



Metropolitan Borough of Knowsley

Education Improvement Team

2024/25 Coordinated annual admissions scheme for Knowsley secondary schools

## Context

- 1.1 The scheme set out below seeks to comply with the requirements of the 1998 Act, as subsequently amended, and the School Admissions Code 2021. The scheme will apply to the admission of pupils who are of age to be admitted to the relevant year in in the school year 2024/25.
- 1.2 All Knowsley academy and voluntary aided schools participate in the scheme.

## 2 Coordinated scheme for annual admission to secondary school in 2024/25

- 2.1 In the voluntary aided sector, the Governing Body of each school is the admission authority. Each academy has a Trust who has responsibility for admissions.

The following named schools participate in the scheme:

Voluntary Aided	All Saints Catholic High School
Academy	Halewood Academy
Academy	Kirkby High School
Academy	Lord Derby Academy
Academy	St Edmund Arrowsmith Catholic Academy
Academy	The Prescott School

## 3 Applying for a place in a year 7 class of a secondary school for 2024/25 admission

- 3.1 No later than 12 September 2023, Knowsley LA will publish a composite prospectus 'Knowsley Primary Education Admissions 2024/25 – Information for Parents'. A copy of the composite prospectus will be available on the School Admissions pages of the Knowsley Council website, or a hard copy can be requested from the LA School Admissions Team.
- 3.2 Knowsley resident parents/carers are requested to complete the Knowsley LA Common Application Form (CAF) via the online parent portal accessed on the Knowsley Council website, which will be available no later than 12 September 2023. A paper copy of the CAF will be available on request from the LA School Admissions Team for those who cannot access the online application. Non-Knowsley residents must apply by completing the CAF provided by the LA in which they are resident. This is the case even where they wish to apply for one or more Knowsley primary schools.
- 3.3 Where Knowsley resident applicants intend to name a school in another LA area as a preference, they are advised to obtain a copy of the admission policy of the school and details of any relevant procedures from the individual school/s or relevant LA. Knowsley resident applicants must complete the Knowsley CAF to make their formal application even if naming schools in other LA areas as preference/s.

## 4 Submitting the Common Application Form (CAF) and providing supplementary information

- 4.1 The Knowsley CAF allows parents/carers to state up to three school preferences in ranked order. Knowsley schools and those in other LA areas can be named as preferences. The online application should be submitted via the parent portal accessed via the school admissions pages of the Knowsley Council website. A confirmation email will be automatically generated to confirm successful submission of the application. Alternatively, a paper application form can be returned to the LA School Admissions Team at the address stated on the form or a scanned copy emailed to [schooladmissions@knowsley.gov.uk](mailto:schooladmissions@knowsley.gov.uk). If an email address is provided on the application form a receipt email will be issued within 10 working days to confirm submission.
- 4.2 Some schools request applicants to complete a Supplementary Information Form (SIF) to gather information specific to their school oversubscription criteria. It is the responsibility of the applicant to check whether or not a SIF is required by the school/s they are applying for and to complete and return it as per the instructions of the school.
- 4.3 A SIF is not a valid application on its own; the school must also have been named as a preference on the LA CAF and the school will validate this before considering the application. The SIF should normally be returned directly to the school concerned by the closing date, or any other date specified by the school. Applicants who name a school that operates a SIF as a second or third preference should be aware this also applies to their application. Where a SIF is not completed, the application will be considered based on information provided on the LA CAF.
- 4.4 Knowsley Catholic secondary schools use a SIF to obtain faith information that is relevant to applying the oversubscription criteria from their admission policies. These are available from individual Knowsley Catholic Schools or via the Knowsley Council website school admission pages. One form should be completed for each Knowsley Catholic secondary school named on the CAF and returned directly to each school/s. If naming a school/s in other LA areas as preference/s, parents/carers need to check the requirements of that individual school in relation to SIFs.
- 4.5 Where parents/carers wish to submit other additional documentation which they feel may be relevant to the processing of their application, this documentation should be provided at the point of application to the LA and/or the relevant admission authority. Parents/carers should be aware that admission authorities can only take account of additional information in the allocation if the oversubscription criteria of the individual school allow for it.
- 4.6 If the applicant is indicating that the child is Looked After by the LA (LAC) or was previously LAC (including children who were previously in state care outside of England), evidence of the child's current or previous LAC status, as defined in the school admission arrangements, must be submitted at the time of application.

