

PRIMARY



Proposed Co-ordinated Scheme for Primary School Admissions for 2024/25

Status: Proposed Primary Co-ordinated Scheme 2024/25

Proposed Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for Primary & Junior schools within Wiltshire for year 2024/25

Introduction

1. This scheme for co-ordinated admissions is pursuant to section 89(b) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, for co-ordinating the arrangements for the admission of pupils to primary schools within the LA area. It applies to all primary schools in Wiltshire with effect from September 2024 intakes. There will be an annual review of the scheme as per the School Admissions Code in force at the time.

Interpretation and Glossary

2. In this scheme –

“the LA” means Wiltshire Council acting in their capacity as a local (education) authority;

“the LA area” means the County of Wiltshire;

The definitions of “primary education”, “primary school”, “secondary education” and “secondary school” can be found in sections 2 and 5 of the Education Act 1996.

“school” means a community, (C) voluntary controlled, (VC) foundation (F), voluntary aided (VA) or Academy (A) school.

“Academy” means a state funded, non fee paying independent school set up under a Funding Agreement between the Secretary of State and the proprietor of an Academy (most commonly, and hereafter, referred to as an Academy Trust). Academy Funding Agreements require them to comply with the Code and the law relating to admissions, though the Secretary of State has the power to vary this requirement where there is a demonstrable need.

“admission authority” in relation to a community (C) or voluntary controlled (VC) school means the LA and, in relation to an academy, foundation or voluntary aided school means the governing body / academy trust of that school;

“the specified year” means the school year beginning in September 2024.

“admission arrangements” means the determined arrangements which govern the procedures and decision making for the purposes of admitting pupils to a school;

“first round application” means any application for a place in the first year of primary or infant education or the first year of junior education that is received before the deadline of 15 January 2024.

“second or third round application” means any application for a place in the first year of primary or infant education or the first year of junior education that is received after the 15 January 2024.

“In – Year application” means any application for any other year group in the school up to and including Yr 6;

“eligible for a place” means that a child’s name has been placed on a school’s ranked list within the school’s published admission number.

The application round for entry into Reception and Junior YR3 2024 opens on 1 September 2023. The deadline date for applications to be received is midnight on 15 January 2024. The home address given for the child must be the address where the child is resident as of the deadline date.

Starting School

3. There is a legal entitlement for all three and four year olds to have access to 15 hours free early education per week – available from registered childminders, school-based childcare, pre-schools, day nurseries, playgroups, or as part of a Children’s Centre. Working parents of children aged three and four years of age will be able to access 30 hours for Free Entitlement, certain criteria will need to be met.

A school place will be made available for children from the September following their 4th birthday. Full-time education is available to all reception pupils.

Parents have the right to ask that their child attends part-time and this will be provided by arrangement with the school governors. Part-time provision has been determined as either five mornings or five afternoons a week.

Schools will be responsible for informing parents of the induction arrangements for new entrants to the reception class(es). These may involve a short period of part-time provision or a phased entry at the beginning of Term 1, which will normally be a fortnight. Individual children(s) cases for induction should be discussed by the parents(s) with the school directly.

General Information

4. Parents will be able to make an online application. If an online application has been submitted, a written application is not necessary. The online facility will be available from 1 September 2023 up until the deadline of 15 January 2024.
5. There will be a standard form for applications known as the Primary Common Application form (PCAF) used for the admission of pupils into the first year of primary education in the specified year.
6. The PCAF must be used as a means of expressing one or more preferences by a parent wishing to apply for a school place for their child (either within or outside the county). The child must live in Wiltshire.
7. The LA will make arrangements to ensure
 - a. the PCAF is accompanied by written guidance notes
 - b. that copies are available on request from the LA
 - c. that an electronic version of the form is available for parents to make an online application.

