



# **WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **Your Guide To Secondary School Admissions For Entry In September 2025**

**Application Deadline: 31st October 2024**

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

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## Key Dates at a glance

<b>Admissions Round</b>	<b>Secondary - Year 6 into Year 7</b>
<b>Birth range</b>	<b>01/09/13 - 31/08/14</b>
<b>Website opens and you can apply online</b>	<b>12<sup>th</sup> September 2024</b>
<b>Closing date for applications</b>	<b>31<sup>st</sup> October 2024</b>
<b>Deadline for house moves and additional supporting evidence</b>	<b>31<sup>st</sup> December 2024</b>
<b>National Offer Day &amp; Notifications sent</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> March 2025</b>
<b>Acceptances and refusals of any offer should be made by this date</b>	<b>17<sup>th</sup> March 2025</b>
<b>Waiting list information available</b>	<b>18<sup>th</sup> March 2025</b>
<b>Any appeal should be received by this date. (20 school days following notification that application was unsuccessful)</b>	<b>29<sup>th</sup> March 2025</b>
<b>Appeals received on-time should be considered by this date (40 school days)</b>	<b>15<sup>th</sup> June 2025</b>

## 1. When will your child move to Secondary School

If your child was born between 1 September 2013 and 31 August 2014, you will need to apply for your child to start secondary school in September 2025.

The age to which all young people in England must continue in education or training has been set by the Government. This is not the same as the statutory school leaving age, which remains at 16.

Pupils starting Year 11 or below will need to continue in education until at least their 18th birthday. This does not necessarily mean staying in school, it could be through:

- Full-time study in a school, college or with a training provider.
- Full-time work or volunteering combined with part-time education or training.
- An apprenticeship, traineeship or supported internship.

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

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

If your child is undergoing an education health and care needs assessment which is not yet complete, please apply as normal via the [Council's Citizen Portal](#) . Your application will be withdrawn if an EHCP is subsequently agreed.

### 3. When to submit a school place application

You can submit your school place application between 12th September 2024 and 31st October 2024 via the [Council's Citizen Portal](#).

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

You must apply to your home local authority, (the council you pay your council tax to). You can apply either online or by using a paper application form. Either way you apply you can name up to **four preferences**. You can only make one application and you must name any school you wish to apply for regardless of which Local Authority it is in.

For example, if you live within Wokingham but want to apply for a school in Reading or Bracknell, you must name the school on your Wokingham application form. This means if you are a Wokingham resident you will need to apply to Wokingham Borough Council and must name any school that you wish to apply for, even if it is within another Local Authority.

You cannot list independent/ private schools on your application form. These are fee paying schools and you must apply to the school directly.

You cannot apply direct to other local authorities or schools. It is your responsibility to contact other admissions authorities to obtain information about their schools and the criteria that is relevant to admission at that school and to complete any additional forms that may be required.

Wokingham Borough residents should make applications to Wokingham Borough Council online, via the [Council's Citizen Portal](#) known as the Common Application Form (CAF).

## 5. Types of schools

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

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

### **Community and Maintained Schools**

Wokingham Borough Council is the admission authority for these schools and makes decisions about the policy they use for school admissions. There are no longer any Community Secondary Schools in Wokingham.

### **Academy Schools (Non – Maintained Schools)**

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

### **Voluntary Aided Schools (Non – Maintained Schools)**

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

### **Free Schools (Non – Maintained Schools)**

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

## 6. Which schools to apply for

You can apply for a secondary school place at any maintained or academy (non-fee paying) mainstream school on your home authority's online system, as long you are applying for the school's natural year of entry. **This is year 7 for secondary schools.**

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

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

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

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

## 7. How many schools to apply for

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

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

## 8. Catchment/Designated area

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The regulations allow for a parent to express a preference for a school; this is not the same as being able to ‘choose’ which school your child attends. You should not make any assumptions that your child is entitled to a place at a preferred school, at a school within your designated area or at the school nearest to your home address. You are not guaranteed a place at a preferred school, and it is important to be realistic when considering which schools you name as preferences. Distances of proximity vary every year and you should consider using all four preferences, including local schools which have consistently reached your address in past allocations.



