



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**Local Co-ordinated In-year Admissions Scheme for
Community and Voluntary Controlled Primary and
Secondary schools in the Wokingham Borough
2027/2028**

**This includes Local co-ordinated in-year admissions
scheme for own admission authority schools where there
is agreement to do so**

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The Co-ordinated In-Year Admissions Scheme

1. Why we have a co-ordinated scheme

This scheme follows the rules set out in the School Admissions Code 2021 and other current laws about school admissions. It's reviewed every year to make sure it stays up to date. The scheme will continue as long as Wokingham Borough Council manages in-year admissions.

An in-year application is any application for a school place that:

- Is for a year group other than the usual entry point (for example, Reception at primary school, Year 3 at junior school, or Year 7 at secondary school).
- Is made outside the usual admissions timetable for a child's normal entry year.
- Was submitted too late to be considered in the normal admissions round.

Further information regarding applications submitted during the normal admissions round is available in the relevant Primary, Junior, and Secondary Coordinated Admissions Schemes.

This document should be read alongside the admissions arrangements for your child's school type (Infant/Primary/Junior or Secondary) and the relevant Parent's Guide.

2. What the scheme aims to do

This scheme helps manage in-year admissions for all mainstream state-funded schools in Wokingham Borough — including maintained infant, primary, junior, and secondary schools. These schools are automatically included in the scheme.

Other schools — such as academies, free schools, and foundation schools — can choose to take part by asking the Council to manage their in-year admissions. To do this, the school must:

- Let the Council know by 1st August before the school year starts.
- Agree to follow the scheme for the whole school year.
- Clearly explain the process on their website for parents and carers.
- Only admit pupils through the Council's co-ordinated process during that year.

This scheme covers applications for Reception to Year 11. For Year 12 or 13, please contact the school or college directly.

Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) follow a different admissions process, which is managed by the Council's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) team.

This scheme does not decide whether a child gets a place — that’s based on each school’s published admissions criteria. Instead, the scheme explains:

- How to apply.
- What happens if your child qualifies for more than one school.
- What happens if your child doesn’t qualify for any of your preferred schools.

3. Schools and Admission Authorities Covered by This Scheme

This scheme applies to all Wokingham Borough Schools, which includes:

- Community and voluntary controlled schools – where the Council is responsible for admissions.
- Foundation and voluntary aided schools – where the school’s governing body manages admissions.
- Academies – where the academy trust is responsible, although they may delegate this to individual schools.

The Council automatically uses this scheme to manage in-year applications for community and voluntary controlled schools.

Other schools (such as academies, foundation, and voluntary aided schools) can choose to take part in the scheme. To do so, they must:

- Let the Council know by 1st August before the school year starts.
- Provide all necessary information, including application forms, so the Council can publish it on its website.

If a school chooses **not** to take part in the Council’s co-ordinated scheme, they must:

- Provide a single preference application form for parents to apply directly to the school.
- Let the Council know about any in-year applications and their outcomes — ideally within two school days — so the Council can keep accurate records of available places.

Even if a school manages its own admissions, it must still:

- Tell parents about their right to appeal if a place is refused.
- Follow the Fair Access Protocol, which means the Council or Fair Access Panel may ask the school to admit a child who needs a school place urgently.

4. The Application Form

In-year applications to transfer a child from one school to another may be submitted at any point during the academic year. However, applications will only be considered **up to six school weeks** in advance of the requested start date.

Where the intended start date aligns with the beginning of a term or half term, the application should be received by the School Admissions Team **at least 15 school days** prior to that date to allow sufficient time for processing.

Submission Method: Applications must be submitted via the Wokingham Borough Council Citizens Portal. Applicants are required to create an account to access and complete the online form.

➤ [Citizens Portal](#)

Where online submission is not possible, a paper application form may be requested by contacting: schooladmissions@wokingham.gov.uk

5. Preference Selection

Applicants may express up to **four** school preferences, listed in order of priority. The first preference should reflect the school the applicant most wishes the child to attend.