- 4.7 If the applicant is UK service personnel with a confirmed posting in the locality, or a Crown Servant returning from overseas, the application will be accepted and processed from the intended address provided the application is accompanied by an official letter that confirms a relocation date and an intended address.
- 4.8 For families moving into the area or moving address within Knowsley, the LA will accept an application from a local/new address only once the applicant has evidenced residency or intended residency at that address by a date prior to the start of the school year the place is being applied for. This means that, until such time as the applicant can provide the documentary evidence requested, the application should continue to be made from the address at which they currently reside and coordinated by the relevant LA of that residency if applicable. This does not restrict applicants from naming preferences for any school on their application, but parents/carers need to be aware of how their application address could affect how their child is considered within the oversubscription criteria of the school/s applied for.
- 4.9 For families arriving from outside of England, the LA will accept an application for a child but will only process it from a local address if evidence of expected arrival date and confirmed residence has been provided. This means that, until such time as the applicant can provide the documentary evidence requested, the LA will accept the application, but it will be processed from the overseas address and parents/carers need to be aware of how their application address could affect how their child is considered within the oversubscription criteria of the school/s applied for. In all cases parents/carers should only have a single application in progress with any one Local Authority in England who will act as the coordinator of that application.
- 4.10 Only one application per child will be accepted. If a child lives between two addresses (e.g., due to a shared care arrangement), the application can be completed by either parent, provided they have parental responsibility for the child, and the correct main home address for the child is stated on the application form. In such cases, it is expected everyone who has parental responsibility for a child will have agreed school preferences before the application is submitted. If the LA is made aware of a disagreement between those with parental responsibility, it will usually proceed with the application made by the parent/carer with whom the child mainly resides during the school week, unless the terms of a court order instruct otherwise. If a court order or mediation arrangement is required to determine which parent has the right to make the application and name school preferences, this does not give the child any increased priority for a place in the school/s of preference; normal allocation procedures still apply, and the application will be considered along with all other against the admission policy of the school/s. Any delay in making an application beyond the closing date due to a dispute could result in the application being classed as late and the application then being at a disadvantage. Applications are made on behalf of the child; therefore the detail of the application can typically be shared with all those holding parental responsibility unless information has been disclosed to the LA that the sharing of this data could affect the safety/wellbeing of the child, applicant or third party.

- 4.11 Allocations are subject to proof of any information stated on the application documents that may have led to the offer of a place. For Knowsley schools, applicants may be requested to provide relevant confirmatory documents to the allocated school immediately after receiving the offer notification to secure the offer made. For schools in other LA areas, parents/carers must follow any instruction provided by that LA/school in respect of providing proof documentation. Parents/carers should note that if false information has been supplied which has influenced the allocation, any place offered based on this information may be withdrawn and, at that point, places in some other schools may no longer be available.
- 4.12 To guarantee they are considered in the initial allocation of places; applications should be submitted no later than the national closing date of 31 October 2023.

## 5 Consideration by Admission Authorities

- 5.1 As required by statutory regulation, this is an equal preference inter-authority coordinated scheme. Initially, each preference expressed by an applicant will be considered by the relevant admission authority against their oversubscription criteria without consideration of the level of preference.
- 5.2 Following the closing date, Knowsley LA will send to other coordinating LAs, relevant application information for Knowsley resident pupils wishing to be considered for their schools. Similarly, application preferences for Knowsley schools from children resident elsewhere will be received by Knowsley LA for consideration. Knowsley LA expect to share application information with coordinating LAs by Friday 17 November 2023.
- 5.3 Knowsley LA apply the published admission arrangements, including the oversubscription criteria, on behalf of those academy schools in Knowsley who are adopting the arrangements. The admission authorities of Knowsley voluntary aided schools and other academies will consider applications for their schools against their own individual admission criteria. The relevant admission authorities of schools outside of the Knowsley area apply their admission criteria to any applicant who has stated a preference.
- 5.4 By Monday 4 December 2023, Knowsley schools which are own admission authorities will receive from the LA via the establishment portal, the application details of all applicants of any preference level. These admission authorities should therefore arrange meetings of their admission committees to consider applications during the period Monday 4 December 2023 to Wednesday 13 December 2023. To achieve the agreed co-ordinated timetable and national offer date, it is essential that this is planned for and achieved on time. The LA will conduct the same process for those academies adopting the LA admission arrangements by applying the oversubscription criteria to all preferences expressed during this time period.
- 5.5 By Friday 15 December 2023, each admission authority should have applied their oversubscription criteria and returned ranked applications to the LA.

