

This information has been taken from the West Sussex Admissions booklet (Southern area) 2016. The whole document is very helpful and can be found at:

https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/media/6157/information_for_parents_booklet_south_2016.pdf

Admissions staff are happy to help with applications.

If you wish to apply online and do not have access to the internet, you are welcome to come into Harting school to complete an application.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the role of the Pupil Admissions Team?

The role of the Pupil Admissions Team is to administer West Sussex County Council's coordinated admissions scheme, including the allocation of places at community and controlled schools in accordance with the Council's published admission policy. The Team is able to offer advice and guidance to parents making an application for their child.

However, the Team is unable to:

- offer opinions on schools' suitability and performance;
- arrange visits to schools;
- allocate places outside West Sussex County Council's criteria or take account of personal circumstances, outside of exceptional and compelling cases;
- change a child's details (name or address) without written confirmation and supporting documentation where appropriate (see page 9);
- investigate anonymous allegations regarding false addresses without sufficient information. West Sussex County Council does treat the issue of using a false address very seriously and any correspondence of this nature is dealt with confidentially.

If you are dissatisfied with the service of the Pupil Admissions Team, in the first instance please write to the Pupil Admissions Manager for the area, see page 45. Complaints about schools should be referred to the headteacher or the school's Governing Body.

How likely is it that my preference will be met?

Please see the section on using your three preferences wisely and being realistic (under 'Points to consider before submitting your three preferences') on page 5. The less priority you have under a school's oversubscription criteria the less likely you are to be offered a place if that school has more applications than places.

For the 2015 starting school round 87.52% of parents who applied on time were offered their preferred school and 98.15% were offered one of their three preferred schools. For the 2015 junior transfer 99.15% of APPLY ONLINE for September 2016 at www.westsussex.gov.uk/admissions by Friday 15 January 2016

Starting at or Transferring from Infant to Junior School Southern Area Page 11 parents who applied on time were offered their preferred school and 99.6% were offered one of their three preferred schools. The table on pages 19-35 gives details about the number of places offered and children refused at each community, controlled, church aided, foundation school and academy in the southern part of West Sussex for September 2015 admissions. This is only a guide because patterns of parental preference and the number of pupils in the area vary from year to year. The outcome of

your application cannot be guaranteed. If you want further information about the previous patterns of admission to your preferred schools, please contact the Pupil Admissions Team.

Where can I find out information about schools?

It is important that you do not base your preferences on other people's opinions. Each school has a prospectus and website which include details of the school's policies, uniform, the curriculum and teaching methods, term dates and school times as well as other helpful information.

You can obtain a copy of the prospectus from the school and you are welcome to make an appointment to visit the school.

School websites can be accessed through the West Sussex County Council website. The Government website <http://direct.gov.uk> has links to school OFSTED reports and Department for Education performance tables.

This information should also be available from the school or your local library. Schools may invite you to attend an open session and this invitation or receipt of a prospectus should not be seen as an offer of a school place as all offers are made through the Local Authority. Headteachers may confirm that they would be happy to have your child in their school but again this is not an offer because all applications are subject to the admission criteria.

Can I ask for my child to go to any school in West Sussex?

You can express a preference for any mainstream school. West Sussex County Council makes every effort to meet parental preference but some schools receive more applications than the number of places available. When this happens, the oversubscription criteria are used to decide which children are offered a place. Please also see the answer to the question 'How likely is it that my preference will be met?' for further information, and advice on using your three preferences wisely and being realistic, on page 10.

Schools are categorised as community, controlled, church aided (sometimes called voluntary aided), foundation schools and academies (including free schools). All community and controlled schools have catchment areas and West Sussex County Council manages the admissions. APPLY ONLINE for September 2016 at www.westsussex.gov.uk/admissions by Friday 15 January 2016 Starting at or Transferring from Infant to Junior School Southern Area Page 12 Some church aided schools, and most foundation schools and academies, also have catchment areas while others serve a wider area. For these schools the decision to offer a place is made by the Governing Body. You can check your catchment school by entering your postcode on our website. If you apply for a place for your child at a community or controlled school that is not the catchment school for your address (you can check your catchment school at www.westsussex.gov.uk/admissions), you should note the following:

- the Council will not provide assistance with travel or related expenses to the school;
- it is less likely that places will be available at oversubscribed schools for any brothers or sisters, should you wish them to attend at a later date;
- the tie break for oversubscribed schools, within any oversubscription category, is the straight line distance from home to school.

Can I defer my child's start at school?

