

School admissions applications

Mythbuster

Myth: If I get my application in as soon as I can after the application system is open I will have more chance of getting a place.

Fact: All applications received by the deadline will be considered equally in the allocation process so there is no advantage in applying early – but there would be a disadvantage in applying after the deadline as it is possible that some schools will already be full.

Myth: It will not matter too much if I miss the application deadline.

Fact: Applications submitted after the deadline will not be processed until after all those submitted on time. There will be some delay before a place can be allocated and it is possible that some schools will already be full.

Myth: If I only put one school preference my child will be more likely to get a place there/the Council will have to offer my child a place there.

Fact: Listing only one preference means that, if the Local Authority cannot allocate a place at the school because you do not have enough priority according to the school's oversubscription criteria, you will be allocated the nearest school with a space available after all other parents' preferences have been taken into account. If you have not listed any other preferences, you might be allocated a school some distance away as other parents who did express additional preferences will take priority for the nearer schools. This is why the Local Authority encourages parents to name more than one preference and strongly recommends listing your nearest school or schools as one of those preferences.

Myth: If I don't get a place at my preferred school, I will get a place at my nearest school anyway.

Fact: If the Local Authority cannot allocate a place at your preferred school because you do not have enough priority according to the school's oversubscription criteria, you will be allocated the nearest school with a space available after all other parents' preferences have been taken into account. If you have not listed any other preferences, you could be allocated a school some distance away from your home address as other parents who did express additional preferences will take priority for the nearer schools, even if those schools are designated or nearer to you.

Myth: One of my children already goes to the school so my other child will automatically get a place.

Fact: Each child's school place must be applied for and there is no automatic allocation based on having a sibling at the same school. This depends on the individual school's oversubscription criteria and whilst many schools do offer some priority to siblings in their oversubscription criteria this may come after children living in the designated area, or vice versa. Your child having a sibling in the school does not guarantee a place if there are other children who rank higher in the criteria. If your child does have a sibling attending the school already, make sure you indicate this on your application form.

Myth: Living near to a school gives you greater priority for a place.

Fact: Many schools do offer some priority based on designated area or distance from the school in their oversubscription criteria but this does not guarantee a place if there are other children who rank higher in the criteria. Just because someone living near to you was allocated a place last year this does not mean that you will also secure a place there.

Myth: One of my children receives transport free of charge, so my other child will also receive transport free of charge to that school automatically.

Fact: Transport is allocated on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy so there is no guarantee of transport free of charge to an additional child in a household. If one of your children receives transport to a school because it was the nearest one with a place available, other children may not be entitled if a place would have been available for them at a nearer school. We strongly recommend that you enquire about transport entitlement before applying for a school place if you are in any doubt.

Myth: Having my child in the nursery/pre-school at my preferred school means I do not need to apply/I get more priority for a place in reception.

Fact: All reception places must be applied for, regardless of whether or not a child is attending the attached nursery/pre-school. Schools are able to offer some priority to children with specific circumstances that are attending an attached nursery/pre-school in their oversubscription criteria but this does not guarantee a place if there are other children who rank higher in the criteria.

