

A photograph of a modern building interior with a white wall and a black metal frame structure. The frame has several rectangular panels attached to it. The wall has some dark rectangular fixtures.

East Sussex Admissions Prospectus 2027-28



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Introduction

This is the East Sussex schools prospectus for 2027 to 2028. All the information you need to apply for a school place is in this guide or online at [school admissions](#)

If you need further advice, contact the Admissions and Transport team. We can:

- answer detailed enquiries on the admissions process
- discuss your application
- let you know about home to school transport
- process applications for free school meals

The Admissions and Transport team

Children's Services

East Sussex County Council

County Hall

St Anne's Crescent

Lewes

BN7 1UE

Phone: 0300 33 09 472 between 10am to 3pm Monday to Friday

Email: [Admissions and Transport team](#)

Overview

This Privacy notice covers the allocation of school places, the provision of free school transport and free school meals.

East Sussex County Council takes data protection seriously. Please be assured that your information will be used appropriately in line with data protection legislation, will be stored securely and will not be processed unless the requirements for fair and lawful processing can be met.

What information is being used?

East Sussex County Council collects the following information in order to allocate school places and to assess any entitlement to transport services and/or free school meals.

- Child's name and date of birth
- Gender
- Child's home address
- Details of school aged brothers or sisters
- If the child is 'Looked after' or 'Previously looked after'
- If the child has an Education, Health and Care plan (EHC plan)
- Parent's name
- Parent's date of birth
- Parent's National Insurance number
- Parent's address
- Parent's contact details
- Any other information the parent chooses to supply about the family circumstances.

How will your information be used?

To allow the council to manage school admissions policies to ensure children are correctly allocated school places in accordance with our statutory duties.

To allow the council to assess school transport and free school meals eligibility in line with statutory duties and council policy to the benefit of pupils.

We aim to maintain high standards, adopt best practice for our record keeping and regularly check and report on how we are doing. Your information is never sold for direct marketing purposes.

Our staff are trained to handle your information correctly and protect your confidentiality and privacy.

Your information is not processed outside the European Economic Area.

What is the legal basis for processing your information?

The purpose of providing the information allows

- the allocation of school places to individual children in response to parents or carers' applications.
- allows individual children to benefit from free school transport in line with legal obligations.
- to determine those who are eligible for free school meals.

How long will your information be kept for?

The information provided as part of the school application process will be retained for seven years from the start of the school year to which the application is made.

For free school meal applications this information is retained for a maximum of 6 years, or your details will be held until your child leaves compulsory education or school sixth form, whichever comes first.

Sharing your information

Information will only be shared with those involved in the application process or to provide transport services or free school meals.

Any sharing of personal data is always made:

- on a case-by-case basis
- using the minimum personal data necessary
- with the appropriate security controls in place
- in line with legislation
- Information is only shared with those agencies and bodies who have a “need to know” or where you have consented to the sharing of your personal data to such persons

Your rights

Under data protection legislation, you have the right:

- to be informed why, where and how we use your information
- to ask for access to your information
- to ask for your information to be corrected if it is inaccurate or incomplete
- to ask for your information to be deleted or removed where there is no need for us to continue processing it
- to ask us to restrict the use of your information
- to ask us to copy or transfer your information from one IT system to another in a safe and secure way, without impacting the quality of the information
- to object to how your information is used
- to challenge any decisions made without human intervention (automated decision-making)

To find out more or how to complain see [Privacy notice - School admissions and transport](#)

Find out about schools

Information gathering

You will probably have an idea of some of the things about a school that are going to be important to you and your child. You may have talked to other parents whose children already attend a particular school.

Their ideas and opinions may be helpful, but you should always base a decision about schools on your own judgement. It is important, therefore, to find out as much as you can about individual schools and you may wish to consider the points in this section when deciding which school you would like your child to attend.

School visits

We suggest you look round schools to see what they have to offer and get a general impression. Schools organise open days or arrange viewings for parents to meet staff. Before you go, it might be useful to think of some questions to ask during your visit.

You may also want to look at:

- [Get Information about Schools](#) - the Department for Education (DfE) register of schools and colleges in England.
- The school's community area - [primary community areas](#) and [secondary community areas](#) or you can email your address to [Admissions and Transport](#) for advice as to which school(s) serve your home address
- School prospectus - can be found on the school's website or by request from the school
- [Inspection reports](#) - these can also be found on the school's website
- [Performance data](#) - the DfE publishes national achievement and attainment tables each year

Understanding the admissions process

Once you have researched schools and decided which ones to apply for, you will need to consider several other factors which will have a bearing on whether your application will be successful. We recommend you read this section with care.

Coordinated admissions at the normal age of transfer

We are required to operate coordinated admission schemes for primary and secondary admissions. The schemes ensure the sharing of information between all admissions authorities in the county, as well as close liaison with neighbouring authorities. Coordination means that all applications are treated fairly and makes sure that each child can be offered one school place.

