Gateshead Infant, Junior, and Primary School Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme September 2026

Introduction

1. This scheme is made by Gateshead Council under the Education (Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (Primary) (England) Regulations 2002 and applies to all Infant, Junior & Primary Schools in Gateshead.

Interpretation

2. 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.

'Infant, junior & 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 or voluntary school (but not a special school), which is maintained by the LA.

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

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

'Voluntary controlled schools' means such of the schools as are voluntary controlled schools, where the LA sets the admissions criteria and offers places.

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

'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 2026.

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

'Academic Year' means a period commencing 1 September and ending 31 August.

'Home LA' means the local authority in which the child resides.

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

'Equal preference system' means all preferences for each school listed by parents on the common application form are considered against the 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 Infant, Junior or Primary school received during the academic year commencing in September 2026.

'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 schools and Academies for the admission year 2026/2027 (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 schools and academies will include in its admission arrangements for the above year the provisions set out in the Schedule, so far as relevant to that school, or provisions having the same effect.

The Scheme

1. 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.
2. The Scheme shall apply to every infant, junior & primary school including academies in the LA area as identified in Appendix 1 (except special schools).
3. 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 normal year of entry in the specified year. A standard application form known as 'In-year school transfer application form' will be used for 'In-Year' applications made after the commencement of the academic year in September 2026.

2. The CAF will be used for admitting pupils into the first year of infant/junior/primary education in the academic year 2026/2027.

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:

a) to be admitted to a school within the LA area

b) to 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 primary education and those transferring from infant to junior school receives a written explanation of how to apply and an explanation of the key features of the admission procedures and coordinated 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 application form and an explanation of the 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 academy 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 (no 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 15 January 2026. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that CAFs are returned to the LA, on-line or paper copy by the closing date.

Determining offers in response to the Common Application Form

11. The LA will act as a clearing house 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 17 of this Schedule.

12. Completed application forms must be returned to the home LA by the closing date of 15 January 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 the closing date unless exceptional circumstances apply.

15. **By 6 February 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 Gateshead LA area, then Gateshead LA will also notify the relevant maintaining authority by this date.

16. **By 6 March 2026** 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 13 March 2026** 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 23 March 2026** 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.

- 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 community catchment school or if this is not available 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,

19. **By 10 April 2026** the LA will inform its infant, junior & primary schools, and academies of the pupils to be offered places at their school.

National Offer Day

20. **On or around 16 April 2026** 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 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 schools nominated on the CAF.
- Information about their statutory right of appeal against the decision to refuse places at the other nominated schools and waiting list procedures.
- Inform parents that their child's name has been added to the waiting list for those schools nominated on the CAF at which they were refused a place.
- 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 22 May 2026

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.

If vacancies arise at oversubscribed schools after 16 April 2026, the first allocation of places will take place on 22 May 2026 followed by subsequent allocations, 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 be compiled from those children who have been refused a place at that school. This list may include the following children:

- Those who applied late after 15 January 2026 but before 16 April 2026 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 list 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 of the CAF, they may be placed on the waiting list for all 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 offered a place at their second ranked school, they may be placed on the waiting list for their first raked school, but 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 16 April 2026, will NOT be placed on the waiting list for that new school until 29 May 2026, this is after the first reallocation of places on 22 May 2026.

From 29 May 2026 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 **15 January 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 27 February 2026. 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). Other circumstances will be considered, and each case decided on its own merits based on the evidence provided.

Change of preferences received after 15 January 2026

24. Parents submitting requests to change their preferences, from those originally ranked on the CAF, will be classed as late applications, 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 16 April 2026. 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 28 February 2026

25. Applications received after 28 February 2026, will not be processed until after 16 April 2026. Parents will, if possible, receive an offer of a school place on 16 April 2026 according to the terms of this scheme.

No application received by 16 April 2026

26. Where no CAF is submitted the child will, on 16 April 2026, 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 because of liaison with nursery school and private providers.

