

Applying for a place at Primary School 2023/24

Information for parents/carers

Why not apply online – see page 4

Applying for a place at Primary School 2023/24

If your child is due to start reception class in September 2023 you need to apply for a school place by the closing date of **15th January 2023**

Please read this booklet very carefully because it:

- explains how we decide which school to offer your child; and
- gives information to help you decide if you are likely to get a place at a particular school.

We can give you this information in other formats (such as in large print) and languages if you ask.

The information in this booklet was correct at the time it was published. If there are any changes, we will put a notice on our website at www.wigan.gov.uk and take appropriate steps to let you know.

You need to apply even if you have registered your child's name at a school, your child attends a school nursery and/or your child has a brother or sister already attending primary school.

If you need any help with your application, please contact:

Wigan Council
People Directorate
Wigan Council
PO Box 100
Wigan
WN1 3DS

Phone: 01942 489013

Email: schoolplaces@wigan.gov.uk

Contents page

Part 1 – Applying for a primary school place

Part 2 – How places are allocated

Part 3 – Useful information

Part 4 – Information about primary schools in Wigan

Part 5 – Transfer of primary school

Part 6 - Oversubscription criteria for Wigan primary schools

Apply Online

Apply online for your child's primary school place because:

- It is quick, safe and secure.
- We will confirm we have received your application.
- You can change your application at any time up until the closing date **15th January 2023**.
- There are clear, simple instructions to guide you through making your application.
- The service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week during the application period – September 2022 to **15th January 2023**.
- You will receive your result by email and be able to view this online from **16th April 2023 (next working day if the 16th falls over a weekend or bank holiday)**.

What will I need to apply online?

- A computer or mobile device (smart phone or tablet) with internet access
- An e-mail account

What if I haven't got access to the internet?

- You can use a computer your local Life Centre – we recommend that you book this service beforehand.

To access the online application service, you can go to our [website and follow the links](#).

If you need any help or guidance using the online service please contact us:

- by phone on 01942 489013, 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday; or
- by e-mail at schoolplaces@wigan.gov.uk.

Part 1 – Applying for a primary school place

Timetable

If your child was born between 1st September 2017 and 31st August 2018, he or she will start reception class at the start of the new school year in September 2022. The timetable for the application process is as follows.

Application process dates	
30th September 2022	Admissions information circulated. Online application service available.
15th January 2023	Closing date for applications.
January 2023 to April 2023	Applications processed.
16th April 2023 (or next working day)	Offers go out by email and letter.
By 2nd May 2023	School places accepted.
16th May 2023	Closing date for appeals.
June - July 2023	Appeals heard.
September 2023	Admission to school.

How to apply

In Wigan, the School Organisation Team at People Directorate deals with admissions to schools. We will be pleased to help if you have any questions or need extra information.

You can contact us as follows.

Address: School Organisation Team
People Directorate
Wigan Council
PO Box 100
Wigan
WN1 3DS

Phone: 01942 489013

Email: schoolplaces@wigan.gov.uk

[There is also information on our website.](#)

1. Registering an interest

Parents can register an interest at any local primary school. This needs to be done by November of the year before your child is due to start school.

Registering an interest provides schools with information about who to send details of how to apply to. You must advise the school if your address changes or you may not receive the information.

Important note: completing a registration of interest is not an application for a school place.

2. Application information

In September 2022, the primary school where you have registered an interest will have details of how to apply and application form should you wish to collect one. They will also be able to provide information about how to access this booklet and the online application service.

If you would like application information in the post you can request it from the School Organisation Team.

Children going to nursery classes

It is important to remember that if your child goes to a nursery class attached to a school **they do not have an automatic right to a place in a reception class at that school.**

The oversubscription criteria for schools are different from those for nurseries.

You must submit an application for a place by the closing date 15th January 2023.
This will be considered according to the school's oversubscription criteria.

3. Completing your application

This booklet provides information about the types of primary schools in Wigan and the admission arrangements for each school.

To be considered for your preferred primary schools, you must **apply online** or fill in the **Wigan Council primary school application form**. You can give three preferences of school in order of priority. You will only be considered for schools you name as a preference.

The closing date for applications is 15th January 2023.

When you give preferences, it is important to make a realistic assessment of your child's chances of gaining a place. The information in this booklet will help you to do this. If you need more advice, please contact the School Organisation Team.

You should give three preferences. If you do not:

- it does not increase your chance of gaining a place at your first preference school; and
- we do not know which other schools you are interested in.

If we cannot offer your first preference school, we can only offer the nearest school to your child's home with an available place. You may miss out on a place at another school you prefer.

