

Westminster City Council

Pan-London Coordinated Admissions System for the Academic Year 2023-24

LA Scheme for the Coordination of Admissions to the Reception/Junior Year



City of Westminster
CHILDREN'S SERVICES

February 2022

Definitions used in this scheme:

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|---|--|
| 'WCC' | Westminster City Council |
| 'the Application Year' | the academic year in which the parent makes an application (ie. in relation to the academic year of entry, the academic year preceding it). |
| 'the Board' | the Pan-London Admissions Executive Board, which is responsible for the Scheme 'the Business User Guide (BUG)' the document issued annually to participating Local Authorities (LAs) setting out the operational procedures of the Scheme |
| 'the Business User Guide (BUG)' | the document issued annually to participating LAs setting out the operational procedures of the Scheme |
| 'the Common Application Form (CAF)' | this is the form that each authority must have under the Regulations for parents to use to express their preferences, set out in rank order (see Schedule 1) |
| 'the Equal Preference System' | the model whereby all preferences listed by parents on the CAF are considered under the over-subscription criteria for each school without reference to parental rankings. Where a pupil is eligible to be offered a place at more than one school within an LA, or across more than one participating LA, the rankings are used to determine the single offer by selecting the school ranked highest of those which can offer a place |
| 'the Highly Recommended Elements' | the elements of the Template Scheme that are not mandatory but to which subscription is strongly recommended in order to maximise co-ordination and thereby simplify the application process as far as possible |
| 'the Home LA' | the LA in which the applicant/parent/carer is resident |
| 'the LIAAG Address Verification Register' | the document containing the address verification policy of each participating LA |
| 'the Local Admission System (LAS)' | the IT module for administering admissions in each LA and for determining the highest offer both within and between participating LAs |

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| ‘the London E-Admissions Portal’ | the common online application system used by the 33 London LAs and Surrey County Council. |
| ‘the Maintaining LA’ | the LA which maintains a school, or within whose area an academy is situated, for which a preference has been expressed |
| ‘the Mandatory Elements’ | those elements of the Template Scheme to which authorities must subscribe in order to be considered as ‘Participating Authorities’ and to benefit from use of the Pan-London Register |
| ‘the Notification Letter’ | the agreed form of letter sent to applicants on the Prescribed Day which communicates any determination granting or refusing admission to a primary or secondary school, which is attached as Schedule 2 |
| ‘the Prescribed Day’ | the day on which outcome letters are posted to parents/carers. 17 April (primary) in the year following the relevant determination year except that, in any year in which that day is not a working day, the prescribed day shall be the next working day. |
| ‘the Pan-London Register (PLR)’ | the database which will sort and transmit application and outcome data between the LAS of each participating LA |
| ‘the Pan-London Timetable’ | the framework for processing of application and outcome data, which is attached as Schedule 4 |
| ‘the Participating LA’ | any LA that has indicated in the Memorandum of Agreement that they are willing to incorporate, at a minimum, the mandatory elements of the Template LA Scheme presented here. |
| ‘the Qualifying Scheme’ | the scheme which each LA is required to formulate in accordance with The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) Regulations 2012, for co-ordinating arrangements for the admission of children to maintained primary and secondary schools and academies. |

LA Schemes for the Coordination of Admissions to Reception/Junior for the academic year 2023/24

Background

In accordance with the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012, all Local Authorities (LAs) are required to formulate schemes for coordinating arrangements for the admission of children to maintained primary and secondary schools and academies. Details of the Royal Borough scheme for 2023/24 for the reception /Junior class entry which forms part of the Pan-London Coordinated Admissions System (PLCAS) are set out in this document. All maintained schools and academies are required to take part.

