London Borough of Waltham Forest

2026/27 Determined Admission Arrangements and oversubscription criteria for community and voluntary controlled infant, primary and secondary schools

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Background

In accordance with The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012, admission authorities are required to determine their admission arrangements each year. London Borough Waltham Forest is the Admission Authority for all community and voluntary controlled schools within the borough. For foundation or voluntary aided schools, the Admissions Authority body is the governing body of the school. For Academies, this body is the Academy Trust.

The admission arrangements for all schools must be determined in advance of the academic year to which they are relevant. For the academic year **2026/27**, all admission authorities must have determined their arrangements by **28 February 2025**.

What are Admission Arrangements?

Admission arrangements are the overall procedure, practices and oversubscription criteria used in deciding the allocation of school places. It describes the full set of arrangements on how a school will admit pupils. This includes the Published Admission Number (PAN) which is the maximum number of pupils intended to be admitted to the relevant year group, the oversubscription criteria and information on waiting lists.

Changes to admission numbers for community/voluntary controlled primary schools for 2026/27

Changes to the Pupil Admission Numbers (PAN) have been made for the following primary schools:

Reduction of PAN for Chapel End Infant and Early Years Centre from 90 to 60
Reduction of PAN for Edinburgh Primary School from 60 to 30

Changes to admission numbers for community secondary schools for 2026/27

No changes.

Published Admission Numbers (PAN) for community/voluntary controlled infant and primary schools for 2026/27

School	PAN 2026/27		School	PAN 2026/27
Ainslie Wood Primary School	60		Handsworth Primary School	60
Barn Croft Primary School	30		Henry Maynard Primary School	120
Chapel End Infant School	60		The Jenny Hammond Primary School	60
Chase Lane Primary School	90		Mission Grove Primary School (2 sites)	120
Chingford CofE Primary School	60		Newport Primary School	120
Coppermill Primary School	30		Oakhill Primary School	30
Dawlish Primary School	30		Parkside Primary School	90
Downsell Primary School	60		South Grove Primary School	60
Edinburgh Primary School	30		Stoneydown Park Primary School	90
George Tomlinson Primary School	90		Thorpe Hall Primary School	60
Greenleaf Primary School	60		Whitehall Primary School	60
Gwyn Jones Primary School	60		The Winns Primary School	90

Published Admission Numbers (PAN) for community secondary schools for 2026/27

School	PAN 2026/27
Frederick Bremer School	180
Heathcote School & Science College	180
Kelmscott School	240
Leytonstone School	210
Walthamstow School for Girls	180
Willowfield School	210

ADMISSIONS ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2026/27

The following Admission Arrangements apply to all schools which are Community and Voluntary Controlled within the London Borough of Waltham Forest as listed above.

All schools have an agreed admission number of pupils for entry. A school will accordingly admit up to its' Pupil Admission Numbers (PAN) pupils in the relevant age group each year if sufficient applications are received. All applicants will be admitted if up to the PAN or a fewer number of pupils have applied.

If a school is oversubscribed, after the admission of any pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) where the school is named in the Plan, priority for admission will be given to those children who meet the criteria set out below, in the following order:

Priority 1 – Looked-After or previously Looked-After Children
Priority 2 – Medical or social reasons or Children 'at risk'
Priority 3 – Siblings
Priority 4 – School staff children
Priority 5 - Distance

Definitions

Looked after children and previously looked after children
For admission purposes, a 'looked after' child is a child currently in care. In order to be given highest priority for admission, a child has to fall within the definition of 'looked after' in section 22 of the Children Act 1989. For looked after children, the application must be completed by their social worker with the name of the local authority, together with a covering letter.

Previously looked after children are children who were in the care of a local authority in England or appear to have been in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in care as a result of being adopted or made subject to a Child Arrangement Order or Special Guardianship Order immediately after being looked-after by a local authority in England or elsewhere. For previously looked after children, a copy of the order under which they left care must be provided. If the child you are applying for is adopted from care, you must provide a copy of the Adoption Order.

Definitions

A looked-after or previously looked after child is a child who is or was in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989:

a) in the care of a Local Authority; or

b) being provided with accommodation by a Local Authority

Special Guardianship Order – is an order under the terms of the Section 14A Children Act 1989 which is an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's 'special guardian(s)'

Child Arrangement Order – is an order under the terms of the Section 8 Children Act 1989 (as amended by Section 14 of the Children and Families Act 2014) setting out the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live.

Adoption Order – is an order under the Adoption Act 1976 (see section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see section 46 adoption orders), as well as children who were in state care outside of England immediately prior to being adopted."

Medical or social reasons

Medical or social reasons can only be taken into account where information is provided by the closing date (31 October 2025 for secondary applications and 15 January 2026 for reception/primary applications). Failure to provide such information at that stage may affect whether the child is allocated a place at the preferred school under this criterion.

