**Secondary School Allocation Information**

**This document provides the following information:**

* Contacting the admissions team
* Reasons for not being offered your preferred school or schools
* Allocated a school that was not one of your choices
* Waiting lists
* Accepting your place/or not – including accepting a school that is not your preferred school.
* Submitting a new application to change your school choices
* Appeals
* Allocation details
* Further allocation information

**Contacting the admissions team**

Please read all of the information below before contacting the team as many of your questions should be answered here. The best way to contact the team is by email: admissions@westberks.gov.uk and we can normally respond the same day depending on the time you email. You can phone the main switchboard (01635 519780) to be directed to the admissions team if you would like to speak to one of us but you may find it difficult to get through due to the volume of calls on offer day. Please leave a voicemail as this is emailed to the whole team rather than trying numerous times. Again we can normally respond the same day.

**Reasons for not being offered your preferred school or schools**

If you applied for a school or schools that received more applications than there were spaces, the school’s admission policy and admission criteria are used to place your child on a ranked list with all of the other applicants. If your child is not ranked high enough for any school, it is not possible for us to offer you a place in any preferred school. If you applied for a Grammar school but your child did not sit or pass the test your application will not have been considered.

The table at the end of this document shows which of the West Berkshire schools (the ones with waiting lists) received more applications than they have capacity for. The table shows the admission criteria and distance of the 1st child on the waiting list to help you understand why a place could not be offered at your preferred school or schools.

**Allocated a school that was not one of your choices**

When we can’t offer a place in one of your choices we will offer you a place in the closest school to your home that still has spaces. We are required to do this as described in the school admissions code of practice. Once allocated a school, this is not the end of the process. Places may become available from waiting lists or you can apply for different schools that have spaces or schools where you may be closer to the top of their waiting list.

You can decline your offered school if you will be making alternative arrangements. If you don’t have another school for your child to attend there is no advantage in declining the place. It will not give you additional priority on waiting lists for your preferred schools and you will have no school allocated for your child.

**Waiting lists**

In West Berkshire we automatically place children on each higher preference school waiting list. Parents can contact the Admissions Team to find out their child’s position on the list and it’s best to do this by email. You can email for updates but please wait until after 20 March before submitting your 2nd request because we won’t be making any late offers from waiting lists until that point.

We asks parents to confirm if they are accepting their offered school place. Some parents will decline their offer of a place and we will offer places that become available to children on the waiting list.

Positions on waiting lists can change up or down because the lists are ranked based on the admission criteria and distance of each child. If we receive a late application, the child will be placed with regard to the policy rather than being placed at the bottom of the list **(a legal requirement).** It is possible that you could be reasonably high on a waiting list and then continue to move further down because other families move in closer or into the catchment area for the school.

**The table below shows how many places have been declined in previous years between 01 March and 01 September of the same year.**

It provides an indication of what to expect but remember that late applications could be placed above your child.

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| School | 2023 | 2022 | 2021 | 2020 | 2019 | 2018 |
| Denefield | 11 | 18 | 12 | 16 | 12 | 20 |
| Kennet | 21 | 14 | 16 | 10 | 9 | 12 |
| Little Heath | 9 | 26 | 13 | 14 | 12 | 28 |
| St. Bartholomew’s | 12 | 10 | 10 | 5 | 11 | 28 |
| The Downs | 49 | 47 | 21 | 38 | 33 | 57 |
| The Willink | 14 | 18 | 20 | 17 | 14 | 15 |
| Trinity  | 21 | 23 | 19 | 8 | 21 | 16 |

 | Places may be declined in March when parents respond to the offer but that isn’t the end as families move away or receive confirmation of private school places. |

**Waiting lists for schools outside of West Berkshire**

If you were unsuccessful in your application for a school outside of West Berkshire please let us know if you would like to be placed on the waiting list and we will let that Local Authority know. You should contact them to ensure that your child has been placed on a waiting list and ask for the position although some surrounding LA’s have slightly different approaches and don’t set waiting lists up until a later date.

**Accepting or declining a school place**

We would like you to accept or decline your place as soon as possible so that we can update and offer any places that become available. If you accept a lower preference school or a school that was not a choice, you will still remain on all higher preference waiting lists.

If you are not satisfied with the school that has been offered we recommend that you still accept it until your child can be offered one of your original choices or an alternative because otherwise your child will have no school place allocated. Declining an offer at a lower preference school or a school that was not a preference will not increase the chance of being offered a place in your preferred school.

**Changing your school preference**

You can submit a late application with up to 4 school preferences if you would like to add or change your school preferences. The application is available at [www.westberks.gov.uk/secondary-school-admissions](http://www.westberks.gov.uk/secondary-school-admissions)

**Submitting an appeal against the decision**

You can submit an appeal for a place in 1 or more of your preferred schools. You need to write your reasons for appealing on the appeal form. You need to provide as much information as possible to explain why your child needs a place in the school and why their needs can’t be met in another. If you believe your application was processed incorrectly and your child should have been offered a place, you can submit an appeal on these grounds but make sure you contact the admissions team as soon as possible. If we can see that a mistake has caused your child not to be offered we would normally offer the place.

**The appeals process**

Once your appeal has been submitted, a date will be arranged to hear your appeal alongside all other appeals made for a place in the school. The school admission authority will provide a response to all submitted appeals that will explain why the school cannot accommodate additional children. Admission appeals for West Berkshire Secondary Schools are normally heard towards the end of May and in June (Not the half term week).