Considerations When Selecting Schools

- It is advisable to use all four preferences and to include schools located near the child's home address.
- Where a preferred school is located in another local authority area, applications must be submitted directly to that authority or to the school, depending on local arrangements.

Catchment Areas and Admission Models

- Wokingham Borough Council maintained community and voluntary controlled schools do not operate catchment areas. Admissions are determined using a distance-based model, where proximity to the school is a key factor if the school is oversubscribed.
- Some non-maintained schools within Wokingham Borough, such as academies, free schools, voluntary aided, or foundation schools, may use catchment areas as part of their admission arrangements. Applicants should consult the individual school's website or contact the school directly to confirm whether their address falls within the catchment.

6. Timing of applications

In-year applications will be considered no more than six school weeks in advance of the requested start date.

Applications submitted earlier than this will not be processed, except in cases involving Crown servants, service families, or looked-after children. In such cases, early applications may be accepted in line with statutory guidance.

The target timescale for processing in-year applications is 15 school days from the date of receipt. Where the application relates to a school that is its own admission authority, additional time may be required to confirm the availability of a place.

Notification of the outcome will be issued via email, where an address has been provided, or by post if not.

7. Travel Considerations

Most families make their own arrangements for travel to and from school, which may include walking, cycling, driving, or using public transport.

Where a school is selected that is further away than others with available places closer to the child's home, this will be treated as a parental preference. In such cases, the child is unlikely to qualify for free home-to-school transport under the Council's transport policy.

While parental preference is respected in the allocation of school places, it does not influence eligibility for transport assistance. Where a school is not the nearest suitable school, transport arrangements remain the responsibility of the parent or carer.

8. Application Considerations and Decision Process

To maximise the likelihood of securing a school place, applicants are advised to list multiple preferences. Places cannot be reserved for families intending to move into a school's designated area, and there is no guarantee that a place will be available at the time of relocation.

Where a house move is planned, applicants are encouraged to contact the School Admissions Team to confirm current availability and to identify the designated area associated with the new address. Availability of places is subject to change and may vary daily as applications are processed.

For schools that act as their own admission authority (e.g. academies, voluntary aided, or foundation schools), applications will be forwarded to the school's governing body for consideration. These schools aim to make a decision within **five school days**, and the outcome will be communicated once received.

During school holiday periods, decision-making may be delayed due to limited school availability.

Schools that manage their own admissions are required to notify the local authority of all applications and decisions to ensure accurate records of place availability. Where a school offers or refuses a place directly, it must inform the applicant in writing within **15 school days**, including details of the right to appeal if a place is refused.

Each preference will be assessed against the school's published admission criteria. Where a child qualifies for more than one school, the highest-ranked preference will be offered.

9. Siblings

Where sibling priority is part of a school's published admission arrangements, applicants must provide full details of any siblings currently attending the preferred school. Failure to do so may result in the child being placed in a lower priority group.

This includes step-siblings, fostered, or adopted children who live at the same address — they will be considered as siblings for admissions purposes.

10. Out of borough applications

Applicants living outside Wokingham Borough who wish to apply for a school within the borough must complete **Wokingham Borough Council's in-year ONLINE application form**. Applications submitted via other local authorities will not be accepted.

Where additional information is needed to support an application, direct contact will be made with the applicant. Once processed, the outcome will be issued in writing. If a place cannot be offered, information about the right to appeal will be provided.

For families relocating out of Wokingham Borough, applications should be made either:

- Directly to the local authority responsible for that area, or
- Directly to the school, depending on how admissions are managed there.

11. Supplementary Information Forms

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.

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

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 visiting the school's website directly.

Primary Schools

- St Teresas Catholic School
- Finchampstead CofE Primary School
- St Dominic Savio Catholic School
- St Peter's CofE Primary School

Secondary Schools

- St Crispin's
- Emmbrook

- Waingels
- Bulmershe

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.

