



School Admission Arrangements
(Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools)
2026-2027

Admission Arrangements 2026-2027(Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools)

1. Introduction

This policy applies solely to applications for places at Community and Voluntary Controlled (VC) schools in Swindon. Foundation, Voluntary Aided (VA) and Academy Schools are their own admission authorities and therefore the Governing Bodies of the schools are responsible for determining their own admission arrangements and policies.

This document should be read in conjunction with the Co-ordinated Scheme for 2025-2026, and the In Year Coordinated Scheme 2026-2027 which applies to all schools within the Swindon LA area.

The closing dates for applications are:

Primary, Infant and Junior – 15th January 2026 offers are made on 15th April 2026
Secondary – 31st October 2025 offers are made on 2nd March 2026

Applications must be made for children transferring from nursery to infant or primary school and for children transferring from infant to junior school.

Oversubscription Criteria

If there are more applications than there are places at the school, then the oversubscription criteria are applied.

The over-subscription criteria for all Swindon Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools are as follows:

A child who has a Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is required to be admitted to the school named on the child's statement.

A	A looked after child or previously looked after child, and those that have been in statecare outside of England. <i>A looked after child or a child that was previously looked after looked after within England and outside of England, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order</i>
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| B | Any child who has a sibling attending the preferred school at the same time as he or she is due to be admitted; |
| C | Any child living within the school's catchment area; |
| D | Any child not living in the school's catchment area. |
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Decider

For Community and Voluntary Controlled schools distance will be determined from the applicant's home address to the school on the following basis –

The distance between the applicant's home and school is taken as a straight line between the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) address point of the applicant's home address and of the school with those living closest to school receiving higher priority.

Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan

Pupils with a statement of special educational needs or Education, Health and Care Plan at the time of allocation are required to be admitted to the school named on their statement or plan. Once a statement reaches the formal proposed stage the administration of the admission of the young person becomes the responsibility of Special Educational Needs Assessment Team (SENAT) at which point this policy no longer applies.

Looked After Child

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 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).

If children have ever been Looked After or Adopted or subject to a residency or special guardianship order evidence would need to be provided and the LA reserve the right to ask the parent to provide this.

Sibling

A sibling is defined as a child attending the preferred school at the same time as he or she is due to be admitted, who is a;

- brother or sister;
- half brother or sister;
- adopted brother or sister;
- step brother or sister, or
- the child of the parent/carer's partner where the child for whom the school place is sought is living in the same family unit at the same address as that sibling.

Where the sibling of the child making the application is under assessment for a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education Health and Care Plan, then they will be counted as a sibling from the time that the school is named on the final plan.

Catchment area

A catchment area is a geographical zone served by a school. The address that determines a child's catchment area is the place where s/he is ordinarily resident with his/her parent(s) or legal guardian(s). Most schools have a catchment area but some addresses fall within areas shared by two or more schools. Children living outside the Borough boundary are treated as if the children live within Swindon but outside the catchment area for the school(s) in question. Maps of each catchment area are held by the LA and can be viewed on request or on the council's website

Distance

In all cases where schools are oversubscribed, distance is as a straight line between the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) address point of the applicant's home address and of the school within each oversubscription criteria. If the direct distance measurement does not separate applicants, places will be offered by random allocation.

2. Other definitions

Address

Home address

The home address given on the application form must be the address where the child resides for most of the week with his or her parent or carer. The LA will not accept more than one address as the child's home address. The terms of a residency order may clarify the home address. Where necessary to determine which address to recognise and in the absence of a residency order, the LA will consider the home address to be with the parent with primary day to day care and control of the child.

In reaching this decision, evidence may be requested to show the address to which any Child Benefit is paid and from which the child is registered with a medical GP. If the Child Benefit letter is not available, a copy of the most recent bank statement where the Child Benefit is credited may be taken as residency, or the address stated on the NHS Medical Card of the child. Any other evidence provided by parents will also be considered by the Admissions Manager in reaching a decision on the home address for admissions purposes. This may be necessary for instance

where parents do not agree on the child's home address. Parents are urged to reach agreement but where they do not, the LA will determine the home address.

