



Referral to Fair Access

All local authorities must have a fair access protocol to provide for children of compulsory school age who experience difficulty in securing a school place outside the normal admissions round.

Nottinghamshire County Council has a well-established fair access protocol which involves working in partnership with schools, parents and carers to ensure children and young people in vulnerable circumstances, including those at risk of exclusion or those excluded from school, are allocated a school place quickly.

The majority of applications for school places will be dealt with through normal admission procedures. However, some children in vulnerable groups may find it difficult to secure a school place.

The School Admissions Code (2014) paragraph 3.15 states that a fair access protocol, as a minimum, must include:

- children from the criminal justice system or Pupil Referral Units who need to be reintegrated into mainstream school
- children who have been out of education for two months or more
- children of Gypsies, Roma, Travellers, refugees and asylum seekers
- children who are homeless
- children with unsupportive family backgrounds for whom a place has not been sought
- children who are carers
- children with special educational needs, disabilities, medical conditions but without a statement or Education, Health and Care Plan.

In addition, Nottinghamshire's Fair Access Protocol also supports:

- children with social or emotional needs
- children who have been without a school place for more than 20 school days
- children who are subject to a child protection plan or categorised as children in need
- children who are fleeing domestic violence
- children where it has not been possible to allocate a school that is at a reasonable distance due to there being no place available within a reasonable distance
- children where elective home education (EHE) is deemed unsuitable by the Local Authority
- exceptional reasons referred by the Fair Access team

What will happen now?

As it has not been possible to secure a school place for your child, your application has now been referred to the Fair Access Lead Officer. Your application will be considered by the locality panel which makes decisions about unresolved applications in your area.

The panel takes into account information that you have provided about your child's needs. It will consider which schools in the locality can meet your child's needs and will identify a school place in the best interests of your child.

This may not be one of your preferred schools.

In rare circumstances, alternative provision may be recommended. In this case your child will be placed on a school roll and that school will take responsibility for monitoring the learning and wellbeing of your child but the education will take place somewhere other than the main school site.

If your child currently has a school place, the panel may suggest that you consider withdrawing your formal application to allow a

'managed move' transfer. Your child would access learning at a new school for an agreed period of time to ensure that all parties were certain that a permanent transfer would be in your child's best interests. Your child would retain the right to return to their current school during this process.

You will be informed in writing of the outcome of the panel decision. If the panel is unable to identify a suitable school place, Nottinghamshire County Council will continue to support you and your child to ensure that the appropriate provision is available.

Right of appeal

If you have been refused a place at your preferred school you have the right to appeal against the decision. If you do wish to appeal you will need to set out the grounds for appeal in writing.

Admission authorities publish appeals timelines on their websites, and you are advised to try to meet those deadlines but any appeals submitted after the deadline must still be heard.

You can [complete an online appeal form](#) or contact us on 0300 500 80 80 for further details about the appeals procedure, who to contact and the timelines for lodging an appeal.

Ahead of the appeal hearing, you will be sent full details of how the admission arrangements applied to your application. This will include reasons for the decision to refuse the application and an explanation as to how the admission of an additional child would cause prejudice to the provision of efficient education or efficient use of resources.

Remember:

Where possible your child should continue to attend their current school until an admission date has been agreed.

Fair access contact information

Email: fairaccess@nottscc.gov.uk
Phone: 0115 9773225

Looked after children (LAC)

For advice relating to the admission of LAC please contact the Co-ordinator of the Virtual School on 01623 434149.

Children with special educational needs or disabilities

If your child has special needs, additional information is available from

www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/learning/schools/special-educational-needs/

Transport to school

If your child is attending full time, statutory education at the catchment or nearest available school and you live over the statutory walking distance, your child may be eligible for free home to school transport or travel assistance.

Remember that you are responsible for getting your child to school and applying for transport if you think you are eligible.

Information on transport is available at www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/schooltravel

Ask Us Nottinghamshire (former Parent Partnership Service) provides impartial information, advice and support for parents and carers of children SEND, aged 0-25 years around education, health and social care issues.

Email: www.ppsnotts.org.uk

Helpline: 0115 8041740

General contact information

Phone: 0300 500 80 80

Monday to Friday: 8am to 6pm
(calls cost 3p a minute from a BT landline. Mobile costs may vary)

Email: enquiries@nottscc.gov.uk

Website:

www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/admissions

Minicom: 01623 434993

Phone: 0300 500 80 80 if you need the information in a different language or format

Other local authorities

Contact details for other local authorities and own admission authority schools are available on our website

www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/admissions