



Starting Primary School September 2026

Your choice for primary education

A guide for parents of 3 and 4-year-olds
in the City of London



Your choice for primary education

Who should apply?

If your child was born between 1 September 2021 and 31 August 2022, you need to apply for a primary school place for them to start in September 2026.

When?

Apply before 15 January 2026. Offer day is 16 April 2026.

How to apply

- Apply online: www.eadmissions.org.uk.
- Applications open on 1 September 2025.
- List up to six schools in any London local authority.
- Include local schools near your home.
- You must list the schools in the order you prefer, with your favourite school listed first. All preferences are considered equally.
- Your preference order is not disclosed to schools. Make sure you are aware of schools that require a Supplementary Information Form to be completed in addition to your eAdmissions online/paper-based application.
- It is a good idea to list your nearest schools. If you do not apply for any of the schools close to you, there is a risk that, if you do not secure a place at one of your preferences, local schools may already be full and your child could end up having to travel further away to get to school.

Act now!

1. Get more information.
2. Read this guide carefully — all the important information you need is included.
3. You can also get more detailed information online via our admissions videos at: www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/schooladmission
You can view using your smartphone, tablet, laptop or desktop computer.

Welcome

The City of London Corporation (City of London) has a very proud and long history of providing excellent educational services to children of all ages.

We are committed to ensuring that every child in the City of London gets the best start in life and receives the right support to reach their full potential.

I'm sure you will agree that starting primary school is an important and exciting time for your child. Getting the right start at primary school, making new friends, developing skills and a love of learning set the foundation for later years.

The City of London has one maintained primary school, The Aldgate School. The school, which has been judged as 'outstanding' by Ofsted since 2008, consistently achieves high standards in English, mathematics and science and has exceptional standards in music.

This guide provides information to help you understand how and when to make a primary school application for children starting primary school in September 2026.

The City of London is part of the pan-London coordinated admissions scheme, which allows parents to apply for up to six maintained schools in any borough. This maximises the chances for City of London residents to receive an offer at one of their preferred schools. We are proud to say that, over the last three years, an average of 90% of City of London applicants received their first preference.

We will do all we can to guide you through the process; the Education and Early Years Service is available to support you with your application if you need it.

I wish your child every success and happiness in their education as they start their journey through school.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judith Finlay".

Judith Finlay CBE

Executive Director of the Department of Community and Children's Services

Starting primary school in 2026

Children are required by law to receive full-time education at the start of the school term following their fifth birthday and to remain in school until the end of the education year in which they turn 16. This is known as compulsory school age.

When does my child start school?

All children will be offered a full-time school place for the start of the education year in which they turn five. The expectation is that the place is taken up in September at the start of the school year.

If your child was born between 1 September 2021 and 31 August 2022, they are expected to start primary school in September 2026.

If you are considering this option, please let the School Admissions Team know as soon as possible. If you choose deferred or delayed admissions entry, you must speak to the school about its policy as soon as possible.

Can I defer my child's start in reception class?

You can opt to defer your child's start in reception class until later in the school year. Your child must, however, be in full-time education by the time they reach compulsory school age.

Can I delay my child's start in reception class?

Parents of summer-born children can make a request to delay their child's admission to reception class until the following education year when the child reaches compulsory school age.

Summer-born children are defined as born between 1 April and 31 August 2022.

Each admission authority publishes its decision-making process as part of its admissions policy. It may expect to see evidence of a child's educational needs and will want to discuss with parents the impact of a child being educated with children of a different age group.

Can my child attend reception part-time?

Yes, but only until the end of the term in which they turn five years old.

Junior school admissions

If your child goes to an infant school, they will transfer to a junior school in the September after their seventh birthday. Children at infant schools normally transfer to their linked junior school at the age of seven, but an application must be made to the junior school. Most linked schools are on the same site and have the same name.

If your child is in Year 2 at any primary school, you can also make an application to a junior school.

