

Starting School 2018 options – 16 April 2018

The following information is for parents/carers who have not been allocated a place at their preferred school(s) in the on time Starting School 2018 allocation:

What will happen next?

16 April – 30 April 2018	Waiting list positions following the on time allocation are available by contacting the School Admissions Team
30 April 2018	Deadline – all applications and change of preferences received between 16 January and this date will be processed in the late allocation. This is also the date we ask parents who are declining places offered to let us know by so that we can reoffer them in the late allocation.
1 May 2018	Late allocation process will begin – waiting lists will be suspended until 4 June 2018 (therefore we will not be able to provide waiting list positions or an update on applications until 4 June 2018).
15 May 2018	Deadline for lodging an appeal – if you want to appeal for a place at the school(s) at which you have not been offered a place you need to lodge it by this date so that it will be heard before the summer holidays
4 June 2018	Late allocation offer day – parents who applied or made a change of preference between 16 January and 30 April 2018 will be notified of the outcome of their application. On time applicants will only be contacted (by letter) on this day if a place has been offered to them in the late allocation.
June/July 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appeal hearings will take place for appeals lodged by 15 May • Applications and change of preferences received from 1 May will be processed on an ad hoc basis from 5 June (usually within fifteen school days of receipt)
September 2018	Children will start school (Reception Year)

On 16 April 2018 (national offer day) we will publish allocation information which will show the number of places available, the number of requests received and places offered in the on time allocation for each school. For oversubscribed schools we will also provide a breakdown of how places were allocated. This information will be available on our website or by contacting the School Admissions Team.

No school places will be allocated between the on time national offer day (16 April 2018) and the late allocation offer day (4 June 2018).

Your options:

Waiting lists – late allocation and onwards

If a place has not been allocated at your preferred Central Bedfordshire school(s) in the on time allocation your child has automatically been added to the waiting list for the school(s).

Waiting lists are prioritised according to the admission criteria for the individual school, not in date order of when applications are received. Therefore once the late allocation process begins your child may move down the waiting list if late applications or change of preferences are received for a child who is in a higher criterion than your child.

Between 16 April and 30 April 2018 you will be able to find out your child's position on the waiting list following the on time allocation by calling or emailing the School Admissions Team. After this date the waiting list will be suspended whilst the late allocation takes place and we will not be able to update you on your child's application or waiting list position.

If a place becomes available for your child at your preferred school during the late allocation your original offer will be withdrawn and reallocated to another child if necessary. **It is therefore essential that you inform us in writing by 30 April 2018 if you do not want to remain on the waiting list so that your original offer is not withdrawn.**

If a place can be offered to your child from the waiting list during the late allocation then a letter will be posted to you on 4 June 2018 (late allocation offer day). If a place is still not available at your preferred school(s) you will not be contacted by the School Admissions Team on the late allocation offer day however you can call or email the team from 4 June and they will let you know your child's position on the waiting list following the late allocation.

If a place becomes available after the late allocation round (5 June 2018 onwards) we will contact you by phone (if possible) in the first instance to offer the place to you:

- If you accept the place over the phone we will send an offer letter out to you to confirm and will withdraw your original offer
- If during the telephone call you advise us that you need time to consider the offer we will write to you to offer the place and you will have 5 working days from the date the letter is sent to confirm to us whether you want to accept the place or not. If we do not hear from you by the close of play on the 5th working day the offer will be withdrawn and offered to the next child on the waiting list if applicable.
- If we cannot contact you by telephone we will write to you to offer the place and you will have 14 days from the date the letter is sent to confirm to us whether you want to accept the place or not. If we do not hear from you by the close of play on the 14th day the offer will be withdrawn and offered to the next child on the waiting list if applicable.

Frequently asked questions regarding waiting lists

My child is first on the waiting list on 16 April 2018; does that mean they will be offered a place if someone else declines theirs?

Not necessarily. After the on time allocation late applications and change of preferences are considered alongside on time applications and priority is determined by the school's admission criteria. Therefore a late application would take priority over an on time application if it is a higher criterion (ie late catchment application and on time 'distance').

How long will my child stay on the waiting list?

For Community and VC schools your child will remain on the school's waiting list until either;

- A place can be offered at your preferred school (or a higher preference school)
- Your child finishes Reception year (July 2019)
- You notify us that you no longer wish for your child to remain on the waiting list

This is usually the case for Academies, Foundation, Trust and Voluntary Aided schools however you should check with the relevant school.

I am happy with the place offered for my child in the on time allocation and do not want to lose it; do I need to do anything?

You need to let us know in writing by 30 April 2018 that you want to withdraw your child from the waiting list of your preferred school(s) so that your original offer is not withdrawn and reoffered to another child in the late allocation.

What should I do if my preferred school is outside Central Bedfordshire?

If your child has not been allocated at your preferred school in another Local Authority area please check with them directly for information regarding waiting list procedures as these can vary between different local authority areas.

Changing your preferences or adding an additional preference

If you have not been allocated a place at your preferred school and there is an alternative school which you would like to add to your application or replace an existing preference with then you can amend your application by submitting a change of preference.

Making a change of preference means:

- any previous preferences will be discarded on submission of the form
- if a place can be offered at any of the new preference schools, the original offer will be automatically withdrawn
- if you want your child to stay on the waiting list(s) for school(s) at which you have been declined for, you need to include this as higher preferences on the form

You can have a maximum of three preferences on your application, so if your original application has three preferences and you wish to add another you will need to decide which of your original preferences you will remove.

If you choose to change your preferences you will need to complete a change of preference form which is available to download from our website or you can call us to request one and we will post it out to you. **We need to receive the completed form by 30 April 2018 in order for your application to be amended and the changes processed in the late allocation.**

If we receive your change of preference form on or after 1 May 2018 it will be processed from June 2018 onwards (after the late allocation).

