



Transfer to Secondary School

**for children born between 1 September 2012
and 31 August 2013**

Transfer to Secondary School

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Applying for Secondary School starting in September 2024

When to apply

The application process for children born between 1 September 2012 and 31 August 2013 starts on 1 September 2023. If your child was born between these dates, please read the following information carefully and ensure you have submitted your online application by 31 October 2023.

We would urge all parents to read the starting secondary school information online.

Full details of Merton's admission arrangements can be found on our website www.merton.gov.uk/admissions, however, the information provided on these pages contains everything you need to make an application.

Open events

Open evenings have been scheduled under the Covid rules in place at the time of going to print. Please be aware that these are subject to change and we would recommend that you check the school websites for up-to-date information.

The following table gives the information currently available together with the website address for each school.

<u>Harris Academy Merton</u>	Open evening: Thurs 21 Sept 2023, 5–8pm. No open mornings.
<u>Harris Academy Morden</u>	Open evening: Thurs 5 Oct 2023, 5.30–8pm. No open mornings.
<u>Harris Academy Wimbledon</u> - Registration details on school website.	Open evening: Tues 19 Sept 2023, 5–8pm. Open mornings: 21 Sept, 3 and 5 Oct 2023, Registration details on school website.
<u>Raynes Park High School</u> - Registration details on school website	Open evening: Thurs 28 Sept 2023, 3.30–6.30pm. Open mornings: 10–12 Oct 2023.
<u>Ricards Lodge High School</u> - Registration details on school website	Open evening: Thurs 28 Sept 2023, 5–7.30pm. Open mornings: 2–6 Oct 2023
<u>Rutlish School</u> - Registration details on school website.	Open evening: Weds 20 Sept 2023, 5–7.30pm. Open mornings: 28–29 Sept 2023.
<u>St Mark's Church of England Academy</u> - Registration details on school website	Open evening: Weds 20 Sept 2023, 5–7.30pm. Open mornings: 26 Sept and 3, 10 and 17 Oct, all.
<u>Ursuline High School</u> - Visit school website for details.	Open evening: Weds 27 Sept 2023, 6.30–8pm.. Open mornings: 2–6 Oct 2023
<u>Wimbledon College</u> - Sign up for free tickets to open evening and mornings via the College website.	Open evening: Thurs 28 Sept 2023, 5.30–8.30pm Open mornings: 2–4 Oct 2023

Open evening dates for schools outside Merton are available from individual school websites.

Important dates

The key dates for the Transfer to Secondary process can be found in the following table.

Please ensure that you meet the date for submitting your online application. Submitting a late application could seriously jeopardise your chances of being offered a place at one of your preferred schools.

Date	Activity
September to October 2023	Online applications can be made.
20 October 2023	Recommended date for parents to submit their application if they are applying using a paper form
27 October 2023	Last opportunity to speak to School Admissions before the closing date.
31 October 2023	Closing date for supplementary forms for Ursuline High School.
31 October 2023	Closing date for supplementary forms for Wimbledon College.
31 October 2023	Closing date for applications. Applications received after this date will be regarded as late.
12 December 2023	Closing date for applications that have been classified as 'late for good reason'. The reason and evidence must also be included with the application.
1 March 2024	National Offer Day. Letters are posted to applicants who applied using a paper form. Parents who applied online will be able to view the outcome of their application from the evening of 1 March.
15 March 2024	Deadline for parents to respond to offers
May to June 2024	Admissions appeals.

Making your choices

Before deciding which schools to apply for, we advise visiting secondary schools and looking at their websites to gain further information.

Please do not base your decisions solely on the GCSE results, Ofsted reports, or what other people say about a school. We recommend that all families make up their own minds and that your child is involved in the application process.

Visit the schools with your child and remember that different children thrive in different environments, not just those that the parents feel are appropriate.

Consider the accessibility of the school from your home address.

You can find and compare schools in England at www.gov.uk/school-performance-tables to find further information on schools close to you. If you live close to a borough boundary, you should consider applying for your local schools even if they are not in Merton. If you are thinking about applying for any schools outside Merton, please get a copy of their application information. If you are applying for schools outside Merton you must still name them on your application.

