

Admissions criteria for community and voluntary controlled schools 2015/16

The criteria outlined below apply only to Croydon community and voluntary controlled schools.

Voluntary controlled schools also have their own denominational criteria, and therefore these schools have their own pages in this prospectus setting out their full admissions criteria.

Should any community/controlled school convert to academy status prior to September 2015, their admissions arrangements will apply as published below or otherwise in their funding agreement.

If the number of applications for a community or voluntary controlled school is higher than the number of places available then, after admitting to that school the children with a statement of special educational need that names this school, the following criteria will be applied in the order set out below to decide the allocation of places:

1. Looked-after children and previously looked-after children (see Note 1).

2. In the case of Beulah Junior, Elmwood Junior and Parish Church CE Junior schools, children who are on the roll of their linked infant school at the time of application, and in the case of Winterbourne Junior Girls, girls who are on the roll of Winterbourne Nursery and Infants at time of application (see Note 2).

3. Siblings: Children with a brother or sister who will be in attendance at the school or the linked infant/junior school at the time of enrolment of the new pupil (see Note 3).

4. Medical: Pupils with serious medical reasons for needing to attend this school. For primary age children, their need to attend this school because of a parent's serious and continuing medical condition may also be relevant. Supporting evidence should be set out on the medical form which is available online at: www.croydon.gov.uk/education/schools-new/school-admissions/how-to-apply/school-place-home giving the particular reasons why this school is the most suitable and the difficulties that would be caused if the child had to attend another school. The medical reason must be verified by a GP or consultant, and both the completed medical form and the supporting statement from the GP or consultant must be submitted with the application (see Note 4).

5. Distance: Priority will be given to pupils living nearest to the school as measured in a straight line (see Notes 5 and 6).

Tiebreaker

In the event that the number of applications for places exceeds the number of places available after application of the admissions criteria, distance will be used to decide between applications. Where distance is the same for two or more applications the authority will use random allocation, which will be independently verified.

The local authority uses the equal preference model for deciding which school is offered. This means that all school preferences are considered together and the admissions criteria applied equally. The order of preference will be used only if it is possible to offer more than one of the preferences. The highest preference offer available will be made, except where the authority is unable to offer any of the preferences, in which case, a place at the nearest school with a place available will be offered.

Note 1: Looked-after children are defined as 'children in public care at the date on which the application is made'. Previously looked-after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order, immediately after being looked-after. If an application is made under the 'looked-after' criterion, it must be supported by a letter from the relevant local authority children's services department and/or relevant documents.

Note 2: This criteria does not include siblings on the roll of the infant school's nursery class, if it has one.

Linked Infant School	Linked Junior School
Beulah Infants	Beulah Junior
Elmwood Infants	Elmwood Junior
Parish Church C of E Infants	Parish Church C of E Juniors
Winterbourne Infants	Winterbourne Junior Girls

Note 3: A sibling is defined as a brother or sister, half-brother or sister, step brother or sister, foster-brother or sister or adopted brother or sister whose main residence is the same address as the child for whom the school place application is being made.

This criteria does not include siblings on the roll of the school's nursery class, if it has one.

Note 4: All schools have experience in dealing with children with medical needs. In a very few exceptional cases, however, there may be reasons why a child needs to attend a specific school. If you feel there are exceptional reasons for your child to be considered for a priority placement at a particular school, you must indicate this in the section provided in your application, and complete the medical form which is available online at: www.croydon.gov.uk/education/schools-new/school-admissions/how-to-apply/school-place-home or you can obtain a paper version from your local Croydon primary school or by contacting the council on 020 8726 6400), setting out the reasons to support your case.

All requests for priority consideration on medical grounds must be supported in writing by a doctor or consultant, and this must make clear which school you are making a special case for, the reason why it is necessary for your child to attend this school in particular, and the difficulties it will cause for your child to attend another school.