It is essential that you look at how places were allocated at Wokingham Secondary Schools over the last few years. Click on the links below to find out how places were allocated in 2024, 2023 and 2022.

- [Secondary school allocation summary 2024 \(PDF document\)](#)
- [Secondary school allocation summary 2023 \(PDF document\)](#)
- [Secondary school allocation summary 2022 \(PDF document\)](#)

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

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

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

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

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

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

You can [find and compare schools on GOV.UK](#).

## 10. Completing your application

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

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

Parents who submit an on-time paper application form and have provided an email address will be sent an email from **9am** on National Offer Day. If no email has been provided, parents will have their offer letter posted **on** National Offer Day. We are unable to give results out over the telephone.

Each Local Authority informs their residents of the outcome of their application, even if the result is an out of borough school.

Any documents or applications posted to School Admissions may be delayed in being received. Wherever possible all applications should be submitted online, and documents scanned to [schooladmissions@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:schooladmissions@wokingham.gov.uk)

### Child's details

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

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

### School preferences

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

## Order of preference

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

## Reasons for your preference

The application form has space for you to give a reason for naming a school as a preference, but you do not have to complete this. Your reasons for choosing a particular school are not considered during the allocation process unless they are relevant to the school's oversubscription criteria.

It is important that you tell us anything that could affect our decision, for example if you have ticked the box to indicate you wish your application to be considered on medical and/or social grounds. In this box you can tell us if there are specific social or medical reasons why your child must go to a particular school.

## Siblings

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

## Looked after and previously looked after children

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Send your evidence to the [Admissions Team](#). All information submitted will be regarded as confidential.

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

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

## Private fostering arrangements

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

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

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

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

## Supporting Evidence

If relevant to your application, please provide evidence

- if your child is adopted, fostered or in local authority care
- evidence if you're applying under exceptional medical or social needs
- evidence you are moving house

## Parent and carer declaration

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

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

## 11. The preference system when applying for secondary school places

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

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

### Equal preference (This is how school places are allocated) – How it works

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

## 12. School admission rules

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

All Secondary schools in Wokingham set their own admissions criteria, but applications for these schools should still be made to Wokingham Borough School Admissions Service using the [Parent Portal](#). Please click on the school details below to be taken to their website for further information about each school and to view their oversubscription criteria.

## 13. Own admission authority schools

School details	Places available In 2025	Last place allocated
<a href="#">Bohunt</a>	270	<b>Oversubscribed</b> - The last child allocated lived 3.973 miles from the school
<a href="#">Bulmershe</a>	255	<b>Oversubscribed</b> - The last child allocated lived 2.398 miles from the school
<a href="#">The Emmbrook</a>	240	Undersubscribed - All preferences met
<a href="#">The Forest School</a>	300	Undersubscribed - All preferences met
<a href="#">The Holt (Girls only)</a>	240	<b>Oversubscribed</b> - The last child allocated lived 1.568 miles from the school
<a href="#">Maiden Erlegh</a>	279	<b>Oversubscribed</b> - The last child allocated lived 0.844 miles from the school
<a href="#">Oakbank</a>	120	Undersubscribed - All preferences met
<a href="#">The Piggott</a>	222	<b>Oversubscribed</b> - The last child allocated lived 7.497 miles from the school
<a href="#">St Crispins</a>	255	<b>Oversubscribed</b> - The last child allocated lived 2.644 miles from the school
<a href="#">Waingels College</a>	240	<b>Oversubscribed</b> - The last child allocated lived 2.199 miles from the school



## 14. Published admission number (PAN)

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

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

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

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

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

## 15. Supplementary Information Forms (SIF)

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

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

If you wish to apply under the medical and/or social grounds oversubscription criteria for any of the schools listed below in the Wokingham Borough, you must complete their SIF and send it directly to the school. This can be downloaded by clicking on the school's name below or visiting the school's website directly.

- [The Emmbrook School](#)
- [St Crispin's](#)
- [Waingels](#)

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

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

## 16. Change of preference

If an older child transfers to another school after 31 December 2024 and you need to change your younger child's school preferences because of this, you should contact Admissions Services: [schooladmissions@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:schooladmissions@wokingham.gov.uk)

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

If any medical or social circumstances within the family change after 31 December 2024 that means that you feel your child would need a place at a particular school, please contact the Admissions Team [schooladmissions@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:schooladmissions@wokingham.gov.uk).

