form received by 1 March 2027

26. Where no CAF is submitted the child will, on 1 March 2027, where possible, be offered a place at their catchment school if there are places available. If no places are available at the catchment school, a place will be offered at the next nearest community school with places available, measured 'as the crow flies', from the parental residence to the main entrance of the school. The LA will be aware which parents this applies to as a result of liaison with junior and primary schools.

Applications received after 1 March 2027 but before 9 April 2027

27. Applications made direct to any school or academy on the CAF must be forwarded to the LA immediately. The LA will offer a place where possible, on 9 April 2027 at the school/academy ranked highest on the CAF at which there is a vacancy, or if this is not possible at their community catchment school, or if this school is also full at the next nearest community school with a vacancy, measured 'as the crow flies' from the parental residence to the main entrance of the school. However, please note, new applications/preferences submitted during this period from parents who have already submitted a CAF in the normal admission round will not be considered until 16 April 2027 in accordance with paragraph 22 above.

Applications received after 9 April but before 31 August 2027

28. The LA will continue to co-ordinate admissions to all relevant schools in Gateshead up to 31 August 2027.

Applications received after 9 April 2027 should be made on the CAF and sent to the LA, who will:

- Determine any application for a community or controlled school for which it is the admission authority; and
 - If the application is for a voluntary aided academy, refer the application to the governing body of the school, which will make a determination and notify the LA who will then notify the parent. Parents who are refused admission will be offered the right of appeal and will be informed about the waiting list procedure.
 - New applications/preferences submitted after 1 March 2027 from parents who have already submitted a CAF in the normal admissions round may not be considered until 16 April 2027.
29. The LA will keep track of any pupils who apply after 1 March 2027 but before 31 August 2027 and intervene as appropriate to ensure that they are allocated a school place without delay.

Part 3 – In-Year School Transfer Applications

30. In-year transfer applications are those applications received after 31 August 2027 for places in any year group requesting admission during the academic year 2027/2028.
31. Parents should apply for a place in a Gateshead school directly through Gateshead LA.

In-year applications must be made on the in-year school transfer form. In-year applications are those applications received after 31 August 2027 for places in any year group requesting admission during the academic year 2027/2028. Please note

that parents who have been refused a place in the normal allocation round for the first year of entry to secondary schools for admission from 2027 and have been refused a place by the independent appeal panel may not reapply for the same year of entry unless they can demonstrate there has been a significant and material change in their circumstances that relate to the question of admission.

32. The Gateshead in-year school transfer form for 'in-year' admissions is available from the Education Support Service, School Admissions, Floor 2, Civic Centre Gateshead, NE8 1HH and on the Council's website www.gateshead.gov.uk We recommend using the online form.
33. Gateshead Local Authority will process all in-year school transfer forms for Gateshead schools and inform parents of the outcome of their application even if the school is a voluntary aided school or academy.
34. The local authority is unable to process applications for schools where the date that the school place is required from, is more than 6 weeks from the date of the application (Service and Crown personnel are exempt). Families of UK service personnel and other crown servants can apply for an in-year transfer 12 weeks in advance of relocation if we receive an official Ministry of Defence, Foreign Commonwealth Office or Government Communication Head Quarters letter which confirms the relocation date and quartering address.
35. School places cannot be allocated based on intended future changes of address unless a house move has been confirmed through the exchange of contracts or a rental agreement. The admission authority reserves the right to seek further documentary evidence to support the claim to residence.

Responding to In-year school transfer application forms

36. If the application form is for a Voluntary Aided school, the Local authority will refer the application to the Governing Body of the school. In the case of applications for schools outside Gateshead, the LA will request that the parents apply directly to the relevant admission authority. We do not process 'in-year' application forms for schools outside Gateshead.
37. All secondary schools within Gateshead must respond to the Local Authority (LA) within 10 school days of receiving the in-year transfer form, informing the LA of the availability of a place. If there is a place available, the LA will notify parents of the outcome of the application within 5 school days of the school notifying the Education Support Service of the availability of places.
38. Where places are not available at the highest ranked school the LA will co-ordinate with the second and third preference schools until a place can be offered at one of the preferences, subject to the availability of places and admission criteria.
39. If a pupil, lives in Gateshead and is not on the roll of a Gateshead school and a place cannot be offered at any of the requested schools, the parent will be informed of places available at other schools in the area.
40. If there are more applications than places available the published oversubscription admission criteria must be applied.

