

PAN-London co-ordinated admissions system

Southwark Council's scheme for co-ordination
of admissions to Reception in maintained
schools and academies in 2026/27

“the Application Year”	the academic year in which the parent makes an application (i.e. in relation to the academic year of entry, the academic year preceding it).
“the Board”	the Pan-London Admissions Executive Board, which is responsible for the Scheme
“the Business User Guide (BUG)”	the document issued annually to participating LAs setting out the operational procedures of the Scheme
“the Common Application Form”	this is the form that each authority must have under the Regulations for parents to use to express their preferences, set out in rank order
“the Equal Preference System”	the model whereby all preferences listed by parents on the Common Application Form are considered under the over-subscription criteria for each school without reference to parental rankings. Where a pupil is eligible to be offered a place at more than one school within an LA, or across more than one participating LA, the rankings are used to determine the single offer by selecting the school ranked highest of those which can offer a place
“the Highly Recommended Elements”	the elements of the Scheme that are not mandatory but to which subscription is strongly recommended in order to maximise co-ordination and thereby simplify the application process as far as possible
“the Home LA”	the LA in which the applicant/parent/carer is resident
“the LIAAG Address Protocol”	the document containing the address verification policy agreed by LIAAG and the policy of each participating LA
“the Local Admission System (LAS)”	the IT module for administering admissions in each LA and for determining the highest offer both within and between participating LAs
“the London E-Admissions Portal”	the common online application system used by the 33 London LAs and Surrey County Council
“the Maintaining LA”	the LA which maintains a school, or within whose area an academy is situated, for which a preference has been expressed
“the Mandatory Elements”	those elements of the Scheme to which authorities must subscribe in order to be considered as ‘Participating Authorities’ and to benefit from use of the Pan-London Register

“the Notification Letter”	the agreed form of letter sent to applicants by email on the Prescribed Day which communicates any determination granting or refusing admission to a primary or secondary school, which is attached as Schedule 2
“the Prescribed Day”	the day on which outcome letters are communicated to parents/carers. 1 March (secondary) and 16 April (primary) in the year following the relevant determination year except that, in any year in which that day is not a working day, the prescribed day shall be the next working day
“the Pan-London Register (PLR)”	the database which will sort and transmit application and outcome data between the LAS of each participating LA
“the Pan-London Timetable”	the framework for processing of application and outcome data, which is attached as Schedule 3
“the Participating LA”	any LA that has indicated in the Memorandum of Agreement that they are willing to incorporate, at a minimum, the mandatory elements of the LA Scheme presented here.
“the Qualifying Scheme”	the scheme which each LA is required to formulate in accordance with The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) Regulations 2012, for co-ordinating arrangements for the admission of children to maintained primary and secondary schools and academies.

All the numbered sections contained in this scheme are mandatory, except those marked with an which are highly desirable.*

Applications

1. Applications from residents of this LA will be made on this LA's Common Application Form, which will be available and able to be submitted online. This will include all the fields and information specified in Schedule 1 to this LA Scheme. These will be supplemented by any additional fields and information which are deemed necessary by this LA to enable the admission authorities in the LA area to apply their published oversubscription criteria.
2. This LA will take all reasonable steps to ensure that every parent/carer who is resident in this LA and has a child in a nursery class within a maintained school or academy, either in this LA or any other maintaining LA, is informed how they can access this LA's composite prospectus and apply online. Parents/carers who do not live in this LA will have access to this LA's composite prospectus, which will advise parents/carers to contact their home LA if they are unable to apply online.
3. The admission authorities within this LA will not use supplementary information forms except where the information available through the Common Application Form is insufficient for consideration of the application against the published oversubscription criteria. Where supplementary information forms are used by the admissions authorities within this LA, the LA will seek to ensure that these are used to collect information which is required by the published oversubscription criteria only, in accordance with paragraph 2.4 of the School Admissions Code 2021.
4. Where supplementary information forms are used by admission authorities in this LA, they will be available on this LA's website. Such forms will advise parents that they must also complete their home LA's Common Application Form. This LA's composite prospectus and website will indicate which schools in this LA require supplementary forms to be completed and where they can be obtained.
5. Where a school in this LA receives a supplementary information form, this LA will not consider it to be a valid application unless the parent/carer has also listed the school on their home LA's Common Application Form, in accordance with paragraph 2.3 of the School Admissions Code 2021.
6. Applicants will be able to express a preference for up to six maintained primary schools or academies within and/or outside the Home LA.
7. The order of preference given on the Common Application Form will not be revealed to a school within the area of this LA to comply with paragraph 1.9 of the School Admissions Code 2021. However, where a parent resident in this LA expresses a preference for schools in the area of another LA, the order of preference for that LA's schools will be revealed to that LA in order that it can determine the highest ranked preference in cases where an applicant is eligible for a place at more than one school in that LA's area.
8. This LA undertakes to carry out the address verification process set out in its entry in the LIAAG Address Protocol. This will in all cases include validation of resident applicants against this LA's maintained nursery and primary school data and the further investigation of any discrepancy. Where this LA is not satisfied as to the validity of an address of an

applicant whose preference has been sent to a maintaining LA, it will advise the maintaining LA no later than **12 February 2026**.

