

In Year Admissions

Admission to Schools in Cambridgeshire; a
guide for parents

2011
2012

December 2011

Key Contacts

Cambridgeshire Admissions Team

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Office Hours

Mon-Thurs 8:45-17:20
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Cambridgeshire Education Transport

☎ 0345 0455 208
@ edtransport@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
💻 www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/education/transport

Parents' Schools Preference Advisor

☎ 01223 699194
@ transitioninfoadvice@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
💻 www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/pps

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)

☎ 0808 800 5793
💻 www.ace-ed.org.uk

Department for Education (DfE)

Ofsted

💻 www.ofsted.gov.uk

Schools finder directory

💻 <http://schoolsfinder.direct.gov.uk/>

School performance tables

💻 www.dcsf.gov.uk/performancetables

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Introduction

This leaflet is for parents who are currently living in Cambridgeshire, or are moving in to the County, who are seeking a school place for their child during the academic year.

You might be making an application at this time because you are:-

- **Moving house;**
- or
- **Wishing to move your child to a different school, if you have not moved**

This leaflet explains:

- The application process
- The types of schools in Cambridgeshire
- Making your application
- Changing your child's school
- How your application is processed
- What happens next?
- Frequently asked questions
- Contact information

Please read the information in this leaflet carefully and contact us if you need any further help.

Information is also provided on our website at:

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/admissions

The Application Process

If you live in Cambridgeshire, or are moving into Cambridgeshire, you must apply on the Cambridgeshire County Council “In-Year School Application Form” for a place at any state-funded school, regardless of whether that school is within Cambridgeshire, or in another local authority area.

The Local Authority (LA) Admissions Team will not accept an application more than six teaching weeks before the intended school start date.

Details of Cambridgeshire’s state-funded schools are available in the information sheets on the LA website. You can also visit <http://my.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/> which enables you to search for schools based on your home post code, or you can contact the LA Admissions Team.

More information regarding the schools you may be interested in can be obtained from:-

- The school website – where you can download a copy of the school prospectus and find general information regarding curriculum and organisation. Most Cambridgeshire school websites can be accessed from our website at, www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/education, click on “find school details” link.
- A school visit – please arrange this directly with the school
- Make use of other resources available, such as Ofsted reports and Department for Education (DfE) performance tables, details of which are available on page 2 of this leaflet

The types of schools in Cambridgeshire

There are six main groups of state-funded schools in Cambridgeshire:

Voluntary Aided Schools

Voluntary Aided Schools are mainly religious or “faith” schools, although anyone can apply for a place. The Governing Body are their own admission authority and set the oversubscription criteria, which often reflects the school’s religious character.

Foundation Schools

Foundation schools, as with Voluntary Aided schools, are their own admissions authority and set their own oversubscription criteria. They do not, however, hold any religious character.

Foundation schools with a trust

Trust schools are schools which have formed links with a charitable organisation (the Trust) formed by partners such as universities, businesses or voluntary organisations. These schools are also their own admissions authority and set their own oversubscription criteria.

Voluntary Controlled Schools

These schools are similar to voluntary aided schools, in that they are schools which hold a religious character. However, unlike voluntary aided schools the LA is the admission authority and sets the oversubscription criteria.

Community Schools

Community schools hold no religious character. The LA is the admission authority and sets the oversubscription criteria.

Academy Schools

Academy schools are state-funded independent schools. Each academy is operated by a trust which appoints a governing body who are their own admission

authority and set their own oversubscription criteria.

A number of Cambridgeshire schools have converted to academy status already. Other schools are also submitting requests to the DfE to convert to academy status.

For further information please contact your preferred school directly. Further information is also available at:

www.education.gov.uk/academies.

Specialist Schools

Many secondary schools in Cambridgeshire have specialist school status. Under the specialist schools programme, schools may apply for specialist status in arts, modern foreign languages, technology, business and enterprise, science, mathematics and computing, engineering and sport.

Specialist schools are supported by private sector sponsors and extra government funding. Although specialist schools develop expertise in their specialist area, they continue to provide a broad and balanced curriculum, which meets National Curriculum requirements.

Remember

There is no automatic entry to any Cambridgeshire school. An application form must be completed in all cases before a school place can be offered.

Making your application

Preferences

You can express a preference for up to three schools when you make the application for your child (parental preference). We will offer you a place at your first preference school wherever possible.

You do not have to express three preferences or apply to your catchment area school, but if you do not, you may find you are allocated a place at a school that is further away if your preferences cannot be met. If this happens you may be responsible for transporting your child to and from that school.

If you apply for and are allocated a place at a school that is not your child's catchment school you need to be aware that:

- It is not always possible to allocate a place to a younger brother or sister at the school in the future;
- You will be responsible for any transport arrangements and costs. However, if you wish your child to be educated at a denominational school for genuine religious reasons, some assistance may be available; and
- Admission authorities cannot reserve places so you are strongly advised to include your catchment school as one of your preferences.

