



**Proposed Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary
Controlled Secondary Schools for 2025/26**

Status: Proposed Admissions Arrangements 2025/26

PROPOSED SECONDARY ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

Wiltshire Council's proposed admission arrangements for admission to Voluntary Controlled and Community (VC and C) Secondary Schools for the 2025/26 academic year

1. General Information

This policy applies solely to applications for places at Voluntary Controlled (VC) and Community (C) Secondary Schools in Wiltshire. Foundation (F) Voluntary Aided (VA) Schools and Academies (A) are their own admission authorities, and the governing bodies are responsible for determining their own procedures and policies.

Proposed arrangements for the co-ordination of secondary admissions are made within the co-ordinated admissions scheme 2025/26.

The application round for entry into Year 7 for September 2025 opens on 1 September 2024. The deadline date for applications to be received is midnight on 31 October 2024. The home address given for the child must be the address where the child is resident as of the deadline date.

a. Designated Area

A designated area is a discrete geographical zone served by a school. The address that determines a child's designated area is the place where he or she is ordinarily resident with his or her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) for the majority of the school week. Most schools have a discrete designated area but some addresses fall within areas shared by two or more schools. Children who live outside the designated area for the school may still express a preference for the school.

In the case of children from the boating community (Boaters) proof of mooring will be required. Those without a permanent mooring, must provide details/proof of their sorting office, post office/poste restante address and this will be used for admissions criteria and allocation purposes.

b. Preferences

Parents will be invited to state up to three ranked preferences. Each preference will be considered equally. This means that Wiltshire Council will consider all applications against the published admissions criteria without reference to how the school applied for has been ranked on the application form. As far as possible applicants will be offered a place at a school to which they have expressed a preference. Where the applicant has made more than one preference, the Local Authority (LA) will make an offer for the highest ranked preferred school possible with available places in accordance with the standard admission criteria. Where it is not possible to offer a place at a preferred school, and the applicant lives in Wiltshire, the LA will allocate a place. Allocations will be made after all expressed preferences have been considered. An alternative school may be allocated in cases where the designated school is full and the alternative school is within the safe statutory 3 mile walking distance and has places available or it is a school to which free home to school transport would be provided.

In the case where there are more children living within an area, than there are places available and the parent has not named the designated school(s) as one of their preferences, the remaining places will be randomly allocated.

c. **Children with an education, health and care plan**

All children whose education, health and care plan that names a school, must be admitted.

d. **Published Admission Number**

A Published Admission Number (PAN) is agreed for each school annually and defines the number of places available for the year of entry. All applications must be agreed until the PAN has been reached and this figure will not be exceeded other than in exceptional circumstances. For example, a child living within a school's designated area and for whom no reasonable alternative school place is available, may be allocated a place at the designated school even if this exceeds the PAN. In this circumstance, reasonable is defined as a school within the statutory three mile safe walking distance from the child's home address or a school to which free home to school transport would be provided.

A list of PAN's for Voluntary Controlled and Community Schools can be found at the back of this policy document.

e. **Address**

The child's address provided on the application form should be that of the child's normal place of residence. Only one address can be considered for application purposes. The address provided will be used to determine the child's priority for a school place. The Local Authority reserves the right to confirm the address provided by the applicant using the council tax reference number which is provided as part of the application.

For YR 7 September entry, the address used to determine priority of school for on time applications submitted in the main round, will be the child's normal place of residence as at deadline date of 31 October 2024. A future address from an applicant who is moving can be considered if the Local Authority receives evidence in the form of an exchange of contracts or a tenancy agreement of a minimum of six months by the 16 December 2024.

Where children spend time with parents at more than one address then the address given on the form should be the one at which they are normally and habitually resident, i.e. sleep at, for the majority of term-time school nights (Sunday night to Thursday night). If children spend time equally at different addresses, then the address which will be used for admissions purposes will be the one registered for child benefit. The Local Authority may request proof of the registered address, which must pre-date the application.

Future addresses from applicants who currently own a property that is unoccupied or rented out, for which they plan to return to, will not be used when allocating places, unless a formal notice to terminate the rental agreement has been received by the deadline date or exceptional circumstances date. Such applications will be checked to confirm the applicants have returned to the property. If the applicant has not returned to the address, it will be considered a fraudulent application and the place will be taken away, even if the child has already started school. If no proof is provided, the current address will be used to determine the child's priority of a school place.