- Junior schools cater for children attending Year 3 to Year 6 (Key Stage 2).
- Children born between 1 September 2017 and 31 August 2018 can apply for a junior school place.

The application process and timeline for junior school and reception class are exactly the same.

Key dates to remember

2025	2026
1 September You can start making applications to schools using the online Common Application Form (CAF).	15 January Deadline date for applications and submission of additional documentation where applicable, such as Supplementary Information Forms (SIFs) and medical assessments for consideration under social/medical criterion.
September/October School open days. Contact the specific school(s) for details.	16 April The results of your application will be sent to you on National Offer Day. If you applied online, you'll receive an email or text alert in the evening informing you of the outcome or where to find it online.
	30 April Deadline for accepting an offer of a primary school place.
	May to July Appeals heard against the refusal of a place at a school on your application form.

Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

All primary schools have written policies (SEND policy and SEND information report) outlining how they support pupils who have been identified as having SEND. Most children with SEND can successfully attend mainstream schools with additional support. You will be able to see the school's SEND policy and SEND information report on its website, or you can contact the school you are interested in to request a copy.

If your child has SEND but does not have an education, health and care (EHC) plan, you must apply for a primary school by completing an application form.

The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) at your child's nursery will work with the SENCo at the primary school to make sure the move to primary school goes as smoothly as possible.

Children with an EHC plan

If your child has an EHC plan, you do not need to complete an online primary school application. The City of London's Education and Early Years Service will support you through the process. It will help you to identify and apply to schools appropriate to your child's needs. Once a school has been agreed, it will be named on your child's EHC plan.

SEND Local Offer

Information about the provision and services that are available for children and young people with SEND (0–25 years) can be found on the City of London's SEND Local Offer website. The SEND Local Offer sets out information about services and provision both inside and outside the City of London. Please visit the Family Information Service website for full details:

www.fis.cityoflondon.gov.uk/send-local-offer



How to choose a school

Get started

Our advice is: don't wait! Give yourself as much time as possible to explore and consider your options so that you can apply to schools that best fit your child's needs and aspirations, and whose selection criteria are favourable to you.

Finding a school — do your research

If you do not know the schools in your area, a good place to start your search is by looking at your local authority's primary school guide, or those of surrounding local authorities. They contain general information about the local schools.

You can find schools near your home online at: <http://map.lgfl.org.uk/eAdmissions/>

You can also visit the Department for Education's website:
www.gov.uk/school-performance-tables

This website provides a comprehensive list of schools across England, and it also allows you to access performance tables that give information on pupils' results at each school.

Each school's information page provides a link to its Ofsted report. An Ofsted report details a school's strengths and weaknesses in terms of teaching staff and leadership, alongside its status at the time of its last inspection. Schools are currently inspected every four years.

Once you have come up with a shortlist, find out more about each school by reading its:

- prospectus: detailed information about the school and its leaders, teachers, courses, facilities and philosophy
- admissions policy: information about admissions criteria should the school receive more applications than it has places available (if it is oversubscribed).

You will find prospectuses and admissions policies on each school's website or you can contact them directly to request copies.

Get a complete picture

Prospectuses, league tables and Ofsted reports alone will not give you a complete picture of a school. Therefore, we advise you to visit the school for a closer look at its location, facilities and surroundings. This will give you a taste of its educational environment. You may also be able to arrange to speak with teachers, administrative staff and, if possible, pupils.

Most schools hold open days or open evenings. Attending these along with your child will give you a better feel for the school.

Information about open days is available in the local authority school admissions prospectus or by contacting the school.

Look at the admissions criteria

On your application you should list all the schools you want to apply to in order of preference. Some schools receive more applications than they have places to offer, so you should always look at the admissions criteria for each of your preferred schools and consider whether you meet them.

Things to consider when choosing a school

Here are a few questions to ask when deciding whether a school fits your child's personality and needs.

Are your preferences realistic?