Applications

An application for a place at a primary or secondary school for September 2026 must be made online using the Local Authority's online common application form. This is made via the Council's online admission system.

Children of UK Service Personnel

Applications for children of service personnel with a confirmed posting to the area will be considered in advance of the family arriving in the area provided the application is accompanied by an official letter from the commanding officer that declares a relocation date. Admissions will accept the Unit postal address, quartering or private address as the home address for the purpose of allocation. All applications must be included in the normal admissions round if possible. The LA will not refuse a service child a place because the family does not currently live in the area, and will not reserve blocks of places for these children.

An in-year application will be considered in the normal way and 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 2012. In circumstances where placing a child at a school that is deemed a reasonable alternative would mean admitting above the PAN, the LA will take into account the organisational structure of the school to determine whether it is the best interests of the child and children already attending the school.

A reasonable alternative is defined as a school which is within the statutory maximum walking distance of 2 miles for a child who is under 8 years old and 3 miles for a child who is over 8 years old.

Late applications

Applications received after the closing date will be considered as late applications. This means that they will be considered after all on-time applications have been considered. This applies to primary applications received after 15th January 2026 and secondary applications received after 31st October 2025. We will continue to co-ordinate with other LA's for late applications unless the parent has a confirmed move to the Swindon area.

Multiple births

The LA will endeavour to place siblings born at the same time (e.g. twins, triplets etc.) at the same school, if necessary the school will admit over its PAN to accommodate such children. In the case of Infant Class Sizes (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2) class sizes must not contain more than 30 pupils with a single school teacher, however, additional children may only be admitted in limited exceptional circumstances, and in accordance with the School Admissions Code, twins and children from multiple births are classed as 'excepted pupils' to this legislation. Therefore, if one child of a multiple birth is offered the last available space at the school (according to the PAN), then offers will be made to all the children of that particular multiple birth. Those children would remain an exception to infant class size for the entire time they are in an infant class or until the class numbers fall back to the current infant class size limit.

||| **Parent/carer**

This is defined as a person with parental responsibility (PR) or legal residency of the child. This could include a person who is not a parent but who has a Court Order giving parental responsibility to them.

Shared responsibility

Where two adults have shared responsibility for a child they should agree before submitting an application form which school(s) to name as their preference(s). In cases of dispute, or where two applications from the adult with whom the child is living are received, the LA will ask parents to agree on the school applied for, or if that is not possible the LA will ask the parent to seek a Specific Issues Order through the Courts to gain the authority to make an application.

In the absence of a parental agreement or either of the parents obtaining a Court order determining the issue, the LA will be required to decide which preference(s) to be recorded and this will be done by using the application made by the person who lives at the property where the child is resident at their home address as defined below

(In reaching a decision on the address to use as the 'home address', evidence may be requested to show the address to which any Child Benefit is paid and from which the child is registered with a medical GP. Any other evidence provided by parents will also be considered by the Admissions Manager in reaching a decision on the home address for admissions purposes.)

Applications outside the Normal Age of Admission

Parents may request that their child is admitted outside of their normal age group. They should include a request with their application, specifying any reason why admission out of the normal age group is being requested. We will decide based on the circumstances of the case and in the best interests of the child concerned. We will ask parents to provide as much supporting evidence as they wish to say why they are requesting admission outside the normal age group for a child. We will consider:

- the parent's views;
- the views of the school's head teacher;
- information about the child's academic, social and emotional development submitted by the parent;
- information about the child's medical history and the views of a relevant medical professional submitted by the parent;
- whether the child has previously been educated out of their normal age group;
- guidance from the Department for Education on the admission of summer-born children to Reception;
- whether the child may have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely.

