



Admission Arrangements 2023/24 - For School & Nursery

If a school is oversubscribed, places are allocated in accordance with the school's published admission criteria (also known as admission policies or admission arrangements).

The admission authority for a school or academy must set admission arrangements annually.

For community schools, the admission authority is the local council. For voluntary aided schools, academies, and free schools, it is the school's governing body or academy trust (please see individual school's websites for information on their determined admission arrangements)

Oversubscription criteria – community and voluntary controlled schools

When there are fewer applications for places in a particular school than the published admission number for that school all legitimate applications will be met with the offer of a place there.

Where there are more applicants than places, the following oversubscription criteria (admission criteria) will be used for deciding which applications have priority. These criteria are set out below in the order in which they are applied.

- 1. Looked after children and previously looked after children** – Children in public care and children previously looked after will automatically be given first priority over other categories where priority is claimed on the application form and validated by the local authority.
- 2. Special reasons** – Priority for admission may be given where there are exceptional social, medical or educational reasons for admission to a particular school. These reasons must be supported by evidence from a relevant professional (e.g. a doctor or a social worker) and must be submitted with the application for admission. The purpose of this criterion is to give priority to pupils with a specific need that can be met specifically at one school rather than another. The threshold for a successful application under this criterion is high and such cases are likely to be rare since all schools are able to offer support and facilities for a wide range of needs.
- 3. Siblings**
Catchment area siblings – Children whose normal place of residence is in the catchment area of the school at the closing date for applications, and who will have a sibling at the school at the point of admission, in distance order with those living closer having higher priority.
Non-catchment area siblings – Children whose normal place of residence is outside the catchment area of the school at the closing date for applications and who will have a sibling at the school at the point of admission in distance order with those living closer having higher priority.
- 4. Catchment area children** – Children whose normal place of residence is in the catchment area at the closing date for applications in distance order with those living closer having higher priority.
- 5. Non-catchment area children** – Children whose normal place of residence is outside the catchment area at the closing date for applications in distance order with those living closer having higher priority.

Appeals

Unsuccessful applicants have a statutory right of appeal to an Independent Statutory Appeals Panel.

Legal Background

Briefly, the effect of legislation since 1980 is that admission authorities are required to admit a pupil to the school of the parents' preference unless certain exceptions specified in the legislation apply. The School Standards and Framework Act 1998, as amended by Education Acts 2002, imposed a further a duty under the Education (Infant Class Sizes)(England) Regulation 1998 to ensure that no infant (Reception, Year 1 or Year 2) class, taught by a single teacher exceeds 30. Appeals panels are not able to allow the appeal, unless one or more of the following exceptions applies, namely that either:

- a) The child would have been offered a place if the admissions arrangements had been properly implemented;**
- b) The child would have been offered a place if the arrangements had not been contrary to the mandatory provisions in the School Admissions Code & the School Standards & Framework Acts 1998; and/or**
- c) The decision to refuse was not one, which a reasonable admission authority would make in the circumstance of the case.**

Unless any of these circumstances apply, panels may not uphold an appeal.