A preference, not a choice

You do not have the right to choose your child's school. You have the right to state a preference for the school you would like your child to attend.

The ability to meet with your wishes will depend on demand for places at individual schools. If a school receives more applications than it has places, the admissions criteria for the school will decide which children will be offered places.

The allocation procedure

Each school has a set of rules (known as admission criteria) to be able to rank children in the order they will be offered places. As all preferences are treated equally, this could mean that some places are allocated to second and third preference applicants, whilst first preferences are refused because they have a lower priority in the criteria.

As admission priorities differ between schools it is essential you read and understand the criteria for each school you prefer. These can be found in our [School admissions policies](#) pages or on the school's website.

Only one school place will be offered on National offer day. This will be the highest ranked on your application that is able to offer a place. If no schools named on your application can be offered, a place will be allocated at the nearest school to your home with a place available, which could be some distance from your home. Because of this we recommend including your community area or closest school as a preference.

Here is an example to describe how the process might work.

Olivia lives in the area served by School Y. Her parents prefer her to attend School X. They fill in the application form as follows:

- Preference 1 - School X
- Preference 2 - School Y
- Preference 3 - School Z

School X receives more applications than it has places available and the admissions criteria must be applied. The school is filled with children living inside the school's area and Olivia's address falls outside the school's area.

This means a place cannot be offered as she falls into a lower priority. However, Olivia meets the criteria for a place at both School Y and School Z. A place will be offered at School Y because it featured higher than School Z on the application.

School places cannot be guaranteed

No admission system can give 100% satisfaction and guarantees cannot be given. The law allows a preference and not a choice. It is the admissions criteria that decide which children are offered places at oversubscribed schools, and what happens at individual schools changes each year.

Whichever schools you prefer, you must name them as a preference if you want your child to attend, as a school can only be considered for your child if it features on your application.

You should make sure you apply by [the closing date](#) and give full details about your child's brothers and sisters. Your application may be affected if you fail to do this.

If your preferences cannot be met, your child will be allocated the closest alternative school that has vacancies after taking account of other parents' wishes. This may be some distance from your home.

Use all your preferences

You can name up to three schools on your application. Although many parents apply for just one school, we recommend second and third preferences are added in case your first preference cannot be offered. This will increase your chances of being allocated a place at a school you will be happy with. Sometimes it is not possible to offer a place at any of the preferred schools.

If you do not name a school local to your home as one of your preferences and your preferences cannot be offered due to oversubscription, the school offered to your child may be a considerable distance from your home and you may not qualify for assistance with transport. Please bear this in mind when making your selections.

Getting to and from school

In most cases, it is for you to decide how your child will get to and from school, so it is important you consider the journey when applying for schools. If it is not possible to walk, scoot or cycle to school because of the distance involved, you may wish to consider using public transport or car sharing. Most schools have school travel plans and are working with parents to reduce the use of the car.

You must pay for your child's transport if:

- We did not offer a place at your nearest or designated school because you did not name it on your application
- You decided to send your child to a school further away

Compelling reasons

Although community and voluntary controlled schools do not have criteria which refer to a child's exceptional medical or social needs, a few admissions authorities do.

Parents applying under such a criterion must be supported by documentary evidence (for example, a letter from a doctor or social worker). Any evidence must conclusively show that only the preferred school can meet the child's needs and that other schools are unsuitable.

Decisions can only be based on the information you supply. It is important, therefore, that you provide the information you want taken into consideration before decisions are reached. If you supply additional information after schools have been filled, it will be for an appeal panel to decide the outcome. See [school admission appeals](#).

Children of staff

Community and voluntary controlled schools in East Sussex, and some academies, have a criterion which prioritises children of school staff in certain circumstances. If you believe your child qualifies for this priority, you will need to request proof of this from the headteacher (or Chair of Governors if you are the headteacher) and submit this at the same time as your application. This must be emailed or posted to the School Admissions team. You should also state this in the application text. Children of staff whose parents do not supply the required evidence by the closing date will not be prioritised when school places are allocated.

Starting school for the first time

Compulsory school age and flexible attendance options

Children reach compulsory school age at the start of the school term following their fifth birthday. However, all children can start school in the September following their fourth birthday.

All children are entitled to attend full-time, but there are flexible options for parents who do not feel their child is ready for full-time attendance. Children may attend part-time until they reach compulsory school age, or you can defer entry until later in the school year, but not beyond compulsory school age, nor beyond the start of the summer term in April. If your child does not start school by this point you will need to re-apply for a school place. Please discuss your options with the headteacher once the school place has been offered as their advice may ease any concerns you may have.

Children born between 1 September-31 December 2022: must attend full time from Start of Term 3 (Spring term). May attend full or part time before then.

Children born between 1 January-31 March 2023: must attend full time from Start of Term 5 (Summer term). May attend full or part time before then.

Children born between 1 April-31 August 2023: may attend full or part time for this school year. If they do not start attending school on or before the beginning of summer term, they will have to re-apply for a school place for the following September.

