



whose governing bodies set their admission policies.

▪ **Will Foundation and Voluntary Aided schools comply with the new admissions policy?**

- The new admission policy has been strongly recommended by the Cabinet for adoption by the governors of Foundation and Voluntary Aided schools. However, we cannot guarantee that all Foundation and Voluntary Aided schools will adopt this policy.

▪ **Who will decide which children will be admitted into our reception Class? How will this work?**

- The Local Education Authority by application of the admission arrangements for each school.

▪ **Which children will be given priority when allocating places?**

- If there are more applications for places than there are places available, the Local education Authority will give preference to children living **nearest** the school according to the following criteria in this order of priority:
  - 1 Children with a statement of Special educational Needs naming that school
  - 2 Children who live within the designated area and have a brother or sister attending the school at the time of their admission
  - 3 Children who live within the designated area and have a brother or sister attending the adjoining middle/junior school
  - 4 Children who live within the designated area and have no brother or sister connection with that or adjoining middle/junior school
  - 5 Children who live outside the designated area and have a brother or sister attending the school at the time of their admission
  - 6 Children who live outside the designated area and have a brother or sister attending the adjoining middle/junior school
  - 7 Children who live outside of the designated area and have no brother or sister connection with that or the adjoining middle/junior school

**Important note:** “School” is defined as the main school and not a learning Support centre or Nursery Class attached to the school. This means that no priority would be given to an out-of area child who had either a brother or sister in temporary or part-time attendance at the attached Learning support Centre.

The address provided to the school will be used to determine the designated school. We will accept changes to the address up to the closing date for applications. To determine who lives nearest distance will be measured door to door using ordnance survey data.

▪ **How do I find out what the designated area is?**

- All schools should be aware of their designated area. If unsure please contact school admissions (Tel:01603 223489)

- **When do children legally have to attend school?**
  - Children are required by law to attend school full-time from the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday (unless they are being educated at home or have special educational needs)
  
- **When can children in Norfolk start school?**
  - Children in Norfolk who will be attending a community or voluntary controlled school may start school full-time between the ages of 4½ years and 5 years of age. This will mean that in each academic year children whose birthdays fall between 1<sup>st</sup> September and the end of February will be able to start school full-time at the beginning of the autumn term. Children whose birthdays fall between 1<sup>st</sup> March and 31<sup>st</sup> August will be able to start school full-time at the beginning of the spring term, but may start school part-time at the beginning of the autumn term.
  
- **Can the parents of individual children defer their child's entry into school?**
  - Yes, parents may defer their child's entry into school until the beginning of the spring or summer terms and the beginning of the term following the child's fifth birthday, at the latest.
  
- **Why do children start school in Norfolk before they are legally required to do so?**
  - Many parents appreciate the opportunity for their child to start school before their fifth birthday to enable them to get to know the children they will be learning with and the school they will attend. The county policy gives a consistency to these opportunities but parents may decide whether to take up this offer for their child.
  
- **Do all children whose birthday falls between 1<sup>st</sup> September and the end of February have to start school at the beginning of the autumn term?**
  - No, children do not have to start school until the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday. Where admission is offered prior to compulsory school age, parents may defer their child's entry into school until later in that academic year to guarantee a place.
  
- **Can a school insist that a child begin school at the beginning of the autumn term?**
  - No, a parent may defer their child's full-time entry up until the beginning of the term following their child's fifth birthday. The child must start part-time or full-time by the beginning of the summer term in order to secure the place in that class, although s/he does not have to attend full-time until the term following their fifth birthday

- **Why can't all children start school full-time at the beginning of the autumn term?**
  - All four-year-old children are entitled to five sessions of early education each week, lasting for a minimum of 2½ hours. Many young children find these sessions tiring and still require a sleep during the day, but some older four-year-olds are ready for a whole day of activity that a reception class can offer. Younger children given the offer of part-time attendance will enable them to participate in some of the activities with their older peers, while ensuring that their care needs may also be met.
  
- **Can full-time children be phased into school gradually?**
  - Most schools now operate comprehensive transition arrangements with local pre-schools and nurseries and most four-year-old children are attending five weekly sessions of early education. It is expected, therefore, that children may be phased into school during the first two weeks of term, but should be attending full-time by the Phoenix Year Group Totals date to ensure that they are included in the headcount. Where a child is able to start part-time but full-time attendance by this date is not seen to be in the child's best interests, although it will be achieved during the autumn term, the headteacher and parent may agree to delay the child's full-time attendance. In this case the child should still be included in the Year Group Totals, but as a part-time attender.
  
- **Do all children have to start school from the first day of term?**
  - Where children have been attending a pre-school or nursery setting for five sessions of early education weekly, the school should offer a minimum of five part-time sessions from the start of the school year.
  