9. This LA will confirm the status of any resident child for whom it receives a Common Application Form stating s/he is currently or previously a 'Child Looked After' and will provide any additional evidence on receipt of a reasonable request by the maintaining LA in respect of a preference for a school in its area by **5 February 2026**.
10. This LA will advise a maintaining LA of the reason for any application which is made in respect of a child resident in the area of this LA to be admitted outside of their correct age cohort and will forward any supporting documentation to the maintaining LA by **5 February 2026**.

Processing

11. Applicants resident within this LA must return the Common Application Form, which will be available and able to be submitted online, to this LA by **15 January 2026**.
12. Application data relating to all preferences for schools in the area of a participating LA, which have been expressed within the terms of this LA's scheme, will be uploaded to the PLR by **5 February 2026**. Supplementary information provided with the Common Application Form will be sent to maintaining LAs by the same date.
13. This LA shall, in consultation with the admission authorities within this LA's area and within the framework of the Pan-London timetable in Schedule 3B, determine its own timetable (available upon request) for the processing of preference data and the application of published oversubscription criteria.
14. * This LA will accept all late applications. Late applications received after 15 January 2025 (except those regarded as exceptional circumstance) will not be considered for a school place until after the initial offer of places on 16 April 2026. However, this LA can accept a late application as on time where it considers there are exceptional circumstances. Applicants must notify this LA in writing if they are submitting a late application under exceptional circumstances, providing their reasons and any supporting documents so that they can be considered by this LA. Only late applications submitted **between 16 January 2026 and 12 February 2026** may be considered under the exceptional circumstances category.
15. Where such applications contain preferences for schools in other LAs, this LA will forward the details to maintaining LAs via the PLR as they are received. This LA will accept late applications which are considered to be on time within the terms of the home LA's scheme.
16. The latest date for the upload to the PLR of late applications which are considered to be on-time within the terms of the home LA's scheme is **13 February 2026**.
17. * Where an applicant moves from one participating home LA to another after submitting an on-time application under the terms of the former home LA's scheme, the new home LA will

accept the application as on-time up to **12 February 2026**, on the basis that an on-time application already exists within the Pan-London system.

18. This LA will participate in the application data checking exercise scheduled between **16 and 23 February 2026** in the Pan-London timetable in Schedule 3B.
19. All preferences for schools within this LA will be considered by the relevant admission authorities without reference to rank order to comply with paragraph 1.9 of the School Admissions Code 2021. When the admission authorities within this LA have provided a list of applicants in criteria order to this LA, this LA shall, for each applicant to its schools for whom more than one potential offer is available, use the highest ranked preference to decide which single potential offer to make. [This is the 'Equal Preference System'.]
20. This LA will carry out all reasonable checks to ensure that pupil rankings are correctly held in its LAS for all maintained schools and academies in this LA's area before uploading data to the PLR.
21. This LA will upload the highest potential offer available to an applicant for a maintained school or academy in this LA to the PLR by **19 March 2026**. The PLR will transmit the highest potential offer specified by the Maintaining LA to the Home LA.
22. The LAS of this LA will eliminate, as a Home LA, all but the highest ranked offer where an applicant has more than one potential offer across Maintaining LAs submitting information within deadline to the PLR. This will involve exchanges of preference outcomes between the LAS and the PLR (in accordance with the iterative timetable published in the Business User Guide) which will continue until notification that a steady state has been achieved, or until **25 March 2026**. Where a management decision is made that additional iterations are necessary, these will continue no later than **27 March 2026**.
23. This LA will not make an additional offer between the end of the iterative process and the **16 April 2026** which may impact on an offer being made by another participating LA.
24. Notwithstanding paragraph 23, if an error is identified within the allocation of places at a maintained school or academy in this LA, this LA will attempt to manually resolve the allocation to correct the error. Where this impacts on another LA (either as a home or maintaining LA) this LA will liaise with that LA to attempt to resolve the correct offer and any multiple offers which might occur. However, if another LA is unable to resolve a multiple offer, or if the impact is too far reaching, this LA will accept that the applicant(s) affected might receive a multiple offer.
25. This LA will participate in the offer data checking exercise scheduled between **26 (30) March and 8 April 2026** in the Pan-London timetable in Schedule 3B.
26. This LA will send a file to the eAdmissions portal with outcomes for all resident applicants who have applied online no later than **13 April 2026**. (33 London LAs & Surrey LA only).
27. The file should additionally contain offers to late applicants who can be offered a place on **16 April 2026**. Home LAs are required to make those offers, but they are not included in the report of on time outcomes generated from the LAS.