By law, children must start their full-time education in the term following their fifth birthday. In West Sussex your child may start either full or part-time in the September following their fourth

birthday. All applicants seeking admission during the academic year commencing in September 2016 must apply by the deadline Friday 15 January 2016. When you have received the offer of a school place, you may wish to take the opportunity to discuss the school's induction arrangements and your child's start date with the school.

You can defer admission until the start of the spring or summer term so long as your child has not reached compulsory school age. However, you must inform the school of this decision. You may feel that starting school in September 2016 is too early for your child and would prefer them to remain at a pre-school group, playgroup or in a nursery school. Should your child attend school part-time as well as a nursery or playgroup part-time, your Nursery Education Grant funding will automatically transfer to the school. This means you will have to pay the full fees for the amount of time your child attends nursery, pre-school or playgroup.

Should you choose to defer your child's start until the term following their fifth birthday; the school you have been offered will hold your child's school place provided your child is still joining the school in the reception year. If your child was born between 1 April 2012 and 31 August 2012 you can decide not to take up a school place until September 2017; however a place will not be held in a Reception class and in most cases your child may need to join Year 1 upon their admission to school.

Parents wishing to defer to Year 1 must approach the Pupil Admission Team in June 2017 to apply for a place but should be aware that a place may not be available in a local school. For further advice on this matter, please contact the Pupil Admission Team.

Can I apply for admissions outside my child's normal age group?

Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group. An application should be made to the Admission Authority for the school you wish to apply for. The decision will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. The right of appeal does not apply if a place is offered at the school but it is not in the preferred age group. For further information and advice please contact the Admissions Authority for the school you wish to apply for.

Can I delay starting school for my summer born child?

The Government has said it intends to change the School Admission Code so that parents can choose to delay when 'summer born' children (those born between 1 April and 31 August) start school. A national consultation will be held on this proposal with a view to it being approved by parliament in the near future. APPLY ONLINE for September 2016 at www.westsussex.gov.uk/admissions by Friday 15 January 2016 Starting at or Transferring from Infant to Junior School Southern Area Page 13 West Sussex County Council are mindful of the comments made by Nick Gibb, Minister of State for Schools in his open letter of the 8 September.

Parents wishing to educate their child outside of their normal age group are asked to make a request to West Sussex County Council in line with the current arrangements. A statement of our policy and relevant application form is available at: <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/education-children-and-families/schoolsand-colleges/school-places/admission-of-children-outside-their-normal-year-group/>. If the School Admissions Code changes this information will be updated on our website.

If your child is born between 1st April and 31st August 2012 they will become of statutory school age in September 2017. However most parents of these summer born children are happy for their child to start school in September 2016 following their 4th birthday. Parents of summer born children may currently request that their child's entry into reception be delayed until the following academic year.

The decision lies with the relevant admission authority, for community and controlled schools this is West Sussex County Council, for an academy it is the academy trust and for a foundation or voluntary aided school it is the governing body.

In order for the admission authority to make a decision, parents must complete a delayed entry application form, available on our website and should include evidence with their application from professionals detailing why there is a need for their child to start in the reception class the following year. You are strongly advised to complete an application, by 15 January 2016 for the admission of your child for September 2016 even if you are thinking of delaying entry until September 2017. Children develop at different rates and your child may change significantly between the application period and starting school. This will ensure that you have secured a school place for September 2016, which can be released later if the decision is made for your child to delay entry until 2017. Failure to make an application for September 2016 may result in your child being offered a place at a school that is not one of your preferences and may be further away from your home. If your application for delayed entry is agreed your child will not be allocated a place at a school for 2016 (or a place already offered will be released) and you will need to make an application for a school place with those children starting school in September 2017.

Parents should note that it will not be possible to apply online for a school place outside of your child's normal year of entry and you will need to contact the Pupil Admissions Team to request a paper application form in the autumn term 2016. The application will be considered in line with the published admission arrangements for the school alongside all other applications for September 2017. If you are considering a delayed entry into school for your child you are strongly advised to contact the Pupil Admissions Team by email before applying to discuss the process for applying and the implications for your child. You are also strongly advised to discuss your intentions with the schools that you are interested in as the local authority will be seeking the views of the headteacher of the schools you have made preferences for as part of their decision making. At this stage of course the allocations would not have taken place.

If your application for delayed entry is refused, your child must either take up the place they have been offered for 2016 by the start of the summer term 2017 or you must make an application for a year 1 place in September 2017. Applications for Year 1 can be made in June 2017 for a September start. Parents should be aware that if their preferred school is full in Reception for 2016 it is unlikely that a place will be available in Year 1 in 2017.