- 5.6 The LA then uses the status for each preference expressed for each pupil to ‘resolve’ offers. The computerised allocation software (EYES) allocates a place at the highest preference school available and removes any potential offers for lower preference schools that are no longer required. Available places created are then re-offered to any applicants on waiting lists without a higher preference offer. The ‘resolve’ process is run, including inter-authority exchanges, until no further movement is possible, and no pupil should hold more than one school offer at this point.
- 5.7 Where a non-Knowsley resident has applied for a Knowsley school, the outcome of the application will be sent to the child’s home LA who will treat the result in accordance with their scheme. Other co-ordinating LAs will provide the outcome of allocations for schools in their areas for Knowsley residents. Wherever practicable, Knowsley will seek to resolve any inter-authority multiple offers. Any final exchanges of information between LAs should be completed, where possible, by Wednesday 14 February 2024.
- 5.8 Where no stated preference can be offered, the LA will seek to offer a place for Knowsley residents at an alternative Knowsley school with an available place to ensure that child is not without an education placement offer.
- 5.9 The LA will endeavour to notify schools in the authority area of the details of applicants confirmed as being allocated a place in the school and, if relevant, those forming the waiting list by Tuesday 27 February 2024. This date will be dependent on inter-authority coordination dates being achieved to finalise allocations. This information is not to be shared by schools and they should not make any direct contact with allocated pupils until the LA has released allocation results on national offer day.
- 5.10 National Offer Day (NOD) is 1 March annually. Where 1 March falls on a weekend or bank holiday, NOD would typically be the next working day thereafter. In 2024, national offer day will be Friday 1 March 2024.

## 6 Allocation results

- 6.1 Allocation results are issued by the LA where the child is resident. On NOD, Knowsley LA will issue an allocation result to all Knowsley residents who applied on-time on behalf of the relevant admission authority. Where a place is being offered in a Knowsley school to a child who is resident in another LA area, the result will be issued by that LA on behalf of the Knowsley school.
- 6.2 Parents/carers who have applied via the online portal should receive their allocation result on national offer day by accessing their account on the admissions application portal. An email will be sent to applicants to alert them that the result is available. Applicants who applied using the paper application will be issued with a letter confirming the school allocation. Letters will be posted by first class post on national offer day, but parents/carers should note that an exact date of receipt cannot be stated. Paper applicants who prefer to receive their allocation outcome by email must state this at the point of application and provide an email address.

- 6.3 School offers may be subject to confirmation of date of birth<sup>1</sup>, home address and any church requirements - such as a baptism certificate - being provided. If the individual school or the LA directly requests documentary evidence, applicants should normally respond within two weeks of the request. If the required evidence is not provided by the applicant within the requested timeframes, notification may be sent to the applicant confirming potential withdrawal of a place.
- 6.4 Where an applicant has been refused a place at a school of a higher preference than the one offered; they will be advised of their right of appeal. Appeals should be made to the relevant admission authority for the individual school/s and will be held during the summer term.
- 6.5 Applicants who are not satisfied with the school offer they receive can consider other schools and make a revised application if they wish, but the original/current offer will not be removed until an alternative placement has been secured. This is to avoid a child being without a school offer and at risk of being missing from education. Applicants are strongly advised not to refuse a place offered without confirmation of an alternative school place.

