

# Infant, Primary & Junior School Admissions

## Guidance Booklet for 2025 Intake

Infant / Primary School Admissions for children born between 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020 and 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021

Junior School Admissions for children born between 1<sup>st</sup> September 2017 and 31<sup>st</sup> August 2018

Also includes information regarding transfer from lower/first to middle school

# WELCOME

This booklet will help guide you through the process of applying for a school place in Gloucestershire.

This booklet is only for parents and carers of children living in Gloucestershire - if you do not live in Gloucestershire you **must** apply to your home local authority, even if requesting a place in a Gloucestershire School.

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# Key Dates 2025 Intake

## Entry to Primary, Infant and Junior School

In Gloucestershire admission authorities will provide for the admission of all children in the September following their 4<sup>th</sup> birthday. Some schools/academies offer a staggered entry for the Reception Class where children attend part-time at first. Please contact each individual school/academy to discuss your child's entry into Reception Class.

We offer three different mainstream categories of educational settings for children aged 4 - 11.

### Primary

Children will have full-time education provided from reception to year 6.

### Infant

Children will have full-time education provided from reception to year 2. When your child is in year 2 you will need to apply for a junior school/academy to continue their education.

### Junior

Children will have full-time education provided from year 3 to year 6. Children will enter junior schools/ academies in year 3.

## Entry from First to Middle School

The neighbouring county of Worcestershire offers a 3 tier system where children transfer from Low to Middle School in Year 5 to Year 6 and Middle to High School in Year 8 to Year 9. For further details, see page 15.

## September 2025 Intake

|                                           |                                                                                                            |
|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>November 2024</b>                      | Letters sent out explaining how to apply for school places                                                 |
| <b>Monday 4 November 2024</b>             | Online application facility opens                                                                          |
| <b>Midnight Wednesday 15 January 2025</b> | Closing date for school applications                                                                       |
| <b>Wednesday 16 April 2025</b>            | Allocation Day                                                                                             |
| <b>Midnight Wednesday 23 April 2025</b>   | Closing date to return reply form accepting the school place or requesting to be placed on waiting list(s) |
| <b>After Tuesday 14 May 2025</b>          | Outcome of waiting list requests sent out                                                                  |
| <b>Wednesday 21 May 2025</b>              | Closing date for return of reply forms                                                                     |
| <b>June 2025 to July 2025</b>             | Appeals                                                                                                    |

# Step 1

## Research the schools to decide which ones you wish to apply to

Go to school open days/evenings, talk to the students and teachers, this may help you decide which school you would like your child to attend. Information about open days/evenings and information sessions is usually available on school websites or by contacting the schools.

Read the latest OFSTED report for the school. This report will point out all the strengths and weaknesses of the school and is usually available on the school's website or by asking the school for a copy.

Look at the school website - this will give information about the school including the number of children on roll, facilities etc.

Research how far away the schools are from your home. You need to consider how your child will get to and from the school, as most children are not eligible for free transport assistance. In most instances transport will need to be organised and paid for by parents/carers and should your circumstances change, you will not be eligible for any transport assistance from Gloucestershire County Council. Therefore, we strongly advise you to read the transport assistance policy available on [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/applyforabuspass](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/applyforabuspass)

Find out about entry requirements and if your child has a **realistic** chance of getting a place at the school/academy. The admission criteria for all schools is available either from the schools directly or in the information booklet on the following link on our website:

[www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/education-and-learning/school-admissions/admissions-to-reception-at-primary-school-3-junior-school-lower-to-middle-school-places-for-september-2024/](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/education-and-learning/school-admissions/admissions-to-reception-at-primary-school-3-junior-school-lower-to-middle-school-places-for-september-2024/)

If your child has an Education Health and Care Plan please go to page 8.

# Step 2

## Choose your preferred schools

You can apply for up to 5 schools that you would prefer your child to attend; we advise you list 5 preferences.

Place the schools in your **true preference order** with one being the school you would most like your child to attend. We allocate schools using the equal preference system. Schools are not informed where you put them on your list. Please see below for further details.

Even if you want a place at your local school or you already have another child in the school you **must** still apply.

## Equal Preference System Explained

### Background to the system

Whether you are applying for a primary or secondary school place for your child, it can be tough deciding which schools to list on your application form, let alone in which order you should rank them.

In the past, some schools and local authorities operated a 'First Preference First' system. Admissions authorities could prioritise those who had listed a school as their first choice on their application form. In practice, this meant that a child who lived some distance from a school but had made it their first choice could be offered a place above a child who lived nearer but had listed it as their second choice.