The schools set their admission number as high as possible as the best compromise between budget and providing suitable education within the accommodation that they have. Their appeal statement will provide information that supports this. There are no places held back when places are offered, any successful appeal will result in a child being admitted in excess of the school’s admission number.

Parents are invited to the appeal hearing to put their case forward to an independent appeal panel. First the admission authority will put forward their case and the appeal panel will determine if they have proven their case that additional children should not be placed in the school. The panel have to decide at this point if the school could accommodate all of the children with submitted appeals. If they decided the school could accommodate all, then all would be offered. If they do not, all parents will individually put their case to the panel and the panel will decide if an individual’s reasons out way the problems that the school would have in admitting an extra child. One or more children could be offered places at this stage but equally, no places will be offered if the cases are not stronger than the schools.

The appeals clerk will write to parents after all of the appeals for the school have been heard to inform them of the decision.

**How to appeal**

You have to ensure that you submit your appeal by 31 March to the relevant admission authority or local authority.

The best way to appeal is usually online if the service is available. West Berkshire council provide the service for 8 out of the 10 West Berks schools – www.westberks.gov.uk/school-admission-appeals

To appeal for St Bartholomew’s you have to contact the school’s Appeal Clerk on 01635 521255

The best way to appeal for Schools in other Local Authority areas is also to check their websites. We have also provided contact details for our surrounding Local Authorities in case you need assistance.

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| **School appeal details for surrounding Local Authorities** |
| Hampshire: [www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/admissions/guidance/appeals](http://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/admissions/guidance/appeals) |
| Oxfordshire Schools: [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/apply-school-place/school-appeals](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/apply-school-place/school-appeals) |
| Reading Borough Council schools: [www.reading.gov.uk/children-and-education/schools/schoolappeals/](http://www.reading.gov.uk/children-and-education/schools/schoolappeals/) |
| Wiltshire County Council Schools:  [Appealing against a decision - Wiltshire Council](https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/article/1686/Appealing-against-a-decision) |
| Wokingham County Council Schools email: [www.wokingham.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-admissions/school-admissions-appeals-and-exclusions](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-admissions/school-admissions-appeals-and-exclusions)If appealing for a Grammar School, you should check the school’s website which will provide information on how to appeal. |

**2024 allocation data for each school**

**Explanation for the information shown in the table below**

* **Sch.Type:** Voluntary Aided Schools and Academy Schools are responsible for their own admission policies and have different oversubscription rules to Community Schools which are set by the Local Authority.
* **Admission Number:** The number of children that can be offered to schools each year. There are circumstances where schools will exceed this number and if there is demand they ensure they offer places to as many children as possible.
* **Allocated:** The number of children offered a school place in each school.
* **Space:** Shows the number of spaces remaining in schools that are not full to capacity.
* **Last child offered / Admission Rule & Distance:** Each child meets a specific admission oversubscription criterion and by measuring the home to school distance (straight line) for each child’s preferred schools we can create a ranked list. The oversubscription rule and distance shown are for the lowest ranked child in the list that we could offer a place to.
* **1st child on waiting list / Admission Rule & Distance:** Following on from above, the next child in the ranked list is placed 1st on the waiting list.
* **Total on waiting list:** Children are placed on waiting lists for all higher preference schools that were not offered and this shows the total for each school with a waiting list.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Allocation table** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **School** | **Sch. Type** | **Admission number** | **Allocated** | **Admission Criteria of last child allocated** | **Distance of last child allocated (miles)** | **Admission Criteria of 1st child on waiting list** | **Distance of 1st child on waiting list (miles)** | **Total on Waiting list** |
| Denefield School | Academy | 180 | 200 | Other Applicants | 1.589 | Other Applicants | 1.605 | 58 |
| John O'Gaunt School | Academy | 120 | 102 | Other Applicants | 13.067 | Other Applicants  |  |  |
| Kennet School | Academy | 300 | 300 | Other Applicants | 4.087 | Other Applicants | 4.844 | 3 |
| Little Heath School | Voluntary Aided | 260 | 270 | Other Applicants | 1.427 | Other Applicants | 1.446 | 70 |
| Park House School | Academy | 205 | 159 | Other Applicants | 14.632 |  Other Applicants |  |  |
| St Bartholomew's School | Academy | 270 | 270 | Other Applicants | 0.955 | Other Applicants | 0.963 | 124 |
| The Downs School | Foundation | 210 | 210 | Feeder School | 8.315 | Other Applicants | 3.818 | 108 |
| The Willink School | Community | 208 | 208 | Other Applicants | 3.84 | Other Applicants | 3.867 | 42 |
| Theale Green School | Academy | 180 | 180 | Other Applicants | 17.46 |  Other Applicants |  |  |
| Trinity School | Academy | 210 | 240 | Other Applicants | 1.496 | Other Applicants | 1.506 | 53 |

**Further allocation information is available at:** [**School Admission Data - West Berkshire Council**](https://www.westberks.gov.uk/school-admission-data)

**School Transport**

[Free school transport](https://www.westberks.gov.uk/free-school-transport) may be available to your nearest school. There are other eligibility criteria such as distance and low-income families may be entitled to receive free transport to one of their closest 3 schools. Full details are available in the [Free Home to School Transport Policy.](https://www.westberks.gov.uk/free-school-transport)

If you are eligible and would like to apply, please apply as soon as you can to ensure you have transport in place for September.