Repeating the name of one school three times on your application does not improve your chances of a place.

Reasons for Preference

Parents are able to include reasons for their preference when making an application. Your reasons for choosing a particular school **are not considered during the allocation process**. Only information relevant to the school's oversubscription criteria entered on the correct part of the application form will be considered. Please check your application carefully before submission to ensure that you have entered these details correctly, for example, siblings, looked after status and Education, Health and Care Plan.

If you include reasons for preference they will be submitted to the independent appeal panel should you be refused a place and take up your right of appeal.

Preferences for voluntary aided (church) schools and supplementary information forms

Catholic primary schools

Wigan residents

If you live in Wigan and any of the schools you want your child to go to is a Wigan voluntary aided Catholic primary school the governors will need extra information so that they can consider your application against their faith criteria. If you do not give this information your child may be refused a place.

Important note: if you apply online you need to complete a separate supplementary information form and submit it to the school by the closing date 15 January 2023.

You can [complete a supplementary form online](#) or get a copy:

- from the school
- by downloading one from our website
- by completing the online Catholic supplementary form. We will pass the information to the school's governors for each Wigan Catholic Primary school you name as a preference; or
- by calling the School Organisation Team on 01942 489013

If you apply using the paper Wigan Council primary school application form please complete the relevant section of the form. We will pass on the information to the schools' governors for each Wigan Catholic Primary school you name as a preference.

Some Catholic schools ask you to show proof of baptism. The school will ask to see this if your child is offered a place. Please do not send any proofs of baptism to the Local Authority.

If any of the schools you want is a Catholic school in another local authority please contact the school to find out if they use a supplementary information form.

Please note that it is your responsibility to check that any information sent by post has been received by the school.

Other Local Authority residents

If you live in another Local Authority and any of the schools you want your child to go to is a Wigan voluntary aided Catholic primary school we strongly advise you to fill in the school's own supplementary information form and return it to the school. You can get a copy from the school or from our website.

Other voluntary aided primary schools

If any of the schools you want your child to go to is a voluntary aided (church) school other than a Wigan Catholic primary school, **we strongly advise you to fill in the school's own supplementary information form as well as your online application or the paper Wigan Council primary school application form.** If you do not fill in the school's own supplementary information form, the school will not have all the information they need to consider your application against their faith criteria and your child may be refused a place.

You can get a copy of the supplementary information form:

- from the school;
- [by downloading a copy and printing it from our website](#) or
- by calling the School Organisation Team on 01942 489013.

Please note that it is your responsibility to check that any information sent by post has been received by the school.

Primary schools in other local authorities

You can apply for schools in any local authority. Other local authorities produce their own admission booklets with details of their schools, which are available online or on request from each local authority. There is a list of our neighbouring local authorities, with contact phone numbers, in part 3 of this booklet.

If your child lives in Wigan and you want to apply for a place at a school in another local authority, you must:

- apply online or fill in the Wigan Council primary school application form and put the name of the other local authority school
- submit your online application or return your paper form to any Wigan primary school **by the closing date of 15th January 2023.**

Whichever way you apply, we will deal with the other local authority for you.

Please make sure you also fill in and return to the school any supplementary information form for a voluntary aided school.

Looked after and previously looked after children

If you are responsible for a looked after or previously looked after child please tell us this on your application. Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order). Applications for previously looked after children must be supported with appropriate evidence i.e. a copy of the adoption order, residence order or special guardianship order. **Evidence must be sent to the Local Authority School Organisation Team by the closing date for applications 15th January 2023.**

Children adopted from state care outside of England

If you are responsible for a child who appears to the Local Authority to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care because they were adopted, please tell us this on your application.

A child is regarded as having been in state care in a place outside of England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society. Applications must be supported with appropriate evidence that the child has been adopted from state care. **Evidence must be submitted to the School Organisation Team by the closing date 15th January 2023. If you do not provide this evidence your child may be refused a place.**

Children of UK service personnel (UK Armed forces)

Places can be allocated in advance for children of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting in the area, or crown servants returning from overseas to live in the area. If this

applies to your child please tell us on your application. You must also provide evidence i.e. an official letter from your commanding officer containing a relocation date and unit postal address. **Evidence must be sent to the Local Authority School Organisation Team by the closing date for applications 15th January 2023.**

Children with an education health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs

Children with an education health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs that names a school will be offered a place without using the oversubscription criteria. This applies to all types of school.

It is important that you still apply for a mainstream school even if a place at a special school is being considered for your child. This is so you have a better chance of getting a place at the mainstream school you prefer if your child does not go to a special school.