The Schools Admission Code outlawed the 'First Preference First' system. **Admission authorities are now legally required to operate an 'Equal Preference' system.** This means schools can no longer favour children who listed the school as their first choice or rule out those who placed it lower down their list; in fact, they are not even told where they were ranked in your list of preferences.

The Equal Preference system means that places are offered purely on the strength of how well children fit the admissions criteria.

Using the equal preference process means that a school place could be allocated to someone who has named it as second preference, over someone that has named it as a first preference; this would be because they have been ranked higher in the oversubscription criteria and could not be offered their first preference.

### **What does this mean in practice?**

On the Common Application Form you will be asked to list your top 5 choices of schools in order of preference.

After the closing date, we will put your child's name on the list for each of the schools you have listed. Their position on the list will depend on how well your child fits the school's admission criteria, for example, they may be higher up a school's list if you live very close to it.

The Equal Preference system means that at this stage, the order in which you ranked the schools will not be considered. Your child will be put on the list for every school you have applied to.

Each school has a Published Admission Number (PAN) - the number of places it has to offer. So, if a school has a PAN of 150, the first 150 children will be provisionally allocated a place and those children whose names fall outside the PAN will not be offered a place at this school. This is repeated for each school.

If the situation occurs where a child can be offered a place at more than one school, we will then consider the order in which you ranked the schools on your Common Application Form and we allocate the highest preference possible. This means the place from the lower preference school can then be allocated to the next person on that school's list.

If your child has been offered a school that was not your first choice, you can request for your child to be placed on the waiting list for your higher preference(s). All waiting list requests will be processed in the subsequent allocation rounds. For further guidance, please see Step 4.

If your child is not allocated a place at any of your preferred schools, we will allocate a place at the nearest school with a space available after all preferences have been processed.

## **Step 3**

### **Apply for a school place**

To make an application for a school place, you must be the child's parent or legal guardian. We can only accept one application per child; therefore, applications should only be made to us once both parents agree with the preferred schools. If parents cannot agree please see page 10.

Register to apply online via our website - this is the quickest and easiest way to apply. If you have previously registered for another child, or for Free School Meals, you can use the same logon details and password. Just check that all your details are still correct and update accordingly. You may need to provide proof of any changes.

Use your child's permanent address. We use this information to determine if a child can be offered a place at a school, so it is important that we have the correct address.

You can apply for up to 5 schools. Place them in your true preference order but make sure you have read the Admissions Policy for each school to ensure your choices are realistic. Details on individual school's admissions policies can be found in the Infant, Primary and Junior School Information booklet, available on our website or on the school's website.

Tell us about any siblings that will be attending the school when your child is due to start. If you are naming an infant school as one of your preferences tell us about any siblings attending or will be attending the linked junior school when your child is due to start.

Check if the schools you are choosing require supplementary forms to be completed. You will find this information in this booklet or on the school's website. Remember, you must still complete the Common Application Form and name them as one of your preferences.

If you feel that your child has a medical need that can only be met by a specific school, you will need to supply the school with documentation from a medical professional to support your application if it is relevant in the school's admissions criteria.

If you currently live overseas and require a reception place or a Year 3 junior place in Gloucestershire for your child from September, you can apply directly to ourselves using our online application facility. Please apply using your child's name, date of birth and your current overseas address but also give details of your moving date and UK address, if known.

Remember to make a note of your username and password as you will need this to access your account to make any changes and to check the outcome of your application.

Applications received after **15 January 2025** will be treated as 'late' and will not be considered until after all other applications have been processed.

Alternatively, you can complete a paper application form which can be downloaded from our website. It is your responsibility to ensure that we receive it by the deadline as proof of posting is not sufficient

## Step 4

### Responding to the school offer

We strongly advise that you accept your child's offer, even if you are unhappy with it, to ensure your child has a school place for September. Accepting a school place does not affect your right to be placed on a waiting list or to appeal.

#### Accept your child's school place

Parents who applied online will be notified via email. Alternatively, you can login back into your online account to view the school allocation.

If you are happy with the school place your child has been offered, log into your online account and accept the place.

If you did not apply online, you will receive notification by letter and you can accept the school place by completing the online reply form available on our webpage. Alternatively, you can complete and return the paper reply form.

#### Decline your child's school place

You can decline your child's school place using any of the methods above.

However, it is important to note that if you decline your child's school place, this will not increase your chances of being offered one of your preferred schools and your child may then end up without a school place for September.

#### Request to be placed on a waiting list(s)

Children are not placed on any waiting list(s) automatically; you **must** complete either the online reply form or the paper reply form.

