



## Warwickshire County Council In-Year Admissions Process

2022/2023 Academic Year

### Terms

The term '**school**', in this document, refers to maintained schools, and academy and free schools. It does not relate to special schools or private (fee-paying) schools, as these schools have their own admission processes.

The term '**parent**', in this document, refers to biological parents, all those with Parental Responsibility, and other person with primary care for a child.

The term '**own admission authority**' school, in this document, refers to state schools for whom the local authority is not the admissions authority, including; Academies; Voluntary Aided; Trust; and Foundation schools. The admission authority for such schools is the governing body or the academy trust.

The term '**infant**' school, in this document, refers to any admission authority school which admits children at the beginning of the Reception year until the end of Year 2.

The term '**junior**' school, in this document, refers to any admission authority school which admits children at the beginning of Year 3 until the end of Year 6.

The term '**primary**' school, in this document, refers to any admission authority school which admits children at the beginning of the Reception year until the end of Year 6.

The term '**secondary**' school, in this document, refers to any admission authority school which admits children at the beginning of Year 7 until (at least) the end of Year 11.

## Introduction

The School Admissions Code no longer requires local authorities to coordinate in-year applications for school places. In-year applications are those relevant to when a parent wishes to move their child from one school to another outside of the normal admissions round, for example, because of a house move

Warwickshire County Council does, however, still coordinate in-year applications for all community and voluntary controlled schools, and the vast majority of own admission authority schools, such as academies. At the time of writing, only the following schools are not part of Warwickshire's In-Year Admissions Scheme:

- All Saints Bedworth C of E Primary School
- Southam St James C of E (VA) Primary School
- St Lawrence C of E (VA) Primary School (Napton)
- St Nicolas C Of E Academy (Nuneaton)
- Studley St Mary's C of E Junior School
- Rugby Free Primary School
  
- Etone College
- North Leamington School
- Rugby Free Secondary School
- The Queen Elizabeth Academy

*The above list will be updated on a continual basis as required.*

Warwickshire residents wishing to apply for a place at the above schools should contact them directly. Warwickshire Admissions Team works with all schools, including the above schools, to maintain a record of the number of places available in each year group at each school and will be able to advise parents on the availability on school places in an area.

Non-Warwickshire residents should contact the local authority in which they live to establish the in-year admissions process in relation to their home authority.

In-year admissions also apply where parents would like to move their child from Year 2 in a Primary School into Year 3 of a different Primary school. This is because Year 3 is not the normal point of entry for primary schools.

However, a change of school from Year 2 in an Infant school to Year 3 in a Junior school is classed as a normal point of entry – or 'transfer round' - and these applications must follow the coordinated admissions process, which is explained in the Warwickshire County Council admission arrangements for the relevant entry year.

## The application process

Families must follow the in-year admissions process by completing a Change of School application form for their child. This can be done as an online application via the Parent Portal:

[www.warwickshire.gov.uk/moving-schools-within-school-year](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/moving-schools-within-school-year)

This process allows parents to:

- Name up to six schools on the application, in their order of preference
- Rank their preferred schools in the order they would like their child to be offered a place (parents should name their most preferred school(s) as their first/highest preference on the application).
- Give reasons for each preference.
- Give details of any siblings who will also be attending one of the preferred schools at the point of admission of the child for whom a place is being applied.  
*Some own admission authority schools will also consider sibling links where the sibling attends the preferred school at the time of application, rather than time of admission of the child for whom the application is being made.*
- Give details of any parent who is a staff member at the school which has been named as a preference, in line with the oversubscription for some own admission authority schools.
- Indicate if the child has an Education, Health and Care Plan
- Provide details of the child's faith
- Confirm if the child falls within the classification of 'Looked After'\* or 'Previously Looked After'\*\*, in line with paragraph 1.7 of the School Admissions Code (2014).

*\*'Looked After' refers to a child who is currently under the care of the Local Authority (eg: in foster care under a full or interim care order).*

*\*\*'Previously Looked After' refers to a child who was looked after (as outlined above), but ceased to be so because they were adopted straight after leaving care, or they became subject to a child arrangements order – including a residency order - or special guardianship order.*

The Change of School application process requires you to provide your child's details and the schools you wish to apply for. Applications should be completed using the online parent portal, or via a paper copy of the application form.

