

# **Admissions Policy 2026-2027**

## **Catshill Middle School and Catshill First School & Nursery**



Reviewed: February 2025

Ratified: February 2025

Next Review: September 2026

# CATSHILL MIDDLE SCHOOL AND CATSHILL FIRST SCHOOL & NURSERY ADMISSIONS POLICY for 2026/27

## APPLYING FOR A PLACE

Applications are welcomed from all who wish their children to attend Catshill First School & Nursery and Catshill Middle School. Parents/Carers who are considering applying are warmly invited to visit the schools.

The schools hold an Open Evening in the Autumn Term of the year prior to intended admission. In addition, visits can be arranged at any time by contacting the school office. The school will be pleased to provide information and answer questions by letter or telephone, or to meet parents/carers to discuss possible applications.

The following procedure for applications is designed to ensure that the Governors' Admissions Policy is applied as fairly and consistently as possible.

Catshill First School & Nursery and Catshill Middle School follow Worcestershire County Council's admissions guidance and arrangements. Full details are available on Worcestershire County Council's website: [www.worcestershire.gov.uk](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk)

When there are more applications than places, in a Community or Voluntary Controlled First, Middle or High school, children are admitted in the following order of priority:

## ADMISSION CRITERION

1. Children Looked after and previously Children Looked after including those who appear to have been in state care outside of England;
2. Catchment Area Siblings;
3. Catchment Area at a Feeder School;
4. Catchment Area Children of Staff;
5. Catchment Area;
6. Out of Catchment Area Siblings;
7. Out of Catchment Area at a Feeder School;
8. Out of Catchment Area Children of Staff;
9. Out of Catchment Area;
10. Distance.

In each criteria, children will be ranked in accordance with Straight Line Distance.

In accordance with legislation, a child with an Education, Health and Care Plan will be offered a place at the school named in the Plan, this will be prior to the allocation of any other places, wherever possible, and could reduce the number of places available.

## DEFINITIONS

Children Looked after and previously Children Looked after, including those who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

'Looked after' means all those currently in the care of a Local Authority or accommodated by a Local Authority under the terms of the Children Act 1989 and children who were previously in the care of or accommodated by a Local Authority but immediately after being looked after, became subject to an adoption, a child arrangements order or special guardianship order and includes those children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. By children previously in state care outside of

England, we mean children who have been looked after outside of England by a public authority, a religious organisation or another provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society. The care may have been provided in orphanages or other settings. Independent supporting evidence will be required to be provided with the application.

### **Catchment area**

It is the school allocated to take children for the geographical area within which your address falls. It is likely to be the school nearest to your home address but this will not always be the case. There is no guarantee you will be allocated a place at your catchment school. Copies of catchment area maps, if required are available from the LA, or can be viewed in schools.

In the event of a school catchment area change being approved, pupils who would still have a sibling connection (see below for definition) at the time of admission and who are living at the same address in the previous catchment area for a school, (but not within the revised catchment area), at the time the change was approved will be considered as living within the catchment Area.

### **Siblings**

A brother or sister of pupils attending the school. In order to qualify for a place on the grounds of a sibling attending the school, the sibling must already be attending the school at the time of application and still be attending at the time of admission.

The sibling connection, as well as brother and sister will include half-siblings, adopted children, step-siblings or a child of the parent/carer's partner. They must also be living at the same home address. Children who are brought together as a family by a civil partnership and who are living at the same address, are also considered to be siblings.

### **Feeder School**

Within each area a pyramid of schools exists. Feeder schools are schools which feed up to the next phase of education within the same pyramid. In order to qualify for the Feeder School connection, children must be attending a feeder school at the time of application and at the closing date for applications. Details of each pyramid listing all the appropriate feeder schools are displayed in Section 4 of the Information for Parents Book.

### **Children of Staff**

Children of any member of staff employed at the mainstream school in either of the following circumstances:

- a) Where that member of staff has been employed for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission is made, or
- b) the member of staff is recruited to fill a post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage;

### **Straight Line Distance**

The measurement will be taken using the GeoCode Points for each property and the GeoCode point for the School. The Local Authority uses a software package called Arcview GIS to determine distance. Ordnance Survey supplies the coordinates that are used to plot an address within this system. (In the event of equi-distance applicants, any place will be allocated by random selection (lottery). Legal And Democratic Services, who are totally independent of School Admissions will supervise this process).

