



**WOKINGHAM  
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Your Guide To Primary and Junior School Admissions For Entry In September 2024

**Application Deadline: 15 January 2024**

Apply online, via the Council's [Citizen Portal](#)



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## Key Dates at a glance

Admissions Round	Reception	Junior (Year 2 into 3)
Birth range	01/09/19 - 31/08/20	01/09/16 - 31/08/17
Website opens and you can apply online	13 November 2023	13 November 2023
Closing date for applications	15 January 2024	15 January 2024
Deadline for house moves and additional supporting evidence	15 January 2024	15 January 2024
National Offer Day & Notifications sent	16 April 2024	16 April 2024
Acceptances and refusals of any offer should be made by this date	1 May 2024	1 May 2024
Waiting list information available	2 May 2024	2 May 2024
Any appeal should be received by this date. <i>(20 school days following notification that application was unsuccessful)</i>	15 May 2024	15 May 2024
Appeals received on-time should be considered by this date <i>(40 school days)</i>	20 July 2024	20 July 2024

## 1. When will your child start school

In Wokingham, we prefer all reception children to start school in September at the start of the school year so that we can give them the best possible start to school.

All our infant and primary schools provide for the full-time education of all children in the September following their fourth birthday.

If you live outside the Wokingham Borough, you will need to apply to the local authority in which you live.

There is a legal requirement that all children attend school or receive suitable education once they reach compulsory school age. The actual points at which each child reaches this compulsory school age are set out in the table below.

**For the 2024-25 school year, the table below sets out the position:**

Date of Birth	Date of compulsory school age	Latest date your child may start school full-time
1 September 2019 – 31 December 2019	31 December 2024	The start of the 'Spring' term in January 2025
1 January 2020 – 31 March 2020	31 March 2025	The start of the 'Summer' term in April 2025
1 April 2020 – 31 August 2020	31 August 2025	The start of the 'Autumn' term in September 2025

## 2. Deferred entry and part time reception places

Most children start school in the September after they turn 4. However, you may feel your child is simply not ready to start school in the September following their fourth birthday. Therefore, you are entitled to **request** either that:

- You start your child in September on a full-time basis from their first day of attendance or
- To allow your child to attend on a part-time basis until the start of the term after your child's fifth birthday or
- To defer your child's entry to school until later in the school year. **This must not be beyond the start of the term after their fifth birthday or beyond the start of the final term of the school year**

## 3. Summer born children

Most children start school in the September after their 4th birthday. However, children are not legally required to attend school until the term after their 5th birthday. If you are considering delaying when your child starts school, then different options are available to you depending on when your child was born.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| ➤ Children born September-December         | - The start of the 'Spring' term in January 2025   |
| ➤ Children born January-March              | - The start of the 'Summer' term in April 2025     |
| ➤ Children born April-August (Summer Born) | - The start of the 'Autumn' term in September 2025 |

## Children born September-December

If a child is born between 1 September and 31 December, then you must apply for a school place during the winter that they turn 4 years old.

A child would usually be expected to start school in the September following their 4th birthday, however their start can be postponed, or they can attend part-time during the Autumn term. This is called 'deferring' a child's admission to primary school. The latest parents can postpone their child's start is January.

### **If you would like to do this, they must:**

1. Apply for a school place during the winter of their child's 4th birthday. The deadline for applications is 15 January after their 4th birthday.
2. Accept a school place offered.
3. Speak to the school about deferring their child's start to later in the year. Discuss both the possible benefits and disadvantages of your child starting later in the year.
4. If parents want their child to attend part-time, then they should discuss with the school what might be the best schedule for their child.
5. The school will hold a child's place during the Autumn term of their reception year, depending on how long they decide to defer.
6. **A child MUST start school at least by the beginning of the Spring Term in January.**

## Children born January-March

If a child was born between 1 January and 31 March, then you must apply for a school place during the winter before their 4th birthday.

A child would usually be expected to start school in the September following their 4th birthday, however you can postpone their start or have them attend part-time during the Autumn and Spring terms. This is called 'deferring' a child's admission to primary school. The latest you can postpone their start is April.

### **If you would like to do this, you must:**

1. Apply for a school place during the winter before your child's 4th birthday. The deadline for applications is 15 January 2024.
2. Accept a school place offered.
3. Speak to the school about wishing to defer your child's start to later in the year. Discuss both the possible benefits and disadvantages of your child starting later in the year.
4. If you want your child to attend part-time, then you should discuss with the school what might be the best schedule for your child.
5. The school will hold a place during the Autumn and Spring term of your child's Reception year, depending on how long you decide to defer.
6. **A child MUST start school at least by the beginning of the Summer Term in April.**

## Summer Born Children (April-August)

If a child was born between 1 April and 31 August, then it is usual for them to start school in the September following their 4th birthday. It is expected that most families will start sending their child to school at this time, along with the rest of their child's nursery friends.

However, if you are considering delaying your child's entry into reception, then you have several options available to you, and it is important that you consider these carefully before deciding whether to delay admission.



In all cases you should first apply for a school place in their child's normal age group. After this you can decide whether to accept the place offered or whether to delay admission.

## 4. Summer Born Children - Options for delaying entry into reception

- Option 1: Postpone your child's start to later in the year
- Option 2: Attending school part-time
- Option 3: Delaying admission by a year

### Summer Born Option 1: Postpone your child's start to later in the year

Summer born children are allowed to accept an offer of a school place but then postpone their start in Reception until later in the year. This is called 'deferring' a child's admission to primary school. **The latest parents can postpone their start is April.**

If you would like to do this, you **must**;

1. Apply for a school place during the winter before your child's 4th birthday. The deadline for applications is 15 January before their 4th birthday.
2. Accept a school place offered.
3. Speak to the school about wishing to defer a child's start to later in the year. Discuss both the possible benefits and disadvantages of a child starting later in the year.
4. The school will hold a place during the Autumn and Spring terms of the child's Reception year, depending on how long they decide to defer.
5. **A child MUST start school at least by the beginning of the Summer Term in April.** They can then attend school either full-time or part-time for the rest of the year.

## Summer Born Option 2: Attending school part-time

Summer born children are allowed to attend school part-time during the whole of their first year. This means that a child can start attending gradually. As long as the child starts school by April in their Reception year then they are allowed to attend part-time, either for all of the year or for part of it.

If you would like to do this, you **must**;

1. Apply for a school place during the winter before their child's 4th birthday. The deadline for applications is 15 January before their 4th birthday.
2. Accept a school place offered.
3. Speak to the school about their child attending part-time. Discuss both the possible benefits and disadvantages, and what might be the best schedule for the child.
4. From the September after the child's 4th birthday, they can either attend school part-time, or they can postpone their start date until the start of the Summer Term of their Reception year.
5. **A child MUST start school at least by the beginning of the Summer Term in April.**
6. The child can attend part time during the summer term as well, but they must attend school.

## Summer Born Option 3: Delaying admission by a year

If you are considering delaying a child's admission by a full year, then you will need to request permission for your child to start Reception a year later than their normal age group.

This is a big decision and is something you should think about carefully as it usually means that your child will remain in a lower year group for the rest of their education. This may not apply for future applications to alternative settings or out of Borough schools.

It is important to remember that if you do delay by a year, then you will not keep the school place originally offered to your child. This offer will be removed, and the following year you will have to re-apply for a school place alongside all other applicants, and the oversubscription criteria will apply if there are more applications than places available at the school.

