

Children, Adults, Families, Health, Education
Education & Skills: Pupil Entitlement

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21 September 2018

	For action	For info	Meeting
To: Headteachers of all schools in West Sussex with an intake into Reception in September 2019.	✓		

Dear Colleague,

Starting School – September 2019

The application process for children due to start school in September 2019 will open on 1st October 2018. As you are aware West Sussex County Council no longer sends individual letters to parents but advertises the application arrangements widely, including on social media. Over the last two years these arrangements worked well and reduced the number of late applications.

This year we have been working very closely with early year's staff in IPEH to try and further reduce the number of late starting school applications. They have agreed to distribute leaflets to all of their early year's settings over the next week and therefore all primary and infant schools will now receive the starting school leaflet electronically. Please feel free to print any copies required and give to parents who request them or display in the school.

During next week you will receive two A4 starting school posters delivered by the county courier, electronic copies of which are also attached for your information. We would ask you please to support prospective parents by displaying the posters in a prominent position and providing leaflets as appropriate.

As in recent years, parents are being encouraged to apply for their child's school place using the online system at www.westsussex.gov.uk/admissions. Applications must be submitted by the **national closing date of Tuesday 15 January 2019**. The online system will open on Monday 1 October 2018 at 9.00 am.

For parents who do not have access to the Internet at home, free access has been arranged at all libraries and Children and Family Centres within West Sussex. Please encourage families who do not have Internet access at home to visit their local library or Children and Family Centre where staff will be on hand to assist parents making their application. We are aware that some schools support parents to make applications and we are grateful for this support where offered.

Parents resident in West Sussex must complete an official West Sussex County Council application in order to apply for a school place. Please therefore encourage all parents to complete an application before the closing date. If you have a nursery attached to your school, or preschools in your area, please work with them to ensure that all children due to start school in September 2019 make an application. It may also be useful to put a note in your autumn term newsletter in order to remind any families with siblings that they need to apply.

Parents resident outside West Sussex will need to apply through the relevant local authority for their home address. They cannot apply on the West Sussex website and should be directed to their own local authority for information on how to apply.

Paper forms will only be issued to parents who cannot apply online. Any parent who chooses to complete a paper form must return it to any local West Sussex school (or direct to us by recorded

delivery) by 3pm on Tuesday 15 January 2019. Any application form that is received after this date will be considered as a late application and will not be processed until after all applications that are received before the deadline. Instructions for the return of any forms to the Pupil Admissions Office are on the guidance notes accompanying this letter. Please forward any forms that you receive to us on a weekly basis via the WSCC Schools courier.

What happens if a child does not make an application?

The national closing date is **15 January 2019** and all parents should make an application by this date. Applications not made by the closing date cannot be considered until after all other applications have been considered. This may mean it is not possible to offer a child a place at a local school. We would therefore be grateful if you could actively encourage all parents who visit you to apply online by the closing date.

If you know of families who may have problems making an application, please work with them well in advance of the 15 January. SEND Information and Advice Service is able to offer support to any parent who may have difficulties with the school application process and details regarding this service are available on our website and in our Information for Parents Booklet. We have also attached an electronic copy of the SEND-IAS poster which you may wish to print and display.

In advance, please accept my thanks for your assistance and co-operation. If you have any further queries regarding the process please contact the Admissions Officer for your school.

Yours sincerely



Helen Moules
Pupil Admissions Manager (South)



Linda Bubb
Pupil Admissions Manager (North)

Attached with this letter are the following:

1. Starting school leaflet
2. A4 starting school poster
3. A4 SEND-IAS poster
4. Guidance note for school admin staff with starting school administrative responsibilities

Guidance notes for school staff with responsibility for Starting School administration.

Information for the children due to start school in September 2019.

Online Applications - All parents are encouraged to apply online at www.westsussex.gov.uk/admissions for their child's school place. The online system will open on Monday 1 October 2018 and applications must be submitted by the national closing date of Tuesday 15 January 2019.

The starting school leaflets tell parents how to find their catchment school on the County Council website and explains the benefits of applying online. For parents who do not have access to the Internet at home, free access has been arranged at all libraries and Children and Family Centres within West Sussex. Please refer parents who do not have Internet access at home to their local library or Children and Families Centre where staff will be available to assist parents making their application.

Parents resident in West Sussex must complete an official West Sussex County Council application in order to apply for a school place. Please therefore encourage all parents to complete an application before the closing date. It may also be useful to put a note in your autumn term newsletter in order to remind any families with siblings already attending with you that they need to apply.

Parents resident outside West Sussex will need to apply direct to the relevant local authority for their home address. They cannot apply on the West Sussex website and should be directed to their own local authority for information on how to apply.

Paper forms will only be issued to parents who cannot apply online. It is the responsibility of any parent who chooses to apply on a paper form to return their form to a local school (or direct to Admissions by recorded delivery) by 15 January 2019. Any application form that is received after this date will be considered as a late application and will not be processed until after all applications that are received before the deadline.

What do I do if I receive a paper form?

If you receive a form at your school please date stamp it with the date of receipt (so it can be treated as late/on time as appropriate) and check that all parts of the form have been completed. Return the forms on a weekly basis via the WSCC Schools courier. Please put the forms in an envelope, clearly labelled to the **Pupil Admissions Office (Horsham or Worthing)**. Putting the forms in an envelope prevents loose forms going astray. We would urge you to make a copy of the forms you return just in case. Doing this means we can still consider the form as on time and the applicant will not be penalised.

What happens if a child does not make an application?

The national closing date is **15 January 2019** and all parents should make an application by this date. Failure to do so will impact on the priority applied to any application made subsequently and may result in a school offer some distance from a child's home.