



## SCHOOL ADMISSIONS; SECONDARY TRANSFER 2026

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### **Introduction**

The 2nd March 2026 is National Allocation Day when parents/carers of children throughout England will learn which secondary school place has been offered to their child for September 2026. *For children who are starting primary school, their parents/carers will hear about their allocation on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2026.*

All parents/carers of children in Gloucestershire who applied for a school place on-line will receive an email confirming the school place after 9:00am on 2nd March 2026. Those parents who did not apply on-line will receive a letter.

### **Process**

The County Council Co-ordinates Year 7 admissions to all maintained schools and academies. The national closing date for secondary school applications was 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025 and parents/carers in Gloucestershire were given the opportunity to apply for up to five schools.

Parent/carers were strongly advised to make use of their 5 preferences to reduce the risk of not being allocated their school of choice, and then the LA would have to allocate the nearest school with space to the home address. This may not be their nearest school as it will have filled up with children who listed it as a preference and therefore can be some distance away.

Allocations of school places are determined by the level of preference stated by the parent and the oversubscription criteria for schools (where too many children request places in particular schools). The oversubscription criteria for community and voluntary controlled schools is determined by the County Council; Governing Bodies of all foundation, voluntary aided schools and academies are responsible for their own criteria.

2025 saw a significant bulge of children transferring to secondary school and extra capacity was created across the county.

This year numbers are still high and places remain tight, however bulge classes have again been created where needed in particularly in the Cheltenham and Gloucester area.

Where a parent's/carer's preferred schools are unable to offer places, the child will be offered a place at the nearest school with places available.

## **2026 Allocations**

### **The statistics for on time applications are as follows:**

This year 6635 Gloucestershire children will be offered a secondary school place (165 less children than last year)

- 83% have been offered their 1<sup>st</sup> preference (up 2% on last year)
- 7% have been offered their 2<sup>nd</sup> preference (down 1% on last year)
- 93% have been offered a preference (same as last year)
- 7% have not received a preference (same as last year)

### **Current position for mainstream admissions**

All on time applications have been offered a place and parents/carers will be notified on March 2nd (National Allocation day).

### ***Advice for parents/carers***

Parents/carers who applied on-line will only receive an email notification of their allocated school and will be able to accept their place on-line from 2nd March. All other parents/carers will receive a reply form with their allocation letter and it is important that they return these to the Co-ordinated Admissions team by 16th March 2026 to guarantee their child's place for September.

Some parents will be anxious that their child has not been offered a place at their preferred school. It may be helpful to know that places will always become available after the initial allocation round, and we have therefore tried to make it clear in our information that there is a second stage of allocations where we may be able to reconsider their preferences. This happens when some parents refuse the school place offered (moving out of the area or attending independent school etc.) so we are then able to offer that place to the child at the top of the waiting list.

If parents would like their preferences to be reconsidered, they should state this on the reply form. Since we cannot guarantee that a place at the preferred school will become available, **we strongly recommend that parents/carers who ask for reconsideration, also accept the school place offered to them initially** - this will not affect reconsideration of their preferred school, but will ensure that they have the certainty of a school place for their child in September.

The results of this reconsideration will be sent to parents/carers after 6<sup>th</sup> April 2026. It is therefore recommended that only those who are still unhappy with their child's school allocation after this date contact the Co-ordinated Admissions team. Parents/carers have a third opportunity to secure their preferred choice by means of a formal appeal and will receive information about this process with their final decision

letter. The Governing Bodies of most secondary schools or academies are responsible for arranging their own appeals.

If you are contacted by any parent after the initial allocation on 2nd March, it would be helpful if you could outline this process and explain that the Co-ordinated Admissions team will endeavour to reconsider parental preferences, where possible, during the second round of allocations (between 17th March – 5<sup>th</sup> April 2026).

If Members have any questions regarding the admissions process, please contact:

Gareth Vine, Head of Education Planning & Infrastructure on 01452 427547  
([gareth.vine@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:gareth.vine@gloucestershire.gov.uk))

Parents should be advised to contact Co-ordinated Admissions staff within the Education Planning & Infrastructure Team at Shire Hall, Westgate Street, Gloucester, GL1 2TP, t: 01452 425407 or email: [school.admissions@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:school.admissions@gloucestershire.gov.uk).