12. Twins and Multiple Births

Where an application is submitted for twins or children from a multiple birth, and the same school preferences are listed, all siblings will be offered a place if only one place remains — even if this results in the school exceeding its Published Admission Number (PAN) or the infant class size limit.

In such cases, the additional sibling(s) will be treated as exceptions under the Infant Class Size Legislation. This status remains in place while the child is in an infant class or until the number of pupils in the year group returns to the PAN.

13. Designated Area

For in-year admissions, the way schools consider a child's home address can vary depending on the type of school.

- **Wokingham Borough Council maintained community and voluntary controlled schools** do not use catchment areas. These schools apply a **distance-based model**, meaning places are offered based on proximity to the school when oversubscribed.
- **Other schools within Wokingham Borough**, such as academies, voluntary aided, or foundation schools, may include **catchment areas** in their admission criteria. Applicants should refer to the individual school's website or contact the school directly to confirm whether a specific address falls within their catchment.

Key points to note:

- Applications can be made to any school, regardless of location.
- Living closer to a school may improve the likelihood of being offered a place, but this does not guarantee admission. If the relevant year group is full, the application may be unsuccessful.

14. Misleading Applications

Admission authorities have a duty to ensure that school place applications are genuine. Where a child moves into the home of a friend or relative during the application process, or an alternative address is provided with the intention of securing a higher priority for a school place, this may be considered a misleading application. Similarly, if any information provided on the application form is found to be false or misleading, the application may be invalidated.

If a school place has been offered based on false information, the offer may be withdrawn, even if

the child has already started attending the school.

15. Moving House and Address Use in Applications

School applications are processed using the child's **permanent home address** — the place where they normally live with their parent(s) or legal guardian.

Key Points:

- The address must be the child's **main residence**. It cannot be a second home or a temporary arrangement unless part of a formal care or private fostering agreement.
- The Council may verify the declared address using council tax records and other supporting evidence.
- If a family owns another property, it may still be considered the permanent home unless:
 - The family has permanently relocated a significant distance from the owned property;
 - The property is uninhabitable;
 - The property is being sold and the family now lives permanently elsewhere;
 - The family is separated/divorced and the property is no longer accessible.
- Rented addresses may be treated as temporary if there is evidence they were used solely to secure a school place.
- Applicants must confirm that the address provided is the child's permanent residence and that they intend to remain there beyond the school start date.
- Any changes in circumstances, such as a house move, must be reported to the School Admissions Team immediately.

Why Address Accuracy Matters:

- The address provided is used to prioritise school places, especially when schools are oversubscribed.
- If it is later found that the address was temporary, misleading, or used solely to gain a place, the offer may be withdrawn — even if the child has already started at the school.
- The Council may request documents and carry out checks to confirm residency. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure all information is accurate and up to date.
- If a false or misleading address is used, the school place may be withdrawn.

Address evidence

If moving to or within the Wokingham Borough, evidence **that the family will be living in the new address when the child starts school, will be required**. The type of evidence needed depends on the nature of the move.

Types of Address Evidence

Buying a new home

- A solicitor's letter confirming exchange of contracts
- For new builds: a letter from the developer confirming build completion date
- Additional documents may be requested, such as:
 - ✓ Updated driving licence
 - ✓ Registration at a local GP or dentist
 - ✓ Letters or bills addressed to you at the new property
 - ✓ Bank statements (with financial details redacted)

Renting a property

- A signed tenancy agreement, usually for 12 months or more, covering the period beyond your child's school start date
- Additional documents may be requested (same as above)

Returning to owned property

- Proof of ownership (e.g. current council tax bill or recent utility bills)
- Evidence the property is available to move into (e.g. end of tenancy agreement from current rental)
- Additional documents may be requested (same as above)

Moves from Within 20 Miles of Wokingham

If relocating from an address within a 20-mile radius of Wokingham Borough, further evidence may be required to confirm that the previous property has been fully vacated. This may include:

- Proof that contracts have been exchanged for the sale of the previous property
- A copy of the end of tenancy agreement

If the situation does not fall into one of the categories above, applicants should contact the School Admissions Team for guidance on acceptable alternative evidence.

