**In-Year Admissions Co-ordinated Scheme 2025/26**

**1. Introduction**

West Berkshire Council (the Local Authority, or LA) is responsible for co-ordinating the in-year admissions process for all Community and Voluntary Controlled (VC) schools. This process enables parents to apply for school places and outlines how applications will be managed, including the relevant timescales.

At the request of individual schools, the LA will also co-ordinate in-year admissions for Voluntary Aided, Foundation, and Academy schools within West Berkshire.

This document will be updated annually to reflect the schools for which the LA co-ordinates in-year admissions and those that manage their own processes. Contact details for schools managing their own admissions will be provided in **Appendix 1**.

**2. Co-ordination Process**

* The Admissions Team will provide an application form and guidance on the West Berkshire Council website:
www.westberks.gov.uk/inyear-school-admissions
* Completed applications should be submitted either:
	+ By post to: Admissions, Market Street Council Offices, or
	+ By email to: admissions@westberks.gov.uk
* Upon receipt of an application, the Admissions Team will:
	+ Forward it to the relevant own-admission authority school for a decision, or
	+ For Community and VC schools, notify both the school and the parent of the outcome, providing the school with a copy of the application.
* Applicants will be notified of the outcome within **15 school days**.
* Admission authorities must respond to the Admissions Team within **13 school days** to ensure timely notification to parents.
* All applications will be recorded in the admissions database.

**3. Information to be Published on School Websites**

By **31 August** each year, all schools (including those managing their own in-year admissions) must publish the following information on their websites:

* How parents can apply for a school place, including access to the appropriate application form and any supplementary information form (if required).
* Notification timelines and details of the right to appeal.
* If participating in the LA’s co-ordinated scheme, a link to the scheme must be provided:
[www.westberks.gov.uk/inyear-school-admissions](http://www.westberks.gov.uk/inyear-school-admissions)

Schools must also provide a printed copy of this information upon request for families without internet access.

**4. Processing principles**

* In accordance with the School Admissions Code of Practice, we aim to respond to applicants within 10 school days but applicants must be notified of the outcome of their application in writing within **15 school days**. If an application is refused, the reason and appeal information must be included.
* The LA, as the admission authority for Community and VC schools, will make decisions without consulting schools unless clarification (e.g., on the Number on Roll) is required.
* Applications are typically forwarded to admission authorities on the day they are received to facilitate a response within the required timeframe.
* If an application is refused due to challenging behaviour, the admission authority must provide a detailed explanation to be included in in the refusal letter.
* Once a place is offered and accepted, arrangements should be made for the child to start school as soon as possible, especially if the child is currently out of school.

**5. School Admission Numbers (PAN) and Point of Prejudice (POP)**

**Published Admission Number**

The Published Admission Numberapplies solely to the initial year of entry into a school (e.g., Reception, Year 3 in Junior Schools, or Year 7 in Secondary Schools). Schools must admit up to the PAN in these entry years without exception.

**Admissions in Other Year Groups**

For all other year groups, admission authorities may only refuse a place if admitting an additional pupil would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources. This threshold is referred to as the **Point of Prejudice (POP)**.

While the POP may align with the PAN, it can vary depending on specific circumstances within the school or year group.

**Notification of POP**

Schools must email admissions@westberks.gov.uk as soon as a POP is determined that differs from the PAN. This must be done **in advance of responding to any specific application** and must include the affected year group, the reason and the revised number. For Community and VC schools, the LA as admission Authority will consider if the reasons for a revised number are acceptable.

**6. Available Places**

Local Authorities are required to provide up-to-date information on school place availability upon request. To support this schools are required to respond to the LA within 2 working days to confirm availability.

**7. Offering a School Place**

**General Principles**

All maintained schools and academies, including those with a religious designation, must offer a place to every child who applies, provided a place is available. Offers must be made without condition and without applying oversubscription criteria, unless admitting the child would prejudice the efficient provision of education or the efficient use of resources.

**Exceptions:**

* Where a child has been permanently excluded from two or more schools there is no need for an admission authority to comply with parental preference for a period of two years from the last exclusion
* An admission authority may refuse admission if there is **good reason to believe** the child may exhibit **challenging behaviour.**  In such cases, the child must be referred to the **Fair Access Panel**.(This does not apply for applications into Reception, Year 3 in Junior Schools, and Year 7).

This provision should only be used if the school has a **disproportionately high number** of pupils with challenging behaviour or those who have been permanently excluded, compared to other local schools.

Admission authorities must not refuse to admit a child thought to be potentially disruptive, or likely to exhibit challenging behaviour, on the grounds that the child is first to be assessed for special educational needs.

Behaviour can be described as challenging where it would be unlikely to be responsive to the usual range of interventions to help prevent and address pupil misbehaviour or it is of such severity, frequency, or duration that it is beyond the normal range that schools can tolerate. We would expect this behaviour to significantly interfere with the pupil’s/other pupils’ education or jeopardise the right of staff and pupils to a safe and orderly environment.

**Note:** Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools must inform the Admissions Team if any year group has a significantly high proportion of such pupils. Once a place has been offered, it **cannot be withdrawn** on the grounds of challenging behaviour if the Admissions Team was not previously informed.

**8. Right to Appeal**

When a school refuses admission, the parent must be provided with:

* The reason for refusal.
* Information about the right to appeal.
* The deadline for lodging an appeal.
* Contact details for submitting the appeal.

Parents must be informed that appeals must be submitted **in writing**, stating their grounds. Admission authorities **must not restrict** the grounds on which an appeal can be made. The Admissions Team will coordinate and notify schools accordingly.