8. The PCAF and accompanying guidance notes will invite the parent to express up to three preferences in rank order. Preferred schools may be state-funded schools inside or outside Wiltshire. They will also explain that the parent will receive no more than one offer of a school place and specify the closing date and the address to which the PCAF must be returned. They will also confirm that;
 - a. a place will be offered at their highest ranked school at which they are eligible to be offered a place; or
 - b. if a place cannot be offered at any one of their preferred schools, and the child is living in Wiltshire, a place at an alternative school will be allocated.
9. Split Site Schools – where a school operates from separate bases and each base provides for the full primary age range (i.e. Both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2), the two sites will be treated as separate schools for admissions purposes, as they have their own discrete catchment area. This means that an application must name the site preferred. An applicant can use two preferences to name both sites.
10. The governing body of a Foundation (F) or Voluntary Aided school (VA) or an Academy (A) can ask parents who have expressed a preference for their school on the PCAF, to provide additional information on a supplementary form, but only if the additional information is required in order to apply their oversubscription criteria to the application.
11. Where a school receives a supplementary form, it will not be regarded as a valid application unless the parent has also completed a PCAF which expressed a preference for that school. The application must have been returned to the LA by the deadline date.
12. The closing date for applications is **15 January 2024**. All completed PCAFs are to be returned directly to the LA. Any PCAFs which are incorrectly returned to schools must be forwarded to the LA to be received by the deadline. Forms returned to schools and not received by the LA by 15 January 2024 will be treated as late applications.
13. The LA will send out an acknowledgement of receipt for each PCAF and all online applications. Applicants will be advised to contact the LA if they have not received an acknowledgement within 15 school days of posting their applications.

Address

14. 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 R and Junior YR3 September 2024 entry, the address used to determine priority of school places for on time applications submitted in the main round, will be the child's normal place of residence as at deadline date of 15 January 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 8 February 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/ 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 priority of a school place.

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

Designated Area (if applicable)

15. 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 the child is ordinarily resident with their parent(s) or legal guardian(s) for the majority of the school week. Most schools have a discrete designated area. Some addresses may 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.

Applicants will only be considered from the address as of the deadline date (for applications into YR and YR3, unless proof of future address is provided) and this will be used to determine the child's priority for a school place. For in year transfer applications the current address at the time of application will be used.

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

Shared Parental Responsibility

16. 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 application 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, where possible, 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.

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.

Applications for children of UK Service Personnel

(UK Armed Forces)

17. Applications for children of 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.
18. 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 the unit postal address or quartering area address.
19. 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 that is currently rented out, then this address can be considered provided a signed letter from the Commanding Officer is received or a formal notice to terminate the rental agreement stating the future address. This should be received by the deadline / exceptional circumstances deadline.
20. The LA will not refuse a child of UK service personnel a school 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.
21. Children will be considered to be siblings if any brother or sister (including step siblings living at the same address) have been formally offered and have accepted a place at the school. The sibling link will not apply if the child on roll is in Yr 6 for VC & C's schools. Parents should view individual admissions policies for VA, F and A schools for information about YR6 pupils. Their position on any waiting list will be set accordingly.
22. All applications will be dealt with in accordance with these admission arrangements. If a reasonable alternative cannot be offered, the child may be admitted as an 'excepted pupil' under the School Admissions (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations.

Applications for a child from overseas (Not UK Armed Forces)

23. All applications for a child from overseas will be considered in accordance with the relevant legislation at the time of application.
24. Applications on behalf of a child currently living outside the UK will be considered, but until the child is resident in the UK, their home address outside the UK, will be considered as being their place of residence. Exceptions to this would be instances where the child of a parent(s) returning from foreign postings, such as UK service personnel and other crown servants who have been posted abroad on a fixed term contract and who are returning to live within the UK or if an exchange of contract or signed tenancy is received to support the application. Proof of the future UK residency will be required.

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/ 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 priority of a school place.

The Application Process

First Round Applications for Reception and Junior YR3 - 2024 Intake (applications received before the deadline of 15 January 2024)

25. The LA will act as a clearing house for the allocation of places by the relevant admissions authorities in response to the PCAFs. The LA will only make a decision with respect to the offer or refusal of a place in response to any preference expressed on the PCAF where-
 - a. it is acting in its separate capacity as an admission authority, or
 - b. an applicant is eligible for a place at more than one school, or
 - c. an applicant is not eligible for a place at any of the schools for which a preference was expressed.
26. The process by which the LA will allocate places is explained at paragraphs 28- 35.
27. **15 January 2024, closing date for all applications to be received by the School Admissions Team. Applications received by this date will be classed as first round applications.**
28. **8 February 2024: Exceptional circumstances deadline.**

Only in exceptional circumstances such as those listed here will a late application be considered at the same time as applications received by the deadline of 15 January 2024.

