

In Year Admissions

Information for parents and carers of pupils living in Hertfordshire seeking a school place mid-year, outside the usual transfer time

1 September 2012 onwards



In Year Admissions

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<p>Moving to a new school is an important step for any child. Changing your child's school can affect him or her in many ways and the decision should not be taken without careful thought. We know that a number of families will need to transfer their child to another school during the academic year, rather than at the usual transfer times.</p>	Key facts about the application process	3
<p>This may be because they are moving into Hertfordshire or moving within the county. We want to make this move as smooth as possible for every child and so we have developed special arrangements for the admission of children outside the normal transfer time. These school moves are called 'In-Year' admissions.</p>	Which schools can I apply to?	4
<p>Hertfordshire schools are very popular and it is not always possible to offer you the place you want for your child. We need a process to decide which children get a place when there are more applications than places available. These arrangements must be fair and follow the requirements of central government.</p>	Making your in-year application	5
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<p>Hertfordshire has excellent schools and we work with them all to continue raising standards. We all want the very best education for your child and to make sure that the transfer to a new school is well planned and effective.</p>	How your application is processed	8
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KEY FACTS ABOUT THE APPLICATION PROCESS

This booklet provides information about how to apply for an In Year school place for your child, i.e. outside the usual transfer time.

- 1. Parents/carers usually need to apply for a new school place for their children because they have moved house. However some parents/carers would like their child to move schools for a different reason.**

Changing your child's school can affect your child in many ways. Decisions should not be taken without careful thought. Please consider the factors listed on page 7 before applying for a new school place.

- 2. If you live in Hertfordshire you must apply on the Hertfordshire County Council In Year application form for a place at any maintained (state) school or Academy, regardless of whether that school is within Hertfordshire or in another local authority.**

- A directory of Hertfordshire schools is available from every school in Hertfordshire and at www.hertsdirect.org/admissions. A list of local schools will have been provided with this leaflet. For more information on specific schools visit the school's website or Hertfordshire's website. You should list up to three schools in order of preference.
- You can include schools in other local authority areas on your application form. For more information on schools in other authorities please contact the school or authority direct. A list of the authorities surrounding Hertfordshire is on page 12.
- If your child could be offered a place at more than one school you have listed on your application form, a place will be offered at the highest ranked school possible.

- 3. If you live in England or Wales but outside Hertfordshire you should apply to the local authority where you live at the time of application.**

4. In Year Coordination

- Hertfordshire County Council is responsible for coordinating In Year admissions for all applications from Hertfordshire residents.
- The County Council is responsible for admissions to all community and voluntary-controlled schools and will allocate places at these schools in accordance with the County's published admission rules.
- The Governors of foundation, voluntary aided schools, trust and academy schools set and apply their own admission rules. Governors remain responsible for the allocation of places at these schools and the admission and transport team will liaise with these schools and offer any available places on their behalf.
- If you are applying for any schools outside Hertfordshire please discuss your application with the relevant school or local authority before submitting your Hertfordshire form to ensure you provide all the necessary information and are aware of how your application will be dealt with.

An In Year application will have one of three outcomes:

- If the school you want has places for everyone who has made an application, your child will get a place.
- If the school does not have enough places for everyone who has made an application, the school's admission rules will be used to decide who will get a place.
- If the school does not have any places available you will not be offered a place but will be informed of how to register a continuing interest and/or appeal. If you live in Hertfordshire and your child does not have a school place we will offer a place at the nearest suitable school with a place available.

WHICH SCHOOLS CAN I APPLY TO?

The In Year admissions process is co-ordinated for all maintained schools and academies. **Applications to all Hertfordshire maintained schools from families resident within Hertfordshire must be made on the Hertfordshire In Year Application Form** (attached) and available for download at www.hertsdirect.org/admissions.

Hertfordshire has a variety of schools, many with their own admission arrangements. Some schools may, for example, prioritise applications for places on the basis of faith or academic ability. It is therefore important that you carefully consider the admission arrangements of all the schools that you are interested in. Specific information on the admission arrangements for voluntary aided, foundation, trust schools and academies can be obtained by visiting the school website or contacting the schools direct.

Hertfordshire County Council's admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools can be obtained from any community or voluntary controlled school in the county and are listed on our website at www.hertsdirect.org/admissions.

