



**Wigan**<sup>♥</sup>  
**Council**

# In-Year Admissions Primary and Secondary Schools

Information Booklet

August 2024

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## Introduction

This booklet sets out the in-year application process and is also intended to give information and advice to families looking to explore the possibility of transferring their child from one school to another.

Before you consider changing school, it is important to discuss it with your child and find out how they really feel about the possibility of a school move. You need to be clear about the real reason why you are wanting to move them to a different school. For example, it could be because they are worried about certain subjects. If this is the case, then you will need to discuss this with your child's current school to allow them the opportunity to address any concerns that you or your child may have. If you think your child needs extra help or has needs that are not being recognised, you will need to arrange to speak to the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo) at your child's current school. If you or your child has concerns about bullying or friendship issues, speak to your child's class teacher, head of year or pastoral head. Finally, having explored these options, if you feel your concerns have not been addressed appropriately at your child's current school, you should arrange an appointment to speak with your child's Headteacher.

All schools have a range of policies which will set out how parents/carers should raise school's awareness of any concerns and what steps will be taken to help resolve them.

## Points to consider before making an application

### Behaviour

Some parents/carers want to change schools because they think their child's behaviour will improve with a change of school. Changing school does not always lead to improvements in a child's behaviour. This is because there are many reasons for the poor behaviour. It is more important for everybody to work together in trying to address and resolve the difficulties that are causing the poor behaviour.

### Bullying

Sometimes a change of school is considered because your child is being bullied. All schools have anti-bullying policies and, as such, if you think your child is being bullied you need to tell the school immediately. Moving school without confronting the problem may help in the short term but in

the long run it may not help your child to understand that the bullies need to be challenged.

### Curriculum

Parents/carers whose children are in years 9, 10 and 11 need to be aware that a new school may not exactly match a child's existing curriculum commitments and a change of school during the school year can disrupt a child's education. Schools do not always follow the same curriculum or are up to the same stage of a curriculum as other schools. Moving your child's school during these year groups can seriously negatively affect their exam results. An application to change schools in year 11 will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

You may find it useful to visit the school's website and contact the school to arrange a visit to discuss this before making an application.

### Disagreement with the school

Occasionally, there might be a disagreement between a parent/carer and a school. Changing a school for such a reason is not always a good idea. Instead, we suggest that parent/carers do everything possible to resolve the differences.

### Friendships

Forming friendships is a very important aspect of school life. Children should feel happy and content at school and relationships with friends and teachers are a key part of any child's social development and educational progression. If relationships have broken down at your child's current school, you must discuss this with your child's school before deciding to transfer to another school. Problems that your child may be experiencing may not go away simply because of a change of school.

A change of school means having to make new friends. Peer groups and friends can have a positive and negative influence. You should think carefully about the effects of moving schools because some other pupils are having a negative influence on your child. It is often better to work with the current school to address matter. Moving a child away from an established peer group may adversely affect achievement and well-being.

### Transport

A change of school may lead to travel difficulties, both in getting your child to school and in disruption to your own day-to-day schedule. The Council

provides assistance with travelling to school in very limited circumstances and so you may find that you will have to cover the costs of getting your child to a new school. You can view the policy here

<https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Resident/Education/Home-to-schooltravel/Home-to-school-travel.aspx>

It is important that you do not confuse the right to express a preference for a school with an entitlement to travel assistance. If you have expressed a preference for a school which is further away from your home and the distance to this school is more than the statutory distance, you may not be entitled to travel assistance. If this is the case, you will need to think about the costs involved with getting your child from home to school and back on time and safely as this is your responsibility. For more information regarding home to school transport assistance, please visit the Council's website.

### Uniform

A change of school will mean a new set of uniform for your child. Very few parents/carers are entitled to support towards uniform costs and but for those who are eligible, a second grant to purchase the new school's uniform is not available.

### In-year application process

Applications must be completed by a person who has parental responsibility for the child.

In-year application forms can be completed online at [www.wigan.gov.uk/schooladmissions](http://www.wigan.gov.uk/schooladmissions)

Alternatively, you can request that a paper copy is posted out instead. To request this, please submit the online query form or phone us on 01942 489013.

A form must be completed for each child seeking a school transfer. For example, if you are relocating to Wigan from out of area and have three children, two of primary age and one secondary school age, you are required to complete two primary in-year forms and one secondary in-year form.

The form is made up of two parts.

## Part 1

Part 1 must be completed by the child's current school. Once completed, you must scan or take a photo of the completed Part 1 and upload it to the relevant section of the online application. This step must be completed before moving onto Part 2 of the form.

For paper application forms, Part 1 must be completed and attached to Part 2 of the application before posting back.

## Exemptions

Families applying for a school place are not required to complete Part 1 where:

- They are relocating from overseas.
- The child is currently home educated, and this has been the case for more than 12 months.

Where a child has been home educated for less than 12 months, Part 1 should be completed by the last school attended.

## Part 2

You must complete each section of Part 2. Failure to do so may result in a delay in processing the form.

The form invites you to select up to three preferences. Wigan Council can only process in-year applications for community, voluntary controlled schools and own admission authority schools that have chosen to participate in the Scheme.

You can use the council's form to apply for any school in Wigan except for the following:

### Primary

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

### Secondary

- Fred Longworth High School

For information about applying for these schools please contact the school direct

If you are looking to apply for a school outside of Wigan, you should contact the school direct for information about how to apply.

Once Part 1 and Part 2 have been completed and submitted, an email acknowledgement will be automatically generated to the sender's email address upon safe delivery to the school organisation team's mailbox. If an acknowledgement is not received by the sender, there is no guarantee that it has been received.