Children whose fifth birthday falls after 31 August 2023 will not, under any circumstances, be admitted to school in the 2027 to 2028 school year.

Requests for delayed admission for summer-born children

Summer-born children

Children born between 1 April and 31 August do not reach compulsory school age until the September after their fifth birthday, at which point they would normally join Year 1. However, some parents may request their child be admitted out of their normal age group and start in Reception rather than Year 1 when they reach school age. We call this delayed admission. If you are considering delaying your child's admission, we would recommend discussing this with your preferred schools before making this request.

If you request delayed admission for your child, you must:

- Apply for a school place for your child's normal age group by 15 January 2027.
- Complete a copy of our [summer born delayed start form](#) and send it to admissions@eastsussex.gov.uk by 15 January 2027.

If this request is for a community and or voluntary controlled school(s) we will contact the headteacher of the preferred school(s) for their views and decide on whether to agree to your request.

If this request is for a free, trust or voluntary aided church school or an academy we will send your request to the school(s) as the decision will be theirs to make.

We will write to you with the decision before 16 April 2027.

If your request is agreed, the application for starting school in September 2027 will be withdrawn and you will need to apply for a school place by the closing date next year. Please be aware you will not necessarily be offered a place at your preferred school, and if the school you are offered is a different admission authority they may not agree to allow your child to start in Reception at that point.

If your request is refused, you cannot appeal against this decision. You will need to decide whether to accept the offer of a place for the normal age group or decline it. If you decline the offer, you will need to [make an in-year application](#) in time for your child to join Year 1 for the start of the 2028 to 2029 school year.

Whether your child enters Reception or Year 1 they must attend full-time if they have reached compulsory school age.

If your child starts in Reception they cannot be considered for a delayed admission for the following September.

Special needs and education (SEND)

What is SEND?

A child or young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or which requires special educational provision to be made for him or her.

This could arise from a disability that prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities generally provided for others of the same age or significantly greater difficulty in learning than many children of the same age.

How are children and young people with SEND supported?

Most pupils with some form of special educational need can have their needs fully met in a mainstream school so that they can be educated and make friends in their local community. School staff are experienced in monitoring a child's educational development and will be able to arrange appropriate support in a variety of ways, such as:

- access to different books or equipment
- small group work
- specific programmes of learning
- support from a teaching assistant

There is a range of Local Authority's support services available to East Sussex schools to meet a range of needs, such as autism, dyslexia and speech, language and communication to name a few. Schools will be able to offer you guidance and explain how your child's needs can be met within their school setting with or without support from specialist services.

Application process

If your child has special educational needs but does not have an Education, Health and Care plan (EHC plan), you will need to follow the application process in this guide. Schools admit children according to the published criteria and must not consider a child's special educational needs when deciding whether to offer a place.

Different arrangements apply for those with an EHC plan. You should tell your Assessment and Planning Officer which school you would like your child to attend, and they will then explain the next steps. If a mainstream school is named in your child's EHC plan, they will be entitled to attend there.

Further information

If you need advice on special educational needs or think your child may need extra help when they start school, please discuss your concerns with the school's SENCO in the first instance. See [East Sussex Local Offer](#).

Other relevant information

The admission number

The number of places available at each school is known as the 'admission number'. Admission numbers are linked to a school's accommodation and its organisation. Keeping to admission numbers makes sure that children receive an effective education and correct levels of care and support. Once published, it is the maximum number of children a school will admit at the normal age of entry. In other year groups this may differ based on how the year group is organised.

Normally, it is only possible to refuse an application if the number of applications exceed the admission number. The admission number is therefore an important factor in the process. See [primary school information](#) and [secondary school information](#) for this year's proposed admission numbers.

Children with an EHC plan have priority for school places. Once a school is named in the EHC plan, that school must admit the child. This will reduce the number of places available for other children.

How places were allocated last year

To help you make your decision you may want to look at how places at East Sussex schools were allocated for the last academic year.

- [Infant, primary and junior school information](#)
- [Secondary school information](#)

The infant class size law

The law requires children aged 5, 6 and 7 to be taught in classes of no more than 30 pupils to one school teacher. Admission numbers at most schools admitting Reception age pupils have been set to ensure compliance with the class size law. See [Infant class size law appeals](#).

Children from multiple births

Where the admission of twins or all siblings from a multiple birth would cause a community or voluntary controlled school to rise above its admission number, all the children will be admitted. Where the admission of the additional child or children from a multiple birth would result in the admission number rising above 30 (or multiples of 30), the additional child or children are permitted exceptions to the Infant Class Size legislation throughout the infant phase or until the number in the year group reduces to the admission number. At own admission authority schools, it is likely that twins or all the siblings will be admitted, but this is not always the case.

The importance of where you live

Community areas

Each East Sussex address will fall into an area served by a certain school or set of schools. Where you live can make a difference to the outcome of your application. Living in a community area does not guarantee a place at a particular school and sometimes your 'community area' school may not actually be your nearest school.

