



# In- Year Transfers to RBWM Schools

For Academic Year 2023/24

Changing Schools Mid-Year  
Moving into RBWM



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## About this guide

The School Admissions Service is provided by Achieving for Children (AfC), in partnership with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM).

The information in this guide is primarily aimed at pupils transferring into a RBWM school outside the normal point of entry.

A list of definitions used within this document is available to view on [Appendix A](#).

A list of frequently asked questions is available to view on [Appendix B](#).

Responsibility for information printed here relating to academies, voluntary aided schools, free schools, university technical colleges or studio schools lies with the governing body of the school concerned, and not with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Council nor Achieving for Children.

The information was correct in September 2023 and is subject to change during the academic year 2023-24.

How to contact the School Admissions and Child Employment Team

Email: [rbwm.admissions@achievingforchildren.org.uk](mailto:rbwm.admissions@achievingforchildren.org.uk)

Please note: This is our primary mode of contact, and using email will get you the fastest response to your query.

Phone: 01628 683870

Please note: This is a call back service via the RBWM Customer Contact Centre

- Contacting Admissions directly by phone is not possible.
- Due to the sheer volume of calls received throughout the year, we cannot necessarily provide phone support for all who request call-backs.
- Priority will always be given to requests where the information cannot be found on the website or in the appropriate guide, and where information has not already been provided via email.
- In times of especially high demand, the call-back service may be withdrawn without notice, in order to channel the available resources to help as many parents and caregivers as we can.  
Thank you for your understanding.

Website: [rbwm.afcinfo.org.uk](http://rbwm.afcinfo.org.uk)

By post: School Admissions & Child Employment Team,  
Achieving for Children,  
Town Hall, St Ives Road,  
Maidenhead SL6 1RF

## Introduction

Please read the information in this guide carefully in order to understand the different types of schools within the borough and how to make an application.

This guide is for parents or carers who want to apply for an RBWM school outside the normal rounds of admissions. This is known as an in-year transfer.

An in-year transfer application should be made if you:

- have moved into the area and do not currently have a school place for their child
- have moved within the area and wish to transfer their child to a closer school
- have recently moved to the UK from abroad
- wish to transfer your child(ren) from their current school to another preferred school.

An in-year transfer differs from a normal phase admission which is when a whole year group of pupils are due to transfer into a school at the first point of entry eg, primary to secondary or first year entry into a primary school at the beginning of reception etc.

An in-year transfer application should only be made if you require a school place in your child's existing year group, unless it is the last short term of the academic year, and you are applying for a place in the next year group for September entry which does not fall within the normal round of admissions transfer phase.

If you wish to apply for a school in any other local authority, please contact the relevant council or the school directly for further information on how to make your application. The RBWM Admissions team only manages in-year transfers into community and voluntary controlled schools in our administrative area. Contact details for neighbouring boroughs can be found in Section 8.

Even if you have been through the school admissions process before, **please ensure you have read this guide in its entirety.** There are changes made to the process every year.

# 1. Types of school in RBWM

## Key dates for admission in September 2024

There are 14 state-funded secondary schools and 46 state-funded primary schools in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. The in-year transfer application process is different depending on the type of school to which you apply.

### Community and voluntary controlled schools

Community and voluntary controlled schools are maintained by the local authority. The local authority is also responsible for setting the admissions policy. The local authority manages the in-year transfer applications for these schools.

Alexander First	Hilltop First	South Ascot Village Primary
Braywood First	Homer First	The Queen Anne Royal Free CE First
Alwyn Infant	Holy Trinity CE Primary (Cookham)	Waltham St Lawrence Primary
Boyne Hill CE Infant	Kings Court First	Wessex Primary
Cookham Rise	Larchfield Primary	Wraysbury Primary
Courthouse Junior	Oldfield Primary	
Eton Wick CE First	Riverside Primary	
Furze Platt Infant		
Furze Platt Junior		

### Voluntary aided schools

Voluntary aided church schools are supported by the Church Diocesan Boards and the local authority. The governors are responsible for setting the admissions policy. These schools manage their own in-year transfer applications.

Cheapside CE Primary	Holy Trinity CE Primary Sunningdale	St Michael's CE Primary
Churchmead CE Secondary	St Edward's Catholic First	The Royal School (Crown Aided)
Clewer Green CE First	St Edward's Royal Free Ecumenical Middle	Trinity St Stephen CE First
Cookham Dean CE Primary		

### Academies

An academy is an all-ability school that is run by an academy trust and its governors independently of the local authority and is funded entirely by the central government.

The governors are responsible for setting the admissions policy.

These schools manage their own in-year transfer applications.

All Saints CE Junior	Eton Porny CE First	St Francis Catholic Primary
Altwood CE Secondary	Furze Platt Senior School	St Luke's CE Primary
Bisham CE Primary	Holyport CE Primary	St Mary's Catholic Primary
Burchetts Green CE Infant	Knowl Hill Primary	St. Peter's CE Middle
Charters School	Lowbrook Academy	Trevelyan Middle School
Cox Green School	Newlands Girls' School	The Windsor Boys' School
Datchet St Marys CE Primary	Oakfield First	White Waltham Primary
Dedworth Green First	St Edmund Campion	Windsor Girls' School
Dedworth Middle	Catholic Primary	
Desborough College		Woodlands Park Primary

## Free schools

A free school is an all-ability school which is run by the governing body independently of the local authority and is funded directly by the central government. They are set up to meet the needs of the local community. The governors are responsible for setting the admissions policy. You must apply directly to these schools for an in-year transfer place.

Braywick Court Free School (primary)

Holyport College (secondary day and boarding school)

## The structure of education in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

### Primary education

Children usually enter primary, first or infant school in the September following their fourth birthday. Children transfer into junior school in the September following their seventh birthday school, at the beginning of Year 3. The type of school your child will attend will depend on the area of the borough in which you live.

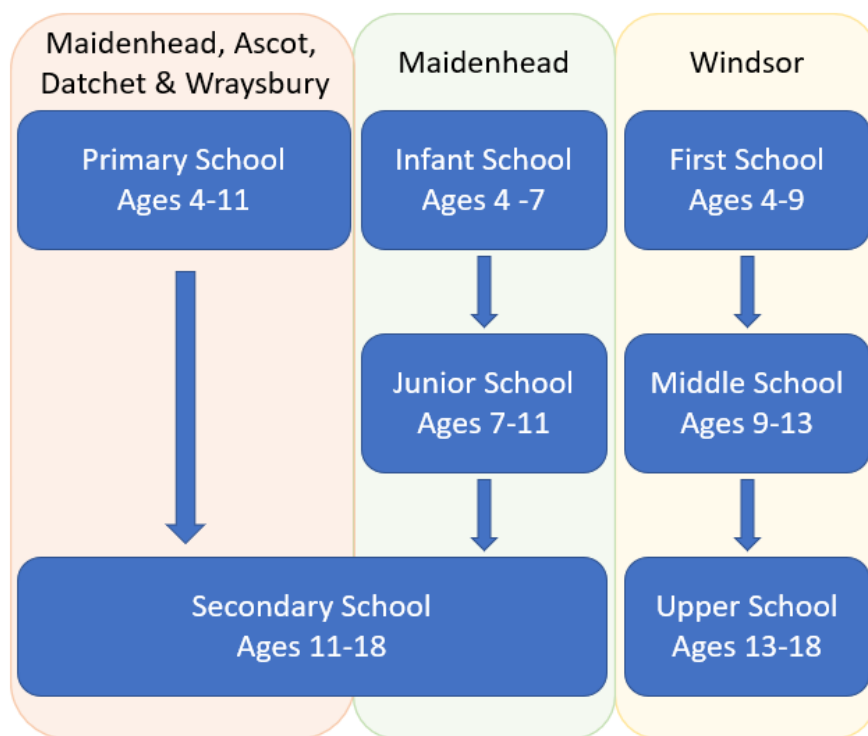
You will see a range of school types when looking at primary school education for your child. Each type of school covers a different age range.

- **Primary schools** - Catering for pupils from Reception to Year 6, or ages 4 to 11. These schools are found all over RBWM. After Year 6, pupils tend to move from primary schools to secondary schools.
- **Infant schools** - Catering for pupils from Reception to Year 2, or ages 4 to 7. These schools are found in Maidenhead. After Year 2, pupils tend to move from infant schools to junior schools.
- **Junior schools** - Catering for pupils from Year 3 to Year 6, or ages 7 to 11. These schools are found in Maidenhead. After Year 6, pupils tend to move from junior schools to secondary schools.
- **First schools** - Catering for pupils from Reception to Year 4, or ages 4 to 9. These schools are found in Windsor. After Year 4, pupils tend to move from first schools to middle schools.

## Secondary education

You will see a range of school types when looking at secondary school education for your child. Each type of school covers a different age range:

- **Secondary schools** - Catering for pupils from Year 7 to Year 13, or ages 11+. These schools are found all over RBWM. After Year 11, some pupils may move to a college, UTC, Studio school, or another sixth form provision.
- **Middle schools** - Catering for pupils from Year 5 to Year 8, or ages 9 to 13. These schools are found in Windsor. After Year 8, pupils tend to move from middle schools to upper schools.
- **Upper schools** - Catering for pupils from Year 9 to Year 13, or ages 13+. These schools are found in Windsor. After Year 11, some pupils may move to a college, UTC, studio school, or another sixth form provision.
- **UTCs and studio schools** - Catering for pupils from Year 10 to Year 13. These schools are found outside RBWM, but within commutable distance. These schools are training centres for specific areas such as engineering, business, arts management, or tourism, aviation, construction, e-sports or digital media, to name but a few. They offer the same qualifications as secondary schools, with the added bonus of industry expertise and work experience links.





## General information on schools

There is a lot of information available to parents on the internet, and in the public domain. Some of this information is subjective, and some is more factual.

### Performance tables

Schools provide information about their own examination results in their individual prospectuses. In addition, the Department for Education publishes performance tables for all schools and these are available to view at [www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk). Performance information may not be available in the years affected by COVID closures. It is designed to show patterns over time, and it is not a snapshot of the school or its pupils.

### Ofsted inspection reports

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 at [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). Ofsted inspections are designed to be a snapshot of how a school operates, at a single moment in time. Ratings for schools do fluctuate, so be prepared to look at the 'bigger picture' of the school by reading the whole school report, looking at the website, speaking to current parents or staff, and touring the school.

### Finding my nearest school

The easiest way to find your nearest school is to go to the GOV.UK website [www.find-school-performance-data.service.gov.uk](http://www.find-school-performance-data.service.gov.uk). All you have to do is select the 'Location' option, and enter your address. You will receive a list of schools, starting with the closest. This will give you a list of all types of schools, as well as their address, their latest Ofsted rating (if eligible for inspection), and the approximate straight-line distance from your home to the school.

