

Scheme for co-ordinating secondary (Year 7) admissions for September 2026-27

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ACADEMIC YEAR 2026/2027

1. Introduction

1.1 The School Standards and Framework Act 1998, as amended by the Education Act 2002 and supported by The School Admission (Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012, requires Local Authorities to formulate a scheme for co-ordinating admission arrangements for the normal admissions round and late applications for all academies and maintained schools in their area. Academies are required to participate in the co-ordinated scheme.

1.2 A school is here defined as any academy or maintained community, foundation, trust, voluntary-aided or voluntary controlled school in the Slough Borough Council area.

1.3 The normal admissions round for 2026-27 relate to:

- Year 7 applications for children born between 1 Sept 2014 and 31 Aug 2015.

1.4 Slough Borough Council, acting as the Local Authority, is the admission authority for all community and voluntary controlled schools. The admission authority for academies is the academy trust. For foundation, trust and voluntary aided schools, the admission authority is the governing body.

1.5 This scheme will apply to all secondary schools in the Slough Borough Council area from September 2026. The scheme excludes maintained special schools.

1.6 Any reference to LA Slough is a reference to the administrative area of the unitary authority.

Co-ordination for September 2026

1.7 The Slough Borough Council (LA) co-ordinated scheme was last consulted between 25 November 2022 and 27 January 2023. The proposal was to remove the catchment criterion from the oversubscription criteria of Slough's community schools. Since that consultation took place, there have been no changes to the co-ordinated scheme for 2026 entry, therefore no requirement for a public consultation.

Admission Criteria

1.8 Under the co-ordinated scheme, the LA, as the admission authority, will set and apply the oversubscription criteria for all maintained community and voluntary controlled schools. Academies, voluntary aided, free and foundation schools will set and apply their own oversubscription criteria.

2. Aims of the secondary scheme

2.1 Co-ordination schemes are intended to simplify the admissions process whilst reducing the likelihood of any child being left without a school place. Co-ordination establishes a mechanism that ensures that, as far as is reasonably practicable, every parent of a child living in a local authority area who has applied to a maintained school is sent a single offer of a school place by their local authority.

2.2 Co-ordination schemes do not affect the rights and duties of the governing bodies of voluntary aided and foundation schools to set and apply their own admission arrangements and oversubscription criteria, nor for academies and free Schools to agree their own arrangements with the Secretary of State. Admission authorities do not have to determine the same or similar oversubscription criteria but must ensure that their own admission arrangements are compatible with, and do not undermine, the co-ordination scheme for their area. These arrangements are required to:

- meet all statutory requirements relating to the co-ordinated admissions process
- ensure that the needs of the child and the wishes of the parent(s) are the prime considerations
- ensure that as many parents as possible gain a place for their child at one of their preferred schools
- ensure that every child living in the Slough area who has applied for a school place in the normal admission round is issued with an offer letter on the agreed offer letter date
- specify how late applications should be dealt with and how applications that fall outside of the normal admission round should be dealt with
- ensure that all parties to the admissions process work together to achieve the above aims, within the limits of the legislation relating to school admissions.

3. The Scheme

3.1 The scheme shall:

- apply to all community, voluntary aided and academy secondary schools in the Slough area;
- ensure that a fair and transparent system for the allocation of school places is achieved;
- require the LA to produce a guide for parents (composite prospectus) providing information to parents about the secondary admissions process; the application procedure and containing information relating to the criteria by which every maintained secondary school, or Academy, in the Slough Borough Council area shall determine whether a child is to be granted, or refused, admission.

- provide a single on-line application form enabling a parent living in the LA area to apply for up to six secondary² schools, whether in the LA's area or not, to give reasons for those applications and to rank them in order of preference;
- provide a paper common application form upon request for parents/carers unable to make their application through the on-line facility;
- ensure that on the national offer date (1 March, or next working day, where this is a weekend or bank holiday) a single offer of a secondary school place is made by the LA to the parent of every child living within the LA area for whom an "on-time" application has been received within the published timetable;
- stipulate timetables for all aspects of the process;
- set out a procedure for determining any application made otherwise than in the course of a normal admission round, or where it is for admission during the normal round, any application submitted after the application deadline stipulated by the scheme;
- specify whether, in determining if a pupil is to be granted or refused a place at a school in the LA area, the LA will have regard to any information provided by another LA as to whether that pupil is to be granted a place in that LA's area.