Do special rules apply to twins and multiple births?

A separate application must be made for every child. Please note that sibling priority is only given when a sibling is already attending the school, therefore twins and multiple births do not give sibling priority to each other and their details should not be included as siblings on an application. Where West Sussex County Council is the Admissions Authority and the last child to be offered a place is a twin, the other twin will normally be admitted over the published admission number. For schools that are their own admission authority please check their policy direct with the school.

What if my child has special educational needs?

The great majority of pupils with some form of special educational need participate fully in mainstream schools, with help appropriate to their special needs. This includes most children for whom the Council has issued a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). If your child has a Statement or EHCP, you have a right to make a request for a

school and you should already have been contacted by the Special Educational Needs Assessment Team (SENAT). If not, please contact them using the contact details shown below.

We try to arrange school admissions for children with Statements/EHCPs earlier in the year than other pupils to allow sufficient time to consider requests and for the necessary consultation process to take place. If your child is in the process of an Education, Health and Care Assessment, you should still complete an application online with your mainstream school preferences. The Council will let you know whether an EHCP will be made and if a draft EHCP is issued you will be able to make a request for the school you would like your child to attend at that time. Whilst we aim to meet parent requests where possible, it is the Council's responsibility to ensure placements are appropriate and are an efficient use of resources. Only children with a Statement/Proposed Statement of Special Educational Needs or EHCP/draft EHCP can apply for a place at a special school or a special support centre attached to a mainstream school.

If your child has a Statement/Proposed Statement of Special Educational Needs or EHCP/draft EHCP and you have any queries about the admission process, please contact SENAT using the following telephone numbers: 0330 222 8881: Chichester, Bognor Regis, Midhurst, Petworth 0330 222 8882: Angmering, Littlehampton, Steyning, Worthing, Shoreham, Lancing, Horsham West 0330 222 8883: Crawley, Burgess Hill, Horsham East, Haywards Heath, Cuckfield, East Grinstead SENAT are located at Room 001, County Hall, Chichester, PO19 1RF. (Please note that callers must report to the main reception desk) email: sensupportteam@westsussex.gov.uk. Please only contact SENAT if your child has a Statement/Proposed Statement of Special Educational Needs or EHCP/draft EHCP; for all other children admissions queries should be directed to the Pupil Admissions Team.

If my child also stays with their other parent, which address will be used?

The Pupil Admissions Team can use only one address for the purpose of allocating a school place. The address for the application is the one held on our records as being the address for your child. If your child regularly stays overnight with another parent or relative on a shared residency basis and therefore potentially has more than one address, you must confirm this in writing after making your application online. You should give both addresses and details of your child's living arrangements and state which address you believe should be used for the application i.e. your child's main address.

We may contact you for further supporting evidence and this could include documentation such as: council tax bill, child benefit documentation, medical card, utility bill or bank statement. Additional enquiries may also be made where necessary. Priority for your preferences will be decided according to the address which the Pupil Admissions Team determines as your child's main address. Parents should note that overnight stays relating to childcare arrangements are rarely considered to be a formal "shared residency" and priority will not be given from a relative/carer's address in these circumstances. Parents should submit details of their child's shared residency by covering letter addressed to the Pupil Admissions Team.

It is important to note that only one application can be made per child and parents with shared parental responsibility should agree their child's school preferences before making an application. The County Council cannot intervene where parents with joint responsibility disagree. Failing to disclose information can result in a delay in offering a school place or the offer being withdrawn. Places offered based on fraudulent addresses will be withdrawn. If you have any concerns or questions about this, please contact the Pupil Admissions Team.

We are moving house soon. Will this affect our application?

Yes it will. It is important that applications are received before the application deadline of 15 January 2016. However, if you have acceptable evidence of a confirmed house move you must send it to the Pupil Admissions Team on or before 23 March 2016. It will be necessary to prove that the new address is your child's main address in order to give them correct priority for admission. We would expect to be provided with a copy of a signed tenancy agreement, or evidence of exchange of contracts, as proof of your new address. Any school place offered for your child will be on the basis of the address held on the Pupil Admissions Team records and the assumption that your child will still be resident at this address in September 2016. It is your responsibility to notify the Pupil Admissions Team of any changes to your address at any time before 5 September 2016. If you change residency before places are allocated without informing the Pupil Admissions Team, this may result in the offer made being withdrawn.