- where there has been a change of family circumstances after the deadline date which has a significant effect on the preferences given on the original application. (If this is a house move, this must have been completed with an exchange of contracts before 8 February 2024).
- a move into Wiltshire from outside the county after the deadline date but before 8 February 2024. Confirmation of the new address (in the form of an exchange of contracts or a tenancy agreement of a minimum of six months) must be provided before 8 February 2024.
- service personnel moving to a Wiltshire address after the deadline date. A posting notice must be provided before 8 February 2024.

Documentary evidence should be provided with the application (or at the latest by 8 February 2024) to verify the circumstances which caused the late application to be made. If evidence cannot be provided, the application will not be treated as an exception.

29. **By 08 February 2024** where parents have nominated a primary school outside the LA area, the LA will notify the relevant LA.
30. **By 09 February 2024** the LA will notify all F and VA schools and Academies of every preference that has been expressed for that school.
31. **By 8 March 2024** all F and VA schools and Academies must have considered all of the preferences for their school and provide the LA with a ranked list of all applicants in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.
32. The LA will then match this ranked list against all other ranked lists and:
 - Where the child is eligible for a place at only one of the preferred schools, a place at the school will be offered to the child.
 - Where the child is eligible for a place at two or more of the nominated schools, they will be offered a place at whichever school was their highest available preference.
 - Where the child is not eligible for a place at any of the nominated schools and they live in Wiltshire, a place will be allocated at the next nearest school to the home address with available places.
 - Should this place subsequently be declined then it is the parent's responsibility to apply for an alternative school place.
33. Where the child is not eligible for a place at any of the nominated schools and the child lives in Wiltshire, they will be allocated a place at a school. This will be their designated school if places are available or at another school (to which there would be an entitlement to free school transport if it were outside the statutory safe walking distance from the home). Should this place subsequently be declined then it is the parent's responsibility to apply for an alternative school place.
34. **By 22 March 2024** the LA will inform other LAs of any places in Wiltshire schools which will be offered to their residents.
35. **By 15 April 2024** the LA will inform Wiltshire schools of the pupils to be offered places at their schools.

36. On **16 April 2024 (National Offer Date)** letters will be despatched to all parents who submitted an application by 15 January 2024 offering a place at one school.
37. These offer letters will give the following information:
- a. the name of the school at which a place is offered;
 - b. the reason why the child is not being offered a place at any of the other schools nominated on the PCAF;
 - c. information about their statutory right of appeal against any decisions to refuse places at other preferred schools;
38. **30 April 2024** is the deadline for parents to accept the place offered. Parents should confirm their acceptance online if they have applied online, or if they have applied by paper return the acceptance/decline slip directly to the Local Authority.

If the parent does not respond to the Local Authority to confirm if they wish to accept or decline the offer by 30 April 2024, the Local Authority will send a reminder to the parent informing them that failure to respond could result in the offer of the place being withdrawn. Should the offer be withdrawn then it will then be the parent's responsibility to apply for an alternative school place.

Second Round Applications for Reception and Junior YR 3 2024 Intake (applications received between 16 January 2024 and 26 April 2024)

39. Second round applications, i.e. those received between 16 January 2024 and 26 April 2024 for the Reception Intake round will not be considered until after all first round on time applications have been processed. Second round applications will be considered together with any applicant previously refused a place in the first round and if necessary, will be prioritised using the oversubscription policy in place at the time.

Additional applications:

Only one offer of a school place for each child can be held at any one time. If the Local Authority receives a further application for a child who has already secured a place in an earlier round, the new stated preferences will automatically supersede any earlier preferences stated.

During the second round of applications parents should note that the school initially allocated will be retained for their child pending the outcome of that application and that there is no guarantee of gaining a place at the preferred school named on the new application.