Scheme for the coordination of Admissions to Reception and Junior school in 2023/24

1. Applications from residents of WCC will be made on the WCC Common Application Form (CAF). The CAF will include all the fields and information specified in Schedule 1 (page 10). These will be supplemented by any additional fields and information which are deemed necessary by WCC to enable the admission authorities in the LA area to apply their published oversubscription criteria. The CAF can be obtained online via the London eAdmissions portal provided by LGFL. This can be accessed via the WCC website at: www.westminster.gov.uk/schooladmissions. Paper forms are made available if requested.
2. WCC will take all reasonable steps to ensure that every parent who is resident in WCC and has a child in a nursery class within a maintained school or academy, either in WCC or any other maintaining LA, can access WCC's admissions booklet and CAF online. A hints and tips leaflet will be circulated to schools in September with key contacts and how to access information online. A paper CAF can be obtained on request from the Admissions Team.
3. The admission authorities within WCC will not use Supplementary Information Forms (SIFs) except where the information available through the CAF is insufficient for consideration of the application against the published oversubscription criteria. Where SIFs are used by the admissions authorities within WCC, the LA will seek to ensure that these only collect information which is required by the published oversubscription criteria only, in accordance with paragraph 2.4 of the School Admissions Code 2021.
4. Where SIFs are used by admission authorities in WCC, they will be accessible via WCC's website. Such forms will advise parents that they must also complete their Home LA's CAF. WCC's admission booklet and website will indicate which schools in WCC require SIFs to be completed and where they can be obtained. A list of

schools requiring the completion of an additional supplementary form is also given in Schedule 4.

5. Where a school in WCC receives a SIF, WCC will not consider it to be a valid application unless the parent has also listed the school on their Home LA's CAF, in accordance with paragraph 2.3 of the Admissions Code 2021.
6. Applicants will be able to express a preference for up to six maintained primary schools or Academies within and/or outside the Home LA.
7. The order of preference given on the CAF will not be revealed to any school in accordance with paragraph 1.9 of the School Admissions Code. However, where a parent resident in WCC expresses a preference for schools in the area of another LA, the order of preference for that LA's schools will be revealed to that LA in order that it can determine the highest ranked preference in cases where a child is eligible for a place at more than one school in that LA's area.
8. If applying on a paper CAF, this will need to be sent direct by parents to the Admissions Team or submitted to the nursery school then forwarded to the Admissions Team. Although a compromise on confidentiality of school preferences, it is recognised that this is necessary so that school staff can assist parents in the application process. Parents must be given the opportunity to apply direct to the Admissions Team if they wish. All paper CAFs must be received by the Admissions Team by 5pm on the closing date, **15 January 2023**. Online applications must be submitted by 11.59pm on the closing date.
9. If requested the Admissions Team will issue a written acknowledgement to parents for any paper CAFs received. The guidance provided with the CAF (paper and online), accompanying notes and WCC Admissions Brochure will emphasise that parents must complete only one CAF. Where more than one CAF is received (e.g. paper and online), the Admissions Team will contact the parent/guardian to resolve the order of preference. If the matter remains unresolved, the last form submitted will be used.
10. WCC undertakes to carry out the address verification process set out in its entry in the LIAAG Address Verification Register. This will, in all cases, include validation of resident applicants against WCC's maintained nursery and primary school data and the further investigation of any discrepancy. In addition, WCC will request documentary evidence of the child's address. Where WCC is not satisfied as to the validity of an address of an applicant whose preference has been sent to a maintaining LA, it must advise the maintaining LA no later than **10 February 2023**.
11. Where there is a discrepancy between the address given on the CAF and a school SIF, the Admissions Team will contact the parent/guardian to identify the correct home address. If the matter remains unresolved, the address on the CAF will be deemed as the correct address.

12. Applications made from WCC resident families working, or temporary living abroad, will be processed with all other applicants. The address that the child is living at the time of application, and at the closing date, will be used for purpose of processing. The applicant must inform the LA on their return in order for the address to be updated. Proof of address and occupancy will be requested.
13. WCC will check the status of any resident applicant who is a 'Child Looked After' and provide evidence to the maintaining LA in respect of a preference for a school not in WCC's area by **3 February 2023**.
14. WCC will advise a maintaining LA of the reason for any preference expressed for a school not in WCC's area, in respect of a resident child born outside of the correct age cohort and will forward any supporting documentation to the maintaining LA by **3 February 2023**.

