

Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for Secondary Schools in Worcestershire for 2024/25 Academic Year

Document Details: Approved Document

Date: February 2023

Document Location: [Co-ordinated Schemes for all Worcestershire Schools | Worcestershire County Council](#)

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Introduction

Local Authorities are required, to operate a coordinated admissions scheme for Secondary Schools (i.e. schools who admit children aged 11 or older). Under the scheme, LA's are required to coordinate with neighbouring authorities, and all admission authorities within their area to ensure that only one offer of a school place is awarded to pupils. The Scheme outlined below applies to the academic year 2024/25 and is similar to the scheme implemented for the last few academic years.

The Application Process

ALL pupils, who reside **within Worcestershire**, who wish to apply to **any** Secondary School, including any school outside the county of Worcestershire, are required to complete an application.

This also means that any pupil, who does not reside within Worcestershire, but wishes to apply for a place at a Worcestershire school must complete an **application provided by their "home" LA**. (The "home" LA is defined as the Local Authority relevant to the child's home address). The "home" LA will ensure the application details are passed on to this authority for consideration in the allocation of school places. (See timetable for dates).

When all applications have been considered, in conjunction with neighbouring LA's and/or Academies, Foundation, Free and Voluntary Aided Schools, the offer of a **single** school place will be made by the "home" LA, on behalf of the relevant admission authority. (See timetable for dates).

Parents should be aware that different LAs and Academies, Foundation, Free and Voluntary Aided Schools may have different admissions criteria, and therefore it is strongly advised that they ensure that they have understood the information that is available from each LA/School, before stating their preference on any application.

Please make contact with the Admissions Teams of any of the relevant LAs, if further information is required. (The addresses and telephone numbers of all the neighbouring LAs can be found in the Information for Parents Book.)

The Application and Closing Date

Parents are invited to state three preferences, and parents are also able to state the reasons, for their preference. All preferences are to **be treated as equal initially**, and sent out to other admission authorities (i.e. Academies, Foundation, Free and Voluntary Aided Schools, or neighbouring LAs) if appropriate, for consideration.

The closing date for the receipt of applications will be **31st October 2023**.

Initial Allocation Process

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By 13 November 2023, Worcestershire LA will send all neighbouring LAs details of applicants for their schools, who will then apply their admissions criteria.

By 24 November 2023, Worcestershire LA will send details to all its Academies, Foundation, Free and Voluntary Aided Schools, for initial consideration. This information may need to be updated if information regarding further applications is subsequently received by other Local Authorities. Late applications will be forwarded upon receipt.

By 15 December 2023, Worcestershire LA will receive a ranked list from each of its Academies, Foundation, Free and Voluntary Aided Schools of all applicants. These lists will be compared to identify any pupils, who may have been offered more than one place. As **only the highest ranking school** will be offered, it may be necessary for Worcestershire LA to inform the Academies, Foundation, Free and Voluntary Aided school(s) that the place is not required, this will be notified to the school, as required.

This process will be ongoing (see section about late applications), along with exchange of information to neighbouring LAs – see timetable for dates.

Finalising the Allocation Process

By 5 February 2024, a final data exchange between Local Authorities neighbouring authorities, will take place, and any amendments to the listings for Academies, Foundation, Free and Voluntary Aided Schools will be notified as soon as possible.

On 1 March 2024, an offer of a school place will be made by Worcestershire LA, on behalf of the relevant admission authority, in the case of Worcestershire residents (even if the placement is for an Academy, Foundation, Free and Voluntary Aided School or a school in a neighbouring LA). **For families residing outside Worcestershire, who have applied for a place in a Worcestershire school, the offer letter will be sent by the “home” LA.**

The **single** offer will normally be the highest ranked school on the application form, at which a potential offer could be made.

In the few cases, where it may be not be possible to offer a place at any of the three preferences stated on the application, and the parent is a Worcestershire resident, a place will be offered at the catchment area school (if places are available), or the nearest available school with places, which includes Academies, Foundation, Free and Voluntary Aided Schools.

Late Applications including late changes to on time applications

Between 1 November 2023 and 31 January 2024, it is likely that several late applications will be received. The Council has agreed in its co-ordinated scheme to accept late applications, for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools within Worcestershire, within this time-frame, and treat them as being on time, only in the following circumstances;

a) where a family have just moved address, (refer to Section 4 of the Information for Parents book);

b) where it is agreed by School Admissions, that individual circumstances apply, and the delay was reasonable given the circumstances of the case;

In each case supporting documentary evidence will be required. **In all other circumstances, or if the application is not received until after 31 January 2024, late applications (including late changes to on time 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 and 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 1 February 2024 for the intake year, must be sent to Worcestershire LA, and will be processed as soon as possible. An offer, or refusal of a school place, will be given by Worcestershire LA, on behalf of the relevant admission authority.

Waiting Lists

Waiting lists for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools are maintained by the School Admissions Section, and parents need to apply, in order to be included.

The waiting list is ranked in line with the published oversubscription criteria and is maintained for the whole of the academic year, so for applications for intake in September 2024, the waiting list will remain open until the 31st July 2025. Each child added to that list will require the list to be ranked again in line with the published oversubscription criteria. Parents will need to reapply at the start of July 2025 if they wish to be included on the new waiting list for the new academic year, by completing a fresh in-year application form. Only on receipt of an acknowledgement letter from School Admissions will that child be on 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 schools directly, in order to be included. Parents must consult the individual schools for details on the waiting list procedure.

Timetable of Admissions Process

31 October 2023	All applications must be received, either on-line or at the HOME LA .
13 November 2023	Information received from neighbouring LAs of pupils, who have nominated a school in Worcestershire.
13 November 2023	Information supplied to neighbouring LAs concerning any Worcestershire children nominating an out-county school.
24 November 2023	Information forwarded to Academies, Foundation, Free and Voluntary Aided Schools for applications to be considered. Further applications to be forwarded ASAP.
15 December 2023	Academy, Foundation, Free and Voluntary Aided Schools to return preferences, ranked by those schools in accordance with their admission criteria.
12 January 2024	Worcestershire and neighbouring LAs to exchange information of results (1 st cycle).
22 January 2024	Worcestershire and neighbouring LA's to exchange further information (2 nd cycle).
31 January 2024	Last date by which Late Applications can be considered in the initial allocation (see Late Applications for details)
5 February 2024	Worcestershire and neighbouring LAs to exchange final information.
1st March 2024	Offers of school places made to parents.

Fair Access Protocol

As part of the Worcestershire Fair Access Protocol, which can be viewed at the following link: [Fair Access Protocol \(opens in a new window\)](#), all schools with Key Stage 2, 3 and 4 classes can be required to exceed the published admission number to admit pupils covered by the Protocol.

Admission of children outside their normal age group

Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health, effectively in the year group below or above their chronological age group.

The admission authority for any school must make the decision based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned.

In the case of a Community or Voluntary Controlled School the Local Authority will request the head teacher of the school to take account of the parent's views; information about the child's academic, social and emotional development; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional; or specialist practitioner; whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group; and whether they may naturally

have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely in order to reach a decision as to whether or not it is appropriate for the individual child to delay or accelerate their entry into school and be taught permanently behind or ahead of their chronological age group. The reasons for the decision must be clearly set out.

Even if delayed or accelerated entry is agreed, the normal admission arrangements apply and there is no guarantee of a place.