Some own admission authority schools do not use areas to decide applications. Please check the school's admission criteria if you are in any doubt.

You can find maps showing the community areas for:

- [Primary community areas](#)
- [Secondary community areas](#)

Your address

You must state your child's home address which should be a residential property that is your child's only or main residence on the closing date and not an address at which he or she might sometimes stay or sleep.

If your child lives with parents or carers with shared parental responsibility, each for part of the week, the school place will be allocated based on the address at which your child spends the majority of weekday nights during term time. Addresses for carers without parental responsibility will not be used. For clarity, weekday nights are defined as Sunday to Thursday, as these are the days when a child departs from that address to attend school.

If two addresses are supplied, we will decide which address should be used as the main residence for the purpose of processing your application because we only accept one current address. Evidence may be required to confirm the address given and we reserve the right to check the information you supply.

If you have any questions about addresses or community areas, please contact the Admissions and Transport Team who will be happy to discuss this with you before you apply.

Moving house

Places cannot be reserved. If you move locally or into East Sussex late on in the process and your preferred school is full, your child will be allocated a place at the nearest school with spaces. Please contact the [Admissions and Transport team](#) and supply proof of your new address if you move after the deadline has passed.

We will only use a new address for the purpose of allocating a school place when contracts have been exchanged or when a tenancy agreement has been signed. Until such evidence can be provided, we will process your application based on your existing address.

We may also ask for additional evidence to confirm a move has taken place. This may include getting you to provide a copy of a council tax or utility bill for your new address or evidence that you will not be returning to your previous address.

How to apply

Apply online

The safest and quickest way to apply for a school is online at [Apply for a school place](#). Step-by-step instructions will guide you through the process. After you have checked your details, please remember to submit your application.

Applying online means:

- your application is safe
- you can apply 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- you can be sure your application has been received
- a decision will be emailed to you

Once you have submitted your application you will receive a confirmation email listing your preferences in order. Please read this carefully. If you want to make changes to your application after you have submitted it or if there are any errors, you will need to contact the [Admissions and Transport Team](#).

If you need to send us additional information such as a signed tenancy agreement, please indicate in the 'other reasons' section that evidence is on its way. You should clearly mark your child's name and date of birth on the top of the supporting documentation before sending it to us.

Many own admission authority schools require the completion of a supplementary information form (SIF) to help them to rank your application correctly. These schools are indicated in the online system, although you should check with the school in question. They will need to receive it by their closing date.

A supplementary information form on its own is not a valid application.

Paper application forms

Please contact the [Admissions and Transport team](#) for a paper application or download a copy below. Complete your form, check that the information on the form is correct and sign and date it. Please send it to:

Admissions and Transport Team
County Hall
St Anne's Crescent
Lewes BN7 1UE

[Printable school application form](#)

We recommend you obtain a certificate of posting or send us your application by special delivery or by Royal Mail Signed For service. We do not acknowledge paper forms, but you are welcome to email the [Admissions and Transport Team](#) to check your application has reached us safely.

If we receive more than one application for the same child before the closing date, we will use the latest application submitted.

Applications from inside East Sussex

If you live in East Sussex, you must apply through us as your 'home' authority. This rule applies whichever type of school you prefer including schools outside the county. Applications that include schools in two or even three other admission authorities outside East Sussex are allowed.

Once you have applied, we will pass the details of your application to the appropriate admissions authority for them to apply their own admissions criteria. You must not apply direct to schools (unless it is to join an existing age group) and any applications made in this way are invalid.

Applications from outside of East Sussex

If you live outside East Sussex and are interested in your child attending a school in East Sussex, you must apply through the local authority in which you live. Your authority will then pass us details of your application for us to consider. Your 'home' authority will be responsible for letting you know the outcome of your application.

Application deadlines

National closing dates

Parents or carers are responsible for making sure that the application form is returned by these dates.

- Secondary - 31 October 2026
- Primary or Junior - 15 January 2027

Late applications

If you apply after the national closing dates without a good reason, we will deal with it after we deal with the 'on time' preferences.

If 'on time' applications fill all the places in your preferred school, we will have to offer your child a place at another school. This may not be your community area school nor the same school as a brother or sister.

Not knowing about the closing date or forgetting to apply are not good reasons for applying late.

If you have a good reason for applying late (for example you move house) we can consider your case as 'on time' if:

1. we receive your application by:
 - 31 January 2027 (secondary)
 - 13 March 2027 (primary) and
2. you supply independent supporting evidence as to why you applied late.

In the case of a house move we will require:

- a solicitor's letter confirming exchange of contracts or
- a signed tenancy agreement clearly showing the move took place after the closing date

If there is no proof, or we do not consider the reason valid, we will treat the application as late.

There is no separate right of appeal against a decision which deems an application as 'on time' or late.

This applies to community and voluntary controlled schools.
Own admission authority schools may consider late applications differently.