Processing

15. Application data relating to all preferences for schools in the area of a participating LA, which have been expressed within the terms of WCC's scheme, will be uploaded to the Pan London Register (PLR) by **3 February 2023**. Supplementary information provided with the CAF will be sent to maintaining LAs by the same date.
16. The timetable for the exchange of application and offer information between the LA and schools within WCC is outlined in Schedule 3 (page 12).
17. WCC will not normally consider late applications (i.e. applications received after the closing date) until after the offer date of 17 April 2023 unless there are very exceptional circumstances. Examples of what will be considered as good reason include: when a single parent has been ill for some time, or has been dealing with the death of a close relative; a family has just moved into the area or is returning from abroad (proof of ownership or tenancy of a property within WCC will be required in these cases) or there is uncertainty affecting the date that the application was received. Each case will be decided on its own merits.
18. Where such applications contain preferences for schools in other LAs, WCC will forward the details to maintaining LAs via the PLR as they are received. WCC will accept late applications which are considered to be on time within the terms of the Home LA's scheme.
19. The latest date for the upload of late applications which are considered to be on-time to the PLR is on **10 February 2023**.
20. Where a parent moves from one participating home LA to another after submitting an on-time application under the terms of the former home LA's scheme, the new home LA will accept the application as on-time up to **9 February 2023**, on the basis that an on-time application already exists within the Pan-London system.

21. WCC will participate in the application data checking exercise to be scheduled between **13 and 17 February 2023** in the Pan-London timetable in Schedule 3.
22. All preferences for schools and academies within WCC will be considered by the relevant admission authorities against the school's published oversubscription criteria without reference to rank order in accordance with paragraph 1.9 of the School Admissions Code 2021. WCC will administer the admissions to community schools in WCC.
23. All applicants for a school must be included on the ranked list. For WCC voluntary aided schools, WCC can provide home to school distances (straight line) to prioritise applicants tied under a certain criterion and/or rank applicants not meeting faith or other criteria. Where a school specifies a certain number of places to be offered under each category e.g. foundation and open places, a ranked list should be provided for each category. Where appropriate, applicants may be included on more than one list.
24. When the admission authorities within WCC have provided a list of applicants in criteria order to WCC, WCC shall, for each applicant to its schools for whom more than one potential offer is available, use the highest ranked preference to decide which single potential offer to make. This is the 'Equal Preference System' - explanatory note in Schedule 5 (page 14).
25. WCC will carry out all reasonable checks to ensure that pupil rankings are correctly held in its LAS before uploading data to the PLR.
26. WCC will upload the highest potential offer available to an applicant for a maintained school in WCC to the PLR by **16 March 2023**. The PLR will transmit the highest offer made by the Maintaining LA to the Home LA.
27. The Local Admission System (LAS) of WCC will eliminate, as a Home LA, all but the highest ranked offer where an applicant has more than one potential offer across Maintaining LAs submitting information within deadline to the PLR. This will involve exchanges of preference outcomes between the LAS and the PLR (in accordance with the iterative timetable published in the annual Business User Guide) which will continue until notification that a steady state has been achieved, or until **24 March 2023** if this is sooner.
28. WCC will not make an additional offer between the end of the iterative process and **17 April 2023** which may impact on an offer being made by another participating LA.
29. Notwithstanding paragraph 27, if an error is identified within the allocation of places at one of WCC's schools, WCC will attempt to manually resolve the allocation to correct the error. Where this impacts on another LA (either as a Home or Maintaining LA) WCC will liaise with that LA to attempt to resolve the correct

offer and any multiple offers which might occur. However, if another LA is unable to resolve a multiple offer, or if the impact is too far reaching, WCC will accept that the applicant(s) affected might receive a multiple offer.

30. WCC will participate in the offer data checking exercise to be scheduled between **27 March and 6 April 2023** in the Pan-London timetable.

31. WCC will send a file to the eAdmissions portal, with outcomes for all residents who have applied online, no later than **12 April 2023**.

Offers

32. WCC will inform all resident applicants of their highest potential offer of a school place and, where relevant, the reasons why higher preferences were not offered, whether they were for schools in the Home LA or in other participating LAs.

33. WCC will ensure, so far as is reasonably practical, that each resident applicant who cannot be offered a preference expressed on the Common Application Form, receives the offer of an alternative school place. In these circumstances the nearest school with a vacancy will be offered (as measured by straight line distance). All such applicants will also be provided with a list of further schools with vacancies to consider if the allocated school not acceptable to the applicant.