For in year transfer applications the current address at the time of application will be used.

f. **Shared Parental Responsibility**

Where two (or more) adults have parental responsibility for a child it is preferable that they should agree which school(s) to name as their preference(s) before submitting an application form. In cases of dispute, or where two application forms are submitted, the LA will process the application received from the adult who has a residence order. If no such

order has been made, preference will be given to the parent with whom the child is living for the majority of the school week.

If both parents are in dispute as to whom the child lives with the majority of the school week, the LA will process the application received from the adult who is in receipt of the child benefit, if this is not available then the address used on the NHS card will be used.

In the event of a further dispute regarding the address used, parents may wish to take independent legal advice on whether they should seek a specific issue order from the court to decide on where the child is schooled. For an in-year transfer application, the placement will continue in the best interest of securing educational provision for the child, with a minimum of disruption until any such order is made.

For year of entry, a place will be offered in accordance with the preferences to the parent who can provide evidence that they are in receipt of child benefit.

g. Multiple Births

The LA will endeavour to place siblings (e.g. twins, triplets etc) in the same school. If necessary schools will be required to admit over PAN to accommodate such children.

h. Children of UK Service Personnel (UK Armed Forces)

Applications for children of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting to the county will be considered in advance of the family moving into the county. Where possible, an application must be included in the normal admission round.

An official letter, such as a posting note or letter of support from the commanding officer should be sent to the LA as soon as possible. This should include the relocation date and unit postal address or quartering area address.

Until a fixed address is available, the unit postal address will be used and a school place allocated accordingly. For service personnel moving back to a property that they own and this is currently rented out, then this address can be considered providing a signed letter from the Commanding Officer or a formal notice to terminate the rental agreement is received stating the future address.

If there is a tie-break situation then the criteria of the relevant admissions authority will be applied.

The LA will not refuse a child of UK service personnel a place because the family does not currently live in the area. It is also not permitted to reserve places for these children. If a place is not secured at the preferred school and the applicant has provided proof of a Wiltshire address, then an alternative place will be allocated. This will be at the next nearest school to the unit postal address or quartering address with available places.

Children will be considered as siblings, if any brother or sister (including step siblings living at the same address) has been formally offered a place at the school which has been accepted. The sibling link will not apply if the child on roll is in Yr11, YR12 or YR13 for VC & C's schools.

2. Early or Delayed Transfer

a. Early transfer

Children may only transfer early to a secondary school in exceptional circumstances such as if they have previously been educated out of cohort or if it can be shown that not to do so would be detrimental to their academic progress or social wellbeing. All requests will involve consultation with the current school, the school to which the child wishes to transfer to. It would also be the case that the Local Authority's professional adviser would be involved with any decision making. In addition to this, there must be clear evidence from the child's current primary school confirming that the child is exceeding age related expectations and that it would be detrimental for the child to remain in the current setting. As with any request for admission out of cohort, clear evidence will need to be provided as to why this would be in the child's best interest.

b. Delayed transfer

All requests must be submitted to the Local Authority by 31 October, the year in which the child would have chronologically transferred to secondary school.

Children may remain for a further year in a primary school if it can be shown that not to do so would be detrimental to their academic progress or social wellbeing, The presence of special educational needs or underachievement are not in themselves sufficient reasons to delay transfer.

Children for whom a delayed entry to school or year group retention has already been agreed by the relevant parties will continue in the lower year group unless it can be shown that it is in their best interests to re-join their chronological year group. To enable the child to transfer back to their chronological year group then, a place must be available in the relevant year group.

The continuation of this arrangement will continue on transfer to secondary school unless the parent/carer, current school, the school to which the child would otherwise wish to transfer and, where appropriate, the LA's professional adviser consider it in the child's best interest to re-join the chronological year group. An application for delayed transfer to secondary school must still be made in the same way as expected of other children in the year group in which they are working (rather than their chronological age group).

3. Deadline – applications received by the deadline date of 31 October 2024 will be considered as first round applications

The closing date for main round applications (i.e. applications for entry into Secondary Yr7 2025) is 31 October 2024.

All applications received after the deadline of 31 October 2024, including those directed incorrectly to schools and not forwarded to the LA before the deadline, will be treated as late applications and considered only after those applications received before the deadline have been determined. Applications may be considered as being received on time if they meet the exceptional circumstances criteria as detailed in the Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme 2025/26.

