



Media Release
Monday, March 1, 2021

National Secondary Offer Day 2021

As schools prepare to reopen to all pupils following the latest COVID-19 lockdown, thousands of children will find out today which secondary school they've been offered a place at for September.

More than 95% of pupils will receive an offer from one of their preferred schools this National Secondary Offer Day. The number of schools families could apply to was increased from four to six for this year only to account for the fact [the Kent Test was delayed due to COVID-19](#) and parents/carers had to submit their applications before the results of the selection assessment had been returned.

A total of 22,264 parents/carers (18,273 from Kent) applied for a place for their child in a Kent school for September 2021, which is an additional 594 applications when compared to last year. Despite this, 95.38% of Kent families (17,428) were offered a place at one of the schools they selected.

As parents/carers selected their six schools before knowing their child's Kent Test results, many named first preferences their child did not end up being eligible for and therefore it was expected that the number of pupils offered a place at their first preference school – 12,736 pupils (69.7% of the Kent cohort) – would be significantly lower than last year's 77.65%. A total of 2,577 children (14.1% of the Kent cohort) will be offered a place at the school they put as their second preference, up from 11.68% last year.

Richard Long, Kent County Council's Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, said: "The past year has been extremely tough for most of us with additional pressure for pupils and their families and of course school staff. I would like to take this opportunity to thank teachers and support staff once again for going above and beyond to continue to educate and support Kent's children and young people in extremely challenging circumstances. I must also praise pupils who have embraced remote learning and parents and carers who have supported their sons and daughters with home-schooling, many while working from home themselves.

“I am delighted to say that in September, when life will hopefully have returned to some semblance of normality for most of us, more than 95% of pupils will be starting school at one of the preferred schools their families selected.”

Families who applied online should check their emails from 4pm today (Monday, March 1) and will be able to log into their accounts from 5pm to view their offer. Those who submitted their applications on a paper form will receive their offers by post, which will be sent by First Class mail on Monday, March 1.

Every year a small number of children cannot be offered a place in one of their preferred schools and KCC will support these families by allocating them a place at an alternative school. Families in these situations are advised not to worry as today is only the first stage of the allocation process. They are always advised to speak to staff at the school they have been offered a place at before making a decision as they may well find the school is suitable for their child. Families should also request to join the waiting list of any school they want to continue to be considered for by Monday, March 15. KCC will hold a second round of offers on Wednesday, April 21 for any spaces that become available. Parents/carers can also appeal directly to the admissions authority of any school that could not offer their child a place. The offer email will explain how to make use of these options.

Mr Long added: “I know pupils and their families will feel disappointed and concerned if they haven’t been offered a place at one of their preferred schools but if you are in this situation, there are still a number of options available. There is also likely to be considerable movement on school waiting lists between now and September.

“Throughout the remainder of the application process, KCC staff members are ready to speak to parents and carers to answer any questions they may have as well as offer information, advice and support, so I would urge anyone who is concerned to contact them.”

Of the 845 children who were allocated a place by the Local Authority this year, just five (0.59%) parents/carers named the full number of eligible preferred schools on their application form while 65 (7.69%) didn’t select any schools their child was eligible to attend. This makes it very difficult for officers to identify local schools because the law requires all named preferences to be satisfied before allocations can be made, which often leaves local schools full. This is why it is important for families to name the maximum number of schools they are able to (six this year, four during ‘normal’ years) on their application form as naming fewer will not increase the chances of being offered a school they want.

Once again, the percentage of families applying online has increased, this year to 98.66%, which is better for the environment than using a paper application form.

- For further advice about the admission process please email:
kent.admissions@kent.gov.uk
- For more information on how to join a waiting list and/or appeal go to:
www.kent.gov.uk/secondaryadmissions

...Ends...

Notes to journalists:

1. Parents/carers will have until Monday, March 15 to accept or refuse their offer and return waiting list forms.
2. Parents/carers must also lodge any appeals for their named schools by Friday, March 26 to be heard on time.
3. KCC will reallocate places from schools' waiting lists sending out a second round of offers on Wednesday, April 21.
4. After Wednesday, April 21, schools will maintain their own waiting lists and parents/carers can apply to schools direct to ask to be placed on the waiting list. (Note – only children assessed suitable for grammar school can be placed on a grammar school waiting list.)
5. Please see the table below for additional preference information, however, comparisons between each year's figures will not be possible due to the additional preferences that parents were provided to accommodate delayed Kent Test results.

Kent Pupils	2021		2020	
	No of pupils	%	No of pupils	%
Offered a first preference	12,736	69.7	14,095	77.65
Offered a second preference	2,577	14.1	2,120	11.68
Offered a third preference	1,247	6.82	714	3.93

Offered a fourth preference	561	3.07	269	1.48
Offered a fifth preference	192	1.05	Not applicable	Not applicable
Offered a sixth preference	115	0.63	Not applicable	Not applicable
Allocated by Local Authority	845	4.62	955	5.26
Total number of Kent pupils offered	18,273	100	18,153	100

Year	2021	2020
Out of county applicants	3,991	3,517
Offers to out of county pupils at Kent schools	859	817

Year	2021	2020
Total numbers of pupils in the cohort	22,264	21,670