Use the tick boxes on the left of the page to select just primary schools, schools of a particular denomination or faith, single-sex or co-educational schools, or to exclude independent schools from your list. For families living near the border of a local authority, this is a particularly useful site, as it lists schools in all local authorities, not just RBWM. You may find that the nearest school to your home may be a school managed by another local authority.

### Are you eligible to apply for a school place this year?

Children with education, health and care plans (EHCPs) apply through a slightly different avenue, due to the individual needs of the child. Please discuss your child's application with the Children and Young Persons Disability Service (CYPDS) [cypds@achievingforchildren.org.uk](mailto:cypds@achievingforchildren.org.uk).

If your child is undergoing statutory assessment, please contact CYPDS on 07784 361 267 or 07783 806 246 before making an application.

**If your child has additional needs but does not currently have an EHCP you should apply in the normal way.**

## Do you understand how the preference system works?

- During the application process, you will be asked to make a list of up to six schools that you would be happy for your child to attend. This is your 'preference' list. It is important that you put your list in order from your favourite or most preferred school, down to your least preferred school.
- Your preference list is your chance to have a say in which school your child may be allocated. Wherever possible, we take parental preference into account when allocating places, but this **does not** mean parents get to choose the school their child attends.
- Your list lets us know which schools you want your child to attend, but it does not mean you are guaranteed entry to those schools.
- **It is extremely important to use all the preferences available for you to use.**
- If you choose to only list a single preference, or even three out of your six preferences, this does not mean you are allocated these schools.
- If enough pupils meet a higher criterion than your child, or live closer to the school, they will have priority over your child, and you will not be given a place.

**In cases where not all the available preferences have been listed by the parent, your application will automatically have the nearest schools available added to your application if your child is not currently enrolled at a school to which they can feasibly commute.**

This will be done in ascending order of distance, from the closest school downwards, until all your preferences are full. The addition of schools to your application is done to ensure you gain a place at a geographically close location wherever possible, where places are available. This process reduces the possibility of parents being left without a school place for their child, due to their lack of expressed preferences.

## Equal preference allocation process

- Once you have constructed your preference list, it is used to check available places at your preferred schools.
- Each school is considered under an 'equal preference' scheme. This means that all applications are considered equally no matter which preference the school is ranked in your list.
- If you rank a school as your first preference you will not get priority over another applicant who has ranked it lower.

Action	Top tips
Applications should be made by completing the common application form online.	You may list up to six schools in order of preference, depending on the type of school your child will be attending.
We put your child's name onto the applicant list for each school named on the application form.	All applications are dealt with equally. We do not look at your order of preference at this point, yet.
All the names on each school list are ranked according to the oversubscription criteria.	Your child's name will be on the list for each school named, and the schools do not know at which preference you have placed their school.
We look at the published admission number (PAN) for each school and mark the names of children at the top of each list up to the PAN.	Each school now has a list of potential applicants up to their PAN.
We see how many lists your child's name appears on.	In some cases, your child's name might appear on more than one list. In rare cases, they might not appear on any list.
Where a child's name appears on more than one list, it means that s/he is eligible for a place at more than one school. We will allocate a place at the highest eligible school on your list. This is the point when order of preference is considered.	Where your child's name does not appear on any list, it means that they will not be allocated a place at any of the schools you requested. The home authority will allocate a place at the nearest school to you <b>with a vacancy</b> where your child meets the oversubscription criteria, where possible, if your child is not already at a school to which they can feasibly commute.

## 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.

The following table illustrates the importance of the order of preference:

Pref	School	Qualify for a place?	Outcome
1	Riverside Primary School	No	No Current Offer (waiting list)
2	Knowl Hill CE Primary Academy	Yes	Offer
3	Lowbrook Academy	No	Withdrawn – Higher preference met
4	Woodlands Park Primary School	Yes	Withdrawn – Higher preference met
5	St Luke’s CE Primary School	Yes	Withdrawn – Higher preference met
6	Wessex Primary School	Yes	Withdrawn – Higher preference met

In this case, should the parent then decide they would actually prefer their child to attend Wessex Primary, they would have to put in a change of preference form, and hope there were still places at Wessex available in the next round of offers. This is why it is extremely important that parents think carefully about their preferred schools, and list all six choices in their order of preference.

## 2. Before making your application

### Collecting information about schools

You should gather as much information as possible before you decide which schools you choose to include as a preference on your application.

- Read about the schools on their individual school websites and contact them to obtain a prospectus.
- Arrange to visit the school during a normal school day to see how it operates, and attend any open events they hold.
- Look at the school's admission procedures on their website. A summary of the admission rules for each RBWM school has been included in this guide.
- Information about the individual school and links to their school inspection reports and school performance tables are available on the school's website.
- Consider your child's particular interests and abilities, and their views on the schools visited.
- Check that daily travel to and from the school is possible within a reasonable time. Under the law, it is your responsibility as a parent or carer to get your child to school. The home to school transport support policy is available on the borough website [www.rbwm.gov.uk](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk).

Information about school vacancies is available from the School Admissions team upon request. Please note that we can only provide information at the time of request – it is impossible for us to predict vacancy information weeks or months in advance as we are processing applications on a daily basis. Your child will not be guaranteed a place at a school based on the vacancy information provided.

If a school you are interested in applying for is showing as full in the relevant year group, you can still apply for your child's name to be placed on the school's waiting list. You will receive a letter to confirm the outcome of your application, and this must provide details about your right of appeal, regardless of the type of school to which you apply.

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

As stated above, the legislation governing school admissions allows 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. **It is important that you do not assume 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, as this is not the case.**

You are not guaranteed a place at a preferred school, and it is important to be realistic when considering the schools you name as preferences. If you list six preferences for schools that are a considerable distance from your home, you are risking not receiving an offer for any of your preferred schools if they are all too far away. Distances to which offers are made to pupils vary every year, and even if your next-door-neighbour received an offer last year, it does not mean you are guaranteed an offer this year. As you will see throughout this guide, the distance from your home to the school is always used to determine which children receive offers ahead of their peers.

## The admission criteria

If there are fewer applicants than places available for a school, every applicant will be offered a place, if a higher preference has not been met. If there are more applications received than there are places available, the school will use its published oversubscription criteria to work out which children have the highest priority and can be offered a place. Any children with an education, health and care plan which names the school must be admitted before any other children and will be counted in the published admission number.

The oversubscription criteria for each Windsor and Maidenhead school are summarised on the individual school pages in Section 5. Make sure you understand the admission criteria and address any questions directly to the school

## Designated area (also known as catchment area)

All the secondary schools within the Royal Borough have designated areas. All Maidenhead secondary schools share the same designated area, except Holyport College which has its own designated area for Year 7 day place applications. Residents living in the designated area for Holyport College are also in the designated area for the other Maidenhead secondary 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 the [Know Your Neighbourhood](#) facility on the council website. Electronic copies of the designated areas are available on the [School Designated Areas](#) website.

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.**

## Commonly used in the oversubscription criteria

Please refer to the full admissions policy of each individual school to see whether the following criterion form part of the oversubscription criteria, and for any variation to the following definitions. Please note that the commonly used criteria regarding looked after children, or children with exceptional social or medical needs are outlined in Section 5.

## Sibling priority

All the secondary schools give some priority to siblings in their oversubscription criteria. Most parents find it easier to have their children attend the same school, but it is important to understand that having children at the same school is often not possible. **Please note that there is no guarantee that we will be able to offer a sibling a place at your preferred school even if you meet the sibling criterion.**

In RBWM children are defined as siblings if:

- they are full, half step or foster brother or sister
- they live at the same address
- they are already in attendance at the school
- they will still be in attendance in September 2024 in Years 8 to 10, with some schools also accepting Years 11 and 12

Attendance of a sibling in Year 11 at the time of application or possible attendance in the Sixth Form (Years 12 and 13) does not necessarily confer sibling status. A child is regarded as being of compulsory school age until the end of the school or academic year in which they become 16 years of age.

It is **your responsibility to give the sibling's details** on your application under sibling details. Qualification for sibling status is made on the basis that the pupil already at the school will remain on roll at the school at the time of application and at the time your child is due to start school. If this sibling then leaves the school, it may affect the younger sibling's application.

**If you fail to indicate that a pupil has a sibling at the school when you are applying, your younger child will not be considered under sibling criterion.** Your child will instead be considered under the next possible criterion, and this increases the likelihood that your younger child will not receive an offer to the school their sibling attends.

### Proximity to school

In most published oversubscription criteria, priority within each criterion is decided by distance, with those living closest to the school being given the highest priority. To be fair to all applicants, the council has a standard method of measuring home to school distance. This is measured in a straight line from the GIS address point of the pupil's house as determined by Ordnance Survey to the Designated School Node of the school, using proprietary GIS software.

Please refer to the individual school's published admissions policy for information on how places are allocated if two or more children live at the same distance from the school.

**Please note that we cannot provide home to school distances to applicants ahead of a formal application being received and an offer being made.** If you would like the approximate distance between your home and the school in question, you can find this information at [www.find-school-performance-data.service.gov.uk](http://www.find-school-performance-data.service.gov.uk).

### 3. Applying for a place at a community or voluntary controlled school

If you are applying for any of the community (C) or voluntary controlled (VC) schools listed below, **you must apply through the local authority's Admissions team.**

Alexander First (C)	Furze Platt Infant (C)	Oldfield Primary (C)
Alwyn Infant (C)	Furze Platt Junior (C)	Riverside Primary (C)
Boyne Hill CE Infant (VC)	Hilltop First (C)	South Ascot Primary (C)
Braywood CE First (VC)	Holy Trinity CE Primary (Cookham) (VC)	The Queen Anne CE First (VC)
Cookham Rise Primary (C)	Homer First (C)	Waltham St Lawrence Primary (C)
Courthouse Junior (C)	Kings Court First (C)	Wessex Primary (C)
Eton Wick CE First (VC)	Larchfield Primary (C)	Wraysbury Primary (C)

For all other schools, including all secondary schools, you will need to contact the individual schools directly in order to apply. While the local authority can give you an idea of potential vacancies, we cannot apply to these schools on your behalf.

#### When to apply

Applications should be made no sooner than one term prior to hopeful entry, based on a six term school year.

To start school at this time.....	..... you can apply from this date
September 1 (Term 1)	June 20
October 30 (Term 2)	September 1
January 2 (Term 3)	October 30
February 19 (Term 4)	January 1
April 15 (Term 5)	February 19
June 3 (Term 6)	April 15

Your child will be expected to start at their allocated school within the same academic year, no later than the start of the next short term.

If applying in the final short term of the current academic year to start school in the current academic year, your child will be expected to start school by the end June at the latest. If they do not start school by this time, any offer may be withdrawn and re-considered alongside any other children applying for a September start, in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

No applications for the current academic year will be accepted after the end of June unless your child is without a school place.