Two Tier and Three Tier Education

Most of Hertfordshire has a two tier education system, but in three areas, a three tier education system operates

Reception	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6	Yr 7	Yr 8	Yr 9	Yr 10	Yr 11	Yr 12	Yr 13
PRIMARY SCHOOL							SECONDARY SCHOOL						
INFANT SCHOOL			JUNIOR SCHOOL										
FIRST SCHOOL					MIDDLE SCHOOL				UPPER SCHOOL				

KEY:

- = Two-tier education system
- = Three-tier education system

Two Tier Education

Pupils transfer from primary or junior schools to secondary school at the end of Year 6 when they are 10 or 11 years old. The first year of secondary school is Year 7 and pupils then progress through the school until at least the end of Year 11. Many pupils will stay on until Year 12 or 13.

Three Tier Education:

In Royston, Buntingford and Berkhamsted children attend first schools and transfer to middle schools at the end of year 4. At the end of year 8, through the normal secondary transfer process, they transfer to upper school where they can remain until Year 13.

Specialist Status

Secondary Schools are now able to choose to specialise from a variety of subjects including business and enterprise, language, music and sports. All schools continue to teach the National Curriculum and offer a broad and balanced curriculum.

Having a specialism does not mean that only children good at that subject should attend, or that you should not apply for a school if your child doesn't like that particular specialism. Community and Voluntary Controlled schools do not offer places to children based on their ability in the specialist subject.



MAKING YOUR IN YEAR APPLICATION

Filling in the In Year admission application form

The In Year application form should be included in your pack and is available to download from our website. If you need a copy, then please phone the Customer Service Centre.

Please note that places are offered in the expectation that they will be taken up within 10 school days. We are unable to offer places in advance. Please contact us if you need further information, for example if you are moving in to the area.

Your child's details

1. The address you give must be your child's current permanent address at the time you fill in the application form.
2. You must include two forms of proof of address, one of which should be a utility bill, council tax bill, signed tenancy agreement or a solicitor's letter confirming completion date. Please do not send original documents. Your application may be delayed if you do not provide us with this information.
3. We can only process the application from one address. If your child lives at a different address from you or another parent/carer Monday to Friday, please provide the Parental

Responsibility Order or Residence Order for the person the child lives with.

4. If there are reasons why your child is not living at the same address as you (for example, if you and your child's other parent/carer do not live together), both parents should declare this in a letter sent with the application.

5. If your child regularly lives at more than one address Monday to Friday, the address given should be the address where your child spends the majority of his/her time. If the address is disputed, the address of the parent/carer that claims child benefit/child tax credit will be considered as the child's main residence.

If you are moving house

If you know the address you are moving to, please fill in the relevant section of the In Year admission application form.

Please remember that places are allocated in the expectation that they will be taken up immediately. Places may be withdrawn if your child is not able to start at the allocated school within 10 school days.

We are unable to offer places in advance. If you are considering applying more than 4 weeks in advance of your move, please note that we will be unable to offer a place at a school. However, if the schools you wish to apply for are full we will offer the right to appeal.

To confirm your child's new address, you must send either:

- A letter from your solicitor giving your completion date, OR
- A signed rental agreement of at least 12 months showing the starting date of your tenancy AND
- Confirmation that your child will be living at the new address from the given date.

We will not use your new address to process your application until the completion date or start of the tenancy agreement. We may, at a later stage, ask for evidence that your child is living at your new address. If you are unable to provide this information, you must expect the offer of a new school place to be withdrawn.

Allegations that parents/carers have provided false information on their application form are taken very seriously. A number of comprehensive checks are carried out to verify that your child lives at the address you have provided and the County Council works closely with schools and other authorities to ensure that fraudulent applications are detected.

If you deliberately give false information, the offer of a school place will be withdrawn.

Families of UK Service personnel and other Crown servants (including Diplomats)

We understand that families of UK Service personnel and other Crown servants are subject to frequent movement within the UK and from abroad. If an application for an In Year place is accompanied by an official MOD, FCO or GCHQ¹ letter declaring a relocation date we will arrange for confirmation of a school place in advance of the relocation.

Applications made for children living abroad

If you are applying from abroad we will take into account when the child is expected to be resident in the UK when considering the application. Your Hertfordshire address will not be

¹ Ministry of Defence (MOD), Foreign Commonwealth Office (FCO), Government Communication Head Quarters (GCHQ)
www.hertsdirect.org/admissions

used for application purposes until your child is resident at the address (the exception is as above for children of UK Service personnel and other Crown servants). You should send confirmation of the child's arrival date in the UK, e.g. copy of travel ticket. Your application may be delayed if you do not provide this information.