School Admissions Team

Direct telephone: 0300 300 8037

Email: admissions@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/admissions

Appeal against the decision

All parents/carers have the right to appeal if they have not been offered a place at their preferred school(s). The appeal process is independent to the School Admissions Team, and is dealt with by the Governance Services Team at the Council for Central Bedfordshire schools/academies.

Your appeal needs to be received by the appeal clerk by 15 May 2018 otherwise it may not be heard until after the summer holidays.

If you decide to appeal you will need to submit the grounds of your appeal in writing. An appeal hearing will then be arranged. At the hearing a representative from the Council or school/academy will present the case for non-admission; outlining the prejudice to the school if another child is admitted. Both you and the panel will have an opportunity to question the school/academy's case. It will then be your opportunity to present your case for why your child should be admitted to the school. The panel and the representative from the Council or school/academy will then be able to ask you questions regarding your case before both parties sum up. The panel will make their decision based on the information provided by both parties and will do so in private at the end of the appeal hearings that day or for the school/academy in question. The appeal clerk will inform you of the panel's decision in writing within five school days of the appeal hearing. The panel's decision is binding on all parties.

At the appeal hearing, your case is decided upon by the appeals panel who are independent, trained volunteers. They are not paid and are not associated with the council or school.

Accepting a place at another school will not affect your chances of your appeal being successful.

For information about the appeal process and guidance on how to make an appeal for a Central Bedfordshire school/academy visit the website at:
www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/appeals

To request an Appeal Form email: education.appeals@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Or call: 0300 300 8029.

To make an appeal for a school/academy outside of Central Bedfordshire you need to contact the relevant Local Authority.

Important information about infant class size appeals

The law states that in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 infant classes cannot have more than 30 children per one qualified teacher.

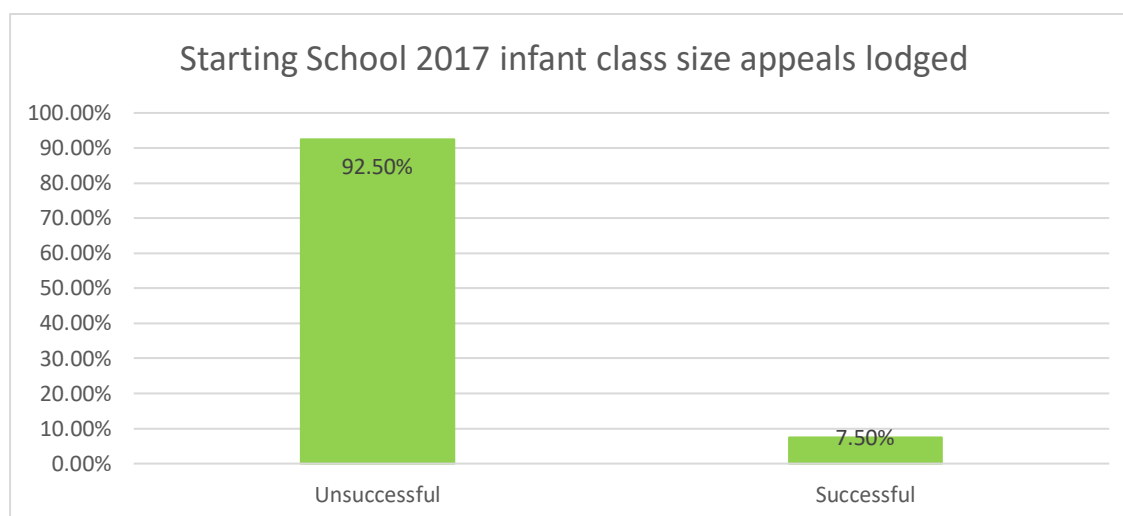
In infant class size appeals the Panel can only allow an appeal in the following circumstances:

- **Unreasonableness** – the decision to refuse admission was one which no reasonable admission authority would have made in the circumstances of the case
- **Error (also known as maladministration)** - the admission arrangements do not comply with admissions law and/or were not correctly and impartially applied **and your child would have been offered a place if the admission arrangements had complied or had been correctly and impartially applied.**

Your appeal will only be successful if one of these grounds can be demonstrated.

If you believe that an error has been made in processing your application you should contact the School Admissions Team as soon as possible.

For Starting School 2017 only 7.5% (4 out of 53) infant class size appeals lodged were successful.



Consideration of 'reasonableness' (from the School Admission Appeals Code 2012)

The threshold for finding that an admission authority's decision to refuse admission was not one that a reasonable authority would have made is high. The panel will need to be satisfied that the decision to refuse to admit the child was 'perverse in the light of the admission arrangements' i.e. it was 'beyond the range of responses open to a reasonable decision maker' or 'a decision which is so outrageous in its defiance of logic or of accepted moral standards that no sensible person who had applied his mind to the question could have arrived at it'.

Considering your chance of success at an infant class size appeal



You have been unsuccessful at gaining a place at your preferred school and the decision letter states this is due to infant class size limits.

You are considering appealing because:

Unreasonableness

Can you demonstrate that the decision to refuse admission was one which no 'reasonable' admission authority would have made in the circumstances of your case?

Yes

An independent panel will consider reasonableness and make a judgement accordingly.

No

You are extremely unlikely to be successful at appeal.

Error/maladministration

Can you demonstrate either:

An error occurred when your application was processed and as a result you were not offered a place

Or the admission arrangements do not comply with admissions law resulting in you not getting a place at your preferred school

Yes

I can prove that an error was made or the admission arrangements did not comply with the law

No

Error did not occur and/or admission arrangements did comply with law

Contact the School Admissions Team who will assess your circumstances and advise accordingly.

You are extremely unlikely to be successful at appeal.