## 7 Waiting Lists

- 7.1 Any applicant who is not offered a place at a Knowsley school/s of a higher preference than that offered, will be placed on the waiting list for the school/s. Waiting lists will be compiled according to the school over-subscription criteria. Late applicants will join the waiting list on the date their application is processed on basis of which criterion they meet. Parents/carers should be aware that the waiting list is a 'live' document and their child's place on the waiting list can change, up or down, according to the movement of other applicants.
- 7.2 Where a vacancy occurs below the admission number, the admission authority will fill the place from the waiting list, in priority order, offering the available place to the child who is top of the waiting list at the time the vacancy is confirmed. The LA will normally undertake any communication with applicants in relation to waiting list offers until September 2024, at which point the waiting lists will become integrated with the secondary in-year transfer process.
- 7.3 Pupils on the year 7 waiting list as a result of the annual allocation will normally be removed from that list at the end of the Autumn term in December 2024. Any parent/carer who wishes for their child to continue to be considered for a place will be required to confirm this via communication with the LA as part of the in-year transfer monitoring process.

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<sup>1</sup> The short birth certificate to confirm the date of birth of the child is the appropriate document.

## 8 Late applications

### Applications received after the closing date of 31 October 2023

- 8.1 Applications can continue to be submitted via the application portal after the national closing date, but there is no guarantee that late applications will be included in the initial allocation and applicants are strongly advised to abide by the national closing date.
- 8.2 Applications naming Knowsley schools as preferences received following the national closing date but before the allocation process begins will be included in the initial allocation of places where practicable. For Knowsley schools this will typically mean preferences received up to Wednesday 29 November 2023. However, this will be dependent on the volume of late applications received, therefore, parents/carers have no guarantee that any application submitted after the closing date will be included in the initial allocation.
- 8.3 If a school in another LA has been named as preference, the application details and preference will be forwarded to the appropriate LA as soon as possible and it will be for the relevant admission authority to determine whether the application will be included in the initial allocation of places in accordance with the agreed scheme of that LA area.
- 8.4 Applications received after 29 November 2023 stating preferences for Knowsley schools will not normally be considered by Knowsley schools until the initial allocation process is complete. The LA will not typically share preferences received on or after this date with schools in the LA area.
- 8.5 Only where the admission authority accepts there are exceptional circumstances for an application being received after this date will applications be considered in the initial round. If parents/carers believe that there are exceptional circumstances for the application being submitted late, it is their responsibility to state these reasons in writing when submitting the application and provide supporting documentation wherever possible – they can do this by completing an application via the portal and sending supporting information by email to [schooladmissions@knowsley.gov.uk](mailto:schooladmissions@knowsley.gov.uk) or completing a paper application form and including supporting documentation. The decision as to whether the preference is included will be taken by the admission authority of the individual school of preference and the absolute deadline even for exceptional circumstances will be 26 January 2024. Applications made with no additional information will be treated as late and will not be considered until after the initial allocation of places is completed and NOD has passed.



## **After National Offer Day and before the start of the school year (1 March to 31 August 2024)**

- 8.6 The inter-authority coordinated process continues and applications from Knowsley residents should be submitted to the LA who will ensure they are considered by the appropriate admission authority.
- 8.7 Knowsley LA will not process any applications classified as late and received up to 15 March 2024 until 18 March 2024. All late preferences for Knowsley schools received up to 15 March will be considered together at this time. Where places remain available in schools following the initial allocation, they will be offered to late applicants. Where the school requested is already full, or if there are not enough vacancies remaining for the number of late applications received, the oversubscription criteria from the relevant school admission policy will be applied to all applications being considered at that time. For any application that is unsuccessful in obtaining a place, the child's name will be added to the waiting list by applying the oversubscription criteria for the individual school. The result of late applications for Knowsley schools processed after 18 March 2024 will be shared with co-ordinating LAs and applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application as soon as possible after 19 May 2024.
- 8.8 Where a school in another LA has been named as a preference on a late application, the details will be forwarded to that LA as soon as is reasonably practicable, and it will be for the relevant admission body to determine how the application will be considered in accordance with their admission arrangements and local scheme.
- 8.9 Further late applications received after 18 March 2024 up to 31 August 2024 will be considered as soon as possible following receipt. Outcomes in respect of preferences for Knowsley schools will normally be issued within 10 school days of receipt of the application.

## **9. Making changes to an existing application**

### **Change of circumstance**

- 9.1 Once an application has been submitted, it is the responsibility of the applicant to notify Knowsley School Admissions Team and/or the individual school of any change of circumstance that could affect that application, for example a change of address, a baptism or a sibling changing school. If applicants do not notify Knowsley School Admissions Team directly of any change, this may affect how the application is considered and could result in a place at a school of preference not being allocated or risk having a place withdrawn if incorrect information has been used in the allocation process. If the change is in relation to information provided on a SIF, the applicant should contact the individual school directly to discuss making a change to the form. If applicants are unsure what constitutes 'a relevant change' they should contact Knowsley School Admissions for advice/verification.