**Each year a number of families who decide to delay admission discover that they no longer qualify for a place at their preferred school because the cut-off distance has changed, and they now live too far away. Parents should keep this in mind while making their decision about whether to delay admission.**

If a Wokingham Borough resident or applying for a Wokingham Borough school, and you would like to do this, you **must**;

1. Apply for a school place in their child's normal age group, during the winter before their child's 4th birthday. The deadline for applications is 15 January before their 4th birthday.
2. Complete Wokingham borough Council's **Summer Born Deferral Request Form**
3. Meet with the headteacher of the school, and any others you plan to apply for, to discuss the options available. Discuss both the possible benefits and disadvantages of the child starting school a year late.
  - If you plan to apply for Wokingham Borough community or voluntary controlled schools, the Wokingham borough Local Authority will consider your request
  - If you plan to apply for academies, free schools or voluntary aided schools, the school will consider your request
  - If you plan to apply for schools outside the Wokingham Borough, you will need to discuss their procedures with them directly.

**If a request to delay admission is agreed**

1. The school admissions team will send an email/letter letting you know which schools have agreed a request to delay admission.

2. After this, if you still want to delay admission, inform the School Admissions Team at Wokingham Borough Council to withdraw the original application or withdraw any school place offered to your child.
3. The School Admissions Team at Wokingham Borough Council will withdraw the application/offered school place.
4. During the winter before your child's 5th birthday apply for a school place as part of the main admissions round. The deadline for applications is 15 January before their 5th birthday.
5. Clearly state on the application form that you are applying for a Summer-Born Reception place to start school in September.

## 5. Deferred Entry -Seeking Advice

- Most children start school in the September after their fourth birthday, but some children will benefit from a delayed school start, particularly if their school readiness has been delayed by a medical condition or developmental delays.
- Teachers understand that children develop at different rates and have different starting points when beginning school. They know some children need more support than others and are trained to adapt their teaching to suit individual children's needs.
- You might find it helpful to speak to the staff at the schools you are considering for your child, for example the reception teacher or the headteacher. You can discuss any concerns you have about your child's readiness for school and ask them how they help children to settle in and how they would support your child.
- You may also wish to visit the schools to find out more about how children learn and play in the reception year.
- You can also talk to your child's early years provider. They will be able to support your child to get ready to start school and to let you know if there is anything you can do at home. They can also tell you if your child could stay at that early years setting until they are 5.
- You may want to talk to any specialist services your child is involved with, for example if they see a speech and language therapist or occupational therapist or are under specialist medical care.

## 6. Deferred Entry - Making A Decision

- You need to apply for a primary school place a year before your child starts school. Applications open on 13 November 2023 and close on 15 January 2024.
- You should apply to the local authority for a school place as normal – as if your child were going to start school at age 4 – even if you think you want to delay their start until age 5. If you do not want your child to miss their reception year, you should submit a request for admission out of the normal age group to the school's admission authority at the same time.
- This means you will need to decide whether or not you want to request admission out of the normal age group in the autumn following your child's third birthday. Remember that your child will do lots of growing and developing before they reach the point at which they could start school.
- If you decide to delay your child starting school until the September following their fifth birthday but do not request admission out of their normal age group at this time, your child will start school in year 1.
- You will need to make an in-year application for a school place for your child and the school admissions team at your local authority can advise you on when it would be best to make such an application.

**Some schools are likely to be full at this point and unable to offer you a place. Schools are unable to hold a place for your child from the previous year.**

## 7. Nursery to Reception class

Children do not automatically transfer from nursery to a Reception class so you must complete an application for a Reception place.

## 8. Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

If your child has an education, health and care plan, you should not complete the application form as your child's school placement will be dealt with by the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Team. To contact the SEND Team please email [SENDSchoolAge@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:SENDSchoolAge@wokingham.gov.uk)

If your child is undergoing an education health and care needs assessment which is not yet complete, please apply as normal. Your application will be withdrawn if an EHCP is subsequently agreed.

## 9. When to submit a school place application

You can submit your school place application between **13<sup>th</sup> November 2023 and 15th January 2024** via the **Council's Citizen Portal**

## 10. Who to apply to for a school place

Wokingham Borough residents should make applications to Wokingham Borough Council online, via the **Council's Citizen Portal** known as the common application form.

The Common Application Form is a form for applicants to express their preferences for places at Wokingham Borough Schools and at schools maintained by other local authorities and academies in other local authority areas.

## 11. Types of schools

**Schools have different bodies that make decisions about a school's policy and admitting pupils, depending on the type of school that they are. The responsible body is known as the 'admissions authority'.**

The Admission Authority for each school is responsible for setting its admission arrangements and deciding which children are given priority for a place, in accordance with the published admission criteria.

### Community and Maintained Schools

Wokingham Borough Council is the admission authority for these schools and makes decisions about the policy they use for school admissions. **These schools use the Wokingham Borough Council admissions policy. (WBC Maintained)**

### Academy Schools (Non – Maintained Schools)

Academies receive funding directly from the government and are usually run by an academy trust. They have more control over how they do things than community schools, who are guided by the local authority. Academies are inspected by Ofsted. They have to follow the same rules on admissions, special educational needs and exclusions as other state schools and students sit the same exams. **Academies set their own admissions policies and term times.**

Voluntary Aided Schools (Non – Maintained Schools)

Voluntary Aided (VA) Schools are funded by the local authority but have more freedom to change the way they do things - sometimes they are supported by representatives from religious groups. The admissions authority for these schools is usually the school's governing body. **The governing body of the school is responsible for deciding on admissions to the school.**

### Free Schools (Non – Maintained Schools)

These are schools set up by non-profit agencies and set their own policies. They operate in a similar way to an academy school in relation to school admissions. **Free schools set their own admissions policies.**

## 12. Transferring to Junior School

Children at infant schools in the borough will normally transfer to their linked junior school at the age of seven, but you must apply for a junior school place. Parents of all year 2 pupils, living in the Wokingham borough, will be able to apply on-line from November 13, 2023. **The process is the same as applying for a primary school place. When you have completed and submitted your application you will receive an instant email confirmation. You can then make changes to your application up until the 15 January 2024, the closing date.**

### How to apply for a Junior School

You should submit your application online at: [https://schoolsonline.wokingham.gov.uk/CitizenPortal\\_LIVE/en](https://schoolsonline.wokingham.gov.uk/CitizenPortal_LIVE/en)

You will need to give the name of the school you want your child to transfer to (this should be your child's linked junior school).

Most linked schools are on the same site and have the same name. We treat the following as linked schools:

Linked Infant School	Linked Junior School
Emmbrook Infant School	Emmbrook Junior School
Gorse Ride Infant School	Gorse Ride Junior School
Oaklands Infant School*	Oaklands Junior School*
Polehampton CE Infant School*	Polehampton CE Junior School*
Robert Piggott CE Infant School	Robert Piggott CE Junior School
Shinfield Infant & Nursery School*	Shinfield St Mary's CE Aided Junior School*
Walter Infant School	St Paul's CE Junior School
Wescott Infant School*	Westende Junior School*
No linked Infant School	St Cecilia's* (Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 only)



## 13. Catchment/Designated area

This is sometimes called “Designated Area”. In essence, it is a geographical area from which children live. They are given priority for admission to a particular school. School catchment areas are used by most schools in their admission policy as one of their oversubscription criteria.

Your home address may not be in the designated area of the school nearest to your house. It is important that you check which catchment areas include your home address before submitting your application, using our **Schools designated areas map**.

Please be aware that this is for guidance only. For confirmation of your catchment school, contact the School Admissions team for Wokingham Borough Schools, or the schools directly for all Non-Maintained Schools, for example Academy Schools.

Most schools have catchment area children as a high criterion. Children living within a school’s catchment area are ranked as a high priority for a place. There is, however, no guarantee of an offer of a place at your catchment school as it may be full or oversubscribed in your child’s year group.

## 14. Which schools to apply for

You can apply for a reception or junior school place at any maintained or academy (non-fee paying) mainstream school on your home authority’s online system, as long you are applying for the school’s natural year of entry. **This is reception for primary schools and year 3 for junior schools.**

If you live near the Borough boundary, you may wish to consider applying for schools in neighbouring authority areas such as Reading or Bracknell, as they may have schools closer to your home address. You will still need to make your application through Wokingham Borough Council.