4. Submitting your application

Online applications

You must ensure that you follow the instructions on screen to submit your application. Please note that if you amend your application after submitting you must re-submit it or your preferences will not be recorded.

You will receive a confirmation email showing your preferences. Please keep this safe until you receive an offer of a school place.

Wigan Council primary school paper application form

You can hand in your form at a Wigan Primary school or send it directly to us at this address –

School Organisation Team
Wigan Council
People Directorate
Wigan Council
PO Box 100
Wigan
WN1 3DS

Important note: you will receive a receipt for your application. Please keep this safe until you know the outcome of your application.

One application per child

The Local Authority will only accept one application per child. Where parents disagree on school preferences for their child, they must settle their differences between each other and submit only one application. Where duplicate applications are received the Local Authority will contact both parents and advise them to complete one application with one set of preferences for their child.

The Local Authority cannot mediate disputes between parents. Parents must resolve disputes about preferences between themselves, legally if necessary. For further information please read the government's guidance [‘Understanding and dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility’](#) available online.

The closing date for applications is 15th January 2023. We will only consider applications we receive by the closing date as on time applications.

In 2022 93.2 per cent of on time Wigan applicants were offered a place at their first preference primary school. 98.7 per cent of on time applicants were offered a place at one of their preferences.

Changing your mind up to the closing date

If you change your mind about the names or order of schools you have put on your application, you must submit a new application before the closing date on **15th January 2023**.

If you apply online, you can change your preference at any time up to the closing date by amending your application. You must follow the instructions given on the online service to make sure your preferences have been changed. You will receive a confirmation email showing your new preferences. Keep this safe until you receive an offer of a school place.

You can get a new Wigan Council primary school application form from any Wigan primary school or the School Organisation Team. Make sure you hand the new form in at a school. **Keep your receipt safe until you receive an offer of a school place.**

Changing your mind after the closing date

If you change your mind about the preferences or the order of preferences after the closing date, you must submit a late application. This will be available on our website after the closing date or on request from the School Organisation Team. **It is important to note that changes of preference after the closing date are treated as a late application (see below) and will reduce your chances of being offered a place at the school you want.**

5. Offering school places

Part 2 of this booklet provides important information about how we decide which school to offer your child.

If you have applied online you will receive an email on **16th April 2023** with the result of your application. We will also write to all on time applicants on **16th April 2022** to tell you the school where we are offering your child a place. We will send the letter by first class post. The letter will include details of how to accept or refuse the offered school which must be returned by **2nd May 2023**. Please note if the 16th April falls over a weekend or bank holiday you will receive the result the next working day.

If you are unhappy with the school place offered and want to be considered for new preferences please complete a late application. You can do this online at www.wigan.gov.uk or request a form from the School Organisation Team. **This will be classed as a late application (see below).**

6. Late applications

It is important that you apply online or return your application form before the closing date on **15th January 2023**.

We will deal with all on time applications first and at the same time.

Important note: all applications and changes of preference made after the closing date will be classed as late.

If your application is late, we will only look at it after we have dealt with the applications we receive on time. This means that you are far less likely to get a place at the school you want.

If you apply late, you will not receive an offer until after 16th April 2023, but we will write to you as soon as we can after this date.

Late applications received after the closing date **15th January 2023** will be processed in two stages as follows:

Stage 1 Late applications received **before** 16th April 2023 will be considered at the same time, after all on time applicants have been offered a place

Stage 2 Late applications received **after** 16th April 2023 will be considered after those in stage 1.

If we are unable to offer a place at any of your preferences, we will offer a place at the nearest school to your home address with an available place. This may not be a school that is near to you because we will offer places first to children whose applications we receive on time. All places at your local primary schools may already have been filled.

If you have already accepted a place at a school and want to keep this offer you must name this school as a preference on your late application. If you do not we may withdraw the offered place and make it available for another child.

If you need advice about submitting a late application please contact the School Organisation Team on 01942 489013.

7. Deferred entry to primary school

Legally, your child does not have to start school until the admission date after their 5th birthday. The admission dates set by the Government are:

- 31 August;
- 31 December; and
- 31 March.

Parents can request that the date their child is admitted to primary school is deferred until later in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age in that school year. Requests should be made to the headteacher of the school where your child has been offered a place.

Where deferred entry is agreed by the school, the place will be held open and not offered to another child. Parents cannot defer entry beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday, nor beyond the academic year for which they originally applied.

If you want to defer entry beyond the 2023 academic year we cannot guarantee that there will be a place at the school you want.