Your child's current (or last) school

Details of your child's current or last school are requested, and for monitoring purposes, the reasons why they have left or wish to leave the school. Please note we may contact the school for further information.

Schools

Please list up to three schools you would like your child to attend in order of preference. You can include any Hertfordshire school, of the appropriate age range, listed in the schools directory, and/or schools in other Local Authorities. You must add the school code to the relevant box - you will find the code under each entry in the directory. Schools in other authorities will also have codes that should be included. More information will be available from the Local Authority where the school is located.

Other information

- If your child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs, please tick the 'yes' box on the In Year admission application form. Any applications for children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs will be passed to Hertfordshire County Council's SEN Department to take forward.
- If you are applying for a voluntary aided, foundation, trust school or academy you may need to complete the school's supplementary information form (SIF). This form requests any additional information the school's governors require to allocate places in accordance with the school's admission rules. If you do not complete a SIF the governors will still consider your application but will only be able to take into account information provided on the Hertfordshire application form. Your application therefore may be considered under a lower rule and your child may be less likely to be offered a place.
- Please remember to include any evidence to support your application.
 - Supporting evidence for applications to voluntary aided, foundation, trust schools and academies should be sent direct to the school.
 - Supporting evidence for applications to community and voluntary controlled schools should be sent to the Admission and Transport team.
- Sibling links - your child must have a brother or sister at the school at the time of application who will still be at the school when the other child is admitted. Please be aware that schools do have differing definitions of siblings – please check the relevant school's admission arrangements to ensure your child meets the published requirements.
- If you have not moved but would like your child to attend a different school, please ensure you ask for your child's current school to fill in Part A of the application form. Your application may be delayed if this form is not returned.

Please ensure that you have filled in your form correctly, including signatures, and include any papers you need to support your application. Sign the declaration in Section 8 and return it to the Admissions and Transport team.

You are asked to tick the box to confirm that you have parental responsibility. If you are applying on behalf of the parent with responsibility you must include a letter from that parent confirming they agree to the application. Legally, everyone who is a parent has a right to participate in decisions about a child's education. A parent includes:

- all natural parents, whether they are married or not
- any person who has responsibility for a child
- any person who has care of a child or young person

Please ensure that any decisions have been discussed with any relevant persons before the application is made.

If you choose to write to give reasons to support your application, you should make sure your letter relates to the school's published rules.



MAKING AN APPLICATION IF YOU HAVE NOT MOVED

Changing your child's school can affect your child in many ways and the decision should not be taken without careful thought. You should consider the following before applying for another school place for your child.

Teaching and school organisation

Each school teaches the National Curriculum in different ways and at different times of the academic year.

How will your child cope:

- With learning new rules?
- Doing things in different ways?
- If he/she has done the work before or has missed important earlier work?
- If he/she finds the work new or strange?
- Older children who transfer school after exam subjects have been chosen in Year 9, may find:
 - That they cannot do the same subjects in a new school; or
 - That the exam boards and courses are different
 - That some schools start GCSE curriculum courses in Year 9.

Have you thought whether:

- Your child can take the same subjects at a new school?
- The courses will be the same?
- Your child will be comfortable taking new subjects or exam courses?

Relationships

Children need to feel happy at school and relationships with the right friends and with teachers are an important part of this.

- Will he/she be able to settle in and get to know new people quickly, so that his/her learning does not suffer?

Family link

If your child has brothers and sisters at the same school, transferring one child may affect the others:

- If you have other children attending the same school, will it be difficult for you to have children attending different schools? Your other children will have no automatic right to transfer to the new school either now or in the future.
- Will you be able to transport your children to different schools at the appropriate times?

Uniform

You might need to buy a completely new uniform, including PE kit, if your child changes school.

- Have you thought about the cost involved?

Transport

Your child needs to be able to travel to school easily, safely and on-time.

- How would your child get to a new school?
- What will be the cost involved? A change of school will usually be regarded as parental choice. In most circumstances your child is unlikely to be eligible for travel assistance to their preferred school.

Other things to think about

Many issues that worry parents/carers and children can be put right without the need to move schools. Moving schools may not resolve your concerns and may even have a negative effect on your child's education.

