

# Primary schools in Luton co-ordinated admissions arrangements for September 2026

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## Summary

1. This paper outlines the co-ordinated admission arrangements for primary schools for the Reception and Year 3 intakes in September 2026. It also sets out arrangements for processing in-year admissions for academic year 2026/27. This scheme excludes admissions to special schools.

## Background

2. Co-ordinated admission schemes are intended to simplify the admissions process for parents whilst reducing the likelihood of any child being left without a school place. Co-ordination for Year R intakes and Year 3 intakes for junior Schools establishes a mechanism that ensures every parent of a child living in a local authority area who has applied to a maintained school or academy is sent one, and only one, offer of a school place by their (home) local authority (LA).
3. Co-ordinated admission schemes do not affect the rights and duties of the governing bodies of Voluntary Aided and Foundation schools and academies to set and apply their own admission arrangements and oversubscription criteria.

## Luton context

4. There are 7 infant, 7 junior schools and 32 primary schools in Luton. All schools are comprehensive.
5. The following schools are community schools. Responsibility for admission to these schools rests with the LA.
  - Beech Hill Primary School
  - Beechwood Primary School
  - Bramingham Primary School
  - Bushmead Primary School
  - Denbigh Primary School
  - Downside Primary School
  - Foxdell Primary School
  - Hillborough Infant School
  - Hillborough Junior School
  - Icknield Primary School
  - Maidenhall Primary School
  - Norton Road Primary School
  - Parklea Primary School
  - Pirton Hill Primary School
  - Putteridge Primary School
  - Ramridge Primary School
  - Someries Junior School
  - St Matthew's Primary School
  - Stopsley Primary School
  - Surrey Street Primary School
  - The Meads Primary School
  - Warden Hill Infant School
  - Warden Hill Junior School

- Waulud Primary School
  - Wigmore Primary School
  - William Austin Infant School
  - William Austin Junior School
6. The following schools are Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Schools or academies. Responsibility for admission to these schools rests with the Academy Trusts.
- Sacred Heart Primary School
  - St Joseph's Primary School
  - St Martin de Porres Primary School
  - St Margaret of Scotland Primary School
7. Wenlock CofE Academy is a Church of England Voluntary Aided School. Responsibility for admission to this school rests with the Academy Trust.
8. Crawley Green Infant School, Someries Infant School and Early Childhood Education Centre and Legrave Primary School are foundation Schools where its governing body is responsible for admission arrangements.
9. The following schools are academies; responsibility for admissions rests with the governing bodies.
- Chantry Primary Academy
  - Dallow Primary School
  - Ferrars Junior School
  - Southfield Primary Academy
  - Tennyson Road Primary School
  - The Ferrars Academy
  - Whipperley Infant Academy
  - Farley Junior Academy
  - Whitefield Primary Academy
10. River Bank Primary School and The Linden Academy are free schools where responsibility for admissions rests with the governing body.
11. Luton operates a catchment area system. Parents are advised of their catchment area school and of their right to express a preference for any school.
12. Pupils are admitted to Luton Schools up to the published admission number for each school.

# Co-ordinated arrangements for the reception and Year 3 intakes

## Admissions process

### Stage 1

Parents will be invited to express three preferences on a 'common application form'. Parents who specify a voluntary aided Roman Catholic School or a Church of England School as one of their preferences will also need to complete a supplementary form attached to the main application form.

### Stage 2

Applications are considered using the admissions criteria determined by the relevant admission authority.

### Stage 3

If a pupil qualifies for a place at more than one school the highest ranking school will be offered, and any lower ranking offers will be disregarded.

### Stage 4

Those pupils who have not been allocated a place at any of their preferred schools will be allocated a school place at one of the nearest schools to their home address with vacancies.

## Timetable

- **1 September 2025:** Junior school transfer round and starting school admissions round are available for parents to make applications.
- **Week commencing 20 October 2025:** Parents receive information on the transfer to junior school process.
- **Week commencing 10 November 2025–** Parents of children born between 1/9/21 – 31/8/22 receive information on the starting school admissions process.
- **15 January 2026** – Closing date for submission of application forms.
- **23 February 2026:**
  - Details of applications are sent to schools who do not want the council to undertake the ranking of applicants on their behalf.
  - Out of borough applications are sent to the relevant LA for consideration.
- **2 March 2026** – Admission authorities undertaking the ranking of applications must provide the LA's Admissions Team with a list of applicants ranked against their admissions criteria.
- **2-27 March 2026** – Exchange of data between LAs:
  - Luton will notify neighbouring LAs of the outcome of applications for out of borough residents requesting a place at a Luton school