## Applying to start in September or to remain on the waiting list for the next academic year

If you are applying to start in September, or if you are reapplying for your child to remain on a waiting list, you can apply from 20 June. All applications received by the end of June will be processed together from the first working day in July. We will aim to write to you by the end of July to confirm the outcome of your application. This may be after the schools close for the summer break.

Applications received later than 30 June will be processed on an individual basis after the main processing exercise, in the order of the date they were received. There may be a delay if the schools have closed for the summer holiday break and cannot confirm whether a place can be allocated.

## The allocation process

Your application will normally be processed within 10 **school** days from the date received, but may take longer if it is submitted during peak periods, for example in the final short term for a September start or over the summer break. Different processing times apply to the processing of applications for September start (as outlined above). You will be notified of the outcome of your application within 10 school days, and you will receive written confirmation of the outcome within 15 school days.

Each school has a published admission number (PAN), and the admission authority will not be able to offer your child a place at a school which has reached its admission number.

Where there are more applicants than places available, school places are allocated using the published oversubscription criteria, and this is the criteria used to determine a child's place on a waiting list.

**Please note that we cannot consider any vacancy arising as a result of a child leaving a school until the current school has confirmed the child is on roll at their new school and can be deregistered from the current school. This includes potential vacancies arising over the summer break.**

## Oversubscription criteria for voluntary controlled and community schools

A child who is the subject of an education, health and care plan must be admitted to the school named in their plan even if the relevant year group is full. Where a school receives more applications than there are places available, places will be allocated in line with the published oversubscription criteria, in descending order.

1. Children in care. This category includes a looked after child or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order, including children 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. [Note 1]
2. Children with exceptional medical or social reasons for requiring the school [Note 2].

3. **Junior schools only** – children attending a linked infant school [Note 3].
4. Children who live in the designated appropriate area of the school and who have a sibling\* in attendance at the school at the time of the application and who is expected still to be attending the school at the time of entry [Notes 4 & 5].
5. Children who live in the designated appropriate area of the school [Note 4].
6. Children with a sibling in attendance at the school. The sibling would need to be attending the school at the time of admission of the child for whom a place is sought [Note 5].
7. Children of a staff member [Note 6].
8. Children whose parents have any other reason for their preference.

If a school does not have places for all the children in a particular category, the borough prioritises those applicants who live closest to the school. Proximity to the school will be measured in a straight line from the address point of the pupil's house as determined by Ordnance Survey to the address point of the school using the local authority's GIS system. In the event that two or more children live at the same distance from the school (for example families living in flats) and there are fewer places available then random allocation will be used to decide which child will be allocated the remaining place(s). The names will be drawn and the whole process scrutinised by persons independent of the authority.

Parents of children who are admitted for nursery provision at a nursery attached to a school or a co-located nursery must apply separately for a place at the school if they require a place at that school. Attendance at such a nursery does not confer any priority for or guarantee of a place at that school.

**Note 1** - Looked after children are children who are (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school.

Previously looked after children includes children who immediately after being in public care were adopted or subject to a child arrangement order under the terms of the Children Act 1989 or children subject to a special guardianship order which is defined under Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

Internationally previously looked after children are children who have been 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) and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. Examples may include:

- an Article 16 Report – this applies to Hague convention adoptions and will have been issued by the central authority
- information provided by an adoption agency, either in the UK or overseas
- information provided by an organisation that provided care for the child
- a report or letter from another agency or organisation that has been involved with the child

**Note 2** - the social and medical reasons can apply to the child or another member of the family, see the SEMC pages in this guide for full details of how to apply for priority under this criterion.

**Note 3** - Infant and Junior linked school priority. Furze Platt Junior is formally linked with Furze Platt Infant (Furze Platt Primary Federation), All Saints CE Junior is formally linked with Burchetts Green CE Infant and Boyne Hill CE Infant, Courthouse Junior is formally linked with Alwyn Infant.

**Note 4** - Designated areas. Maps of the current designated areas may be viewed on the RBWM website, [www.rbwm.gov.uk](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk). Alternatively, applicants can use the Neighbourhood View facility on the website for information on schools based on their address.

**Note 5** - Sibling criterion. A sibling would need to be attending the school at the time of admission of the child for whom a place is sought. The term 'sibling' includes a half or stepchild permanently living in the same family unit or a foster child permanently living in the same family unit whose place has been arranged by the social services department of a local authority. Sibling eligibility will flow from a foster child to other children of the family or from a child of the family to a foster child. In the case of Infant and Junior schools, attendance of a sibling at either the Infant or Junior school qualifies as a sibling for the linked school. Linked schools are set out in Note 2.

**Note 6** - Children of a member of staff. Priority will be given where the member of staff has a) been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, and b) the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage. A SIF must be completed and returned to the Local authority at the time of application.

If a school does not have places for all the children in a particular category, the borough prioritises those applicants who live closest to the school. Proximity to the school will be measured in a straight line from the address point of the pupil's house as determined by Ordnance Survey to the address point of the school using the local authority's GIS system.

In the event that two or more children live at the same distance from the school (for example families living in flats) and there are fewer places available than random allocation will be used to decide which child will be allocated the remaining place(s). The names will be drawn and the whole process scrutinised by persons independent of the authority.

Parents of children who are admitted for nursery provision at a nursery attached to a school or a co-located nursery must apply separately for a place at the school if they require a place at that school. Attendance at such a nursery does not confer any priority for or guarantee for a Reception place at that school.

## Completing your application

You cannot make an application for an in-year transfer via the RBWM online Citizen's portal used for the normal admissions round. Any applications made this way will not be processed and will delay your child's possible entry into a new school.

You can apply for community or voluntary controlled school using the webpage form on the RBWM website. If you do not have internet access at home, it is free to apply online at any library in Windsor and Maidenhead. If you cannot find the required form, searching the phrase 'RBWM In-year transfer' will take you to the correct place.

We will need the following information from you when making your application:

- name of preferred schools
- your child's name and date of birth
- your contact details and email address

**When making your application you will sign a declaration that you have parental responsibility 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.** If you share joint custody of the child or children you are applying for, please be aware that we require the names of both parents, and their agreement in writing, before school places can be allocated. **If you choose not to divulge joint custody arrangements, the school places will be withdrawn, when the deception comes to light, even if the children have started school.** Please see the relevant section later in this guide for full information.

You will need to attach additional documents to your application, depending on your individual situation, for example:

- proof of address as set out below
- supporting evidence if you wish to be considered under the exceptional social or medical need criterion
- if you are moving into the UK from overseas you must provide evidence that you are entitled to remain in the UK; we will accept a copy of the visas for you and your child(ren) but reserve the right to request that you and your child(ren) visit the Town Hall with the original documentation

## Supplementary information form

A supplementary information form is required when a school needs additional information to apply its admission criteria. You must check whether any of the schools you are applying for require a supplementary information form. If you do not complete and return the form to the address provided on the form, the school will only consider your application based on the information on the application, and this may reduce your chances of being offered a place at the school.

## Proof of address

You must provide copies of three of the following non-exhaustive list (we may request further information):

- most recent council tax statement
- child benefit statement, universal credit, or child tax credit notice
- driver's licence registered to the admissions address
- water, gas, data, or electricity bill (dated within the last three months). Mobile phone bills, credit card statements and bank statements are not acceptable. Inclusion on the electoral roll is not acceptable proof that you live at an address

- signed rental agreement or confirmation that a house purchase is legally binding, contracts have already been exchanged and completed; confirmation of an intention to buy or rent is not sufficient proof and will not be accepted
- evidence that your previous property has been sold or the rental ceased – this includes, but is not limited to, signed termination of rental agreement or proof of completion of sale (if your previous address is within commutable distance)
- proof that you are returning to a home that you legally own (if applicable) and that property is available for you to live in

Please read the guidance on how an address is considered for admissions purposes in full in the following pages of this section.

## **Submitting your application**

Before you submit your application, please check that you:

- have read and understood the admissions criteria for each school included on your application and considered the likelihood that your child will qualify for a place
- are clear on the order you want your preferences to be listed in
- understand how the home address will be assessed for admissions purposes
- have used all available preferences as this will increase your chance of obtaining a place for your child at one of your preferred schools

## **Being offered a place**

If your child meets the admissions criteria for more than one school, we will look at your order of preference and offer you a place at the highest preferred school at which your child is eligible for a place.

If your child does not meet the admissions criteria for any of your preferred schools and you are a RBWM resident, the Admissions team will offer you a place at the nearest suitable RBWM school to your home address with places remaining where possible. This will not be done automatically if your child is currently at a school where they can remain.

Your offer letter will provide details of the school appeals process and referral to the Fair Access panel (where appropriate).

If your child is of statutory school age and you refuse an offer because it is not one of your preferred schools, then you will need to consider either applying for a maintained school which has vacancies, home educating your child, or enrolment in private education. If there are no mainstream schools with vacancies within an appropriate distance from your home your application will be referred under the Fair Access Protocol.

Children missing education are automatically referred to the education welfare officers by the Admissions team.

You will have a right of appeal against the decision not to offer your child a place at your preferred school. We strongly recommend you accept any offer you hold until another school is allocated via the waiting list or the appeal process. If you refuse the offer your child may be left without a school place. It will be your responsibility to consider your options.

If you have also applied to academies, voluntary aided or free schools, it is possible that you may end up with multiple offers. It is your responsibility to respond to these offers to say whether you wish to accept or decline promptly. Not responding to an offer may restrict a school from offering a place to another pupil who requires the place.

If you do not respond within the timeframe requested in your offer letter, then the offer is likely to be withdrawn within 20 school days from the date your child was supposed to start at the school and may be offered to another child. This timeframe is shortened to five days when there are less than three vacancies in that year group.

The school will contact you to provide you with more information and to arrange a start date.

Admission will normally be deferred until the start of the next term to minimise disruption to both the child's education and that of other children. This is based on a six term academic year.

Admission into a school mid-term will normally only be considered for:

- applicants that are moving to a new house and unable to continue at their previous school
- applicants unable to take the place up on-time due to extenuating circumstances such as ill health
- applicants considered under the Fair Access Protocol

Applications in the last short term of the current academic year requesting to start school within the same academic year, will be required to start by the end of June in that year at the latest.

## **Withdrawing offers**

Once the offer of a place has been made, the local authority may withdraw the offer in limited circumstances, for example:

- where the offer was made in error, which has resulted in another child being disadvantaged and it has not been able to resolve the error without withdrawing the offer. The offer will be withdrawn as soon as possible after the error has been discovered
- where the application is considered fraudulent or intentionally misleading
- where a parent or carer has not responded to the offer within a reasonable time

## 4. Applying for a place at a voluntary aided, academy or free school

You must apply directly to any of the voluntary aided (VA), academy (A) or free (F) schools listed below. We are unable to process applications for these schools at any time or provide information about their waiting lists. If we receive applications for these schools, they will be discarded. Academies, voluntary aided and free schools set their own admission arrangements. Make sure you read the school's admission policy before making your application and provide all the supporting documentation or evidence required.