Ask yourself the following questions:

Have I:

- Sat down with my child to talk about the points in this booklet, to find out how he/she really feels about moving to a new school?
- Found out the real reason why he/she wants to move schools?
- Spoken to the teachers who teach my child (if he/she is worried about certain subjects) to find out how he/she is getting on?
- Spoken to the teacher in charge of special needs (if your child needs extra help)?
- Spoken to my child's Tutor/Head of Year or pastoral Head (if he/she is being bullied or not getting on with other children)?
- Made an appointment to speak to the Headteacher (if you are still concerned about your child)?

If you are not happy about the way the school is working with your child you should speak to the Headteacher. If your concerns are not dealt with to your satisfaction you may decide to write to the Chair of Governors.

If you need further help or advice you can call the Customer Service Centre. **Please contact us to discuss your concerns before applying for another school place or moving your child to another school.**

You must return completed Part A or your application may be delayed.

HOW YOUR APPLICATION IS PROCESSED

Allocating places

Each of the schools listed on your form is treated as a separate application. If schools receive more applications than they have places available, the school's admission rules will be used to decide which child will be offered a place.

If you live in Hertfordshire, your child does not have a school place and we have not been able to offer you a place at any of the schools you wanted, a place will be offered at the nearest school with available places. However, this could be some distance from your home address.

Fair Access Protocol

Hertfordshire County Council has a Fair Access Protocol which ensures that vulnerable groups of children can quickly access school places and that all schools take an equal number of children who may, for a variety of reasons, need more support. These children can take precedence over all other children on a school's continuing interest list. Some of the questions on the In Year application form are included to identify more vulnerable children and to try and ensure appropriate support is put in place for them at their new school.

Letting you know

We aim to offer school places within 10 working days of receiving an application. In certain instances we need to request information from your child's current school which may result in a delay. Allocations may be delayed if we are unable to confirm with individual schools or other local authorities, accurate information about school vacancies and whether or not a place can be offered. Allocations may also be delayed if full information is not provided at the time of application, for example, proof of address.

Whilst every effort is made to quickly allocate places to children without a current school, where a child is moving from one school to another within Hertfordshire these moves can sometimes happen at the beginning of a term or half-term to aid smooth integration.

Hertfordshire County Council will send you an offer letter which will include an allocation response form which you must return to the school within 10 school days. If you do not return the allocation response form the place may be withdrawn.

In many cases schools will also contact families direct when an allocation has been made.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

If you are not happy with the school place offered, you may do the following:

- Pursue a place through the continuing interest list. If you would like your child to be considered for a place through continuing interest at your preferred school(s) you must confirm this in writing by email or letter to the In Year Team. If you have applied to schools outside Hertfordshire you must confirm with the relevant school and/or local authority how their continuing interest process works. If we receive written confirmation of your continuing interest request, and it is possible to offer a place at one of these schools in the future, we will contact you again. If you have applied for any voluntary aided foundation schools or academies you should ensure you have completed the school's supplementary information form to ensure your child's application can be accurately assessed.

Please be aware at the end of each academic year, on the last day of term, your child's name **will** be removed from all continuing interest lists. All applicants **must** make a new application and your child will not be considered for available places until a new application is received.

Places will be offered in accordance with the school's published admission rules.

- Appeal for the any or all of the schools listed on your In Year admission application form. Information on appeals will be included in your offer letter. You may only appeal for a place at a school once every academic year unless there has been a significant change in circumstances, for example if you have moved address.

What happens if my child does not take up the place at the school you have offered?

If the school informs us that your child has not started at the school we have offered, we will write to you to ask what other arrangements you are making to educate your child. If you do not reply to that letter the following may happen:

- Step 1** The place will be withdrawn and we will offer you a place at the nearest school to your home that still has a place available, if appropriate.
- Step 2** We will start legal proceedings if your child is not attending school, to ensure that he or she receives a full education.

HOME-TO-SCHOOL TRANSPORT

The County Council has recently amended its home to school transport policy and, from September 2012, will introduce a statutory only transport policy. For details of the full policy and updates on the transport review go to

<http://www.hertsdirect.org/scholearn/admissions/admissionsinfo/fai/schadhtst>

Parents/carers are advised to carefully consider the home to school transport policy before applying for a school place.

Only a small number of children in Hertfordshire qualify for free home to school transport. If a child is not entitled to free home to school transport it is a parent's responsibility to ensure that their child can get to school.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Who can I talk to about the information in this booklet?

In the first instance contact the Customer Service Centre. If necessary your call will be forwarded to the local Admissions and Transport teams, who can provide additional support and guidance throughout your application process. Contact details are provided at the end of this leaflet.