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

## 17. Applying after the closing date

Any applications received after 31 October 2024 will be considered as a late application. However, we may consider applications as on time, under exceptional circumstances, and when evidence is provided to support this. Our ability to accept late applications, with extenuating circumstances, as on time, is time sensitive in view of the processes involved. You can apply by downloading an application form from our website [Starting and applying for secondary school - age 11](#) and emailing the completed form to [schooladmissions@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:schooladmissions@wokingham.gov.uk)

## 18. Proof of residence

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

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

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

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

why or confirmation that it is a 6-month rolling tenancy with the expectation that you will be in the property for longer than 6 months. Short term tenancies may not be accepted.

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

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

## 19. Changing your address

If you move address before 31 December 2024, you must notify us in writing by emailing [schooladmissions@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:schooladmissions@wokingham.gov.uk). You can also make changes to the schools you wish to apply to.

If moving to or within the Wokingham Borough, address evidence received after 31 December 2024 cannot be considered for the initial offer of places. It will be used to communicate the outcome of the application and for waiting list purposes after national offer day where required.

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

## 20. Siblings

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

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

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

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

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

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

## 21. Measuring home to school distance

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

## 22. National Offer Day

On 3 March 2025 we let our parents know which school has been offered for their child. An email is sent to parents who applied via the Citizen's Portal on the 3 March 2025. Parents who submit an on-time paper application form and have provided an email address will be sent an email from **9am** on National Offer Day. If no email has been provided parents will have their offer letter posted **on** National Offer Day. Each Local Authority informs their residents of the outcome of their application, even if the result is an out of borough school.

**It may not always be possible to offer all children a school place on National Offer Day. National Offer Day is the start of the offer process and offers continue to be made when places become available after parents accept and decline their offer of a school place and as parents make alternative arrangements for their child's education.**

## 23. Reasons for Refusal School Admissions

If we have not been able to offer your child a place at your preferred school, this is because there were more applications for the school than there were available places and not all requests for places could be met.

Places are allocated in line with the admissions criteria published by the relevant admission authority and your application may not be ranked high enough to obtain a place.

If you listed own admissions authority schools (e.g., voluntary aided or academy schools) on your application and this school was listed higher than the school offered, then the trust or the governors of the school were unable to offer a place to your child as your application was not ranked high enough against their admissions criteria.

If you have been refused a school place at a school within another local authority (LA) you should refer to the relevant LA for information regarding refusal.

**For late applicants:** If we are not able to offer your child a place at your preferred school, this is because the school has reached its admissions number (the maximum number of children that can be admitted to the year group for September 2025) from the initial round of admissions.

## 24. Waiting Lists

- Your child's name will **automatically** be placed on the waiting list, in criteria order, of any Wokingham school that you named as a higher preference than the school you have been offered.
- If a place becomes available for your child and you accept it, your child will be removed from the waiting list of any schools you named as a lower preference.
- The waiting list will include children new to the area who weren't able to make an application on time.
- Waiting list positions are subject to change as they must be re-ranked each time a new application is received.
- You should be aware that if an application is received for a child who has higher priority under the school's admission criteria, it can affect your child's position on a waiting list. They can move down as well as up the list.
- Your child can remain on more than one waiting list.
- Waiting list positions for Wokingham schools will be available from 18 March 2025 after parental responses, address changes and late applications have been processed. You can request your child's position by sending an email to [schooladmissions@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:schooladmissions@wokingham.gov.uk)
- Wait lists will be closed at the end of a school year (**31<sup>st</sup> July 2026**) and parents will need to re-apply for a place at their preferred school.
- Children who are the subject of a direction by the local authority to admit or who are allocated to a school in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over those on a waiting list.
- For schools outside of Wokingham, you must check with them direct whether you have been automatically added to their waiting list(s).