All late applications we receive by:

- 31 January 2027 (secondary)
- 13 March 2027 (primary)

will get a decision at the same time as those who applied 'on time'.

Requests for a change of preference after the closing date

We do not have to agree to a change of preference(s) from those given on the original application. However, a change of circumstances may mean the original preferences are impractical. A new stated preference will not necessarily enable a place to be allocated because that school may already be oversubscribed by 'on time' applications. If a change of preference is accepted but it is not possible to allocate that preference, you can appeal and/or ask for your child's name to be placed on the waiting list.

If you wish to add a preference or revise your preference order, please put your request in an email to [Admissions and Transport team](#) explaining the basis for the change. We are not obliged to accept your request and will not do so unless we feel there are exceptional reasons which could not have been foreseen. Each request will be carefully considered and we will let you know if we agree to your request.

You will need to provide independent supporting evidence by this date, in the case of a house move this should be proof of address.

The deadlines for these requests are 31 January 2027 (secondary) and 13 March 2027 (primary), after this we will not be able to make any changes.

Parents not completing applications

The responsibility for finding out about schools and applying for places rests with parents or carers. If you do not apply for a school your child will not be allocated a place.

Allocation of places

School places are allocated according to parental preference wherever possible. If there are more places available at a school than there are applicants, all applicants will be offered. If there are more applicants than places available, the admissions authority for each school will rank the children in line with their admissions criteria and offer places to as many applicants as possible. See [The allocation procedure](#).

If your preferences cannot be offered due to oversubscription, and you live in East Sussex, we will offer your child a place at the nearest school with a vacancy. If you have not applied for your community area school this could be a long way from your home and you may not qualify for assistance with home to school transport.

National offer dates

- Secondary - 1 March 2027
- Primary and Junior - 16 April 2027

Please do not contact the Admissions and Transport Team for an early decision as it will not be made available under any circumstances.

Letting you know

Decisions are sent by email on the offer day. If we are unable to email you, we will post you the decision letter. Online applicants can view the decision through their online account. Each child is allocated one school place.

Once you have your decision

Accept the place allocated

The allocated school will be in contact to explain how you can accept the place offered.

If you do not accept the place within 14 days, schools may send you a reminder. If you no longer wish to send your child to the school allocated (for example, because you are moving away) please contact the [Admissions and Transport team](#). Please be aware if you change your mind we may not be able to reinstate your allocation.

Request a change of school

We can look into changing your child's allocated school provided the alternative school has vacancies. Please put your request in an email to the [Allocation Change inbox](#) giving your child's name, date of birth and the name of the school you wish to be considered. Such requests do not carry a right of appeal. If we can fulfil your request, the original place will be withdrawn as children can only have one school place at any one time. Please do not restate schools you have already been considered for as you can pursue places for preferred schools through an appeal or via the waiting list.

Waiting lists

If you did not get your preferred school, you will be added to the waiting lists of all schools that were ranked higher than the school offered in your application.

If you do not wish to be on a waiting list or wish to join a waiting list for a lower preference school, please email us or the own admission school directly.

You will be notified in writing if a place becomes available. At community and voluntary controlled schools, waiting lists are held by the Admissions and Transport Team. At own admission authority schools, lists are maintained by the school.

Waiting lists for children starting or transferring school in September 2027 will be maintained until Christmas 2027. Waiting lists for an existing year group run until the end of the term in which the application is processed. Waiting list requests must be renewed at three points during the school year (at Christmas, Easter and summer holiday) otherwise names will be removed.

Waiting lists must follow a school's admissions priorities and cannot be run on a 'first come, first served' basis, and will not take into account if the original application was submitted late. As a result, a child's position can change as other pupils join or leave the list.

If a place becomes available for your child, you will be notified in writing. Your child's original allocation will automatically be withdrawn as children can only have one school place at one time. This applies until children start school. During term time you will be given 10 school days to accept or refuse the place offered.

If you subsequently wish to withdraw from a waiting list, then you must do so in writing to the [Admissions and Transport team](#) the moment you no longer wish to pursue a place at an alternative school to the school offered to your child.

Appeal for your preferred school

If you did not get the school place you want for your child, you can appeal to an independent appeal panel. Appeal Panels can overturn the decision of an admission authority to refuse your child a place at your preferred school. Please note:

- You can only appeal for a school named on your application. Appeals for schools not named on your original application will not be heard
- When submitting your appeal, you will need to put in writing the reasons why you are appealing and supply any additional supporting evidence you would like the panel to consider
- At the hearing you will also be given the opportunity to speak to the panel to expand on the reasons for your appeal, and to ask questions of a representative of the admission authority that made the decision to refuse the place
- You can find information at [school admissions appeals](#)

Withdrawing places

If our decision to allocate a place at a school is based on incorrect information (for example, a wrong address or date of birth has been given) the place may be withdrawn. We will investigate false addresses when concerns have been raised.