8. Part time attendance at primary school

Parents can request that their child attends part-time until they reach compulsory school age. Requests must be made to the school.

9. Delayed entry to Primary school

The parents of a summer born child (born between 1 April and 31 August) may choose not to send their child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to reception rather than year 1.

A decision is made on the basis of the circumstances of each case.

The process is as follows:

Stage 1 – request

Parents must make a formal request for delayed entry to reception class to the Wigan Council School Organisation Team in writing stating up to 3 preferred schools, with any supporting evidence they wish to be considered.

This request must be made at the same time as applying for a place for normal entry (**i.e. by the closing date of 15th January**) in order to give sufficient time for the case to be considered prior to the offer of school places on 16th April.

Stage 2 – decision

Requests for voluntary-aided, foundation and academy schools will be referred to the school to be considered.

Requests for community and voluntary controlled schools will be considered by Wigan Council, in consultation with the headteacher of the school. We will look at the following factors but these are not exhaustive:

- Parent's views
- The needs of the child and the possible impact on them of being educated out of year group
- The child's medical history and views of medical professionals if appropriate

- In the case of children born prematurely the fact that they may have naturally fallen into the lower age group if they had been born on their expected date of birth
- Whether delayed academic, social, emotional or physical development is adversely affecting their readiness for school;
- Any other information which the parent requests the local authority to consider.

Stage 3 – outcome

Parents will be notified of the decision for each school in writing by the School Organisation Team.

Request for delayed entry agreed:

Parents can apply for a place in reception for the following academic year at the school/s for the schools for which delayed entry has been agreed. The application will be ranked alongside any other applications in accordance with the oversubscription criteria for the schools. **There is no guarantee that a place will be offered at any of the preferred schools.** If parents change their mind about school preferences or are not offered a place at their preferred primary schools we cannot guarantee to offer a reception class place at any other school for which a deferral request has not been made.

The application for a place in the child's normal year group will continue to be processed unless parents withdraw it. Parents will have 2 weeks following the offer of a place to decide if they wish to accept it or delay entry and apply again the following year.

Right of appeal: If the child is refused a place at the school/s for which delayed entry has been agreed they will be advised of their statutory right to appeal. This right does not apply if the child is offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.

Transfer to secondary school: Where a child has been educated out of their normal age group, the parent may again request admission out of the normal age group when they transfer to secondary school. It will be for the admission authority of that school to decide whether to consider an application for a child out of their normal age group.

Request for delayed entry refused:

There is no statutory right of appeal against the refusal of a request for delayed entry. However, if parents are dissatisfied they have the right to complain through the Council's complaints procedure for decisions made by the local authority or under the school's complaints procedure where the decision has been made by the school.

Part 2 - How places are allocated

What will we consider?

When we consider on time applications, we will use only the information that is correct on your application at the closing date for applications.

We will consider the following things when deciding which school to offer your child a place at:

- **Admission number**

Every school has an admission number. This is the number of places in a school year group. The admission numbers for all Wigan primary schools, and information on each school, are given in part 6 of this booklet.

- **Oversubscription criteria**

When there are more applications than places for a school, we say the school is 'oversubscribed'. If there are more applications than the admission number, a fixed set of rules are used to decide which children will be offered a place. These rules are called the 'oversubscription criteria'.

The oversubscription criteria for all Wigan primary schools are given in part 6 of this booklet. You will see that the criteria are numbered. Children in criterion 1 will have first priority for places, children in criterion 2 will be considered next and so on through the criteria until there are no places left.

If you want more information about each school's admission policy you can get details by contacting the School Organisation Team or the school.

Ranking applications

The admission authority for the school ranks applications using the oversubscription criteria:

- Academy schools – academy trust
- Foundation and Voluntary Aided schools – governing body
- Community and Voluntary Controlled schools – Local Authority

The equal preference system and the priority order of schools on your application

By law, we must use the equal preference system when considering your application for a school place.

All first second and third preferences for schools are treated as equal, regardless of their ranking. If schools receive more applications than they have places available, the oversubscription criteria will be used to decide which applicants can be potentially offered a place.

The preference order is only used to determine which school should be offered if your application is ranked high enough in the criteria for more than one school i.e. your child will be offered a place at your highest available preference. This is why we advise you to give three preferences.

If your child lives in Wigan and following this process none of the schools you have named as preferences are able to offer a place, we will offer a place at the nearest Wigan secondary school to your home address with an available place.

If your child does not live in Wigan, the local authority in their area will offer them a place.