16. Address of Convenience

An address of convenience refers to an address used on an application that is not the child's normal, permanent residence, and is used to gain advantage in the admissions process. The child's home address should reflect where they reside for the majority of the school week and where the person with parental responsibility normally lives.

Each school's admission arrangements include a definition of "home address," which is used to assess applications.

There are no fixed criteria for identifying an address of convenience. Admission authorities will determine, on the balance of probability, whether the address provided is the child's genuine, permanent residence. Examples of situations that may be considered an address of convenience include:

- Use of a relative's address where the child does not permanently reside.
- Temporary residence in a rented property or with relatives while retaining ownership of another property. In such cases, the owned property may be considered the child's home address.
- Applications made from an address where the child does not spend the majority of the school week, in cases of split parental responsibility. A court order should be provided to confirm living arrangements. Where residency is equally split, the school's admission arrangements will specify how the home address will be determined.

17. Split living arrangements/Shared Care Arrangements

Where a child lives with one parent for part of the week and another for the rest, only one address can be used for the school admission application. This will usually be the address where the child wakes up for the majority of school days (Monday to Friday).

In cases involving shared care arrangements, it may be necessary to confirm which address should be treated as the child's permanent home. To support this, the local authority may request:

- A written statement showing how the child's time is divided between the two homes.
- Evidence of which parent or carer was receiving Child Benefit at the time of application.
- If Child Benefit is not claimed, alternative documents such as Tax Credit Award Notices.
- Confirmation of the child's registered GP address.

The local authority reserves the right to request additional documentation as needed, depending on individual circumstances, to establish the correct address for admissions purposes.

18. Multiple applications

Only one Common Application Form can be processed for any given child. If more than one form is received for the same child and the preferences expressed are different on each form, the applicant(s) will be required to submit a single Common Application Form.

If the Council receives more than one Common Application Form, for example both an online and paper application, and they differ, the Council will query this with the applicant.

If the Council receives a Common Application Form from more than one person claiming parental responsibility for the same child, and the content of these applications differs, the Council will inform both applicants. The Council will then not process any preference(s) that differ until the applicants are either in agreement, or until one applicant can show the legal right to have their preference(s) considered over the preference(s) of the other applicant. No school place will be allocated to the child until a single Common Application Form is submitted.

19. Applicants from abroad

Overseas nationals entering the UK who wish to apply for a state-funded school, must check that they have a right of abode, or the conditions of their visa otherwise permit them to access a state-funded school before making their application.

It is the responsibility of parents to check that they and their children have a right of abode in the UK, or their children have a right, under their visa entry conditions, to study at a state-funded school.

If a child is entitled to access a state funded school, evidence of the move to the area, with an application must be provide.

The address used will be the address where the child is living at the time of application. Third party written evidence confirming the details and timing of any relocation will be required. Adjustments will be made to any waiting lists, if the family returns later, prior to the start of school. Further advice on the documentation required can be obtained from the School Admissions Team.

20. Returning Crown Servants and Armed Forces Personnel

Families of Crown servants returning from overseas to live in the Wokingham Borough or applicants relocating in the armed forces may apply for a place in advance of their move provided the application is accompanied by an official letter confirming the posting to the UK and the expected relocation date.

To apply, the following is required:

- Completion of the **in-year application form**
- Submission of an official letter from the **MOD, FCO, or GCHQ** confirming:
 - The relocation date
 - The future home address, unit postal address, or quartering area address

Each application will be considered in line with the relevant school's published admission criteria. There is no guarantee that a place will be available at a preferred school.