How quickly will my queries be dealt with?

Phone calls

Most queries can be dealt with straight away, however at peak times the volume of calls and correspondence is high. We aim to deal with your telephone enquires as quickly as possible, usually within three working days. However, to ensure that each case is thoroughly investigated, response times may be longer at particular times of the year.

Letters and emails

You will normally receive an answer within ten working days. If this is not possible, the officer dealing with your query will let you know the reasons for the delay and when you will receive a response.

What do I do if I want to make a complaint?

- 1) Please discuss your concerns with the Admissions and Transport Team, most issues can be resolved in this way.
- 2) If you wish to make a formal complaint, you should write direct to the Admissions and Transport Manager.

What financial help is available?

If your family has a low income, you may be able to get some financial help with school expenses, for example help with transport, free school meals and the cost of music lessons. You can apply for this help online or over the phone by dialling 0300 123 4048 or alternatively you can visit www.hertsdirect.org/freeschoolmeals.

Use of Information

In addition to processing your application for a school place, under the data protection legislation, we may use your application information for other purposes:

- To co-operate with our partners in health and youth justice to improve the well being of children in Hertfordshire.
- To provide statistical data to other organisations.
- To publish statistical data about the number of applications/allocations at each school.
- To model the effectiveness of alternative admission arrangements to improve services.
- To check your eligibility for low income transport.

CONTACT DETAILS

Customer Service Centre

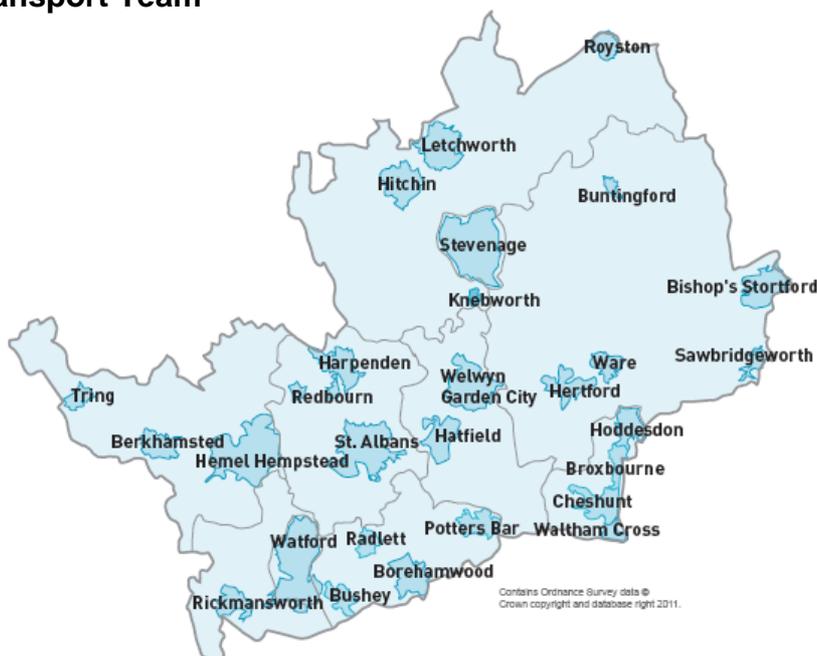
For help and support, please contact the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 or 0300 123 4041 for textphone (for deaf and hard of hearing people only).

Admissions and Transport Team

Some enquiries will be referred to the In Year Admissions and Transport team. Admissions and Transport Officers have knowledge of specific geographical areas in Hertfordshire.

Admissions and Transport Team

County Hall CHR102
Pegs Lane
Hertford
SG13 8DQ



If you write to the admissions and transport team, please remember to include your child's full name and date of birth. If you send information in relation to an online application, please include your Parent ID.

Neighbouring Local Authorities

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| • Barnet Council | www.barnet.gov.uk |
| • Bedfordshire Borough Council | www.bedford.gov.uk |
| • Central Bedfordshire Council | www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk |
| • Buckinghamshire County Council | www.buckscc.gov.uk |
| • Essex County Council | www.essex.gov.uk |
| • Cambridgeshire County Council | www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk |
| • Enfield Council | www.enfield.gov.uk |
| • Harrow Council | www.harrow.gov.uk |
| • Luton Borough Council | www.luton.gov.uk |
| • Hillingdon Council | www.hillingdon.gov.uk |

If you would like help to understand this information or would like it in another format please contact the Customer Service Centre.