- **Can children be phased into school over a longer period than two weeks?**
  - Yes, where a parent feels it is in the best interests of their child to attend school part-time beyond the Phoenix Year Group Totals date, they may either agree an individual programme for transition with the headteacher or defer their child's full-time attendance until the term following their fifth birthday.
  
- **At present children are phased into our Reception class and only attend full-time from the beginning of the second half of the term. Will children be able to be phased in this way?**
  - No, by the time they start school, most children will now be used to attending early education sessions for five sessions weekly, and some children will also be in full day-care. It will be expected that by the Phoenix Year Group Totals date most children born between 1<sup>st</sup> September and end of February will be ready to attend school full-time. Similarly for children born between 1<sup>st</sup> March and 31<sup>st</sup> August will be ready to attend full-time by the January Phoenix Year Group Totals date. However, where parents and headteacher agree that it is in the best interests of the child to start part-time and build up more gradually to full-time attendance, they may agree an individual programme for

transition. Alternatively the child's full-time attendance may be deferred up to the term following their fifth birthday.

- **What is the definition of part-time?**
  - All four-year-old children are entitled to five sessions weekly of early education, lasting for at least 2½ hours. Part-time attendance at school would be expected to meet these requirements.
- **What times of the day do part-time children have to attend school?**
  - In most schools the timing of the school day will generally mean that it is more convenient for part-time children to attend for five morning sessions. Where a school is able to provide both morning and afternoon sessions of at least two and half-hours, sessions may be offered in a flexible way. Part-time children may attend for five morning sessions, or five afternoon sessions, or a mixture of five morning and afternoon sessions, throughout the autumn term.
- **Can the parents of individual children defer their child's full-time entry into school?**
  - Yes, parents may ask for their child to attend part-time until the beginning of the spring or summer terms or the beginning of the term following the child's fifth birthday, whichever is earlier.
- **Can a child whose birthday falls between 1<sup>st</sup> April and 31<sup>st</sup> August start school at the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday?**
  - Yes, a child whose birthday falls after the 1<sup>st</sup> April, admission could be delayed until the beginning of the following academic year. However the child would be expected to start school in Year 1 with the correct age cohort and a place could not be guaranteed. In this instance, parents would have to reapply for the place for their child and a place in Year 1 would depend on the availability of places.
- **I believe it would be better for younger children to start school at the beginning of the spring or summer term. Can I defer admission for the younger children?**
  - No, the admission of whole cohorts of children may not be deferred by the school. Parents may decide to defer their child's admission but a place must be available for any child offered a place. Even if most parents in an area wish to defer their child's entry, provision must be available for any parent who wishes for their child to start school on the designated start date in the autumn term.
- **I believe all children should attend school part-time during the autumn term. Can I arrange for the whole year group to attend part-time?**
  - No, schools may not delay full-time attendance for whole cohorts of children in this age group. Even if most parents in an area wish to defer their child's full-time attendance, provision must be available for

any parent who wishes for their child to start school full time.

- **Can we continue to operate three termly intakes of children?**
  - No, only if parents wish to defer their child's entry into school may the date of admission be varied. Schools must make arrangements to accommodate all children eligible to begin full-time or part-time at the designated times.
- **Can part-time children be phased into school gradually?**
  - All children born between 1<sup>st</sup> March and 31<sup>st</sup> August should attend school part-time by the Phoenix Year Group Totals date unless this is not seen to be in their best interests by the parent. Where children have been attending a pre-school or nursery setting for five sessions of early education weekly, the school should offer a minimum of five part-time sessions from the start of the school year. Where a child has not attended a pre-school setting or nursery or a parent feels it is in the best interests of their child to phase part-time entry into school an individual programme of transition may be agreed between the parent and the headteacher. In this case the child would not be eligible for early education funding at any other setting.
- **When can children born between 1<sup>st</sup> March and 31<sup>st</sup> August start school full-time?**
  - All children born between 1<sup>st</sup> March and 31<sup>st</sup> August may start school full-time from the beginning of the spring term. It is expected that all children will attend school full-time by the January Phoenix Year Group Totals date unless this is not seen to be in their best interests by the parent. Where a parent feels it is in the best interests of their child to phase full-time entry into school over a longer period they may either agree an individual programme for transition with the headteacher or defer their child's full-time attendance until the term following their fifth birthday.
- **At present we admit children born between 1<sup>st</sup> September and 31<sup>st</sup> March full-time in September. Can we continue to do this?**
  - No, children born between 1<sup>st</sup> September and end of February may be admitted full-time at the beginning of the autumn term, children born after the 1<sup>st</sup> March may start part-time at the beginning of the autumn term and full-time at the beginning of the spring term.
- **Some parents would like their younger child to start school full-time at the beginning of the autumn term. May I admit individual children full-time before their full-time start date?**

