



Guide on How to Make an Application for Starting School

for Parents and Carers of Children Resident in Worcestershire.

Starting school is an exciting step for you and your child, however the process can sometimes appear confusing. This leaflet aims to provide you with some basic information and advice, as well as how to apply for a Reception school place for children born between **1 September 2011 and 31 August 2012**.

Even if you already have older siblings in a school, your child attends a nursery at the school, you have approached a school, been placed on an expression of interest register or think you have either already applied or put your child's name down at a school, **you will still need to make and submit an on-line application**. This is very important, **if you do not make an application on time, you may not be considered for places until after all those that applied by the closing date**.

Attendance at a particular nursery does not give priority for a place at a First or Primary school.

STARTING SCHOOL

For Parents/Carers of young children in Worcestershire the guide below indicates when to apply for your child/ren to start school:

Date of Birth	Relevant Year Group for Intake	Applications Open	Applications Closing Date
01/09/2011 to 31/08/2012	Reception 2016/2017 Academic Year	1st September 2015	15th January 2016
01/09/2012 to 31/08/2013	Reception 2017/2018 Academic Year	1st September 2016	15th January 2017
01/09/2013 to 31/08/2014	Reception 2018/2019 Academic Year	1st September 2017	15th January 2018
01/09/2014 to 31/08/2015	Reception 2019/2020 Academic Year	1st September 2018	15th January 2019

Visit: www.worcestershire.gov.uk/schooladmissions to make your application.

Or telephone School Admissions on 01905 822700 if you need assistance.

All of the information you need is available on our website:
www.worcestershire.gov.uk/schooladmissions

The different types of school

Academies (A)

The Academy Trust and the Headteacher have responsibility for managing the academy and have responsibility for deciding the arrangements for admitting pupils including their own admissions criteria. Academies are not maintained by the local authority. Academies are usually the result of a change to an existing state school.

Community (C) and Voluntary Controlled (VC) schools

Worcestershire Local Authority (LA) is the admission authority i.e. it has responsibility for deciding the arrangements for admitting pupils to community (C) and voluntary controlled (VC) schools including the admissions criteria.

Foundation (FD) and Voluntary Aided (VA) schools

The governing body is the admissions authority i.e. it has responsibility for deciding the arrangements for admitting pupils including their own admissions criteria.

Free Schools (FR)

Free Schools are non-profit making, independent, state-funded schools. Unlike normal state-funded schools, Free Schools are not controlled by the local authority. Free Schools are similar to academies, but will usually be new schools.

Some parents choose to educate their children at home. The local authority regularly monitors the quality of provision being provided – further information and guidance is available from the SEND Information, Advice and Support Service Worcestershire (see back cover for contact details). For more detailed information on types of school visit the www.Gov.uk website.

Worcestershire school organisation

In Worcestershire there are two systems:-

Three-Tier System

The three-tier system of first, middle and high schools operates in Bromsgrove, Droitwich, Evesham, Pershore and Redditch.

Two-Tier System

In the other areas of Worcestershire, there is a two-tier system of primary schools for pupils up to the age of 11 with high schools for pupils over the age of 11.

Please refer to page 6 for further details.

Can schools cater for children with additional needs?

Schools offer support for children with additional needs and will have a SENCO (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) with whom you can discuss any concerns. There are also a number of mainstream schools with specialist units and Special Schools around the County. Further information and advice for parents of children with additional needs is available from the SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (see back cover for contact details).

When is my child able to start school full time?

The law requires all children to start full-time education by the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday. Children who have reached their fourth birthday are entitled to attend full-time in a reception class from the September after their fourth birthday.

The Reception year group from **1st September 2016 – 31st August 2017** is for children who were born between **01/09/2011 – 31/8/2012**.

Can I keep my child out of school until s/he is 5?

By law children must start in full-time education at the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday. **However, all children are entitled to access education in the September following their fourth birthday.**

Parents can request that their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age. All Schools have to provide for children to attend part-time, should the parent wish to do so. Any period of part-time attendance could vary according to the circumstances at each school and perhaps also according to the age of the child. You will need to discuss with the school you would like your child to attend, what their induction arrangements are.

Parents may also request that their child's entry to a reception class be deferred until later in the same reception academic year group. Parents wishing to consider this must discuss the situation with the Headteacher at the school. Parents must apply for a school place in the normal way at the usual time.

Summer Born Children

Usually children with a date of birth in the summer term wishing to start school in the September after their fifth birthday would start in Year 1 and consequently miss the entire reception year. To apply for a place in Year 1 and not reception please refer to Section 3.13 of the Information for Parents Book 2016 for further details. Please be aware that there may not be a vacancy in Year 1 at that time.