34. On **17 April 2023**, all resident applicants that applied online will receive an email notifying them of their application outcome school during the evening with a link to access their formal letter. Any application submitted on a paper form will be sent a letter sent in the 1st class post on **17 April 2023**.

WCC's outcome letter for those not offered their first preference school, will include the information set out in Schedule 2 and as detailed below (depending on the outcome):

- i) the name of the school at which a place is offered. If it is not possible to offer a school preference listed on the CAF, an offer will be made for a school within the bi-borough¹ area that is considered a reasonable² alternative, if there are vacancies available. An offer may also be made for a neighbouring borough school.
- ii) the reason why an offer was not made for any school for which a higher preference may have been expressed;
- iii) notifies parents of their statutory right of appeal against the decisions to refuse a place at any school for which they expressed a higher preference;

¹ Bi-borough is – The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster Council.

² A reasonable alternative is considered to be a primary school within a 2 mile walking distance from home.

- iv) and the opportunity to make further preferences by **2 May 2023** for parents not offered any of their preferences and the alternative school offered is not considered suitable. The details of schools in neighbouring LAs that may have vacancies will be provided.

All resident applicants offered school place will be asked to accept or decline their offer of a place by **2 May 2023**.

- 35. WCC will provide nursery or primary schools with destination data of its resident applicants by the end of the Summer term 2023.

Post-offer

- 36. WCC will request that resident applicants accept or decline the offer of a place by **2 May 2023**, or within two weeks of the date of any subsequent offer.
- 37. Where an applicant resident in WCC accepts or declines a place in a school maintained by another LA by **2 May 2023**, WCC will forward the information to the maintaining LA by **9 May 2023**. Where such information is received from applicants after **2 May 2023**, WCC will pass it to the maintaining LA as it is received.
- 38. Where a place becomes available in an oversubscribed maintained school or academy in WCC's area, it will be offered from a waiting list in accordance with paragraph 2.12 of the School Admissions Code 2021.
- 39. Where a waiting list is maintained by an admission authority of a maintained school or academy in this LA's area, the admission authority will inform this LA of a potential offer, in order that the offer may be made by the home LA.
- 40. When acting as a maintaining LA, WCC will inform the home LA, where different, of an offer for a maintained school or Academy in WCC's area which can be made to an applicant resident in the home LA's area, in order that the home LA can offer the place.
- 41. When acting as a maintaining LA, WCC and the admission authorities within it, will not inform an applicant resident in another LA that a place can be offered.
- 42. When acting as a home LA, WCC will offer a place at a maintained school or academy in the area of another LA to an applicant resident in its area, provided that the school is ranked higher on the CAF than any school already offered.
- 43. When acting as a home LA, when WCC is informed by a maintaining LA of an offer which can be made to an applicant resident in WCC's area which is ranked

lower on the CAF than any school already offered, it will inform the maintaining LA that the offer will not be made and the applicant must re-apply.

44. When acting as a home LA, when WCC has agreed to a change of preference order for good reason, it will inform any maintaining LA affected by the change. In such cases, paragraphs 39 and 40 shall apply to the revised order of preferences.
45. When acting as a home LA, WCC will advise any affected maintaining LA of any late preferences received either as a result of a new application received after the closing date or additional preferences.
46. When acting as a maintaining LA, WCC will inform the home LA, where different, of any change to an applicant's offer status as soon as it occurs.
47. When acting as a maintaining LA, WCC will accept new applications (including additional preferences) from home LAs for maintained schools and academies in its area.
48. Applicants' names will be included on waiting lists for schools which have been named as a higher preference than the one offered. For example, if a child has been offered their third preference school, they will be included on the waiting list for their first and second preference schools. Applicants' names will not normally be included on waiting lists for schools which were a lower preference than the one offered. For any vacancies that arise after the initial **17 April 2023** offer date, the school governors will decide who is offered any subsequent vacancies at own admission authority schools and the LA will determine offers for community schools. These places will be offered to children on the waiting list in accordance with the schools' published admission arrangements.
48. Where a waiting list is maintained by an admission authority of a maintained school or academy in this LA's area, the admission authority will notify this LA of a potential offer, in order that the offer may be made by the home LA.'
49. For all schools, late applicants will be included on a single school waiting list along with unsuccessful applications received before the closing date, ranked in order of priority under the school's published admission criteria in accordance with paragraph 2.15 of the School Admissions Code 2021.