If I live outside West Sussex, how do I apply for a West Sussex school?

Parents living outside West Sussex can apply for a school in this county but must do so by applying via their own Local Authority. This is the Local Authority for the county or city in which you live (telephone numbers for neighbouring local authorities are at the back of this booklet). You may wish to contact the Local Authority for your home to discuss the implications of listing a West Sussex school as a preference. Your home Local Authority will let us know about your application. Once decisions have been made we will inform your home Local Authority and they will notify you on 18 April 2016. The oversubscription criteria for all schools apply to all applicants, regardless of where they live. APPLY ONLINE for September 2016 at www.westsussex.gov.uk/admissions by Friday 15 January 2016 Starting at or Transferring from Infant to Junior School Southern Area Page 16

Can I ask to go to a school outside West Sussex?

Parents living in West Sussex wishing to apply for a school place in another county or city must still apply online from the West Sussex website listing their preferences. We will tell the appropriate Local Authority about your application but you may find it helpful to contact them yourself to discuss your application. (Addresses and telephone numbers for neighbouring local authorities can be found at the back of this booklet).

Once decisions have been made the appropriate Local Authority will let us know and we will advise you on 18 April 2016.

Can I change my preference?

After the deadline you cannot change your preferences unless there is a genuine unforeseeable reason for doing so, for example, if a sibling has moved schools. Evidence of the change will be required. The processing deadline for the Pupil Admissions Team to receive confirmation of the change to allow it to be used for the purpose of allocating your child's school place is Wednesday 23 March 2015.

Before the national closing date of 15 January 2016 you can amend the preferences by logging back into your online application. You must re-submit your application every time you make a change to your preferences. Only your last dated preferences, prior to the deadline, will be considered in the allocation.

When will I know if I have a place?

National offer day is 18 April 2016. Online applicants will be notified which school their child has been offered by email during the day. No decisions will be issued by telephone. Other applicants will be sent a letter by second class post, posted during the day.

What happens after allocation?

The majority of parents in West Sussex will receive an offer of a school place at a school they expressed a preference for. For children starting school for the first time, the school offered will ask you to accept the place and provide a copy of your council tax bill as proof of your address. Accepting the place offered does not affect your right of appeal for any school you have been refused. If your address has or will be changing you must notify the Pupil Admissions Team without delay. The Headteacher of the school your child has been allocated will contact you to confirm the school's induction arrangements. APPLY ONLINE for September 2016 at www.westsussex.gov.uk/admissions by Friday 15 January 2016 Starting at or Transferring from Infant to Junior School Southern Area Page 17 Different arrangements may apply for parents being offered school places in other Local Authority areas. If you have been offered a school in another Local Authority area you should contact the school to confirm the entry arrangements.

What can I do if I am not offered a place at the school I wanted?

If we cannot offer your child a place at any of your preferred schools, we will offer a place at your catchment school if availability allows or, if your catchment school is full, you will be offered a place at the nearest school to your home address with a place available. (This only applies to children resident in West Sussex. If you live in another Local Authority's area they will offer you a place at one of their schools, if your preferences cannot be met). For this reason we always advise parents of children starting school to include their child's catchment school as one of their three preferences.

Can I appeal?

You have the right to appeal against the decision not to offer a place at any of your preferred schools, including church aided, foundation schools and academies. All appeals are heard by an independent panel. If you have been refused a place at your preferred school(s) in writing, you can access an online appeal form and details of the appeals process at www.westsussex.gov.uk/admissions. If you require a paper form you can download it from the website or ring 03330 142 903 to request one.

If you decide to appeal, you will receive advance notice of the hearing date. You will be invited to attend the appeal and you may take someone with you for support. The hearing will be conducted as informally as possible and you will have the opportunity to put forward your case and ask questions.

For Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, the right of appeal is restricted by law due to Infant Class Size legislation. Where classes are organised in these year groups in classes of 30 pupils, you could only be successful if you could prove that:

- a) the admission arrangements were incorrectly applied in your case and your child should have been offered a place or
- b) the child would have been offered a place if the arrangements had not been contrary to mandatory provisions in the School Admissions Code or the law or
- c) the admission authority acted unreasonably – that is, the decision made was perverse and would not have been made by a reasonable authority.

If your appeal is refused, the Local Authority or Governing Body at a church aided or foundation school or an academy will not consider a further application or appeal for a place at the same school, in the same academic year, unless there is a significant material change in your circumstances or those of the school.