Parents can also **request** that their child enter the reception class in the September after their fifth birthday, effectively in the year group below their chronological age group. The admissions authority of the school must make the decision based on the circumstances of each case. In the case of a Community or Voluntary Controlled School the Local Authority will request the head teacher of the school to reach the final decision. This will involve the head completing an educational assessment to determine whether or not it is appropriate for the individual child to delay their entry into school and be taught permanently behind their chronological age group.

This process must be completed in advance of the closing date of 15th January 2016, in the event that the delayed entry is not approved, parents will need to make application in time for the 2016 reception intake. Should the delayed entry be approved you will be advised how to proceed at that stage.

Even if it is agreed that your summer born child can start school in the September following their fifth birthday in the reception class, the normal admission arrangements apply and there is no guarantee of a place. You should therefore give careful consideration to requesting delayed entry.

What do I need to do?

1. Visit Schools

Schools hold open events for interested parents and children. These can be evening or daytime sessions. You can tour the school, talk to staff and pupils and see demonstrations. If the visit is during a normal school day, you will be able to see the school at work. These are good opportunities for you and your child to have a look at the school and get a feel for it. You should contact the school direct or visit the school website to find details of open day events.

If you are unable to make the arranged date, most schools are usually happy for you to visit at a different arranged time. You should contact the school direct to organise this.

Visit as many schools as you can to compare. Make up your own mind rather than listening to rumours. Feel free to talk with schools about things that are important to you.

Please be aware:

- **Attendance at a particular nursery/pre-school does not give a child priority in gaining a place at the school where the nursery/pre-school is located. Parents/carers must still apply for their child to go to a First/Primary school and places are allocated in line with the Admissions Policy of the school.**

2. Get more information about the schools you are interested in

- Every school produces a school prospectus (a brochure giving information about the school). Ask the school for a copy.
- Look at the school website.
- Read the information on each school in the 2016/17 **Information for Parents Admissions and Transfers to Schools book** which is available online at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/schooladmissions
- <http://schoolsfinder.direct.gov.uk/> gives links to the School profile, Ofsted reports and School performance data.

3. Look at the admission policy

If a school is oversubscribed (has more applications than places), it will use admission criteria to decide who to offer places to. Read them carefully for the schools you are interested in. To look at what happened in previous years and how many children were offered places under each criteria, you may wish to contact the school direct.

4. Decide which schools

You are strongly advised to use all of the three preferences available to you and to be realistic about the schools you apply to. Always put down one school where you are more likely to get a place, even if it is your third preference.

DO NOT HOWEVER, put schools as a preference if you would be unhappy with the offer of a place at that school.

NB Parental responsibility

Should more than one parent have parental responsibility for a child, both parents must be in agreement over the preferences expressed prior to the application being submitted. Failure to ensure agreement prior to submission, may result in a delay in the application being processed and in some instances a legal resolution may be required.

Consider individual factors that are important to you:

If your child has particular learning needs, talk to the SENCo (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator) at the schools you are interested in.

Consider **how your child will get to school** before you apply – can your child walk or cycle there or use public transport. Avoid applying to a school which will be difficult to get to or may involve expensive transport costs.

Information about home to school transport assistance available to residents of Worcestershire is available on-line at http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/homepage/18/school_and_college_transport or Tel: 01905 765765.

5. Apply on time

The Reception year group from 1st September 2016 - 31 August 2017 is for children who were born between **1 September 2011 and 31 August 2012**.

Places in reception classes for admissions in the school year September 2016 to August 2017 are allocated on the basis of applications received on or before the closing date of: 15th January 2016. It is very important that you apply on time. If you do not submit an application on time, you may not be considered for places until after all those that applied by the closing date.

Parents who do not wish their children to start until they have reached compulsory school age must discuss their intentions with the school, and must also apply for a school place on-line by, **15th January 2016**, so that their application can be considered.

When and How to Apply for the Reception Year Group Academic Year 2016/2017

When to Apply	
Applications Open	1st September 2015
Closing Date	15th January 2016
School Offer Notification Date	16th April 2016

If you live in **Worcestershire** and your child is due to start school in Reception during the school year 2016/2017, then you must apply to Worcestershire County Council for his or her school place – the opening and closing dates for applications are as above.

How do I apply?

- Apply online at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/schooladmissions
- You will need an email address
- Once you have submitted your application you will receive an email to acknowledge receipt. If you do not receive this email, it could mean that you have not submitted the application correctly and should resubmit it. **It is very important that you retain this receipt as proof of submission for your records.**
- If you do not have access to the internet, you can get online at any Worcestershire library.
- Join the Library and use your Library card to get one hour internet access free each day.
- Training on “How to get online” is available free to all Worcestershire Library members.

If you require additional assistance please do not hesitate to call School Admissions on 01905 822700.