Apply during the school year

In-year admissions

An in-year admission is defined as the admission of a pupil to a school which takes place outside the normal entry times. This includes pupils changing schools, pupils coming from a different country or from other parts of the UK, pupils returning to a school from living elsewhere or those who have not been in school. You can ask for your child to change schools at any stage in your child's education.

Application process

You should apply online at [Apply for a school place](#).

Your application will be shared with your preferred school(s) so they can check if they have a place for your child. You will be asked to provide the name of your child's current school or the school he or she last attended. If you cannot find the details of that school, skip to the next part of the application by leaving the field set to 'Select current school'.

House moves

School places cannot be reserved but we can advise you which schools have places at the time a place is required. Even if you have been told a school is full you can still apply for it as a place may become available. If it is the only school serving the area you move to, we may be able to offer a place even if the school is full, although this cannot be guaranteed. If we are unable to offer a place you will have the right to [make an appeal](#) and [go on the waiting list](#).

You may apply before you move but you will probably need to give evidence of your move such as a signed tenancy agreement or a copy of exchange of contracts.

We aim to process requests within 10 school days of receipt. If you apply too far in advance of needing a place, we will not process your request until nearer to your preferred start date. If a place cannot be offered at one of your preferred schools, we will allocate the closest school to your home with a place.

Parents/carers who are UK service personnel with a confirmed posting, or crown servants returning from overseas will need to provide an official letter declaring a relocation date if they want an application to be processed in advance.

Change of school requests

We discourage unnecessary school moves.

If your child is having problems at school, you might feel a move would help. Before you apply, please contact your child's current school and see if they can help. Changing school can harm your child's learning without solving the problems. They may also struggle to make new friends at a new school. The current school may be able to suggest other ways to make things better for your child.

If you still decide to move your child, please give your reasons why you want them to change schools. These should list what you have done to try and resolve the issues with the current school.

When they get your application, staff at your preferred school may contact your child's current school. If you have not already spoken to the school, they will talk to you about this before a start date is agreed. Staff may also contact other services within the local authority, including any which have worked with your child.

If your preferred school is full or if there are other legal reasons for refusing your request, we may suggest that your child remain at their present school if this is reasonable or offer a place at another school if spaces exist.

Applications for September entry

Applications for the start of the next school year can be made from 1 June onwards. Unfortunately, we cannot guarantee that decisions can be made on every application before schools close due to the unpredictable volume of applications that are received and if you apply late in term 6 or during the holidays you may not get a decision until after schools return in September.

Making an appeal

You have the right to appeal for any of the schools named on your application. We will let you know all about the process for appeals for community and voluntary controlled schools should it be necessary. If you are refused admission to a school which is its own admission authority, they will tell you about your appeal rights.

For more information visit [school appeals](#)

Fair Access Protocol

We are legally required to operate a Fair Access Protocol (FAP) to ensure that all vulnerable children who are without a school place are offered a place as quickly as possible. Working in partnership with schools, the FAP aims to ensure that all schools admit a proportionate number of children deemed vulnerable. To achieve this aim, it may be necessary to admit such children to schools that are already full and ahead of other pupils on a waiting list. The FAP only applies to in-year admissions.

If your child has been permanently excluded or is attending an alternative provision, please provide details when you apply.

We will ask you certain questions on your in-year application to establish whether your child should be placed through this process. You do not have to answer them, but it may help your child to succeed in their new school if you do.

Requests to be educated out of age group

If you wish to apply in year for a school place outside your child's chronological age group, you should request this in the 'other reasons' field in your application. You should also contact [Admissions and Transport team](#) and request an out of age group application form. This will allow you to provide reasons for your request and any supporting information (for example evidence from the previous school that the child has been educated out of year group until now).

The admission authority for the school will then reach a decision on whether this is in the best interests of your child.

Where your child has already been educated out of year group previously in a school in England and Wales which follows the National Curriculum, we will work on the assumption that this should continue, unless there is a clear reason why it should not. If your child has been educated in a different system, we will take advice from relevant professionals and the Headteachers of the preferred schools to make a decision. This could lead to delays in allocating a school place and you should be prepared for this if you move into the area in this situation. It will be for own admission authority schools to reach a decision on your request.

Applications to own admission authority schools

Many own admission authority schools require the completion of a supplementary information form (SIF), which will help them to rank your application correctly. Our online form indicates which schools require a SIF although we recommend that you check this requirement with the school in question.

Applications for schools outside East Sussex

You will need to check the in-year admissions arrangements and apply direct to the local authority where the school is situated. They will consider your request and let you know the decision.

Neighbouring local authorities

Brighton & Hove

Phone: 01273 293653

Website: [School admissions in Brighton and Hove](#)

Kent

Phone: 03000 412121

Website: [School admissions in Kent](#)

Surrey

Phone: 0300 200 1004

Website: [School admissions in Surrey](#)

West Sussex

Phone: 03330 142903

Website: [School admissions in West Sussex](#)

Admissions criteria for Community and Voluntary Controlled (LA) schools

The priorities below will be used to decide who gets a place at community and voluntary controlled infant, primary and secondary schools:

Priority 1: Looked after children and children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or subject to residence orders or special guardianship orders) immediately following being looked after.