It is also important that you consider the admissions criteria for each school so you understand how places are allocated and who gets priority when a school is oversubscribed. Different schools have different admissions policies, and these may affect the chances of your child being offered a place.

If you are considering applying for a selective school in one of our neighbouring boroughs, speak to your child's primary school Headteacher to find out the likelihood of your child passing the entrance test. Please note that selective schools conduct their testing before the closing date for applications so you should know whether your child meets the entry standard before you apply.

Merton schools do not have selection tests as our schools have a fully comprehensive system. However, Harris Academy Merton operates a banding system to ensure a comprehensive intake and all applicants for this Academy will be required to sit a test. Your child will only be required to sit the one test even if you apply for Harris Academies in other boroughs.

We recommend that you make use of all six preference options available to you. You should be aware of the admissions arrangements for the school. We recommend that you check how places were offered in recent years to see whether you are within average offer distance. www.merton.gov.uk/education-and-learning/schools/admissions/how-school-places-were-allocated-in-recent-years

We also suggest that you treat the application form as a wish list; name schools in the order you want them – you definitely won't be offered a school if you do not name it – but please ensure that there are schools on your list that you have checked and are likely to be offered and you are happy with. You do not gain any advantage by naming fewer schools, or only naming oversubscribed schools, and local schools you might have secured a place in may not have spaces if you name them as late preferences.

Secondary Schools

Secondary Schools in Merton

Harris Academy Merton

Wide Way
Mitcham
CR4 1BP

020 8623 1000
www.harrismerton.org.uk
info@harrismerton.org.uk

Type of school Academy

Year 7 places for 2024 240

Gender Mixed

Religious affiliation None

Sixth form provision Yes

DfE number 315 6905

Harris Academy Morden

Lilleshall Road
Morden
SM4 6DU

020 8687 1157
www.harrismorden.org.uk/
info@harrismorden.org.uk

Type of school Academy

Year 7 places for 2024 180

Gender Mixed

Religious affiliation None

Sixth form provision Yes

DfE number 315 4000

Harris Academy Wimbledon

High Path
London,
SW20 9NS

020 3962 4300
www.harriswimbledon.org.uk
info@harriswimbledon.org.uk

Type of school Academy

Year 7 places for 2024 180

Gender Mixed

Religious affiliation None

Sixth form provision Not yet

DfE number 315 4001

Raynes Park High School

Bushey Road
London
SW20 0JL

020 8946 4112
www.rphs.org.uk
school@raynespark.merton.sch.uk

Type of school Community

Year 7 places for 2024 240

Gender Mixed

Religious affiliation None

Sixth form provision Yes

DfE number 315 4052

Ricards Lodge High School

Lake Road
London
SW19 7HB

020 8946 2208
www.ricardslodge.merton.sch.uk
office.manager@ricardslodge.merton.sch.uk

Type of school Community

Year 7 places for 2024 240

Gender Girls

Religious affiliation None

Sixth form provision Yes

DfE number 315 4050

Rutlish School

Watery Lane
London
SW20 9AD

020 8542 1212
www.rutlish.merton.sch.uk
administration@rutlish.merton.sch.uk

Type of school Voluntary controlled

Year 7 places for 2024 240

Gender Boys

Religious affiliation None

Sixth form provision Yes

DfE number 315 4500

St Mark's Church of England Academy

Acacia Road
Mitcham
CR4 1SF

020 8648 6627
www.stmarksacademy.com
school@stmarksacademy.org.uk

Type of school Academy

Year 7 places for 2024 180

Gender Mixed

Religious affiliation Church of England

Sixth form provision Yes

DfE number 315 6906

Ursuline High School Wimbledon

Crescent Road
London
SW20 8HA

020 8255 2688
www.ursulinehigh.merton.sch.uk
enquiries@ursulinehigh.merton.sch.uk