Offers

28. This LA will ensure that, if there are places available, each resident applicant who cannot be offered a preference expressed on the Common Application Form, receives the offer of an alternative school place in accordance with paragraph 2.12 of the Schools Admissions Code 2021. If it is not possible to offer the resident applicant a school they listed as a preference, this LA will offer an alternative place at a school with capacity. This is likely to be the nearest school to the resident applicant's home and situated within this LA which has a vacancy.
29. This LA will inform all resident applicants of their highest offer of a school place and, where relevant, the reasons why higher preferences were not offered, whether they were for schools in the Home LA or in other participating LAs.
30. This LA's outcome letter will be sent by email and include the information set out in Schedule 2.
31. This LA will, on **16 April 2026 after 5pm**, send notification of the outcome to resident applicants by email.
32. * This LA will provide nursery and primary schools with destination data of its resident applicants by the end of the Summer term 2026.

Post offer

33. This LA will request that resident applicants decline the offer of a place by **30 April 2026**, or within two weeks of the date of any subsequent offer.
34. Where an applicant resident in this LA accepts or declines a place in a school maintained by another LA by **30 April 2026**, this LA will forward the information to the maintaining LA by **7 May 2026**. Where such information is received from applicants after **30 April 2026**, this LA will pass it to the maintaining LA as it is received.
35. Where a place becomes available in an oversubscribed maintained school or academy in this LA's area, it will be offered from a waiting list ordered in accordance with paragraph 2.15 of the School Admissions Code 2021.
36. When acting as a maintaining LA, this LA will automatically place an applicant resident in the area of another LA on a waiting list of any higher preference school in this LA's area where the application has been submitted on time. Where the application has been submitted late, this process is not automatic and it will be done following a request from the home LA as per the timetable set out at paragraph 45 of this Scheme.
37. Where a waiting list is maintained by an admission authority of a maintained school or academy in this LA's area, the admission authority will inform this LA of a potential offer, in order that the offer may be made by the home LA.

38. When acting as a maintaining LA, this LA will inform the home LA, where different, of an offer for a maintained school or Academy in this LA's area which can be made to an applicant resident in the home LA's area, in order that the home LA can offer the place.
39. When acting as a maintaining LA, this LA and the admission authorities within it will not inform an applicant resident in another LA that a place can be offered.
40. When acting as a home LA, this LA will offer a place at a maintained school or Academy in the area of another LA to an applicant resident in its area, provided that the school is ranked higher on the Common Application Form than any school already offered.
41. When acting as a home LA, when this LA is informed by a maintaining LA of an offer which can be made to an applicant resident in this LA's area which is ranked lower on the Common Application Form than any school already offered, it will inform the maintaining LA that the offer will not be made.
42. When acting as a home LA, when this LA has agreed to a change of preferences or preference order, it will inform any maintaining LA affected by the change. In such cases, paragraphs 39 and 40 shall apply to the revised order of preferences.
43. When acting as a maintaining LA, this LA will inform the home LA, where different, of any change to an applicant's offer status as soon as it occurs.
44. When acting as a maintaining LA, this LA will accept a change of preferences or preference order (including reinstated or additional preferences) from home LAs for maintained schools and academies in its area.
45. This LA will continue to co-ordinate admissions beyond offer date and will hold waiting lists for all oversubscribed maintained schools or academies in this LA's area until 10 July 2026. After this date, any remaining waiting lists will be returned to the schools or academies in the area. Each child on the waiting list will be ranked in line with the published oversubscription criteria for that school or academy. Looked after children or previously looked after children allocated a place at the school in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol must take precedence over those on a waiting list.
46. This LA, when acting as a home LA, will make the initial offer of places which become available after National Offer Day, as per the timetable set out below:

Date application submitted	When will the application be processed?	When will the offer be made?	When will the waiting list position be available?
Between 16 April – 11 May 2026	Week commencing 18 May 2026	June 2026	Week commencing 22 June 2026, available from Southwark LA

Date application submitted	When will the application be processed?	When will the offer be made?	When will the waiting list position be available?
12 May 2026 onwards	Week commencing 22 June 2026 onwards	July 2026 (before the end of the Summer term)	Before 10 July, waiting list positions will be provided to applicants by Southwark LA. After this date, waiting list positions will be provided to applicants by the individual school

47. After preferences expressed in accordance with paragraph 7 above have been determined, this LA, when acting as a home LA will accept and process any further additional preferences expressed by applicants post offer and before the start of the school term as per the timetable at paragraph 46. The number of additional preferences will be unrestricted.