Parents can only hold one offer. Therefore, if an offer is made to a child during the second round of allocations any offer made in the first round will automatically be withdrawn.

Where the child is not eligible for a place at any of the nominated schools, and the child lives in Wiltshire, the child will be allocated a place at their designated school if

possible, unless an alternative place is available within a safe statutory walking distance from their home address.

The LA will contact all Foundation, Aided schools and Academies named as a preference on the application form to determine whether or not a place is available. An offer will be made for the school named as the highest preference where there is an identified place.

40. By **7 May 2024** details of second round applications received between the 16 January 2024 and 26 April 2024 to be sent to Academies, Foundation and Voluntary Aided Schools.
41. By **13 May 2024** Academies, Foundation and Voluntary Aided Schools should provide the LA with a ranked list of second round applications.

On receipt, the LA will match the returns from all schools and will make an allocation of one place for each applicant:

- Where the child is eligible for a place at only one of the preferred schools, a place at the school will be offered to the child.
- Where the child is eligible for a place at two or more of the nominated schools, they will be offered a place at whichever school was their highest available preference.

42. **By 24 May 2024** the LA will send out the second round offers for applications received between 16 January 2024 and 26 April 2024.
43. **07 June 2024** is the last date for second round offers to be accepted by parents. Parents should return their acceptance/decline slips back to the LA.

If the parent does not respond to the Local Authority to confirm if they wish to accept or decline the offer by 7 June 2024, the Local Authority will send a reminder to the parent informing them that failure to respond could result in the offer of the place being withdrawn. Should the offer be withdrawn then it will then be the parent's responsibility to apply for an alternative school place.

Third Round Applications for Reception 2024 Intake (applications received after 26 April 2024)

44. Third round applications, i.e. those received after 26 April 2024 for the Reception Intake round will not be considered until after all the second round applications have been processed. Third round applications will be considered together with any applicant previously refused a place and if necessary, will be prioritised using the oversubscription policy in place at the time.

Only one offer of a school place for each child can be held at any one time. If the Local Authority receives a further application for a child who has already secured a place in an earlier round, the new stated preferences will automatically supersede any earlier preferences stated.

During the third round of applications parents should note that the school initially allocated will be retained for their child pending the outcome of that

application and that there is no guarantee of gaining a place at the preferred school named on the new application.

Parents can only hold one offer. Therefore, if an offer is made to a child during the third round of allocations any offer made in the first or second round will automatically be withdrawn.

The LA will contact all Foundation, Aided schools and Academies named as a preference on the application form to determine whether or not a place is available. An offer will be made for the school named as the highest preference where there is an identified place. Where the child is not eligible for a place at any of the nominated schools, and the child lives in Wiltshire, the child will be allocated a place at their designated school if a place is available, unless an alternative place is available within the safe statutory walking distance from their home address.

45. Applications received after the 26 April 2024 will be considered in date order of receipt and will be looked at after 28 June 2024 (i.e. once the second round of applications have been processed).
46. If the parent does not respond to the Local Authority to confirm if they wish to accept or decline the offer by the date stated in the letter, the Local Authority will send a reminder to the parent informing them that failure to respond could result in the offer of the place being withdrawn. Should the offer be withdrawn then it will then be the parent's responsibility to apply for an alternative school place.

Applications for Reception 2024 Intake (applications received after 24 July 2024 – end of term)

47. Any applications received by the LA after 24 July 2024 will be forwarded to the school within two school days of receipt at which time the process for in-year applications will apply.

Right of Appeal – main round applications

48. Parents who are refused a place at a school for which they have applied have the right of appeal to an independent Admission Appeal panel.

The deadline dates for lodging appeals for VC & C Schools for the main round entry is:

First round appeals

For applications received from 1 September 2023 – 15 January 2024 and for offers made on National Offer Date appeals must be received by the Local Authority no later than 14 May 2024.

Second round appeals

For applications received from 16 January 2024 – 26 April 2024 and for offers made on 24 May 2024 appeals will be heard as soon as possible.

