

STARTING SCHOOL - WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

If your child was born between 1 September 2016 and 31 August 2017, then you need to make application for a school place before the **closing date of 15 January 2021**. Application should be made to your home local authority (to whoever you make council tax payments) and for Shropshire local authority residents this will be Shropshire Council. More information can be found in our Parents' Guide to Education booklet, available on our website or reference copies available in schools and libraries.

APPLICATION

Make your application via our website:

www.shropshire.gov.uk/schooladmissions

The process is confidential. You will be asked to provide your own password which you should keep safe as you will need it to view the result of your application. Internet access is free at Shropshire libraries. However, if you have any difficulties in making your application online, please enquire with your local primary school or library.

Late applications (received after 15 January 2021) or changes of preference cannot be dealt with before 16 April, unless relating to a house move, exceptional family circumstances, such as bereavement or a change which affects how an application would be considered and evidence of this would be required. A change would need to be verified before 5 March 2021 to be included in the main allocation round. If your application is late, then your preferred school may be full before your application is processed.

All schools have an admission number. If more children want a place than the published admission number, places are allocated using the oversubscription criteria and some pupils will have to go to another school. You are therefore advised to state more than one preference, particularly if you are not making your local or nearest school your first preference.

Parents are reminded that the address used in application for school places **must be the genuine home address of the child. If that address changes, through a house move, the Admissions Team must be informed without delay.** Failure to inform the Admissions Team of a change of address may result in a school place being offered in error. Where an error is made the offer of a school place may be withdrawn even after the child has started at a school. Parents must not use a business address, grandparent's or other family member's addresses or short-term tenancies where the substantive address remains unsold or is rented out.

WHEN DOES MY CHILD START SCHOOL?

Children in England are entitled to start school in the September following their fourth birthday but parents may have other options. Please see the Parents' Guide to Education on our website (page 11).

ALLOCATION

If there are more places available than the number of places requested, all applicants will be offered a place. But if there are more applicants than places available, then the appropriate oversubscription criteria are applied to determine which applicants have the highest priority for the places available at the school up to the admission number.

The oversubscription criteria for community and controlled schools in Shropshire are listed below.

Please note that some primary schools are their own admission authority and have adopted different oversubscription criteria. Where applicable these are shown on pages 15-21 of the Parents' Guide to Education on our website.

Oversubscription Criteria for Community and Voluntary Controlled Primary and Infant Schools:

Children who have a Statement of Special Educational Needs or EHC Plan, which names a particular school will be offered places before other children. If your child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs, your application will be handled by the SEN Team. Further information can be found in the Parents' Guide to Education on our website.

Places will then be offered in the following priority order:

- 1a. Looked after children at the time of application to a school and all previously looked after children who ceased to be so because they were immediately adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order).

- 1b Children who appear to the admission authority to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted
2. Very exceptionally, priority may be given to a child who has a particular health reason making it **essential** for them to attend a specific school and no other. This will only be allowed if parents/carers can provide written medical evidence that, in the view of Shropshire Council, makes attending that particular school essential to the well-being of the child.
3. Children living inside the catchment area (children in this category who will have an older sibling at the school on the day they are due to start there have top priority in this group).
4. Children who live outside the catchment area (children in this category who will have an older sibling at the school on the day they are due to start there have top priority in this group).

If there are more applications than there are places available in any of the categories above, the group of applicants will be put in order of distance measured as a straight line on a computerised mapping system between the home address and the nearest entrance gate of the school by pinpointing the eastings and northings and the shortest distance will be given priority. Where two addresses are within the same block of flats, the lowest number of flat or nearest the ground floor will be deemed to be the nearest in distance. Catchment areas can be viewed on the mapping section of our website www.shropshire.gov.uk or individual addresses can be checked by contacting the Admissions Team.

Notes:

The definition of a sibling is the brother or sister, stepbrother or stepsister, half-brother or half-sister living at the same address as part of the same family unit and of compulsory school age (i.e. 5 – 16 years). Fostered and adopted siblings are also included. Older siblings must still be attending the school on the date the younger sibling is due to start there. However, cousins or other relatives who take up residence in the home in order to establish an “in catchment area” address will not be given priority under the sibling criterion. In the case of twins or triplets from the same address the school will endeavour to admit both or all siblings.

In the event that two individual applications are exactly the same after all other criteria have been taken into account a tie breaker will be used. This will be by random allocation and overseen by an independent party not connected with the admissions process.

The Parents’ Guide contains information on transport to schools on pages 66-68 of the booklet. Please note that there are set rules for entitlement and admission to a particular school does not itself guarantee free transport.

Online applicants will be able to log on to view their allocated school on **16 April 2021** and should receive an email if this has been requested. Shropshire Council will write to other applicants who live within the Shropshire authority area on 16 April 2021, by second class post, informing them of whether their application has been successful. Please note that the volume of calls is usually high on 16 April and so we may not be able to respond to calls before 17 April. If you have not heard from us by 23 April 2021, please contact the Admissions Team. If you are dissatisfied with the offer of a place at a school you will have the right to a review and/or an appeal. Further details will be sent with your allocation letter.

ALTERNATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

If you are not intending to make an application to Shropshire Council for a maintained school, please contact the Admissions Team before **15 January 2021**. It may be that you are planning to educate your child at home, your child may be transferring to a private school (in which case please provide the school’s name and address) or you may be moving away from Shropshire (in which case please provide your new address). If any of these apply, please contact the Admissions Team by email, by telephone or by post using the contact details below:

e-mail: school-admissions@shropshire.gov.uk

Telephone: 0345 678 9008

Address: The Admissions Team, Learning and Skills, Shropshire Council, Shirehall,
Shrewsbury, SY2 6ND