Children with an education and health care plan or a statement of special educational needs

Children with a statement of special educational needs or education and health care plan which names the school will be offered a place without using the oversubscription criteria. This is a legal requirement and applies to all types of school.

Your child's home address

Many schools use children's addresses when deciding who to offer places to.

When considering your child's application, we use your permanent home address at the closing date for applications.

You must give the correct permanent address. This is where the child and parent, or the person who has care of the child or has parental responsibility, normally live.

If your address changes temporarily (for example, if you go to live with a relative), you cannot use this address.

If parents are separated and the child spends time at each parents' address, the address which will be used for admission to schools is the address where the child sleeps the majority of the school nights (Sunday to Thursday) during the week in term time. Where there is dispute or equal nights are slept, parent will be asked to provide proof of the address registered with the child's GP. The Local Authority reserves the right to request other documentary evidence as fit the individual circumstances.

Please see each school's individual admission arrangements for further details.

Verifying information

We carry out checks to confirm that addresses are genuine. If we are unable to confirm your address, or any issues are raised concerning your address, we may carry out further checks.

We may ask to see **two** forms of evidence of your permanent address at the closing date for applications (photocopies are acceptable).

The primary form of evidence required is **proof of where you are registered for council tax on the closing date for applications**. The second form of evidence may be one of the following documents:

- your current driving licence;
- a utility bill (gas, electricity or water) covering the closing date for applications;

- proof of your Child Benefit;
- proof of your Child Tax Credits.
- written evidence of final completion of sale or a long term tenancy agreement

Any evidence you provide must show that the parent or main carer lives at the address used on the closing date for applications.

Applicants who are not registered for Council Tax are required to supply three alternative forms of evidence as fit the individual circumstances.

If on the balance of the information provided we believe that the address you have given is a temporary one in order to secure a place in a school we may not use this address.

Moving address

If you move house after the closing date for applications but before we send allocation letters to parents, you must tell the School Organisation Team in writing. **We cannot use your new address to consider your application from** but we will make sure we write to you at the correct address.

False information

If you give any false information which results in your child being offered a school place they are not entitled to (for example, if you give the incorrect permanent address at the closing date for applications), we may withdraw the offer and your child may lose their place.

Important note - If you suspect that someone has given false information to get a school place please contact the School Organisation Team on 01942 489013 or email schoolplaces@wigan.gov.uk

Important note: we have withdrawn a number of places in previous years due to false and misleading information.

Re-allocating withdrawn places

Where a place is withdrawn due to a fraudulent or misleading application it will be re-allocated to the applicant who should have been offered the place on **16th April 2023**.

Waiting lists

Places may become available at a school after the offer date. All admission authorities must have a waiting list.

All admission authorities must:

- Put all children who are refused a place on the waiting list for the school;
- Keep the list in priority order, in accordance with the oversubscription criteria for the school;
- Offer any place that becomes available to the next child on the waiting list; and
- Maintain the waiting list until the end of the autumn term.

Important information about the waiting list

Admission authorities must keep their waiting list in order of the oversubscription criteria for the school. This is a legal requirement. Admission authorities cannot take into account the date the application was received or the length of time a child's name has been on the waiting list. This means that both on time and late applications are treated the same for waiting list purposes. Your child's position on the waiting list may change if another applicant is refused a place and their child is ranked higher in the school's oversubscription criteria.

If you tell us, after the closing date for applications, that your address has changed, and you provide documents to prove this, we will take this into account for the purposes of the waiting list.

Please note that your child's name can only be placed on the waiting lists for schools you have named as preferences and have been refused a place. This means that they can only be on 3 waiting lists at any one time. If your child's name is already on 3 waiting lists and you wish to put them on the waiting list for another school you need to decide which of your original preferences you want to change.

Waiting lists for foundation schools and academies

Each foundation and academy school includes details of their waiting list policy in their admission arrangements.

Wigan Council will maintain the waiting list on behalf of the admission authorities of the following schools:

- Bedford Hall Methodist Primary School
- Golborne Community Primary School
- Leigh Westleigh Methodist Primary School
- Lowton Junior & Infant School
- Marus Bridge Primary School
- Orrell Holgate Academy
- Orrell Lamberhead Green Academy
- Platt Bridge Community School
- St James' Church of England Primary School
- Tyldesley Primary School

The Academy Trusts for the following schools maintain their own waiting lists and you should contact the school directly for more information:

- Atherton St George's CofE Primary School
- Canon Sharples Church of England Primary School
- Highfield St Matthew's Church of England Primary School
- Hindley Green Community Primary School
- Leigh CofE Primary School
- St David Haigh and Aspull CofE Primary School
- St John's Church of England Primary School, Abram
- St John's Church of England Primary School, Hindley Green
- St Mark's CofE Primary School
- St Paul's Church of England Primary School
- St Peter's Church of England Primary School, Hindley
- Standish St Wilfrid's Church of England Primary Academy

Waiting lists for voluntary aided schools

Each voluntary aided school includes details of their waiting list policy in their admission arrangements. The governing body of the school will maintain the waiting list. Please contact the individual schools for more information.