### **Multiple Births**

In the event that one or more but not all children from that multiple birth can be allocated a place(s), all of the children from that multiple birth will be admitted even if this takes the school over PAN. In circumstances where no children from a multiple birth can be offered a place and

parents/carers appeal against the decision, parents are advised to note, that all appeals are dealt with on their own merits and independent appeal panels are not obliged to allow all children from a multiple birth to be admitted, if one appeal is successful.

### **Infant Class Size Legislation**

Legislation is in place to ensure that, Infant classes in Key Stage One, (those where the majority of children will reach the age of 5, 6 or 7 during the school year) must not contain more than 30 pupils with a single school teacher. There are a number of limited exceptions to the Infant Class Size legislation, including children of UK service personnel admitted outside the normal admissions round, children with Education Health Care Plans, looked after children, children with special educational needs who are normally taught in a unit attached to the school, where a procedural error has occurred, children admitted following successful appeal and children admitted outside of the normal admissions round where no other place is available.

### **SHARED CATCHMENT AREAS**

If there is more than one catchment area school and the number of applications for places from within the catchment area for one of those schools exceeds the number of places available, the allocation of places for the shared catchment area will be decided according to the following priorities, in the following sequence:

1. Siblings
2. Feeder School
3. Children of Staff
4. Distance

Definitions of the above criterion are set out on page 3.

### **LATE APPLICATIONS INCLUDING CHANGES TO ON TIME APPLICATIONS – CATSHILL MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Between 1st November 2026 and 31st January 2027, it is likely that a number of late applications will be received. The Council has agreed in its co-ordinated scheme to accept late applications, for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools within Worcestershire, within this time-frame, and treat them as being on time, only in the following circumstances;

- a) where a family have just moved address, (refer to Section 1 of the relevant Information for Parents book);
- b) where it is agreed by School Admissions, that individual circumstances apply and the delay was reasonable given the circumstances of the case;

In each case supporting documentary evidence will be required. In all other circumstances, or if the application is not received until after 31<sup>st</sup> January 2027, late applications will receive a lower priority, and will only be considered after the applications received (or deemed to be) on time.

### **LATE APPLICATIONS INCLUDING CHANGES TO ON TIME APPLICATIONS – CATSHILL FIRST SCHOOL**

Between 16th January 2027 and 28th February 2027, it is likely that a number of late applications will be received. The Council has agreed in its co-ordinated scheme to accept late applications, for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools within Worcestershire, within this time-frame, and treat them as being on time, only in the following circumstances;

- a) where a family have just moved address, (refer to Section 1 of the relevant Information for Parents book);

b) where it is agreed by School Admissions, that individual circumstances apply and the delay was reasonable given the circumstances of the case;

In each case supporting documentary evidence will be required. In all other circumstances, or if the application is not received until after 28<sup>th</sup> February 2027, late applications will receive a lower priority, and will only be considered after the applications received (or deemed to be) on time.

NB. If the late application is for an Academy, Foundation, Free and Voluntary Aided School, or a school outside Worcestershire, it will be necessary to refer to the late application policy of the school or the LA, in whose area the school is located.

All applications received after 28<sup>th</sup> February 2027 for the intake year, must be sent to Worcestershire LA, and will be processed as soon as possible. An offer, or refusal of a school place, will be given by Worcestershire LA, on behalf of the relevant admission authority.

## **WAITING LISTS**

Waiting lists for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools are maintained by the School Admissions Section, and parents need to apply, in order to be included.

The waiting list is ranked in line with the published oversubscription criteria and is maintained for the whole of the academic year, so for applications for intake in September 2026, the waiting list will remain open until the 31st July 2027. Each child added to that list will require the list to be ranked again in line with the published oversubscription criteria. Parents will need to reapply at the start of July 2027 if they wish to be included on the new waiting list for the new academic year, by completing a fresh application form, a CA1 form. Only on receipt of an acknowledgement letter from School Admissions will that child be on the list.