Type of school Voluntary aided

Year 7 places for 2024 210

Gender Girls

Religious affiliation Catholic

Sixth form provision Yes

DfE number 315 5400

Wimbledon College

Edge Hill
London
SW19 4NS

020 8946 2533
www.wimbledoncollege.org.uk
mail@wimbledoncollege.org.uk

Type of school Voluntary aided

Year 7 places for 2024 199

Gender Boys

Religious affiliation Catholic

Sixth form provision Yes

DfE number 315 4701

How places were allocated for September 2023

To see how places were allocated in 2023 and other previous years, please see our webpage:

www.merton.gov.uk/education-and-learning/schools/admissions/how-school-places-were-allocated-in-recent-years

Schools outside Merton

If you are applying for schools which are not in Merton, you still need to name them as one of your six preferences. If you do not name them as a preference, they will be unable to consider your application.

Listed below are links to the websites for our neighbouring local authorities and details of the schools available in their boroughs:

Borough	London Borough of Croydon
Address	People Department, 2nd Floor (Zone A), Bernard Weatherill House, 8 Mint Walk, Croydon, CR0 1EA
Telephone	020 8726 6400
Email	school.admissions@croydon.gov.uk
Website	Croydon admissions site
Borough	Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
Address	School Admissions, Guildhall 2, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey, KT1 1EU
Telephone	Please email for a call-back
Email	kingston.admissions@achievingforchildren.org.uk
Website	Kingston admissions site
Borough	London Borough of Lambeth
Address	School Admissions Team, London Borough Lambeth, PO Box 734, Winchester, S023 5DG
Telephone	020 7926 9503
Email	schooladmissions@lambeth.gov.uk
Website	Lambeth admissions site
Borough	London Borough of Sutton
Address	Cognus Admissions Team, Civic Offices, St Nicholas Way, Sutton, Surrey, SM1 1EA
Telephone	020 8770 5000
Email	suttonadmissions@cognus.org.uk
Website	Sutton admissions site

Borough	London Borough of Wandsworth
Address	Pupil Services, Wandsworth Council, Children's Services Department, Town Hall Extension, Wandsworth High Street, London, SW18 2PU
Telephone	020 8871 7316
Email	admissions@wandsworth.gov.uk
Website	Wandsworth admissions site

Out-borough residents

If you are not a resident in Merton but you are thinking of applying for a Secondary School place in a Merton school, you will need to apply via your home borough.

Secondary school admissions criteria

Admissions criteria are the rules by which applications are ranked for each school. It is important you understand the admissions criteria for the schools you will name on your application. The criteria will vary depending on the type of school you are applying for, and these criteria will dictate how likely to it that you will be offered a place.

Community and voluntary controlled school admissions criteria

Please note that the criteria below apply only to Merton's Community and Voluntary Controlled schools (Raynes Park, Ricards Lodge and Rutlish). Academies and voluntary aided (Church affiliated) schools and schools in other boroughs apply their own criteria to applications and these are available either from the schools or by contacting the Admissions Team for the borough concerned.

1. Looked after children or previously looked after children
2. Where there are professionally supported medical reasons or exceptional social reasons why a child should attend a particular school
3. Where a sibling is already in the main school at the time of admission
4. Children of permanent staff employed in the main 11-16 school, in either or both of the following circumstances:
 - a. where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made,
 - b. and/or the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage
5. Straight line distance between the child's home address and the main school

Looked-after and previously looked after children

A looked after child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

A previously looked after child is a child who, immediately following being looked after, was subject to an adoption or subject to a child arrangements, or special guardianship order including those who appear to Merton as the admission authority to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

Medical or social reasons

Applicants wishing to be considered under this criterion must supply professional evidence supporting their case at the time of application.