Giving a place from a waiting list

If a place becomes available at an oversubscribed school and your child's name is at the top of the waiting list we will contact you to ask if you want to accept the place. We will do this by telephone if possible. We will send you a letter to confirm the new offer. The letter will include details of how to accept the school place offered and the deadline for accepting it. If you do not accept the place by this date the place may be withdrawn and offered to another child.

If you accept a place from a waiting list we will withdraw any place we have already offered and make it available for another child.

Admission appeals

You can appeal to an independent appeal panel if you are refused a place at any school you have applied for.

If your child is refused a place at a school, we will write to tell you:

- why your application was refused;
- how to appeal;
- the time limit for sending your appeal (you will have at least 20 school days from the date of the letter);
- where to send the appeal; and
- who to contact if you need any help.

Sometimes, places become available at a school before the admission appeals have been heard. If this happens, we will offer places to the next child on the waiting list. If you appeal, it does not affect your child's place on the waiting list.

Before you decide if you want to appeal, you will probably want to think about:

- the school's published oversubscription criteria for admitting pupils;
- your reasons for wanting your child to go to the school;
- your child's view on which school he or she should go to; and
- how strong a case you have.

You may also want to visit the school which your child has been offered.

Appeals for children refused a place at a preferred school for admission to reception class in September 2023 will be heard according to the following timetable:

Appeals		
Offer date	Appeals lodged	Appeals to be heard
16th April 2023	by 16th May 2023	within 40 school days
	after 16th May 2023	within 30 school days

The appeal hearing

Before the hearing

Parents/carers will be notified of their appeal date at least 10 school days before the hearing.

A copy of the school's statement of case will be sent to each parent/carer at least 5 school days before the hearing.

Any additional evidence parents/carers wish to submit in support of their appeal must be sent to the clerk at least 7 school days before the hearing. Any evidence not submitted by this deadline may not be considered by the independent appeal panel.

The appeal panel

The panel will have three or five people on it. They are completely independent of Wigan Council and the school you are appealing for. The appeal panel will also have a clerk.

At the appeal hearing

We strongly advise you to go to the appeal hearing if you can. You will not usually need legal representation (such as a solicitor) but you do have the right to bring a legal adviser or a friend along for support.

A representative of the admission authority will be at the hearing to give their reasons for refusing your child a place and you can ask questions about this. You will be able to put your case for your child to the panel. You will probably want to refer back to your original reasons for applying for that school. If you cannot go to the appeal hearing, the panel will consider all the information you have sent in writing, in your absence.

At the end of the hearing, the clerk should be able to tell you when you can expect to receive the panel's decision.

You will receive the panel's decision by letter.

Admission authorities must keep to the decisions of admissions appeals panels. The decisions can only be overturned by the courts.

Appeals for infant classes (reception, year 1 and year 2) - the '30 children in a class' rule

The law says that we cannot teach infant children in classes of more than 30.

When your child is refused a place because of infant class size you can only win an appeal if:

- the admission arrangements were not lawful and your child would have been offered a place if they did;

- the admission arrangements were not correctly and impartially applied to your child's application and if they had been your child would have been offered a place; or
- the appeal panel decides that the decision not to offer a place was unreasonable in your circumstances (an unreasonable decision is one that no sensible authority acting properly would make)

The threshold for finding that an admission authority's decision to refuse admission was unreasonable is high. The panel will need to be satisfied that the decision to refuse your child a place was 'perverse' in the light of the admission arrangements i.e. it was 'beyond the range of responses open to a reasonable decision maker' or 'a decision which is so outrageous in its defiance of logic that no sensible person who had applied his mind to the question could have arrived at it'.

After the hearing

The parents or guardians of children who have been unsuccessful in their admission appeal may want to consider the following options:

1. Complaints about maladministration

Community/voluntary controlled, foundation and voluntary aided schools

The Local Government Ombudsman can investigate written complaints about bad administration by an admissions appeal panel for community, voluntary aided or foundation schools. This is not a right to appeal and has to relate to issues such as failing to follow correct procedures or failing to act independently and fairly. You cannot complain just on the basis that you think an admissions decision is wrong.