N.B. It is very important that you apply by the closing date of **15th January 2016**. If you do not make an application on time, you may not be considered for places until after all those that applied by the closing date. Applications received after the deadline may be classed as late and you may be refused a place, even if you live in the catchment, have a child at the school already, have a child in the school nursery or live very close to the school.

You are advised to refer to: **Section 3 of the Information for Parents Admissions and Transfers to Schools book 2016/2017 for full details of the Late Application procedure.**

Deadline for applications is 15th January 2016

After the closing date, you will need to visit www.worcestershire.gov.uk/schooladmissions to download a PA1 Late application form to apply or telephone: 01905 822700 to request a Late application form.

Parents of children resident outside Worcestershire

If you are not resident in Worcestershire, then you should obtain admission details from your home LA, even if your preferences include schools within Worcestershire.

Offer date

Offers will be issued on **16th April 2016**. They will be issued direct to parents, by the School Admissions Section, even if it is on behalf of the governing body of an Academy, Foundation, Free or Voluntary Aided School, or a school in a neighbouring LA.

In the few cases, where it may not be possible to offer a place at any of the preferences nominated on the application, a place will be offered at the nearest school with available places for pupils who live in Worcestershire.

The acceptance or decline of the offer must be made by the date specified.

For pupils not resident in Worcestershire, the offer or refusal will be sent direct to parents by the home LA, even if it is for a school in Worcestershire.

Mythbusters and Tips

Mythbusters

- Listing only one preference does not increase your chance of getting into that school.
- Applying for more than one school does not weaken your chances of getting a place at your preferred school.
- Naming schools that you are very unlikely to get as your second and third preferences will not increase your chances of getting your first preference school. The other schools you applied for are not considered when deciding who to offer places to.
- Applying for your catchment school does not mean you will be automatically offered a place there. If you can be offered a school which is higher on your list, you will be.
- All applications to a school are considered at the same time. Listing a school as a first preference does not give you priority over those who put the school as a second or third priority. All preferences are considered equally. The order in which you list the schools is only used if you could be offered a place at more than one school. In this case, you would be offered **whichever of those schools was highest on your application form**.
- Having gained admission for one child at a school does not guarantee a younger child will be admitted. Should the school be oversubscribed at the time of application of a younger sibling, catchment area may have a higher priority on the oversubscription criteria.
- Having gained admission to a school of your preference, other than your catchment area school, does not mean your child will have highest priority for transfer to the related middle or high school. If the related middle or high school is oversubscribed at the time of transfer, your child might then have to move in a different direction from other children currently attending the same school.

Tips

- You can name up to three schools on your application. You are strongly advised to use all three preferences to increase your chance of getting a preferred school.
- You are advised to include your catchment school as one of your three preferences. However please note that you are not guaranteed a place at your catchment school.
- Do not put schools as a preference if you would be unhappy with the offer of a place at that school. It would be a waste of a preference if you were offered a place at a school that you would not be happy with your child attending.

- **Be Realistic!**
Don't waste all three preferences on schools that are unlikely to be able to offer your child a place. Have at least one school as a "safety net" where you are likely to be offered a place.
- When deciding who to offer places to, schools do not know what order you have listed them on your application or which other schools you have applied for – this information is confidential prior to allocation.
- Decisions about who to offer places to are made using the admission criteria only. Any other schools you may have applied to, has no bearing on the admission arrangements.

Schools within Worcestershire

All schools in the County are co-educational, and all high schools are comprehensive. However, there are different types of school and there are also differences across the County in the age groups that the schools provide for, as explained below.

The areas served by a **three-tier system** of first, middle and high schools are as follows:

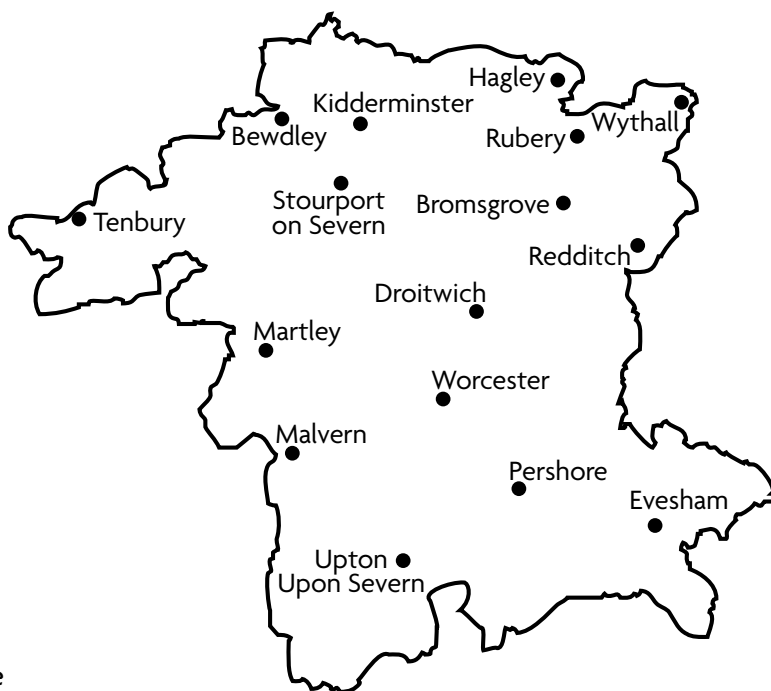
Bromsgrove Droitwich Evesham
Persnore *Redditch

