

School Admission – Middle School Applications Frequently Asked Questions for September 2023

Q1. Which school can your child attend?

The law says that the local authority must give parents the chance to state their preference for the school they wish their child to attend. The law does not give parents/carers an absolute right to "choose" the school for their child. It is important to find out the name of the catchment area school for the home address.

You may apply for other schools, including Academy, Foundation, Free or Voluntary Aided Schools, Important Considerations for you to note:

- If your child is admitted to a middle school of your preference, your child may not have the highest priority for transfer to the related high school. If the related high school is oversubscribed at the time of transfer, your child might then have to move in a different direction from other children attending the same middle school.
- Having gained admission to a middle school of your preference does not mean that younger siblings will automatically gain admission to the same school. Should the school be oversubscribed at the time of application of a younger sibling, other children may have a higher priority on the oversubscription criteria.
- Applications where a preference is expressed on time will take precedence in relation to the school over where a preference is expressed after the closing date, including late changes to preferences. In all of these instances they will have precedence over those where no preference is expressed.
- You should give careful consideration to the means by which your child will travel to school (see the School Transport pages for further information)

Q2. How do you apply for a place at a Middle School?

The parents of ALL pupils resident in Worcestershire, including parents whose preference is for the catchment area school for the child's home address, seeking a place at any Middle School, including any Academy, Foundation, Free or Voluntary Aided School, and any School outside Worcestershire, must complete a [Worcestershire on-line application](#) by the closing date – **15 January 2023** (It is important that you apply by the closing date as applications received after the deadline will be classed as late and you are unlikely to be successful, even if you have a child there already or live very close to the school).

Worcestershire parents are invited to state three preferences on the Common Application. All preferences are treated as equal initially, and the oversubscription criteria applied to each preference. If it is possible to make a potential offer at more than one school, then the final offer will be the school ranked highest on the application.

Please be aware that different LAs, Academies, Foundation, Free and Voluntary Aided Schools may have different admissions criteria, and therefore it is strongly advised that you ensure that you have understood the information that is available from each LA/School, before stating a preference on an application. (The Admissions Criteria for Worcestershire Academy, Foundation, Free and Voluntary Aided Schools are included under the Policies section on this website)

Please make contact with the School Admissions Teams or any of the relevant LAs, if further information is required. (The contact details for neighbouring LAs can be found in the 2023/2024 Information for Parents book)

Parents seeking a place at an Academy, Foundation, Free or Voluntary Aided School or schools outside Worcestershire must:

- obtain from the school an admissions pack, including a prospectus which will explain if you need to provide/complete supplementary information/forms;
- complete and submit a [Worcestershire on-line application](#) naming your school preferences.

It is very important that applications are received no later than the closing date 15 January 2023.

Late applications are always considered, though it may not be possible to allocate a place in the school you prefer, if it is oversubscribed, even if the school is the catchment area school for your child's home address – (See the answer to question 7 regarding late applications)

You should inform the Headteacher of the allocated school, and School Admissions if you are withdrawing your application for any reason. School Admissions and the Headteacher must be notified immediately of any change in the child's home address.

If your child currently lives outside Worcestershire, please see answer provided to question 4 on how to apply for school places.

Q3. Why do I have to put three preferences on the application form?

You are not required to use all three preferences; however you should consider all schools in an area in case your application for your higher preference schools are unsuccessful. If the local authority cannot offer your child a place at your preferred schools, you will be offered the nearest school to your home address that has a place available. By including three preferences, it helps the local authority consider schools that you would find acceptable for your child.

Q4. My child currently lives outside Worcestershire and would like a Worcestershire school place, what should I do?

You should apply to your child's home Local Authority, regardless of which schools you are placing as a preference. If you would like to express a preference for a Worcestershire school, you will need to add it as a preference on the Common Application for your child's home Local Authority.

Please refer to the website of your home Local Authority for information on their School Admission process and timescales.

Q5. When should you apply?

Places in Middle schools are allocated on the basis of applications received on or before the closing date of: **15 January 2023** for admissions in the school year September 2023 to August 2024.

If your child is not attending a Worcestershire school, and yet you live in Worcestershire, you must apply on a Worcestershire application, at the intake stage, for Admission to Middle School, under the National Co-

ordinated Admission Arrangements, even if your preferences include schools within any other Local Authority.

- Proof of application – It is the parent/carers responsibility to ensure a receipt is obtained when making an application. Please retain any receipt as proof of application.
- Applications made online would have been sent a return receipt via email once the application had been submitted. Please retain as proof of submission.

Q6. How do I make an application after the closing date?

After the closing date, from 16 January 2023 until July 2023, parents and carers will be able to submit a [Worcestershire on-line application](#). If you are unable to apply on-line, a late application form (PA1) form is available on request by telephoning 01905 822700.

Q7. What if your application is late or you want to change your application after the closing date ?

To make an application after the closing date of **15 January 2023**, an application must be completed and submitted to School Admissions.

