

In Year Admissions



From 1st September 2013 the LA will no longer co-ordinate In Year admissions and parents will apply directly to schools. Schools must process all applications and make offers where places are available in line with their over subscription criteria.

What does the Admissions Code 2012 say?

2.21 There is no requirement for local authorities to co-ordinate in-year applications for the offer year 2013/14 and all subsequent years, but they **must** provide in the composite prospectus how in-year applications can be made and will be dealt with. Local authorities **must**, on request, provide information to a parent about the places still available in all schools within its area, and a suitable form for parents to complete when applying for a place for their child at any school for which they are not the admission authority. Any parent can apply for a place for their child at any time to any school outside the normal admissions round.

What does the Admissions Code 2012 say?

2.22 Own admission authority schools **must**, on receipt of an in-year application, notify the local authority of both the application and its outcome, to allow the local authority to keep up to date figures on the availability of places in the area. The admission authority **must** also inform parents of their right to appeal against the refusal of a place.

Summary of requirements in the Code

Schools (including academies and free schools) are required under the code to “notify the local authority of both the application and its outcome” (2.22). They must also provide the LA with the necessary information to “allow the local authority to keep up to date figures on the availability of places in the area” (2.22).

Schools will continue to be required to explain to parents their right to appeal against the refusal of a place. The LA is required to produce information for parents about vacancies and will “provide in the composite prospectus how in-year applications can be made and will be dealt with” (2.21).

How will the process work?

The LA will produce a new **Single In Year Common Application Form (IYCAF)** for applying for an In Year place which all schools must use. On one side parents will fill in their details. The back of the form will explain the process and inform parents of all their legal rights. Parents will return the form to the school and will fill in a form for each school they want to apply for.

The new **Single IYCAF** will be designed so that all the information the LA needs is on one side of the form. This will allow for easier faxing/scanning as multiple pages will not need to be matched up in the LA office.

Single IYCAFs will be sent to schools shortly but should not be used until September 2013.

How will the process work?

The LA will provide template letters for schools to use. Letters will have tear off slips so parents can easily respond. Schools can use their own letters, but must ensure that if they do this, no additional limitations or requirements are added that change the LA process.

Every applicant must be given either an offer or refusal letter to explain the outcome of their application.

Schools should keep a copy of all correspondence in case of appeal or parental enquiry

How will the process work?

The LA is currently liaising with neighbouring authorities to finalise the process for Kent pupils applying for Out of County schools and Out of County pupils applying for Kent school, but this is likely to vary from LA to LA.

If a place is available at the school

- Parents send IYCAF to school (with SIF if needed)
- School produces an offer letter and sends to parent within 5 school days
 - Parents accept or refuse the place to the school within 10 school days
 - If place is accepted the child should start as soon as possible.
Completed IYCAF sent to LA
 - If child subsequently doesn't start, CME processes initiated by school
 - If place is refused by parent, completed IYCAF sent to LA
 - If parent doesn't reply, chaser letter sent by school after 10 school days
 - If place is accepted the child should start as soon as possible.
Completed IYCAF sent to LA
 - If no reply after a further 5 school days, school can withdraw offer.
Completed IYCAF sent to LA

If a place is not available at the school

- Parents send IYCAF to school (with SIF if needed)
- School produces a refusal letter and sends to parent within 5 school days
 - School waits for 5 school days to see if parent requests to join waiting list and then sends a completed IYCAF to the LA

How will the process work?

Schools must process each application in order of the date they are received. Schools should not collect batches of applications and process them together.

If the school receives more applications than places available, offers should be made to applications that were received first. If more applications were received in one day than places available, these applications should be put into the schools oversubscription criteria order to decide who gets an offer.

If a school makes an offer from a waiting list, they must ensure that the waiting list is maintained in oversubscription criteria order. The school must inform the LA that an offer from the waiting list has been made.

How will the process work?

Schools **must** ensure that an IYCAF is completed by all applicants so that the LA can be provided with the data and complete its safeguarding responsibilities. Applications cannot be made verbally or via different forms.

Schools **must always** complete offer or refusal letters, even if they are going to be given direct to parents rather than posted, to ensure that the parent receives all relevant information and the school fulfils its legal obligations.

Schools can be flexible when receiving acceptances or waiting list requests. Template letters will all have tear off slips that can be returned to the school, but schools should accept these responses via telephone/email/in person etc.

Although schools must follow the process, they are free to speed it up wherever possible. For example, if a parent visits the school and there is a space available, the parent can complete the IYCAF, be given their offer letter and accept before the parent leaves.

How will the process work?

Withdrawal of an offer is the only part of the process that cannot be fast tracked. Schools must allow 10 school days before chasing and ensure a chaser letter is completed and sent to the parent's address. Chasing by telephone or email is not acceptable on their own. If no response is received for a further 5 school days, the offer can be withdrawn.

School should require refusals by parents to be given in writing, to safeguard against parents changing their mind and requesting a place that has since been offered to someone else.

Schools should keep a copy of all correspondence in case of appeal or parental enquiry

Keeping the LA informed

Schools will fulfil the requirement to inform the LA by returning a copy of the application side of the **Single IYCAF**. As schools must also inform the LA of the outcome of every application, they should wait until the end of each application to send over information, so they only have to contact us once. The bottom of the form will have a section with the following tick boxes that schools should complete to tell us what has happened:

- Place Offered?
- Place Accepted by Parent?
- Place Refused by Parent?
- Place Withdrawn by School?
- No Place Available
- Joined Waiting List

Schools will tick the appropriate boxes and then return the form.

How the LA will aid parents

The LA will continue to provide advice to parents in our yearly admissions book, on our website and via telephone. If a parent is struggling to find a place they can contact the LA who will inform them of schools in their area that have places. Parents can then approach those schools to secure the place. The LA will continue to collect information about places from schools in the same way they have through the co-ordinated In Year process.

Where a parent continues to be unsuccessful in finding a place, the LA may refer cases to Fair Access Panels

Monitoring

The LA will use school census information to monitor school roll changes to ensure schools are informing us of all In Year activity.

Handing back to schools

To allow the LA to clear its backlog of applications before the end of the school year, it will only process applications received **before 1st July 2013**. Parents that miss this deadline will be required to contact schools directly once In Year has been handed back.

Handing back to schools

Historically, the LA has also collected applications that are made for the *next* school year and processed them in July.

For Primary applications, these parents will be contacted and told to apply to the school directly. The schools will collect applications and process them after the In Year process is handed back.

Secondary applications will also not be processed, however, where parents name Grammar schools, the LA will continue to forward details to schools to allow testing to be organised. Parents will be directed to apply directly to non-Grammar schools.

Handing back to schools

To speed up the transition back to schools after 1 July, the LA will inform schools by email when all outstanding In Year activity has been completed for their school. This means some schools may be in a position to offer places before they break up.

No offer should be made before the LA expressly informs the school, as this could result in disadvantage and the school being put over PAN.

What to do if you have any questions

- Send your questions to kentinyearadmissions@kent.gov.uk
- Contact the team on 0300 3336472
- Attend Head Teacher Briefings in July