All requests need to be made by the closing date **by midnight 23 April 2025** to be considered in the second round of admissions. Requests made by this date will receive the outcome after **14 May 2025**.

All waiting lists are held in accordance with each school's criteria; we cannot take individual circumstances or personal reasons for wanting the school(s) into account. However, if your address has changed or will have changed before **23 April 2025** you must provide us with proof of address.

In the second round of admissions, any places that become available in the school are offered to the children at the top of the waiting list. If we can offer one of the schools you submitted a request for, your child's original school place will be **automatically** withdrawn and made available to others.

Should you wish to remove your child's name from waiting list(s), you must clearly state this in writing/by email to us.

If your child has not been allocated your preferred school in the waiting list round, your child's name will remain on their waiting list. This team continually allocates, as and when spaces become available in the schools, up until the end of the summer term. At this point the waiting lists are handed over to the schools. The lists we provide to them must be kept until 31 December 2025.

## Step 5

### Request an Appeal

If your child is unsuccessful in gaining a place at your preferred school, you have a legal right to appeal if you think you have exceptional circumstances supporting why your child should have a place at your preferred school.

Further clarification on the appeal process will be available via your allocation letter or our webpage from the **16 April 2025**.

Unless there are significant material changes in circumstances, only one appeal application may be made for each academic year for each school. We strongly recommend that you accept the school place offered, even if you are intending to appeal for another school. This ensures that your child has a school place secured for September if your appeal is unsuccessful.

## Additional Information

### Late Applications

It is extremely important that you apply by the closing date of **15 January 2025**. We must treat any application that is received after this date as 'late' and your preferences will not be considered until places have been offered to all children for whom we received an application by the closing date.

Our Senior Officers can agree to extend the deadline, for a short time, in very exceptional circumstances such as:

- Where legal paperwork needs to be obtained for a parent/carer to be able to state a preference on behalf of their child
- Cases of Emergency Care Orders
- The hospitalisation of the only parent/carer

If you think this applies to you it is important that you contact us before the closing date to agree any extension.

It is unlikely that your child will be offered a place at any of your preferred schools if we do not receive your application form by the closing date. However, if we can make a reasonable offer we will do so, and you will receive notification on allocation day. If we are unable to make a reasonable offer your application will be considered during the second round of admissions.

Applications received with less than 4 weeks to go before allocation day (i.e., received on or after 16 March) will not be processed until after allocation day.

## Delayed entry during the 2025/2026 Academic Year

Most children joining Reception start school at the beginning of Term 1 (September). However, children do not have to start full time education until the term after their fifth birthday, and some families decide to delay their children's entry to school until this term.

**If you intend to delay your child's entry to later in the 2025/2026 academic year an application still needs to be made by the closing date, 15 January 2025.**

If a parent wishes to delay their child's admission to school, they should discuss the request with the allocated school concerned.

Please see table below showing dates by which children have to start school.

| Children born between...                 | Can start school...<br>(full-time or part-time)                                                                      | Must start school by... (full-time)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 September 2020 and<br>31 December 2020 | September 2025                                                                                                       | January 2026 (start of the Spring Term)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 1 January 2021 and<br>31 March 2021      | September 2025<br>or<br>January 2026 (start of<br>the Spring Term)                                                   | April 2026 (start of the Summer Term)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 1 April 2021 and<br>31 August 2021       | September 2025<br>or<br>January 2026 (start of<br>the Spring term)<br>or<br>April 2026 (start of the<br>Summer Term) | September 2026<br><br>Unless otherwise agreed, if a child of this age starts school in September 2026 the child will start in Year 1 and not Reception (please see the section on the admission of summer born children below). The offer of the reception place for September 2025 will lapse if the child concerned does not start school at the beginning of the Summer Term. In cases of this kind the child's parent would need to reapply in June 2026 for a Year 1 place for September 2026. However, there are no guarantees a place will be available |

## Deferment for Summer born children

If your child was born between 1 April and 31 August and you are considering deferring your child's admission to Reception 2026, please see our separate Deferment for Summer-born Information Sheet available in the Related Documents section on our webpage [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/education-and-learning/school-admissions/admission-to-reception-at-primary-schoolyear-3-junior-school-lower-to-middle-school-places-for-september-2025/](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/education-and-learning/school-admissions/admission-to-reception-at-primary-schoolyear-3-junior-school-lower-to-middle-school-places-for-september-2025/) This information sheet contains important information and explains the application process you will need to follow.

