

In-Year Transfer (Moving Schools)

Admissions booklet

Information for parents

2024/25

warrington.gov.uk/schools



WARRINGTON
Borough Council

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In-year transfer applications

1. In-year transfer applications are those requesting a transfer from one school to another outside of the normal admissions round, for example when a family moves house part way through a school year. This booklet sets out the in-year application process. It is also intended to give information and advice to Parents/Carers who wish to explore the possibility of transferring their child from one school to another, part way through a school year.
2. Generally, a child will be admitted to another school if there is a place available, except for those children whose circumstances meet the requirements of the Fair Access Protocol. You can contact us to enquire about vacancies (which are subject to change) or to find out which schools are close to your home. For more information about Warrington's Fair Access Protocol and to access a copy of it, please visit our website at warrington.gov.uk/schools or telephone **01925 446226** and request a copy.
3. If your request for an in-year transfer is not because of an address change or relocation from overseas, you are strongly advised to think very carefully before you apply. Problems that your child may be experiencing may not go away simply because of a change of school.
4. Before you consider changing your child's school, it is important to discuss it with your child and find out how they really feel about the possibility of a school move. You need to be clear about the real reason why they want to move to a different school. For example, it could be because they are worried about certain subjects. If this is the case, then you will need to discuss this with your child's current school to allow them the opportunity to address any concerns that you or your child may have. If you think your child needs extra help or has needs that are not being recognised, you will need to arrange to speak to the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) at your child's current school. If you or your child has concerns about bullying or friendship issues, speak to your child's class teacher, head of year or pastoral head. Finally, having explored these options, if you feel your concerns have not been addressed appropriately at your child's current school, you should arrange an appointment to speak with your child's Headteacher.
5. All schools have a complaints policy which will set out how Parents/Carers should raise school's awareness of any concerns and what steps will be taken to help resolve them.

Points to consider before making your application

6. **Teaching and school organisation:** Each school teaches the national curriculum in different ways and at different times of the academic year. If your child moves to a new school, the curriculum currently being studied at this school may have been already covered by your child's current school earlier on in the year. Additionally, it could be that areas of the curriculum have been completed at the new school but had not yet been covered at your child's current school. This means your child will completely miss out on some areas of the curriculum.
7. If your child is already in a Warrington school, please discuss the reasons for the change of school with your current headteacher. It may be possible for the school to address any concerns you have so that your child can remain at their current school.
8. If you are moving into Warrington and you can't keep your child in their current school, you should apply for a school place as soon as you know you are moving.
9. **Year 10 and 11 admissions:** As children sit GCSEs at the end of secondary school, moving your child during years 10 and 11 may not be the best option. Moving during the last two terms of year 11 can be particularly difficult. There are very few vacancies at any of our schools in years 10 and 11 because it is unusual for pupils to leave during these years.
10. If your child is already in a Warrington school, please discuss the reasons for the change of school with your current headteacher. It may be possible for the school to address any concerns you have so that your child can remain at their current school.
11. If you are moving into Warrington and you can't keep your child in their current school, you should apply for a school place as soon as you know you are moving.
12. Things to think about before moving your child include:
 - Availability of places in the school you wish your child to attend
 - The options available to your child may not be the same as in their current school
 - The option groups for the courses your child is studying may be full
 - The examination boards that the school uses may not be the same as those used at their current school
 - Coursework they have already started may not be relevant
 - If you can't match the options your child is already studying, changing school at this stage may reduce their chances of gaining qualifications
 - The change may be a source of stress for your child
13. If you believe that it is in the best interests of your child to move schools, we recommend that you discuss this with the headteacher of your child's current school first, and then only apply if absolutely necessary.

14. Other things to think about before moving your child include:
- **Friendships:** Forming friendships is a very important aspect of school life. Children should feel happy and content at school and relationships with friends and teachers are a key part of any child's social development and educational progression. If relationships have broken down at your child's current school, you must discuss this with your child's school before deciding to transfer to another school. Problems that your child may be experiencing may not go away simply because of a change of school.
 - **Uniform:** It may be necessary to buy a completely new uniform, including PE kit, for your child if you decide to transfer schools. The Local Authority is unable to provide any subsidy in connection with uniform costs, even for low-income families.
 - **Transport:** The Local Authority is required by law to provide or pay for free transport for pupils who have to travel more than the statutory distance to their nearest suitable school. For pupils of primary age this distance is 2 walking miles and for secondary pupils this distance is 3 walking miles.
15. It is important that you do not confuse the right to express a preference for a school with an entitlement to travel assistance. If you have expressed a preference for a school which is further away from your home and the distance to this school is more than the statutory distance, you may not be entitled to travel assistance. If this is the case, you will need to think about the costs involved with getting your child from home to school and back on time and safely, as this would be your responsibility. For more information regarding home to school transport assistance, please visit our website.