Parents should consider the implications of a child being taught out of the normal age group. Any school the child later moves on to will not be obliged to continue to educate their child out of the normal age group.

We will reach a decision on which Year Group is appropriate for the child. We will then reach a decision whether a place can be offered as it would for any application in that Year Group. Admission Authorities must make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case, informing parents of their statutory right to appeal. This right does not apply if they are offered a

place in another year group of the school.

In the instance that the child has not started school (or is not statutory school age), or it is before the child needs to apply for a school place, the Admitting Authority for the school (LA for maintained schools or Governing Body of the School) may have discretion to decide would only be used in exceptional circumstances where it would have to be proved that it was in the child's interest. This may have already been considered by the Special Educational Needs Assessment Team (SENAT) through the Early Years Panel.

Delayed Admission to Reception

Delayed admission is where a summer-born child delays admission into a Reception class until the start of the September after the **fifth** birthday and not the September after the **fourth** birthday. This means admission would be out of the normal age group. A summer-born child is one whose birthday is between 1 April and 31 August.

Parents of summer-born children can request that admission to Reception is delayed to the following academic year - the start of the next September term will be when the child reaches compulsory school age. We recommend that parents visit and contact the school so that they can explain the provision that is on offer to children in the Reception class, how it is tailored to meet the needs of the youngest children and how their needs will be met as they move through the school. This is an opportunity to discuss any concerns parents have about the child's readiness for school. Children in Reception and in an Early Years setting all receive the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum which is largely play-based learning.

As with any request for admission outside a child's normal age group, the admissions authority will have two decisions to make:

1. it must first decide on the age group the child should be admitted to
2. it then decides whether a place can be offered in that age group.

It can be difficult to reach a decision about the appropriate age group for a child more than a year in advance of admission as it will not be easy to assess how the child will develop in that time. Therefore, it would be helpful for parents to provide as much information on the child as possible, particularly with any relevant professional social or medical evidence.

The process in Swindon is that the parent is encouraged to make an application for the child's normal age group at the usual time and make a request for delayed admission at the same time. This enables the LA to reach a decision on age group before the national offer day. If the request is agreed, the application can be withdrawn by the parent before a place is offered and the parent will then make a fresh application in the next normal admissions round. If the request is refused, the application for the normal age group will continue in the process and an offer of a school place will be made on national offer day. Parents can then decide to accept the school place, defer to a later start date (see below) or defer until their child's admission until Year One for the following September, when they would be statutory school age. Please note that if the parent would like their child to start at the school allocated in Year 1 they would need to start school in the last academic term (April) for the place to be held for their child. Otherwise, the school place will be removed and the parent will need to make a new application for a school place in Year 1.

In reaching a decision, we will consider the circumstances of the case as we would with any request for admission outside the normal age group. Our decision will be made in the best interests of the child and will be set out in writing for the parent. We recognise, along with the Department for Education, that requests for delayed admission to Reception differ from other requests for admission outside the normal age group as it is only in these circumstances that a child is being admitted to school for the first time. Delayed admission is not an opportunity for a child to retake the Reception year.

There is no right of appeal if a parent is offered a place but it is not in the year group they would like. They may make a complaint through the LA's complaints procedure if they are unhappy with a decision.

Please see Appendix 1 to these arrangements, Delayed and Deferred Admissions.

Deferred admissions

Parents can request that the date that their child is admitted to school is deferred later in the academic year or until the term in which the child reaches compulsory school age. However, please note that the place must be taken up in the same academic year that it was originally offered and admission cannot be delayed beyond the statutory school start date. Notification of the intention to defer should be given directly to the school concerned as soon as possible once a place has been offered.

1st September 2020 and 31st December 2020

Admission will be September 2026 or can be deferred until January 2027

1st January 2021 and 31st March 2022

Admission will be September 2026 or can be deferred until January or April 2027

1st April 2022 and 31st August 2022

Admission will be September 2027 or can be deferred until January or April 2028

Delayed admission should not be confused with deferred admission which involves putting off admission to the Reception class within the same academic year. Deferred admission children remain in their chronological year group.