Consider how likely it is that your child will be offered a place at your preferred schools. Read the admissions criteria for each school and figure out which criteria apply to your child.

Do you live close enough to get a place?

The distance from home to school of the last child offered a place at any school from previous years (i.e. the cut-off distance) should be available via each local authority's school admissions booklet. Remember that although this information can be used to give you an idea of how likely it is that you will be offered a place, the cut-off distance will change every year. We can never guarantee any child will be offered a place at any school.

How will your child travel to school?

It is very important that your child arrives on time to school each day. A long journey at peak times could make it difficult and may not be the best choice for your child. London has a great network of buses, London Overground and rail links, making it easy to get to any of our local schools.

Does the school have extended services such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs and after-school activities?

Are there supervised activities for pupils outside normal school hours, if parents and carers are at work?

What facilities does the school offer?

Are the buildings, classrooms and grounds well equipped and maintained?

What do other parents think about the school?

Find out about the experiences of parents with children at the schools you are interested in.

Which school does your child prefer?

Now is the time to get their opinion. This could be a tie-breaker. Ask them where they would like to go. Starting primary school can be unsettling, especially if it is in a different part of the city from their nursery and none of their friends are going there. But it might be that the right school for your friend's child may not be the right school for your child.



Remember, the school with the best reputation may not always be the most suitable for your child's needs.

How to apply — the process

You must apply through the local authority where your child lives, regardless of where the school is located. Do not list independent fee-paying schools as you need to apply to them directly.

1. To make an application online, please visit the eAdmissions website: **www.eadmissions.org.uk**. If you are unable to apply online, please contact the City of London School Admissions Team at **eeyservice@cityoflondon.gov.uk**
2. You can apply for any school located in any borough, up to a maximum of six schools. We highly recommend that you apply to as many schools as you can as this will increase your chances of getting one of your preferred schools.
3. List the schools in the order you prefer, with your favourite school listed first. Your preference order is not disclosed to schools. Make sure you are aware of schools that require a SIF to be completed in addition to your eAdmissions online/ paper-based application.
4. It is a good idea to list your nearest schools. If you do not apply for any of the schools close to you, there is a risk that, if you do not secure a place at one of your preferences, local schools may already be full and your child could end up having to travel further away to get to school.

What is a SIF and why is it needed?

A SIF provides additional information that some schools use to allocate places when they are oversubscribed (they have received more applications than they have places to offer).

To find out if your chosen schools require a SIF, you can either contact them directly or, if you apply online, the eAdmissions website will tell you. You must send the completed SIF directly to the school and not to the City of London. Choosing not to complete the SIF could reduce your chances of getting a place at that school if it is oversubscribed. Most voluntary-aided schools and foundation schools and some academies require a SIF.

Applying under sibling criteria

If your child has a brother or sister attending any of your preferred schools at the time of admission in September 2026, you should complete the box marked 'Sibling details' alongside the relevant school.

Applying under exceptional reasons

If you are making an application based on medical, social, religious, philosophical or educational reasons, you must complete the 'Reasons for preference' box on the application form.

You must also explain in writing why your child must attend a specific school, and a professional practitioner, such as a doctor or educational psychologist, must support your reasons and provide relevant evidence. The City of London School Admissions Team must receive this by the application deadline.

**Remember: The
deadline for
applications is
15 January 2026**

How to apply — the criteria

Oversubscription criteria – an example

The list below indicates the order in which schools that are oversubscribed will prioritise applicants:

1. Children looked after by the local authority
2. Children whose siblings attend the school
3. Distance to school from the child's home address.

Proof of home address

Your address details will be checked by the City of London Council Tax Team. You will be asked to provide additional supporting documentation if the Council Tax Team is unable to verify your details. It is important you give accurate information on your application form, as this can affect the outcome of your application.

