

In-Year Coordinated Admissions 2026-2027



City of Westminster



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

Definitions used in this document

‘the Notification Letter’ the Royal Borough’ or RBKC	The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea
‘WCC’	Westminster City Council
‘the Home LA’	the LA in which the applicant/parent/carer is resident
‘Maintaining LA’	The Local authority (LA) where the schools are located
‘In-Year Application’	an application that is made outside of the normal point of entry (normal point of entry is admissions to reception for the following year and primary to secondary transfer)
‘The Team’	the bi-borough Admissions Team
‘Own Admissions Authority (OAA)’	a school that is responsible for its admissions arrangements and all decisions
‘the Common Application Form (CAF)’	this is the form (online and paper) that each authority must have under the Regulations for parents to use to express their preferences, set out in order of preference
‘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, the rankings are used to determine the single offer by selecting the school ranked highest of those which can offer a place
‘the Notification Letter’	the agreed form of letter sent to applicants which communicates any determination granting or refusing admission to a primary or secondary school

In-Year Coordinated Admissions Process for schools located in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster City Council

Introduction

The Admissions Code removed the duty on Local Authorities to coordinate in-year admissions with effect from September 2013. The two partnership boroughs, Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster Council work together and have been coordinating in-year admission as **maintaining LA's** since September 2013.

This process sets out the arrangements for coordinating in-year admissions for participating school located in the two boroughs. As in-year coordination is not a statutory requirement, but an agreed local arrangement between the LA and its schools, the process set out in this document will apply to the academic year 2026-2027. This document will be reviewed and updated if there are changes to central government legislation that applies to in-year admissions.

Coordination is the most effective way of ensuring that children out of school are tracked and monitored and placed as quickly as possible. This safeguarding element has been a particular strength of in-year coordination.

The two boroughs will continue coordinating in-year admissions as a maintaining Local Authorities for all community schools and any Own Admission Authority (OAA) schools that agree to participate (i.e. academies, Free Schools and voluntary aided schools).

Full details of the coordinated in-year scheme are included in this document but key features are as follows:

- Applicants wanting to apply for schools and academies located in the two boroughs that have signed up to participate in the coordinated scheme must apply on the respective Primary or Secondary Common Application Form. Applicants can name up to six schools.
- The coordinated scheme will be made available on each of the borough websites. These details are subject to change at any point, i.e. if a community school converts to an Academy and will become its own admission authority.
- Residents of the two boroughs wishing to apply for schools located in other boroughs must apply through that borough's in-year arrangements.
- The formal notification of an application made on the In-Year application form would be made by the Admissions Team (referred to in this document as 'The Team').
- The Team will maintain the waiting lists for all community schools located in the two boroughs and the OAA schools that are participants of coordination.

- VA schools will retain a supplementary form (for applicants applying for a place on faith grounds).
- It is crucial that the Team hold up-to-date information about school vacancies so that correct advice can be provided to parents. The Team will liaise with its schools on a regular basis to confirm roll numbers for each year group. This is further supported by Children Missing Education (CME) Regulations that requires all school to provide their maintaining LA with new starters and leavers within in five school days.
- Schools cannot reserve a school place in advance of it being required, unless it is for a limited time to allow for tests or exams to be completed at the current school.
- Applications that meet the Fair Access threshold will be referred in accordance with the Primary Fair Access Protocol or Secondary Fair Access Protocol. Each Protocol can be accessed via the respective Council website.

As with secondary transfer and primary school reception year entry, unsuccessful applicants have a right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

The In-Year Coordinated Scheme 2026-27

Applications

1. Applications for children applying for school located in the two boroughs that have signed up to participate in the coordination of in-year admissions will be made on the In-Year Application Form. An online form is available on each Council's website.
2. The in-year form will provide the option to name up to six preferences for primary schools or secondary schools located in the bi-borough area in rank order. Parents/carers can add further preferences at any time.
3. The Team will notify the Home LA of all in-year applications submitted that are not borough residents and the child is without a school place. This procedure is to ensure the Home LA has an overview of children without a school place in order to ensure that they support arrangements to secure a school place.
4. Any preferences made for own admission authority (OAA) schools located in one of the two boroughs will be passed to the respective school(s) via the mechanisms of the School Admissions Module (SAM) within five school days.
5. Where an OAA school located in one of the two boroughs receives a supplementary form, it will advise the parent/carer to complete the LA's in-year form to formally register their application if the school(s) requested participate in the coordinated scheme.
6. Where an application for a school located in one of the two boroughs is named on the in-year form, but does not participate in the coordinated scheme, the applicant will be notified by the Team and advised on the application procedure for that school or schools.

7. Where there is a dispute between separated parents concerning the address to use for the child's application, please refer to **Appendix A** – Parents dispute policy.
8. Schools that are not participants of in-year coordination will be set out on the main in-year page of the respective Council website. Applicants will need to apply direct to these schools.
9. To prevent fraud, the team will liaise with other Council Services or Government agencies if there is suspicion or evidence that an address is being used that is not the main residence of the child being applied for.
10. The Team will confirm the status of any resident child for whom it receives an in-year form stating s/he is a child looked after, previously looked after, became subject to an adoption, in the UK or abroad, or a Child Arrangement or Special Guardianship Order, and will notify the Home LA if the child is not resident in one of the two boroughs.