Medical reasons

- if there are medical reasons that make it essential for your child to attend a particular school, you must provide supporting information from a doctor or health care professional together with any other relevant information by the closing date.
- this must make a compelling case as to why your child's needs can only be met at the preferred school, evidence of a medical condition will not automatically result in a place at your preferred school being offered.
- the evidence should explain exactly what your child's needs are and what specialist support or facilities your child requires.
- the evidence should explain why other schools could **not** provide the appropriate support for your child

Social reasons

- If there are social reasons that make it essential for your child to attend a particular school, you must provide independent evidence from a professional who is supporting your family.
- The supporting evidence needs to set out the reasons why the school in question is the most suitable and the difficulties that would be caused if your child had to attend another school.
- The evidence should explain exactly what the family's needs are and what specialist support or facilities are required.
- The evidence should explain why other schools could not provide the appropriate support.
- Providing evidence does not guarantee priority under this criterion; the School Admissions Team will consider if the evidence provided demonstrates that the child must attend a particular school and cannot reasonably attend an alternative school. Please note that your child's current (or most recently attended) school may be contacted for further information and may be sent a copy of your request. The information you provide may also be shared with an independent appeals panel should this be necessary. Applicants will not be individually advised if their application has been prioritised under this criterion.
- Merton cannot seek information on your behalf and we cannot contact any health care professionals direct for further information – please ensure that you supply all available evidence to us.
- Please note we cannot accept letters from yourself or from other members of your family, nor from your health visitor.
- School staff are not allowed to provide letters supporting placement at their own school so please do not ask your school to write a letter supporting your application.
- Based on previous decisions, it is unlikely that application will be prioritised for the following:
- Asthma, eczema, allergies, diabetes, dyslexia, travel sickness

- Dispensing of medication that may require some training as this can be undertaken by any school
- Use of a hearing aid
- Because an Education Health and Care Plan has not been completed
- Need for the child to stay in friendship groups
- Childcare arrangements where the carer lives close to a particular school.
- Work/travel arrangements
- Family members other than siblings
- A desire for a single sex school
- School specialisms
- Siblings in sixth form

If you feel that one of these examples should be considered you can apply but you would be expected to demonstrate how this has a significant impact on your child, why a particular school can meet your child's need more than any other and why you should be placed above other children when making allocations.

If you believe that your child has a medical need for a place in a particular school, please complete the medical/social form at the back of this booklet.

Siblings

Sibling refers to brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or the child of the parent/carer's partner, and in every case, who is living as part of the same family unit at the same address, Monday to Friday.

Ricards Lodge and Rutlish School have a cross-sibling policy; qualifying siblings attending either school will be considered under priority 3.

Siblings in Year 11 who are not staying for RR6 sixth form and those in Year 13 at the time of an application to start secondary school (Year 7) in September 2023 will not qualify under the sibling criterion.

Distance measurement

All distances will be measured by the computerised Geographical Information System maintained by Merton Admissions team. It should be noted that the computerised system measures from a start point plotted within the property at which the applicant lives to the main school reception entrance and calculates this measurement.

The child's home address excludes any business, relative's or childminder's address and must be the applicant's normal place of residence. If there is a genuine equal share custody arrangement between the two parents, the address that will be used will normally be the address of the parent who is claiming Child Benefit for the child, however all available evidence will be considered.

The address to be used for the initial allocation of places to Secondary School (Year 7) will be the child's address at the closing date for application. Changes of address up to 12 December 2023 may be considered if there are exceptional reasons behind the change, such as if a family has just moved to the area or has returned from abroad. Any offer is conditional upon the child living at the appropriate address on the relevant date. Parents have a responsibility to notify the Local Authority of any change of address.

Please note

- Applicants in short term rented accommodation may be asked to provide evidence of their current and former housing arrangements.
- Where an applicant has ownership of a property, that address should be used for the purposes of school admission. The applicant must provide evidence and reasons for the use of any other address.
- Where an applicant rents a property and has ownership of an alternative property, the rented property will only be used for admission purposes if the child has been resident away from the owned property for a period of 3 years or more at the closing date for applications.
- Any applicant who moves from a rented or temporary address in advance of their child taking up their school place may have their place withdrawn if it is found the family have returned to an address already in their ownership.
- The authority will investigate whether the place should be withdrawn if the pupil is not resident at the application address at the time of the September entry point.
- The authority will always investigate a case where the application address has previously been used to gain a school place fraudulently.
- Where it is found an address has been used for the purposes of admission where the child is not ordinarily resident, the application and any place offered will be withdrawn.
- An offer found to have been gained fraudulently will be withdrawn. This may also be the case where the child has started the school.
- In some cases, places may not be withdrawn once a child has been attending the school for a term or more. In these circumstances future sibling applications will not be given sibling priority for places and will be considered under the next appropriate criterion.
- Where more than one applicant has the same straight line distance measurement and distance is the determining factor, rank order will be determined by random allocation.