Applications will only be considered under this category if they are supported by a written statement from a doctor, social worker, psychologist, or other relevant independent professional. The information must confirm the exceptional medical or social need and demonstrate how the specified school is the only school that can meet the defined needs of the child. In all cases the medical or social need must be permanent or long term. For medical conditions affecting mobility, consideration will only be given for the school nearest to the child's home.

Examples of possible exceptional medical or social reasons:

- Any acute or chronic condition that would make it difficult for a child to attend any school other than the closest school to the child's address.

- Any acute or chronic medical condition that requires regular, long-term attendance at a particular medical establishment which is closest to the school named.

- A child and their family who are considered 'at risk' due to circumstances beyond the family's control such as fleeing domestic violence (housed in a refuge in Waltham Forest) consideration may then be given for the named child to be given a school away from the area of their previous home address for safeguarding purposes.

- An existing restraining order that may put a family 'at risk' if the school were to be outside the remit of distance agreed by the courts.

The decision for community and voluntary controlled schools will be made by a panel of officers based upon the evidence produced. The Panel reserves the right to seek additional professional advice where necessary.

Children 'at risk'

A child is 'at risk' if they are currently on or subject to a Child Protection Plan.

Siblings

Sibling means:

A full brother or sister
A half brother or sister
An adopted brother or sister
A step brother or sister
A foster brother or sister
The child of a parent or carer's partner living at the same address

For primary applications, children with a brother or sister on roll in Reception to Year 6 at the time of the proposed admission will be considered under sibling criteria.

In all cases the sibling must be living at the same address and must still attend the school at the time of admission of the child for whom the application is being made. If you do not provide the name and date of birth of your child's sibling, we will not be able to take it into account and it will affect your child's chances of being offered a place at that school.

School staff children

All children of school staff, irrespective of the role that the staff member is performing and whether working part-time or full-time will be given priority:

a) 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;

b) the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

Distance

Distance is measured using a straight line from the centre of the child's permanent address **(as defined by the Local Land and Property Gazetteer)** to the designated main gate of the school.

We have to make a decision of where the child's home address is because the allocation of school places under the Admissions Policy, where the criterion of distance is used, is determined by reference to the child's 'home address'. Where a child lives with each of their separated parents for different parts of the week, we will consider the child's home address on any application to be where the child sleeps for most of the school week. Where this is an equal time, this will be determined by reference to the parents' address who receives the Child Benefit. In cases where the recipient of child benefit is clearly not a main carer of the child, or no one receives Child Benefit, we will consider all of the circumstances and make a determination as to the 'home' address which will be used and provide our reasons for doing so.

- All distances will be measured in miles using a computerised mapping system called Routefinder GIS.

- All distances will be measured using this system, which is the only one that that will be used in the allocation of school places by Waltham Forest School Admissions Service.

- If more than one applicant lives in a multi-occupancy building (for example, flats) priority will be given to the applicant whose door number is the lowest numerically and/or alphabetically.

Applications for split site schools

A 'split site' school is where a school has more than one site. There are some schools which may have two or more sites. This means that although the school operates across separate sites, each school site is still managed by the same Headteacher and Governing Body. It is the school's responsibility to determine which pupil is educated at which site. Where an application to a split site school is being determined with reference to the 'distance' criteria (as defined and measured above) distance will be measured between where a child lives and the nearest school site, irrespective of whether this is the school's main site or not. Any decision as to which site a pupil attends is a decision by the school alone, and therefore there is no guarantee that a pupil will be educated at the site closest to their home.

How applications for multiple birth children are dealt with

If the last child to be offered a place is one of multiple births, all multiple birth siblings will be admitted to the school as 'permitted exceptions' to the infant class size legislation which limits infant classes to no more than 30 children.

Tie-breaker

The tie-breaker is to decide between two applications that cannot otherwise be separated. The tie-break for two or more applications will be a lottery tie-break draw (where names are drawn

at random out of a blind draw) which will take place with the assistance of an impartial third party (LA officer), who does not work for the school admissions team.

Parental responsibility and whose application will be considered where more than one is received

If one parent has parental responsibility (as evidenced by documentation) that parent's application is the one that will be accepted. If parents are separated and both have parental responsibility, then they must determine between them who will make the application and if they cannot agree then either parent may seek to have that determined by a Court. In the event of a dispute between parents who do not have this matter resolved by the Court we will accept the application by the parent with whom the child resides the majority of the school week. Where that is equal, we will determine whose application is progressed with reference to the parent who is in receipt of Child Benefit. If no one is in receipt of child benefit, then we will consider all of the circumstances and make a determination as to the application which will be accepted and provide our reasons for doing so. This will ensure the child has an active application for a school place. Where the parent applying does not live in the same address as the child, we will require evidence of child's home address.

Applicants will not be able to change to the other parent's address mid-year unless the current arrangements as set out in any Court Order have changed. Applicants must also provide a copy of any custody or resident order.