You are also required to provide proof of the child's residence. The document must not be older than one year and should be either uploaded to the eAdmissions system or sent electronically to the City of London School Admissions Team. This can be in the form of a Child Tax Credit notification, letter from the NHS or any other document that has your child's name and address. For more information on the City of London address verification policy, please visit:

www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/services/education-and-learning/schools/starting-school

Note: The offer of a school place can be withdrawn if the information supplied is knowingly incorrect. An admissions authority can also take legal action against anyone who has knowingly given false information to get a school place for their child.

Your child's home address

If you are separated from your child's other parent and your child lives partly with you and partly with the other parent, you should state the address where your child lives most of the time.

If you have an equal shared care arrangement, state the address of the parent claiming child benefit, receiving tax credits linked to the child or whose address is registered at the child's GP. If you are making an online application, you can upload documents to your eAdmissions account. If you are making a paper application, you will need to send the documents to the City of London School Admissions Team.

Note: You cannot submit more than one application for your child. Only one address can be used for school admission purposes. The final decision to process an application will rest with the City of London School Admissions Team.

Late applications

Applications received after the closing date will be deemed 'late applications' and will be considered after those received on time.

If there are exceptional reasons why you could not make the deadline, please write to the City of London School Admissions Team and provide supporting evidence.

If you wish to change your school preferences after the closing date, your application will be treated as a late application.

How to apply — the allocation

What happens after you have submitted your form?

All London local authorities, and some local authorities bordering London, are part of the Pan London eAdmissions System. The scheme coordinates applications across local authority borders.

Your child will be considered separately by each school based on their application form. The schools do not know which other schools you have listed or your order of preference.

If a school is not oversubscribed, every child that applies will be offered a place.

If a school is oversubscribed, places will be allocated by its admissions authority in accordance with the school's oversubscription criteria. The oversubscription criteria are part of a

school's admissions policy. Children meeting criteria with a higher priority will be more likely to get a place than those meeting lower-priority criteria. You can get a copy of the policy from each school's admissions authority.

Your child will receive only one offer. If more than one school can offer them a place, the school making the offer will be your child's highest preference and all lower preferences will be withdrawn and released to other children. Therefore, please make sure you put the school you really want first.

Admissions authority

For foundation schools, voluntary-aided schools, academies and free schools, the admissions authority, which makes the decision regarding admissions applications, is the school's governing body. For all other schools, this is the local authority.



Myth busters — get the facts!

My child has a right to a place at one of my preferred schools.

Not true! Your child will only be offered a place if they qualify according to the school's admission criteria. If your child does not qualify for any of your preferred schools (e.g. your preferences were unrealistic), they will usually be offered a place at the nearest school to your home with a vacancy remaining after all on-time applicants have been offered places.

My child is in the nursery so they will automatically go into reception.

Not true! You must apply for your child even if they already attend the nursery. Schools must consider applications from children in the nursery in the same way as all other applicants, i.e. in accordance with the admission criteria for the school.

If I list only one school, then I have to be offered a place.

Not true! Listing only one school does not increase your child's chances of being offered a place. You are strongly advised to include your nearest schools among your preferences.

I live nearer to the school than the last child offered a place under the distance criterion last year so I'm guaranteed a place.

Not true! The home-to-school distance of the last child offered a place will change every year.

Children in my road go to the school so my child will too.

Not always! The number of pupils offered a place under each criterion at each school can change every year. Knowing pupils living near you that go to a certain school does not mean that your child will be offered a place there.

If I apply to a school in another borough, their residents will have priority over me.

Not always! Some admission authorities may give priority to local children, i.e. based on postcode. However, published admissions criteria cannot include the borough of residence. You should read the admission arrangements to see how children are prioritised for a place.

Faith schools are only for children from the specific faith which the school supports.

Faith schools align with whichever faith they support but they welcome children of all faiths and no faith. You do not have to attend a place of worship to be considered for a place.