All Saints CE Junior (A)	Dedworth Middle (A)	St Edward's RFE Middle (VA)
Altwood CE Secondary (A)	Desborough College (A)	St Francis' Catholic Primary (A)
Bisham Primary (A)	Eton Porny CE First School (A)	St Mary's Catholic Primary (A)
Braywick Court (F)	Furze Platt Senior (A)	St Michael's CE Primary (VA)
Burchetts Green Infants (A)	Holy Trinity CE (Sunningdale) (VA)	St Peter's CE Middle (A)
Charters School (A)	Holyport CE Primary (A)	The Royal (Crown Aided) School (VA)
Cheapside CE Primary (VA)	Holyport College (F)	The Windsor Boys' School(A)
Churchmead CE Secondary (VA)	Knowl Hill Academy (A)	Trevelyan Middle (A)
Clewer Green CE (A)	Lowbrook Academy (A)	Trinity St Stephen's CE First (VA)
Cookham Dean CE Primary (VA)	Newlands Girls' School (A)	White Waltham CE Academy (A)
Cox Green School (A)	Oakfield First School (A)	Windsor Girls' School (A)
Datchet St Mary's CE Primary (A)	St Edward's Catholic First (VA)	Woodlands Park Primary (A)
Dedworth Green First (A)	St Edmund Campion Catholic (A)	

Key: (A) – Academy (VA) – Voluntary aided (F) – Free school

## Right of appeal

The School Admissions Code 2021 requires the admissions authority of any school to allow you to make an application even if the school is full. The admitting authority **must** send you a letter either offering you a place or the reason(s) why they are unable to allocate a place.

This letter should include information on the policy for adding your child to the waiting list, your right of appeal to an independent panel. Schools must not refuse to accept an application based on the fact that it is full or refuse to issue an outcome letter detailing your right of appeal.

If you have applied to several schools, it is possible that you may end up with multiple offers. It is your duty to respond to these offers to say whether you wish to accept or decline promptly. Not responding to an offer may restrict a school from offering a place to another pupil who requires the place.

If you do not respond within the timeframe requested in your offer letter, then the offer is likely to be withdrawn.

The school will contact you to provide you with more information and to arrange a start date.

## No school place offer

If you are having difficulties securing a school place for your child, please contact your home authority (the council to which you pay council tax) for support. RBWM residents can contact the Admissions team using the information on the cover page of this guide.

If your child is of statutory school age and you refuse an offer because it is not one of your preferred schools, then you will need to consider either applying for a maintained school which has vacancies, home educating your child, or enrolment in private education. If there are no mainstream schools with vacancies within an appropriate distance from your home your application will be referred under the Fair Access Protocol.

Children missing education are automatically referred to the Education Welfare Officers by the Admissions team.

## Waiting lists

If your child has not gained a place at a particular school, you have the right to be placed on the waiting list. An admission authority cannot refuse to place your child on a waiting list because they are full.

Your place on a waiting list will be determined by applying the over-subscription criteria for the relevant school as published in the admission arrangements. Please check the individual school's website for further information



## 5. Special circumstances and common areas of query

### Looked after children or previously looked after children

These terms refer to children who are in the care of a local authority<sup>1</sup> or being provided with accommodation by a local authority, children who were previously looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted<sup>2</sup> or became subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order and children who appear (to the admitting authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

### Evidence required for a child who is currently in the care of a local authority or being provided with accommodation by a local authority

You must enclose a letter from the child's social worker which confirms that the child is currently subject to a Section 20 Children Act 1989 agreement (signed by parent(s) and the local authority) or a current interim care order or a current final care order.

### Evidence required for a previously looked after child

You must provide documentary evidence to show that the child was in care immediately before the adoption, child arrangements order, or special guardianship order, along with a copy of the relevant order from the following list:

- an adoption order made under the Adoption Act 1976 or Adoption and Children's Act 2002
- a child arrangements order settling the arrangements around the person with whom the child is to live with under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 (as amended by Section 12 of the Children and Families Act)
- a special guardianship order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian(s) under Section 14A of the Children Act 1989

### Evidence required for children who have been in state care outside of England

Documentary evidence of adoption such as:

- an adoption order from a UK court
- an adoption certificate issued by the Registrar General for England and Wales, National Records Scotland, or the General Register Office for Northern Ireland
- an Article 23 certificate – this applies to Hague convention adoptions, and will have been issued by a Central Authority
- official documentation from the relevant court or state authorities in the country of adoption, confirming that the child was adopted. In this case further information may be required including:
  - A certified document obtained from the embassy of the country of origin
  - A letter from the adoption agency
  - A letter from another agency or organisation that has been involved with the child

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<sup>1</sup> In accordance with section 22 of the Children Act 1989

<sup>2</sup> Under the Adoption Act 1976 or Adoption and Children Act 2002

## Exceptional social or medical need (SEMC)

In response to the needs of parents with exceptional or highly unusual circumstances, the Admissions Code introduced the opportunity for parents to apply for a school, based on their child's exceptional social, emotional, or medical need. These applications are also known as applying for social, emotional, or medical consideration (SEMC). It is expected that no more than a small number of applications will be given this criterion in a year, if any at all.

All schools, whether in RBWM or not, are required by law to provide for the additional needs of their pupils, wherever possible. As such, all RBWM schools have experience providing for children with different social and medical needs. To be considered under SEMC criteria, a child must be experiencing such exceptional difficulties that they are very uncommon in the general population. The threshold for SEMC acceptance is exceptionally high, and the need can apply to the child or another member of the family.

Some schools will consider an application under this category only where the parent or carer can demonstrate a **wholly exceptional** medical or social requirement why the preferred school is the **only** suitable school for their child, and the difficulties likely to be caused by not attending that school. Specific details of the requirements for the individual schools where this criterion applies are available on their websites and summarised in Section 3 of this guide. We will only consider a social and medical application for the **first preference** school named on the application where it forms part of the oversubscription criteria.

It is the responsibility of the parents to provide a clear argument, with supporting evidence, as to why their child should be given this consideration. **Please be aware that providing evidence does not automatically guarantee that a child will be given priority at a particular school.** In each case, a decision will be made based on the merits of the evidence presented and whether that evidence demonstrates that a placement should be made at a particular school above any other.

Awarding this criterion does not guarantee that a school place will automatically be allocated at the school. If the school is full in the relevant year group, your child will be added to the waiting list with the appropriate social and medical criterion, giving them priority on the waiting list over other children who fulfil lower criteria.

The local authority only assesses social and medical needs applications for community and voluntary controlled schools as outlined at the beginning of Section 3. Specific details of the requirements for all academies, voluntary aided and free schools where this criterion applies is available on the individual school's website. If you would like to apply for an own admission authority school, please contact the school directly for information about how to apply under this criterion. The threshold for acceptance with own admitting authorities is just as high as it is with the local authority, and they will follow a process similar to that of the local authority, in the interests of fairness and consistency.

When assessing an application, we will consider the statement you provided, as well as any other accompanying evidence. The strength of your application will be considered by two or more officers who will make an evidence-based decision individually and then together, referring to another officer where disagreement exists. If a consensus cannot be found, then more expert advice may be sought. Those officers assessing the application will have knowledge of the local authority's admissions process and the School Admissions Code 2021.

As multiple cases are discussed at once, no notes or rough deliberations will be made available for public consumption, as it is not appropriate to discuss other cases or divulge other children's information to a third party. Instead, the officers will note collectively their reasons for any acceptance or rejection of the application under this criterion for your particular case. The reasoning will then be outlined in the letter parents receive, so that you are aware of exactly what was taken into account when making the decision.

Parents and carers whose cases are heard before National Offer Day will be notified of their outcome in writing, at the same time as they find out which school their child has been offered. Parents applying late, but before second round offers, will be notified on second round offer day. Parents who submit a late application under this rule after the second round of offers will be notified of the outcome in writing once the decision has been made.

In all cases, if an application is rejected under SEMC, the application for admission will be categorised under the next highest criterion. A rejection under SEMC does **not** mean that the application for admission will be affected in any other way. It will be treated in the same way as an application that did not ask for SEMC consideration.

**Wherever possible, it is very important to apply, and provide all evidence as soon as you apply for a school place.** The Admissions team can only consider the application **once** during the process and if further documentation arises after the initial assessment has taken place, it may not be possible to reassess the decision. Requests or additional evidence received after the decision has been made can only be considered where the reasons for the late submission are exceptional, and it can be reasonably assumed that the application could not be made on time.

The local authority's decision is final and **there is no right of appeal to officers against refusal to consider an application under this category.** If your child has not been offered a place at your preferred school, you will have your usual legal right of appeal to an independent appeal panel. During this kind of appeal, you are able to explain why you would like your child to attend a particular school and can include the evidence you provided to support your social/medical application as part of your appeal submission.

Where the local authority assesses the application on a school's behalf, all applications **must** be submitted by the closing date and **must** include a completed social or medical application form (please email [rbwm.admissions@achievingforchildren.org.uk](mailto:rbwm.admissions@achievingforchildren.org.uk) to request a form) or a letter or email explaining the reasons for applying under this criterion. This form or letter **must** provide **all** of the following statements or evidence.

- Why the preferred school is the **only** suitable school for your child, and the difficulties likely to be caused by not attending it.
- If the requested school is not the nearest school to the child's home address, you must provide clear reasons with supporting evidence why the nearest school is not appropriate. A statement must be included giving permission for the local authority to make such enquiries as it thinks necessary to investigate the matter further.
- Supporting evidence specifically in relation to your current school application that gives reasons and provides information why only the preferred school can meet a child's individual needs, and the effect on your child if they do not attend this school. This evidence must be on headed writing paper from a suitably qualified professional person associated with the child or the family, such as a consultant, a general practitioner, psychiatrist, or a senior social worker.

Please scan documents and send them to [rbwm.admissions@achievingforchildren.org.uk](mailto:rbwm.admissions@achievingforchildren.org.uk). All information provided is treated in the strictest confidence. Please do not send or drop off original documents, as these cannot be returned to you.

## Important points to consider when applying for SEMC

As stated above, it is the **parent's responsibility** to ensure they provide the supporting documentation, and a clear argument that addresses the required statements. Please note that hospital appointment letters or prescriptions are **not** considered relevant documentary evidence. Evidence from members of the family, friends or a childminder is also not normally acceptable. Applications lacking external objective evidence will be rejected under this category without further assessment.