You can contact the Local Government Ombudsman at:

Local Government Ombudsman
PO Box 4771
Coventry
CV4 0EH

[Visit the Local Government Ombudsman website for information.](#)

Telephone 0300 061 0614

Fax 024 7682 0001

Academy and Free schools

The Education and Skills Funding Agency deals with complaints about bad administration by an admissions appeal panel for academy and free schools. This is not a right to appeal and has to relate to issues such as failing to follow correct procedures or failing to act independently and fairly. You cannot complain just on the basis that you think an admissions decision is wrong.

You can contact the ESFA at:

[Visit the Education and Skills Funding Agency website for contact details.](#)

2 Judicial review

You can ask for a judicial review if you consider that the decision wasn't properly made or was 'unreasonable'. An 'unreasonable' decision is one that no sensible authority acting properly would make. You will usually have to contact a solicitor.

Further appeals

Admission authorities will normally only allow parents to have one appeal to a particular school in any school year.

They will only consider an application for the same school in the same school year in very exceptional situations, such as a significant, material change in your circumstances or those of your child.

A material change is something substantial, such as a change of address from a different area which would change the priority of your application or the submission of substantial new evidence that was not available to the original appeal panel. The fact that a pupil is distressed at not being offered a place at the school they wanted is not a significant and material change in circumstances.

See the Department for Education's website for [further information about admission appeals](#)

Part 3 – Useful information

School meals

Please contact individual schools to find out about school meal options.

Free school meals and pupil premium

If you want to find out whether your child is eligible for free school meals / pupil premium [please visit their page](#) or ring 01942 489002.

You can also enquire about an existing claim by email to benefits@wigan.gov.uk

Our postal address is: PO Box 100, Wigan WN1 3DS

You can visit us at:

Wigan Life Centre, located at The Wiend, Wigan, WN1 1NH, or

Leigh Life Centre, located at The Turnpike Centre, Civic Square, Leigh, WN7 1EB

Wigan Life Centre and Leigh Life Centre are open from 10am to 2pm Monday to Friday only.

Please note as of April 2021, all other Life Centres remain closed. For further information regarding the opening times for Wigan Life Centre and Leigh Life Centre, and for updates regarding all other Life Centres, [please visit the Life Centre's webpage](#). –

School uniform

Pupils must wear school uniform at all primary schools in Wigan. Details are available from the individual schools.

Help with travel costs

To find out whether you may be eligible for help with travel costs please see the chart below:

Children Under 8 (of compulsory school age)

- **Low Income Families** – the school must be over 1.5 miles and be one of the 3 nearest available schools of the same faith.
- **Families not on a low income** – the school must be the nearest available school regardless of faith, the school must be over 1.5 miles.

Children aged over 8 but under 11

- **Low Income Families** – the school must be over 2 miles and be one of the 3 nearest available schools of the same faith.
- **Families not on a low income** – the school must be the nearest available school regardless of faith, the school must be over 2 miles.

If you have any questions or want to check if we would offer help before you apply for a particular school, please contact at the Integrated Transport Unit on 01942 489685 or email ITU@wigan.gov.uk

Sustainable school travel

Wigan's Transport Strategy recognises the benefits for the environment, as well as to children's health and well-being in encouraging walking and cycling. It also aims to tackle the issue of local congestion around schools and make education easier for children and young people to get access to.

For more information on your sustainable travel options, please ring 01942 488250.

Useful contacts

Special educational needs and disability team: 01942 486136

Wigan Family Information Service: 01942 489004
email fis@wigan.gov.uk

Independent advice on school admissions issues is available by visiting the [Children's Legal Centre website](#).

Neighbouring local authorities

Bolton Council
Children's Services
Pupil and Student Services
Town Hall
Bolton
BL1 1RU
Telephone: 01204 333333
Email: admissions@bolton.gov.uk

Lancashire County Council
Area Education Office South
(Preston, South Ribble, Chorley and West Lancashire)
County Hall
Preston
PR1 8RJ
Telephone: 01772 532109
Email: southadmissions@lancashire.gov.uk

Salford Children's Services
School Admissions
2nd Floor
Unity House
Chorley Road
Swinton
M27 5AW
Telephone: 0161 793 2500
Email: school.admissions@salford.gov.uk

St Helens
School admissions
Atlas House
Corporation Street
St Helens
WA9 1LD
Telephone: 01744 671035
Email: schooladmissions@sthelens.gov.uk

Trafford School Admissions
2nd floor, Waterside House
Waterside
Sale
M33 7ZF
Telephone: 0161 912 5007
Email: school.admissions@trafford.gov.uk

Warrington School Admissions
East Annexe, Town Hall,
Sankey Street,
Warrington,
WA1 1UH
Email: schooladmissions@warrington.gov.uk

Telephone: 01925 446226

Part 4 – Information about Wigan primary schools

Types of primary school

In Wigan there is a range of schools available. Each type of school has an admission authority that is responsible for considering applications. The oversubscription criteria for all types of schools are given in this booklet.