It is for you to decide how to support your case and what documents to provide, but these must be submitted, together with the completed medical form and supporting statement by the GP/consultant, by the closing date of **15 January 2015**. The admissions team is not responsible for contacting professionals for information about your case. Any decision will be based on documents you submit by the closing date.

The local authority, using guidance received from Croydon's admissions panel (this is comprised of professionals from health and education), will decide whether an application for a school is to be prioritised on medical grounds, in light of the medical evidence submitted by the parent for their child to attend this particular school. Claims for priority of admission on medical grounds will not be considered if submitted after a decision on the original application has been made.

Applicants who submit supporting information on medical grounds will not be advised whether their application is likely to be successful prior to the offer of places on 16 April 2015. If evidence is received after the closing date of 15 January 2015, it will not be taken into account until after places have been offered on the 16 April 2015.

Note 5: 'Home' is defined as the address where the child normally resides as their only or principal residence. Addresses involving child-minding (professional or relatives) are excluded. There have been occasions when parents/

carers have tried to use false addresses to obtain a place at a school. To prevent this happening, the Croydon school admissions team undertakes random checks on (all) addresses against the Croydon Council tax register. If after checking council tax records, we cannot be satisfied that the address is the parent and child's normal place of residence, the parent/carer will be asked to provide further proof of their home address.

If the parents/carers are found to have used a false address or deliberately provided misleading information to obtain a school place, the offer will be withdrawn. Should there be doubts about the address to be used parents/carers may be asked to provide evidence concerning the child's normal place of residence. This could include a court order stating where the child should be live during the course of the week. The local authority would expect that the parents/carer with whom the child is normally resident receives the child benefit for the child.

If parents/carers have more than one property they may be required to provide proof of the normal place of residence for the child.

With regards to how the information provided by parents/carers is handled, the following statement is detailed on their application form:

Croydon Council will handle information you have provided in line with the Data Protection Act (DPA) and will be used for school admission purposes. The information will be held in confidence with only the necessary people working within the combined children's services able to access and handle it. The Council has a duty under the Children Act 2004 to work with partners to develop and improve services to children and young people in the area. As such, the Council may also use this information for other legitimate purposes and may share information (where necessary) with other Council departments and external bodies responsible for administering services to children and young people. For the purpose of validating proof of address the admissions team may refer to data held by Council Tax records. The Council also has a duty to protect the public funds it administers, and to this end it may use the information you have provided on this form for the prevention and detection of fraud. Under the DPA you have the right to make a formal written request for access to personal data held about you or your child. For further information please contact the School Admissions Team.

Admissions criteria for community and voluntary controlled schools 2015/16 (continued)

Note 6: Distance will be measured in a straight line from the centre of the pupil's main home to the designated main school entrance, nominated by the school, using the local authority's computerised measuring system, with those living closer to the school, receiving higher priority. For shared properties – e.g. flats – the centre will be taken from the centre of the building.

Note 7: Child-minding arrangements cannot be taken into account when allocating places at oversubscribed community or voluntary schools.

Note 8: Parents of children attending the nursery class at an infant or primary school must apply for a reception class place in the usual way. These children are not guaranteed a reception class place at the school where they are attending the nursery class.

Note 9: Twins/triplets or other multiple births for admission into an infant class

If you are applying for places for twins, or children from a multiple birth, and there is only one place available at the school, legislation allows us to admit them all i.e. all siblings from a multiple birth. The government's school admissions code does state that infant classes must not contain more than 30 pupils with a single school teacher, but the code considers multiple births to be an 'exceptional circumstances' and they can be admitted in excess of the published admission number.

Waiting lists

If you are offered a place at a school, and you have also expressed a higher preference for another school or schools, you will automatically be placed on the waiting list for your higher preference school/schools. Waiting lists for community/controlled schools are held for the first term of the reception year, and thereafter applicants are required to complete the local authority's in-year Common Application Form (iCAF) if they wish to remain on the waiting list. In year waiting lists are maintained for one academic year and applicants are required to re-apply for each academic year.