Please note that appealing for a school place does not give priority on a waiting list. If you were refused a school place outside of West Sussex then you need to contact the Admissions Authority for the school refused for information on their appeal process.

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Will my child's name be added to the waiting list?

If your child was refused a place in writing at a West Sussex school that was a higher preference than the school offered they will automatically be added to the waiting list for the higher preference school. Waiting lists are set-up 20 school days after the allocation date.

If you were refused a school place outside of West Sussex then you need to contact the Local Authority for the school refused for information on their waiting list procedure. All waiting lists must be ordered by the same criteria used to determine the allocation; the School Admissions Code prohibits waiting lists from being ordered by date of application or length of time on list.

The oversubscription criteria for all community and controlled schools in West Sussex are shown on pages 35-38. The oversubscription criteria for all church aided, foundation schools and academies, in West Sussex are available from the schools' websites and at www.westsussex.gov.uk/admissions. For community and controlled schools, within each criterion places are ordered by straight line distance to the school, the nearest having higher priority. A child's position on a waiting list can go down as well as up as others join or leave the lists - for this reason parents are asked not to contact the Pupil Admissions Team too often just to check their child's waiting list position.

The Pupil Admissions Team is particularly busy in the summer term and frequent calls from parents regarding waiting list positions prevent them from undertaking their key task of managing applications and waiting lists and offering places. If a place becomes available following the allocation it will be offered to the child at the top of the waiting list at that time and you will be notified.

Allocation waiting lists for community and controlled schools will be held until 31 December. If you wish your child to remain on any list after this date you must confirm this in writing or by email to the Pupil Admissions Team. Parents refused a place at a church aided school, foundation school or academy should contact the school direct for guidance on the operation of their waiting list.

Can I appeal for or put my child on a waiting list for a school that wasn't one of my original preferences?

If you wish to appeal or have your child placed on a waiting list for a school that was not one of your original preferences, you must first make an application for that school by completing an application form available at www.westsussex.gov.uk or calling 03330 142 903. Only when you have been refused a place in writing can you appeal or will your child be placed on the waiting list.

Late applications are automatically added to the waiting list and we will confirm this when we write to you refusing you a place at the school.

What happens if my child can be offered a place from the waiting list?

If a place becomes available from the waiting list we will normally contact you before offering the place and withdrawing the school previously offered. However, it is your responsibility to let the Pupil Admissions Team know if your child is on a waiting list and you no longer want to be considered for this place.

What happens if I moved into West Sussex after school places have been allocated?

Pupils moving within West Sussex after the allocation date and applying for a school place after the initial allocation of places will, where availability allows, be offered their preferred school and the place previously offered will be withdrawn. Where we have to refuse a place because the preferred school is oversubscribed pupils will be placed on a waiting list following an application. We will confirm this when we write to you refusing you a place at the school. Oversubscription Criteria for Schools in West Sussex for September 2016 (Oversubscription Criteria for previous years is available on the website.) West Sussex County Council

Oversubscription Criteria These are the criteria that apply to the majority of community and voluntary controlled schools.

- The tie-break used is a straight line distance.
- All distances are measured by a straight line from the school to the child's home address, using Ordnance Survey address point data from a central point in each building.
- Where priority is given for a sibling, brothers or sisters may be half or step-siblings (by marriage or co-habitation) or foster siblings but must be living permanently at the same address.
- West Sussex County Council only gives sibling priority if the older sibling will be at the school at the time of application and will still be in the school at the time of admission; or if the sibling will be attending the linked junior school in September 2016 (see above table for the list of linked schools). Please note it is the parent's responsibility to tell the Pupil Admissions Team about sibling links in their application.
- Children whose parents were denied places they requested at their catchment school are treated as living in their current school's catchment area for sibling purposes. Please note that it is the parent's responsibility to indicate these circumstances in their application.

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Starting School Allocation:

Any child with a statement of special educational needs or EHCP naming the school will automatically be admitted to that school, under section 324 of the Education Act 1996.

1. Looked after children (children in public care), children who were previously looked after who leave care under a special guardianship or residence order. See page 7 for further details. Evidence must be provided;
2. Children who need a place at the school on exceptional and compelling social, psychological or medical grounds. See page 7 for more information. Evidence must be provided;

3. Children who live in the catchment area with brothers or sisters already at the school or who will be attending the linked junior school in September 2016;
4. Other children who live in the catchment area;
5. Children who live outside the catchment area with brothers or sisters already at the school or who will be attending the linked junior school in September 2016;
6. Other children who live outside the catchment area