

Kent National Primary Offer Day 2020

Press Release

More than 97% of children in Kent will find out today that they have been offered a place at one of the primary schools their family named on their application form.

A total of 17,855 pupils applied for a primary school place in Kent for September 2020 (17,411 from Kent and 444 out of county applicants) and 16,954 of these (97.38%) have been offered a place at one of the three schools named on their form. This number is over 100 higher than last year and has been achieved despite the cohort of pupils being the largest in four years.

Of these, 15,372 pupils (88.29% of the cohort) have been offered a place at the school their parents/carers named as their first preference. Kent County Council and school staff have worked diligently to ensure that offers are still available to parents/carers, while also dealing with the unprecedented situation caused by the Covid-19 virus.

Richard Long, Kent County Council's Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, said: "I would like to say a huge well done and thank you to every member of our staff who has been working even more tirelessly than in previous years to ensure all 17,855 children who applied for a place in one of our primary schools for September has been offered one. Since the partial closure of all our schools last month, everyone involved in the provision of education has, like a great number of employees in other sectors, been working in challenging circumstances, and it is a credit to them that we are still able to release offers today. This news is made all the better by the fact that an even higher number of families received one of their preferences compared to last year."

Every year there will be some families who do not receive one of their preferences and will instead be allocated a place by the Local Authority. This year 457 pupils (2.62%) have been allocated a place, which is only 10 higher than last year despite an overall increase of 139 children applying for a place. Unfortunately, almost half of those families – 220 (48.14%) – did not make full use of all their available

preferences, which limited which schools KCC could consider before having to assign them an alternative.

Mr Long continued: “I appreciate that for those families who did not receive one of their preferences there will be feelings of disappointment and concern today. I would like to reassure them that this is just the first stage of the application process. Families have the option to appeal or join a waiting list for an alternative school if they are not happy with their allocation and there is likely to be considerable movement between now and September as families do not take up places they are offered. However, I would advise that parents, carers and pupils consider the school they have been given with an open mind and speak to staff, even if they are not currently able to visit, before making a decision.

“Parents are also advised to carefully read their offer email or letter as it has been necessary to amend some of the processes after Offer Day to take into account the fact that schools are partially closed and social distancing is in effect. Information is also available at www.kent.gov.uk/primaryadmissions.”

Parents and carers who applied online will receive an email after 4pm today (Thursday, April 16), indicating which school they have been offered; the timing of the email will depend on the email service provider. Parents can also log in after 5pm to view the offer online. Those who applied by post will be sent notification by first class post today.

Mr Long concluded: “My colleagues and I fully appreciate that there is an additional layer of worry this year for children hoping to start school in September due to the uncertainty of the current situation. KCC and Kent schools will continue to follow Government guidance around school closures and further updates will be provided as the situation changes. In the meantime, I would urge all families to follow Government guidance in terms of hygiene, social distancing, and self-isolation where required, to keep themselves safe and well.”

For more information on how to join a waiting list and/or appeal go to www.kent.gov.uk/primaryadmissions or email primaryadmissions@kent.gov.uk

...Ends...

Note to journalists:

1. Parents will have until Wednesday, May 6 to accept or refuse their offer and return waiting list forms. These processes have been adjusted this year to ensure parents do not need to travel to schools in light of current restrictions. Further information is available at www.kent.gov.uk/primaryadmissions and within offer emails or letters.
2. KCC is awaiting confirmation from the Department for Education as to how school closures will impact parental appeals. Until further information is available parents are advised lodge any appeals for their named schools by the normal deadline of Thursday, May 14. Further advice will be published when it is available.
3. KCC will reallocate places from schools' waiting lists, sending out a second round of offers on Wednesday, June 10.
4. From Thursday, June 11, schools will maintain their own waiting lists and parents can apply to schools directly after this date to ask to be placed on the waiting list. Parents are advised to contact schools via telephone or email at that time, if restrictions are still in place.
5. Please see the table below for additional preference information.

	Number Offered 2020*	% Of Kent Cohort	Number Offered 2019**	% Of Kent Cohort
1ST	15,372	88.29%	15,450	89.28%
2ND	1,192	6.85%	1,057	6.11%
3RD	390	2.24%	332	1.92%
LA Allocations	457	2.62%	447	2.59%

Total offers made to Kent Pupils	17,411	100%	17,286	100%
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