It is not appropriate for the headteacher of the school you are applying for to provide supporting evidence as this will be considered a conflict of interest in the decision-making process. Where we feel it is appropriate, we may liaise with the school during our assessment process, to request their views, however, as the admitting authority for community and voluntary controlled schools, the final decision will be made by the local authority.

Please also be aware of the following when considering whether to apply under the social or medical needs criterion.

- **Special educational needs:** All RBWM schools can provide support for a child's educational needs. If your child may need additional support in school, but they do not have an EHCP, we cannot consider their application for a higher priority under this criterion. Special educational needs include the following non-exhaustive list of conditions:

Autistic spectrum disorder  
Dyslexia  
Dyscalculia

Dyspraxia  
ADHD and ADD  
Speech and language difficulties.

If you are a resident of RBWM and consider that your child's special educational needs can only be met by attendance at a specific school, please contact the Children and Young People Disability Service to discuss the assessment process for an education, health and care plan ([cypds@achievingforchildren.org.uk](mailto:cypds@achievingforchildren.org.uk)).

- **Medical needs:** All RBWM schools are expected to manage medical needs. An application with medical evidence may be agreed where a child has an exceptional illness or disability (for example, limited mobility) which means that a child can only reasonably attend one school. We cannot consider common conditions as exceptional medical needs, such as the following non-exhaustive list of conditions.

Asthma  
Eczema  
Allergies  
Diabetes

Any condition where the dispensing of medication may require further training of school staff for its administration.

- **Emotional needs:** All schools are expected to appropriately support their pupils' social and emotional needs, including anxiety and stress-related conditions, and their subsequent presentations (including selective mutism). Applications on this basis cannot be considered under this criterion.

- **Bullying:** All schools are required to have a behaviour policy that includes measures to prevent all forms of bullying among pupils, and applications on this basis cannot be considered under this criterion.
- **Domestic arrangements and family connections:** Joint care arrangements childcare arrangements, transport arrangements, before or after school care or provision, your place of work, or the need to leave or meet children at more than one school at the same time, cannot be considered under this criterion **without accompanying exceptional medical or social reasons.**
- **Personal preferences:** A preference to keep your child with their current friendship group, the fact that your child attended a nursery associated with the particular school, a preference to attend or not attend a particular faith school, a preference for a single gender school, or a preference for a particular subject to be included on the curriculum, cannot be considered under this criterion.

The Admissions team will consider whether there is other support available to support the child or family member accessing another school, for example the duty for all schools to make reasonable adjustments for a child or family member under The Equality Act 2010. It is unlawful for any school to discriminate against a pupil or prospective pupil by treating them less favourably because of a protected characteristic. Similarly, it is unlawful to privilege a pupil or prospective pupil by treating them more favourably because of a protected characteristic, unless this is specifically enshrined in law.

## Verifying the home address

Because the admissions process is based on the distances measured from your home to your school/s of choice, verification of your home address is an extremely important measure in preventing fraud. Only one address can be used as your admissions address. We verify application addresses to ensure that only entitled pupils are offered places. We are obligated to do so under a number of legislations, and therefore do not have the authority to deviate from the high standard of evidence required by these legislations.

**Address verification is not the same as identity verification.** You will be used to using documents to verify your identity, but these are not the same as those needed to verify an address to the level required by the legislation. Admissions staff are authorised to verify your address and are required to do so using a number of corporate systems. It is common for us to request further information from you about your home address if:

- there are any doubts or confusion about your address details
- there is a joint custody arrangement in place
- you have moved to the address given on the application within the last 18 months
- you plan to move at any stage between applying for a school, and your child starting at the school
- you are forced to move from your home for any reason

As part of the admissions process, we will check council records to confirm that the address you have given on your application is your child's permanent home address. We may also seek evidence from schools or any other source we consider appropriate, and home visits may also be conducted to confirm residency.

If we find that your true address is in another local authority, your application will be forwarded to that local authority's school admission service. **Council tax spot checks will be undertaken at any point in the process** and places may be withdrawn if address details do not match the information given on the application.

We may request further evidence even if this is after a school place has been offered. **It is your responsibility as the applicant to provide evidence to support your application, and failure to do so will result in the school place being withdrawn.**

### What is considered my child's admission address?

We will decide whether to accept an address for admission purposes in accordance with the guidance set out below. **This guidance should be read in its entirety.**

The address you give us on your application must be your child's **permanent address** or where they spend **most of the week** (in the case of joint custody arrangements). This decision is made at the date of application, and where they will be living when they join the school is also considered. If you intend to move before the September of entry, please see the subsection on 'Moving Home' below.

The assessment of the permanent address for admissions purposes is set out below.

#### Permanent address for admissions purposes

- Your home address must be where you live with your child. The exception to this is if you can prove that your child lives elsewhere with someone who has legal care and control of your child. This must be due to a formal fostering arrangement through Social Services, and official letters from the professionals involved are submitted to confirm this at the time of application.
- A child's home address should be a residential property that is the child's only or main residence, not an address at which your child may sometimes stay or sleep due to your domestic arrangements. We cannot accept the address of a relative (unless it can be evidenced that the applicant and the child live there as a long-term and permanent arrangement), friend or childminder, a temporary address, or an address of a house you intend to move to, or a commercial address.
- If you own or rent a property, which is used, or has previously been used, as your home address which is within commutable distance of an oversubscribed school, and you state that you are living at, and apply from, a different address which is closer to the school, we will normally treat the second address as temporary, even if the property which is further away is not available for you to inhabit. It is your responsibility to provide the Admissions team with information on the properties that you are connected to for us to make an assessment on whether a property can reasonably be disregarded for admission purposes.

The aim is to show that the original property cannot be used by your family, to a level beyond a reasonable doubt. The individual circumstances will be considered by two or more officers who will make an evidence-based decision individually and then together, referring to another officer where disagreement exists. If you are unsure of how your particular circumstances would be treated in this event, please email us for advice on your next steps, at [rbwm.admissions@achievingforchildren.org.uk](mailto:rbwm.admissions@achievingforchildren.org.uk).

- If you rent a property, we **must** consider any break clauses included in the tenancy agreement when assessing the permanency of your address. If your tenancy agreement expires prior to the start of term, we will require further verification of continued occupancy following the date of expiration, even if this is after the school place has been offered. Failure to provide evidence of continued occupancy will result in the withdrawal of the school place.
- If you use an incorrect address or you do not inform the Admissions team of other properties which you are connected to, **this will be treated as an attempt to obtain a school place based on false information**, and your application will be withdrawn in accordance with the School Admissions Code 2021, even if your child has started school.
- If the Admissions team does not receive the evidence required to verify your home address within the deadline given, the application will be considered under the lowest category on the oversubscription criteria, with no distance priority applied.
- If you are a Crown Servant or armed forces family, please see the relevant section below on how your addresses are verified, as your situation is unique.
- For admission purposes, the address used for occupational bargees or boat dwellers, will be the sorting office or main post office address, closest to the place of mooring as of the deadline date. Proof in the form of a licence will be required and must be submitted at the time of application.
- Children of, or who identify as, Gypsies, Roma, Travellers are considered in a different manner. Proof of address for voluntary controlled, community schools and any academy or free schools which buy back into our admissions services will not be required for traveller families where the address is confirmed by the Traveller Education Service.

For admissions purposes, children meeting this criterion are defined by RBWM as children who have lived in a mobile home, traveller housing or caravan for the last 2 years and whose families are planning to continue to do so for at least a further 12 months from the point of application. Groups considered under this element of the protocol are Irish travellers, Scottish or Welsh travellers, Roma people (including British Romany Gypsies), New Age travellers, or Travelling show people.

- If you are applying from abroad and you own a property that you will be returning to, which has previously been used as the family home and for which you can prove will be available for you to live in when you return, we will apply the address for admissions purposes. If you intend on renting a property or you cannot provide evidence that a property that you own will be available to you and your family upon your return, we cannot apply the address for admissions purposes until you have arrived, and you can prove that you and your family are habitually resident in the property. If we do not receive sufficient proof of address before your arrival, your application will still be processed, however, we will not apply distance or criterion priority until we have received evidence. We cannot accept a temporary address or an address of friends or relatives. **It is your responsibility to let us know when you have arrived and provide evidence that you are habitually resident in the property.**

## What happens if an investigation is still ongoing when places are being allocated?

If an investigation into your application is still ongoing when school places are being offered, you will be allocated a place on a conditional basis. Once all the information has been gathered, we will write to you about what we have found, and you will have the opportunity to respond, and if necessary, submit further information. A decision will then be made as to whether the address you declared on your application will be accepted. If it is decided that your address will not be accepted, you will be given a period of notice during which you will have a final opportunity to provide evidence.

## Why does moving house affect admissions? (Moving Home)

Because the school admissions system and legislation are based on your permanent home address, moving house at any stage in the application process will complicate matters. It can add a level of frustration to an already stressful process. Of course, it is not always avoidable, but as the address verification processes are strict, please be aware that you will need to follow the procedures outlined to you, in order to still gain a school place for your child.

If you are applying for schools that are heavily oversubscribed, it is important to keep in mind that if you are moving specifically into a school's area to attend that school, you will not receive an offer there unless a vacancy is apparent, and you are at the top of the waiting list. **Parents moving into an area need to be aware that the schools with available vacancies at the time of your move are the only schools to which your children can gain admittance.** Places cannot be allocated to you in oversubscribed schools – you will only be able to join the waiting list.

**It is your responsibility to tell us when you have moved and provide the evidence as set out below before the address will be verified and changed on the system.** The rules about being connected to more than one property detailed above will apply to all changes of address during the application process.

Any change of address will only be considered if you provide sufficient proof that the move is legally binding and that you and your child are habitually resident in the new property. The non-exhaustive list of evidence includes:

- a solicitor's letter stating that the sale is complete, or a formal tenancy agreement which shows that the property leased is suitable for the family's needs; confirmation of an intention to buy or rent is not sufficient proof and will not be accepted
- proof that the previous property has been sold or the lease terminated, or sufficient evidence to allow the Admissions team to reasonably disregard the previous property for admissions purposes
- a copy of three utility bills or contracts (less than three months' old) to prove that the family is habitually resident in the new property. These utility bills may be for water, gas, electricity, waste disposal or sewage, or internet and data connection contracts for the property itself (not a mobile device). Mobile phone bills, credit card statements and bank statements are not acceptable, nor is inclusion on the electoral roll proof that you live at the address

If you are returning to live in a property that you already own, we will require evidence of this. This includes, but is not limited to, evidence of ownership and proof that the property will be available for the family to live in by the end of August (when the child is starting school in September).



Once address verification procedures have been satisfied, your new address will be used to offer you available places, and will also determine your child's position on any waiting lists for oversubscribed schools. Your child will automatically be added to the waiting list for oversubscribed schools that are ranked as higher preferences than any school you are offered.