21. Offer of a school place

Once an in-year application is received, all listed school preferences will be considered. If a place is available at more than one preferred school, the offer will be made for the **highest-ranked preference** where a place can be allocated.

Offers for schools within Wokingham Borough must usually be taken up **within the same half-term**. If the place is not taken up within this timeframe, the offer may be withdrawn and the place released. Exceptions may apply where there is clear evidence that the delay is unavoidable — for example, in cases involving Crown Service, service families, or looked-after children.

In line with the School Admissions Code, admission may be deferred to the start of a term or half-term for the following types of in-year applications:

- Applications that do not involve a house move
- Applications where there is no urgent need for an immediate transfer
- Allocations made from waiting lists

Children are normally admitted during a school term only in specific circumstances, such as:

- A house move that prevents earlier admission
- Ill health or other unavoidable reasons
- Placement under the Fair Access Protocol

Deferring admission to the start of a term or half-term helps reduce disruption to the child's education and to the wider school community.

Places are offered based on the child's chronological age. If a child is working outside their expected year group and is not already attending a Wokingham Borough maintained school, supporting documentation from the current school will be required. This should explain the reasons for the placement and will be reviewed by an admissions panel.

Placement outside the normal year group can only be agreed with the consent of the receiving school.

Applicants are advised to refer to the relevant admission authority's published information to understand how places are allocated and how their application will be considered.

There is no guarantee that a place will be available at either a designated or preferred school.

22. Accepting a school place offer

Once a school place is offered, the applicant will be asked to accept or decline the offer within five school days from the date of the offer letter. Where an email address has been provided, the offer will be sent via email; otherwise, it will be sent by post.

If no response is received within the initial timeframe, a final written reminder will be issued. Failure to respond to this reminder may result in the offer being withdrawn and the place released.

School places offered through the in-year admissions process are expected to be taken up during the current or next half-term. If the child does not start within this period, and no valid reason is provided, the offer may be withdrawn.

The offer letter will include a request for applicants to notify the School Admissions Team if the place is not being accepted. Where the child resides within Wokingham Borough and the offer is declined, the applicant should confirm what alternative educational arrangements have been made. In cases where a child remains out of education without a valid reason, the matter may be referred to the **Education Welfare Service** for further investigation and support.

23. Availability of school places

In-year applications are made for year groups that have already been allocated during the general transfer rounds. As Wokingham Borough schools are often oversubscribed, it is possible that preferred schools may not have places available.

To improve the likelihood of securing a place, it is advisable to list multiple school preferences. There is no guarantee that a place will be available at a preferred or designated school, and places cannot be held for applicants planning to move into a school's designated area.

Where a move to Wokingham is being considered, applicants should be aware that an immediate school place may not be available, and an alternative school may be offered.

It is recommended that applicants contact the School Admissions Team prior to any relocation to:

- Check current availability of school places
- Confirm the designated area for the new address (if relevant)

Please note that availability information is accurate only at the time of enquiry and may change daily as applications are received and places are allocated.

The local authority is required to provide, on request, information about available school places within its area. To support this, schools must respond to requests for pupil number updates and availability within the timeframe set out in the School Admissions Code.

Contact our admission team by email on schooladmissions@wokingham.gov.uk for full details of nearest local schools and refer to our [school admissions](#) pages for admissions guides.

24. Published admission numbers (PAN)

Each school has an agreed Published Admission Number (PAN) for each year group. This number reflects the school's physical capacity and, for infant classes, legal limits on class size. PANs are set by the school's admission authority and are reviewed annually.

