

Surrey School Admissions: briefing for the Surrey County Council Civilian-Military Partnership Board, 20 Oct 2021

New round admissions

The application process is underway for Secondary (Year 7) for September 2022 entry, with a national closing date of 31 October 2021.

[Apply for a place at a secondary school - Surrey County Council \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk)

The application process for Primary (Year R and Year 3) for September 2022 entry opens on 01 November 2021, with a national closing date of 15 January 2022.

[Apply for a place at a primary, infant or junior school - Surrey County Council \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk)

In year admissions

As of 01 September 2021, there is a new DfE School Admissions Code (“the Code”), which has brought in changes to in year admissions. There is a particular emphasis on improving support for the in year admission of vulnerable children, with specific mandatory timescales to process in year applications and fewer grounds under which a school can lawfully refuse to admit a child.

Key changes to the Code include:

- the requirement for own admission authority schools to publish on their website how parents can apply for a place, and to provide a suitable form for parents to complete where the school manages its own in year admissions. The school must also set out when parents will be notified of the outcome of their application and give details of their right of appeal.
- the requirement for own admission authority schools to provide the local authority on request with details of the number of places available within 2 school days of a request, to enable the local authority to assist parents seeking a school place.
- clarification that a school cannot refuse to admit a child solely because information has not been received from their previous school.
- a new requirement that parents **should** be notified of the outcome of their application in writing within 10 school days but **must** be notified within 15 school days.
- a requirement that arrangements should be made for a child to start school as soon as possible (though no timescale is specified), particularly where the child is out of school.
- clarification that admission authorities can only refuse admission **in the normal admissions round or at any point in the normal year of entry (until the following July of Years R and 7, and Year 3 if there is an entry point)** if the PAN (Published Admission Number) has been reached; or the child has been twice permanently excluded and the last exclusion was within the last 2 years.
- confirmation that for in year admission, ie for non-normal years of entry, a place can only be refused if the child has been twice permanently excluded and the last exclusion was within the last 2 years; or the school is full and can demonstrate prejudice to the efficient education of the existing pupils or efficient use of resources; or the school is not full but the child meets the Code’s definition of challenging behaviour **and** the school has a high proportion of previously permanently excluded pupils or children with challenging behaviour compared to other local schools.

Aspects of the new Code specific to children of UK service personnel:

- confirmation that admission authorities must not refuse to process an application and must not refuse a place solely because the family do not yet have an intended address or do not yet live in the area.

- a requirement for admission authorities to use the address at which a service child will live, as long as the parents provide some evidence of the intended address; or to use a Unit or quartering address as the child's home address where the parent requests this.

The School Admissions team has amended its in year processes, guidance and application forms for parents to comply with the new Code.

[Apply for an in year school place - Surrey County Council \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk)

With regard to children of UK service personnel, we ensure that these are identified at the point of application (for those schools for which we manage in year admissions) and are prioritised to ensure the parent is given a prompt outcome – ie a place can be offered or not. All parents refused a place at a school have a right of appeal, and the refusal letter must set out why a place cannot be offered and explain how to appeal the decision.

Children of UK service personnel remain a permitted exception to the Infant Class Size Regulations, which means that a school can lawfully exceed 30 in a class for Years R, 1 and 2 to admit a child who comes under this category, where the child is top of the waiting list and so would be the next to be offered a place.

We provide all schools with guidance on the admission of children from overseas, and this includes a section on children of service personnel:

[Guidance on admission of children from overseas \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk)

This all means that as far as possible, we are satisfied that applications for children of service personnel are treated consistently across Surrey.

Parents should send admission queries to schooladmissions@surreycc.gov.uk, or they can call us via (0300 200 1004), Mon-Fri 9am-5pm.

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