

Chief Executive Gavin Boyd

22 October 2018

To Principals of Primary Schools and Nursery Schools and Managers/Leaders of Pre-school Providers participating in the Pre-School Education Programme.

Dear Principal/Manager/Leader

DIGITAL ADMISSIONS UPDATE

I refer to the Education Authority's (EA's) plan to introduce online applications for admissions. As advised in the email from Mrs Mairead Maguire (dated 10 September 2018) the EA will be using a facility within the existing Capita One system to accept and process applications for pre-school and primary school places for September 2019 intake.

The software provides two new portals:

Parent Portal

A new portal for parents to apply online for a place, including the listing of preferences.

Parents will have the opportunity to amend their submitted application until the closing date. This replaces the current paper based application form.

School Portal

A new portal for schools/providers providing the ability to download, manage and process applications via the portal. Schools/providers will be available to view applications in advance of the closing date.

The School Portal will be available within C2k and to providers without C2k access. The School Portal contains a workflow engine to automatically manage and route applications through preferences in accordance with current admissions procedures. Full integration with the School Information Management system (SIMs) is planned for later in the project.

Evidence to support applications

For admission to the forthcoming academic year, parents will continue to provide their child's birth certificate and any other verifying documents stipulated in admission criteria directly to the first preference provider/school.

Testing

The EA is currently configuring and testing the new software portals. To improve quality and user experience, the EA plans to run a number of testing workshops with schools, providers and parents in

November. If you are interested in attending I would encourage you to register early as there will be a limited number of places available. Please forward your expression of interest to the following: digital@eani.org.uk not later than Wednesday 7 November 2018.

Training

It is the EA's intention to provide tailored training on the new digital admissions system. Dates and venues for training are as follows:

Date	Venue
Monday 26 November 2018	Lisneal College, Derry City
Tuesday 27 November 2018	Omagh Technology Centre
Wednesday 28 November 2018	Antrim Board Centre
Thursday 29 November 2018	Fortwilliam, Belfast
Friday 30 November 2018	Clounagh Centre, Portadown

The times of these sessions are yet to be confirmed, to give a range of options. It is also planned to have some mop-up sessions in early January 2019 in addition to providing support materials online. The sessions will be open to teaching and non-teaching staff. Whilst places will be limited to a maximum of two people per setting, the EA will endeavour to respond to demand.

Go Live

The Go Live date for the new digital admissions is **Wednesday 2 January 2019 at 10.00am**. The closing time and date for punctual applications will be **12.00 midnight on Thursday 31 January 2019**.

The EA is planning to provide Assisted Digital Support for parents and users of the new system. This will be in the form of a new telephone service, enhanced website content and a number of face-to-face drop-in clinics held in EA offices and other locations during January 2019. Details of the planned digital assistance will be provided in due course.

Communications

The EA is currently devising a communications strategy to ensure that all key stakeholders are aware of the change in the admissions procedure and particularly that parents know how and when they can make an application.

New EA Website

The EA is also launching a new website with a focus on improving accessibility and reorganising information for the two main users of the site, Parents and Schools. The new site will be available in early November. Help us improve the new site by providing feedback on it to digital@eani.org.uk.

Next steps

Schools/providers will now be asked to submit their admission criteria for 2019/20. You will be contacted shortly by the Admissions Officers for pre-school and primary about those arrangements.

The EA will keep you updated over the coming months in the lead up to go-live. In the interim if you have any queries regarding the content of this letter please contact Mrs Mairead Maguire at mairead.maguire@eani.org.uk or Tel 028 3751 2411.

Yours sincerely



Donna Allen
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