## 25. Confirming acceptance of the school offer

You can accept or decline a school place offer by clicking on the following link. [Accept or decline the school place you've been offered.](#)

**All acceptances or refusals of a school place must be made by 17 March 2025**

## 26. Making further applications

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

The Admissions Team will advise you of the outcome of any further school applications you make in May 2025. It is strongly recommended that you secure and accept a place at one of the schools that still have availability.

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

## 27. School Place appeals

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## 28. Travel Assistance

When choosing a school place, it is important to think about how your child will travel to and from school each day. Most families in Wokingham organise their own home to school journey. They may walk, cycle, use public transport, lift-share with other families or take their child to school in their family car.

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

### **Our Service**

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

For more detailed information regarding school transport and eligibility please refer to Wokingham Council's full School Travel Assistance policy. **You are strongly encouraged to read the travel assistance policy before making a school place application.**

If there is a school with places available that could meet the needs of your child and is closer to your home than the school or schools listed in your application and/or which offer your child a place, the placement will be classed as Parental Preference, and you are unlikely to qualify for travel assistance.

Please note, parental working commitments will not be considered as part of the decision to award transport support.

**Did you know that children who walk, cycle or scoot to school are exposed to less pollution than they would be in a car?**

We work with schools to encourage safe, active and sustainable journeys to school for children (and parents). We want to help our young people gain the lifelong skills and knowledge they need to travel safely, responsibly and (where appropriate) independently. For more information, please refer to [About My Journey \(myjourneywokingham.com\)](http://myjourneywokingham.com)

Travelling actively to school provides the perfect opportunity for children to learn about their local area, expand their social networks and feel independent.

Modes of travel can include:

- Walking;
- Scooting;
- Cycling;
- Park and striding (parking at least a 5-minute walk from your final destination);
- Public transport

Research also shows that walking, cycling or scooting to school can improve children's':

- Alertness;
- Concentration (for up to four hours afterwards!);
- Academic performance;
- Well-being and mood;
- Self-esteem.

It also makes children more likely to choose sustainable travel options in the future.

The [Health Promoting Schools programme](#) strives to create a healthy environment for schools, including pupils, staff, and the wider community through connecting with schools with local services that support health and wellbeing needs.

## Travelling to Secondary Schools

Going to school on foot or by bicycle is great for children in secondary school. It's good for their health and helps them become more independent. Plus, they get to meet and hang out with friends along the way!

Climate change is a big concern for many young people, and by choosing eco-friendly ways to travel, they're making a positive impact on this global issue.

[Want to know more about how to get to secondary schools in Wokingham borough? Just click on the relevant school below for all the details.](#)

Select your school:

<a href="#"><u>Bohunt School</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>St Crispin's</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Bulmershe School</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Maiden Erlegh</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Emmbrook School</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Oakbank School</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Forest School</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Piggott School</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Holt School</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Waingels College</u></a>

## 29. Eligibility for Travel Assistance

### Eligibility criteria for mainstream schools

Your child must meet all of the following criteria to be eligible for travel assistance:

1. Be of compulsory school age (the term following your child's fifth birthday until the end of the school year in which they turn 16 years of age.)
2. Attend the nearest available and suitable school (where parents name their nearest suitable school as one of their 4 preferences and a place is not available, assistance may be offered to the next closest school, where the other qualifying eligibility criteria are met.)
3. Live the appropriate distance from home to school:
  - More than 2 miles (if the child is below the age of 8)
  - More than 3 miles (if the child or young person is aged 8 to 16)

The walking distance will be measured from where the home meets the public street, for example from the front gate to the nearest gate or point of access to the school premises, and by the shortest route along which a child, accompanied as necessary, may walk safely. As such, the route measured may include footpaths, bridleways, and other pathways, as well as recognised roads.

### Nearest Suitable School

A school will only be considered as unsuitable if there is a physical reason that a child cannot attend. Reasons for a school being unsuitable may include, but not be limited to:

- a secondary-aged child attending a primary school and vice versa.

There is no entitlement to transport to the nearest school of a particular type, for example, by gender, faith, structure (i.e. academy, grammar, upper, free school) or to the catchment area school if it is not also the nearest available school.

We would not consider a school as not suitable for your child because it does not offer the course that you would like your child to attend, or if you are unhappy with its current Ofsted rating.