- 9.2 During the usual application period (12 September 2023 to 31 October 2023) online applicants can make changes to information supplied on their common application form by revisiting the portal and making the change directly. For applications submitted by post using the paper application, and for all applications following the national closing date of 31 October 2023, applicants should contact Knowsley School Admissions by email or in writing by post to confirm the change that they wish to make to the application (in some cases, they may be asked to provide evidence of the change).
- 9.3 Parents/carers should be aware that if a change of circumstance occurs very close to the allocation date, it may not be possible to make any changes to the original application until after the initial allocation is complete and the absolute deadline for exceptional circumstances will be 26 January 2023.
- 9.4 In the event of a change of address, the applicant must notify Knowsley School Admissions of the change as soon as it occurs, or in advance if the date of change is known. Applicants who are changing address prior to NOD and wish for their new address to be considered in the allocation of places must provide satisfactory documentary evidence confirming the address change by 26 January 2024 – for example, proof of exchange of contracts or tenancy agreement confirming the date of occupancy.

### Change of school preference/s

- 9.4 During the usual application period (12 September 2023 to 31 October 2023) online applicants can make a change of preference by revisiting the portal and making the change directly. For applications submitted by post using the paper application, and for all applications following the national closing date of 31 October 2023, applicants should contact Knowsley School Admissions by email or in writing by post to confirm the change that they wish to make to the application (in some cases, you may be asked to provide evidence of the change).
- 9.5 The LA will normally only accept a change of preference during the allocation period if there are substantial/exceptional reasons, for example a house move to another area. Applicants should email Knowsley School Admissions Team stating the reasons why a change is being requested and should provide satisfactory evidence of the change of circumstance resulting in a change of preference request. The absolute deadline for a change of preference to be considered in the initial allocation of places even in exceptional circumstances will be 26 January 2024.
- 9.6 Where there are no relevant substantial reasons for the request to change preference, parents/carers can change their preferences by withdrawing the original application and subsequently submitting a new application form. The new application will be considered as a late application as described in section 8 of this document.

## Change of preference requests received after National Offer Day and before the start of the new school year (1 March to 31 August 2024)

- 9.7 After initial offers have been made, parents/carers who wish to change their preference can do so by making a revised application. The online application portal will be available after NOD for parents to submit a new (second) application or make a direct change of preference request. The second application/change request will replace any previous application made.
- 9.8 Knowsley resident parents will still be able to name up to three schools of preference on their revised application and new preferences will replace those on the original application. Therefore, any applicant who wishes for their child's name to remain on the waiting list for a school/s where a place has been refused must name that school again as the higher preference within the new preference list. Where a place is available in any of the new preferences named, it will be offered, and the original offer will be withdrawn. Where a place cannot be offered, the child's name will be placed on the waiting list/s by applying the relevant oversubscription criteria for that school and the right of appeal will be given. Any previous offer made will remain available.
- 9.9 Knowsley LA will not process any late change of preference requests received up to 15 March 2024 until 18 March 2024. All late preferences for Knowsley schools received up to 15 March will be considered together at this time. Where places remain available in schools following the initial allocation, they will be offered to late applicants. Where the school requested is already full, or if there are not enough vacancies remaining for the number of late applications received, the oversubscription criteria from the relevant school admission policy will be applied to all applications being considered at that time. For any application that is unsuccessful in obtaining a place, the child's name will be added to the waiting list by applying the oversubscription criteria for the individual school. The result of late change of preference applications for Knowsley schools processed after 18 March 2024 will be shared with co-ordinating LAs and applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application as soon as possible after 19 March 2024.
- 9.10 After this time, further late applications as a result of a change of preference received up to 31 August 2024 will be considered as soon as possible following receipt. Outcomes in respect of preferences for Knowsley schools will normally be issued within 10 school days of receipt of the application.

