

# Referral to Fair Access

Each local authority **must** have a Fair Access Protocol to ensure that unplaced and vulnerable children, and those who are having difficulty in securing a school place in-year, are allocated a school place as quickly as possible.

Nottinghamshire County Council has a well-established Fair Access Protocol and works in partnership with schools, parents, and carers to ensure that unplaced children and those in vulnerable circumstances are allocated a school place quickly.

The majority of In Year applications are dealt with promptly. For a small number it may be necessary to refer to the Fair Access.

**Your child is without a school place** – If, after applying for a school place through the normal in year process, your child remains without a school place within a reasonable distance. Your case will then be referred to Fair Access for review and possible action.

**Referral under paragraph 3.10 of the School Admissions Code 2021** – A school to which an application has been made has indicated that they do not wish to admit a child because it has good reason to believe that the child may display challenging behaviour. This is because the school has a particularly high proportion of children with challenging behaviour or previously excluded children and the admission authority believes that to admit a further child with challenging behaviour into that year group will prejudice the provision of efficient education or efficient use of resources.

The Fair Access team will work with the school to ensure that any refusal made is in line with the School Admissions Code and, that where a refusal is agreed, support is given to secure ongoing access to education for the child concerned.

[School admissions code - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

[Fair Access Protocols; Guidance for school leaders, admissions authorities and local authorities](#)

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[Nottinghamshire's Fair Access Protocol](#)

## What will happen now?

The Fair Access team will now review your case and a member of the team will be responsible for ensuring progress. This may include contacting you to discuss next steps, speaking to the school(s) involved, gathering further information and referral to a locality panel where decisions are made regarding children requiring a school place and unresolved applications. The panel of schools considers all information provided and will carefully review several factors including:

- whether your child has access to a school place;
- relevant information about any additional support your child may require in school;
- information provided by the school relating to any existing pressures within the year group;
- the most appropriate education pathway for your child.

If your child is without a school place, the panel will be required to identify an education pathway. This could include an offer of a school place that is in a school to which you did not make an application.

### **Remember:**

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

You will be informed in writing of the outcome of any decisions. If your child resides within Nottinghamshire and remains without a school place, Nottinghamshire County Council will continue to support you and your child to ensure that appropriate education provision is made.

**If you are unsure why a referral has been made to the Fair Access Team, or would like to speak to anyone, please contact us.**

## 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 in writing. Admission authorities publish appeals timelines on their websites, but any appeals submitted after the deadline must still be heard.

You can complete an online appeal form at [www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/admissions) or contact us for further details on the appeals procedure, who to contact and the timelines for lodging an appeal.

Academies, foundation schools, free schools and voluntary aided schools are responsible for arranging their own appeals. You should contact the school directly to find out how to appeal.

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

## 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.

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

Information on transport for children under 16 is available on the [under 16 transport page](#)

## Children with special educational needs or disabilities

If your child has special needs, additional information is available [here](#) and from [Nottinghamshire's Local Offer](#)

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.askusnotts.org.uk](http://www.askusnotts.org.uk)

Helpline: 0800 121 7772

## Making a school application

You do not need to make further school applications and an educational route will now be identified through the Fair Access Protocol. However, this does not take away your right to apply for additional schools should you wish to.

Contact details for other local authorities and own admission authority schools are available on our website [www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/admissions)

### Contact us:

**Fair Access Team:** [fairaccess@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:fairaccess@nottsc.gov.uk)  
**Phone:** 0115 977 3225

### General contact information:

**Online:** use our online form available at: [www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/contact-us](http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/contact-us)

**Phone:** 0300 500 80 80

**Monday to Friday:** 8.30am to 5pm (Calls cost no more than calls to a standard geographic number (01 or 02) and will also be included in inclusive minutes and discount schemes)

**Minicom:** 01623 434993

**Website:** [www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/admissions)

**Relay UK:** hearing and speech difficulties, contact us using [www.relayuk.bt.com](http://www.relayuk.bt.com)

Download the Relay UK app or using your existing text phone prefix our dedicated text Relay number with the Relay UK code (18001) 0115 977 4050

**Contact Us** if you need the information in a different language or format

Internet access is available at public libraries.

Nottinghamshire County Council is committed to protecting your privacy and ensuring all personal information is kept confidential and safe. For more details see our general and service specific privacy notices at:

<https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/global-content/privacy/>