4. **Oversubscription Criteria for Voluntary Controlled and Community Schools**

Where a secondary school is over-subscribed, places are allocated to children in order of the ranked criteria listed below:

a. **Looked After Children/Previously Looked After Children**

The definition of Looked After Children - A 'looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements, or special guardianship order including those who appear [to the admission authority] to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. A looked after child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989). Proof will be required and must be submitted by the deadline date.

b. **Vulnerable Children**

Children from families registered with the National Asylum Support Service; children or families with a serious medical, physical or psychological condition where written evidence is provided at the time of application from a senior clinical medical officer, general practitioner or specialist showing that it would be detrimental to the child or family not to admit to the preferred school.

For the purpose of the above criteria the word 'families' is determined as living at the same address at the time of application and also living at the same address on a permanent basis. Proof will be required and must be submitted by the deadline date.

c. **Designated Area Siblings and Shared Area Siblings**

A child is considered under this criterion if a sibling is attending the school as at the deadline date and where the child lives within the designated area or shared area at the same address as the sibling. The sibling must not be in year 11, 12 or 13 of the school at the deadline date. Step, half and foster siblings are included in this category.

d. **Other Children from the Designated Area or Shared Area**

Children resident within the designated area or shared area who do not qualify under one of the criteria above.

e. **Other Siblings**

A child is considered under this criterion if a sibling is attending the school as at the deadline date and where the child lives at the same address as the sibling. The sibling must not be in years 11, 12 or 13 at the school as of the deadline date. Step, half and foster siblings are also included in this category.

f. **Children of staff at the school**

A child is considered under this criterion:

- i) where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, and/or
- ii) the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

If applicants wish to be considered under this criterion, then a letter or email from the Headteacher confirming the paragraph i) or ii) applies to the applicant must be provided at the time of application.

h. **Other children**

Children to whom none of the above criteria apply.

If the school is oversubscribed within any of the above categories, the straight-line distance from the child's home address to the school will be used as the determining factor. Distances will be measured according to the Ordnance Survey eastings and northings for the child's home address and the school. Those living closer to the school will be given priority.

Tie Break

If two or more children with the same priority for admission live an indistinguishable distance from the preferred school, but cannot all be admitted, then the available places will be decided by means of casting lots.

The random allocation will be conducted independently by Democratic Services, Wiltshire Council.

5. **Waiting Lists for all year groups**

Waiting lists for VC & C Schools will be maintained for all year groups. Parents must request that their child is added to the waiting list, children will not automatically be added to them. All applicants have the right of appeal against any refusal of a place. The existence of a waiting list does not remove this right from any unsuccessful applicant.

The position on the waiting list will be determined by applying the published over-subscription criteria and not by date order of receipt. This will mean a position will change if a later application is received from someone with higher priority according to the oversubscription criteria.

Waiting lists for all year groups will close on the last day of the summer term in July 2026.

Parents may submit a fresh application for the next academic year group which will be submitted 8 weeks in advance of the required date.

Places that become available will not be offered to pupils who are not on the waiting list. If a child is offered a place from the waiting list for any VC or C school, then the place must be accepted or declined within 10 working days of the date of offer. The child must start at the school within date specified in the letter.

Notes:

- Once added, names will only be removed from a waiting list, if a written request is

received or if the offer of a place that becomes available is declined.

- Registration of interest on a school's pre-admission list will not be considered as an application for a school place.
- Except for Service Families, children will be considered to be living within the designated area for a school on receipt of an exchange of contracts or a signed tenancy agreement of a minimum of six months.
- Except for Service Families, children will not be considered to be a sibling unless their brother or sister is attending the school and is expected to still be in attendance at the chosen start date.

6. Applications for Secondary Yr7 Intake – applications received after 31 October 2024

Applications received between the 1 November 2024 and 7 March 2025 will be treated as second round applications.

Applications received after the 7 March 2025 will be treated as third round applications.

7. Appeal Process – Main round applications

Parents have a right of appeal to an independent panel against any decision made by or on behalf of the Authority.

The deadline dates for lodging appeals for the main round entry is:

First round appeals

For applications received from 1 September 2024 – 31 October 2024 and for offers made on National Offer Date, appeals must be received by the Local Authority no later than 31 March 2025.