Please note the nearest suitable school with places available may not necessarily be a Wokingham school or the catchment school for your home address. The nearest suitable school for **transport purposes** means physically, the nearest qualifying school the pupil is eligible to attend, which means a school in a neighbouring Local Authority may be nearer to your home address than any Wokingham school. You can find your nearest schools and colleges by referring to the Government website Search for schools, colleges and multi-academy trusts - [Find school and college performance data in England - GOV.UK \(find-school-performance-data.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/find-school-performance-data).

The Council has no statutory duty to provide travel assistance if a child is attending a school on parental preference grounds. This means the schools applied for are not the nearest schools, or one of the 3 nearest eligible schools in the case of extended criteria (low income). In cases of parental preference, parents/carers are responsible for making their own travel arrangements. For the normal school admissions round, unless there are exceptional circumstances, it is generally assumed that each of your nearest schools, including schools in neighbouring Boroughs, will have space to accommodate your child. Parents/carers will be expected to have named all four nearest schools on their application, which may include schools in neighbouring Boroughs.

For pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) the nearest suitable school is taken to mean the school deemed most appropriate by the local authority to meet the pupil's needs.

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

For transport to be provided in this instance the parent must provide evidence that they have applied for and been refused a place at the school which is the nearest school for their home address and any other schools closer than the school offering admission. This includes schools in neighbouring boroughs. If your nearest suitable school is not in the Wokingham Borough, then transport may be provided. This is subject to meeting the eligibility criteria in this policy.

## Important

The eligibility test for transport purposes is undertaken at the same time as the normal school admissions round when places are allocated:

- For transfer to secondary schools this is during September and October with school place offers being sent to parents/carers in early March
- For entry to primary and transfer to Junior school this is during November to January with school place offers being sent to parents/carers in early April

Where parents/carers apply late i.e., after the published closing date for applications for admission, eligibility for travel assistance is assessed for the school(s) applied for taking into account available places in the nearest schools at that point of allocation.

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

## Assessments for home to school transport

Assessments for home to school transport will only be processed following receipt of a completed application form. Home to school transport eligibility and assessments will not be provided over the phone.

### How to apply

If your child meets the eligibility criteria, above, complete the appropriate application form which can be found on our webpages: [Travel assistance to school and college \(wokingham.gov.uk\)](https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/travel-assistance-to-school-and-college)

### Types of travel assistance that may be offered

Wokingham Borough Council is an enabling council. We prioritise empowering parents and families to find their own solutions, helping people to be independent and to access support when they really need it.

The type of travel assistance offered will be for the council to decide, taking into account the needs of the young person and the nature of the journey to be undertaken. The assistance offered might include:

- A Personal Travel Budget to enable you to make your own arrangements independently (offered automatically if this is the most cost-effective travel assistance option)
- Free passes for children on public transport;
- Provision of a seat on a dedicated school bus or minibus
- A seat in a taxi, usually shared with one or more other pupils, where a pupil's needs require more personalised arrangements. This will be in exceptional circumstances only.

### Note: Personal Budgets

A personal budget is a sum of money given to parents or carers to enable them to arrange their child's travel in a way that suits their circumstances best. The budget allows families complete freedom to choose the best possible travel option for their child, with flexibility to change over time. Please read our guide to Personal Travel Budgets for more information.



## **Travel assistance we do not provide**

We only provide travel assistance for a child's journey between their home address and school.

If the child's parents live at separate addresses, travel assistance will normally be provided to where the child normally lives.

We do not provide travel assistance for:

- Travel to an alternative provision arranged by the school, this could be because of a fixed period exclusion or other reasons
- Attending work experience placements or interviews
- Visits to clinics, GP surgeries, hospital appointments during the school day
- After school clubs
- Travel to a parent or carer's preferred school that is not the nearest suitable school
- Travel to and from home outside of normal school finishing hours.

## **Reviewing travel assistance**

We review travel assistance regularly to make sure we are meeting the needs of the children travelling as much as possible.

We may decide that an alternative option could be more suitable for your child or young person. When this happens, we will check with you and the school before making any changes to travel arrangements.