Completing the In Year School Application Form

Where a child is moving to a new address, proof of the address will be required before the application can be processed. Where this is not provided with the application form a letter will be sent requesting this information and the application will be held pending receipt of this information.

Where Part 2 of the application form has not been completed by the child's current school, the form will be emailed by the LA Admissions Team to the current school for completion, where appropriate to do so.

Please note: if you do not provide the evidence requested in Part 1 of the application form, or Part 2 of the application has not been completed by your child's current school, we cannot treat the application as being complete. This means that we will not be able to begin processing the application until the evidence, or information, required has been provided, which will delay the process.

Changing your child's school

Before changing your child's school you need to consider the following:

- Schools that teach the National Curriculum do so in different ways and at different times of the academic year. Your child may miss out or repeat part of the scheme of work at the new school.
- If your child is in KS3 it may not be possible for the school to place your child immediately into the most appropriate class group for their age and abilities. Additionally your child may not be able to

take the same subjects at a new school, or choose the same options if they are in Year 9?

- If your child is in KS4 they may not be able to study the same exam course/subject at the new school?
- Transporting your child to the new school?

If, having considered these factors, you still feel there are strong and valid reasons for requesting a transfer to another school you should still discuss this with your child's tutor/head of year or head teacher prior to making an application.

Please note

In these circumstances, it may not be possible to offer a school place immediately, and you may be offered a school place for the start of the following term/half term.

It may also not be possible to place your child (immediately) in the appropriate groups for their level of ability, nor match any optional subjects currently being studied.

How places are offered

On receipt of a completed application form you should receive an offer of a school place within 10 school days.

Each school has a **Published Admission Number (PAN)**. This is the maximum number of pupils that can be admitted each year, based on the accommodation available at a school. The number is based on a national formula for deciding how many children can go to a school without causing overcrowding.

Many schools receive more applications than there are places available. To decide which

children to offer places to, specific admission criteria are used. These are known as the school's oversubscription criteria.

What are oversubscription criteria?

These are the criteria by which all applications are prioritised when more applications are received than there are places available. Different schools have different criteria, so it is important that you check the admission arrangements for all the schools in which you are interested.

Oversubscription Criteria for Foundation and Aided Schools and Academies

Details of the oversubscription criteria for all Cambridgeshire foundation, voluntary aided and academies can be found within the school information sheets appropriate to the local district council area in which the school is located, available on our website; www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/admissions

or from the LA Admissions Team directly.

The relevant local district council areas are:

- Cambridge City
- East Cambridgeshire
- Fenland
- Huntingdon
- South Cambridgeshire.

Oversubscription Criteria for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools

The oversubscription for all community and voluntary controlled schools are determined annually by the LA, as the Admission Authority for these schools.

The oversubscription criteria for the academic year 2011 - 2012 are:

Children who have a statement of special educational needs that names the school will be admitted. NB. Those children with a statement of special educational needs that does not name the school will be referred to Student Assessment to determine an appropriate place.

1. Children in Care, also known as Looked After Children (LAC);
2. Children who live in the catchment area, attend primary schools within the catchment area and who have a sibling at the school at the time of admission;
3. Children who live in the catchment area with a sibling at the school at the time of admission;
4. Children who live in the catchment area who attend the primary schools within it;
5. Children who live in the catchment area;
6. Children who live outside the catchment area, who attend primary schools within it and who have a sibling at the school at the time of admission;
7. Children who live outside the catchment area who have a sibling at the school at the time of admission
8. Children who live outside the catchment area who attend the primary schools within the catchment area;
9. Children who live outside the catchment area, but nearest the school, as measured by a straight line.

In cases of equal merit, priority will go to children living nearest the school according to the shortest straight line distance.

The Allocation Process

These are the steps that are taken once your completed application has been received.

Step 1 If we can meet your first preference, we will offer your child a place at that school.

Step 2 If we cannot meet your first preference but can meet your second preference, we will offer your child a place at that school. Your child's name will then be added to the reserve list of your first preference school.

Step 3 If we cannot meet your second preference, but can meet your third preference, we will offer your child a place at that school. Your child's name will be added to the reserve lists for your first and second preference schools.

Step 4 If we cannot meet any of your preferences, we will offer your child a place at your catchment school (if you have not included it in your preferences and if there is a place available there) or the next nearest designated school with a place available. The nearest designated school* is measured by the shortest available walking distance. Your child's name will be added to the reserve list for all of your preferred schools.

*The designated school will be either:-

- a) the catchment school; or
- b) the nearest appropriate school; or
- c) the school specified in the child's statement of special educational need.

What happens next?