Priority 2: Children who will have a brother or sister at the school (or linked junior school) at the time of admission and who live at the same address, within the predefined community area.

Priority 3: Children of staff members contracted to work at the school in question where:

- a) The member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, and/or
- b) The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage

Priority 4: Other children living within a predefined community area.

Priority 5: Children who will have a brother or sister at the school (or linked junior school) at the time of admission who live at the same address, outside the predefined community area.

Priority 6: Other children.

Looked after children and previously looked after children

A 'looked after child' is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services function at the time of making an application to a school (see section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989). Children accommodated under section 20 of the Children Act 1989 are included in this priority.

Previously looked after children are children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a Child Arrangements Order or special guardianship order. This may include children previously in state care outside the UK.

Community areas

Each home address in the county falls within a community area although living in a community area does not guarantee a place. (See the [primary community areas](#) and [secondary community areas](#).)

Siblings

Children are 'siblings' if they are full, half, adoptive or foster brother or sister living in the same household including siblings attending sixth forms.

Out of area siblings

The admissions criteria give priority to children living in a community area (priority 4) above siblings who live outside the area served by the school (priority 5). You can still apply for and get schools outside your community area. However, there is no guarantee that younger children in your family will be able to follow their brother or sister. You will therefore need to consider the possibility that your children may end up at different schools if you send your child to a non-local school.

Children whose brother or sister:

- lives in the school's former community area and joined prior to 1 September 2024 for Polegate & Willingdon primary schools and Willingdon Community School, or 1 September 2022 for Denton Community Primary School
- who will still be attending the school when this child is due to start

will be assigned to priority 2 under the previous arrangement which gave priority to brothers and sisters regardless of whether they live in the predefined community area or not.

Where a child has been unable to secure a place at a school in his/her community area and has been directed to attend a school outside the community area as an alternative, any applications for younger siblings to attend the school will be treated as if the family were resident in the community area, as long as the sibling will still be attending the school when the younger child starts.

Tiebreaker

In the event of oversubscription within any priority, place allocation will be decided by prioritising applications on the basis of home to school distance measured in a straight line. This will be measured from the address point in the school (supplied by Ordnance Survey) to the address point in the family home. For split site schools, we will measure to the site where the child will attend for the majority of lessons at the point of entry.

In the event that applicants cannot be prioritised using the tiebreaker because the distance measurements are the same, the Authority will use random allocation to decide which children will be offered the remaining places. This will be done electronically using the Authority's admissions software.

Factors not included

When schools are oversubscribed, only stated admissions criteria are applied to decide which children will be allocated places. Given this, you will need to bear in mind that it does not take account of:

- attendance at a particular school, pre-school or nursery setting. The only linked schools are those recognised under priority 3 for children moving from an infant to a junior school)
- any connections you or your family may have had with a school
- your profession or working or childcare arrangements
- any reference to a child's ability or aptitude
- performance of schools

Linked infant and junior schools

Eastbourne

- Motcombe Community School - Ocklynge Junior School
- Pashley Down Infant School - Ocklynge Junior School
- Parkland Infant School - Parkland Junior School
- Roselands Infant School - Stafford Junior School
- St Andrew's CE Infant School - Tollgate Community Junior School

Hastings

- Dudley Infant Academy - All Saints CE Junior Academy

Applications for a Year 3 place at a primary school

Some parents will want to request a place at a primary school. You can only apply for a Year 3 place at a primary school after 1 June 2027.

As a fall-back position, we recommend you apply for a junior school by 15 January 2027 in accordance with the timetable for applications. This will ensure your child has a confirmed place in September 2027 in case your preferred primary school is full.

School transport

In general, most children do not qualify for help with home to school transport and parents are responsible for making the travel arrangements and meeting the cost. However, some children will be entitled to free home to school transport and this section explains when support is available.

For more information view the [full transport policy](#).

Planning the journey to school

Public transport information, including bus and rail routes, timetables and a journey planner can be found at [Plan your journey](#)

Students and young people can find advice about public transport at [Fares and discounts](#)

Vacant Seats Scheme

Requests are sometimes received from parents who wish to pay for their children to use a particular school coach. Please be aware that vacant seats cannot be guaranteed and parents should not rely on places always being available as priority is given to children who qualify for free transport. Occasionally vacant seats must be withdrawn at short notice. See [Vacant seats scheme](#).

Qualifying for free home to school transport

Application process

Eligibility for children of compulsory school age based on age and distance and route safety is assessed when school places are allocated. An application is required for support under extended rights eligibility (low-income) and medical conditions.

The following paragraphs explain when transport support can be given:

Statutory walking distance

Many people enjoy taking their child to school; however, we will provide free transport between home and school if your child is eight years of age or over and lives more than three miles (4,828 metres) from the designated* school, or two miles (3,218 metres) if your child is under eight years of age.