Schedule 1

Minimum content of common application form for admissions to Reception 2026/27.

Child's details:

Surname

Forename(s)

Middle name(s)

Date of Birth

Gender

Home address

Name of current school

Address of current school (if outside home LA)

Parent's details:

Title

Surname

Forename

Address (if different to child's address)

Telephone Number (Home, Daytime, Mobile)

Email address

Relationship to child

Preference details (x 6 recommended):

Name of school

Address of school

Preference ranking

Local authority in which the school is based

Additional information:

Reasons for Preferences (including any medical or social reasons)

Does the child have an Education, Health and Care Plan Y/N*

Is the child a 'Child Looked After (CLA)'? Y/N

Is the child formerly CLA but now adopted or subject of a 'Child Arrangements Order or 'Special Guardianship Order'? Y/N If yes, name of responsible local authority

Surname of sibling

Forename of sibling

DOB of sibling

Gender of sibling

Name of school sibling attends

Other:

Signature of parent or guardian

Date of signature

*Where an LA decides not to request this information on the CAF, it must guarantee that no details of a child with an Education, Health and Care Plan will be sent via the PLR.

Schedule 2

Template outcome letter (sent by email) for admission to Reception in 2026/27

From: Southwark Council

Date: **16 April 2026**

Dear Parent/Carer,

Application for a Primary School

I am writing to let you know the outcome of your application for a primary school. Your child has been offered a place at X School. The school will write to you with further details.

I am sorry that it was not possible for your child to be offered a place at any of the schools which you listed as a higher preference on your application form. For each of these schools there were more applications than places and other applicants had a higher priority than your child under the school's published admission criteria.

Offers which could have been made for any schools which you placed lower in your preference list were automatically withdrawn under the co-ordinated admission arrangements, as a higher preference has been offered.

If you would like more information about the reason that your child was not offered a place at any higher preference school, you should contact the admission authority that is responsible for admissions to the school within the next few days. Details of the different admission authorities for schools in the borough of X are attached to this letter. If the school is outside the borough of X, the admission authority will either be the borough in which the school is situated, or the school itself.

You have the right of appeal under the School Standards & Framework Act 1998 against the refusal of a place at any of the schools for which you have applied. If you wish to appeal, you must contact the admission authority for the school within the next few days to obtain the procedure and the date by which an appeal must be received by them.

*Please would you confirm if you do not wish to accept the place at X School by **30 April 2026**. You will also need to let me know what alternative arrangements you are making for your child's education.*

You must contact this office if you wish to apply for any other school, either in this borough or elsewhere.

Your child's name has been placed on the waiting list for any school which was a higher preference on your application form than the school you have been offered. If you need to find out your child's position on the waiting list please contact the admission authority or the borough in which the school is situated.

If you have any questions about this letter, please contact me on _____.

Yours sincerely

(First preference offer letters should include the paragraphs in italics only)

Schedule 3B

Timetable for admission to Reception in 2026/27

Date and working days	Process
Thursday 15 Jan 2026 <i>15 days</i>	Statutory deadline for receipt of applications
Thurs 5 Feb 2026 <i>5 days</i>	Deadline for the transfer of application information by the Home LA to the PLR (ADT file)
Thurs 12 Feb 2026	Deadline for receipt of late applications considered as “on-time” by parents to Home LA
Fri 13 Feb 2026	Deadline for the upload of late applications considered as “on-time” to the PLR
Mon 16 –Mon 23 Feb 2026	Checking of application data
<i>Mon 16 to Fri 20 Feb 2026</i>	<i>Half Term</i>
February 2026 to Weds 18 March (exact dates to be determined by LA)	Ranking of applications, checking of ranked lists and local allocation of school places
Thurs 19 Mar 2026 <i>6 days</i>	Deadline for the transfer of potential offer information from the Maintaining LAs to the PLR (ALT file)
Weds 25 March 2026	Final ALT file to PLR
Thurs 26 and Fri 27 March 2026	Additional iterations for Reception if needed
Thurs 26 (30) Mar – Weds 8 Apr 2026	Checking of offer data
<i>Mon 30 March to Fri 10 April 2026</i>	<i>Easter Holidays</i>
Mon 13 Apr 2026	Deadline for on-line ALT file to portal
Thurs 16 April 2026 <i>10 days</i>	Offer notifications sent
Thurs 30 April 2026 <i>5 days</i>	Deadline for acceptances

Thurs 7 May 2026	Deadline for transfer of acceptances to maintaining LAs
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Easter Weekend 2026 – Friday 3 April to Monday 6 April