

# Online Schools Admission for Lincolnshire County

Abacus e-Media has developed an online schools admission system for Lincolnshire County Council, which enables parents and carers to apply, on behalf of their children, for admission to some 350 primary and secondary schools in the county and (for secondary applications), to any school in England or Wales. Over the course of the three years in which the online service has been running, the Local Authority has made cost savings of around £10,000 through postage savings, and less time spent opening post, scanning the paper forms and validating them.

The percentage of online applications to both primary and secondary schools has grown significantly from 18% in 2006/2007 to 36% in 2008/2009.



“ *The system is easy to use and it helps the School Admissions Team and the County Council’s Customer Service Centre deal more efficiently with any queries from users. In the latest survey of online applications, 83% of respondents rated the system good or excellent.* ”

*Adrian Flowers, Admissions Officer,  
Lincolnshire County Council*

A screenshot of the Lincolnshire County Council online schools admission system. The interface is displayed on a computer screen and includes a search bar, a navigation menu, and a form titled "Child's Details". The form has sections for "Child's Application", "Child's Address", and "Child's Profile". The "Child's Application" section has a dropdown menu and a "GO" button. The "Child's Address" section has a question "Does child live with you?" with "Yes" and "No" radio buttons. The "Child's Profile" section has a dropdown menu and a "GO" button. The interface is clean and user-friendly.

## Building successful digital services

For parents, the online system provides them with a convenient, fast and easy to use service which automatically validates the data as it is input, thus reducing the likelihood of mistakes on the application. Users receive a confirmation email once they have submitted their application, which provides peace of mind knowing that the Authority has received the application. Another significant advantage for many parents is that those who apply online can find out the result of their application earlier than those who send in a paper submission.

Applicants can complete and submit their preferences, via the Lincolnshire County Council web site, in accordance with the schools admissions criteria. Once the allocations are processed, the County Council returns the results to the parents (or carers) for them to accept or decline the offer of a school place.



## System design and build

The system has been developed, based on Microsoft SQL server and a .net environment, to be secure, easy to use and capable of dealing with high peaks in demand. Users are required to register with a unique user name and password.

The design, which was piloted and enhanced based on feedback from groups of users, focused on making the site as attractive as possible to use, which would in turn enable the Local Authority (LA) to achieve maximum cost and efficiency savings. Information on schools in the County and their location is also provided, together with maps which enable parents to find their closest school. The system adheres strictly to the government web guidelines on accessibility.

The Lincolnshire CC schools admission system comprises two web sites (an administration site and a public site) which capture content and query a single admissions database.

The administration site allows staff from the Local Authority to configure the system, enter reference information and to view or report on data held there. The public site, which is accessed via Lincolnshire.gov.uk, allows parents to register their children, apply online for school places, check on the progress of their applications and, if necessary, initiate appeals.

Both sites have an integrated email messaging service.

Abacus e-Media has worked with Lincolnshire County Council on a large number of online projects over the course of the last decade. The Council's web site is based on Abacus e-Media's Webstructure content management platform. Recent innovative projects have included the development of a live elections service and the first operational UK Financial Sector Continuity intranet in the country.

### Check your child's date of birth is eligible for the current admissions round

[Skip this and start my applications.](#)  
Please enter the child's date of birth.

6 September 2000 **PROCEED** ?

### Primary School Entry

Your child is eligible for primary school entry in the current admissions year.  
**Primary applications may only be accepted through this system for Lincolnshire primary schools. Please check that the schools you wish to apply for are in the list below. Contact the Education Team if you require further assistance.**

Aby Church of England Primary School **GO** ?



## Our expertise in the public sector

Abacus e-Media has been delivering public sector information systems for more than fifteen years. We focus on web design and development, content management and recruitment management, and have created a portfolio of products and services for our public sector clients.

We can undertake all the work or specific tasks within an overall project – whichever approach best suits the needs of an individual client.

Our award-winning designers and information architects strive to ensure a simple, user-centric experience. Our development team uses the latest web technologies to create sites that are fast, efficient, accessible and usable – and which deliver your strategic objectives.



Recent work has included the development of transactional-rated websites, the introduction of streamlined and measurably-efficient recruitment services, and an innovative project which successfully reached out to the community in Lincolnshire.

For more information call **020 7297 5200** or e-mail **info@abacusemedia.com**