In the event a paper form has been completed, this can be posted to:

School Organisation Team

Wigan Council

PO Box 100

WN1 3DS

Or

Via email:

For secondary school forms use - [secondaryinyeartransfers@wigan.gov.uk](mailto:secondaryinyeartransfers@wigan.gov.uk)

For primary school forms use - [primaryinyeartransfers@wigan.gov.uk](mailto:primaryinyeartransfers@wigan.gov.uk)

You will receive an acknowledgement informing you of the time it will take to process the form.

Once a fully completed form has been submitted, they generally take 15 school days to process, where Day 1 of the 15-school day timescale will begin the next school day. For example, for a fully completed form that has been submitted on a Monday, Day 1 of the 15 school days will be taken from the Tuesday. In terms of a fully completed form submitted on a Saturday, Day 1 will be taken from the following Monday.

**It is not possible to provide application outcomes during school holiday periods because schools are closed, and staff are not in school therefore are unable to confirm and arrange any admissions.**

There are occasions when forms can take longer than 15 school days to process due to incomplete application forms or because the form needs to be considered in accordance with the Local Authority's [Fair Access](#)

[Protocol](#). If it is necessary to refer an application for Fair Access consideration, you will be notified accordingly.

## Processing and co-ordinating in-year applications

In-year applications will be considered by each of the relevant admitting authorities named as a preference that take part in the in-year co-ordinated admission scheme. This means that a copy of the application form will be sent to each of the preferred schools. If you have expressed a preference for a Wigan School that is not part of the scheme, you will be advised to contact the school direct.

Places at schools that take part in the Scheme are offered on a first come first served basis. In the event there is only one place available at a school and more than one child has applied on the same day, the school's oversubscription criteria will be applied to determine which child has the highest priority and should be offered the place.

You are invited to express a preference for up to three schools. If only one of the preferred schools can offer a place in the required year group, and the school is listed as first preference, then that place will be offered to the applicant for their child. If more than one of the preferred schools could offer a place, a place would be offered at whichever of those schools is the highest preference.

If it is not possible to offer a place at the first preference school, then the right of appeal will be offered for any preference refused.

If all of the preferred schools are full and your child doesn't currently have a school place due to relocating to the area, the local authority will offer a place at the nearest Wigan school which is within a reasonable distance\* to the home address that has a place available. This may not be the closest school to the applicants' home as many Wigan schools are already full in many year groups and admission authorities are unable to hold places in reserve for children who may move into an area during the year.

\*Wigan local authority defines a reasonable distance as one of the following:

- a home to school shortest walking distance up to 2 miles for primary aged children and up to 3 miles for secondary aged children.



- Where the maximum journey time one-way for a secondary aged child is 75 minutes and 45 minutes one-way for a primary aged child.

If no school within a reasonable distance has a place available, it may be necessary to offer a place in accordance with the [Fair Access Protocol](#). In these circumstances, a place will be allocated within 20 school days from the date the case is referred for fair access consideration which is normally at the point when the 15-school day timescale expires.

If all the preferred schools are full and the child is a Wigan resident and already has a place at a school that he or she can attend (i.e., within reasonable distance from home), an alternative school place will not be offered.

### Change of address

Where an in-year application has been made due to a house move that is due to take place or has taken place in the last 6 months, documentary proof must be provided. Examples of acceptable proof are as follows:

- a council tax bill;
- evidence of the exchange of contracts; or
- Driving licence
- utility bill, not bank statements. For the purpose of this policy, utility bills are defined as water, gas or electric bill

Where a change of address is to a rented property, a copy of the tenancy agreement (for a minimum of 6 months) must be provided.

If the reason for an in-year application is cited as a house move and the move took place more than six months ago, and all the preferred schools are full, an alternative school place will not be offered if there is evidence to suggest the child has been attending their current school since moving to the new address.

### Children with an Education and Health Care Plan (EHC Plan)

Where an application is received for a child with an EHC Plan, the school organisation team will send a copy to the preferred school(s) and the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Team. The applicant will be made aware of this. The SEND team will then liaise with the parent(s) and preferred school(s) regarding the application. Parents who do not

secure a place at their preferred school will be advised of their right to make a case to a SEND tribunal.

### **Children who are looked after (CLA)**

Applications for CLA will be shared with Wigan's Virtual Headteacher who, where relevant, will liaise with the Virtual Headteacher of the child's home authority regarding the application and its outcome. Where a place is not secured at the preferred school, the home local authority for the child may choose to consult the school to admit the child as set out in section 3.26 and 3.27 of the Code.

### **Applications for children who have been permanently excluded from their last school and/or are returning to mainstream education following a period in alternative provision.**

Applications for children in this category are not processed in accordance with this Scheme. The application and placement process for these children are administered by the pupil inclusion team.

### **Application outcome**

The local authority will notify you of the outcome of the application. Where a place is allocated, a child must be admitted and placed on the school roll within 10 school days of the offer of a place. The only exceptions to this are where the parent(s), donor and receiver schools have agreed a later start date. **There must be no period when a child is not on a school roll unless in exceptional circumstances, such as a family relocating from overseas.**

### **Right of appeal**

Where parental preference cannot be met, the parent/carer will be made aware of their right of appeal.

### **Waiting lists**

Once an application has been considered and the outcome of the application sent to the parent/carer, the application is closed. The local authority does not maintain in-year waiting lists for community and voluntary controlled schools. If you have been refused one or more of your preferences, you will need to contact these schools direct to find out if they hold a waiting list for in-year admissions.