**If you fail to notify the Admissions team of a change of address during the application process or before your child is admitted into school, this will be treated as an attempt to obtain a school place based on false information.** Your application and any offer we have made will be withdrawn in accordance with the School Admissions Code 2021.

## Joint custody arrangements

Due to the complex interplay between the legislations governing school funding, admissions and governance, applications can only be made from a single applicant, and using a single residential address, in what is referred to as a single-point-of-entry system. In situations where parents reside separately, this requires a level of agreement between the two parents. Parents with Joint Custody arrangements need to indicate this when asked on their application, and provide contact details for **both** parents, so that communication can be undertaken fairly. **Failure to indicate a Joint Custody arrangement, when one exists, will be considered a fraudulent act, and further action will be taken.**

If there is a situation that would make equal contact with both parents impossible or unsafe, please discuss this with us as early as possible, as there are certain scenarios where it is permitted to limit contact to a single parent. In most cases, however, all parties with parental responsibility will be contacted equally.

As a result of the single-point-of-entry system applied throughout England, **the onus is on parents to collectively make the decisions for their children, then present that agreement to admissions for action.** We are prevented from interfering with this process. Due to our requirement to maintain neutrality we cannot advocate for, or liaise between parents where an agreement cannot be reached unless a child requires safeguarding intervention in order to protect them from harm.

**When parents share custody, we will therefore require any applications for schools for any affected children, whether at phase transfer or in-year transfer, to be agreed between the parents, in writing, before being processed.** This means that without a written agreement from both parents, admissions staff are unable to move forward with any application, and no school offers can be made. The written agreement does not need to be in the form of a formal child arrangement order unless the parents require this formality to reach an agreement.

An email from both parents' registered email addresses, outlining your agreement, will suffice. Please note that this scenario will also be in effect when accepting or rejecting school offers, so we would strongly advise allowing time for agreements to be reached, so that statutory offer deadlines can be met. If a single parent has full custody of their children, and provides evidence of this, an agreement is not required with the other party.

Where the parents or carers live separately, the application must be based on the address where the child lives most of the time. When parents share custody of children, they will split their time between households. This split of time may be defined by a formal order, or in a less formal, mutual agreement between the parents.

Where the child lives equally with both parents at different addresses, the child's home address will be taken to be the address of the parent that is deemed to be the child's main residence, where the child spends most of the school week. In the absence of a formalised legal care arrangement, we will consider all available evidence that you provide to support your application.

Where there is an equal split, or there is any doubt about residence, we will make a judgement about which address to use for admission purposes. In making this judgement, we will consider the following.

- Any legal documentation confirming residence.
- The pattern of residence, including nights or hours spent at each address.
- The period over which the current arrangement has been in place, and any upcoming planned reviews.
- Confirmation from the previous or current school of the contact details and home address provided to them by parents.
- Which parent is in receipt of Child Benefit, Tax Credit or Universal Credit (Unless parents have decided between themselves who receives child benefit, HMRC will give it to the parent who the child lives with **most of the time** and in accordance with the Child Tax Credit Regulations 2002 and The Universal Credit Regulations 2013. You must have parental responsibility for the child you wish to claim for, **and** you must also be the **primary caregiver or parent with main responsibility** of the child).
- Where the child is registered with a GP.
- Any other evidence the parents may supply to confirm their situation.

We aim to be as fair as possible to both parties, but are unable to progress applications where there are parental disputes.

Should your custody arrangements change at any point in the future, you must keep school admissions informed, as it will affect the admissions processes for all your children while they are of compulsory school age.

## Applying to RBWM Schools from abroad or from elsewhere in the UK

Applications for overseas pupils are considered in accordance with guidance received from the Department for Education ([DfE](#)) and in consultation with the [Home Office](#).

Parents who are not UK or Irish nationals should check they, and their children, have a right to reside in the UK before applying for a school place in England. It is not the responsibility of the admission authority or co-ordinating local authority to check.

You can apply for a school place ahead of your arrival, however, your application will be considered from your current overseas address without distance or criterion priority, unless you are returning to a home that you own, and which has been previously used as the family home and you can provide evidence that the property will be available for you to habitually reside there on your return.

If you are not returning to a property that you own, and which has previously been used as your family home, we can only process your application to update your address, criteria, and distance when you are habitually resident in the UK at a permanent address. We cannot accept a temporary address, nor the addresses of friends or relatives.

**Any allocation made will be provisional until your new address has been verified.** In cases where an address is disputed, the application progress will be halted while investigations continue. We will ask for evidence before the school year or term begins to confirm that your child now lives in the area. Failure to provide the evidence will result in any offer being withdrawn.

Similarly, if your child does not attend school on the first day of term, we will remove the offer and allocate the place to a child on the waiting list. We will contact you first, before this action is taken to give you the opportunity to explain why there has been a delay in taking up the place and to find out when your child might begin attending.

## Children of Crown Personnel, including His Majesty's Armed Services

RBWM recognises the needs of Armed Service families and others serving the Crown, many of whom must manage frequent moves from within the UK and overseas. The Admissions legislation specifically mentions your unique circumstances, and states the following.

For families of service personnel with a confirmed posting, or crown servants returning from overseas, admission authorities must:

- allocate a place in advance of the family arriving in the area (as long as one is available), provided the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date. Admission authorities must not refuse to process an application and must not refuse a place solely because the family do not yet have an intended address, or do not yet live in the area
- use the address at which the child will live when applying their oversubscription criteria, as long as the parents provide some evidence of their intended address. Admission authorities must use a Unit or quartering address as the child's home address when considering the application against their oversubscription criteria, where a parent requests this
- not reserve blocks of places for these children
- ensure that arrangements in their area support the government's commitment to removing disadvantage for service children. Arrangements must be appropriate for the area and be described in the local authority's composite prospectus

If you are an HM Forces family with a confirmed posting to this area, or a UK Crown Servant returning from abroad to this area, you can apply for a school place ahead of your arrival

Your application must be accompanied by official documentary evidence from your employer that confirms a relocation date and that your intended address is within the Royal Borough.

The date you take up post must be before the beginning of the term in which you want your child to start school. We will not request proof of council tax payment or tenancy where the address is service family or Crown Servant accommodation. However, we reserve the right to request proof of occupancy for you and your child to verify habitual residency at the address which has been declared on the application, as this is in line with anti-fraud measures applicable to all applicants.

Armed Service personnel and their families may obtain further information, advice, and guidance from the Children’s Education Advisory Service. CEAS is part of the Ministry of Defence’s Children’s Services Directorate and established to help Service families, schools, local authorities, and other organisations with any issue relating to the education of Service children.

Children’s Education Advisory Service (CEAS)  
Building 190 Trenchard Lines, Upavon, Pewsey, Wiltshire SN9 6BE

Email: [RC-DCS-HQ-CEAS@mod.gov.uk](mailto:RC-DCS-HQ-CEAS@mod.gov.uk) (best form of contact)

Website: [CEAS](#)

RBWM take their obligations under the Armed Forces Covenant very seriously, and we do whatever we can to assist our service families. However, please be aware the admissions team are unable to act in a manner that contravenes other existing legislation.

We are required to apply the oversubscription criteria to all applicants, regardless of their service background, so we cannot privilege applications from government personnel, or reserve spaces for them in schools near family accommodation hubs. As well, if a school is full by the time an application from a military family is received, we do not have the authority to insist the school go over their agreed cohort number to make a space for a service child.

## **Twins, triplets, and other children of multiple births**

In cases where there is only one place available at a school and the next eligible child is one of a twin or other multiple birth group applying for the same mainstream school, we will admit both twins (and all the siblings in the case of multiple births) even if this exceeds the admission number for that school.

If one of your multiples has an EHCP which guarantees admission to a particular school, you must let the School Admissions Team know this, as the Children and Young People Disability Service (CYPDS) will deal with the application of the child with the EHCP while the admissions service will deal with the application(s) for the other multiple(s).

It can happen that twins or triplets in this situation will be allocated to different schools. If you wish to avoid this, you might consider making an application for just one school for all your multiples using social and medical grounds to argue that this is the only suitable school.

## **Admission of children outside their chronological age group**

It is RBWM’s policy that children should move with their chronological age peers, including children with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language.

Exceptionally, a child may be educated with a peer group one year younger or one year older than their chronological age. This needs careful thought. Once placed in a younger age group it is very difficult for a child to return to their chronological age group successfully. Equally, once accelerated it is very difficult for a child to return to their age group without feeling demoralised.

The relevant legislation can be found in section 2.18 of the [School Admissions Code 2021](#).

Additional guidance about how the process works and your responsibilities can be found on the [School Admissions Policies](#) website.

## Implications for pupils admitted outside their expected year

- Where placement in a younger year group is maintained, phase transfers, SATs, GCSEs, and school leaving are reached a year or more late. Young people cease to be classed as being 'of statutory school age' the last Friday of June in the school year in which they turn 16 years of age. Therefore, if they are being educated in a younger year group the school must make provision for them until the date they are due to leave school, meaning they are educated for longer, at the school's expense.
- Where placement in an older year group is maintained, the consequence is that the child will reach the next phase transfer, SATs or GCSEs, and school leaving point a year or more early. Young people do not cease to be of statutory school age until the last Friday of June in the school year they turn 16 years of age and as such would have to negotiate transfer early to a school sixth form or Further Education college, which would not be guaranteed, and may raise safeguarding concerns.
- As there is an obligation to be in education or training until the age of 18, a pupil who spends an additional year in school may reduce the time they spend in post-16 education or training which may limit their capacity to achieve qualifications.

Parents and schools also need to take into account the social and emotional needs of the child when accessing careers information, pastoral care, relationship education and other PSHE topics. Children should be exposed to these topics at the appropriate level of development, and there are significant consequences if this is done before a child is ready, and also if it is left too late to be of use to the child as they develop.

The implications for being educated out of year group extend to every single time your child transfers to another school. At no point is it guaranteed that your child will be allowed to remain with their new cohort, and your child may have to resume their expected cohort at any time a transfer occurs.

## 6. Waiting lists and how they work

Waiting List information is available directly from the school itself (if an academy) or from the local authority. We only hold lists for certain schools, so if in doubt, email us on [rbwm.admissions@achievingforchildren.org.uk](mailto:rbwm.admissions@achievingforchildren.org.uk) for advice or direction.

A Waiting List will only exist when there are more applicants for a particular school, than there are places available. To begin with, the waiting lists will contain the names of all children that applied to that school, and did not gain a place, as long as that school is a higher preference than the school you were offered. Your child will automatically be added to the waiting list for any **higher preferred schools** that you ranked above the school you were allocated.

Any requests to be added to the waiting list of a school which was initially a lower preference than the school offered, are not valid and will not be processed. If you change your mind about the school you want, you must submit a late change of preference request form on our website or write to the Admissions team requesting a late change of preference to be considered for lower preferred schools. Late applications are automatically added to the waiting list for their preferred schools if they are full.