## **APPEALS**

If the parental preference cannot be met, you may, if you wish, appeal against the decision. Appeals by parents, setting out the grounds upon which the appeal is made, should be submitted in writing to School Admissions, by the deadline published on the Worcestershire County Council website at [Appealing an Admissions Decision](#). Appeals are heard by an independent appeal panel and whether your appeal is successful is likely to depend on the merits of your case.

### **Second Appeal**

The Code of Practice on School Admission Appeals, Section 5 (page 23) covers the issue of second appeals for the same school in the same school year. "Appellants do not have the right to a second appeal for the same school for the same academic year unless, in exceptional circumstances, the admission authority accepts a second application because of a significant and material change in circumstances."

## **FAIR ACCESS PROTOCOL**

As part of the Worcestershire Fair Access Protocol, all schools with Key Stage 2, 3 and 4 classes can be required to exceed the published admission number to admit pupils covered by the Protocol.

## **'IN YEAR' TRANSFER ARRANGEMENTS**

The procedure for in-year admissions for Worcestershire residents is as follows;

1. The Authority provides a common application form (CA1) for parents to apply for a place at any mainstream school in Worcestershire. Once completed this must be returned to the School Admissions Team.

2. In addition to the CA1 Form, some Voluntary Aided, Academy, Foundation or Free schools may require parents to fill in a supplementary form which may request information that allows them to apply their oversubscription criteria. If schools use a supplementary form these must be consulted on and published and also available from the Local Authority.

3. A supplementary form, where required, must be submitted with the CA1 form. It will not be regarded as a valid application unless the parent has also completed the CA1.

4. Applications from parents for schools outside Worcestershire should be made direct contact with the school or the local authority in whose area the school is located to find out how they process in-year applications.

5. Parents will be invited to state up to three preferences on the CA1 for schools in priority order and give reasons for those preferred schools. Preference order is not taken into account when applying admission criteria as the law requires all preferences to be treated equally.

6. Where a parent approaches a school directly the parent should be advised to complete a CA1 and return it to School Admissions.

Parents or carers seeking to transfer to a school need to be aware that they are responsible for ensuring their child continues to receive appropriate education in the interim.

#### **ADMISSION OF CHILDREN OUTSIDE OF THEIR NORMAL AGE GROUP**

Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health, effectively in the year group below or above their chronological age group. The Local Authority must make the decision based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned.

The Local Authority will request the head teacher of the school to take account of the parent's views; information about the child's academic, social and emotional development; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional; whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group; and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely in order to reach a decision as to whether or not it is appropriate for the individual child to delay or accelerate their entry into school and be taught outside of their chronological age group.

#### **PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY AND WHAT IS CONSIDERED TO BE THE HOME ADDRESS**

In the case of Community and Voluntary Controlled schools, home is defined as the only or main permanent residential address, at the closing date for applications, where the child usually resides and which is the usual address of the parent/carer with main responsibility for the child.

Where parents/carers have shared responsibility, the child's home address will usually be considered to be that of the parent/carer with whom the child lives for the majority of the school week (e.g. three or more days out of five Monday to Friday during term time). Where care is split equally, parent/carers must provide independent supporting documentary evidence to prove that care is equally split. In such cases the address used will be determined by random selection (lottery). Legal and Democratic Services, who are totally independent of School Admissions will supervise this process.

Should more than one parent have parental responsibility for a child, both parents should be in agreement over the preferences expressed prior to the application being submitted. Where

more than one parent submits an application for a child, or where there is a parent not in agreement with the preferences, the Local Authority and any admission authority applied for, legally has to comply with the preferences expressed. If this is not the same, then parents will have to seek resolution and if necessary legal resolution. It may be necessary for the courts to determine which parent can make the final decision on schooling. Failure to ensure agreement prior to submission, may result in a delay in any application being processed.

When submitting your application, as part of the terms and conditions, you will be required to confirm that parents are in agreement with the preferences expressed, this will also apply if you wish to transfer in-year. If it is subsequently determined that agreement was not made prior to the application being submitted, it could result in the withdrawal of the offer of a place, if it is determined that the information supplied was intentionally misleading or fraudulent.