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Getting your results — National offer day

The results of your application will be sent to you on National Offer Day, which is 16 April 2026. If you applied online, you will receive an email alert that evening informing you of the outcome of your application telling you where you can view the outcome online. The email the City of London School Admissions Team sends you will tell you:

- which school can offer your child a place
- how to accept the place
- what to do if your child was not offered a place at any of their chosen schools
- how to appeal a decision.

Your child will receive only one offer. If more than one school can offer them a place, the school making the offer will be your child's highest preference.

Accepting an offer

You can accept the offered school place by:

- completing the online acceptance form via your eAdmissions account
- replying to the offer day email.

Either way, the City of London School Admissions Team must receive your response by 30 April 2026 or your place may be offered to another child.

What if my child has a place at a private or independent school?

If you have accepted a place for your child at a private or independent school, please let the City of London School Admissions Team know in writing as soon as possible so that, the school place can be offered to another child.

I have been offered a place at one of my least preferred schools and plan to appeal. Should I reject the place?

You are strongly advised to accept the offered place, as it will ensure that your child has a place should your appeal be unsuccessful. Accepting the place will not affect the outcome of your appeal. If you reject the offered place and your appeal is unsuccessful, the process of finding another school is likely to be difficult.

What if I do not receive a place at any of my preferred schools?

You will be allocated an alternative school that has a vacancy and the City of London School Admissions Team will work with you to find schools that have places available. You can also choose to appeal against the refusal or go on your preferred school's waiting list. Contact the school directly to find out its waiting list policy and if you have been automatically added to the list.

How do waiting lists work?

Your child's place on a waiting list is determined by the school's oversubscription criteria, not by how long they have been waiting. Children meeting higher-priority criteria will be higher on the list than those meeting lower-priority criteria.

Your child's place can move down if children meeting higher criteria than yours join the list. Late applications are included on the waiting list and are treated in the same way as on-time applications.

Acceptance deadline

If your acceptance slip is not received by 30 April 2026, your place may be offered to another child.

If you are likely to be away from home between 16 April and 30 April 2026, please let the City of London School Admissions Team know in advance by emailing eeservice@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Appeal process

If you do not receive an offer from your preferred school, you can appeal against the refusal.

What you need to do:

- Contact the school you want to make an appeal against as soon as possible. It will provide you with information about its appeal process, e.g. what you will need to do and by when.
- Present your appeal. Your appeal will be heard during May, June and July 2026 by the appeal panel, which is made up of people who have not been involved in any way in the allocation of school places.

Details of how to appeal will be included in the offer letter/email.

If you intend to make an appeal, you should still accept the school place you have been offered so that your child will have a place if your appeal is unsuccessful.

Accepting the place you have been offered will not affect the outcome of your appeal.

The appeal panel's decision is final.

In-year admissions

What are in-year admissions?

In-year admissions is the process of applying to a school at any time outside the normal admissions rounds. Normal admissions rounds are those that take place during September of the year a child starts either reception or secondary school.

You must complete an in-year application if your child:

- is transferring from one primary school to another
- has been educated at home and now wishes to apply for a school place
- is newly arrived in the UK and is looking for a school place.

What do I need to do?

That depends, as the in-year admissions application process varies. With some schools, you apply directly to the school, while with others you will need to complete the local authority's in-year application form. Contact the school directly to find out more.

Is there a closing date for in-year admissions?

No, although we advise you to make your application as soon as possible.

I do not like the school that my child is currently attending and want to change their school. Can I make an in-year admissions application?

Yes, but before you do, please consider that moving schools can be very unsettling for children, particularly if they are preparing for exams or have difficulty adapting to new situations and surroundings.

Watch the City of London's information video

https://youtu.be/_3kYdTdiYv0

The Aldgate School

St James's Passage, 27 Duke's Place, London EC3A 5DE

t: 020 7283 1147

e: office@thealdgateschool.org

w: www.thealdgateschool.org

Head Teacher

Ms. Alexandra Allan

Ages

3–11 boys and girls

Reception places

30

Religious affiliations

Church of England

Supplementary Information Form (SIF) required?