A guide to the Change of School application process is also available online and is useful for parents, carers and any other organisations who are interested in following the process. A further guide is also available specifically for schools, by request through the Admissions Service.

Once the Change of School application has been submitted, it will be processed by the Admissions Service at Warwickshire County Council, in consultation with the schools that have been named.

## Definition of Home Address

Where the child normally resides during the school week and where they sleep for at least 50% of the week.

If arrangements are such that a child resides at two addresses for equal amounts of time, then parents must decide which address to use for admissions purposes. Failure to agree on the address to use on the child's application for a school will result in Warwickshire County Council using a random number generator to determine which application to process.

Addresses involved in child-minding arrangements, whether with professional child-minders, friends or relatives, are excluded.

Where a school place is offered on the basis of an address which is subsequently found to be different from the address where the child ordinarily resides, that place may be withdrawn. Cases will be assessed on an individual basis and in discussion with any schools named on the application which are their own admission authority.

There is an expectation that the child will be resident at the address used to allocate a place on a long-term basis. Short-term house moves purely to secure a school place may be considered fraudulent or intentionally misleading and, in such circumstances, the place may be withdrawn.

Where a child's address changes after a school offer has been made, the Local Authority (acting on behalf of the school, in some cases) may request an explanation for the house move and documentary evidence that the child is resident at the new property. The Admissions Service operates a thorough and robust address checking process and home visits are also carried out through this process.

## Evidence of Home Address

As part of the application process, two documents which confirm the child's home address **must** be submitted with the Change of School application form.

The first document should be a copy of either;

- a full, signed copy of a current tenancy agreement, **or**,
- a copy of a letter from the solicitor confirming that there has been an exchange of contracts or a copy of the completion letter from the solicitor

The second document should be a copy of one of the following:

- Utility bill (electricity, gas, water or landline phone), *dated within the last 3 months*
- Council tax bill for the current financial year
- Housing benefit letter, *dated within the last 3 months*
- Universal Credit award notice letter, *dated within the last 3 months*

Copies of documents are required – **do not send originals as these documents will not be returned**.

If you have any difficulty in submitting any of the documents stated above then please contact the Admissions Service, who can advise you further.

## Children of split parent families

The Admissions Service will not become involved in disputes between parents, or parties, regarding applications for school places.

As part of the disclaimer found in Section C of the Change of School application, it is expected that all parties with parent responsibility of the child will be aware of the application being made and will agree to all the information disclosed within, including the schools named as preferences on that application.

Where parents, or other parties with parental responsibility for the child, do not agree that an in-year application should be made for the child (in order for them to change school during the academic year), then the parent or party who does not agree should contact the Admissions Service, in writing, to confirm this. In such cases, the application will not be processed further, where possible.

If the application has already been processed and a school place offered, then the local authority and the school at which the place has been offered will honour the place. If any person with parental responsibility wishes to dispute the application or school place offered further then they must seek their own, independent legal advice, which may then lead to a court order being made. The local authority will obey any such court order that is then provided.

Where it is agreed that an in-year application should be made, but the home address and/or the school preferences to name on an application cannot be agreed to, the Admissions Service will contact both parents to inform them of the situation and to request that they confirm between themselves, and to the local authority, which application and school preferences to take forward. This may require the involvement of the courts, where necessary.

Where the child spends 50% of their time with each parent, and a decision cannot be reached by the relevant closing date for the submission of applications, the local authority will intervene and act on their behalf. The local authority uses a computer 'random

generator' to select either parent A or parent B's application. This process is carried out by two Admissions officers in the presence of a local authority solicitor. Parent A and B are advised which application will be processed.

## **Applications from overseas residents**

### ***UK Military families/Crown Servants***

For families of UK Service Personnel with a confirmed posting to within the county, or crown servants returning from overseas to live in the county, admission authorities:

- **Must** allocate a place in advance of the family arriving in the area\*, provided the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date and a Unit postal address or quartering area address when considering the application against their oversubscription criteria. This must include accepting a Unit postal address or quartering area address for a service child.

