Applying for a Secondary school place

A step-by-step guide for Kingston secondary school admissions
(September 2027 entry)

Download the Secondary Admissions Guide

OVERVIEW

The application timeline

Key milestones for entry into secondary school in September 2027

1 September 2026
Applications Open

Start researching & attending open events.

31 October 2026
Closing Date

Submit online application & supplementary forms.

1 March 2027
National Offer Day

Outcomes sent via email after 5pm.

15 March 2027
Response Deadline

Accept or decline your offer online.

30 March 2027
Further Offers

Waiting list offer process begins.

PHASE 1: UNDERSTAND & PREPARE

Researching your options

Essential steps before filling in your application form

Coordinated admissions system

Admission into secondary school is coordinated nationally. You complete ONE application form with your home local authority regardless of where your preferred schools are located.

Key steps to prepare

- Attend school open events in September & October (check school websites for booking).
- Check historic offer distances to see if there is a realistic chance of gaining a place.
- Review oversubscription criteria.
- Talk to your primary school headteacher for advice.

Admissions guide

The 'Admission to Kingston's Secondary Schools' brochure contains information about the application process and your responsibilities as the applicant. It is important that you read this before making your application

Kingston Secondary Admissions Guide

PHASE 1: UNDERSTAND & PREPARE

How schools prioritise applications (oversubscription criteria)

These are used to prioritise children when a school receives more applications than available places

HIGHEST PRIORITY: Looked After & Previously Looked After Children

All state schools must give highest priority to children in public care or previously in care.

Sibling link

A brother or sister already attends the school at the time of admission.

Staff child

Child of a qualifying member of staff employed at the school.

Exceptional need

Specific medical or social reason why only this school is suitable. The threshold to qualify under this criterion is very high.

Proximity

Home-to-school distance measured in a straight line. Schools in other boroughs may measure the distance using a different method.

These are examples of common oversubscription criteria, but schools may not have all of them in their arrangements.

PHASE 2: APPLY

Making your application

How to complete and submit your form on time

1. Apply Online

Go to eadmissions.org.uk. 99% of parents apply online. It is fast, secure, and instant.

2. Name up to six Schools

List your preferred schools in order of preference. You can include schools inside and outside Kingston.

3. Submit supporting documents

Upload any required supporting documents directly to the portal.

4. Supplementary information forms (SIFs)

Some faith or selective schools require additional forms sent directly to the school.

CLOSING DEADLINE: Saturday 31 October 2026

Submit on time at www.eadmissions.org.uk — late applications are processed after on-time offers.

PHASE 2: APPLY

Children educated out of year group

Requests for admission outside the normal age group

Applying out of year group

- If your child is currently educated outside their normal age group, you must apply for a secondary place at the same time as other Year 6 pupils.
- You must request agreement from the admission authority of each preferred school to accept an out-of-year application. This includes summer born children who have been educated out of year group since Reception.

Decision process & requirement

- Decisions are made independently by each school's admission authority based on the individual circumstances of the child.
- **MANDATORY REQUIREMENT: You must provide written proof of an agreement to the School Admissions Team for the school to be considered.**

PHASE 2: APPLY

The equal preference scheme

How all six of your preferences are processed fairly

MYTH

Putting a school first or naming only one school gives you a higher priority over someone who listed it 2nd.

FACT

Schools consider ALL applicants equally under their oversubscription rules without knowing where you ranked them.

1. Preference order

Applications are sent to schools without preference numbers. Schools do not see where you ranked them

2. Equal criteria assessment

Each school independently ranks all applicants strictly against their oversubscription criteria

3. Highest preference offer

If you qualify for a place at more than one school you will be offered the one with the highest preference and any lower preferences will be discarded

Listing a school as your first preference does not guarantee you a place or increase your priority for that school. The preference order is only considered where more than one offer can be made when you will be offered the highest preference which can be met.