Applicants wishing to query a distance from home to school should contact the School Admissions Team at admissions@merton.gov.uk.

In cases where a distance calculation is disputed applicants should write to the School Admissions Manager, London Borough of Merton, 10th Floor, Civic Centre, Morden SM4 5DX. All disputes will be investigated. Where it is agreed that the basis of the calculation was incorrect the measurement will be recalculated. The calculation will be re-run for both the applicant in question and any other applicant shown to be affected by the issue.

Applications relating to twins, triplets, or other multiple births

Where a parent applies for entry into the same year group for more than one child and the final offered place falls between these children, the school will consider if they have capacity to offer to the additional children.

If it is not possible to offer a place to all of them, rank order will be determined by random allocation.

The names of the children who were unsuccessful will be added to the waiting list in accordance with the published admissions criteria, in the same way as for other children. The parent can then determine whether to accept or reject those places on an individual basis.

Admission criteria for Merton Academies and Voluntary Aided schools

Information on the admissions arrangements for Harris Academy Merton, Harris Academy Morden, Harris Academy Wimbledon, St Mark's Academy, Ursuline, and Wimbledon College can be found on the websites for these schools.

Supplementary forms

Some schools may ask for a supplementary form to be completed. The online application will advise you if this is the case.

In Merton you will need to complete a supplementary form if you are applying for Ursuline High School or Wimbledon College, or a foundation place at St Mark's Church of England Academy or a Music Aptitude place at Harris Academy Wimbledon.

If a school requires a supplementary form to consider whether you meet the faith requirement under its policy and you do not complete one, you will be ranked in their lowest category within its oversubscribed criteria.

If you are applying for schools outside of Merton you will need to find out if supplementary forms or online test registrations are necessary.

Supplementary forms should be returned directly to the school.

School places

Any change to admission numbers are included in the directory of schools.
www.merton.gov.uk/learning/schools/schoolsdirectory/primaryschools

Guide to applying for a secondary school place

The information in this booklet is for parents and carers with children due to transfer to secondary school from September 2024. If your child already attends secondary school and you need to know how to submit an application, please see www.merton.gov.uk/education-and-learning/schools/admissions/in-year-school-admissions-junior-applications-and-transfers

Before completing your secondary school application there are a few things to consider:

- Merton Council co-ordinates applications for secondary schools across academies, community, voluntary aided, out-borough and free schools. If you are applying for any of the voluntary aided (Church affiliated) schools, academies, or wish to apply for any schools outside Merton, you must include them in your application or they will be unable to consider your child for admission.
- You may also need to complete supplementary forms for some schools that require additional information. The information contained in the Admissions Criteria section will tell you which Merton schools need these. If you apply online, the system will automatically inform you if a supplementary form is required.
- Decide which schools you would like for your child in your preferred order. Each applicant in London is limited to a maximum of six preferences on their main Transfer to Secondary School application. It is recommended that you name at least one school for which your application is likely to be successful, for example, your local community.

How places are allocated

Merton Local Authority will always try to offer a place at the school you have named as the highest preference.

Our admission process operates an equal preference scheme, which means that each admissions authority will consider applications without referring to the order of preference on your application. This means that, if your child is unsuccessful at your first preference school, they will not get overlooked by schools lower down your order of preference.

If the school is oversubscribed and has more applicants than places available, all applications will be ranked in the order described in the admissions criteria. This will show if a child's name is high enough on the ranking list to be offered a place.

If a place at more than one school can be offered your child's place will be made for the highest preference school.