*\*The child must then start at the school allocated within the academic year for which the offer relates. For example, a Year 8 place offered in October 2021 must be taken up by the end of the academic year in July 2022, otherwise a new application will need to be submitted and processed for the child.*

- **Must** 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.
- **Must not** refuse a service child a place because the family does not currently live in the area, or cannot provide documentary evidence of residence at a particular property
- **Must not** reserve blocks of places for these children.

The application will follow the in-year admissions process in all other respects, as outlined in this document.

### ***Families moving to, or back to, the UK (Non-Military)***

There is no legal requirement to process applications from other families coming from overseas who are not yet resident within UK, except as set out above.

Applications from overseas families in all other cases will therefore only be processed in line with the coordinated scheme once the family, including the child for whom the application is being made, can show evidence that they will be residing in Warwickshire imminently. Proof of residence may be requested at any time during the application process and the application will only be processed once sufficient documentation, that confirms a Warwickshire address, has been provided to the Admissions Service.

For schools where Warwickshire County Council is the admission authority there is also an expectation that the child and applicant will reside at the address used to allocate a place on a long-term basis. Short-term house moves purely to secure a school place

may be considered fraudulent or intentionally misleading and, in such circumstances, the place may be withdrawn, even when the child has started at the school concerned. Other admission authorities have similar provisions in their own admission arrangements. Please contact individual schools for further information on this.

## **How the offer of a place is determined**

Upon receipt of a completed Change of School application, the Admissions Service will send it to the school listed as the first preference on the application form. Schools should inform the Admissions Service within **2 school days\*** if they are able to offer a place. If the first preference school is able to offer a place then the parents will be notified in writing and no further consideration will be given to any remaining preferences.

Where the first preference school is not able to offer a place then the relevant oversubscription criteria will be used to determine the child's place on the school's waiting list.

Further preferences named on the application will then be considered in order, using the same process as outlined above. It is the intention of the local authority to process a Change of School application within **10 school days\***.

*\*Please be aware that, at busy periods of the school year, the application may take longer to process. Particularly busy periods for both the local authority and schools include the last 4 weeks of the academic year, in June/July, and the first 2 weeks of the new academic year in September. In-year applications submitted at these times of the year are likely to take longer than 10 school days to process.*

*Also, due to the requirement for individual schools to be involved in the in-year admissions process, applications are unlikely to be processed during school holidays. This will, therefore, have an impact on the length of time an application is with the local authority and/or school before a place can be offered or refused. For example, in-year applications cannot be processed during the 6 week summer holidays, so any Change of School applications submitted at the end of July are unlikely to be processed until the beginning of September.*

## **Over-subscription criteria (Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools)**

For community and voluntary controlled schools, the Admissions Service will apply the oversubscription criteria. This will be taken from one of the following documents, depending on the year group for which admission is being sought:

Applications for places into Year 1, Year 2, Year 3, Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6 - at a Warwickshire Community or Voluntary Controlled Primary, Infant or Junior School - will utilise the over-subscription criteria as laid out in the document entitled, **'Warwickshire County Council Admission Arrangements - Starting school in Reception in September 2022, or transferring to Year 3 at a Junior school.'**

The above will also apply to in-year applications for places into Reception, but only where

the application is made **after** 31 August 2022.

- Applications for places into Year 8, Year 9, Year 10 and Year 11 will utilise the over-subscription criteria as laid out by each secondary school in their 2022 entry admission arrangements.

The above will also apply to in-year applications for places into Year 7, but only where the application is made **after** 31 August 2022.

### **Over-subscription criteria (Own Admission Authority Schools)**

Where it has been agreed that the Admissions Service will carry out the in-year application process for own admission authority schools, it is the admission authority's responsibility to determine the over-subscription criteria to allocate to each application. The over-subscription criteria can be viewed by the school via the School Admissions Module.

Other own admission authority schools are responsible for assigning their own oversubscription criteria.