Third round appeals

For applications received after the 26 April 2024 and for offers made after 28 June 2024, appeals will be heard as soon as possible.

Own admission authority appeal timetables will be provided within the individual school's admissions policy or on the school's website.

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

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 unless the child is not of statutory school age.

Admitting in - area children above Published Admissions Number (PAN)

49. Wiltshire Council will always try and allocate a space at a child's designated school whenever this is possible. We cannot reserve places at any school, nor can we guarantee that a space will be available at the designated school. Having enough spaces in schools for local children is a service priority for the School Buildings and Places team.
50. The LA has responsibility for the strategic management of school places across the county and has to ensure admissions do not compromise its ability to provide efficient and effective use of resources. It is often more economic to admit children to their designated school because this does not incorporate an additional transport cost which would be required were an alternative school be allocated.
51. For some schools, the next nearest school does not provide a reasonable alternative because it is beyond the statutory walking distance or the route is unsafe or there is no available transport. Any children who move into these areas might have to be admitted to the designated school despite any existing pressures upon it.
52. It may not always be possible to find a space at the designated school if this is already oversubscribed. If a school is over-subscribed, then Looked After Children will be given the highest priority on any waiting list. Following this in area children will be given priority on any waiting list over out of area children at all VC & C schools. If the designated area school is unable to accommodate any more children within the year group, then the LA will allocate an alternative school which will be the next nearest school which has places available.
53. Transport would be made available for any children who had to be allocated a school because their designated school was full and the school that has been allocated is outside of the statutory safe walking distance for the age of the child. All other entitlements will be dealt with by the Passenger Transport Team.

The In-year Transfer Application Process

Details of where to submit an application for your preferred school can be found on the Wiltshire Council website.

For in-year transfer applications co-ordinated by Wiltshire Council, the following process applies.

All applications received by post or the Parent Portal will be date stamped on the date they are received by the school admissions team, unless the application is received over the weekend in these cases the form will be stamped as being received on the next working day.

54. The LA will make available copies of the Admissions Guide and In year transfer form on request from County Hall.
55. All applicants who wish to apply for a school place must complete an application form, we recommend that this is completed online.
56. Should a parent living in Wiltshire wish to apply for a school in another authority; they must contact that authority directly for details on how to apply.
57. Should any Wiltshire school receive an in-year application form expressing a preference for that school the form should be forwarded to the LA within two school days of receipt.
58. Where the LA receives an in-year application form expressing a preference for a VC or C school the application will be forwarded to the school within three school days of receipt. The school is then required to advise the LA if a place can be offered within two school days or receipt.
59. For an Academy, F or VA school, the school's governing body is responsible for deciding the outcome of the application and should advise the LA accordingly within two school days of the date of which the information was received by the school.
60. In all cases, Wiltshire Council will aim to send a decision letter or email out within 15 school days of receiving the application form and this will provide information, if appropriate, about the statutory right of appeal.
61. Waiting lists for schools must be kept and will be managed as per the admission arrangements for the particular school involved. Waiting lists will be kept in order of the relevant oversubscription criteria and not in date order of receipt.
62. The Local Authority will maintain waiting lists for all year groups for VC & C schools, however the parent must confirm if they wish their child's name to be placed on the waiting list. This will not happen automatically.
63. The school/academy will maintain waiting lists for all year groups for A, F & VA schools. Parents should contact these schools directly for details of how to place their child's name on the waiting list for these schools.
64. If an own admission authority school does not wish the LA to co-ordinate its in year, applications, the admission authority must officially confirm this to the LA by 31 August each year. It will then be the responsibility of that admissions authority to ensure that applications are processed in line with the School Admissions Code.

The admissions authority will then have to process the application and inform the parent of the outcome and where necessary their statutory right of appeal. In all cases, it also required to forward a copy of the application, along with the decision, to the LA within two school days.

Where a school has opted in to the in-year co-ordination process, then all places offered at one of these schools must be taken up within 28 working days of the date stated on the initial application form, unless the school has an alternative timescale for this on their website. If the place has not been taken up with 28 working days, then the offer could be withdrawn.