- Luton LA receives notification of the outcome of applications to schools outside of the borough
- **15 April 2026** – Allocation lists will be available to schools and academies.
- **16 April 2026** – Offer date.
  - Offer emails sent to parents during the course of the working day.
  - Decision letters will be sent to parents.
- **From June 2026** – Admission appeals take place.
- **23 April 2026** – Late starting school applications received by this date will be processed week commencing 11 May 2026.
  - The outcome of the late starting school round will be posted to parents on 4 June 2026.
- **7 May 2026** – Late junior school applications received by this date will be processed week commencing 18 May 2026.
  - The outcome of the late junior school round will be posted to parents on 29 May 2026.
- **21 May 2026** – Late starting school applications received by this date will be processed week commencing 22 June 2026.
  - The outcome of the late starting school round will be posted to parents on 14 July 2026.
- **June 2026** – A letter/email will be sent to parents asking them to confirm whether they wish their child's details to remain on the waiting list for their preferred school(s). Parents must respond by 11 July 2026 as failure to do so will result in their child's details being removed from the waiting list(s).
- **23 July 2026** – Late junior school and starting school applications received by this date will be processed and parents will receive the outcome of before September 2026. Applications received after this date will be processed as in-year applications and parents will receive the outcome in due course.

If schools receive direct applications, they must inform Luton LA of the application and forward it to the council by the closing date of 15 January 2026, regardless of whether the child resides in the Luton area.

## Change of address

13. For the purposes of allocating places, in the initial allocation, where a school is oversubscribed the pupil's catchment area will be determined by their home address as at 15 January 2026.
14. Children who gain a place at a school because their parents/carers have given the LA a false home address will have their places withdrawn.

## Late applications

15. Applications received after the closing date will not be considered in the initial allocation of places, except in very exceptional circumstances.
16. Where parents have submitted an application form before the closing date, but then seek to change their preference after the closing date, this late expression of preference will be treated as a 'late' application and will not be considered in the initial allocation of places, other than in exceptional circumstances.
17. Late applications and changes of preference will be processed as soon as possible after 16 April 2026. Late application forms from Luton resident parents must be submitted direct to Luton LA.

## Applications for schools outside of Luton

18. Luton resident parents wishing to apply for a school outside of Luton must apply using Luton LA's application form. The council will ensure that applications for a place at schools outside of Luton are sent to the relevant local authority (LA) for consideration. Application forms submitted by Luton parents, direct to other LAs, will not be accepted.
19. The council will have regard to whether a place can be offered at a school outside of Luton. If a pupil qualifies for a place at more than one school, and the highest ranking offer is for an out of borough school, this place will be offered and any lower ranking offers will be disregarded.
20. Parents will also be advised to check with the out of borough school to see if they need to complete any supplementary forms.
21. Luton LA will liaise with neighbouring LAs over the outcome of applications for Luton pupils. Luton Council will send the decision letter to the parent.

## Applications for Luton schools from parents residing outside of the LA area

22. Parents living outside of Luton must apply to their home LA for a place at a Luton school. Their home LA will pass the application to Luton Council for processing. Luton LA will then notify the applicant's home LA as to whether a place can be offered. The applicant's home LA will inform the parent of the outcome of their application.

23. Where a family is moving to Luton they may apply direct to Luton Council for a school place when they have documentation to confirm that contracts are signed on a purchase of a new house in Luton or a rental agreement is signed.

## In-year admission arrangements

### In-year admissions

24. In-year admissions are applications that are submitted during the academic year for entry to school outside of the normal admission round/intake point.

### Mandatory requirements for in-year admission arrangements

25. The requirement for local authorities to co-ordinate in-year admissions for all of Luton's schools (including academies, foundation and voluntary aided schools) has been revoked for academic year 2013/14. The Admissions Code sets out the following requirements with regard to the co-ordination of in-year admissions:

- *2.21 There is no requirement for local authorities to co-ordinate in-year applications, but they **must** provide information in the composite prospectus on how in-year applications can be made and will be dealt with. Local authorities **must**, on request, provide information to a parent about the places still available in all schools within its area, and a suitable form for parents to complete when applying for a place for their child at any school for which they are not the admission authority. Any parent can apply for a place for their child at any time to any school outside the normal admissions round. They can do this by applying directly to admission authorities, except where other arrangements are in place locally (e.g. the local authority coordinates all in-year admissions).*
- *2.22 Own admission authority schools **must**, on receipt of an in-year application, notify the local authority of both the application and its outcome, to allow the local authority to keep up to date figures on the availability of places in the area. The admission authority **must** also inform parents of their right to appeal against the refusal of a place.*

### Luton's scheme for in-year admissions

26. The council will co-ordinate in-year admission arrangements for community schools and other own admission authority schools/academies that 'opt-in' to these arrangements. For these schools, parents will be asked to complete one application form stating three preferences.