Applications received after 16 April 2026 but before 22 May 2026

27. Applications made direct to the school must be forwarded to the LA immediately. The LA will offer a place, where possible on 22 May 2026 in accordance with the scheme, at the school ranked highest on the CAF at which there is a vacancy, or if this is not possible, at their community school, or if this school is also full at the next nearest

community school measured as the crow flies from the parental residence to the main entrance of the school with a vacancy. However, please note that new applications submitted during this period from parents who have already submitted a CAF in the normal admission round will not considered until 29 May 2026 in accordance with paragraph 22 above.

Applications received after 22 May 2026 but before 31 August 2026

28. The LA will continue to co-ordinate admissions to all relevant schools in Gateshead up to 31 August 2026.

Applications received after 22 May 2026, for first year of entry must be made on the CAF and sent to the LA, who will:

- Determine any application for a community school for which it is the admission authority and
- If the application is for a voluntary aided school, refer the application to the governing body of the school, which will decide and notify the LA who will notify the parent. Parents who are refused admission will be offered the right of appeal and informed about the waiting list procedures.
- New applications submitted after 16 April 2026 from parents who have already submitted a CAF in the normal admissions round may not be considered until 29 May 2026 in accordance with paragraph 22 above.

29. The LA will keep track of any pupils who apply for admission from 16 April 2026 but before 31 August 2026 and intervene as appropriate to ensure that they are allocated a school place without undue delay.

Part 3 – In-Year Applications

30 **'**In-Year' applications are those applications received after 31 August 2026 for places in any year group requesting admission during the academic year 2026/2027.

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 application form. These applications are those received after 31 August 2026 for places in any year group requesting admission during the academic year 2026/2027. Please note that parents who have been refused a place in the normal allocation round for the first year of entry to primary, infant, or junior schools for admission from 2026 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 Gateshead's in-year school transfer application form is available from the Education Support Service, The School Admissions Team, Floor 2, Civic Centre, Gateshead, NE8 1HH or online at 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 Forms

36 If the school transfer 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 parents apply directly to the relevant admission authority. We do not process 'in-year' application forms for schools outside Gateshead.

37 All primary schools within Gateshead must respond to the Local Authority (LA) within 10 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 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

45 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.

46 **Pupils living in Gateshead applying for a school out of the area.** The home authority (Gateshead) will request that the parent apply directly to the relevant admission authority to process their request and follow their 'in-year' application process.

47 **Pupils living outside Gateshead applying to a Gateshead school.** The home authority must ask the parent/carer to contact Gateshead LA to complete an in-year school transfer form to confirm the availability of a place. Gateshead LA will liaise with the parents regarding the outcome of their request.

48 **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.

49 **Waiting Lists.** If your child is refused a place at the school you requested, you may request that your child's name is placed on the waiting list for this school. The LA will maintain school waiting lists for reception class until the end of December 2026, following this date they will be sent to the individual schools to maintain. 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' Applications

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

Schedule 2

Timetable of Primary Co-ordinated scheme 2026
First Year of Entry

Monday 8 September 2025:	Common Application Form made available to parents online or paper copy (on request only). Schools/Academies receive information letters for distribution to parents.
Thursday 15 January 2026:	On–Line applications and paper forms to be submitted to the LA.
Friday 6 February 2026:	Details of applications to be sent to VA schools and other LA's.
Friday 6 March 2026:	VA schools provide the LA with ranked lists of applicants.
Friday 13 March 2026:	The LA will provide other LAs with a list of offers and refusals for relevant children.
Friday 10 April 2026:	By this date the LA will notify schools/Academies which applicants have been offered places at their schools.
Thursday 16 April 2026:	Notifications sent to parents on or around this date.
Friday 22 May 2026:	Any places that become available are reallocated to applicants from the waiting list in accordance with paragraph 22 of schedule 1 of this scheme.

Waiting lists maintained by the LA until end of the autumn term December 2026