Second round appeals

For applications received from 1 November 2024 – 7 March 2025 and for offers made on 25 April 2025, appeals will be heard as soon as possible.

Third round appeals

For applications received after the 7 March 2025 and for offers made after 16 May 2025, appeals will be heard as soon as possible.

All appeals will be heard in accordance with the timescales which have been determined and are explained in the School Admissions Appeals Code.

Parents who have appealed unsuccessfully can reapply for a place at the same school in a later academic year and have a right of appeal if unsuccessful.

Where there have been material changes in circumstances in the same academic year and a repeat application is considered and again refused, the parents will have the right to a fresh appeal.

If a child is offered a place at appeal for a VC or C school, it must be taken up within 28 working days of the required admissions date stated on the original application form.

8. In Year Transfer Applications for year groups other than Secondary Yr7 2025 Intake

Applications received after the 25 July 2025 for the year of entry and any applications received for other year groups are classed as transfer applications.

All applications will be considered together with any applications that have already been refused and the child's name will be placed on the waiting list accordingly.

Applications for transfer for VC and C schools can be submitted eight weeks in advance of the required admissions date.

Applications received requesting more immediate admission are considered in the order that the School Admissions Team receives them. If more than one application for a particular school is received on the same date, places are allocated to children in order of the oversubscription criteria as listed in this policy.

In all cases parent(s)/guardian(s) will be invited to state up to a maximum of three preferences. An offer will be made at the school listed as highest preference possible which has an available place.

If a child is offered a place at any VC or C school, then the place must be accepted or declined within 10 working days of the date of offer.

If a child is offered a place at any VC or C school and the parent(s)/guardian(s) accept the place, it must be taken up within 28 working days of the required admissions date stated on the original application form. Should the place not be taken up within the 28 working days, the LA will then write to the parents informing them that the place has been withdrawn.

Requests for places in year groups other than the one relating to the child's chronological age will only be agreed if supported by the LA's relevant professional adviser(s) and the school.

9. Appeals Procedure – In Year Transfer Applications

Parents have a right of appeal to an independent panel against any decision made by or on behalf of the Admissions Authority as to the school which education is to be provided for their child.

All appeals will be heard in accordance with the timescales which have been determined and are explained in the School Admissions Appeals Code.

Information about the appeal procedure will be provided where a place at one or more of the preferred schools has been refused. Parents should visit www.wiltshire.gov.uk or contact the Customer Services Team (01225 713010) to obtain an appeals form which should be returned to the Democratic and Members Service team (D&M) at County Hall, Trowbridge. The clerk to the appeals panel will be provided by the D&M Service team.

Parents who have appealed unsuccessfully can reapply for a place at the same school in a later academic year and have a right of appeal if unsuccessful.

Where there have been material changes in circumstances in the same academic year and a repeat application is considered and again refused, the parents will have the right to a fresh appeal.

If a child is offered a place at appeal for a VC or C school, it must be taken up within 28 working days of the required admissions date stated on the original application form.

Please note appeals are only heard in term time.

10. Proof of address

The LA reserves the right to ask parents for proof of their address. If the parents' current address is different to that held on the LA's computerised system, the LA may ask parents to provide proof of the new address if one is indicated. Acceptable proof of address includes:

A formal exchange of contracts or a signed solicitor's letter or e-mail stating contracts have been exchanged and specifying a completion date or a signed and dated tenancy agreement of a minimum of 6 months.

If parents fail to provide proof of a new address, the LA will use the old address for admission purposes. The LA reserves the right to check that parents are living in the address indicated on the applications form. If parents are not living there, the applications will be investigated and the allocated place may be withdrawn.

11. Fair Access Protocol

All Wiltshire Schools will act in accordance with the Fair Access Protocol.

Further information on the In Year Fair Access Protocol including further criteria for referral, and a copy of the protocol, can be viewed at www.wiltshire.gov.uk

12. Sixth Form Admissions

Parents or students wishing to enrol for sixth form courses at Voluntary Controlled or Community Secondary Schools should contact the school and ask for a copy of the sixth form prospectus. This will detail the courses offered at the school and any specific entry requirements for any of those courses. The school will require an application form to be completed should the parent or student wish to make a formal application to join the school's sixth form.

Published Admission Numbers (PAN's) for VC & C Schools

DfES	School	2025 PAN
4000	Abbeyfield School, Chippenham	180
4070	The Stonehenge School, Amesbury	224