The council will liaise with the schools/academies on the application form to ascertain the highest preference that can be offered and will send the decision letter to the parent. Where higher ranked preferences are refused, parents will be advised of their right of appeal and the waiting list procedure.

Where the parent does not qualify for a place at any of their preferred schools they will be asked to apply for a place at an alternative school with vacancies.

27. Own admission authority schools that 'opt-in' to the in-year co-ordinated scheme can, if they wish, commission the LA to rank application forms against their school's admissions criteria, maintain waiting lists and check proof of address.



28. The council will provide an alternative application form for parents wishing to apply for schools/academies 'opting out' of the in-year co-ordinated admission scheme. Own admission authority schools must accept applications made on the form supplied by the LA.

Parents can use this form to apply directly to these schools and will be able to make individual applications to all of the schools that interest them. Own admission authority schools will be responsible for:

- giving parents the opportunity to make a formal written application, even if the year group is full. This will ensure that where a place cannot be offered at the preferred school(s) the pupil's name is placed on the relevant waiting list(s) (where these operate) and the parent will be advised of their right of appeal.
- informing the council that they have received an application (within three school days) and providing brief details of the application (e.g. name, address, date of birth, previous/current school).
- sending a decision letter, either offering a place or refusing the application and advising the parents of their right of appeal and the waiting list procedure. Where a pupil is without a school place the school must refer the parents to the LA. A copy of the decision letter and application form must be sent to the council's Admissions Team for their records.
- processing applications in a timely manner e.g. within 10-15 school days.

29. Where the LA receives an application for a school that has 'opted out' of the co-ordinated in-year scheme, the application will be returned to the parent advising them to apply direct to the relevant school.

30. All headteachers/principals of schools and academies must nominate a member of their staff to provide the Admissions Team with the number of pupils on roll in each year group on a fortnightly basis. If vacancies occur in the interim the nominated representative at the school/academy must notify the Admissions Team.

31. The in-year application forms can be completed by Luton resident parents and those living outside of Luton wishing to apply for a Luton school. Luton parents wishing to apply for a place at a school outside of Luton should use that LA's in-year application form.

32. Parents applying for a place at a voluntary aided school within Luton will also need to complete a supplementary form.

## Children in care

33. The admission of children in care follows a separate process. Under the Education and Inspections Act 2006, local authorities must admit children in care to a school that is considered to be in the child's best interests, even if this would exceed the School's admission number. The council may direct admission authorities to admit a child in care to the school.

## In-year fair access protocol

34. Some pupils will be placed in a school using Luton's In-Year Fair Access Protocol. Such placements override the normal admission arrangements; this includes admitting children above the published admission number to schools/academies that are already full.

## Waiting lists

35. Each Luton admission authority has set out whether it will operate waiting lists in its published admission arrangements. Waiting lists must be ranked using the admissions authority's published admissions criteria; not the date the pupil's name was added to the waiting list.
36. The council will maintain waiting lists for community schools and other admission authorities who 'opt in' to the in-year admissions service.

## General information for both in-year and Year R and 3 intakes

### Pupils with an education, health and care plan (EHCP)

37. Luton provides a range of facilities and services for children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and aims to meet those needs within the local mainstream schools as far as possible.
38. For children with an Education, Health and Care Plan, the LA acts as the admission authority.
39. Where a school is proposed to be named in a child's EHC Plan the LA, in accordance with the SEN Code of Practice, will consult with the 'named' school on the proposal.

## Publication of admission arrangements

40. The LA will publish an information booklet for parents of pupils transferring into Year 3 in September 2026 and for parents of children born between 1/9/21 – 31/8/22 who will enter the reception year in September 2026.
41. An information booklet will also be published for parents of pupils seeking admission outside of the normal admission rounds (in-year admissions).
42. Assistance for parents with English as an additional language can be arranged through the LA's Translation and Interpretation Service.