## 10 Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

- 10.1 Where a pupil has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which names a particular mainstream school as provision, the child will normally be admitted. Where such pupils are known about at the time of the annual allocation procedures, they will be placed within the admission number, with priority over others thus reducing the number of places available to other applicants. If an EHCP is issued after the allocation of places has been undertaken and names a school that is already fully subscribed to PAN, that child can be admitted beyond PAN as an exception.

- 10.2 Where a child is under formal assessment by the LA but an EHCP has not been issued at the point the initial allocation of places is concluded, the child will be considered for the mainstream school of preference along with all other applicants for in accordance with the oversubscription criteria of the school.

## **11 Admission outside the typical age range**

- 11.1 Children normally transfer from year 6 of primary education into year 7 of secondary education in the September following their eleventh birthday. This means children who have their 11<sup>th</sup> birthday on or between 1 September 2023 and 31 August 2024 will move to secondary school at the beginning of the Autumn term in September 2024.
- 11.2 Parents/carers may seek a place for their child outside of the normal age group if they believe it is appropriate. Requests for admission to year 7 of secondary education for a child whose age is outside the normal range should be received by 31 October 2023 to allow adequate time for the request to be considered and responded to. Parents/carers should submit information/evidence to support their request which will then be considered by the relevant admission authority. The views of the Headteacher of the school/s requested must be considered and will be a strong factor in determining whether admission outside of the normal year group is agreed.
- 11.3 Where admission outside of the normal age range is agreed, the application is still subject to consideration under admission arrangements for the relevant year - the process is a right to request and does not guarantee a place in the school of preference or give any additional priority for a place. If a place is not subsequently allocated at the preferred school following the application of the oversubscription policy, the parent/carer retains a right of appeal to an independent panel.
- 11.4 If the request for admission outside of the normal age range is refused, a reason/s for the decision will be provided. There is no statutory right of appeal against the decision to refuse a request for admission outside of the age range, but applicants can follow a complaints procedure if they feel necessary.

## **12 Admissions to year 12 of secondary establishments with post 16 provision**

- 12.1 All Saints Catholic High School will consider applications for admission to year 12. Details of year 12 admission arrangements can be obtained directly from the school and applications made as described in those arrangements.

### 13 In-year admission and Fair Access Protocol (FAP)

Secondary school In-Year Admissions (applications for year groups 8 to 11 and year 7 classes after the end of the annual coordination process)

- 13.1 The LA co-ordinates in-year admissions for secondary schools in the borough and the in-year scheme is published as a separate document. If the child has an Education and Health Care Plan, they should contact the Special Education Needs Team within the LA as admission/transfer is dealt with under SEND procedures.
- 13.2 Parents/carers should complete an In-Year Application form and submit it to the Local Authority School Admissions Team who then liaise and monitor applications with each secondary school in the borough. Where places are offered, schools will agree appropriate admission dates with the applicant to allow for a planned admission. Where places are refused due to the year group being full and further admission creating prejudice to the efficient use of education and efficient use of resources, the child will be placed on a waiting list and parents/carers will be advised of their right to an independent appeal against the refusal.
- 13.3 For families moving into the area and where the child will be unable to access their previous school due to distance, parents/carers are advised to make the application 4-6 weeks in advance of the move taking place to allow time for the application to be processed and ensure children are not unnecessarily out of school. Where a place is available and offered in advance of the child being in the area, a start date will be agreed with parent; this date will not typically be more than 20 school days in the future and places will not be held beyond the agreed start date if the child has not taken up the place as this could potentially create disadvantage to other children applying.
- 13.4 The School Admissions Code states each Local Authority must have a Fair Access Protocol to ensure that unplaced and vulnerable children, and those having difficulty in securing a school place in-year, are allocated a place as quickly as possible. The protocol is operated outside the normal point of entry to school and applies only to specific categories of children seeking places through the in-year transfer/admission process. It does not apply to the annual allocation of year 7 places. The protocol seeks to ensure that no individual school is asked to admit a disproportionate number of children who have been excluded from other schools, who display challenging behaviour, or who are being placed via other categories of the protocol. To achieve this, the protocol allows the Fair Access Panel to make admissions in excess of the admission number, or to refuse where places are available. The Knowsley FAP document is published in a separate document and is reviewed annually during the summer term to be effective from the new school year.

## Proposed timetable for annual secondary coordinated admissions school year 2024/25

