Birmingham City Council

Applying for a Secondary School Place for September 2027
Information for Parents and Carers of Children in year 6
(Children without an EHCP)

1. Introduction

This briefing is for parents and carers of year 6 children who are due to transfer to secondary school in September 2027. It explains how to apply for a school place, key dates you need to be aware of, and where to find further information before you submit your application by 31 October 2026.

Councils are the admissions authorities for community schools and voluntary controlled schools and are responsible for setting their admission arrangements.

Faith schools (voluntary-aided schools), foundation schools, academies and free schools are responsible for setting their own admission arrangements, so are 'own admission authorities'.

Councils are responsible for co-ordinating all school admissions in their areas during the normal rounds at the start of primary and secondary school.

This means that you apply through your local council, including for schools and academies that are 'own admission authorities' or are in another council area.

All schools and admission authorities must comply with the statutory School Admissions Code (September 2021). If there are concerns about a school's admission arrangements, a complaint can be made to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator.

Councils have a statutory duty to raise with the Schools Adjudicator any concerns they have about the admission arrangements for the schools in their areas. They are required to submit an annual report to the Adjudicator about the operation of schools' admission arrangements in their areas and to publish the report on their website.

2. Timetable

The key dates for the secondary transfer process for September 2027 are shown below.

Date	Milestone
1 September 2026	Online applications open
31 October 2026	Deadline for applications
1 March 2027	Secondary National Offer Day
13 April 2027	Deadline for appeals managed by the council
31 July 2027	Closing date for late applications

3. Understanding the Application Process

Your local council provides a Common Application Form (CAF), which you must use to apply for a place at state-funded secondary schools.

They must also publish an online prospectus which explains their application process and include a directory with a list of schools' details, admission arrangements, etc.

In Birmingham, this is known as the 'secondary admission arrangements' and these can be viewed on the school admissions webpages:
https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/schooladmissions

This document contains essential information about how school places are offered in Birmingham, including the home-to-school distance (cut-off distance) of the last child admitted to Birmingham schools at the time of offer for the past three years, where applicable.

You can also view the historic admissions patterns for Birmingham schools for all years that we hold this information at: Secondary school (year 7) offer information | Historic school offer information | Birmingham City Council

For previous admissions patterns and selective test results for the Birmingham Grammar schools, please visit the King Edwards VI website:
https://kingedwardvifoundation.co.uk/results-and-offers/

It is also a good idea to research schools before applying for a school place. This could include:

- Checking schools' websites for details of their open days/open sessions that take place in the Autumn term.
- Attending the open days/open sessions for the schools you are interested in.
- Reading the schools' admissions arrangements to see if your child is likely to be offered a place.
- Consulting Ofsted Inspection Reports https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk

This will also help you check your child is eligible for the schools you want to apply to.

We strongly recommend using all six preferences available to you and including schools where your child is likely to meet the admission criteria.

A list of examples of "realistic" and "unrealistic preferences" can be found at
https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20119/school_admissions/1778/apply_for_a_secondary_school_year_7_place/2

4. Applying Online

In Birmingham parents and carers can apply online for up to six schools.

These can be in or outside Birmingham.

If your first preferred school is unable to offer a place, your other options will be considered in the order you have ranked them.

When you submit your online application, you will receive a confirmation email.

You can change your order of preferences up to the closing date.

If you change your order preferences, you must re-submit your application form before the closing date. If you do not re-submit your application, your amended preferences will not be processed. We will process the last application you submit.

The deadline for submitting an 'on time' application is **11.59pm on 31 October 2026.** We strongly encourage parents and carers not to leave their application until the final day.

After this date, your application will be categorised as 'late'. Late applications will still be considered, but not until after secondary national offer day, so you are less likely to be offered a place at one of your preferred schools.

It is important that parents and carers provide truthful information on their application form. The council conducts rigorous checks, and a school place may be withdrawn if an application is found to be fraudulent. Last year, the council and local schools withdrew a number of school places where it was found that a parent or carer had used an address of convenience or provided other false information to secure a place. This can cause unnecessary distress for your child.

5. Schools Admission Arrangements

All applicants **must** be offered a place if the school is **not** oversubscribed. A school is oversubscribed when more applications are received than there are places available.

If a school is oversubscribed, then the school uses its oversubscription criteria to decide the priority order in which places are allocated.

The government allows the admission authority some leeway in how they decide on their oversubscription criteria, but in all schools the highest priority must be given to looked after children and previously looked after children – that is children who are, or have been, in the care of the local authority, such as foster care. Other examples of criteria that are often used are children with a sibling attending the school, and distance from home to school.

You can contact schools or visit our website for details of their admission criteria and whether you need to complete any additional forms https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/schooladmissions

6. Offer of places

Your child will be added to a list for each of the schools you've named on the Common Application Form. The list for each school is then ranked in the order in which each child meets the school's admission arrangements, and this will determine if a place can be offered.

Admission authorities must use an equal preference system.

This means that places are offered solely according to the admissions criteria, not according to where a school was listed on a parent's application. For example, a child whose parent listed a school as a second preference may be offered a place ahead of a child whose parent listed the same school as a first preference. The determining factor is how well the child meets the oversubscription criteria. For this reason, you should list schools in your genuine order of preference.

If a child is not offered a place at any of the schools a parent has named on their form, the council will offer a place at one of the nearest schools with a space available. We strongly recommend that you do not refuse your child's offer of school place, as you will not receive an offer for another school, unless your child can be offered a place from the waiting list, or you submit a late application for a school with places. Accepting the school offered has no bearing on your child's place on a waiting list or on any appeals.

7. Waiting lists

A child's name can be added to the waiting list for most school(s) that you have applied for but not offered a place at, except for selective grammar schools, where your child must score the qualifying score to be added to their waiting list.

Waiting lists for Birmingham schools will be made available from 22 March 2027. For schools outside of Birmingham, you will need to check the local Council's website for information about their waiting lists.

You should contact us to confirm who manages the waiting list for Birmingham schools.

It is important to note that children can move down the waiting list if other children who have greater priority, in accordance with the oversubscription criteria, later join the list. Having a place on the waiting list does not guarantee that a place will become available.

8. Appeals

A parent automatically has the right of appeal to each individual school their child has been refused a place at. For the appeals that we manage for Birmingham schools, the deadline to submit your written appeal is **13 April 2027**.

You will be able to access the appeal form via our website on 1 March 2027 from 4.00 pm.

If you submit an appeal after this date, it will be classed as a late appeal and will be heard after the on-time appeals. It may not be heard before the beginning of September 2027.

You should check the websites of schools that manage their own appeals for further details.

Further information can be found on the appeals process and timelines for the process on the council website: https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/schooladmissions

9. Offer Day

If you have submitted your application online, you will receive your child's secondary school offer by email on 1 March 2027. All parents and carers will also receive a letter with further information on next steps.

10. Contact Information

If you have any enquiries about the secondary transfer process, please contact the School Admissions and Fair Access service on:

T: 0121 303 1888
E: admissions@birmingham.gov.uk

If you would like details of schools in other councils, please contact that council directly.