Making an application

16. If, having considered all the points listed above, you decide to apply for a school transfer; you must complete an in-year transfer form for each of your children.
17. It is not possible to apply for a school place any further in advance than four school weeks. For example, if you wish to apply for a place from the beginning of the Autumn Term, the earliest you could apply would be mid-June.
18. Application forms are available to download on our website: warrington.gov.uk/schools or alternatively you can telephone 01925 446226 and ask for a form to be posted out or emailed to you. For more information about the schools in Warrington please refer to the Primary or Secondary Information for Parents booklets which are available to download on our website warrington.gov.uk/schools
19. The in-year transfer application is made up of seven sections. Sections 1 to 6 must be completed by someone who has parental responsibility. Section 7 of the form needs to be completed by your child's current school or the school last attended. It is important that all sections are completed before submitting as incomplete forms will not be processed and will be returned to the Parent/Carer.
20. If you are relocating to or within the Warrington area documentary proof of the house move will be required. Examples of acceptable proof are as follows:

- a. a council tax bill;
- b. written evidence of a final completion of sale;
- c. a copy of a signed tenancy agreement (at least 6 months)
- d. Driving licence
- e. utility bill, not bank statements. For the purpose of this policy, utility bills are defined as water, gas or electric bill

21. We accept applications for in-year transfers from outside the UK.

For foreign nationals who do not normally reside in the UK but who wish to apply for a state-funded school place, please check that your child(ren) have an immigration status which permits them to enter the UK to access a state-funded school. Checking is the parents' responsibility. You can find more about [school applications for foreign national children and children resident outside England on the gov.uk website](#). For these applications the overseas address will be used as the address for the application until proof of the proposed Warrington address is received. If we are unable to offer a place, you will still be offered the right of appeal.

22. Children Formerly in Care are defined as previously Looked After Children who have ceased to be so because they have been Adopted or became subject to a Child Arrangement Order or Special Guardianship Order immediately following being looked after. If your child is a child formerly in care then you must provide a copy of the Adoption Certificate, Child Arrangement Order or Special Guardianship Order at the time of application, for your child to be considered under this criterion.

Parental responsibility

- 23. Applications must be completed by a person who has parental responsibility for the child. The applicant is strongly advised to inform all other parties who have parental responsibility before submitting the application.
- 24. If all parties are not in agreement with the child moving schools, any disputes should be resolved before applying. If parents are unable to reach an amicable agreement, then both parents should seek recourse through the family courts.
- 25. Where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility, the address given on the form should be the address of the parent who is in receipt of child benefit and/or child tax credit. Proof may be required.

Children of UK service personnel and crown servants

- 26. Places can be allocated in advance for children of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting in the area, or crown servants returning from overseas to live in the area. If this applies to your child, please tell us on your application. You must also provide evidence such as an official letter from your commanding officer containing a relocation date and unit postal address.

Application process

27. The fully completed form must be returned to the School Admissions team. Completed forms may be scanned by the Parent/Carer and emailed to schooladmissions@warrington.gov.uk.

Photographs of application forms are not acceptable and will be returned.

28. Alternatively you can post the completed application form to:

School Admissions Team East Annexe
Town Hall
Sankey Street
Warrington
WA1 1UH

29. If you have submitted the form via email, an email acknowledgement will automatically be generated to the sender's email address upon safe delivery to the school admissions mailbox. If an acknowledgement is not received by the sender, there is no guarantee that it has been received by the School Admissions team.
30. The School Admissions team aim to reply to all in-year transfer applications within 15 school days of receiving a complete application form. However, in certain circumstances some applications may take longer to process. Please be aware that applications cannot be processed during school holiday periods.
31. In certain cases, it may be necessary to consider an application in accordance with the Fair Access Protocol. If an application meets Fair Access, the application process could take up to 20 school days.

Allocating places

For applications which do not meet the requirements of the fair access protocol

32. Applicants are invited to express preferences for up to three schools. Each of the schools listed on the form is treated as a separate application. The Admissions Team will look to see whether there are places at any of the preferred schools. You are strongly advised to use all three preferences as many Warrington schools are already full in many year groups.
33. Places are offered for in-year applications on a first come first served basis. If there is one place available at a school and more than one child has applied on the same day, the school's oversubscription criteria will be applied. This will determine which child has the highest priority and should be offered the place.

34. If you have relocated to the area, within six months of making an application, documentary proof of your Warrington address has been received, and all your preferred schools are full, we will offer you a place at an alternative school. This would be the next nearest school, measured by the shortest walking distance to your home address which has a place available in the required year group. This may not be the closest school to your home as many Warrington schools are already full in many year groups. Admission authorities are unable to hold places in reserve for children who may move into an area after the usual point of entry.
35. If all the preferred schools are full and the child is a Warrington resident and already has a place at a school that they are able to attend, an alternative school place will not be offered.
36. If no school has a place available, it may be necessary to admit over the published/agreed admission number at a school.
37. Admitting over the published/ agreed admission number will only be considered where the following exceptional circumstances apply:
 - a. children admitted outside the normal admissions round with an Education, Health and Care Plans specifying a school.
 - b. looked after children and previously looked after children admitted outside the normal admissions round.
 - c. children admitted, after initial allocation of places, because of a procedural error made by the admissions authority or Local Authority in the original application process.
 - d. children admitted after an independent appeals panel upholds an appeal.
 - e. children who move into the area outside the normal admissions round for whom there is no other available school within reasonable distance.
 - f. children of UK service personnel admitted outside the normal admissions round.
 - g. children whose twin or sibling from a multiple birth is admitted otherwise than as an excepted pupil.
 - h. children with special educational needs who are normally taught in a special educational needs unit attached to the school, or registered at a special school who attend some classes within the mainstream school.
38. When considering which school should admit exceptionally above the published/ agreed admission number, the Local Authority may consult the Headteacher at the school to decide whether, on balance, the prejudice caused to the child by not admitting them to a particular school outweighs the prejudice caused to the school by admitting the child. The Authority would make every effort to share such requests between schools which are local to the applicant's address when it is reasonable to do so. Therefore, if all schools are full, the Local Authority will not automatically admit exceptionally to the preferred school.