The **three-tier system** consists of first schools for pupils from 5 to 8, 9 or 10 years, middle schools for pupils from 8, 9 or 10 years to 12 or 13 years, and high schools which provide for pupils of 12 or 13 years to 18 years. A **two-tier system** of Catholic schools also serves Droitwich, Evesham and Persnore areas.

In the other areas of Worcestershire, there is a **two-tier system** of primary schools for pupils up to the age of 11, with high schools for pupils over the age of 11.

* A number of schools in Redditch have approved changing the age range of the school and are in the process of converting to the two-tier system.

If applying for a A, FD, FR or VA school place, you should check the details in the 2016/2017 **Information for Parents Admissions and Transfers to Schools book** at: www.worcestershire.gov.uk/schooladmissions or contact the school direct to find out if you need to complete an additional form for that school.



Tier Systems and Year Groups by Area

Area	Tier System	Type of School	Age Range	Year Groups
Bewdley	2	Primary	5 - 11	R - 6
		High	11 - 18	7 - 13
Bromsgrove	3	First	5 - 9	R - 4
		Middle	9 - 13	5 - 8
		High	13 - 18	9 - 13
Droitwich	3	First	5 - 9	R - 4
		Middle	9 - 12	5 - 7
		High	12 - 18	8 - 13
Evesham	3	First	5 - 10	R - 5
		Middle	10 - 13	6 - 8
		High	13 - 18	9 - 13
Hagley	2	Primary	5 - 11	R - 6
		High	11 - 18	7 - 13
Kidderminster	2	Primary	5 - 11	R - 6
		High	11 - 18	7 - 13
Malvern	2	Primary	5 - 11	R - 6
		High	11 - 18	7 - 13
Martley	2	Primary	5 - 11	R - 6
		High	11 - 16	7 - 11
Persnore	3	First	5 - 9	R - 4
		Middle	9 - 12	5 - 7
		High	12 - 18	8 - 13

Area	Tier System	Type of School	Age Range	Year Groups
Redditch*	3	First	5 - 9	R - 4
*Tudor Grange		Middle	9 - 13	5 - 8
Academy		High	13 - 18	9 - 13
Redditch		High *	11 - 18	7 - 13
Rubery	2	Primary	5 - 11	R - 6
		High	11 - 18	7 - 13
Stourport	2	Primary	5 - 11	R - 6
		High	11 - 18	7 - 13
Tenbury	2	Primary	5 - 11	R - 6
		High	11 - 16	7 - 11
Upton	2	Primary	5 - 11	R - 6
		High	11 - 18	7 - 13
Worcester *	2	Primary	5 - 11	R - 6
		High	11 - 16	7 - 11
		High *	11 - 18	7 - 13
Wythall	2	Primary	5 - 11	R - 6
		High	11 - 18	7 - 13

Checklist for applying

15th January 2016 is the closing date for First/Primary School applications.

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Visited the website www.worcestershire.gov.uk/schooladmissions and read the 'Information for Parents book. If you do not have access to the Internet, either visited your local Library and gained free access to the Internet or viewed a copy of the book in Schools, Libraries or at your Local Worcestershire Hub.

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Visited Schools and obtained a School Prospectus.

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Applied online and retained the email receipt sent when submitted. Remembered to keep a reminder of own password used when applying for future use.

Date Applied:

Password:

Security Question Answer:

OR

☐

Completed and submitted an IA form and retained the signed receipt as proof of application.

If there is anything about the admissions process which you do not understand please contact School Admissions:

By Phone: 01905 822700

By Fax: 01905 766776

By Post: School Admissions Section,
Children's Services Directorate,
PO Box 73,
Worcester
WR5 2YA

By Email: schooladmissions@worcestershire.gov.uk

Online: www.worcestershire.gov.uk/schooladmissions

The SEND Information, Advice and Support Service Worcestershire offers independent and neutral information /advice on Special Education Needs and information on elective home education. Please contact:

By Phone: 01905 768153

By Email: SENDIASS@worcestershire.gov.uk

Online: www.SENDworcestershire.co.uk

This leaflet has been prepared by the Directorate of Children's Services to inform parents about School admissions and transfers in good time for the school year 2016/17. To the best of our knowledge all information was correct at the time of printing: July 2015