If you are submitting preferences for schools outside of Wokingham, it is essential that you also contact the Local Authority who maintains the school you are applying for, to check their closing date, supplementary information form and identification document requirements.

If you submit invalid preferences, such as an independent school or a school where the year group you are applying for is not the natural year of entry, these preferences will be discarded, and you may not be offered the opportunity to name other schools in their place.

**IMPORTANT - If you do not name the nearest suitable schools in your original school place application, your child is unlikely to be eligible for travel assistance. The nearest school may not be a Wokingham school. Please check if a school in a neighboring Local Authority is a closer school to your home address, if getting your child to and from school may be an issue for you.**

## 15. How many schools to apply for

You can name **four** schools on your application in order of preference. **It is strongly recommended that you use all four preferences, and that you name all of your nearest schools.**

If you only apply to one school, you will only be considered for that school. You may then be allocated a school that is not one of your preferences, that is further from your home address and to which you may not be entitled to travel assistance should your preference be unsuccessful.

## 16. Deciding which school(s) to include as a preference

When deciding which schools to apply for, we strongly encourage you to consider schools that are nearest to your home address, **including schools that may be in other boroughs.** As well as being easier to get to, such schools are more likely to be able to admit your child.

It is also important that you consider the **admissions criteria** for each school, so you understand how places are allocated and who gets priority when a school is oversubscribed. Different schools have different admissions policies, and these may affect the chances of your child being offered a place.

The regulations allow for a parent to express a preference for a school; this is not the same as being able to 'choose' which school your child attends. You should not make any assumptions that your child is entitled to a place at a preferred school, at a school within your designated area or at the school nearest to your home address. You are not guaranteed a place at a preferred school, and it is important

to be realistic when considering which schools, you name as preferences. Distances of proximity vary every year and you should consider using all four preferences, including local schools which have consistently reached your address in past allocations.

**It is essential that you look at how places were allocated at Wokingham Primary Schools over the last few years. Click on the links below to find out how places were allocated in 2023, 2022 and 2021.**

- **[Summary of allocation at Wokingham Borough primary schools 2023 \(PDF document\)](#)**
- **[Summary of allocation at Wokingham Borough primary schools 2022 \(PDF document\)](#)**
- **[Summary of allocation at Wokingham Borough primary schools 2021 \(PDF document\)](#)**

**If your nearest school is outside of Wokingham, you are strongly advised to check how places were allocated in previous years. For details of the number of applications received for Bracknell Forest and Reading Schools and how these were ranked against the relevant admissions criteria, please follow the links below;**

- **[Bracknell Forest Schools](#)**
- **[Reading Borough Schools](#)**

Your home address may not be in the designated area of the school nearest to your house. It is important that you check which catchment areas include your home address before submitting your application, using our **[Schools designated areas map](#)**.

Although you are not limited to designated area schools when listing your preferences, admissions priority is usually given to those pupils who apply for their designated area school. **However, living in the designated area does not guarantee you a place at the school if the school is oversubscribed.**

**Important - You must list the schools in the order that you prefer them, including any out of borough schools. Please make full use of your opportunity to list more than one school on your application to avoid disappointment.**

**You are NOT guaranteed a place at a school if you only list one option.** If you do not meet the admissions criteria or the school is oversubscribed, we will offer you a place at the nearest appropriate school with vacancies. This may not be your most local school. Do not name the same school more than once; it will only be considered as one preference.

You can **find and compare schools on GOV.UK.**

If you would like to view the report of an Ofsted school inspection, these are available to view online on the individual school's website and on the **Ofsted website.**

## 17. Completing your application

Wokingham Borough residents can make applications online, via the **Council's Citizen Portal** or complete and return a paper form which can be requested by contacting **schooladmissions@wokingham.gov.uk.**

You are strongly encouraged to use the online portal to submit an application because, if you apply online, you will be sent an email advising you of the result of your application. After you receive this email, you will be able to log onto the parent portal to view your application result, and accept or decline your offer of school place online.

If you apply using a paper form you will be sent your application results by Royal Mail which will be sent out on National Offer Day. Any documents or applications posted to School Admissions may be delayed in being received. Wherever possible all applications should be submitted online, and documents scanned to **schooladmissions@wokingham.gov.uk**

### Child's details

**Child's name and address:** This should be your child's legal name and the address at which they live permanently. Where a child lives with separated parents with shared responsibility, parents must decide which address to use for the allocation process. The admissions team will determine if an address can be used based on information received and information held on record.

You must not use the address of a relative or child minder. If you have moved or are about to move house, you must send us proof of your child's permanent address.

## School preferences

Name up to **FOUR** schools in order of preference. Make sure that your first preference is the school you most want for your child, as this is the one, we will try to offer you where possible. You must not name independent (private) schools on your application. Instead, you should apply directly to these schools.

## Order of preference

You should think carefully about your order of preference when you decide how to list the schools for which you are applying. This is because if your child qualifies for a place at several schools, you will only be made one offer, to the school with the highest preference for which your child is eligible. Any offers to a lower preferred school will be automatically withdrawn to ensure each child only receives one offer.

## Reasons for your preference

It is important that you tell us anything that could affect our decision, for example if there are specific social or medical reasons why your child must go to a particular school, you must send us a letter from your child's pediatrician/consultant or relevant professional from Children's Services, as appropriate, by 15 January 2024. This letter will need to explain why the school is the **only** school to meet your child's needs and why no other school could provide the appropriate support.

## Siblings

If you believe your child is eligible for sibling priority at one of your preferred schools, you must include the sibling's details on your application. If you don't, your child may be given lower priority for a place at the school. Please give details of the youngest brother or sister who is already attending the school (not the nursery) that you want (or attending the linked junior school) and who will still be at the school in September 2024. Include stepbrothers, stepsisters or fostered or adopted children living at the same address as your child.

## Looked after and previously looked after children

Only fill in this section if your child is in public care (also known as a 'looked after child') or was previously looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (in accordance with the Adoption and Children Act 2002) or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order (in accordance with the Children Act 1989).

**Applications for looked after children must be completed by the designated social worker.**

If you are making an application for a previously looked after child, who immediately after being in care became subject to an adoption order, child arrangements order or special guardianship order, you will need to attach to your application one of the following pieces of evidence:

- **Special guardianship order** – This order appoints one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian(s). Refer to **Section 14A of the Children Act 1989**.
- **Child arrangements order** – This order settles the arrangements of the person the child is to live with. Refer to **Section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by Section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014**. Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order.
- **Adoption order** – Refer to **Section 46 of the Adoption and Children act 2002** or **Section 12 of the 1976 Adoption Act**.

**If you are making an application for a previously looked after child who was in state care outside of England and ceased to be so as a result of being adopted, you will need to include with your application, evidence of the following:**

- that your child has been adopted and;
- that your child was previously in state care outside of England (in the care of or accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society) immediately before being adopted.

**Evidence must be sent to the Admissions Team by the deadline for evidence. Send the whole document, as priority cannot be given without it. The applicant should note, that by applying under Criterion A they understand that Wokingham Borough Council School Admissions Team may obtain additional confirmation of the child's 'Looked After'/'Previously Looked After' status, either via the Local Authority where the child was taken into , or the residential authorities' duty/triage/social care department**

## Serious medical, physical, psychological, or social need

You can request priority for a place at your preferred school if your child or a family member living at the same address has an exceptional medical and/or social need that makes attendance at a particular school essential. **Please note that some own admission authority schools do not have medical/ social reasons within their oversubscription criteria. These schools will not be able to consider medical/social need when ranking school place applications.**

'Medical need' does not include mild medical conditions, such as asthma or allergies. 'Social need' does not include a parent's wish that a child attends the school because of a child's aptitude or because their friends attend the school or because of routine child-minding arrangements.