**9. Transfers Between West Berkshire Schools**

* When a child applies to transfer between West Berkshire schools and a place is available, the Local Authority (LA) will notify both the current and receiving schools.
* If a place becomes available from the waiting list, the same notification process applies.
* Schools are encouraged to communicate with each other and the Admissions Team if there are concerns about the impact of the move on the child.
* Parents retain the right to transfer their child if a place is available.

**10. Fair Access Protocol**

The **Fair Access Protocol** ensures that unplaced children are allocated a school place when all standard admission routes have been exhausted.

**When No Places Are Available Within a Reasonable Distance:**

* The Admissions team will confirm the lack of availability.
* In these cases, admission above PAN or POP may be necessary.
* The **closest school** is typically expected to admit the child, though parental preference is considered where possible.
* If the closest school is unable to admit, the next nearest schools will be contacted.
* All relevant schools will be kept informed.
* If the child has been out of school for **less than four weeks**, waiting lists must still be considered.
* After four weeks, the case becomes a **Fair Access case**, and a place may be offered regardless of waiting lists.
* If no school agrees to admit, the case will be referred to the next **Fair Access Panel**.

**11. Looked After and Previously Looked After Children**

These children are considered **vulnerable** and should be prioritised for their first-choice school, although there is **no legal obligation** for schools to comply.

* For **Looked After Children**, school choices are made by social workers and the Virtual School Head, based on the child’s best interests.
* The **School Admissions Code** advises that, where a Looked After Child is refused a place, the local authority should consider using its **powers of direction** (as outlined in paragraphs 3.27–3.29 of the Code) rather than pursuing an appeal.
* In line with this, **West Berkshire Admission Authority** will ask schools to consider admitting above PAN or POP.

**Appendix 1: Schools included within the co-ordinated Scheme**

West Berks LA co-ordinate applications for all West Berkshire Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools.

Academies, Foundation Schools and Voluntary Aided Schools may opt into co-ordination and are included in the list below when requested.

**Secondary Schools**

1. Denefield School (Academy)
2. John O’Gaunt School (Academy)
3. Kennet School (Academy)
4. Little Heath School (Voluntary Aided)
5. Park House School (Academy)
6. St Bartholomew’s School (Academy)
7. The Downs School (Foundation)
8. The Willink School
9. Theale Green School (Academy)
10. Trinity School (Academy)

**Infant, Junior & Primary Schools**

1. Aldermaston CE Primary School
2. Basildon CE Primary School
3. Beedon CE Primary School
4. Beenham Primary School
5. Birch Copse Primary School
6. Bradfield CE Primary School (Voluntary Aided)
7. Brightwalton CE Primary School (Voluntary Aided)
8. Brimpton CE Primary School
9. Bucklebury CE Primary School
10. Burghfield St Mary’s CE Primary School
11. Calcot Infant School
12. Calcot Junior School
13. Chaddleworth CE Primary School
14. Chieveley Primary School
15. Cold Ash St. Marks CE Primary School
16. Compton CE Primary School
17. Curridge Primary School
18. Downsway Primary School
19. Enborne CE Primary School (Voluntary Aided)
20. Falkland CE Primary School
21. Fir Tree Primary School
22. Francis Baily Primary School (Academy)
23. Garland Junior School
24. Hampstead Norreys CE Primary School
25. Hermitage Primary School
26. Highwood Copse Primary School (Academy)
27. Hungerford Primary School
28. Inkpen Primary School
29. John Rankin Infant School
30. John Rankin Junior School
31. Kennet Valley Primary School
32. Kintbury CE Primary School
33. Lambourn CE Primary School (Academy)
34. Long Lane Primary School
35. Mortimer St. John's CE School
36. Mortimer St. Mary’s CE Junior School (Voluntary Aided)
37. Mrs Bland's Infant School
38. Pangbourne Primary School
39. Parsons Down Infant and Nursery School
40. Parsons Down Junior School
41. Purley CE Primary School
42. Robert Sandilands Primary School and Nursery
43. Shaw-cum-Donnington CE Primary School
44. Shefford CE Primary School
45. Speenhamland Primary School (Academy)
46. Springfield Primary School
47. Spurcroft Primary School
48. St. Finians Catholic Primary School (Voluntary Aided)
49. St. John The Evangelist Infants School (Voluntary Aided)
50. St. Joseph’s Catholic Primary School (Voluntary Aided)
51. St. Nicolas Junior School (Voluntary Aided)
52. St. Paul’s Catholic Primary School (Voluntary Aided)
53. Stockcross CE Primary School (Voluntary Aided)
54. Streatley CE Voluntary Controlled School
55. Sulhamstead & Ufton Nervet CE Primary School (Voluntary Aided)
56. Thatcham Park CE Primary School
57. The Ilsleys Primary school
58. The Willows Primary School
59. The Winchcombe School
60. Theale CE Primary School
61. Welford & Wickham CE Primary School
62. Westwood Farm Infant School
63. Westwood Farm Junior School
64. Whitelands Park Primary School (Academy)
65. Woolhampton CE Primary School (Voluntary Aided)
66. Yattendon CE Primary Schools (Voluntary Aided)

**Schools that have not opted into co-ordination**

Englefield CE VA Primary School

The Street

Englefield

Berkshire

RG7 5ER

0118 9302337

office@englefield.w-berks.sch.uk

[www.englefieldprimary.co.uk/admissions](http://www.englefieldprimary.co.uk/admissions)