Applications for transfer at a future date

65. Applications for transfer for VC and C schools as well as any Voluntary Aided, Foundation school or Academy that has opted in to the In Year Co-ordination Scheme (these are schools which are available for selection on the Parent Portal) can be submitted eight weeks in advance of the required admissions date.
66. Applications for transfer for VA and F schools and Academies will be forwarded when received directly to the schools named for consideration in accordance with the school's own admissions policy.

Right of Appeal – In Year Transfer Applications

67. Parents who are refused a place at a school for which they have applied have the right of appeal to an independent Admission Appeal panel.

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

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.

Proof of address

68. 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 solicitor's letter stating contracts have been exchanged and specifying a completion date
- A signed and dated tenancy agreement plus proof of residency (e.g. copy of a recent utility bill)

If parents fail to provide proof of a new address, the LA will use the old address for admission purposes. If parents notify the LA that they will be moving to a new house, even if they provide the relevant proof of that address, they must move into that property by no later than the end of the first term following the notification. The LA reserves the right to check that parents are living in the address indicated within that timescale. If parents are not living there, the applications will be investigated, and the allocated place may be withdrawn. The application will then have the statutory right of appeal.

In year Fair Access Protocol

69. All Wiltshire Schools will act in accordance with the Fair Access Protocol which has been adopted to give access to educational provisions for hard to place children. Further information on the In Year Fair Access Protocol, as well as a copy of the protocol, can be viewed at www.wiltshire.gov.uk

Early, deferred or delayed admission

70. a. **Early admission**

In order for any child to be considered for early entry, this would need to be fully supported by the preferred schools. In addition to this there must be clear evidence from the child's current pre-school or nursery confirming that the child is exceeding age related expectations and that it would be detrimental for the child to remain in the current setting until they reach statutory school age. Such cases are only agreed in exceptional circumstances. It would also be the case that the Local Authority's professional adviser would be involved with any decision making. Clear evidence must confirm that this is the child's best interest.

b. Deferred admission until later in the academic year

Parents do not have to ensure their child receives full time education until the start of the term following their fifth birthday. However, parents have the right to start their child in school in the September of the academic year following their fourth birthday. In such circumstances, parents also have the option to start their child on a part-time basis or defer their child's entry until later in that academic year.

If a parent decides to defer their child's entry to the school that they have been offered until later in the academic year, that place will be held for the child and will not be offered to another child. However, please note that entry cannot be deferred beyond the point at which their child reaches compulsory school age (for the avoidance of doubt the law states that a child reaches compulsory school age on the prescribed day following his or her fifth birthday [or on his or her fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day]. The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August). For children born between 1 April and 31 August, parents cannot defer entry beyond the beginning of the April term of the school year for which the offer was made.

Please note also that children who attend part-time until later in the school year cannot do so beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.

If the parent decides that they no longer wish to take up their child's place, they should inform the school and the Local Authority that the place is no longer required. The place will then be withdrawn and reallocated to the child who is top of the waiting list at that time. The parent must then submit a fresh application for a place in year one for the following academic year. The application can be submitted from April 2023 but will not be considered until June 2023.

Any request to defer or attend part-time should be made to the school as soon as an offer is received.

c. Delayed Admission

All applications will be dealt with in accordance with the School Admissions Code 2.17, 2.18, 2.19,2.20 which came into force on 1 September 2021:

Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child has experienced problems such as ill health. In addition, the parents of a summer born child (born from 1 April to 31 August) may choose not to send that child to school until the September following their

fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to reception rather than year 1.

All requests should be made from the September following the child's third birthday, in order to give sufficient time for the case to be considered by the admissions authority prior to the deadline for applications of 15 January.

Parents of a summer born child may choose not to send their child to a school until the September following their fifth birthday and they may request that they are admitted outside their normal age group – to reception rather than year 1. All admission authorities are required to make clear in their admission arrangements the process for requesting admission outside of the normal age group.

The decisions on requests for applications outside the child's normal age group are made by the admission authority, which in the case of voluntary controlled and community schools is the LA. For voluntary aided, foundation schools or academies the admissions authority is the governing body of the school concerned. The decision to admit outside of their normal age group is made on the basis of the circumstances of each case. All parents who wish to apply for delayed entry into reception for any Wiltshire school must first submit a formal application to the LA.