**You MUST tick the appropriate box on the application form to show that you wish your application to be considered on medical and/or social grounds.**

Submit supporting evidence by the application deadline, from a professional, such as a doctor and/or consultant for medical need or a social worker, health visitor, housing officer, the police or probation officer for social need. The supporting evidence must confirm the child or family's medical and/or social need and set out why that need makes it essential that your child attends the named school rather than any other.

Send your evidence to the **Admissions Team**. All information submitted will be regarded as confidential.

Your child or family member's exceptional medical and/or social need cannot be considered if you do not tick the appropriate box on the application form and submit supporting application by the application deadline.

**Providing evidence does not guarantee priority at the preferred school. Decisions will be made based on the merits of each case and whether the evidence demonstrates that a placement should be made at a particular school above any other.**

## Private fostering arrangements

If you are looking after someone else's child, this could be a private fostering arrangement and the Local Authority must be notified.

Private fostering is an arrangement made by the child or young person's parent or guardian and not the Local Authority.

Private fostering is when a child or young person under the age of 16 (18 if the young person has a disability) is looked after for 28 days or more by someone who is not a close relative, guardian, grandparent, uncle, auntie, brother, sister and step-relatives.

The Council has a duty to assess and monitor arrangements to make sure the child is safe, and their needs are being met. There is a legal obligation that you and /or the parent notify the Local Authority of this arrangement.

## Parent and carer declaration

When making your application you will sign a declaration to confirm that you have read the guide and understand your responsibilities as the applicant.

You will also confirm that you have parental responsibility for your child and that you have the agreement of all people with parental responsibility to make your application, or there is a court order allowing your application. It is not appropriate for the council to become involved in private disputes with parents or carers. You should attempt to resolve the matter of school preference between yourselves and inform us in writing, or through the family court by way of a specific issue order. Any applications subject to a dispute will not be processed until agreement can be reached, and this may affect your child's chance of being allocated a place at a preferred school or result in an offer being withdrawn. **Please read through the checklist carefully and ensure you read the declaration before submitting your application by the closing date.**

## 18. The preference system when applying for primary school places

You are offered one school place on national offer day. If your child qualifies for a place at more than one school on your list, we will offer you a place at the school that you have placed highest on your list of preferences.

If we can't offer you a place at one of the schools you applied for, we will offer you a place at your nearest Wokingham school that has places available.



## Equal preference – How it works

### (This is how school places are allocated)

1. You can name up to **FOUR** schools on your application, in order of preference
2. Your child is added to a list for each of the schools you have named. Each schools list is then ranked in accordance with the published admission criteria for that school to determine whether they are able to offer a place
3. If only one of your preferred schools can offer a place, you will be allocated a place at that school
4. If your child qualifies for a place at more than one school, the one ranked highest on your application will be allocated
5. If none of your preferred schools can offer a place, you will be allocated a place at the catchment school (if places remain) or the nearest school (measured as a straight line) with a place available. You will also be advised of the arrangements for placing your child on the waiting list and your right of appeal

## 19. School admission rules

If a school does not have enough places for everyone who applies, the admission rules for that school will be used to decide who will get a place. Every school has a set of rules, known as the 'admissions arrangements' or 'oversubscription' criteria. Schools that are oversubscribed will follow these rules when allocating places

## 20. Wokingham Borough Community Primary and Junior schools

The schools below are all Wokingham Borough Maintained Primary Schools and follow the Wokingham Borough Council Admission Arrangements. A full description of the admissions arrangements can be found on page 17. Wokingham Borough Council is responsible for deciding on admissions to these schools.

Each school has a published admission number for each year group, and this is the maximum number of children that can be admitted. If there are more children who want a place than there are places available, the school is said to be **oversubscribed**.

**Admission priority order:** If the number of preferences for a school is above the number of places available, places will be offered in the following priority order for Wokingham Borough Community Primary and Junior schools:

**Criteria A:** Children in public care, looked-after children, and previously looked-after children

**Criteria B:** Families who have exceptional medical or social needs as the grounds for their child's admission to a particular school

**Criteria C:** For junior school applications to transfer to year 3. Children who are attending the infant school with close links with the junior school

**Criteria D:** Children whose permanent home address is inside the schools' designated area and who has a sibling at the school at the time of application; who is expected to be attending the school when the child will enter the school.

**Criteria E:** Children whose permanent home address is inside the schools' designated area.

**Criteria F:** Children whose permanent home address is outside the schools' designated area and who has a sibling at the school at the time of application; who is expected to be attending the school when the child will enter the school.

**Criteria G:** Other children

## Wokingham Borough Community Primary and Junior schools

School details	Places available In 2024	Last place allocated National Offer Day 2023
<u>Aldryngton Primary School</u>	45	<u>Oversubscribed</u> - The last child allocated lived 0.538 miles from the school
<u>Bearwood Primary School</u>	45	All preferences met
<u>Colleton Primary School</u>	45	All preferences met
<u>Farley Hill Primary School</u>	60	<u>Oversubscribed</u> - The last child allocated lived 1.071 miles from the school
<u>Gorse Ride Infant</u>	30	All preferences met
<u>Hawthorns Primary School</u>	60	All preferences met
<u>Highwood Primary School</u>	60	All preferences met
<u>Hillside Primary School</u>	60	All preferences met
<u>Lamb's Lane Primary School</u>	30	<u>Oversubscribed</u> - The last child allocated lived 0.858 miles from the school
<u>Loddon Primary School</u>	60	All preferences met
<u>Radstock Primary School</u>	45	All preferences met
<u>Robert Piggott (Infant)</u>	45	All preferences met
<u>South Lake Primary School</u>	60	<u>Oversubscribed</u> - The last child allocated lived 0.856 miles from the school
<u>Walter Infant School</u>	90	All preferences met
<u>Winnersh Primary School</u>	60	All preferences met
<u>Woodley Primary School</u>	45	All preferences met
<u>Gorse Ride Junior</u>	64	All preferences met
<u>St Paul's C of E Junior School</u>	96	<u>Oversubscribed</u> - The last child allocated lived 0.646 miles from the school
<u>Robert Piggott Junior</u>	49	All preferences met

## 21. Wokingham Community Primary and Junior Schools Admissions Criteria

Please note that the criteria below apply to the Wokingham Borough Community Schools listed on page 16 only. Academies, free and voluntary aided (Church affiliated) schools and schools in other boroughs apply their own criteria to applications and these are available by visiting the school's individual website.

### The Oversubscription criteria for Community and Voluntary Controlled Infant, Primary & Junior schools are in the following priority order:

#### **Criteria A: Looked after and previously looked after children**

Places will first be given to children who are looked after by a local authority and to children who were previously looked after, including children who were previously looked after outside England, but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order.

Looked after children are;

- Children who are in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by a local authority in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989, e.g., fostered or living in a children's home, at the time an application for a school is made; and
- Children who have previously been in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by a local authority in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989 and who have left that care through adoption, a child arrangements order (in accordance with Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 and as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014) or special guardianship order (in accordance with Section 14A of the Children Act 1989).

- Children who appear (to the local authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care because of being adopted. A child will be regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society. The parent/carer will need to provide evidence to demonstrate that the child was in state care outside of England and left that care because of being adopted

Places will be allocated under this criterion when places are first offered at a school and the local authority may also ask schools to admit over their published admission number at other times under this criterion. [\(See note 1\).](#)

**Criteria B: Families who have exceptional medical or social needs as the grounds for their child's admission to a particular school** [\(See note 2\).](#)

**Criteria C: For junior school applications to transfer to year 3. Children who are attending the infant school with close links with the junior school by the deadline for applications.**

Linked Infant School	Linked Junior School
Emmbrook Infant School	Emmbrook Junior School
Gorse Ride Infant School	Gorse Ride Junior School
Oaklands Infant School*	Oaklands Junior School*
Polehampton Infant School*	Polehampton Junior School*
Robert Piggott Infant School	Robert Piggott Junior School
Shinfield Infant & Nursery School*	Shinfield St Mary's Junior School*
Walter Infant School	St Paul's Junior School
Wescott Infant School*	Westende Junior School*
Willow Bank Infant School	Willow Bank Junior School
No linked Infant School	St Cecilia's* (Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 only)

**\*Academy junior schools included for completeness - the school's governing body's admissions policy will apply**

**Criteria D:** Children whose permanent home address is inside the schools' designated area and who has a sibling at the school at the time of application; who is expected to be attending the school when the child will enter the school. (See notes 3 and 4)

**Criteria E:** Children whose permanent home address is inside the schools' designated area.

**Criteria F:** Children whose permanent home address is outside the schools' designated area and who has a sibling at the school at the time of application; who is expected to be attending the school when the child will enter the school. (See notes 3 and 4)

**Criteria G:** Other children

## Note 1

**Looked after children** are those who are in the care of a Local Authority or are being provided with accommodation by a local authority in England in the exercise of their social services functions.

