



## High online admissions take-up in Devon

### One Admissions & Transfers Online – benefits to parents

- Parents with an email address and internet-enabled PC can apply for a school place whenever and wherever they like
- They can save and edit applications before submitting them, allowing them to make a more informed decision
- They receive email confirmation of receipt and notification of the place.

### One Admissions & Transfers – general benefits to local authorities

- Automatically matches the child data stored within **One** with data from the online application, reducing administration and the risk of duplicated records
- Details of appeals submitted, including hearing dates, notes of meetings and the results of decisions made are stored within each record.

Devon County Council manages school admissions for approximately 15,000 children across 365 schools in the county. The council introduced **One Admissions & Transfers Online** five years ago and achieved a take-up rate of 18% in the first year. In 2009, they thought they had reached a peak as 85% of school places were applied for online, but this was surpassed in 2010 with 92%!

Mark Godwin, **One Systems Manager** at Devon County Council says: "Accessing Admissions & Transfers Online is much more convenient for some parents than completing paper applications, saving them a lot of time. They also get an automatic response acknowledging their application, so they are reassured that it has been received, as well as an earlier notification of their place."

Mark continues: "Moving to an online system has required us to re-organise some of our internal procedures as we cannot start processing the applications until after the closing date, so this only gives us a 3-4 day timeframe to accept applications into the system. It has presented some challenges but the data is brought across automatically, so we don't have to input it, just check it. The overriding benefit is to the families because we can send out an email on the morning that the decisions are announced. The majority receive their notification by 9am."

The **One Systems Team** at Devon County Council works very closely with the Admissions Team and Mark feels that this close co-operation increased the strength of the team, further improving their performance. He adds: "The admissions algorithm in the **One** system is outstanding and needs to be extremely complex to work out the allocation of resources. In the main, **One Admissions & Transfers Online** works very well but once we are familiar with systems, it's easy to take them for granted and demand even more from them. We tend to talk more about the problems than the successes, and sometimes it's good to take a step back and look at what you've achieved."

"Offering an online school admissions system is very beneficial for the public and gives the authority a lot of kudos. It demonstrates that we are keeping up with cultural changes and delivering a better service to the public."

Mark Godwin, **One Systems Manager** at Devon County Council