4. The process of allocation

Normal admission round

4.1 This scheme will apply to all children resident in the LA area who are applying for a school place for the school's initial year of entry for the start of the relevant autumn term; this is Year 7 in the normal admission round and late admissions for all Slough Secondary Schools. This scheme will apply to all admission authorities in the LA area.

4.2 Applications received for children transferring to Secondary School will only be considered in the normal admission round where the year group applied for is the point of entry to the school. Applications received for schools where this is not the point of entry will be considered as an in-year application and in accordance with the published in-year co-ordinated scheme.

4.3 For information regarding admission to these year groups and all other year groups after the start of the academic year please refer to the 'In-Year Admission Arrangements on the Slough Borough Council website.

Common application form and the composite prospectus

4.4 Parents are expected and encouraged to apply online. We will, therefore, limit the availability of a paper version of the common application form; instead signposting the on-line access to as many applicants as possible.

4.5 The LA will provide a brief guide to the application process and information on applying for a school place in advance of the application process opening to all:

- Primary schools in respect of admission to Year 7.

4.6 This information will allow settings and schools to support the parents of children who are due to start or transfer to the school the following September. Electronic copies of the Admissions Information booklets, (composite prospectus) will include information and guidance explaining the operation of the co-ordinated scheme and advice on completing the application form, will be available on the council's website. Hard copies are available on request.

4.7 The LA will identify those pupils in Year 6, attending schools in Slough, through data exchange with Slough schools and through information held on council databases about children attending schools in other local authority areas. Neighbouring local authorities will be asked to provide records of Slough children attending schools in their areas so that application information can be sent directly to their parents. The LA will, in return, provide information to other local authority admission teams about any of their residents attending Slough schools.

4.8 The online facility is available from the School admissions page of the Slough Borough Council website.

4.9 The on-line facility, or the common application form, (whichever is used by the applicant) will collect the basic pupil/parent data required by all LAs to process the application. This will include the child's name, date of birth, address, telephone number, applicant details, primary school attended (where applicable), sibling details, and whether or not the child is Child In Care (CiC) or was previously Child in Care, in England, or overseas, but ceased to be so by reason of adoption, a care arrangements order or special guardianship order, or has an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

4.10 The application form will allow parents to express a preference for up to six schools, to rank the preferences in order and to provide reasons for their preference.

Supplementary Information Form (SIF)

4.11 Admission authorities, other than the LA may have their own Supplementary Information Form (SIF) for the collection of any necessary additional information from parents to enable them to apply the school's oversubscription criteria. This may include any criteria relating to church attendance.

4.12 A SIF must not ask:

- personal details about parents and families, such as maiden names, criminal convictions, marital, or financial status;
- for any financial contribution, voluntary or otherwise;
- details of parents' achievements, educational background or whether either the parents' or the child's first language is English;
- details about parents' or children's disabilities, special educational needs or medical conditions;

- about parents' or children's interests, hobbies or membership of societies;
- for parents to agree to support the ethos of the school in a practical way; or
- for both parents to sign the form, or for the child to complete the form.

4.13 Information on which schools may require a SIF will be provided in the LAs composite prospectus. Copies of the SIF will be available for download from the Council's website and will be available from the school.

4.14 All parents making applications for a school requiring the completion of a SIF must still complete an online/paper common application form. All SIFs must be returned directly to the school at which a place is being sought by the national closing date or date specified by the relevant school. Parents must check the date with the school. Any forms, which are submitted to the LA, will be date-stamped and forwarded to the relevant school.

Processing applications

4.15 The LA will co-ordinate all applications and the offer of places for all school places in the Slough Borough Council (being the admissions authority for all community and voluntary controlled schools and acting as a co-ordinator for all other own admission authority schools within the Slough local authority area).

On time applications

4.16 An 'on-time' application is an online, or emailed common application form (CAF) submitted and received by the local authority admissions team no later than 23:59hrs on the National Closing Date or a hand-delivered, or posted, paper application received at the local authority offices within office opening hours of Monday-Friday 8.30am-4.30pm on, or before, the National Closing Date, where this falls on a weekend.

Late applications

4.17 Any application for the normal admission round received by the local authority school admissions team after the national closing date will be deemed 'late'. Late applications will be dealt with after all on-time applications have been processed and places allocated. Late applications will be processed in "rounds" and places will be allocated in accordance with the published timetable.

Verification of data

4.18 Parents will be asked by the LA to submit proof of address with their application or provide the appropriate proof of address at the data processing stage. Acceptable documentary evidence of proof of address will be set out in the composite booklet and on the Slough Borough Council website. Address checks, child looked after claims, sibling and EHCP checks will also be undertaken by the LA.