Own admission authority schools will have their own set of determined admission arrangements for the relevant academic year, which should outline the over-subscription criteria to follow in relation to in-year applications.

### **Refusal of an offer**

Where the first preference school is not able to offer a place then the second preference school will be sent the application and the process repeated, and so on, until a place can be offered at one of the schools named on the application, or all preferences have been exhausted.

Should it not be possible to offer a place at **any** of the preferences named on the application, and the applicant does not want their child to remain at their current school, then a place will be allocated at the next nearest school with availability (this could be either a community or voluntary controlled school maintained by Warwickshire or an own admission authority school which has a space, including voluntary aided schools and academies). The next nearest school with availability will be identified based on distance calculated by a straight line measurement.

Where a school preference is considered and a place is not offered to the applicant, the parent's legal right to appeal is triggered. Applicants will be informed of this in their written notification of refusal of a place at the preferred school(s).

### **Appeals**

Parents will be informed of their statutory right of appeal when they receive the outcome of their application. Parents can appeal for any school preference where they have received a refusal. Parents cannot, however, appeal for a place at a school listed as a lower preference than the school place offered. This is because the place will not have



been considered and the application for that school preference will have been automatically withdrawn.

Appeals for places at Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools can be lodged on the Warwickshire County Council website. For own admission authority schools, such as academies and voluntary aided schools, parents should contact the school directly for details of the appeals process. A list of these schools is available on the Warwickshire County Council website.

## **Waiting Lists**

Children will be automatically added to the waiting lists of all Warwickshire community and voluntary controlled schools listed as a higher preference than the school at which a place is allocated. Waiting lists for all community and voluntary controlled schools will be held by the Admissions Service.

Waiting lists will then be cleared at the end of each subsequent term (Spring and Summer) and parents must contact the Admissions Service to confirm their continued interest in the schools applied for in order to remain on the waiting list for a school.

Failure to make contact with the Admissions Service, to confirm continued interest in a place at a particular school, by the beginning of both the Spring term and the Summer term (2022), will result in the child being removed from the relevant waiting lists. A new Change of School application will then need to be made if the family would like to maintain their interest in obtaining a place at a different school for their child.

For other admission authorities – eg: academies and voluntary aided schools - parents should contact the school for details of their waiting list policy. For the majority of these schools, the waiting list will continue to be held by the local authority, but in some cases there will be no waiting list held at all after 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021.

## **Distance**

Distance will be calculated by a straight line measurement from the address point location coordinate of the applicant's home address (as set by Ordnance Survey) to the centre point ('centroid') of the school in question. The centroid is a pre-determined point set by Warwickshire County Council and all distances are subject to changes which may occur with updates of mapping data.

## **Timescales**

Warwickshire County Council aims to process all in-year applications within ten school days.

However, applications may take longer to process in certain circumstances, for example:

- Where the application names more than one school – as each school preference will need to be considered individually

- Where the application names one, or more, Grammar Schools - as the child's academic ability will need to be assessed and compared to the relevant cohort
- Where it is determined that the child's application should be considered through the 'Fair Access Protocol' – as this process is carried out separately to the normal admissions process

Once a place is offered parents have ten working days to accept the place. Parents must accept the place by contacting the Admissions Service. If a place is not accepted within this period then the offer may be withdrawn.

Places must normally be taken up (ie: the child must start at the school) within twenty school days of the place being offered. The only exception to this is where the place offered is for the following academic year, when the place should be taken up at the start of the academic year.

Where applications are not completed in full, the applicant will be notified and the application will not be processed any further.

## **Applying for a Year 3 place at a primary school, starting in September 2022**

There is **no requirement** for parents to make an application for a Year 3 place at the primary school which their child is currently attending in Year 2, if they wish for them to remain at that same school. The child will automatically transfer from Year 2 at that school into Year 3 in September 2022.

However, if a parent who currently has a child in Year 2 at a primary school wishes to make an application for a different primary school, for entry into Year 3 in September 2022, then they must follow the in-year admissions process, as outlined in this document. This is also the case where a child currently in Year 2 at an infant school wishes to make an application for a Year 3 place at a primary school, for entry in September 2022.

