

West Berkshire Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme 2027/28

Introduction

Each year, all local authorities are required to develop and publish a scheme to coordinate admission arrangements for all publicly funded schools within their jurisdiction. If there are significant changes to the scheme from the previous academic year, the local authority must consult with other admission authorities within the area, as well as any other relevant local authorities it deems appropriate. If the scheme remains unchanged from the previous year, no consultation is required, although the local authority must consult on the scheme at least once every seven years, regardless of whether there have been any changes during that period.

Following any consultation, the local authority must determine the qualifying scheme and take all reasonable steps to ensure its adoption. The consultation process should aim to align pupil admissions across different local authorities, ensuring, as far as reasonably practicable, that the admissions arrangements are compatible.

General Principles of the Normal Admissions Round

Parents can express a preference for up to four schools, rank these preferences, and provide reasons for each. Only one application per child can be submitted.

- **Who Can Apply:** Any parent with parental responsibility may submit an application. However, only one application per child can be submitted. If applications are received from both parents who no longer live together, or if an application is made to both West Berkshire and another local authority, the following procedure will apply:
 - Both parents will be notified that multiple applications have been made, and each will be asked if they wish to withdraw their application.
 - If neither parent withdraws their application, the application from the parent with whom the child resides during the school week will be accepted.
 - If the child splits their time between both addresses during the school week, neither application will be accepted until the dispute is resolved, and only one application is submitted. If this occurs after the allocation procedures have begun, the application may not be considered as on time.
- **Application Process:** All preferences must be submitted using the Common Application Form (CAF), which includes preferences for schools outside West Berkshire, including grammar schools but not independent schools.

- **Residents of West Berkshire:** Applications must be made online via the West Berkshire Council website or by submitting a paper application form, available from the Admissions Team if necessary.
- **Residents of Other Areas:** Applicants must submit their application via their home local authority's application form. Relevant information for West Berkshire schools will be forwarded to the West Berkshire Local Authority for consideration if such a preference is made.
- **Admission Policies:** Each preference will be considered in accordance with the relevant school's admissions policy. Parents should be aware that each school may have different admission criteria, which are outlined in the parent guides available on the West Berkshire Council website and also published on school websites.
- **Offer of a School Place:** Each child will be offered one school place, where possible. If it is not possible to offer a place at one of the preferred schools based on the admission criteria, an alternative school will be offered.
 - If a child is eligible for more than one school, the highest-ranked preference will be offered.
 - If no preferred school can be offered, the LA will offer a place at an alternative school if one is available.
- **Allocation Process for Children Without a Preferred School:**
 - If no preference can be allocated, a place will typically be offered at the nearest available school to the child's home address, provided there is space.
 - If no school places are available within West Berkshire, no alternative will be offered.

Key Dates for the Normal Admissions Round

- **Secondary Admission Applications:**
 - Application closing date: 31 October 2026
 - Allocation results communicated: 01 March 2027
- **Primary Admission Applications:**
 - Application closing date: 15 January 2027
 - Allocation results communicated: 16 April 2027

Applications submitted after these dates will be treated as late. However, the Local Authority will accept late applications before the co-ordination procedures begin and will treat them as on-time applications, provided they are received within a reasonable time frame.

Late Applications

- **Secondary Applications:** Late applications received after the start of allocation procedures but on or before 15 March 2027 will be processed from 16 March 2027, in line with the relevant admission policies. Any applications received after 16 March 2026 will be processed in order of receipt after all previously submitted applications have been considered.
- **Primary Applications:** Late applications received after the start of allocation procedures but on or before 26 April 2027 will be processed from 27 April 2027. Any applications received after 26 April 2027 will be processed in order of receipt after all previously submitted applications have been considered.

Waiting lists for late applications will not be processed until the relevant dates unless an admission authority decides to exceed its Published Admission Number (PAN).

Duties of the Local Authority (LA)

1. **Data Forwarding:** Forward application data for Voluntary Aided primary schools to the relevant governing bodies as soon as possible.
 2. **Cross-Authority Applications:** Exchange details of applications for schools outside the area or from other local authorities with the relevant authority in a timely manner.
 3. **Ranking Applications:** Rank applications for places at community and Voluntary Controlled schools in accordance with the local authority's admission arrangements and oversubscription criteria.
 4. **Offer and Refusal Notifications:** Determine whether to offer or refuse a place at schools within the authority and communicate these decisions to parents in writing by the specified dates.
 5. **Timely Communication:** Ensure all offers and refusals of places are communicated to parents on 01 March 2027 (for secondary admissions) or 16 April 2027 (for primary admissions).
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Duties of Governing Bodies Acting as Admission Authorities

1. **Incorrect Applications:** Forward any incorrectly received applications directly to the LA as soon as possible.
 2. **Ranked Lists:** Rank applications based on the governing body's admission arrangements and oversubscription criteria, and provide the LA with the ranked list by the required date.
 3. **Communication:** Communicate all decisions regarding the granting or refusal of school places to parents via the LA, which will notify parents on behalf of the governing body.
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This process ensures a fair, transparent, and coordinated approach to school admissions, prioritising the needs and preferences of parents while adhering to the established admission criteria and timelines.

Secondary Schools – Normal Admissions Round Timetable

31 October 2026	Closing date for applications
01 March 2027	Application outcome issued to parents
15 March 2027	Parents to respond to offer
31 March 2027	Closing date for appeals

Primary & Junior Schools – Normal Admissions Round Timetable

15 January 2027	Closing date for applications
16 February 2027	LA transfer of application data to VA Governing Bodies (Additional data received later from other Local Authorities will be transferred for inclusion)
16 March 2027	West Berkshire VA Governing Bodies' send ranked lists to the LA
16 April 2027	Application outcome issued to parents
26 April 2027	Applicant responds to offer
17 May 2027	Closing date for appeals