## Travel Assistance

It is very important that you think about transport when you consider the school you would like your child to attend. If you are not choosing to attend the nearest school (for whatever reason) or the school is within walking distance it is very unlikely that travel assistance will be granted. Most children are not eligible for free transport and this will usually have to be organised and paid for by you. Many schools have their own travel plans, with special routes to make walking or cycling safer and have special facilities such as cycle shelters.

You can apply for assistance with transport if all the following details apply to your child:

- Your child lives in Gloucestershire, and

- They attend their nearest primary/infant school and it is over two miles or more walking distance away for a child under eight, and under three miles or more walking distance away for a child aged eight or over.

For a ‘straight line’ calculation on the distance from your postcode to the school you are interested in please use the following link: [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/find-a-school](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/find-a-school). Please note, this should only be used for a general guideline and does not match the criteria for how the transportation distance assessment is calculated - travel assistance is measured by ‘walking’ distance using the nearest available pedestrian route.

Transport assistance is not provided to those children who:

- Attend an independent school
- Study away from their normal school
- Live outside the County and attend a Gloucestershire school

In addition, travel assistance will only be considered if parents/carers have submitted preferences for all of their closer schools as a higher preference than the allocated school. These preferences must have been made by the National closing date.

If transport is likely to be an issue for you, we would advise you to contact the Travel Assistance and Free School Meals Team to see if they can help with transport before choosing your preferred schools.

The County Council remains committed to ensuring that all children can access education and will continue to meet all its statutory duties. It further commits to considering best practice as outlined in the Education Act 1996, Education and Inspections Act 2006, the Home to School Travel and Transport Guidance and Home to School Travel for Pupils Requiring Special Arrangements Guidance.

Please check the website for our current transport policy [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/applyforabuspass](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/applyforabuspass)

## Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

If you think that your child needs to go to a special school, you are advised to talk to your child’s playgroup, nursery or early years centre in the first instance.

It is important to remember that no places can be guaranteed at schools suggested or recommended as being suitable for your child by staff at your child’s playgroup, nursery or early years centre or by other advisers.

If your child has an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP), there is a different admission procedure for applying for a reception place.

At the Annual Review there should be an opportunity to discuss which school may be suitable to meet your child’s needs. A copy of the Annual Review will be sent to the County Council’s Special Educational Needs (SEND) Casework Team, who will then contact the school named in the report to request a place for your child.

Applications do not need to be submitted for children with an EHCP as places are automatically allocated in the school that has been named in the child’s EHCP. If an application is made, then this will be discarded. If you wish a different school for your child other than the one currently named in your child’s EHCP you will need to contact our SEND Casework Team on 01452 324068.

Children who have additional learning needs or a disability but **do not** have an EHCP or a Statement of Special Educational Needs, will need to apply for a reception place following the same admissions procedures as all other children.

If you have concerns about the process or the choice of a suitable school/academy, you may find it helpful to discuss this with your child’s pre-school setting or other professionals involved with your child’s education and welfare.

## School applications for foreign national children and children resident outside England

Foreign national children resident in the UK normally have the right to attend state-funded and independent schools in England.

To lawfully enter the country to access a school, foreign national children resident outside the UK will normally need either:

- a right of abode
- an immigration status which otherwise permits them to enter the UK to study at a school

Advice and guidance for state-funded school admission authorities, independent schools, local authorities and parents is available using the following link: [www.gov.uk/guidance/schools-admissions-applications-from-overseas-children](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/schools-admissions-applications-from-overseas-children)

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Who has parental responsibility for a child?

Both natural parents have parental responsibility if they are, or ever have been, married to each other. If parents have never married, the mother has parental responsibility automatically. Unmarried fathers acquire parental responsibility for their children in different ways, depending on when their children are born.

Parental responsibility for children born after 1st December 2003 is obtained by:

- Registering the child's birth jointly with the mother at the time of birth.
- Re-registration of the birth by the natural father.
- Marriage to the natural mother of their child or by obtaining a Parental Responsibility Order from the court.
- Registering a Parental Responsibility Agreement with the court or by an application to court.

Parental responsibility for same-sex parents

- Same-sex partners will both have parental responsibility if they were civil partners at the time of the treatment, e.g. donor insemination or fertility treatment.
- For same-sex partners who are not civil partners, the 2<sup>nd</sup> parent can get parental responsibility by either:
  - applying for parental responsibility if a parental agreement was made
  - becoming a civil partner of the other parent and making a parental responsibility agreement or jointly registering the birth

### What if more than one application is completed?

We can only process one application per child and the Local Authority cannot become involved in disputes between parents. If more than one application is received for a child, all applicants will be told that this has happened and they will be asked to reach an agreement and re-submit one application for the child.