If parents are applying for a voluntary controlled or community school, they will also need to make a written request at the time of application to the local authority's admissions co-ordinator, providing reasons for the request along with any supporting documentation they wish to include.

If parents are applying for a delayed entry at a voluntary aided, foundation school or an academy, as well as submitting a formal application to the local authority they should also contact their preferred school directly to discuss the request.

All admission authorities must make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned.

In the case of voluntary controlled and community schools, the Local Authority will look at the following factors when an application for admission outside the normal ages group:

- 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 ;
- whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group ;
- whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely
- the views of the head teacher of the school

The Local Authority will make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned.

If the parental request for delayed admission into reception is agreed, a separate application for a place in the next cohort would have to be made in the following September. This application would be considered along with all the other applicants for admission in that year at the preferred school. There would be no guarantee that a place would be able to be offered in the preferred school. If the preferred school is over-subscribed and a place is not offered, the local authority will make an alternative offer. However, please note that delayed admission into reception in the alternative school may not be possible.

If the parental request for delayed admission into reception is refused, the formal application which has already been submitted will be processed, unless the Local Authority receives a request from the parent to withdraw the application. If no request to withdraw the application is received, after the offer of a school place had been made the parent can then inform the Local Authority and the school that they want to defer entry until later in the academic year as outlined above.

When informing a parent of their decision on the year group the child should be admitted to, the admission authority **must** set out clearly the reasons for their decision.

If a child is currently on a roll at a school and a delayed entry is submitted and cannot be agreed, then no alternative school will be offered.

Applications for delayed entry to out of county schools

Parents who wish to apply for a main round delayed entry to an out of county school should submit the request to Wiltshire Council. Wiltshire Council will pass this on to the other Local Authority for consideration. Wiltshire Council will then inform the parent of the decision of the request.

Parents who wish to apply for a delayed entry as an in-year transfer should contact the Local Authority where the preferred school is situated for details of how to apply.

Right of Appeal for admission of children outside their normal age group

Parents who are refused a place at a school for which they have applied have the statutory right of appeal to an independent Admission Appeal panel. They do not have a right of appeal if they have been offered a place and it is not in the year group they would like. However, if parents are dissatisfied with the outcome of the request for delayed entry into reception, they have the right to complain against the decision through the Council's complaints procedure for decisions made by council officers or under the school's complaints procedure where the school is the admissions authority.

- 15 January 2024:** **Closing date for all Common Application Forms to be received by the School Admissions Team at County Hall. Applications received by this date will be classed as first round applications.**
- 8 February 2024: Details of applications which include preferences for schools in other LAs to be sent to those LAs.
- 9 February 2024: Details of applications to be sent to F, VA schools and Academies of all first round applicants.
- 8 March 2024: F, VA schools and Academies to provide the LA with ranked lists of all first round applicants.
- Between 8 March and 23 March, the LA will match the ranked list from all schools and allocate places.
- 22 March 2024: The LA will inform other LAs of any offers of places at Wiltshire schools to be made to applicants resident in their areas.
- 15 April 2024: By this date the LA will provide schools with details of those children to be offered places at the school.
- 16 April 2024:** **Notification letters despatched and sent to parents for all first round applicants. Online applicants also able to view the outcome online.**
- 26 April 2024: Deadline for second round applications.
- 30 April 2024: Deadline for parents to accept the place offered.
- 7 May 2024: Details of second round applications to be sent to F, VA schools and Academies of all second round applicants.
- 13 May 2024: F, VA schools and Academies to provide the LA with ranked lists of all second round applicants.
- 24 May 2024: **Notification letters despatched and sent to parents for all second round applicants.**
- 07 June 2024: Last date for second round offers to be accepted by parents. Parents should return their acceptance/decline slips back to the LA.
- 28 June 2024: Applications received after the 26 April will be considered in date order of receipt and will be looked at from today. Applications will be dealt with as soon as possible with allocations to a single school being made and offers being sent out by the LA as soon as practically possible.