**Previously looked after children** are those who immediately after being in care (as defined above) became subject to an adoption order, child arrangements order or special guardianship order. They are also those who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

Applications for looked after children must be completed by the designated social worker.

If you are making an application for a previously looked after child, who immediately after being in care became subject to an adoption order, child arrangements order or special guardianship order, you will need to attach to your application one of the following pieces of evidence:

- **Special guardianship order** – This order appoints one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian(s). Refer to [Section 14A of the Children Act 1989](#).

- **Child arrangements order** – This order settles the arrangements of the person the child is to live with. Refer to [Section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by Section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014](#). Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order.
- **Adoption order** – Refer to [Section 46 of the Adoption and Children act 2002 or Section 12 of the 1976 Adoption Act](#).

If you are making an application for a previously looked after child who was in state care outside of England and ceased to be so as a result of being adopted, you will need to include with your application, evidence of the following:

- that your child has been adopted and;
- that your child was previously in state care outside of England (in the care of or accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society) immediately before being adopted.

**Evidence must be sent to the Admissions Team by the deadline for evidence. Send the whole document, as priority cannot be given without it. The applicant should note, that by applying under Criterion A they understand that Wokingham Borough council School Admissions Team may obtain additional confirmation of the child's 'Looked After'/'Previously Looked After' status, either via the Local Authority where the child was taken into care, or the residential authorities' duty/triage/social care department**

## Note 2

When submitting an application under criterion B (exceptional medical or social needs as grounds for a child's admittance to a particular school), this must be supported by written evidence from an independent professional aware of the case relating to the child, parent/carer or other children living at the same address (e.g., doctor, hospital consultant or psychologist for medical grounds or registered social or care worker, housing officer, the police or probation officer for social needs). This evidence must be specific to the school in question; it must show why that school is the most suitable; what facilities will benefit the child, and why no other school can offer the same support.

Your application cannot be considered ***under Oversubscription Criterion B*** if you do not declare that you are applying under this criterion, and you do not provide written independent professional evidence. All supporting documentation must be received by 15 January 2024 for consideration prior to the main allocation of places. An admissions panel will consider the supporting evidence provided and will advise the applicant of its decision; the panel's decision is final. Any evidence received by the school admissions team after 15 January 2024 will not be considered in the main allocation of places but will if agreed by panel; affect the applicant's position on a school's waiting list after offer day.

It should be noted that all schools have the resources to work with special educational needs and common childhood complaints such as asthma or allergies.

### Note 3

Your child will have higher priority if they have an older brother or sister at the school you are applying for. The older child must still be at the school when the younger child starts.

'Sibling' refers to brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, stepbrother or sister, foster brother or sister or the child of the parent/carer's partner where the child for whom the place is sought, is living in the same family unit at the same address as the sibling. A sibling relation does not apply when the child currently on roll will leave the school before the sibling starts.

It includes children who at the time of application have a sibling for whom the offer of a place at the preferred school has been accepted, even if the sibling is not yet attending.

In the case of linked infant and junior schools, the application will be treated as meeting criteria D or F if the child's sibling is expected to be at either of the two schools at the time the child would enter the school. At the initial allocation, when a parent is applying for a reception place at an infant school that has both a feeder and a sibling link to a junior school and that child has a sibling currently attending Year 2 of the infant school but who will have left by the time the younger child starts, the reception applicant will be considered under



the sibling criterion as part of the initial allocation. This is because, due to the feeder link, they will be expected to still have a sibling at the linked junior school at the time of admission and the parent would have made an application expressing their preference to do so.

#### Note 4

Occasionally a parent with more than one child can express a preference for their designated area school(s) for the older child, but the local authority is unable to meet this preference. The local authority will then allocate a place at a lower ranked preferred school or the closest available school with places. In this case, the parent may then prefer to send younger sibling(s) to the same school as the older child attends. In such instances, the allocated school may be regarded as if it were the designated area school for subsequent siblings and would be treated as meeting criterion C (sibling resident inside the designated area). **This does not apply however if there is a change of preference after an offer of a school place has been made.**

Parents must notify the school admissions team at the time of application that they consider this exception applies. Where there is an application for the actual designated area school(s), designated area status would still be applied.

The authority has sought to make the above criteria as objective as possible. However, for category B and any other cases where judgement is needed as to which criteria the application meets, a panel of at least two officers will consider the application and supporting evidence. The panel's decision and reasons will be recorded, for the purposes of informing the parent and any subsequent appeal.

## 22. Own admission authority schools

This section relates to own admission authority schools in Wokingham. These schools set their own admissions criteria, but applications for these schools should still be made to Wokingham Borough School Admissions Service using the **Parent Portal**. Please click on the school details below to be taken to their website for further information about each school.

### Own admission authority primary schools

School details	Admissions Authority	Places available in 2024	Last place allocated National Offer Day 2023
<b><u>Alder Grove Primary School</u></b>	<a href="#"><u>Keys Academy Trust</u></a>	<b><u>60</u></b>	<b><u>Oversubscribed</u></b> - The last child allocated lived 0.430 miles from the school
<b><u>All Saints Primary School</u></b>	<a href="#"><u>The governing body of the school</u></a>	<b><u>45</u></b>	All preferences met
<b><u>Beechwood Primary School</u></b>	<a href="#"><u>The Frays Academy Trust</u></a>	<b><u>60</u></b>	All preferences met
<b><u>Crazies Hill Primary School</u></b>	<a href="#"><u>Keys Academy Trust</u></a>	<b><u>15</u></b>	All preferences met
<b><u>Earley St Peters Primary School</u></b>	<a href="#"><u>Keys Academy Trust</u></a>	<b><u>70</u></b>	All preferences met
<b><u>Emmbrook Infant</u></b>	<a href="#"><u>The Circle Trust</u></a>	<b><u>64</u></b>	All preferences met
<b><u>Evendons Primary School</u></b>	<a href="#"><u>Bellevue Place Education Trust</u></a>	<b><u>60</u></b>	<b><u>Oversubscribed</u></b> - The last child allocated lived 1.071 miles from the school
<b><u>Finchampstead Church of England Primary School</u></b>	<a href="#"><u>The governing body of the school</u></a>	<b><u>17</u></b>	All preferences met
<b><u>Floreat Montague Park Primary School</u></b>	<a href="#"><u>The GLF Schools Trust</u></a>	<b><u>60</u></b>	All preferences met