It is important to understand that Waiting Lists for school admissions do not operate like a queue, where the last person to apply joins the end of the queue. How long you are on the waiting list for a particular school cannot be taken into account. This is because waiting lists are ordered by the oversubscription criteria of the school. Each time a child applies, they are slotted into the list based on their criterion, and their residential distance from the school. **Therefore, if a child is categorised as a higher criterion than your child, or lives closer to the school, they will be placed ahead of you on the waiting list, regardless of how long you have been there.**

If you decide that you want to send your child to the school we have allocated, **it is your responsibility to let us know immediately that you do not wish to remain on the waiting list for a higher preferred school.** If you fail to do this and we can allocate a place at a higher preferred school, you risk losing the original school offered. **If we can offer a place from the waiting list, we will automatically take away the current place we have already offered at the lower ranked preference, and that place will be offered to another child.**

### Own admission authority schools and schools in other council areas waiting lists

Own admission authority schools who do not buy into our service and schools in other areas may operate their waiting lists in a different way to the local authority, but they must still comply with the admissions legislation. It is your responsibility to confirm the arrangements they will follow if you are applying for a school in another area. We do not hold any information on waiting lists for these schools either, so cannot answer enquiries regarding these lists.

## 7. Appealing a decision on a school place

You have a legal right to appeal against a decision not to offer your child a place at one or more of your preferred schools, even though your child may have a place at another school. Your appeal will be heard by an appeal panel that is independent of the admissions authority whose decision you are appealing against. To ensure their independence and impartiality, there are strict rules covering the appointment of panel members. You have the right to attend the hearing to explain your case to the independent appeal panel, but no children are allowed in the hearing.

The admissions authority can only allocate places in accordance with the published oversubscription criteria, and it is unable to allocate places above the published admission number (PAN) when a school is full. An independent appeal panel will consider the grounds you give for appealing against the decision not to offer your child a school place and the reasons given by the school's admission authority for refusing a place.

To ensure their independence and impartiality, there are strict rules covering the appointment of panel members. You have the right to attend the hearing to explain your case to the independent appeal panel. The appeal panel's decision is binding on the school's admission authority, the parent, and the local authority. Further information on how to appeal for a Royal Borough school can be found on the borough website [www.rbwm.gov.uk](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk).

The borough's school appeals service is independent of the Admissions team. You can contact Democratic Services at [Democratic.Services@rbwm.gov.uk](mailto:Democratic.Services@rbwm.gov.uk) to appeal for the following schools:

Alexander First School	Hilltop First School
Alwyn Infant School	Holy Trinity CE Primary (Cookham)
Boyne Hill CE Infant School	Homer First School
Braywick Court School	Kings Court School
Braywood CE First School	Larchfield Primary School
Charters School	Newlands Girls School
Cookham Rise Primary School	Oldfield Primary School
Courthouse Junior School	Riverside Primary School
Cox Green School	South Ascot Village Primary
Dedworth Green First School	St Edmund Campion Catholic Primary
Dedworth Middle School	The Queen Anne CE First School
Desborough College	The Windsor Boys' School
Eton Porny CE First School	Trevelyan Middle School
Eton Wick CE First School	Waltham St Lawrence Primary
Furze Platt Infant School	Wessex Primary School
Furze Platt Junior School	Windsor Girls' School
Furze Platt Senior School	Wraysbury Primary School

If you would like to appeal for a school not listed above, please contact the school directly for information about how to appeal. For information about appealing for a school place in another council area, please contact the school or relevant council directly. Contact details for neighbouring boroughs can be found in Section 8.

Below are the currently scheduled dates for in-year appeals during the next academic year 2024/25 that will be held at the Town Hall, Maidenhead, SL6 1RF. The deadline to submit an appeal to be heard on that date is also stated below. These are strict deadlines and must be adhered to due to the high number of appeals we receive. School holidays are also factored into these dates.

- Monday 18 September 2023 (deadline 18 August 2023)
- Thursday 5 October 2023 (deadline 7 September 2023)\*
- Monday 23 October 2023 (deadline 22 September 2023)
- Tuesday 7 November 2023 (deadline 9 October 2023)\*
- Tuesday 28 November 2023 (deadline 9 November 2023)
- Monday 11 December 2023 (deadline 24 November 2023)
- Tuesday 23 January 2024 (deadline 12 December 2023)
- Tuesday 27 February 2024 (deadline 8 February 2024)
- Monday 25 March 2024 (deadline 6 March 2024)
- Monday 22 April 2024 (deadline 18 March 2024)
- Friday 24 May 2024 (deadline 3 May 2024)
- Tuesday 11 June 2024 (deadline 22 May 2024)
- Tuesday 23 July 2024 (deadline 4 July 2024)

\*Subject to the quantity of appeals received, so these days may be cancelled.

Pending the outcome of your appeal, your child will be offered a school place at a lower named preference school where possible, or at the nearest appropriate school with a place available. If an appeal is unsuccessful there is no automatic right to a further appeal within the same academic year unless there are significant and material changes in the circumstances of the parent or carer, child, or school since the time of the original appeal.

## **Infant class size regulations**

By law, infant classes (Reception, Year 1, and Year 2) must contain no more than a maximum of 30 pupils per qualified teacher. There are only a small number of permitted exceptions whereby an infant class can exceed this number. These exceptions are as follows.

- Children admitted outside the normal admissions round with an education, health and care plan specifying a school.
- Looked after children and previously looked after children admitted outside the normal admissions round.



- Children admitted, after initial allocation of places (during the normal round of admissions, phase transfer), because of a procedural error made by the admission authority or local authority in the original application process.
- Children admitted after an independent appeals panel upholds an appeal (please see limited grounds of appeal below).
- Children who move into the area outside the normal admissions round for whom there is no other available school within reasonable distance.
- Children of UK service personnel admitted outside of the normal admissions round.
- Children whose twin or sibling from a multiple birth is admitted otherwise than as an excepted pupil.
- Children with an education, health and care plan who are normally taught in a special educational need's unit attached to the school, or registered at a special school, who attend some infant classes within the mainstream school

Pupils admitted for the above reasons are classed as 'excepted' pupils only until the number on roll drops back to 30.

### How this affects the admissions appeal process

If an infant class exceeds 30 pupils, for any reason other than those permitted exceptions listed above, then the school is required to take 'relevant measures.' 'Relevant measures' would mean a school would be required to employ an additional teacher and may also be required, in extreme circumstances, to provide an additional classroom. Either would involve significant expenditure.

Due to this, appeals for school places in infant classes which total 30 students are heard under infant class size regulations. **These regulations remove the discretion from the Appeal Panel to consider individual extenuating circumstances when deciding whether to offer children a place, unless they find that your appeal is covered by one of the relevant grounds below.**

- It finds that the admission of additional children would not breach the infant class size limit
- That the child would have been offered a place if the admission arrangements (as published under Section 92 School Standards and Framework Act (SSFA) 1998) had been correctly and impartially applied
- The child would have been offered a place if the arrangements had not been contrary to mandatory provisions in the School Admissions Code and the SSFA 1998
- That the decision to refuse admission was not one which a reasonable Admissions Authority would have made in the circumstances of the case. In order for a panel to determine that an admission authority's decision was unreasonable, it will need to be satisfied that the decision to refuse to admit the child was perverse in the light of the admission arrangements, it was beyond the range of responses open to a reasonable decision maker, or was a decision which was so outrageous in its defiance of logic or of accepted moral standards that no sensible person who had applied his mind to the question could have arrived at it.

If your appeal does not meet one of these grounds, then your appeal will not be successful. You should keep this in mind when considering whether to appeal for a school which is covered by infant class size law. The Local Government Ombudsman office has produced a fact sheet for parents and carers on Infant Class Size appeals: [Infant class size appeals - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#)

## 8. Fair Access Protocol

RBWM operates a Fair Access Protocol. This Protocol exists to ensure that applications for hard-to-place children, received outside the normal admissions round, are considered promptly and that places are allocated at suitable schools.

Hard-to-place children are described in the Fair Access Protocol as including, but not restricted to, the following.

1. Children either subject to a child in need plan or a child protection plan or having had a child in need plan or a child protection plan within 12 months at the point of being referred to the Fair Access Protocol.
2. Children living in a refuge or in other relevant accommodation at the point of being referred to the Fair Access Panel.
3. Children from the criminal justice system.
4. Children in alternative provision who need to be reintegrated into mainstream education or who have been permanently excluded but are deemed suitable for mainstream education.
5. Children with special educational needs (but without an EHCP), disabilities or medical conditions.
6. Children who are carers.
7. Children who are homeless.
8. Children in formal kinship care arrangements.
9. Children of, or who are, Gypsies, Roma, Travellers, refugees, and asylum seekers.
10. For admissions purposes, these are defined by RBWM as children who have lived in a mobile home, traveller housing or caravan for the last 2 years and whose families are planning to continue to do so for at least a further 12 months from the point of application. Groups considered under this element of the protocol are: Irish travellers, Scottish or Welsh travellers, Roma people (including British Romany Gypsies), New Age travellers, Travelling show people. To ensure these are admitted to school with the minimum of delay and to maximise what may be a short-term period of education.
11. Children who have been refused a school place on the grounds of their challenging behaviour and referred to the Fair Access Panel in accordance with paragraph 3.10 of the Code.
12. Children for whom a place has not been sought due to exceptional circumstances.
13. Children who have been out of education for four or more weeks where it can be demonstrated that there are no places available at any school within a reasonable distance of their home. This does not include circumstances where a suitable place has been offered to a child and this has not been accepted.
14. Previously looked after children for whom the local authority has been unable to promptly secure a school place
15. This list is not exhaustive. Please refer to our website [www.rbwm.gov.uk](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk) for more information and guidance about Fair Access.

16. Applications which are suitable for consideration under the Fair Access Protocol are sent to the Fair Access Panel. The Fair Access Panel meets monthly to discuss cases and to ensure, where appropriate, a suitable school place is allocated.

The process is designed to ensure that pupils are allocated to schools which are able to provide appropriate support for them. The aim is to make sure children are allocated to the most appropriate school, as quickly as possible, to give them the optimum opportunity to achieve.

The process is also designed to ensure that no school, including those with vacancies, is asked to take more than its fair share of children who have been excluded or who exhibit challenging behaviour. Allocating a child with challenging behaviour to a school which already has a disproportionate number of children with challenging behaviour can be detrimental not only to the child entering the school, who may not receive the necessary support, but also the children already being educated in the school. The Fair Access Panel must balance this and ensure a fair allocation of these children to all schools.

Any applicant referred to the Fair Access Panel will be notified of this in writing and informed of the date when the Panel is due to meet to discuss your application.