Distances are measured by the shortest available walking route using our Geographical Information System (GIS). GIS pinpoints addresses and then calculates the home to school distance to give a constant result every time.

*The designated school is the school suitable to your child which serves your area, or if there is more than one school, the nearest suitable school to your home where a place is available.

See the [primary community areas](#) and [secondary community areas](#) to find out which school(s) serve your area.

Route safety

Assessments do not determine whether a route is “safe” or “dangerous”. All roads may be thought of as presenting some element of road safety risk, whether they are heavily trafficked urban routes, or more lightly trafficked rural routes. Instead, the assessment determines whether transport should be provided because a child’s only walking route presents particular road safety hazards.

Where the suitability of a route is questioned, the Road Safety Team will look at the relationship between pedestrians and traffic and will make a formal assessment based on national guidance. Issues surrounding personal security do not form part of the assessment and it is assumed the child is accompanied by a responsible adult. There is no requirement for a route to be lit, and temporary closures such as road works or flooding are not considered. Assistance will not be agreed if alternative routes are available within the statutory walking distance.

Parents are responsible for ensuring their child has suitable clothes and equipment for the journey (for example, boots, wet weather clothes, reflective bands, torch, etc) and national guidance is quite clear that conditions such as muddy footpaths or lack of street lighting do not mean that a route is not available. Available routes include: crossing fields, wooded areas, bridleways, public footpaths and public rights of way.

Extended rights eligibility

Children entitled to Targeted free school meals will qualify for free transport in the following circumstances:

Primary age pupils - Children over eight whose designated school is more than two miles but less than three miles from their home will qualify for transport help if they are from a low-income family.

Secondary age pupils - Children from low-income families will qualify for free transport to one of their three nearest schools, provided the school is more than two miles but less than six miles away. Distances up to two miles are measured using the shortest available walking route whereas the six-mile upper distance limit is measured using roads only.

Secondary age pupils attending church schools - Children from low-income families attending the nearest church school preferred on grounds of religion or belief, will qualify for free transport to that school if it is more than two miles but less than fifteen miles away from home. Confirmation of baptismal status or support from the parish priest or minister is required.

If you believe that your child is entitled to extended rights transport due to family income, please [apply online for low-income transport](#).

Pupils unable to walk to school

Some children with SEN and/or a disability may not reasonably be expected to walk even relatively short distances to school. Similarly, children with a mobility problem (including temporary medical conditions) may also be unable to walk to school.

To qualify for help, your child must be attending the designated* school.

We will need to see medical evidence from a consultant or GP who must confirm your child's medical condition and that your child cannot reasonably walk to school. Please note that a fee may be charged for supplying the medical evidence and you would need to pay any costs. We will also need to know how long transport assistance is required and an indication of what type of travel is appropriate. If transport assistance is agreed, your case will be reviewed regularly.

For more advice email [Medical Transport](#).

Disabled parents or carers of primary school children

If you are prevented from walking or accompanying your children because of a disability, we may be able to assist with travel costs.

To receive help, your child/children must be attending the designated* school and, in deciding whether to assist, account will be taken of the distance to school. Where the distance is relatively short, assistance may not be agreed, especially for a child in Year 5 or 6.

You will need to complete a [parent or child medical transport application form](#) and attach medical evidence from a consultant or doctor which must not be older than three months from the date of application. Please note that a fee may be charged for supplying the medical evidence and you would need to pay any costs.

Transport cannot be arranged until the medical evidence is provided. If transport assistance is agreed, your case will be reviewed regularly.

Transport assistance is not provided when parents are not available to accompany their child to school for other reasons. For more advice email [Medical Transport](#).

Travel assistance for eligible children

In most cases, we provide transport to get pupils between home and school at the beginning and end of the school day. This is done by supplying a ticket for use on public services or by allocating a seat on a hired vehicle. We do not cover travel costs for adults.

If there is no suitable public service or hired vehicle, parents willing to make their own arrangements receive help with the cost of two return journeys per day. This is based on the distance between home and school. Payment is made on a family basis at the current rate of 25p per mile since the cost will be the same whether a parent takes one child or more.

Mileage payments are not given to parents who prefer to make their own arrangements where there is a suitable public service or hired vehicle.

When transport is not supplied

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to arrange and pay for transport outside the normal school day. For example, we do not provide transport for:

- Breakfast or after school clubs
- Extracurricular activities
- Parents evenings
- Pre course visits or 'taster' days
- Fixed term exclusions
- Off-site educational placements
- School trips or educational visits
- Work experience or work placement
- Specific exam timetables
- Medical appointments or sickness at school

It is our policy to withdraw any transport that has been issued in error. Entitlement ceases at the end of compulsory school age. See [post 16 policy statement](#).

Appeal process

You can follow our two-stage appeal process if you have been refused transport or do not agree with the transport option provided. See [School transport appeals](#).

East Sussex
County Council