## Own admission authority primary schools

School details	Admissions Authority	Places available in 2024	Last place allocated National Offer Day 2023
<b><u>Grazeley Parochial Church of England Primary School</u></b>	<a href="#"><u>The governing body of the school</u></a>	<b><u>30</u></b>	<b><u>Oversubscribed</u></b> - The last child allocated lived 1.147 miles from the school
<b><u>Hatch Ride Primary School</u></b>	<a href="#"><u>The Corvus Learning Trust</u></a>	<b><u>30</u></b>	<b><u>Oversubscribed</u></b> - The last child allocated lived 0.234 miles from the school
<b><u>Hawkedon Primary School</u></b>	The Orchard Learning Alliance		All preferences met
<b><u>Keep Hatch Primary School</u></b>	<a href="#"><u>The Frays Academy Trust</u></a>	<b><u>60</u></b>	All preferences met
<b><u>Nine Mile Ride Primary School</u></b>	<a href="#"><u>The Circle Trust</u></a>	<b><u>50</u></b>	<b><u>Oversubscribed</u></b> - The last child allocated lived 1.75 miles from the school
<b><u>Oaklands Infant School</u></b>	<a href="#"><u>The Corvus Learning Trust</u></a>	<b><u>60</u></b>	All preferences met
<b><u>Polehampton C of E Infant School</u></b>	<a href="#"><u>Keys Academy Trust</u></a>	<b><u>60</u></b>	<b><u>Oversubscribed</u></b> - The last child allocated lived 0.879 miles from the school
<b><u>St Dominic Savio Catholic Primary School</u></b>	<a href="#"><u>The governing body of the school</u></a>	<b><u>60</u></b>	<b><u>Oversubscribed</u></b> - The last child allocated lived 0.825 miles from the school
<b><u>Saint Sebastian's Church of England Primary School</u></b>	<a href="#"><u>Keys Academy Trust</u></a>	<b><u>26</u></b>	All preferences met
<b><u>Shinfield Infant and Nursery School</u></b>	<a href="#"><u>The Circle Trust</u></a>	<b><u>90</u></b>	<b><u>Oversubscribed</u></b> - The last child allocated lived 0.804 miles from the school
<b><u>Sonning CE Primary School</u></b>	<a href="#"><u>Keys Academy Trust</u></a>	<b><u>30</u></b>	<b><u>Oversubscribed</u></b> - The last child allocated lived 1.311 miles from the school

## Own admission authority primary schools

School details	Admissions Authority	Places available in 2024	Last place allocated National Offer Day 2023
<b><u>St Nicholas CE Primary School</u></b>	<a href="#"><u>Keys Academy Trust</u></a>	<b>20</b>	<b><u>Oversubscribed</u></b> - The last child allocated lived 2.353 miles from the school
<b><u>St Teresa's Catholic Academy</u></b>	<a href="#"><u>Frassati Catholic Academy Trust</u></a>	<b>45</b>	All preferences met
<b><u>The Coombes Primary School</u></b>	<a href="#"><u>The Keys Academy Trust</u></a>	<b>60</b>	All preferences met
<b><u>The Charvil Piggott Primary School</u></b>	<a href="#"><u>The governing body of the school</u></a>	<b>30</b>	<b><u>Oversubscribed</u></b> - The last child allocated lived 1.806 miles from the school
<b><u>Wescott Infant School</u></b>	<a href="#"><u>The Circle Trust</u></a>	<b>56</b>	All preferences met
<b><u>Wheatfield Primary School</u></b>	<a href="#"><u>GLF Schools Trust</u></a>	<b>30</b>	<b><u>Oversubscribed</u></b> - The last child allocated lived 1.034 miles from the school
<b><u>Whiteknights Primary School</u></b>	<a href="#"><u>Bellevue Place Education Trust</u></a>	<b>60</b>	<b><u>Oversubscribed</u></b> - The last child allocated lived 1.396 miles from the school
<b><u>Windmill Primary School</u></b>	<a href="#"><u>GLF Schools Trust</u></a>	<b>30</b>	All preferences met
<b><u>Willow Bank Infant School</u></b>	<a href="#"><u>The Orchard Learning Alliance</u></a>	<b>60</b>	All preferences met

## Own admission authority junior schools

School details	Admission Authority	Places available In 2024	Last place allocated National Offer Day 2023
<u>Emmbrook Junior</u>	<a href="#">The Circle Trust</a>	64	All preferences met
<u>Oaklands Junior School</u>	<a href="#">The Corvus Learning Trust</a>	64	All preferences met
<u>Polehampton C of E Junior School</u>	<a href="#">Keys Academy Trust</a>	60	<b><u>Oversubscribed</u></b> - The last child allocated lived 2.946 miles from the school
<u>Shinfield St Mary's Junior School</u>	<a href="#">The Circle Trust</a>	90	<b><u>Oversubscribed</u></b> - The last child allocated lived 0.322 miles from the school
<u>Westende Junior School</u>	<a href="#">The Circle Trust</a>	60	All preferences met
<u>St Cecilia's CoE Primary School</u>	<a href="#">Keys Academy Trust</a>	30	All preferences met
<u>Willow Bank Junior School</u>	<a href="#">The Orchard Learning Alliance</a>	60	<b><u>Oversubscribed</u></b> - The last child allocated lived 0.2 miles from the school

## 23. Published admission number (PAN)

Each school has an agreed maximum total number of pupils for each of its year groups. This number is based on building space availability or (for some first/primary schools) on legal class size limits and has been agreed by the school's governing body.

As a parent you may see that more children join a school which takes it over its PAN. This is often, however, due to circumstances outside the control of the school, and is often due to there being successful appeals or if the Local Authority needs to activate the Fair Access Protocol.

A school cannot just decide to admit over its PAN. Schools must consider the physical capacity of the school within current class sizes/structure and overall net capacity, in order to accommodate any additional pupils. The school needs to consider whether it would require any additional resources to meet pupils' need. The admission of the additional pupil/s may also require additional funding and could have an adverse financial impact on the school, which all needs to be considered. It is for these reasons, amongst others, that schools only admit over PAN in exceptional circumstances and where it will not negatively impact the school.

Some schools may consider initially, to allocate above their admission number, based on historical trends relating to the number of declines usually received following National Offer Day. In this circumstance the school will generally not allocate any additional places until numbers have fallen below the agreed admission number.

The Local Authority seeks to maintain a viable school system across the Borough. Whilst the Council remains supportive of meeting individual parental preference where this is reasonable, it also has a much wider remit of ensuring that no school can expand at the expense of another (reducing parental choice), that in-year admissions do not impair future access to a school for particular children or communities, and that the ability to effectively manage localised fluctuations in demand is maintained.

## 24. Supplementary Information Forms (SIF)

Some schools ask you to complete a SIF to provide extra information for the admissions criteria to be looked at fully. This is in addition to the Common Application Form being submitted. You must submit an application with the local authority, even if you have already completed the school's form.

It is vital that you submit any SIFs that are required for the schools that you apply for by their deadline. If you don't, this will significantly reduce the likelihood of your child gaining a place at the school.

A 'supplementary form' and is used by voluntary aided (church) or free schools to gather additional information that will enable the school to consider your application under its **faith or other criteria**.

**Only families applying for a place under this oversubscription criteria are required to complete a Supplementary Information Form.**

The following schools in the Wokingham Borough require a supplementary Information Form to be completed and sent directly to the school. This can be downloaded by clicking on the school's name below or visiting the school's website directly.

- [St Teresas Catholic School](#)
- [Finchampstead CofE Primary School](#)
- [Oaklands Junior School](#)
- [St Dominic Savio Catholic School](#)
- [Sonning C of E Primary School](#)
- [St Peter's CofE Primary School](#)
- [St Sebastian's CofE Primary School](#)
- [Hatch Ride](#)

Out of borough schools may require SIFs, please ensure you check the schools' requirements before listing it on your application.

Where an academy or a voluntary aided or foundation school receives a SIF from a Wokingham resident it will not be regarded as a valid application unless the applicant has also completed the Common Application Form and that academy or school is listed as a preference on it.

## 25. Change of preference

If an older child transfers to another school after 15 January 2024 and you need to change your younger child's school preferences because of this, you should contact Admissions Services: [schooladmissions@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:schooladmissions@wokingham.gov.uk)

Please be mindful that the ability to make vital amendments will be dependent on the stage of the process. Depending on when your older child transfers, it may be possible to change your school preferences.

If any medical or social circumstances within the family change after 15 January 2024 that means that you feel your child would need a place at a particular school, please contact the Admissions Team [schooladmissions@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:schooladmissions@wokingham.gov.uk).