If you are not happy with the school offered you are entitled to an Independent Appeal against this decision.

Your child's name will remain on the school's reserve list for the remainder of the term in which you applied and the following term. Where places at the school become available they will be offered in accordance with the school's published admission criteria.

You can request an independent appeal against the decision to refuse your child a place at any schools. Information on the appeal process will be included with your offer letter, where it has not been possible to meet your highest ranked preference.

How do I request an appeal?

You will need to complete an appeal form which is available from the Admissions Team directly. This can be requested by email or by phone. Further information is available via our website at:

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/admissions.

When will my appeal be heard?

Your appeal will be heard within 30 school days of receiving your appeal form.

What happens at an appeal hearing?

An independent appeal panel will hear the admission authority's reasons for not giving your child a place at your preferred school.

During the appeal hearing the admission authority will explain why your preference was not met and why it is not possible to offer your child a place at your preferred school. You will then be given the opportunity to explain your reasons for wishing your child to attend your preferred school.

It is possible for your appeal to be heard in your absence if you would prefer not to come

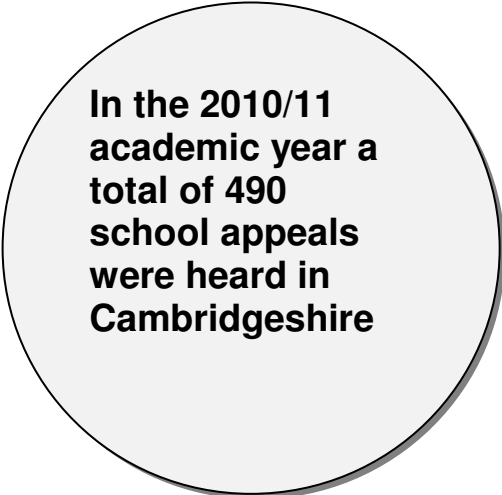
and present your case in person. These appeals are considered only on the written information that you provide. It is, therefore, important that you consider whether you should attend the appeal in person or not.

The clerk to the appeal panel will let you know the decision in writing within five working days.


What if my appeal is unsuccessful?

The appeal panel's decision is legally binding on both yourself as the appellant and the admission authority. It is not possible to have another appeal for the same school within the same academic year, unless there has been a significant change in your circumstances.

Your options will be either to accept the school place that has been offered to you, or, alternatively, submit a new application for another school.



**In the 2010/11
academic year a
total of 490
school appeals
were heard in
Cambridgeshire**



**Of which
143 were
successful**

Frequently Asked Questions about making an application

My child has a statement of special educational needs, do I still need to complete an application form?

Any move of school should be discussed with your child's current school and your SEN casework officer. **You should, in all cases, complete an application for your child.**

Which home address should I use?

It is very important that the address you give on your child's application will be your child's permanent address at the time the school place is allocated.

If you are intending to move home you will need to provide proof of the new address in order for it to be considered;

- a letter from your solicitor confirming exchange of contracts and completion date; or
- a copy of a rental agreement for at least **6 months** signed by both yourself and the landlord.

If you are moving from overseas and are unable to provide your proof of address, your application will **not** be processed until such time as the proof is received.

My child's time is split between two addresses – which address do we use?

If a child lives at more than one address, the address that will be considered will be where the child spends the majority of their school nights.

Only one address can be considered as your child's main residence. Please note that an address used for before and after-

school childcare arrangements will **not** be considered.

What if someone uses a fraudulent address or gives other false information on their application?

Every year there are cases where parents have given false information about their home address in order to obtain a place at a particular school. We do all we can to make sure that this does not happen because this can prevent genuine applicants from getting a place at a school. The LA Admissions Team may ask for proof of your address at any time throughout the application and allocation process. The records at your child's current school will also be used help verify that the information provided on your child's application is correct.

If you have any concerns or information about fraudulent addresses, please contact the LA Admissions Team, in confidence.

What happens if I have twins or multiple-birth children?

If you have more than one child going through the process at the same time, you must make a separate application for each of them. Every effort will be made by the LA to ensure that these children will be offered places together unless to do so would breach infant class size legislation.

What is a catchment area?

In Cambridgeshire we operate a catchment area system. A catchment area is a defined geographical area surrounding a school from which it will usually take the majority of its pupils.

All schools in Cambridgeshire, with the exception of St Bede's Inter Church School, St Alban's Roman Catholic Primary School and St Laurence Roman Catholic Primary School, have a catchment area.

I wish to make an application to an independent school as well as a state-funded school, who do I need to contact?

Any applications for an independent school (i.e. fee-paying) place will need to be sent directly to the school. They should not form part of your application to the LA.

What are Supplementary Information Forms (SIF)

In most cases it is only necessary to complete the LA's application form. However, some foundation, voluntary aided and academies may require the completion of a **Supplementary Information Form (SIF)**. This is used to help the governors consider your application fully, in accordance with the school's admission criteria.