How places were allocated for September 2023

To see how places were allocated in 2023 and other previous years, please see our webpage: [How school places were allocated in recent years](#)

The way places are allocated at each school will vary each year according to the number of applications the school receives and where those applicants live. Living within a shown allocated distance for a school will not guarantee a place in this or future years. Please be realistic in your preferences and use as many as you can. Consider schools both in and outside of Merton if these are local to you.

Late applications or changes made to applications after the closing date

If your application is made after the closing date of 31 October 2023 or you change your existing preferences after this date, your application will be treated as late. A late application will not be considered until after all those that were received on time and may jeopardise the possibility of your child being offered a place at one of your preferred schools.

If the application is late, or preferences are changed for 'good reason', such as a change of address, these will be considered as 'on time' providing the evidence the change has taken place is received by 12 December 2023. Any applications or changes from this date will not be considered until after 1 March 2024.

To help us decide whether cases are late for 'good reason', parents must submit written evidence giving details of their case. A copy of their new Council Tax bill together with a solicitor's letter regarding contract completion or a copy of their new tenancy agreement, must accompany changes of address. If you are unsure whether your circumstances would be regarded as 'good reason', please contact the School Admissions Team for advice at admissions@merton.gov.uk.

Please note that forms that go missing in the postal system can only be reconsidered if there is proof of postage. Lost forms, where there is no proof of postage, are the responsibility of the applicant. For this reason we advise applying online wherever possible.

Children with special educational, health or care needs

If your child has an Education, Health and Care Plan and you live in Merton, you will need to call the SEN (Special Educational Needs) Team on 020 8545 4811 as your application process is different from that described here.

Please do not submit an application if your child has an Education, Health and Care Plan.

If you have applied for an Education, Health and Care Plan but have not been advised of the outcome you should submit a Transfer to Secondary application in the normal way and by the closing date of 31 October 2023.

Apply for a Secondary school place

Apply online

Last year 99% of applicants applied online.

We recommend that you apply online at www.eadmissions.org.uk

Please read the guidance below before applying.

Closings dates

The closing date is 31 October 2023.

Please do not leave your application to the last minute in case you need technical support and this delays submission of your application.

Information you will be asked for when applying online

You may be asked some additional questions depending on the school preferences you name.

Parent or carer's details

You will need to provide your name and address. The person applying on behalf of the child should be the person with parental responsibility for them.

Your contact details are vital; please ensure you include an up-to-date telephone number and email address. If you have already used eAdmissions to make an application for this child or a sibling, please ensure that you have checked that your details are correct.

Your child

We need your child's full name, date of birth and gender.

The address on the application must be your child's permanent place of residence. The child's home address excludes any business, relative's or childminder's address and must be the applicant's normal place of residence. If there is a genuine equal share custody arrangement between the two parents, the address that will be used will normally be the address of the parent who is claiming Child Benefit for the child, however all available evidence will be considered. Please also note that:

- Applicants in short term rented accommodation may be asked to provide evidence of their current and former housing arrangements.

- Where an applicant has ownership of a property, that should be used for the purposes of school admission and the applicant must provide evidence and reasons for the use of any other address.
- Where an applicant rents a property and has ownership of an alternative property, the rented property will only be used for admission purposes if the child has been resident away from the owned property for a period of 3 years or more at the closing date for applications.

You need to state whether your child is, or has previously been, in the case of a Local Authority - Looked After Children / Children in public care. If the child meets the criteria to be classified as a child in public care you must enclose either a letter from the relevant Local Authority confirming the legal status of the child, a copy of the care order, or a copy of the special guardianship order. Please note that children adopted from overseas are not classified as children in public care.

Indicate if your child has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). If 'yes' you should contact your SEN caseworker to follow a different application process.

Please select your child's current school or education provision from the menu.

Your secondary school preferences

You may name up to six schools on the form. The schools do not have to be in Merton, they can be in any borough.

Limiting the number of schools you name will not improve your chance of securing a place at your first preference school, but please do not name schools unless you are happy for your child to attend.

Please think carefully about your preference order. If you receive an offer at a preference school it may not be possible to offer a place at a lower preference school later if you change your mind.