While it may appear that schools occasionally admit pupils above their PAN, this typically occurs under exceptional circumstances, such as:

- Successful admission appeals
- Placements made under the Fair Access Protocol
- Direction from the local authority to meet statutory duties

Schools cannot admit above PAN at their own discretion. Any decision to exceed PAN must take into account:

- The school's physical capacity and class structure
- The impact on staffing and resources
- Financial implications for the school
- Whether additional support or funding would be required

Some schools may initially allocate slightly above PAN based on historical patterns of declined offers following National Offer Day. However, additional places are generally not confirmed until numbers fall below the agreed PAN.

The Local Authority has a duty to maintain a balanced and sustainable school system across the borough. While supporting parental preference where possible, it must also ensure:

- No school expands at the expense of another
- In-year admissions do not compromise future access for other children or communities
- Localised demand can be managed effectively

For infant classes (Reception, Year 1, and Year 2), the law states that **no more than 30 children** may be taught by a single qualified teacher. This limit applies regardless of the presence of additional adults or pupil attendance patterns.

25. Appealing a school place

Where an application is refused due to the relevant year group being full, the applicant has the right to appeal to an independent appeal panel. Appeals information is available at: <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/admissions> or by contacting Democratic Services on (0118) 974 6059.

Applications may also be refused if admitting a child would breach Infant Class Size Legislation. In such cases, the applicant retains the right to appeal.

An appeal panel can only uphold an infant class size appeal if it is satisfied that:

- The child would have been offered a place if the admission arrangements had been properly applied, or if the arrangements were contrary to mandatory provisions in the School Admissions Code; or
- The decision to refuse admission was not one that a reasonable admission authority would have made in the circumstances.

If an appeal is unsuccessful, no further application or appeal will be considered for the same academic year (1 September to 31 August), unless there is a significant change in circumstances relevant to the application.

Appeals are normally heard for the year group applied for. If an appeal is requested for a different year group (e.g. following the May half-term for a September start), a new application must be submitted. This will supersede the previous application and allow the Admissions authority time to assess any new circumstances before issuing a decision.

26. Infant Class Size Appeals

The grounds for allowing an infant class size appeal are extremely restricted and the panel can only allow these appeals on very limited grounds, for example, either the admitting authority has not processed the application correctly or the decision to refuse was completely unreasonable.

Independent appeal panels hearing an infant class size appeal have no power to consider personal reasons such as:

- childcare arrangements
- children attending different schools
- travel or work arrangements
- academic performance
- health and medical grounds (except where this need can only be met by the school you are appealing for, and this claim is supported by professional evidence)

The Panel **must** dismiss cases that are based on these reasons alone.

Applicants should be aware of these limitations before proceeding with an appeal for Reception, Year 1, or Year 2, particularly where the class already contains 30 pupils.

27. Waiting lists

Waiting lists for in-year admissions are maintained by the local authority for its community and voluntary controlled schools where necessary. These lists apply to children who were not offered a place at a preferred school due to oversubscription.

For non-maintained schools (e.g. academies, voluntary aided, or foundation schools), the local authority may also manage waiting lists as part of a traded service agreement, where the school has opted into this arrangement.

Waiting lists are not ranked by the date of application. Instead, positions are determined by the school's published admission criteria. A child's position may move up or down depending on:

- New applications received
- Withdrawals from the list
- Changes in circumstances that affect priority
- Responses to periodic checks confirming continued interest

Waiting lists are typically closed at the end of the academic year. Applicants wishing to remain on a list must reapply for the following year.

Children allocated a place under the Fair Access Protocol or directed for admission by the local authority will take precedence over those on waiting lists.

For own admission authority schools not using the traded service, waiting lists may be transferred to the school after the normal admissions round closes (31 August), usually by the October half-term, unless the governing body has agreed for the local authority to continue managing the list.

Applicants may apply online to be placed on a waiting list for a specific year group. It is the applicant's responsibility to inform the School Admissions Team in writing if:

- They wish to be removed from a waiting list
- Their circumstances have changed since the original application

28. Fair Access

The purpose of the Fair Access Protocol (FAP) is to ensure that children without a school place — particularly those who are vulnerable or hard to place — are offered a suitable school placement quickly, minimising time out of education.