If parents cannot agree, and a court has not been approached to decide which parent has the right to submit their preferred school, we will not accept either application.

### What address do I use to apply?

The address at the top of your original 'how to apply' letter which you will receive from us is the address that we would normally use for allocation purposes.

If this is a recent update, then we may require proof of this address in order to use this, in which case we would use the previous address unless this proof is received. If this address is incorrect, you **must** let us know your correct address as soon as possible, we may also require proof of this address.

The address given on the application should be the child's **permanent** address as at closing date for applications - 15 January 2025. A child's permanent home address is defined as 'a child's ordinary place of residence, which is deemed to be the residential property at which the child normally and habitually resides with their parent or legal guardian'.

School places are offered in accordance with each school's admissions policy and most schools have home to school distance as part of their policy. Therefore, you need to ensure that the address details we have for your child are correct.

Where a child lives with both parents on a 50/50 (equal) basis the local authority will request that the parents agree on which address is to be used for allocation purposes. This should be the one at which they are normally and habitually resident.

The Local Authority may also request proof of the registered address, which must pre-date the application e.g. the address registered for child benefit or where the child is registered with a medical GP. Additional proof of address may be requested before we can confirm the address. The method in which the distance is measured from home to school can be found under 'strongest geographical claim' under Key Terms, page 13.

If the parents/carers are unable to agree on which address is to be used for allocation purposes, the address used will be determined by random selection (lottery). A member of Gloucestershire County Council, who is totally independent of School Admissions will supervise this process.

Addresses of a business, relative, friend or child-minder will not be considered as the home address even when the child stays there for all or part of the week. We may seek proof of residence and may require evidence from courts regarding parental responsibilities in these matters. Evidence that a child's home address is permanent may also be sought. Such evidence should demonstrate that the child lived at the address before the application was made and will continue to live there after the time of admission. Informal arrangements, even between parents, are not acceptable.

### **What if I am changing address?**

If you will be changing your permanent home address before the closing date it is very important that you let us know and send us proof of your move as this may affect the school that we are able to offer. We will not change your address on our system unless we receive this proof. It must be received no later than 1 week after the closing date and show that the move occurred before the closing date.

If you will be changing address after the closing date, then we will not be able to use this new address for allocation purposes but proof will be required to update our records for correspondence purposes and any future allocations/waiting list positions.

### **What is sufficient proof?**

If your move involves the purchase of a property, you must have completed the purchase and moved into the new property on or before the closing date or your previous address will be used for allocation purposes. We cannot accept a letter confirming your intention to purchase. You will need to send us a copy of your solicitor's letter confirming the completion of purchase.

If your move involves the renting of a property, you will need to send us a copy of your signed tenancy agreement or written evidence from the letting agency or solicitor confirming the lease start and end date. The start date needs to be on or before the closing date or your previous address will be used for allocation purposes.

If your move involves you returning to live in a property you already own, you will need to send us written evidence of the date that you will move back into the property. If you have rented your property to someone else, you will also need to send us evidence that you have given your tenants notice to leave.

We reserve the right to check that a property can be treated as your permanent address. Please see our Address of Convenience Protocol available on our website under Related Documents

***Fraudulent applications - the Local Authority takes all cases of fraudulent addresses very seriously. We reserve the right to fully investigate your home address details if it is considered that you are not supplying your permanent home address (e.g., renting a vacant property) at any time during the admission process. Our investigations can include us requiring you to provide us with further information or us carrying out our own checks and searches (e.g., soft credit checks) and verification with District Councils.***

***We will withdraw the school place if it is found that the address used for the application is not the child's permanent home address. In these circumstances you would then jeopardise being allocated a school of your choice.***

### **What if I am applying from overseas?**

You can apply from overseas but you **must** submit your application using the address where the child is living as at the closing date for applications - 15 January 2025.

If you have moved to Gloucestershire from overseas before the closing date, you will need to provide proof of your move and of the address. Please note that if you own a property in the UK and are currently overseas the Gloucestershire address **cannot** be used for allocation purposes unless you have permanently moved back into this address before the closing date.

### **Children of UK Service personnel and other Crown Servants (including Diplomats)**

Admission authorities in Gloucestershire welcome applications from all families eligible for school places in the county. The county and its partner admission authorities recognise the needs of Service parents and others serving the Crown, many of whom must manage frequent moves of home, both inside and outside the UK.

In the light of the guidance and requirements set out in the School Admissions Code (September 2021), admission authorities in Gloucestershire are keen to ensure that those managing applications for school places in the county and any appeals arising from them have regard to the Code and the needs of the Mobile Service Community. Whilst we are keen to support Service personnel it may not always be possible to offer a place at your preferred school.