If you live outside of Wokingham, you must complete and submit your application to the borough where you live. Unless the academy school states otherwise, some academy or out of borough schools prefer evidence to be submitted to the school or their local authority directly. Please be aware they may also have their own published deadline for this.

## 26. Applying after the closing date

Any applications received after 15 January 2024 will be considered as a late application. However, we may consider applications as on time, under exceptional circumstances, and when evidence is provided to support this. Our ability to accept late applications, with extenuating circumstances, as on time, is time sensitive in view of the processes involved. You can apply by downloading an application form from our website [Starting infant or primary school - ages 4 - 5 - Wokingham Borough Council](#) and emailing the completed form to [schooladmissions@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:schooladmissions@wokingham.gov.uk)



## 27. Proof of residence

Your home address is an important factor in how your application is considered. We will check addresses against council tax data held by Wokingham Borough Council. The address you give on the form **MUST** be your child's single permanent home. See page 20 for further information. If you give an incorrect address and we offer a place on the basis of that address, then the offer of the place may be withdrawn. We will request to see both entry and exit proof when we query your address.

**Entry proof** will include, signed tenancies, posting orders, proof of exchange, and documents showing you have registered your property for the purposes of taxes, the electoral roll and with other relevant government agencies – for example your driving licence.

**Exit proofs** include any relevant documentation pertaining to the disposal of your previous address and include, for example, signed tenancies and proof of exchange. Additional information may be requested at any time. We also require satisfactory details of the ownership, tenancy, and disposal of any previous addresses. If we require any proof of residence, we will contact you to request it before we can continue with your application.

If you are already resident at an address, please provide some suitable proof such as a copy of the current financial year's council tax statement. When you apply online you may be asked to enter your Council Tax Reference for this purpose. If you are moving to a new address and renting, a full copy of your new tenancy agreement, signed by yourself for a minimum duration of 12 months. For a 6-month tenancy we ask for written confirmation from your landlord that they will not issue a 12-month tenancy agreement and the reason(s) why or confirmation that it is a 6-month rolling tenancy with the expectation that you will be in the property for longer than 6 months. Short term tenancies may not be accepted.

If you are moving to a new address and purchasing a property, please provide a letter or email direct from your solicitor. This must be on exchange of contracts and include the date of completion.

If you are a member of the armed forces and are subject to a posting or marching out order, please provide a copy of this order. Places can only be allocated once proof of residence has been provided.

## 28. Changing your address

If you move address before 15 January 2024, you must notify us in writing by emailing [schooladmissions@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:schooladmissions@wokingham.gov.uk). You can also make changes to the schools you wish to apply to.

**If moving to or within the Wokingham Borough, address evidence received after 15th January cannot be considered for the initial offer of places. It will be used to communicate the outcome of the application and for waiting list purposes after national offer day where required.**

**If a child has been allocated a place at a school and then subsequently moves from the address on the application, the Local Authority will revisit the allocation and may remove the place if the child is no longer eligible for the space. At that point any allocation would be subject to availability at that time**

## 29. Siblings

We define siblings as brothers or sisters living in the same house as their primary place of residence.

This includes half-, step- and foster- brothers or sisters at the same address, but does not include full-, half-, step- and foster- brothers or sisters living at different addresses as their primary place of residence.

A sibling link is where your preference is considered under a higher priority for a school place than applicants who do not have a sibling who will be on roll at your preferred school at the time of admission.

For most schools, siblings are considered after children who are resident in a school's catchment area and so will not always be successful in obtaining a place.

Having children of similar ages at two different schools can be difficult. Some parents/carers find that they are successful in obtaining a place for their eldest child but are unsuccessful for their younger children in future years.

If you obtain a place for one of your children at a school, this does not mean that places can be guaranteed for their siblings either currently or at a later date.

Exceptions, particularly infant class size exceptions cannot be made to admit siblings into a school if classes are full.

Please note that the 'sibling' criterion in the admissions policy for infant and junior schools does not apply to siblings who attend other nearby infant or junior schools, only to siblings at the same school at the time of admission.

### **30. Measuring home to school distance**

We use the Capita ONE system to calculate the distance from your child's home (the start point) to the school (the end point). This system calculates the distance in miles to three decimal places. Please note that you cannot compare distances produced on the local authority's Capita ONE system to those calculated using any personal or online geographical information system software you may have access to such as satellite navigations system or Google maps.

### **31. National Offer Day**

On 16th April 2024 we let our parents know which school has been offered for their child. An email is sent to parents who applied via the Citizen's Portal on the 16th April 2024. Parents who applied on paper are posted outcome letters. Each Local Authority informs their residents of the outcome of their application, even if the result is an out of borough school.

## 32. Waiting Lists

- Your child's name will **automatically** be placed on the waiting list, in criteria order, of any Wokingham school that you named as a higher preference than the school you have been offered.
- If a place becomes available for your child and you accept it, your child will be removed from the waiting list of any schools you named as a lower-preference.
- The waiting list will include children new to the area who weren't able to make an application on time.
- Waiting list positions are subject to change as they must be re-ranked each time a new application is received.
- You should be aware that if an application is received for a child who has higher priority under the school's admission criteria, it can affect your child's position on a waiting list. They can move down as well as up the list.
- Your child can remain on more than one waiting list
- Waiting list positions for Wokingham schools will be available from 2 May 2024 after parental responses, address changes and late applications have been processed. You can request your child's position by sending an email to **[schooladmissions@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:schooladmissions@wokingham.gov.uk)**
- **Wait lists will be closed at the end of a school year (31<sup>st</sup> August) and parents will need to re-apply for a place at their preferred school.**
- Children who are the subject of a direction by the local authority to admit or who are allocated to a school in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over those on a waiting list.

- For schools outside of Wokingham, you must check with them direct whether you've been automatically added to their waiting list(s).

### 33. Confirming acceptance of the school offer

#### Applied online

You can accept or decline a school place offer by clicking on the following link. <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-admissions/accept-or-decline-the-school-place-youve-been-offered/>

**All acceptances or refusals of a school place must be made by 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024**

### 34. Making further applications

If you are unhappy with the school at which a place has been provisionally offered for your child, you need to email the admissions team regarding amending your preference list at [schooladmissions@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:schooladmissions@wokingham.gov.uk)

The Admissions Team will advise you of the outcome of any further school applications you make in May 2024. It is strongly recommended that you secure and accept a place at one of the schools that still have availability

**Your child's waiting list position at your preferred schools, or the outcome of an appeal that you decide to make, will not be affected by your child having an alternative school place.**

## 35. School Place appeals

When you applied for a school place for your child you will have listed up to four preferences. Officers from the Admissions Team in the Admission Authority will have allocated a place using the Authority's admission criteria. If your child has not been offered a place at the school of your preference you have the right to appeal against the Admission Authority's decision.

Appeals can be made in relation to any school year group up to and including the age of 18. The law gives you the opportunity to put your case to an Independent Appeal Panel known as the IAP, whose decision is made independently of the Admission Authority.

The appeal hearing is your chance to put your side of the argument – to have your say. Section 86, of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 allows you to express a preference, and give reasons for that preference, regarding the school you would like your child to attend.

However, you do not have an absolute right to choose a school because the law states that the Admission Authority need not meet your preference if the Year Group has reached its Admission Number and, as a result, compliance with your preference would “prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources”.

This means that, for example, the school would have trouble in accommodating an extra child in the classroom because of space or the number of desks or computers available, or that there would be Health and Safety issues in play areas, science laboratories, or technical areas.

Appeals are a legal process, and some families can find this a stressful experience. Therefore, before starting the appeals process, you should consider the alternatives:

**Accept** the school place you have been offered If you are a Wokingham resident, you will have been offered a school place. Accepting this place will guarantee that your child can start school, even if no places become available at your preferred school. This will not affect your right to submit an appeal or your child's current position on a waiting list.