Waiting lists

Children are automatically added to the waiting lists for any higher ranked Waltham Forest schools that we are unable to offer. Waiting lists for Waltham Forest schools are ordered in accordance with the admission criteria for each school. Places are allocated to children from the top of the waiting list as vacancies arise. Waiting list positions can change at any time depending on other applicants' circumstances and it is important to note that children's positions may go down as well as up if other applicants join the waiting list. The date of application does not affect the waiting list position once it has been processed. Being on a waiting list is not a guarantee of a place at the school. If we are able to offer a place from the waiting list, we will email or write to you. Applicants wishing their child to be placed on the waiting list for any lower preference schools should contact the School Admissions team.

If offered a place from the waiting list, applicants will need to confirm whether they want to accept the place. The place offered from the waiting list will only be held for seven days.

After seven days, we will revert back to any previous accepted school offer and withdraw the higher offer. For Waltham Forest schools, waiting lists close on 31 December 2025. If applicants then want their child to rejoin the waiting list for any school, they will need to re-apply by completing an in-year application form and listing the preferred school preferences. These waiting lists will then remain open until the end of June 2026.

Appeals

If a child is not offered a place at one of the schools listed on the application form, there is a right of appeal against this decision to an independent appeal panel. Details of how to make an appeal will be given with the offer of a school place.

The deadline for receipt of appeals for Secondary school for September 2026 entry is 13 April 2026, in order for appeals to be heard in May/June 2026. The deadline for receipt of appeals for Primary school for September 2026 is 15 May 2026, in order for appeals to be heard in June/July. If the appeal is received after the deadline, it will be heard after the main round of appeals. Appeals will be heard within 40 school days of being submitted. Appeals are heard by panels of people who have not taken part in deciding how places were offered on National Offer Day. The clerk to the independent appeal panel will write to applicants with details of their appeal date. Applicants will be invited to present their case in person and are allowed to bring a friend or representative to help them.

For further guidance regarding appeals please visit:

https:// https://www.gov.uk/schools-admissions/appealing-a-schools-decision and https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-appeals-code

If applicants also wish their case to be considered under the Medical/Social 'criteria' and discussed by the relevant medical/social panel they should request this in writing separately from the appeal. Any medical/social cases which are part of the appeal will not automatically go to the medical/social panel unless expressly asked for by the Applicant.

We can normally only consider one appeal for each school within the same school year. In exceptional circumstances applicants may be able to appeal for the same school more than once, but there would have to be changes to personal circumstances for this to be allowed.

Where possible, appeals for late applications will be included with those being heard for the same admissions round. Applicants who are unhappy with the outcome of their appeal can seek independent legal advice or complain to the Local Government Ombudsman.

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 has experienced problems such as ill health.

In addition, the parents/carers of a summer born child are entitled to 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.

If parent's wish to apply for a place for their child outside of their normal age group, they should submit their application to the Local Authority together with any supporting evidence they wish to be considered in respect of their application. Applications and any supporting evidence can be emailed to admissions@walthamforest.gov.uk, stating that you wish the application to be considered outside of normal age group.

A decision will be made on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking 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; 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. The views of the head teacher at the school(s) concerned must also be taken into account.

There is no guarantee that an application will be accepted. If the application for a place outside the normal age group is not accepted there is no right to a statutory appeal. Anyone dissatisfied with the outcome of such an application may exercise their rights to make a complaint under the authorities Complaints Procedures.

When informing a parent/carer of their decision on the year group the child should be admitted to, the Local Authority will set out clearly the reasons for their decision.

Deferred entry and part time reception places

Normally a child will be offered a school place the September following their fourth birthday. Some parents/carers will feel their child is simply not ready to start school in the September following their fourth birthday and there is flexibility in the Admissions Code to allow for this. Parents/carers are entitled to request that:

1. their child attends part-time until they reach compulsory school age, which is the term after their fifth birthday. This must be requested directly with the school once a school place has been offered.
2. the date their child is admitted is deferred until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which it was made.
3. for summer born children, their child is admitted outside of their normal age group following the process outlined above under 'Admission of children outside their normal age group'.

Children of UK service personnel and crown servants

For families of service personnel with a confirmed posting, or crown servants returning from overseas, the application should be accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date. This should state the intended address in Waltham Forest. If we are provided with evidence of the intended address, this is the address we will apply the schools' oversubscription criteria to when processing the application.

If there is not a fixed address to return to when making the application, a Unit or quartering address can be stated as the child's home address which will be used when considering the application against the oversubscription criteria of the preferred schools.

Making an objection to these Admission Arrangements

Any objections to these arrangements **must** be made to the Schools Adjudicator. Objections to admission arrangements for entry in **September 2026 must** be referred to the Adjudicator by **15 May 2025.** Further information on how to make an objection can be obtained from the Office of the Schools Adjudicator at the following link:

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/schools-adjudicator-make-an-objection-appeal-or-referral#objections-to-and-referrals-about-determined-school-admission-arrangements