Yes. See page 8

Ofsted rating

Outstanding

Nearest tube stations

Aldgate, Aldgate East, Liverpool Street, Tower Hill and Moorgate

Nearest train stations

Tower Gateway, Liverpool Street and Fenchurch Street. London Bridge and Cannon Street are within a 15-minute walk

Nearest buses

8, 15, 25, 78, 100 and 205

Open days

Thurs:	16 Oct	9.30 – 10.30
Wed:	22 Oct	9.30 – 10.30
Fri:	14 Nov	9.30 – 10.30
Tue:	18 Nov	2.00 – 3.00
Tue:	25 Nov	4.30 – 5.30

Admissions information

The Aldgate School is a Church of England voluntary-aided primary school. The responsibility for the admission of pupils rests with the governing body. The school's current maximum admissions number is 30, with 30 children in each class. These arrangements and the admissions criteria (right) are reviewed annually. When there are more applications than there are places available, the governors will admit pupils according to the oversubscription criteria listed opposite, which are listed in order of priority.

Note: Priority will be given to looked-after children and children with an EHC plan when this school is named in the plan.

Number of places offered using the oversubscription criteria – 2025/26

The table below shows how places were allocated using the oversubscription criteria last year. Each criterion number corresponds to the admissions criteria list.

Criterion	Number of children allocated
1	1
2	12
3	0
4	0
5	7
6	1
7	0
8	9

- The furthest distance a pupil was allocated a school for 2025: 775.21 metres
- There were no appeals lodged for reception 2025

Support for parents and carers

Help with home-to-school travel costs

Transport for London (TfL) provides free travel for children aged 11 years and under at any time on London buses, London Underground, trams, DLR, London Overground and most National Rail services. If children are travelling unaccompanied, they must have a valid 5 —10 Zip Oyster photocard to travel free of charge.

How to apply

- Apply online via:
<https://tfl.gov.uk/fares/free-and-discounted-travel/11-15-zip-oyster-photocard>
You will need a Zip Oyster photocard web account.
- If you have an Oyster photocard account for a non-Zip Oyster photocard, you will need to use a different email address to create a Zip web account.
- For more information, contact TfL on 0343 222 1234 (all calls will be charged at a local rate – which is free on many tariffs).

Free school meals

All children in reception, Year 1 and Year 2 automatically receive free school meals. In addition, as part of the Mayor of London's initiative, all children in state-funded primary schools in London, regardless of household income or benefit status, are eligible for free school meals during the 2025/26 academic year. This programme aims to support families with the cost of living and ensure every child has access to a nutritious meal. For children who attend schools outside London (Year 3 and above), free school meals are available if you receive one of the following benefits:

- Income Support or income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance

- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not entitled to Working Tax Credit and your annual income does not exceed £16,190)
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Working Tax Credit run-on (usually paid for four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- Universal Credit: if you applied on or after 1 April 2018, your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and excluding any benefits).
- Young people who receive these benefits directly (not through a parent or guardian) are also eligible.

If you meet these criteria, you can apply through the local authority where your child's school is located.

School clothing grants

The school clothing grant is a discretionary, one-off payment of £60, made in August each year, to help with the cost of school uniforms and footwear, including PE kits. For this support, you must meet all of the following criteria:

- You and your child must live in the City of London.
- Your child must attend a publicly funded primary school from September.
- There is an agreed school uniform.
- You are in receipt of one of the qualifying benefits for free school meals.

The grant is paid at the discretion of the City of London.

For more information, please contact the School Admissions Team.

e: eeyservice@cityoflondon.gov.uk
t: 020 7332 1002

If you would like this information in another language or another format, such as Braille, large print or audio, please contact the Family Information Service on 020 7332 1002 or email us at **eeyservice@cityoflondon.gov.uk**



Family Information Service
Education and Early Years Service
Department of Community and Children's Services
City of London Corporation
PO Box 270
Guildhall
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