## 9. Useful contact details

### The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

Appeals Helpline	01628 796319
Home to School Transport Helpline	01628 796666
Special Educational Needs Helpline	07784 361 267 or 07783 806 246
Contact the Admissions team by email on	<a href="mailto:rbwm.admissions@achievingforchildren.org.uk">rbwm.admissions@achievingforchildren.org.uk</a>

### Neighbouring local education authorities Admissions Teams

Buckinghamshire County Council	01296 395000
Bracknell Forest Borough Council	01344 354023
Slough Borough Council	01753 875700
Surrey County Council	0300 2001004
Reading Borough Council	0118 9373777
Wokingham District Council	0118 974 6000

### Other useful telephone numbers

Department for Educations (DfE)	0808 1008000
Independent Schools Council information service	020 7766 7070
Local Government Ombudsman	08456 021983
Diocese of Oxford – Board of Education	01865 208237
Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth	01329 835363

### Free school meals

To receive free school meals, applicants must be receiving one of the following.

- Income support
- Income based Job Seekers Allowance
- Income related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part IV of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The 'Guarantee' element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit (exceptions apply)

Please speak to your child's allocated school about making an application. Admissions cannot assist with these enquiries.

## Home to school transport support

Some children and young people may qualify for help with transport to and from school if they live more than a certain distance from their nearest school, or if they have special educational needs which means they cannot walk safely to school.

The council provides this support in line with national guidelines and legislation, which means that some children and young people may be eligible for free home to school transport. The full home to school transport policy and information on how to apply is available on the [transport information website](#)

## APPENDIX A - Definitions

Definitions of terms and acronyms used in this guide.

- **Primary school** - this will mean primary, first, infant, or junior school unless otherwise differentiated.
- **Secondary school** - this will mean secondary, middle, or upper school unless otherwise differentiated.
- **RBWM** - The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Council
- **AfC** - Achieving for Children
- **Academic year** - A period commencing with 1 August and ending with the next 31 July, as defined by Section 88M of the SSFA 1998.
- **Admission arrangements** - The overall procedure, practices and oversubscription criteria used in deciding the allocation of school places including any device or means used to determine whether a school place is to be offered.
- **Admission authority** - The body responsible for setting and applying a school's admission arrangements. For community or voluntary controlled schools, this body is the local authority unless it has agreed to delegate responsibility to the governing body. For foundation or voluntary aided schools, this body is the governing body of the school. For Academies, this body is the Academy Trust.
- **Admission number** (Published Admission Number [PAN]) - The number of school places that the admission authority must offer in each relevant age group of a school for which it is the admission authority. Admission numbers are part of a school's admission arrangements.
- **Banding** - A system of oversubscription criteria in which all children applying for a place at a banding school are placed into ability bands based on their performance in a test or other assessment. Places are then allocated so that the school's intake either reflects the ability profile of those children applying to the school, those children applying to a group of schools banding jointly, the local authority ability profile or the national ability profile.
- **Buy back validation service** - A service which own admission authority schools buy back into whereby the local authority grades applications and maintains their waiting lists in accordance with the school's oversubscription criteria and admission arrangements on behalf of the school.
- **Catchment area** - See designated area.
- **Common application form (CAF)** - The form parents complete, listing their preferred choices of schools, and then submit to local authorities when applying for a school place for their child as part of the local coordination scheme, during the normal admissions round. Parents must be allowed to express a preference for a minimum of three schools on the relevant common application form as determined by their local authority. Local authorities may allow parents to express a higher number of preferences if they wish. These forms are the same for all schools.
- **Composite prospectus** - This guide is the composite prospectus. This is the prospectus that a local authority is required to publish by 12 September in the offer year. This prospectus must include detailed admission arrangements of all maintained schools and academies in the area (including admission numbers and catchment areas).

- **Coordination or coordinated scheme** - The process by which local authorities co-ordinate the distribution of offers of places for schools in their area. All local authorities are required to coordinate the normal admissions round and late applications for primary and secondary schools in their area. There is no requirement for local authorities to coordinate in-year admissions, but they can offer to do so if they wish. Own admission authority schools can take in-year applications directly from parents, provided they notify their local authority of each application and its outcome.
- **Determination year** - The school year immediately preceding the offer year. This is the school year in which admission authorities determine their admission arrangements.
- **Determined admission arrangements** - Admission arrangements that have been formally agreed by the admission authority, for example, agreed at a meeting of the admission authority and the decision recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
- **Diversion offer** - This is an offer given to a parent for a school that is not listed on their preferences. It is a legal requirement that should a place not be available at a preferred school that the local authority 'divert' the application to the nearest school with an available place appropriate for this child. Where this is not possible, the local authority is required to inform you of where schools are with available places, so that you can apply directly to the schools themselves.
- **Designated school node (DSN)** - This is the single point of entry where all pupils can safely gain access to the school. It is usually on, or near the front gate of the school. As many schools have multiple gates for pupil entry, it is fairer to all applicants to measure to a single point, rather than to any point on the school's boundary.
- **Education, health and care plan (EHCP)** - An education, health and care plan is a plan made by the local authority under Section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014 specifying the special education, health and social care provision required for that child. These are plans for children with significant disabilities or complex educational needs. They come with their own funding, and their own laws and regulations. Children with EHCPs have different requirements for admissions, and their needs are protected in UK law. EHCPs replaced the terminology 'statement of special needs.'
- **Fair Access Protocol (FAP)** - The process whereby vulnerable children and children unable to gain school places are placed in schools outside the normal admissions processes.
- **Governing bodies** - School governing bodies are bodies corporate responsible for conducting schools with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement. Governing bodies have three key roles: setting strategic direction, ensuring accountability, and monitoring and evaluation.
- **Grammar schools (designated)** - These were the 163 schools that were designated under Section 104(5) of the SSFA 1998 as grammar schools. A 'grammar school' is defined by Section 104(2) of that Act as a school which selects all (or substantially all) of its pupils on the basis of general (academic) ability. At the time of publication, most grammar schools have converted to Academy status.
- **Home local authority** - A child's home local authority is the local authority in whose area the child resides.
- **Infant class size exceptions** - The School Admissions (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations 2012 permit children to be admitted as exceptions to the infant class size limit. These are set out in paragraph 2.15.



- **Infant class size limit** - Section 1 of the SSFA 1998 limits the size of an infant class (a class in which the majority of children will reach the age of five, six or seven during the school year) to 30 pupils per school teacher.
- **In-year application** - An application is an in-year application if it is for the admission of a child to a relevant age group and it is submitted on or after the first day of the first school term of the admission year; or it is for the admission of a child to an age group other than a relevant age group.
- **Late application** - Late applications are applications for entry in a relevant age group which are submitted before the first day of the first term in the admission year but have not been made in time to enable the local authority to offer a place on National Offer Day.
- **Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman** - An independent, impartial, and free service that investigates complaints about maladministration of certain public bodies.
- **Looked after children (LAC)** - Children who are in the care of local authorities as defined by Section 22 of the Children Act 1989. In relation to school admissions legislation a 'looked after child' is a child in public care at the time of application to a school. See also previously looked after children.
- **Maintaining local authority** - the area in which a school is located is referred to as the maintaining local authority.
- **National Offer Day (NOD)** - The day each year on which local authorities are required to send the offer of a school place to all parents in their area. Secondary National Offer Day is 1 March (or the next working day). Primary National Offer Day is 16 April (or the next working day).
- **Nodal point** – See also Designated School Node. A fixed geographical point, other than the location of the school, from which children may be afforded priority for admission to a particular school, based on the distance from the child's home to the nodal point. A nodal point is part of a school's admission arrangements and must therefore be consulted upon, determined, and published in the same way as other admission arrangements. The selection of such a point must be clearly explained and made on reasonable grounds.
- **Normal admissions round** - The period during which parents are invited to express a minimum of three preferences for a place at any state-funded school, in rank order on the common application form provided by their home local authority. This period usually follows publication of the local authority composite prospectus on 12 September, with the deadlines for parental applications of 31 October (for secondary places) and 15 January (for primary places), and subsequent offers made to parents on National Offer Day as defined above.
- **Own admitting authority (OAA)** - These are schools that are independent of the local authority. The term covers academies, free schools, and some faith schools.
- **Offer year** - The school year immediately preceding the school year in which pupils are to be admitted to schools under the admission arrangements in question. This is the school year in which the offers of school places are communicated.
- **Oversubscription** - Where a school has a higher number of applicants than the school's published admission number.
- **Oversubscription criteria** - This refers to the published criteria that an admission authority applies when a school has more applications than places available in order to decide which children will be allocated a place.

- **PAN** - Published or Pupil Admission Number. This is the total number of places available at the school, in this particular year group.
- **Previously looked after children (PLAC)** - Previously looked after children are children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order).
- **Relevant age group** - The age group to which children are normally admitted. This is also referred to as their expected or chronological age group or cohort. Each relevant age group must have admission arrangements, including an admission number. Some schools (for example schools with sixth forms which admit children into the sixth form) may have more than one relevant age group.
- **School year** - The period beginning with the first school term to begin after July and ending with the beginning of the first such term to begin after the following July, as defined by Section 579 of the Education Act 1996.
- **Schools adjudicator** - A statutory officeholder who is appointed by the Secretary of State for Education but is independent. The schools adjudicator decides on objections to determined admission arrangements of all state-funded schools and variations of determined admission arrangements for maintained schools. The schools adjudicator also deals with referrals of directions by local authorities to maintained schools to admit a child and provides advice on requests to the Secretary of State by local authorities to direct academies to admit children.
- **Social and medical consideration (SEMC)** – Also known as social, emotional and medical consideration. This is an application for a specific school, based on its unique ability to provide for the specific needs of a child. Only a small number of, if any, applications are successful in any application year.
- **Supplementary information form (SIF)** - This is a form requested by some schools that contains extra information to help the school decide which oversubscription criteria is most appropriate. These forms may ask questions about religious attendance, pupil premium information, staff children information, or other information required by the individual school.
- **Twice excluded pupils** - A child who has been permanently excluded from two or more schools.
- **Waiting lists** - A list of children held and maintained by the admission authority when the school has allocated all its place, on which children are ranked in priority order against the school's published oversubscription criteria.

## APPENDIX B - FAQs

### **Why are there no secondary schools listed on the in-year form or in the guide?**

Secondary schools in RBWM currently run their own in-year admission processes.

### **What do I do if I want to apply to a school that isn't listed on the form or in this guide?**

If the name of the school is missing, it means we do not coordinate their in-year transfer process. You will need to contact the individual schools directly.

Please see the [Admissions Website](#) for a range of FAQs. If you cannot find your answer in this guide or on the website, please email us on [rbwm.admissions@achievingforchildren.org.uk](mailto:rbwm.admissions@achievingforchildren.org.uk)