Fair Access applies outside the normal admissions round and is triggered only when it has been demonstrated that a school place cannot be secured through the standard in-year admissions process, despite reasonable efforts.

Key Principles:

- Fair Access Protocols must not be used to bypass the normal in-year admissions process.
- Referrals under the protocol are made by the local authority, not by parents or carers.
- The protocol applies only to children in prescribed groups as defined by the Department for Education.
- There is no requirement to comply with parental preference when allocating places under Fair Access.
- All schools are expected to participate in the protocol and accept placements where appropriate.

Placement Considerations:

- Schools are experienced in supporting children with a range of needs — medical, physical, emotional, behavioural, or educational. Most in-year applications, including those involving additional needs, are placed without requiring Fair Access.
- Referrals for Fair Access are made only where the child meets the criteria and standard admission routes have been exhausted.
- Children placed under Fair Access take priority over those on waiting lists.

The local authority coordinates Fair Access placements in line with statutory guidance and local agreements, ensuring that placements are made fairly and consistently across all schools.

29. Travel Assistance

Wokingham Borough Council is committed to ensuring that children can travel to school safely and reliably. While most families make their own arrangements—such as walking, cycling, using public transport, or driving, some children may face significant barriers to independent travel. In such cases, the Council may provide travel assistance, but only in specific and limited circumstances. Travel assistance is not automatically provided and is subject to strict eligibility criteria.

Eligibility Criteria

A child may be eligible for travel assistance if all of the following conditions are met:

- The child is of compulsory school age (from the term after their 5th birthday until the end of Year 11), and
- They attend the nearest suitable school with places available, and
- One or more of the following applies:
 - The walking distance from home to school exceeds 2 miles (for children under 8) or 3 miles (for children aged 8 to 16).
 - The walking route is assessed by the Council as unsafe, even if within the statutory walking distance.
 - The child is unable to walk or travel independently due to a special educational need or disability (SEND), regardless of distance.

Assessment Process

The child must be attending the nearest suitable school with places available. This is the first and essential requirement. If a place was available at a nearer suitable school and it was not listed on the school admissions application, travel assistance is unlikely to be approved.

The nearest suitable school may be located within Wokingham or in a neighbouring borough (e.g. Reading, Bracknell Forest, Hampshire). Suitability is determined by the school's ability to meet the child's age, ability, and educational needs—not by parental preference, catchment area, or Ofsted rating.

If the child is attending the nearest suitable school, the Council will then assess the shortest safe walking route from the child's home to the school. This may include footpaths, bridleways, and other public rights of way.

For children with SEND, the Council will consider whether the child can reasonably be expected to walk or travel independently, with or without support. Supporting evidence will be required

Types of Support Offered

If eligible, the Council will determine the most appropriate form of travel assistance, which may include:

- A Personal Travel Budget to support independent transport arrangements.
- A bus pass for use on public transport.
- A seat on a school bus or shared taxi, in exceptional circumstances.

The type of support provided will depend on the child's individual needs and the nature of the journey.

What Is Not Covered

Travel assistance is not provided for:

- After-school clubs or childcare arrangements.
- Travel to a school chosen for preference or convenience.
- Journeys outside normal school hours.
- Appointments or alternative provision arranged by the school.

Promoting Sustainable Travel

Wokingham Borough Council encourages families to consider active and sustainable travel options. The [My Journey Wokingham](#) website offers resources, maps, and guidance to help children walk, cycle, or scoot safely. It also provides information on park and stride schemes, public transport, and road safety education. These options support children's independence, health, and wellbeing, while helping to reduce traffic and pollution around schools.

Further Information

For full details of eligibility, assessment criteria, and the application process, please refer to:

- **Travel Assistance Policy** on the Wokingham Borough Council website: [Travel assistance to school and college](#)