We can, however, use the address to which the family is being posted (upon receipt of proof of posting) for allocation purposes before the family has arrived here, provided the application is accompanied by an official government letter e.g.

- Posting Orders, **or**
- Confirmation in writing from the Unit Clerk, **or**
- Confirmation in writing from the Commanding Officer that the parent is Service personnel.

### **What do I do if I want my child to attend a school outside Gloucestershire?**

You can list up to 5 schools on your application form and may have decided that you want to include a school situated within the boundary of one of our surrounding counties. Include any schools outside of Gloucestershire on your Common Application Form and your preferences will be passed on to the relevant local authority.

If you are refused a place at a preferred school outside of Gloucestershire on allocation day, you must contact the authority in the area that the school is situated for advice, to request a place on the waiting list and/or to obtain an appeal form. The completed form must be returned to the issuing authority and **not Gloucestershire**.

## **Making an application for a Middle school (Worcestershire)**

If you live in Gloucestershire and your child is attending a setting within Worcestershire, you can apply for your Middle school place online or download the Common Application Form on our website.

Please remember - your child may not be eligible for free transport to schools situated outside Gloucestershire.

Once we receive your application, we will forward the preference details on to the relevant authority where it will be considered alongside the other applications for the school.

We will notify you of which school your child has been allocated regardless of which county the school is situated in.

## **I live outside Gloucestershire, how do I apply for a place at a Gloucestershire school?**

If you do not live in Gloucestershire you may still express a preference for a school place within Gloucestershire. However, you must apply using your own Local Authority's application form and return the completed form to them by the closing date. Your Local Authority will then forward the preference details to us and it will be considered alongside the other applications for the school. This process will apply whether you only put one preferred school on your application which is in Gloucestershire, or if you put a mix of schools in your own County and in Gloucestershire as your preferences. Your home Local Authority will notify you of which school your child has been allocated.

If your child is unsuccessful in gaining a place at a school in Gloucestershire you should contact us for advice and to request a place on the waiting list.

Please note that Gloucestershire County Council will not be able to provide transport to the school if your child does not live within the county. Your home Local Authority will have their own arrangements and you should contact them for further advice.

## **What if I want to send my child to an independent school?**

If you would like your child to attend an independent school, this is entirely a matter for you and you must make your own arrangements. The Local Authority cannot pay for, or contribute to, the fees or costs for children attending an independent school.

You must contact us [school.admissions@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:school.admissions@gloucestershire.gov.uk) to let us know your child will be attending an independent school and will not require a place at a local authority school. If we receive this confirmation from you, your child will not be offered a place at a state school through the admissions process.

It is important for the education of all children in Gloucestershire that state school places are not held by children who do not intend to take up a state place.

## **What if I want to home educate my child?**

A small number of parents will want to teach their own children. Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 you are legally entitled to educate your child at home. If you decide to do so, you become solely responsible for ensuring that your child receives 'full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have'.

The Local Authority will have to be satisfied that your arrangements are satisfactory, but we are not responsible for helping you plan the programme. This means that you accept responsibility for content, planning, teaching and cost. For further details about home education please go to [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/home-education](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/home-education) or contact the Gloucestershire Elective Home Education Service by email: [ehes@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:ehes@gloucestershire.gov.uk) or telephone: 01452 426015.

# Key Terms

## **Additional / Supplementary Form**

Some schools use supplementary information forms to gather additional information in support of an application, particularly in relation to faith. These forms are in addition to the Common Application Form provided by us. You must complete both. The supplementary form will be available from the school(s) and the information you provide on these forms will be considered by the governing body in its role as the Admissions Authority for the school.

## **Admission Criteria**

Rules used to decide the order in which children are offered places at schools.

## **Appeals**

Appeal papers, timescales and guidelines are available from each school. Appeals will be heard by an independent appeal panel with an independent clerk. Appeals will be conducted in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code.

## **Catchment Area**

Some schools have a catchment area consisting of parishes, district or county boundaries. Some schools will give priority for admission to those children living within their catchment area.

## **Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)**

Children who have an EHCP are placed in schools through the arrangements set out in the SEN Code of Practice and not through any admission criteria. Children with an EHCP that names the school will be allocated a place before other applicants are considered. Governing bodies are required by Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 to admit a child with an EHCP that names the school, even if the school is full. Parents/carers of children with an EHCP should contact their child's casework officer for any further information.

## **Common Application Form**

The online or paper form you must fill in to tell us which school you would prefer your child to attend.