Between 16 January 2023 and 28 February 2023, it is likely that a number of late applications (this includes all requests to amend applications previously submitted) will be received. The Council has agreed in its' co-ordinated scheme to accept late applications, or changes to on time applications, for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools within Worcestershire, within this timeframe, and treat them as being ontime, only in the following circumstances

- a) where a family have just moved address, (refer to the relevant Information for Parents Book);or
- b) where it is agreed, on behalf of the admission authority, that individual circumstances apply, and the delay was reasonable given the circumstances of the case.

In each case, independent supporting documentary evidence will need to be submitted with the application. In all other circumstances, or if the application is not received until after 28 February 2023, late applications will receive a lower priority and will only be considered after the applications received (or deemed to be) on time.

NB. If the late application is for an Academy, Foundation, Free or Voluntary Aided School, or a school outside Worcestershire, it will be necessary to refer to the late application policy of the school or the LA in whose area the school is located.

All applications received after 28 February 2023 for the intake year, must be sent to School Admissions, and will be processed as soon as possible. An offer, or refusal of a school place, will be given by the local authority, on behalf of the relevant admission authority.

Q8. What if I am moving house?

If you are in the process of moving at the time of your application you **MUST** provide School Admissions with some firm independent evidence of when you will actually begin to live there. This evidence must be provided before the relevant closing date for applications. This is also applicable if you are moving property and wish to have your application considered from your new property. The late application policy above

applies even if your application was on submitted on time and you have simply moved property. Please read the relevant Information for Parents Book 2023/24 for full details.

Q9. Who has responsibility for the allocation of places?

If a school is oversubscribed (has more applications than places), it will use admission criteria to decide who to offer places to. Read them carefully for the schools you are interested in.

For Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools, decisions are made by School Admissions. For Academy, Foundation, Free or Voluntary Aided Schools decisions are made by the governing bodies of the individual schools. See published admissions policies.

Q10. How are places allocated?

School Admissions will send details to its Academy, Foundation, Free or Voluntary Aided Schools of all applications received for that school, irrespective of ranking, for initial consideration, and also to neighbouring LAs, who will then apply their own oversubscription criteria.

School Admissions will then receive the outcome of these initial considerations and will compare against lists of potential offers at other schools nominated on the application, to identify any pupils, who may potentially be offered more than one place. If this is the case, then the single offer will be the higher ranked school on the application form.

If no place is available at your second or third preference schools as well, or if you have not expressed a second/third preference, the Home Local Authority will name an alternative school with places available. This will normally be the nearest school to where you live with available places.

Q11. When are decisions made?

Online offers will be emailed on the **17 April 2023**. Offer letters for those who applied on a paper form will be posted on 17th April 2023 via second class postage. They will be sent direct to parents, by School Admissions, even if it is on behalf of the governing body of an Academy, Foundation, Free or Voluntary Aided School, or a school in a neighbouring LA.

In the few cases where it may not be possible to offer a place at any of the preferences nominated on the application form, a place will be offered at the nearest school with available places for pupils who live in Worcestershire.

For pupils not resident in Worcestershire, the offer or refusal letters will be sent direct to parents by the home LA, even if it is for a school in Worcestershire.

Q12. What happens if you are moving into a new area?

Where families with children of school age are moving into a new area, parents should at the earliest opportunity either enquire at schools in the area or contact the Local Authority School Admissions Section in the area. You will be required to provide independent documentary evidence as proof of move to support any application you may make. If your move falls outside of the normal admissions round, then please refer to the Information for Parents – Applying for a place in and Existing Year Group booklet.

In the case of an In-Year Admission, please be aware that we are unable to reserve places in the event that further applications may be received, this means we will not be able to process your application more than 6 weeks in advance of the date you require the place. Please be aware that some schools may well already be full at the time of your application.

Q13. How many children may be admitted to each school?

The County Council has a duty to ensure the provision of efficient education and the efficient use of resources. Schools cannot be permitted to become overcrowded. The number of pupils that may be admitted to a school in the relevant year group (Year 5 or Year 6 intake in the case of Middle Schools) is known as the Published Admission Number (PAN). NB Please be aware that this number is not necessarily for other year groups in the school.

Details for each school are given in the 2023 to 2024 Information for Parents Book.

Q14. How can my child be placed on a waiting list for a particular school if the yeargroup is full?

You should be aware that a school waiting list is an active document. As parents request for their child to be included on the list, the position of an individual child already on the list can change. A waiting list does not give priority based simply on the date an application was added to the list.

Waiting lists for Academy, Foundation, Free and Voluntary Aided Schools are maintained by the individual schools and parents will need to contact the school directly, in order to be included.

Waiting lists for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools, are maintained by School Admissions and parents need to apply in order to be included. These waiting lists will be maintained until the 31 July 2024.

Only on receipt of an acknowledgement slip from School Admissions will that child be on the list.