Published Admissions Number

Each school will operate with a Published Admission Number for its intake year(s). This will be determined by the admission authority for the school as part of the admission arrangements. Once determined, this will be the minimum number of children to be admitted throughout that intake Year should there be sufficient demand.

At any time after determination, the admission authority for an Academy may increase the PAN where it identifies that it has additional demand for places and those additional admissions would not prejudice efficient education or the efficient use of resources. The LA must be informed in good time to adjust the offers of places in line with the increased PAN.

A PAN cannot be reduced after determination without a variation being approved by the Office of the School's Adjudicator or from the Education and Skills Funding Agency. This would follow a request by the admission authority, successfully demonstrating that there had

been a significant and unforeseen change in circumstances at the school. While in most cases, the PAN for the cohort will become the Admission Number (AN) at the end of the intake year, it may be amended to reflect a change in circumstances at the school.

Waiting lists

Waiting lists will be maintained for all Community and Voluntary Controlled schools from the initial point of entry until the end of that academic year. For the September 2026 intake this will be from the national offer date until 31st August 2027

For all other year groups (Years 1 – 6 and 8-11) the waiting list will be discarded on 31st August 2025 and new applications will be invited from 1st September 2026

Placement will be determined by applying the oversubscription criteria published in the Admissions Guide. Names will be removed from the lists if requested or if the offer of a place that becomes available is not accepted. Positions on waiting lists may change due to new applications received.

Waiting lists for Foundation, Voluntary Aided Schools and Academies are outlined in the individual schools own admission arrangements.

Placing a child's name on a waiting list does not affect the parents' right of appeal against an unsuccessful application.

Parents may only apply and appeal once per school per academic year. The LA may consider a fresh application if there is a significant and material change in circumstances of the parent, child or school since the original application was made. An example of this may be that the family have moved house.

Appeals procedure

Parents have a right of appeal to an independent panel against any decision made by or on behalf of the LA as to the school at which education is to be provided for their child. Information about the appeal procedure will be provided where a place at one or more of the preferred schools has been refused.

For appeals for September 2026 a timetable for hearing appeals will be published by 28th February 2026 and be available on the relevant schools or Local Authority website. Appellants should make the appeal using the link provided on their refusal letter using the link below.

<https://www.swindon.gov.uk/forms/form/439/en/a>

For any issues regarding making an online appeal parents to contact the Appeals Clerk on 01793 445500 or email admissionappeals@swindon.gov.uk

In-year admissions

3.1 If parents/carers decide to transfer their children during the academic year after the normal admissions round, this is referred to as an In Year Transfer.

- 3.2 The LA has a coordinated In Year Admissions Scheme and all Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools are part of this scheme for September 2026-2027.
- 3.3 Please refer to the In Year Coordinated Admissions Scheme for more information on this.

3. Published Admission Numbers

The following list of schools are community and voluntary controlled which the Local Authority is the admission authority. The Local Authority are consulting upon the admission number for the 2026-2027 academic year. The Published Admission number (PAN) applies to the relevant year group for admission in September 2026 and these are in the table below.

School Name	Type of School	Published Admission Number 2025-2026	Proposed Published Admission Number 2026-2027
Beechcroft Infant School	Community	90	90
Bishopstone CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled	8	8
Bridlewood Primary School	Community	30	30
Chiseldon Primary School	Community	30	30
Colebrook Junior School	Community	50	50
East Wichel Community Primary School	Community	60	60
Eldene Primary School	Community	45	45
Even Primary School	Community	90	90
Lainesmead Primary School	Community	30	45
Lawn Primary School	Community	60	60
Westrop Primary School	Community	45	45

4. Appendices

5.1 Appendix 1 – Delayed and Deferred Admissions