Please name any sibling(s). You should check the admissions criteria for the school concerned as sibling rules may not be the same for each school, and not all schools give sibling priority. For most schools in Merton that give priority for siblings, sibling is defined as brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, or step brother or sister, and, in every case, who is living as part of the same family unit at the same address.

You may state a reason for your preference if you wish.

If you are attaching supporting documents to be considered under medical or social criteria, you should tick the box to confirm this. Medical or social reasons will not be considered unless supported by professionally written evidence which should either be attached to the online application or emailed to admissions@merton.gov.uk .

Your online form will inform you if any of the schools you name require a supplementary form and where these are available from.

Declaration and form submission

Please read the declaration carefully then submit the application.

If you move home or your circumstances change after completing your application, you must inform us via admissions@merton.gov.uk

Advantages of applying online

- Applying on line is quick and easy and comes with the following benefits:
- your forms will not get lost in the post
- quick, simple and no paper involved
- safe and secure password operated system
- the data validation system prevents you from giving incorrect school names or numbers
- you will receive an instant email confirmation of your submitted application
- you can change or amend your application right up to the closing date
- no risk of data input errors once the online form has been completed
- you will receive earlier notification of the result of your application
- save on paper and postage costs
- you can accept an offer online

Once you have registered to apply online, please keep a note of your user name and password. You will then be able to return to your application to make amendments until the statutory closing date of 31 October 2023, and to view the outcome on the evening of 1 March 2024.

If you apply using the online system it is important that you do not submit a paper form. Applying online and on paper will, at the very least, delay your application form being processed. If more than one application is completed for a child, the one with the later date on it will normally be accepted and the earlier one withdrawn.

All applications received by the closing date are treated equally. There is no priority for people who get their forms in early, so please take your time and only submit your application when you have carefully considered your options.

Frequently asked questions for Merton residents

What is the role of local councils and schools?

All school admissions applications for state funded schools (Community schools, Voluntary Aided Schools and Academies are all state funded) should be made to the local council that you are resident. The council has a coordinating role to ensure you are offered one state funded school place on national offer day. This is to your highest preference possible, whether the school is within your resident borough or not. For Community Schools the council also sets the admissions policy to priorities admissions applications. For Voluntary Aided Schools and Academies this is undertaken by the schools. All School Admissions authorities must abide by a nationally set Admissions Code of Practice.

What is an order of preference?

This is the order in which you name the schools you are applying for. You should name the school that you want your child to attend the most as your first preference. If more than one of the schools you have named is able to offer a place, you will be allocated the school you want the most. Please think about the order in which you name your schools very carefully. If you change your mind later, it may not be possible to offer a place at a lower preference school. Schools are not told your order of preference.

Are first preference applications considered before all others?

No. All applications for places are considered at the same time; this is called an equal preference scheme. Once all applications for schools have been ranked, if a place can be offered at more than one preference, an offer will be made for the school named as the highest preference out of those that can be offered.

How are places allocated?

If the school is oversubscribed, that is there are more applicants than places available, all applications will be ranked in the order described in the admissions criteria. Once all applications have been ranked we can see if a child's name is high enough on a ranking list to be offered a place. If a child can be offered a place at more than one school we will offer a place at whichever of these schools is the higher preference.

Am I entitled to apply only for single sex schools?

You may express a preference for single sex schools, however by law, the authority is under no obligation to consider only single sex schools for any applicant. All places are considered according to the published criteria which cannot, by law, give priority to parents who only name single sex schools.

My partner and I are separated but have joint access or responsibility. Which address should we use?

If you have joint access the parent who looks after the child for most of the school week should make the application and give their address. This address is always checked for oversubscribed schools and documentary proof may be requested.

If there is proof of genuine equal share custody arrangement between the two parents, the address that will be used will normally be the address of the parent who is claiming Child Benefit or the address that the child has been associated with longest. All available evidence will be considered and decisions made for each individual case but if you are unsure please contact the School Admissions Team at admissions@merton.gov.uk for advice.

My family or childminder looks after my child during the week. Can I put their address?

No. We cannot accept the address of childminders or a family who may help you with the care of your child. It must be the child's home address.

We are living at a temporary address. What should we do?