SCHEDULE 1

Minimum Content of CAF (paper and online) for Reception/Junior in 2023/24

Child's details:

Surname
Forename(s)
Middle name(s)
Date of birth
Gender
Home address
Name of current school
Address of current school (if outside home LA)

Parent's details:

Title
Surname
Forename
Address (if different to child's address)
Telephone number (home, daytime, mobile)
Email address
Relationship to child

Preference details (x 6 recommended):

Name of school
Address of school
Preference ranking
Local authority in which the school is based

Additional information:

Reasons for preferences (including any medical or social reasons) Does the child have a statement of SEN or Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC) ? Y/N
Is the child a 'Child Looked After' ? Y/N
Is the child formerly CLA but now adopted or subject of a Child Arrangement Order' or 'Special Guardianship Order' ? Y/N
If yes, name of responsible local authority
Surname of sibling
Forename of sibling
Date of birth of sibling
Gender of sibling
Name of school the sibling attends

Other:

Signature of parent or guardian
Date of signature

SCHEDULE 2

Template Outcome Letter for Admissions Reception in 2023/24

From: Home LA

Date: **17 April 2023**

Dear Parent,

Application for a primary school

I am writing to let you know the outcome of your application for a primary school. Your child has been offered a place at X School. The school will write to you with further details.

I am sorry that it was not possible for your child to be offered a place at any of the schools which you listed as a higher preference on your application form. For each of these schools there were more applications than places, and other applicants have a higher priority than your child under the school's published admission criteria.

Offers which could have been made for any schools which you placed lower in your preference list, were automatically withdrawn under the coordinated admission arrangements, as a higher preference has been offered.

If you would like more information about the reason why your child was not offered a place at any higher preference school, you should contact the admission authority that is responsible for admissions to the school within the next few days. Details of the different admission authorities for schools in the borough of X are attached to this letter. If the school is outside the borough of X, the admission authority will either be the borough in which the school is situated, or the school itself.

You have the right of appeal under the *School Standards & Framework Act 1998* against the refusal of a place at any of the schools for which you have applied. If you wish to appeal, you must contact the admission authority for the school within the next few days to obtain the procedure and the date by which an appeal must be received by them.

Please would you confirm that you wish to accept the place at X School by accepting online [paper form- completing the reply slip below]. If you do not wish to accept the place, you will need to let me know what alternative arrangements you are making for your child's education.

You must contact this office if you wish to apply for any other school, either in this borough or elsewhere.

Your child's name has been placed on the waiting list for any school which was a higher preference on your application form than the school you have been offered. If you need to find out your child's position on the waiting list please contact the admission authority or the borough in which the school is situated.

*Please submit online by **2 May 2023** [paper form - return the reply slip]. If you have any questions about this letter, please contact the Admissions Team on_____.*

Yours sincerely

SCHEDULE 3

PAN-LONDON TIMETABLE FOR RECEPTION YEAR ADMISSIONS IN 2023/24:

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|----------------------------|--|
| 15 Jan 2023 | Statutory deadline for receipt of applications |
| 3 Feb 2023 | Deadline for the transfer of application information by the Home LA to the PLR (ADT file) |
| 10 Feb 2023 | Deadline for the upload of late applications to the PLR |
| 13 – 17 Feb 2023 | Checking and ranking of application data |
| 16 Mar 2023 | Deadline for the transfer of potential offer information from the Maintaining LAs to the PLR (ALT file) |
| 24 Mar 2023 | Final ALT file to PLR |
| 27 Mar – 6 Apr 2023 | Checking of offer data |
| 12 Apr 2023 | Deadline for online ALT file to portal |
| 17 April 2023 | Online results and formal letter available in the evening to applicants that applied online (letter sent in post only to paper applicants) |
| 2 May 2023 | Deadline for receipt of acceptances |
| 9 May 2023 | Deadline for transfer of acceptances to maintaining LAs |