**Remain** on the waiting list for your preferred schools Your child's name will automatically be added to any waiting list where your application has been unsuccessful. When a place becomes available, it will be offered to the child who is at the top of this list at that time. The waiting list is ordered in accordance with each school's admissions policy.

**Apply** for an alternative school If you wish to apply for a school that was not on your original application, you can do this by contacting the admissions team [schooladmissions@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:schooladmissions@wokingham.gov.uk)

For detailed information about the appeals process and how to submit an appeal please read our [parents' guide to school admissions appeals](#).

## 36. Home to School Travel Assistance

It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that their children regularly attend school. This includes making any necessary travel arrangements, except where there is a duty on the local authority to do so.

The Council is committed to promoting children and young people's independence, social, and life skills essential for their preparation for adulthood. These goals underpin our Home to School Travel Assistance Policy because, where possible, children and young people, including those with special educational needs and/or disability, will be encouraged and supported to travel independently.

### **Our Service**

The Home to School Transport Service is part of the **Community Transport Unit** within the council, that is responsible for running a smooth and effective transport service to the highest possible standards. We are your first point of contact for anything related to your child's transport.

For more detailed information regarding school transport and eligibility please refer to Wokingham Council's full **School Travel Assistance policy (opens as a pdf document)**.

**You are strongly encouraged to read the travel assistance policy before making a school place application.**

Applications for Home to School Travel Assistance can be found on our website:

**<https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-information-and-services/school-and-college-transport/>**



## 37. Eligibility for Travel Assistance

### Statutory Walking Distances

The Council has a duty to provide Travel Assistance for children whose homes are outside the statutory walking distance to the nearest suitable school, which is:

- More than 2 miles (if the child is below the age of 8) or
- More than 3 miles (if the child or young person is aged 8 to 16)

### Extended Rights

There are some additional rights to travel assistance for children aged 8 and over if they are eligible for free school meals, or a parent with whom they live receive maximum Working Tax Credits. Travel assistance may be considered in the following circumstances:

- If they are aged 8 to 10 years, attend their nearest suitable school and it is more than 2 miles from their home; or
- If they are aged **11 to 16 years**, and attend one of their three nearest suitable schools which is between 2 and 6 miles from their home; **or**
- If they are aged 11 to 16 years, attend a school that is between 2 and 15 miles from their home that their parents/carers have chosen on the grounds of their religion or belief and, having regard to that religion or belief, there is no suitable school nearer to their home.

The introduction of Universal Credit has not changed the way eligibility for extended rights to home to school transport is determined. It will remain the case that children will be eligible for extended rights if they meet the criteria set out above.

**If a parent is struggling through financial hardship to get a child to school, then they should contact the Council so that they can be signposted to possible sources of additional help.**

## A nearest suitable school

The nearest suitable school for transport purposes means physically, the nearest qualifying school the pupil is eligible to attend where there is an available place that provides education appropriate to the age, ability and aptitude of the child, and any SEND that the child may have. This may include schools in neighboring Borough's such as Reading, Bracknell and Hampshire for example.

## Qualifying Schools

Qualifying schools are all types of schools or other educational establishment that are state-funded, namely:

- Community, foundation or voluntary schools;
- Community or foundation special schools;
- Non-maintained special schools including residential (where deemed appropriate);
- Pupil referral units; and
- Academies, including free schools and University Technical Colleges (UTC).

When a child cannot be offered a place at the nearest school to the home address, the Council will, subject to the criteria set within the transport policy and the qualifying distance being met, provide transport to the **next nearest Wokingham school** with space to admit.

**For transport to be provided in this instance the parent must provide evidence that they have applied for and been refused a place at the school which is the nearest school for their home address and any other schools closer than the school offering admission.**

**This includes schools in neighbouring boroughs.**

For pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities an independent school can also be a qualifying school where this is named on the child's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan), or where it is the nearest of two or more schools named.

**IMPORTANT** - If you do not name the **nearest suitable schools** in your original school place application, your child is unlikely to be eligible for travel assistance. The nearest school may not be a Wokingham school or your catchment/designated area school. Please check if a school in a neighbouring Local Authority is a closer school to your home address, if transport is an important factor in getting your child to school.

You can name **four schools** on your application in order of preference. It is strongly recommended that you use all four preferences, and that you name all of your nearest schools. If you only apply to one school, you will only be considered for that school. You may then be allocated a school that is not one of your preferences, that is further from your home address and to which you may not be entitled to travel assistance should your preference be unsuccessful.

### **Parental Preference**

The Council has no statutory duty to provide travel assistance if a child is attending a school on parental preference grounds. This means the schools applied for are not the nearest schools, or one of the 3 nearest eligible schools in the case of extended criteria (low income).

**In cases of parental preference, parents/carers are responsible for making their own travel arrangements.**

For the normal school admissions round, unless there are exceptional circumstances, it is generally assumed that each of your nearest schools, **including schools in neighbouring Boroughs**, will have space to accommodate your child. Parents/carers will be expected to have named all four nearest schools on their application, which may include schools in neighboring Boroughs.

If you only apply to one school, you will only be considered for that school. You may then be allocated a school that is not one of your preferences, that is further from your home address and to which you would not be entitled to travel assistance should your preference be unsuccessful.

For all children, including those with SEND, a child qualifies for travel assistance when they attend the nearest suitable school which meets their needs. **If a parent selects a school which is not their nearest suitable school which meets their child's needs, parents/carers may then be responsible for making their own transport arrangements and all travel costs for the whole time that their child is at that school.**

During the normal school admissions round, if parents/carers choose to apply for a place for their child at a school that is not the nearest school as their first preference and instead apply for another preferred school, then the child will have no transport entitlement to that

preferred school (on the basis that space would have been available at the nearest school at the time of allocation and there would have been a reasonable opportunity to secure a place had parents/carers made this their first preference).

During the normal admissions round, if an application for a place at the nearest school is refused, transport may then be provided to the next nearest school with space, subject to the standard eligibility criteria being met. However, to qualify for transport to the next nearest school with space, parents/carers must have listed their four nearest schools as one of their preferences and been refused a place at those schools.

For children attending a mainstream school who do not have an EHCP, please note free travel assistance will not be provided if you apply for a place at schools which are not the nearest but don't get into those schools and are allocated a place at a school further away because there are no spaces left at the nearest suitable school.

Please note, the relevant educational setting in relation to an eligible child will be either a qualifying school or the place, other than a school, where they are receiving education.

➤ **Travel assistance will not be provided for the following journeys:**

- ✖ Journeys to and from breakfast or after school clubs
- ✖ Trips and journeys during the school day which are in the curriculum.
- ✖ To or from a venue that isn't the normal home address, for example the address of a childcare provider or a short break placement (unless there is a legal order in place, or a statutory care plan agreed by us)
- ✖ If a child is unwell and has to be collected from school during a school day
- ✖ If a child is excluded during a school day
- ✖ For medical appointments or other approved activities which affect the start or end of and during the school day
- ✖ If a child has missed the contracted transport
- ✖ For transitional/integration placements in schools/colleges
- ✖ For attendance at work experience programmes

- ✖ If a child is withdrawn from school by their family and placed in an alternative education setting
- ✖ To fall in line with other family members travelling in the same/similar direction
- ✖ Work commitments or domestic difficulties of families including taking other children to school or an allocated pick-up point
- ✖ Where parents/carers are unwilling, or unavailable to escort their child to school or an allocated pick-up point.
- ✖ A family being unable to transport their child to school only on the sole grounds that they are a single parent family.
- ✖ Children in temporary care, including foster care (these cases should be referred to the children's social care team to consider available support)
- ✖ An inability to afford existing transport arrangement, e.g. Resulting from loss of employment
- ✖ Family breakdown and fragmentation.
- ✖ Long-term or temporary medical conditions without sufficient medical evidence from an appropriate medical professional