Request to change preferences

4.19 Once an application form has been received, no changes can be made to that application after the National Closing Date has passed, unless there is a genuine reason for the change (such as a change of address or siblings have changed schools). A second deadline date (see timetable) applies for such changes.

4.20 Parents or carers wishing to amend preferences after the closing date, will need to complete a "Change of Preference" Form, which will be available from the school admissions webpages, or by contacting the School Admissions Team. The new application will replace any previous application.

This means that parents must include any schools from previous applications if they would like them to remain as a live preference. If a school is no longer included on the most recent application form the parent, or carer, will be agreeing they are refusing any previous offer made for that school and any right of appeal against refusal of a place at that school. The parent will also be agreeing to their child's name is to be removed from any waiting list for any school refused that is not included on a preference on the most recent application form. This ensures that a parent will have a maximum of six live preferences for the normal year of entry at any one time.

Children of UK Service Personnel (UK Armed Forces)

4.21 Applications received for children of UK Service Personnel will be accepted in accordance with the requirements of para 2.21 of the School Admissions Code. Applications submitted after the national closing date will be accepted and treated as having been received "on-time" where this is received with documentation specified in para 2.21 of the School Admissions Code provided this is received by the stipulated deadline.

Applicants moving into Slough

4.22 Applications submitted after the closing date will only be accepted and treated as having been received "on time" where a parent can demonstrate they have made an on-time application to the local authority admissions team in which they previously lived.

All Preferences equal

4.23 Parental preferences will be ranked by the relevant authority within the LA area according to the oversubscription criteria for the relevant school. The order of preference will not affect this ranking as all preferences are equal.

4.24 Own admission authority schools, will receive, through the Slough Provider Portal, information about all preferences received for their school and will be asked to rank these preferences in accordance with the school's determined oversubscription criteria and not by the order of their preference. These schools will provide the LA through the Provider Portal how these applications have been ranked in accordance with their admission policy and return this to the LA in accordance with the published timetable.

Allocation of places

4.25 The LA, using preference and oversubscription criteria rankings (including those supplied by own admission authority schools), will allocate places according to each parent's preference ranking, as follows:

- where a parent's first preference can be met, a place will be allocated at that school. The LA will then 'discard', i.e. not consider, any lower ranked preferences;
- where a parent's first preference cannot be met, but the second preference can, a place will be allocated at the second preference school. The child's name will be placed on the waiting list for the first preference school ranked according to their oversubscription criteria. The lower preferences will be 'discarded' i.e. be considered as no longer required;
- where a parent's first, second, third, fourth and fifth preference cannot be met, but the sixth preference can, a place will be allocated at the sixth preference school. The child's name will be placed on the waiting list for the first, second, third, fourth and fifth preference schools ranked according to their oversubscription criteria;
- where none of the parent's preferences can be met, a place will be allocated at the next nearest school to the home address with available places (if the child resides in the Slough Borough Council area).

Co-ordination with other local authorities

4.26 The LA will, wherever possible, take account of higher preference offers that can be made by another local authority.

Offer letters

4.27 Parents will receive one offer of a school place. Offer letters will provide parents with the reasons for refusing their child at their first, second, third, fourth, fifth or sixth preference schools (if applicable). It will explain that they have the right to appeal against those refusals.

Reply to an offer

4.28 Parents are required to accept/decline the allocation of a school place within 10 school days of the offer letter being sent or posted. During that period the allocated school will attempt to contact parents to confirm if the place offered is to be accepted, or declined. No later than, ten working days after the national offer date the LA will send a chaser letter to all parents who have not confirmed their admissions decision. If, after a further 5 working days from this date, no decision has been received from the parent, the place may be withdrawn and will be included and offered as part of the "second" round of allocations.

Declining an offer

4.29 Parents should not decline the offer of a place unless they are certain of a place at an alternative school. (This does not remove a parent's right of appeal to a school they are on the waiting list for, but should ensure that all children have a school place).

Co-ordination after allocation day (1 March)

4.30 The School Admissions Code (page 41 “The Admissions Timeline”) clarifies that parents must continue to apply to their home local authority for “late” applications for the normal admissions round (i.e. between 1 March and 31 August for secondary transfer). This will ensure that places which become available are re-allocated effectively and duplicate offers are avoided.

4.31 Offer of school places during the normal admissions co-ordination round and late applications can only be made by the LA. For the avoidance of doubt, a school cannot make an offer directly to parents during this period. The admissions co-ordination round runs till 31 August.