## **Distance measurement (Admissions)**

Distance will be measured in a straight line from the Ordnance Survey point of the child's home to an Ordnance Survey point of the school using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system, with those living closer to the school/academy receiving the higher priority.

## **Distance Measurement and Shortest Available Pedestrian Route (Transport)**

Distances are measured from the child's home entrance to the nearest school gate along the shortest pedestrian route (which would include walking along maintained walkways that are able to be used in any weather). Once the nearest school has been established, we assess the 'statutory walking distance'. The measurement of the statutory walking distance is not necessarily the shortest distance by road. It is measured by the shortest route along which a child, accompanied as necessary, may walk with reasonable safety.

## **Foundation School/Academy**

The school's governing body is responsible for running and managing the school/academy and decides the policy for admitting pupils.

## **Free Schools**

Free Schools are all-ability state-funded schools set up in response to what local people say they want and need in order to improve education for children in their community. It is funded by tax-payers, free to attend and not controlled by the Local Authority. They are academically non-selective, following Admissions law as it applies to Maintained schools. Free schools are governed by non-profit charitable trusts that sign funding agreements with The Secretary of State. They are subject to the School Admissions Code of Practice with the exception that they are allowed to give priority to founder's children. They are still subject to Ofsted inspections.

### **Looked After Children (Children in Care) / Previously Looked After Children**

A 'look after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements order (residency order) or special guardianship order including those who appear to the admission authority to have been in state care outside of England and eased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

- (1) 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) at the time of making an application to a school. In Gloucestershire, such children are referred to as Children in Care.
- (2) A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.
- (3) This includes children who were adopted 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).
- (4) Child arrangements orders are defined in Section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by Section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order.
- (5) See Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 which defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

### **Oversubscription criteria**

If a school receives more preferences than places available, the admission authority will place all children in the order in which they could be considered for a place. This will strictly follow the priority order of their oversubscription criteria. We cannot guarantee your child will be offered one of their preferred schools, but they will have a stronger chance if they meet higher priorities in the criteria.

To see how many pupils were allocated under the admissions criteria for each school, please use the following to find the statistics [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/allocation-day-statistics](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/allocation-day-statistics)

### **Parents/Family Members**

A parent is any person who has parental responsibility or care of the child. Where admission arrangements refer to 'parent's attendance at church' it is sufficient for just one parent to attend. Only parents and siblings are classed as family members.

### **Sibling**

Unless otherwise stated in the individual school criteria a sibling refers to a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, stepbrother or sister or the child of the parent/carer's partner as well as children brought together as a family by a same sex civil partnership. In every case, the child must be living in the same family unit at the same address as the sibling attending the school at the time of application and the sibling will continue to attend the school at the time the applicant child is admitted.

### **Specific Medical Condition**

A diagnosed medical condition that means a child has needs that can be met only at **one** specific school.

### **Strongest geographical claim**

Measured in a straight line from the Ordnance Survey address point of the child's home address (including flats) to the Ordnance Survey address point of the school, using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system, with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority.

### **Twins and Children from Multiple Births**

Applications for twins and children from multiple births will be considered as individual applications. However, the Local Authority acknowledges the difficulties for families if children cannot attend the same school, for example if one child can be offered a place but not the other and therefore will aim to accommodate both/all children at one school where there is capacity to do so.

This includes overriding the Key Stage 1 restrictions which limit Reception, Year One and Year Two classes to a maximum of 30 children per teacher, if the one child from twins/multiple births can be offered a place when the other(s) cannot.

**Trust Schools**

Trust Schools are state-funded Foundation schools that receive extra support (usually non-monetary) from a charitable trust made up of partners working together for the benefit of the school. Trust schools remain Local Authority-maintained. Any maintained school can become a Trust school.

**Voluntary Aided School**

A school that is run by the school's governors, often in partnership with the Church of England or the Catholic Church. The governors are responsible for each school's Admissions Policy.

**Voluntary Controlled School**

A school where the Local Authority is responsible for admissions and setting the criteria.

**Waiting lists**

If a school is oversubscribed a waiting list will be held for the first term, until at least 31 December. The waiting list will be prioritised according to the school's oversubscription criteria and should a place become available at the school it will be offered to the child at the top of the waiting list. If you wish your child to remain on a waiting list after 31 December, you should contact the school for advice.

# Useful Contacts

## **Co-ordinated Admissions (Gloucestershire County Council)**

Responsible for managing the statutory processes for admitting children to the normal years of entry to Primary (Reception), Junior (Year 3) and Secondary schools (Year 7) and including Out of County Lower to Middle and Middle to High School transfers.