We give details of how we offered places last year to help explain how the available places were allocated. You may want to use this information as a guide to whether you are likely to gain a place at one of your preferred schools. The information is only a guide because the number of applications for a school is different each year.

Community and voluntary controlled schools

Wigan Council is the admission authority for community and voluntary controlled schools and Wigan Council decide who will be offered places if there are more applications than the number of places available.

Foundation schools

The governing body of a foundation school decides who will be offered places if there are more applications than the number of places available.

Academy schools

The Academy Trust decides who will be offered a place if there are more applications than places.

Voluntary aided (church) schools

The governing bodies of voluntary aided schools decide who will be offered a place if there are more applications than places.

The oversubscription criteria for voluntary aided primary schools usually take account of whether the child is a member of a church or goes to church (or both). They ask for information about this on their own supplementary information form.

If you want a place at a voluntary aided school, we strongly recommend that you submit a supplementary information form in one of the following ways:

- Request a copy of the supplementary form from the school and **return it to the school** by the closing date, **15th January 2023**
- Download a copy of the school's own supplementary form from the Wigan Council website and **return it to the school** by the closing date, **15th January 2023**.
- The supplementary form for Catholic schools is available to complete and submit online on the Wigan Council website. We will forward to each Wigan Catholic primary school you name as a preference
- If you have requested a printed copy of the Wigan Council primary school application form fill in the relevant section

We strongly advise you to submit a supplementary information form as well as your Wigan Council application for each voluntary-aided school you name, whether it is your first, second or third preference. Please note that it is your responsibility to check that any information sent by post has been received by the school.

Federated schools

A federation is a formal arrangement between two or more schools to work together under a single governing body, sharing one headteacher. A federation can include all types of school; community, voluntary controlled, voluntary aided, foundation and academy. The admission arrangements for each school remain the same.

School prospectus

The admission authority of each school publishes a prospectus which provides information about the school, such as its policies, results and curriculum. You can get a school's prospectus from the school or download it from the school's website. The website address is shown on the page for each primary school.

Ofsted reports

Schools are regularly inspected by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted). Copies of Ofsted reports are available from schools or [on the Ofsted website](#).

School achievement and attainment tables

Yearly school achievement and attainment tables [are available online](#). Information about examination results may also be included in a school's prospectus.

Part 5 - Transfer between primary schools

If you want to change your child's school, you should consider this decision very carefully. It is generally in a child's best interest to stay at the same school, as changing schools can cause an unnecessary break in the child's education. If your child is having problems, a change of school is not always the answer. You should discuss any concerns with your child's head teacher or class teacher before you apply for a different school.

If you are thinking of moving house and your child would have to change school, there may not be places available at the school you want. The School Organisation Team will be able to tell you which schools are full or may have places. Some schools are full in all or most year groups and we cannot guarantee there will be a place available in the area you plan to move to.

How to apply for a transfer of school

Wigan primary schools

Wigan Council's School Organisation Team co-ordinates applications for in year admission for the majority of Wigan primary schools. To apply please fill in the Wigan Council In- year Application Form online. [Please visit the moving schools page](#) on the Local Authority website for further details. If you need a printed form please contact us by phoning 01942 489013.

If you want to apply for a place at the following schools please contact the school directly:

- Castle Hill St Phillip's CE Primary School
- Hindley All Saints CE Primary School
- St Gabriel's Catholic Primary School
- St Patrick's Catholic Primary School
- St Thomas' CE J&I Primary School, Golborne

You can also download a form from the Wigan Council website and return it to the school.

Schools in other Local Authorities

If you want to apply for a transfer to a school in another local authority please contact that authority or the school to find out how to apply.

It is important that your child continues to attend their current school until you have arranged a transfer date.

Fair Access Protocol

We sometimes receive requests for places from Wigan residents and are not able to offer a place at a school within a reasonable distance of where the child lives. In these situations, the Director for Children and Families will use the Local Authority Fair Access Protocol to allocate a place at a community, academy, foundation or voluntary aided (church) school, even if the year group is full.

Children who qualify for a place using the Fair Access Protocol must be given priority over children on a waiting list who attend a school.