This form can be obtained directly from the school or the council website. Once completed this must be returned to the school, to be considered in conjunction with your application form.

Who is responsible for home to school transport?

Generally, as a parent, you are responsible for your child's journey to and from school. If you express a preference for your child to attend a school which is not your catchment school, or the school designated by the LA, you will be responsible for making arrangements for your child's journey to and from school and for meeting any costs involved.

You will be advised in your offer letter if you are entitled to home to school transport for your child.

Further information regarding the county's home to school transport policy can be found on the council website or by contacting the Education Transport Team.

Admission of children from overseas

If you are moving from overseas, either on a temporary or permanent basis, your child may be eligible for a Cambridgeshire school place. In order to be eligible your child must be:

- between the age of 4 and 16;
- resident in Cambridgeshire for six teaching weeks or longer;

If your child does not meet the above criteria, they will not be eligible for education in Cambridgeshire and your application will **NOT** be considered.

UK Service Personnel/Crown Agents

Admission authorities **must** treat a family being posted to their area, whose posting abroad comes to an end, as meeting the residency criteria for the catchment area even if no house is currently owned in that area, once proof of the posting has been provided.

A school place will be allocated in advance if accompanied by an official government letter declaring a relocation date and intended address. The Admissions Team will accept a unit postal address or a quartering area address for applications from service personnel in the absence of a new postal address.

Useful Contact Information

Cambridgeshire Racial Equality and Diversity Service (CREDS)

✉ CPDC
Foster Road
Trumpington
Cambridge
CB2 9NL

☎ 01223 703882
@ creds@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
💻 www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/education/parents/race/

Education Support for Looked After Children (ESLAC)

✉ c/o Education Other Than At School
Roger Ascham Site
Ascham Road
Cambridge
CB4 2BD

☎ 01223 712904

@ eslac@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
💻 www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/education/parents/public_care/lac/

Education Welfare Benefits Service

✉ Scott House
5 George Street
Huntingdon
PE29 3AD

☎ 01480 372307
@ ewb.fsm@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
💻 www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/education/parents/help/

Parent Partnership Service

✉ Box CC1101
Castle Court
Castle Hill
Cambridgeshire
CB3 0AP

CALL (Confidential Advice Line Link)
☎ 01223 699214 - Countywide
@ pps@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
💻 www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/pps

Special Education Needs – Statutory Assessment and Resources Team

✉ Box SCO2209
Scott House
Huntingdon
PE29 3AD

☎ 01480 372600
@ start@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
💻 www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/education/parents/special_needs

Neighbouring Local Authorities

Central Bedfordshire

☎ 01234 718120

School Admissions Service
Borough Hall, Cauldwell Street
Bedford, MK42 9AP

@ admissions@bedford.gov.uk

🌐 www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Bedford Borough Council

☎ 01234 228846

School Admissions Service
Borough Hall, Cauldwell Street
Bedford, MK42 9AP

@ admissions@bedford.gov.uk

🌐 www.bedford.gov.uk

Essex County Council

☎ 0845 603 2200

School Planning & Admissions
PO Box 4261, Chelmsford
CM1 1GS

@ admissions@essexcc.gov.uk

🌐 www.essex.gov.uk

Hertfordshire County Council

☎ 0300 123 4043

Admissions and Transport Team CHR102
Hertfordshire County Council
County Hall
Peggs Land, Hertford
SG13 8GF

@ hertsdirect@hertscc.gov.uk

🌐 www.hertsdirect.org

Lincolnshire County Council

☎ 01522 782030

County Offices,
Newland, Lincoln
LN11XX

@ schooladmissions@lincolnshire.gov.uk

🌐 www.lincolnshire.gov.uk

Norfolk County Council

☎ 0344 800 8001

School Admissions
Room 7, County Hall,
Martineau Lane,
Norwich, NR1 2DH

@ admissions@norfolk.gov.uk

🌐 www.norfolk.gov.uk

Northamptonshire County Council

 01604 236236

Admissions Team

John Dryden House, 8-10 The Lakes
Northampton, NN4 7YD

@ admissions@northamptonshire.gov.uk

 www.northamptonshire.gov.uk

Peterborough City Council

 01733 864007

Admissions Team

Bayard Place, Broadway
Peterborough, PE1 1FB

@ admissions@peterborough.gov.uk

 www.peterborough.gov.uk

Suffolk County Council

 0845 600 0981

Western Area Admissions

West Suffolk House

Bury St Edmunds

IP33 3YU

@ admissions.west@csduk.com

 www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissionstoschools

**This booklet is available in a variety of languages,
large-print and Braille. If you require an alternative version
please contact the Admissions Team**

 01223 699662

 admissions@cambridgeshire.gov.uk