PHASE 2: APPLY

How your final offer is made

How multiple potential offers are resolved into a single offer

Preference Number	School Name	Qualify for a place?	Outcome
1st Preference	School A	No	Waiting List
2nd Preference	**School B**	**Yes**	**OFFERED**
3rd Preference	School C	Yes	Discarded (higher preference offered)
4th Preference	School D	No	Discarded (higher preference offered)
5th Preference	School E	Yes	Discarded (higher preference offered)
6th Preference	School F	No	Discarded (higher preference offered)

Always list schools in the exact order you prefer them.

Lower preferences are automatically discarded as soon as a higher preference can be offered.

PHASE 3: OUTCOMES

National Offer Day: Monday 1 March 2027

Receiving, responding to, and managing your outcome

The notification

You will receive an email with your outcome during the evening of 1 March 2027 (after 5pm). You can also log into eadmissions after this time.

The response

You must accept or decline your offered place online by the deadline of 15 March 2027 to secure your place.

The strategy

Always accept the offer you are given even if it is not your first preference. This guarantees your child has a school place. Accepting a place does not affect your chances of receiving a further offer from the waiting list. You will not be given any extra priority for higher preferred schools if the offer is refused.

The reminder

National Offer Day is only the beginning. There will continue to be movement on waiting lists between March and September.

PHASE 3: OUTCOMES

Reducing the risk of being unplaced

Strategies to minimise the risk of your child not receiving an offer

✓ Make use of all six preferences

Naming fewer schools does NOT increase your chances of getting your first choice. It only limits your options.

✓ Include your nearest non-faith school

Most places are allocated on distance. Including your nearest school increases your chance of getting a place, but it is not guaranteed.

✓ Be realistic about past furthest distances met

Check previous years' offer distances published on the AfC website to see if your distance is realistic.

✓ Do not make assumptions

You are not automatically entitled to a place at a particular school simply because you live in the borough or it is your closest school. There are a specific number of places available in each school.

PHASE 3: OUTCOMES

Waiting lists and further offers

How waiting lists operate and when further offers are made

Automatic entry

If you are not offered your first choice, your child is automatically added to waiting lists for all higher preferences.

Dynamic lists

Waiting lists are ordered strictly by oversubscription rules, NOT date added. A child's position may move down if higher priority applications are added.

Further offers

Waiting list offers begin on Tuesday 30 March 2027. Offers continue through spring and summer as places open up.

Duration

Waiting lists remain open until 30 June 2028. After that date, you must submit an in-year application to stay on the list.

PHASE 3: OUTCOMES

The appeals process

Understanding your legal right to an independent hearing

Your legal right

You have a statutory right to appeal to an independent panel for any preferred school where your child was refused a place after offers have been made.

Independent panel

Appeals are heard by an independent panel completely separate from the school and local authority.

Balancing prejudice

The panel weighs the school's argument (prejudice to the efficient education and efficient use of resources for the other children on roll) against your case for why your child needs that school.

Important Note:

MPs, local councillors, council officers, and schools have no authority to change admission decisions. Only an appeal panel can require a school to admit a child if they are full.

WRAP-UP

Finally... DOs and DON'Ts

Key summary points for a successful application

✓ DOs

- DO read the admissions brochure and visit schools on open events.
- DO apply on time before 31 October 2026.
- DO name up to six schools in your true preference order.
- DO check if supplementary forms (SIFs) are required.
- DO accept your offered place on 1 March 2027 to secure a school.

✗ DON'Ts

- DON'T assume you will get a place just because you live in the borough or near a school.
- DON'T list the same school multiple times — it wastes preference slots.
- DON'T submit a late application — on-time applications are offered first.
- DON'T decline an offer without having an alternative school place secured.

WRAP-UP

We Are Here to Help

Achieving for Children admissions contact & support channels

Achieving for Children — School Admissions Team

- Website: **kr.afcinfo.org.uk**
- Email: **kingston.admissions@achievingforchildren.org.uk**
- Address: Guildhall 2, High Street, Kingston upon Thames, KT1 1EU

Wishing your child every success!

The transition to secondary school is an exciting milestone. Please reach out to the Kingston Admissions Team whenever you need guidance or assistance throughout the application process.