In-year applications for Year 3 places at primary schools, for entry in September 2022, can be submitted from Monday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2022. Places will then be offered **from** 27<sup>th</sup> June 2022.

Where the child attends Year 2 in an infant or primary school, and the family wish to make an application for a Year 3 place at a Warwickshire **junior school**, for entry in September 2022, then the coordinated admissions process must be followed. Please see the document entitled, '**Warwickshire County Council Admission Arrangements 2022/23 for community or voluntary controlled schools**' for further information about this process.

## **Warwickshire residents applying for a place at schools outside of Warwickshire**

Warwickshire residents wishing to apply for a place at a school outside of Warwickshire

should contact the relevant admission authority for that school for advice about their individual application process. For example, parents wanting to apply for a place at a Coventry school should contact Coventry School Admissions Service **and** the school concerned directly for further advice, as the school may operate their own in-year admissions process.

Parents may then be directed to apply for schools in other authorities through Warwickshire County Council's In-Year admissions process, in which case, the above process should be followed.

## **Non-Warwickshire residents applying for a place at a Warwickshire school**

Non-Warwickshire residents wishing to apply for a place at a Warwickshire school should, in the first instance, contact their local authority and the school concerned to establish the application process. Parents may then be directed to apply using Warwickshire County Council's In-Year admissions process, in which case, the above process should be followed.

## **Children educated outside of their chronological year group**

As required by the School Admissions Code, Warwickshire County Council operates an application process for the transfer of pupils to the next key stage, as appropriate, and an in-year application process.

In some cases, children will not follow the chronological process for their age group. This may be due to a medical issue which has caused the child to miss a significant amount of time in school, or a special educational need, in which case the parent may request that they be educated in the year group below. Other children may already be educated outside of their chronological year group and it may be appropriate for this arrangement to continue.

Families following the in-year admissions process, who wish to request that their child be educated out of year group at a new school, should read '**Guidance and Policy relating to the education of children outside of their chronological year group**' and complete the relevant request form, which can be found online at:

[www.warwickshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/admissions)

The completed request form should be attached to, and submitted with, the Change of School application.

Request forms will not be processed unless approval has been given from the schools concerned, as noted on the specific request form. Where a school which is its own admission authority agrees to a child being educated out of year group – for any reason – then the local authority will honour this agreement. An in-year application will be processed on this basis.

However, an agreement for a child to be educated out of year group is **not** a guarantee of a school offer.

## Fair Access Protocol

Some applications may need to be considered under Warwickshire County Council's 'Fair Access Protocol' (FAP). This will apply to some children when it has not been possible to secure a school place for them through the normal in-year admissions process.

If your child's application is being considered under the FAP then you will be notified of this as soon as possible after submitting your application.

Further information on the FAP can be found in the '**Warwickshire County Council Fair Access Protocol for Mainstream Primary and Secondary Schools**', as well as online at: [www.warwickshire.gov.uk/changingschools](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/changingschools)

## Home-to-School Transport Assistance

An offer of a school place does not necessarily mean that home-to-school transport assistance will be automatically provided to the child.

Applications for home-to-school transport assistance – usually in the form of a free bus pass – are assessed in line with the relevant Transport Policy. The criteria set out in that policy is different to the criteria and policy which is followed in relation to the school admissions process, and the time of making an application for transport assistance can also have an impact on the outcome, as this will not necessarily correlate with the school admissions process.

If transport assistance has been approved, but an alternative school can be offered from a waiting list, then this assistance may be stopped if the place from the waiting list is not taken up. Where transport assistance is requested in the case of a child who has been given an 'unplaced' school offer, such cases will be considered on an individual basis.

It is important that parents consider their child's transport options to and from school when making an application for school places. Where families are not eligible for home-to-school transport assistance then it is the legal responsibility of the parent / carer to ensure that the child gets to and from school each day, not the local authority and not the school that the child will be attending.

Information on applying for transport assistance, and the criteria used when assessing applications, can be found on the Warwickshire website at:

[www.warwickshire.gov.uk/schooltravel](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/schooltravel)