- No, provision for younger children in addition to the 2½ hours early education would be deemed childcare and schools would have to show that the additional provision for younger four-year-olds met the Ofsted day-care standards. Parents may be charged for provision offered as childcare.
- **Can a school include full-time and part-time children in the same class?**
  - Yes, many schools already accommodate both full-time and part-time children in the same class. This may mean that some changes to planning and organisation of classes will be needed.
- **Can a school have one full-time class and one part-time class during the autumn term?**
  - Yes, in some schools the number of children to be accommodated in Year R will enable the school to operate a full-time and a part-time class throughout the autumn term. In this case a teacher may be used for part of the day to support other classes, develop links and support pre-school groups or create pastoral or community links to enhance the role of the early years department. It must be remembered however that class size limits of a maximum of 30 children per class must be adhered to.
- **Can a child who attends part-time split their five sessions between school and a pre-school group?**
  - No, the five weekly sessions may not be split between a pre-school group and a school as the school is already funded for these places. Where a parent does not wish for their child to attend school for five sessions weekly, they may either:  
arrange with the headteacher for their child to have a phased transition into school or  
defer their child's admission into school and maintain the child's place at pre-school.
- **At present children begin school part-time for two or three sessions weekly during the autumn term. Will children be able to continue attending for two or three sessions weekly?**
  - No, the school will have to make sure that provision is available for children born between 1<sup>st</sup> March and 31<sup>st</sup> August to attend for five part-time sessions each week. If parents feel that five sessions is too much for their child they may individually agree with the headteacher for their child to attend for less than five sessions weekly. Where parents wish for their child to attend another provider of early education in addition to the school, the parents will be required to pay for the place with the other provider, unless they defer their child's entry into school.
- **Can a child attend school part-time and attend a pre-school in addition?**
  - Yes, but attendance at a pre-school in addition to part-time school would be deemed childcare and parents would be required to pay for

the additional sessions

- **If a parent defers their child's entry into school, will the child's place at pre-school be funded still?**
  - Where parents decide to defer their child's entry into school, by one or two terms, the pre-school group place will be funded through Nursery Education Grant.



# **Guidelines for Headteachers on the implementation of the Policy for First Admission to School September 2003**

## **ANNEXE A**

### **Suggested Format for inclusion in school Prospectus**

*(Delete those brackets that do not apply to your school, and insert appropriate wording instead of XXX)*

***As a (Community)(Voluntary Controlled) School we follow the Norfolk County Council policy for first admission to school which is as follows:  
(As a (Voluntary Aided)(Foundation) School, the school governors have decided to adopt the Norfolk County Council Policy on first admission to schools which is as follows:)***

*By law children must start statutory education full time at the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday. Where admission is offered prior to compulsory school age, parents may defer their child's entry into school until later in that academic year.*

*For Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools, children born between 1<sup>st</sup> September and the end of February may start school full time at the beginning of the autumn term before their fifth birthday.*

*Children born between the 1<sup>st</sup> March and 31<sup>st</sup> August, may start school part time at the beginning of the autumn term before their fifth birthday and full time at the beginning of the spring term before their fifth birthday.*

***(The County Council strongly recommends this policy for adoption by Voluntary Aided and Foundation Schools.)***

*(Name of school) offers children who will reach their fifth birthday between 1<sup>st</sup> March and 31<sup>st</sup> August five part-time sessions each week throughout the autumn term. The times of these sessions will be as follows:  
(XXXXXXXXXX)*

*Our admission policy allows children to start school earlier than the law requires. However the law also allows parents to ask for their child to be admitted but lets them delay the start date until later in the school year. Your child must start school by the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday and the place must be taken up by the start of the summer term. If you inform us that you wish to delay your child's entry the place will be held and will not be offered to another child.*

*If there are more applications for places than there are places available, the Local education Authority will give preference to children living **nearest** the school according to the following criteria in this order of priority:*

- 1. Children with a statement of Special educational Needs naming that school*
- 2. Children who live within the designated area and have a brother or sister attending the school at the time of their admission*
- 3. Children who live within the designated area and have a brother or sister attending the adjoining middle/junior school at the time of their admission*
- 4. Children who live within the designated area and have no brother or sister attending the school or adjoining middle/junior school at the time of their admission*
- 5. Children who live outside the designated area and have a brother or sister attending the school at the time of their admission*
- 6. Children who live outside the designated area and have a brother or sister attending the adjoining middle/junior school at the time of their admission*
- 7. Children living outside of the designated area and have no brother or sister attending the school or adjoining middle/junior school at the time of their admission*

*If you would like to apply for a place at (name of school) please contact (XXXXXX) it is important that you make sure that the school has received the application for a place for your child by (28<sup>th</sup> March 2003)(closing date for application). You will usually hear whether your child has a place at the school by (early May 2003)(date of offers)*

*If you have any queries about an application for a place at (name of school) please contact (XXXX)*

*If you have any queries about the admissions process please (either contact the headteacher at the school or) contact Norfolk County Council Education department on 01603 222146*