5. Waiting lists

5.1 Waiting lists for all oversubscribed secondary schools will be maintained by the LA until 31 August. Where the school manages its own in-year admission process, a waiting list will then be started with the school directly from 1 Sept. Waiting lists are held in strict oversubscription criteria order. For an oversubscribed community school, the LA will maintain a waiting list until at least 31 December. At that point, the waiting list will be cleared, and all applicants will be removed from the list. If a parent wishes for their child to be added back to the waiting list after this period, they will need to complete and submit an in-year application.

5.2 After the offer date, there will be no distinction between ‘on-time’ and ‘late’ applications on waiting lists.

5.3 Schools must advise the LA when a place becomes available. The LA will then offer the place to the child who is at the top of the waiting list.

5.4 Parents will be asked to confirm that they wish to stay on a higher preference school’s waiting list when accepting an offer of a place at a lower preference school. A child’s details will not be added to a school’s waiting list if a higher preference school has been offered. Declining a place when offered a preference school will automatically remove them from the waiting list.

5.5 If, after a child is offered a place at a lower preference school which they have not yet started, a place becomes available at a higher preference school and their name has been added to the waiting list for that school, the original offer will be withdrawn, and a new offer is made. The reason for this is that the child will not yet have started or placed on roll at that lower preference school, and we are obliged to meet a parent’s highest preference. If a parent is happy to accept and keep the lower preferred offer, they must inform the LA to remove them from the higher preference school’s waiting list, or the offer for the lower preference will be withdrawn and their place (at the lower preferred school) will be offered on to the child who is top of the waiting list for that school.

5.6 After the offer date, if a parent wishes their child to be considered for an alternative school, a new online application must be completed listing the new order of preferences.

Allocations over PAN after determination of arrangements

5.7 If at any time following determination of a PAN, an admissions authority wishes to admit children over and above their PAN as part of the co-ordinated admissions scheme, they must make this request in writing to School Admissions no later than the end of the Autumn term prior to the entry year (as in, 15 December 2025 for September 2026 entry). The LA will agree to such requests, where it is received in good time (by the above deadline) to enable the LA to deliver its co-ordination responsibilities effectively; and it can be demonstrated that the school has capacity to support admitting over PAN, without adversely affecting offers made for other schools in the local area.

5.8 Where further capacity is required to provide every child in Slough with an appropriate school place, a discussion will be held with relevant schools by an appropriate officer in School Admissions to reach an agreement on offering additional places above PAN. This will include the LA approaching own admission authority schools to take additional pupils, over and above their PAN.

Admissions timetable 2026/27 – for secondary (Year 7)

Your child's birth date needs to be between 1 September 2014 and 31 August 2015.

Checklist items	Secondary (Year 7)
Application window opens	1 September 2025
National closing date for applications	31 October 2025
Final date change request linked to change of address	14 November 2025
Indication of preference/applicant numbers made available to schools	From 28 November 2025
Inter LA data exchange commences	From 24 November 2025
Send Ranking list to schools	12 December 2025
Finalised ranked list received from OAA	9 January 2026
Ranked list checked and verified	16 January 2026
Inter LA data exchange commences for offers	approx. 19 January to February 2026
List of pupils offered places sent to schools	w/c 23 February 2026
Offer date	2 March 2026
Offer Acceptance/Decline deadline	15 March 2026
Reminder email sent to parents who have not responded to offers by 15 March deadline	19 March 2026
Deadline for parents to submit appeal forms in order to be heard within 40 school days	27 March 2026
Second round of allocations commences (For applications received between 1 November to 20 March)	w/c 6 April 2026
Third round of allocations commences (For applications received from 21 March to 17 April)	w/c 4 May 2026
Fourth round of allocations commences (For applications received from 18 April to 22 May)	w/c 1 June 2026
Further Offers	From 2 July 2026 (Applications received from 23 May are considered on an individual basis in the order of the date the application was received - subject to availability of places)
Admissions co-ordination closes	31 August 2026

List of maintained Secondary Schools within Slough Borough Council Local Authority area

School name	Type of secondary school
Baylis Court School	Academy
Beechwood School	Academy
Ditton Park Academy	Free School
Eden Girls School	Free School
Grove Academy	Free School
Herschel Grammar School	Academy
Langley Grammar School	Academy
Lynch Hill Enterprise Academy	Free School
Slough and Eton C of E College	Academy
St Bernard's Catholic Grammar School	Voluntary Aided
St Joseph's Catholic High School	Academy
The Langley Academy	Academy
The Westgate School	Academy
Upton Court Grammar School	Academy
Wexham School	Community