41. Pupils will only be refused a place at a school if one of the statutory reasons in the school admissions code applies.
42. Pupils should not be placed outside the normal age group without prior discussion and agreement from The Education Support Services Manager. Schools should refer requests for a change of year group to The Education Support Services Manager.
43. The LA will keep track of any pupils who apply for 'in-year' admissions and intervene as appropriate to ensure that they are placed in a school without undue delay particularly in respect of Children in public care and disadvantaged children moving into the area i.e., Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children.

Determining Offers in response to the In-year school transfer form

44. Pupils living in Gateshead and applying for a school in the area (including Voluntary Aided Schools and Academies) The LA will notify the parent verbally if a place is available for Schools and Academies in Gateshead. However, if a place is not available the parent will be notified of this in writing.
45. **Pupils living in Gateshead applying for a school out of the area.** The home authority (Gateshead) will request that the parents apply directly to the relevant admission authority to process their request.
46. **Pupils living outside of the Gateshead authority applying to a Gateshead school.** The home authority must ask the parent/carer to contact Gateshead LA to complete an in-year transfer from to confirm the availability of a place. Gateshead LA will liaise with the parents regarding the outcome of their request.
47. **Acceptance of a school place.** Parents will be expected to contact the school offered to accept or decline the offer within 2 weeks. Failure to do so may result in the school place being withdrawn and offered to the next child on the waiting list if appropriate.
48. **Waiting Lists.** If your child is refused a place at the school requested, you may request that your child's name is placed on the waiting list for this school. The LA will maintain the waiting list for Kingsmeadow, year 7 until the end of December 2027, following this date it will be sent to the school to maintain. All other secondary schools in Gateshead will maintain their own waiting list for year 7 from September 2027. A child's position on a waiting list will be determined using the admission criterion for the school in question however children who are the subject of a direction to admit by the LA or who have been allocated a place through the Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over any child on the waiting list.

Timescales for processing In-Year School Transfer Application Forms

<p>In-year school transfer from received by the Education Support Service</p>	<p>Process commences, unless place is not required until a date more than 6 school weeks away (extended for children of service personnel & crown servants)</p>
<p>Within 10 days of the school being notified of the request</p>	<p>The Governing Bodies of any requested school must respond to The Education Support Service regarding the availability of places</p>
<p>Within 5 school days of the school notifying the Education Support Service of the availability of places</p>	<p>The Education Support Service will notify the parent by telephone if a place is available at their requested school. However, if a place is not available the parent will be notified of this in writing, including information about appeals and waiting lists, where appropriate.</p>
<p>Within 2 weeks of the date of a school place being offered</p>	<p>The school must receive confirmation of acceptance of the place from the parent.</p>

SCHEDULE 2

Timetable of Secondary School Co-ordinated Scheme 2027

First Year of Entry

Monday 7 September 2026	Common Application Form made available to parents online or paper copy (on request only). Primary/Junior schools receive information packs to distribute to year 6 pupils.
Saturday 31 October 2026:	On-line applications and paper forms to be submitted to the LA.
Friday 20 November 2026:	Details of applications to be sent to VA schools and other LA's.
Friday 8 January 2027:	VA academies provide the LA with ranked lists of applicants.
Friday 5 February 2027:	The LA will provide other LA's with a list of offers and refusals for relevant children.
Monday 22 February 2027:	By this date the LA will notify schools which applicants have been offered places at their schools.
Monday 1 March 2027:	Notifications sent to parents on or around this date.
Friday 9 April 2027:	Any places that become available are re allocated to applicants from the waiting list in accordance with paragraph 22 of schedule 1 of this scheme.

Waiting lists will be maintained until end of the autumn term December 2027