39. It should be noted that exceptional circumstances do not apply for a family who relocated over 6 months prior to submitting application or in the event of a family relocating to the area to live with other family members who are unable to provide proof of address. In cases such as these, if no places are available at a school within a reasonable distance, the application will be refused, and the right of appeal will be offered. A list of alternative schools will be provided upon request.

Infant class size legislation

40. Infant classes are those where the majority of children will reach the age of 5, 6 or 7 during the school year i.e. Reception and Years 1 and 2.
41. Infant classes must not contain more than 30 pupils with a single school teacher, however, additional children may be admitted under limited exceptional circumstances as set out above.
42. If a child's circumstances meet any of the exceptions listed in Para 6.5 a)-h), then the child may be admitted to an already full/oversubscribed Reception, Year 1 or 2 class as an excepted pupil. This means that the child can be added to a class of 30 in these year groups without the requirement to take qualifying measures i.e. employment of an additional teacher.

Notification

43. You will receive written notification of the outcome of your application. The outcome is normally sent via email, however, if you prefer to receive your outcome via post please let us know.
44. If you are offered a place you will be asked to contact the school allocated to make arrangements for admission. All offers are available for four school weeks only. If a child has not started by the date given in the offer letter then the offer of a place will be withdrawn.

Appeals procedure for in-year admissions

45. If it has been necessary to refuse any of your preferred schools, you have the statutory right of appeal against the decision not to offer a place at your preferred school(s).
46. You are advised to accept your offer of a school place, even if this is not your preferred school, and arrange a start date for your child, whilst you are appealing for a place at your preferred school. School places are in high demand and there is no guarantee the offered place will still be available whilst you await your appeal for your preferred school. Accepting the place offered will not impact your right to appeal or chances of success at appeal.
47. If you decide to appeal, the appeal must be made in writing, within 20 school days of receiving a refusal letter, stating your child's details and giving your reasons for appealing.

48. Appeal submissions should be sent to: schooladmissions@warrington.gov.uk or alternatively you can post them to:

School Admissions Team East Annexe
Town Hall
Sankey Street
Warrington
WA1 2UH

49. Appeals are considered by an Independent School Appeals Panel and their decision is binding on the admission authority, the Parent/Carer and the school. The Clerk to the Independent School Appeals Panel will arrange a date and time for the appeal hearing and will write to you with details. Appeals can take up to 30 school days to arrange.

50. You will be notified, by the Clerk to the Independent School Appeals panel, in writing of the outcome of your appeal, within 5 school days of the hearing. If an appeal is successful, you will be asked to contact the school to make arrangements for admission. If an appeal is unsuccessful, you are unable to appeal again in the same academic year for the same school unless there has been a material change of circumstances that the panel was not aware of at the hearing. A further application would be required. For more information about the appeals procedure, please visit warrington.gov.uk/schools

Summary of in-year admissions process

Key points to remember

- Before submitting an in-year application, make sure you speak to your child's current school about your reasons for requesting a school move.
- Discuss the option of a school move with your child. If your child is asking to move school, try and find out the reasons why and discuss this with your child's current school to see if there are any issues which can be addressed by them.
- Stop and think about how a school move could impact on your child's education and social wellbeing.
- If you decide to go ahead and explore the possibility of an in-year transfer request, please ensure you visit your preferred schools before making an application.
- You can contact us if you would like to enquire if a school(s) has availability in the required year group, noting that vacancy information is subject to change. If you have a preference for a particular type of school (eg. A faith school), please let us know.
- Please ensure that all sections of your application form are completed before submitting, as incomplete forms cannot be processed.
- All fully completed application forms will be acknowledged and will normally be processed within 15 school days of receipt, however, some applications may take longer to process. Applications are not processed during school holidays.
- If you are relocating into or within Warrington documentary proof of the house move will be required. Examples of acceptable proof are as follows:
 - written evidence of a final completion of sale/ purchase;
 - a copy of a signed tenancy agreement (at least 6 months)
 - Council tax bill;
 - Driving licence
 - utility bill, not bank statements. For the purpose of this policy, utility bills are defined as water, gas or electric bills
- In-year applications for King's Leadership Academy must be made to the school direct. Please visit the school website for more information.