Email: [school.admissions@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:school.admissions@gloucestershire.gov.uk) Telephone: 01452 425407

## **Democratic Services (Gloucestershire County Council)**

For advice on appealing for a place at your choice of school. If you are appealing for a Community School/Voluntary Controlled school, the Democratic Services Unit will co-ordinate your appeal hearing. They will inform you of the date, time and location of your appeal and the names of the panel members and clerk.

Email: [democratic.services@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@gloucestershire.gov.uk)

## **Department of Education**

Provides the rules for admissions and appeals that all Local Authorities must follow

Website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education) Telephone: 0370 000 2288

## **Integrated Transport Unit (ITU) (Gloucestershire County Council)**

Responsible for the Council's passenger transport services, including the operation and procurement of mainstream home to school transport services

The ITU can respond to customer enquiries regarding local bus services for children who are not entitled to free transport and are happy to receive enquiries from you regarding public transport solutions for the journeys to and from school.

Email: [mainstream@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:mainstream@gloucestershire.gov.uk) Telephone: 01452 425387

## **Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education)**

The official government body for inspecting schools - you can access copies of the reports on your local school from their website or from your local library

Website: <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>

## **Ombudsman**

The department who investigates complaints about injustice of the administration of school allocation. The Ombudsman will consider complaints where a parent feels that a school place was refused because of some unfairness or mistake by the Local Authority in their role of co-ordinating admissions in Gloucestershire and/or a school admissions appeal that was handled incorrectly.

Website: [www.gov.uk/schools-admissions/appealing-a-schools-decision](http://www.gov.uk/schools-admissions/appealing-a-schools-decision) Telephone: 0845 602 1983

## **Schools Adjudicator**

Reviews admission criteria for schools and investigates any concerns that parents may have about this.

Website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-of-the-schools-adjudicator/about>

## **Travel Assistance and Free School Meals Team (Gloucestershire County Council)**

Responsible for giving advice and guidance on your child's eligibility to access school transport and free school meals.

Email: [transportmainstream@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:transportmainstream@gloucestershire.gov.uk) Telephone: 01452 425390  
[freeschoolmeals@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:freeschoolmeals@gloucestershire.gov.uk)

## Neighbouring Local Authorities

### **Herefordshire Council**

Email: [schooladmissions@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:schooladmissions@herefordshire.gov.uk)

Website: [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/schools-education](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/schools-education)

Telephone: 01432 260925

### **Monmouthshire County Council**

Email: [accesstolearning@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:accesstolearning@monmouthshire.gov.uk)

Website: [www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/applying-for-a-school-place](http://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/applying-for-a-school-place)

Telephone: 01633 644508

### **Oxfordshire County Council**

Email: [admissions.schools@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:admissions.schools@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Website: [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/apply-school-place](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/apply-school-place)

Telephone: 01865 815175

### **South Gloucestershire Council**

Email: [admissionsandtransport@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:admissionsandtransport@southglos.gov.uk)

Website: [www.southglos.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.southglos.gov.uk/admissions)

Telephone: 01454 868008

### **Swindon Borough Council**

Email: [schooladmissions@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:schooladmissions@swindon.gov.uk)

Website: [www.swindon.gov.uk/secondaryschoolplaces](http://www.swindon.gov.uk/secondaryschoolplaces)

Telephone: 01793 445500

### **Warwickshire County Council**

Email: [admissions@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:admissions@warwickshire.gov.uk)

Website: [www.warwickshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/admissions)

Telephone: 01926 414143

### **Wiltshire Council**

Email: [admissions@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:admissions@wiltshire.gov.uk)

Website: [www.wiltshire.gov.uk/schools-learning-admissions-online](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/schools-learning-admissions-online)

Telephone: 01225 713010

### **Worcestershire Council**

Email: [schooladmissions@worschildrenfirst.org.uk](mailto:schooladmissions@worschildrenfirst.org.uk)

Website: [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/schooladmissions](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/schooladmissions)

Telephone: 01905 822700

### **Disclaimer**

The information contained in this booklet was correct at the time of publication however future amendments to the Department of Education Admissions Code, and related processes, may introduce changes. You are advised to refer to the GCC admissions page [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/school-admissions](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/school-admissions) before making your final decision and submitting your application to ensure that you are fully aware of any changes that may have arisen since publication of this booklet.

We would also advise you to read the full admission policy for your preferred schools, which are available from [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/determined-admission-criteria](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/determined-admission-criteria) or from individual schools.

Please note that definitions of terms found in the 'explanation of key terms' section of this booklet provide the default or standard meaning of the terms. However, in some cases these terms may be defined differently in individual school arrangements and you should read the full admission policy for your preferred school(s).