If you are living at a temporary address, changing your address before your child attends the school you choose, or will be returning to this country from an HM Forces posting overseas or temporary employment overseas, please contact the School Admissions Team for advice.

We are hoping to move in the next few weeks. What do we do?

If you change your permanent address after 12 December 2023, but before your child is admitted to the school, you should inform the School Admissions Team in writing. It is not sufficient to tell the school only. Please note that change of address details will only be accepted upon receipt of a new Council Tax bill or a new tenancy agreement. Other documents may also be requested to support a change of address. If you move after the form is submitted, but before 12 December 2023, please contact School Admissions at admissions@merton.gov.uk as soon as possible.

Please note, the offer of a place may be withdrawn if it is discovered that a parent has given an incorrect address or an 'address of convenience', such as a deliberate temporary address, business address, the home of a relative, a childminder's address or the address of a parent whom the child does not live with for most of the school week.

What happens if I do not get the place I want?

You are entitled to reject any place offered. However, if you reject an offer it will then become your responsibility to secure an alternative. If you are offered a place at a school that is not your first preference, you will automatically go on the waiting list for your higher preference schools. Any preferences that are lower than your offered preference are withdrawn. You will also have the right of appeal against any school that does not offer a place, providing it was named as one of your preferences.

If you are offered one of your lower preferences, we recommend that you accept the place while waiting to see if a higher offer can be made. This ensures that your child will have a school to go to in September and does not prejudice your right of appeal or your place on higher preference waiting lists.

I am a Merton resident. What happens if I don't get any of my preferred schools?

All parents have a right of appeal against a decision not to offer a place for a child. For community schools, appeals should be lodged with the local authority. For voluntary aided, academies and free schools, they should be lodged directly with the governing body of the particular school. For schools in other boroughs, you will need to contact that local authority for further information on their appeal procedures. Information about how to appeal will be sent to all applicants who do not get offered their first preference school on 1 March 2024. Appeals are likely to be heard during May and June. Please note that you can only appeal for schools for which you have applied.

If I do not get a school offer that I am happy with, can I educate my child at home?

You may choose to take this option but we do not recommend that you do so. If you decide that this is the best option for you, you must notify the local authority in writing. You must provide a curriculum suitable for a pupil of secondary age and the local authority has a duty to ensure that the education you provide is appropriate. The local authority will ask for full details of your arrangement and advisers will make monitoring visits while you are educating your child at home. We do not provide materials, tutors or funding and cannot support you educating your child at home.

I am thinking of sending my child to a private school for secondary education. What should I do?

If you definitely do not wish to send your child to a state funded secondary school (Community schools, Voluntary Aided Schools and Academies are all state funded) there is no need to make an application to School Admissions. However, if you do not apply on-time and change your mind you will be treated alongside other late applications where places are allocated after the initial offer day in March.

I have been offered a place at a private school. What should I do?

Accept or decline the state funded school place as per your application outcome. If you are accepting a place at a private school and you have already accepted a place at a state funded school, please inform us of this as soon as possible. It is very important that you do this as, if you don't let us know, you may be preventing another child from receiving an offer of a place. Also, if your child is expected to start at a school in September and does not arrive, an Education Welfare Officer will visit you to find out what arrangements you have made for his or her education.

If my child starts secondary school, can I apply for a move to another school?

We do not recommend a child changes school unless there is a house move involved which makes travel to school particularly difficult. If you wish to consider a change of school, please contact the School Admissions Team for advice and to discuss the options available.

I live in Merton. Is my child entitled to free school travel?

Children can travel free on the buses and trams provided that they have a child photo Oyster Card. An information leaflet and application form can be obtained from the Post

Office or on-line via the Transport for London (TfL) website. Some families who have a low income may qualify for assistance if it is essential that their child travels by train or underground, the school is a long distance from home, and no placement can be provided locally. More information can be found on the Free School Travel page on our website.

I don't live in Merton. Is my child entitled to free school travel?

You will need to contact the local authority in the borough where you live for further information, as each borough is responsible for the travel arrangements of its own residents.