Processing

1. To determine the availability of places, all maintained schools will be required to provide the Team, on request, their roll number, vacancies and waiting list numbers for each year group within two days of the request. This is a statutory requirement of all schools.
2. As agreed with OAA schools that are participants of in-year coordination, where there are numerous vacancies, and no waiting list in operation, an offer will be made to the applicant as there is no decision that needs to be considered.
3. The Team will carry out the following functions to process applications for its schools:
 - i. Where an application is not fully completed, the applicant will be notified the application is invalid until all the information is received.
 - ii. The Team will refer to internal systems and liaise with other Council services, where necessary and as appropriate, to validate any current school the child may attend, if the application is a 'School to School' transfer request, or current/most recent education provision has not been provided.
 - iii. The Team will use a secure means to exchange data with its schools and other LAs.

Notification of outcome

1. The Team will aim to notify the outcome of an application made for one of its schools within **10 school days**. If the applicant is a resident in the two boroughs, and it has not been possible to offer a place at the school(s) applied to, the applicant will be informed as soon as possible and provided with details of alternative schools available, the opportunity to be added to a waiting list and details of their right of appeal. If it has not been possible to make a decision within **10 school days**, the parent/carer will be kept informed of progress.
2. Where an application has been made, and it has not been possible to offer a place for a child resident outside of the two borough's, the parent will be notified of the outcome of their application, the opportunity to be added to a waiting list and details of their right of appeal. The contact details for the Home LA will be provided in the notification letter.

3. The Team will use a formal notification letter to inform of the outcome of the application and indicate, where applicable, that the decision is on behalf of the governing body (for VA schools and academies).
4. Where it is evident that more than one school place can be offered, the Team will eliminate all but the highest ranked offer where an applicant has ranked schools in order of preference on the in-year form. Any lower preferences will be withdrawn at this point but can be reapplied for at any time.
5. Where it is evident that more than one school place can be offered as a result of liaison with applications made to school(s) in other LAs, the Team will contact the parent/carer to establish which offer will be accepted and free up any potential multiple offers.

Post-offer

1. The Team will request that parents accept or decline the offer of a place within **10 working days** of an offer being made.
2. Where a parent/carer does not respond within this timeframe, the team will make every reasonable effort to contact the parent to find out whether or not they wish to accept the place, and where appropriate liaise with the offered school. Only where the parent fails to respond, the team can demonstrate that every reasonable effort has been made to contact the parent, the offer of a place will be withdrawn.
3. The team will refer the details of any child that is resident in the bi-borough area, and any additional information, to the CME Officer (Children Missing Education) where an offer of a school place has been rejected and it is evident that no alternative provision has been arranged for the child by the parent/carer.
4. The team will refer the details, and any additional information, of any child not resident in one of the two boroughs to their Home LA in cases where an offer of a school place has been rejected and it is evident that no alternative provision has been arranged for the child by the parent/carer.

Waiting lists

1. The waiting lists for all the **community** schools located in the two boroughs will be held and administered by the team for all year groups and will be ordered in accordance with the published admission criteria for the respective school. Parents/carers that approach community schools direct, that want to be added to a waiting list, will be required to complete the in-year form.
2. The waiting list for **own admission authority schools** located in the two boroughs that are participants of in-year coordination, are also held and managed by the team on behalf of the school(s). When a place can be offered, the school will provide the team with the details of the child that they have determined as the next eligible child on the list in accordance with their published admission criteria. The parent/carer will be notified of the offer by the team and on behalf of the governing body.

3. For children not in receipt of education, delay in a straightforward admission of a child to a school where a vacancy has been identified should be avoided where possible and the Admissions Team will work closely with its schools to place the child on roll as soon as reasonably practical.
4. Children who are subject of a direction by a local authority to admit or who are allocated to a school in accordance with the Fair Access Protocol must take precedence over those on a waiting list.

Appendix A

Policy for parental disputes – FAQs

Who can apply for a school place?

Any parent or carer with parental responsibility can apply for a school place for their child. You can list up to six preferred schools on the application.

How many applications can be made for one child?

Only one application per child can be processed, and only one offer of a school place will be made.

Which address should be used on the application?

The address used must be where your child normally lives for most of the school week. This is sometimes called the child's main or normal residence. Only one address can be used throughout the admissions process.

What should we do if both parents share equal parental responsibility?

Parents are strongly encouraged to talk to each other and agree:

- which schools to apply for, and
- which address will be used before submitting an application.

The parent applying should inform the other parent before the form is submitted.

What if we think there may be a disagreement?

If you believe there could be a disagreement, start discussions as early as possible. National application deadlines are fixed and cannot be extended for any reason. The same would apply if you submit an in-year application.

Can the council help resolve disagreements between parents?

No. The council cannot mediate or take sides in parental disputes. If you cannot agree, you should seek independent legal advice or ask the Family Court to decide.

What happens if two applications are submitted for the same child?

If more than one application is received with different schools or addresses:

- the council will contact both parents, and
- ask that one agreed application is submitted.

The council will not continue to hold or process more than one application indefinitely, and depending on the circumstances, retain the right to withdraw both applications.

What if we still cannot agree?

If agreement is not reached during the application process, or if there are ongoing Family Court proceedings, the council will decide how to proceed on a case by case basis.

If a school offer is made, it is expected that:

- parents will agree which school the child will attend, or
- the Family Court will decide.

The council will not hold a second school place indefinitely, as it is preventing another child access to a school place. If no agreement or court ruling is secured within a reasonable timeframe (typically no longer than four weeks), the council may determine which school offer will prevail, based on the information available. This decision will be binding upon both parents and can only be overturned by a Family Court decision regarding the school placement for the child.