SCHEDULE 4

SCHOOL SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION FORMS (SIF)

Each voluntary-aided (church) school in the Westminster has additional supplementary forms to complete which are available from the schools direct or via the Westminster website. These forms are necessary for the school governors to determine whether applicants meet their faith or other criteria. Applicants applying for these schools must list the school as a preference on the CAF and should complete the school's supplementary form for their application to be considered fully by the school governors.

| Schools for which an additional supplementary |
|--|
| All Souls CE Primary, W1W 8JJ |
| Burdett Coutts CE Primary, SW1P 2QQ |
| Christ Church Bentinck CE Primary, NW1 5NS |
| Hampden Gurney CE Primary, W1H 5HA |
| Our Lady of Dolours RC Primary, W2 5SR |
| St Augustine's CE Primary, NW6 5XA |
| St Barnabas CE Primary, SW1W 8PF |
| St Clement Danes CE Primary, WC2B 5SU |
| St Edward's RC Primary, NW1 6LH |
| St Gabriel's CE Primary, SW1V 3AG |
| St George's Hanover Square CE Primary, W1K 2XH |
| St James & St John's CE Primary, W2 3QD |
| St Joseph's RC Primary, W9 1DF |
| St Luke's CE Primary, W9 3EJ |
| St Mary Magdalene's CE Primary, W2 5TF |
| St Mary of the Angels RC Primary, W2 5PR |
| St Mary's Brynaston Square CE Primary, W1H 1DL |
| St Matthew's CE Primary, SW1P 2DG |
| St Peter's CE Chippenham Mews Primary, W9 2AN |
| St Peter's Eaton Square CE Primary, SW1V 0NL |
| St Saviour's CE Primary, W9 2JD |
| St Stephen's CE Primary, W2 5QH |
| St Vincent De Paul RC Primary, SW1P 1EP |
| St Vincent's RC Primary, W1U 4DF |
| Westminster Cathedral RC Primary, SW1V 3SE |

Applicants for Westminster community schools, free schools, academies and Soho Parish CE Primary School need only complete the CAF. These schools are listed below.

| Schools for which no additional form is needed |
|---|
| ARK Atwood Primary Academy W10 4RS |
| Churchill Gardens Primary, SW1V 3EU |
| Edward Wilson Primary, W2 5TL |
| Essendine Primary, W9 2LR |
| Gateway Primary, NW8 8LN |
| George Eliot, NW8 0NH |

SCHEDULE 5

EXPLANATORY NOTE - THE EQUAL PREFERENCE SYSTEM

- 1. All LAs have been required to co-ordinate admissions to all maintained primary schools in their area since September 2006. The main aims of coordinated admissions are to ensure that as many parents receive one, and no more than one, offer of a primary school place, and that this will be the parents' highest preference possible.
- 2. The system used is known as the Equal Preference System. Although parents are required to rank their preferred schools in preference order, this preference number information is not released to admission authorities. Voluntary-aided and Academy schools will then consider all school applicants, without reference to the parent preference number, against their admission criteria and provide a list of applicants ranked accordingly to the LA. The LA will order applicant lists for community schools.
- 3. The parental ranking of a school is only taken into account where the child would otherwise be offered more than one school. In these circumstances, the LA shall, for each applicant to participating schools for whom more than one offer is available, use the highest ranked preference to decide which single potential offer should be made. Please see the example below:

Example

The parent of John Smith has applied for six schools. He qualifies to be offered a place at three schools under their admission criteria but under coordinated admission arrangements, is only offered the highest preference of these schools:

- 1. School A - not eligible
- 2. School B - potential offer
- 3. School C - potential offer
- 4. School D - not eligible
- 5. School E - potential offer
- 6. School F - not eligible

Under coordinated arrangements, John would be offered School B. The places at School C and School E would then be offered to the next child on the school's application lists.

Any multiple offers across schools will be removed through the admissions software, which will retain the highest offer possible for each child. The resulting vacancies will then be filled automatically by the next ranked child from the school's allocation list. This will continue until all places are filled or individual school lists are exhausted.