



Watford Grammar School for Boys
Rickmansworth Road, Watford, Hertfordshire, WD18 7JF

ADMISSIONS POLICY 2026

The school admits pupils from a wide geographical area and is heavily oversubscribed. This admissions policy is designed to allocate places fairly, according to clearly defined criteria.

The school's admissions policy is laid down by the governing body and its implementation is delegated to the admissions committee. The detailed execution of the policy is further delegated to the headmaster and a senior member of staff with responsibility for admissions.

1. Admission Numbers

The published admission number for each year group is as follows:

Year 7 224 boys: 146 community places (65% of the whole) and up to 78 specialist places (35% of the whole)

Lower 6th 65 places for external students who have fulfilled the entry requirement.

2. Admission to Year 7 (Secondary Transfer in 2026)

Boys will be admitted at the age of 11 or after having completed National Curriculum Year 6. To apply for admission, parents must complete the Secondary Transfer (or Common Application) Form for the local authority in which they are resident and should also complete our School Information Form. The deadline for completing these forms is 31st October, 2025. Our online School Information Form can be found [here](#).

The school will meet its legal obligation to admit a boy who has an EHC (Education, Health and Care) Plan that names the school and such an admission will count towards the published admission number.

In the event of there being more than 224 applications, oversubscription criteria will be applied. The school will designate 146 places (65% of the whole) as community places and up to 78 places (35% of the whole) as specialist places.

2.1 Specialist places

The school will reserve 22 places (10% of total admissions) for boys selected on the basis of aptitude for music and a further 56 places (25% of total admissions) for boys selected by academic ability. For the purpose of applying the specialist criteria, the admission area will be divided into two separate areas (the Watford area and the 'rest of the admission area') and boys will be placed in one of them according to the location of their normal home address. Applications for these places from candidates who live outside the admission area will only be considered in the event that all of the specialist places are not filled by boys from within the admission area¹.

Watford area: The school will reserve 47 specialist places (60% of the total specialist places) for boys whose normal home address lies within the Watford area. Of these places, 13 are reserved for musical aptitude and 34 are reserved for academic ability. In the event of more than 47 such applications, places will be offered strictly in descending order of candidates' test scores.

Rest of the admission area: The school will reserve 31 specialist places (40% of the total specialist places) for boys whose normal home address lies within the 'rest of the admission area.' Of these places, 9 are reserved for musical aptitude and 22 are reserved for academic ability. In the event of more than 31 such applications, places will be offered strictly in descending order of candidates' test scores.

If fewer places than the number reserved are accepted by applicants from an area, the balance will be added to the places reserved for boys from the other area.

¹ "The level of oversubscription makes it unlikely that a boy from outside the admissions area would be offered a place." (Office of the Schools Adjudicator, 2015)

The Admissions Code requires that the outcomes of admission tests are communicated to parents before they apply for a place at any school. The admissions tests will take place in September in the academic year prior to admission.

2.1.1 Testing for musical aptitude: Round one is an aural test of approximately 30 minutes' duration and does not require any previous knowledge of music or music theory. There will be 60 questions in total in four sections: pitch, rhythm, texture and melody. The highest scoring candidates will be invited back for round two to perform a single piece on their chosen instrument or vocally. This will be a free choice of piece, which should last no longer than three minutes. As there is a free choice of instrument and piece, it will allow candidates of all abilities and all cultures equal opportunity to succeed. Those invited back will be given an individual appointment during the school day. The outcome of the test of musical aptitude will be notified to parents on or around 16th October 2025.

2.1.2 Testing for academic ability: Academic ability is determined through tests in verbal reasoning and mathematics. No minimum score will be required to gain admission, with places being offered strictly in descending order of candidates' standardised test scores. Preparation for the tests is unnecessary. The outcome of the academic test will be notified to parents on or around 16th October 2025. Those who intend to apply **only** for a community place or **only** for a place on the basis of aptitude in music need not sit the school's admissions test of academic ability.

2.1.3 Administration of testing: Both the academic and music tests are administered by the SW Herts Consortium (Watford Grammar School for Boys, Parmiter's School, Watford Grammar School for Girls, Rickmansworth School, Queen's School, Croxley Danes School and St Clement Danes School) and registration for these tests must have been made by the deadline which is indicated on the SW Herts Consortium website (www.swhertsschools.org.uk). This website also provides answers to frequently asked questions, examples of the test questions and information regarding access arrangements.

2.2 Community places

The school will reserve 146 places (65% of total admissions) for boys who are eligible under our community criteria. For the purpose of applying the community criteria, the admission area will be treated as a single area.

In the event of any of the 78 specialist places remaining unallocated, the unallocated places will be treated as if they were community places, but not vice versa.

2.3 Admission area

The admission area comprises the Watford area and the 'rest of the admission area'. The postcodes in each area are not listed in priority order. All postcodes are treated equally within each area unless there is a need to operate the tie break

The Watford area comprises postcode sectors:

Postcode part 1	Postcode part 2 begins with number(s)
WD17	1 to 4
WD18	0, 6 to 9
WD19	4 to 7
WD23	1 to 7 and 9
WD24	4 to 7 and 9
WD25	0, 5, 7 to 9
WD3	3

The Rest of the Admission Area comprises postcode sectors:

Postcode part 1	Postcode part 2 begins with number(s)
WD3	1, 4 to 9
WD4	8 and 9
WD5	0
WD6	3
WD7	7 and 8
HA3	6
HA5	1 to 5
HA6	1 to 3
HA7	3 and 4

2.3.1 Normal home address:

Normal home address means the address where the boy is resident for a majority of school nights at the time of the closing date for applications. A school night is defined as Sunday through to Thursday night.

An address is presumed not to be a genuine address if-

- the address has not been the boy's normal home address since 1st September of the calendar year preceding proposed admission,
- the property is rented and the tenancy agreement is less than 12 months, or
- if a parent with whom the boy is resident for the majority of school nights, owns an alternative property further from but within 20 miles of the school which has been the main family home within the last five years.

In these cases, further evidence must be provided to demonstrate that the address given as the boy's normal home address is genuine.

The school may require additional evidence of residence qualification if there are reasons for casting doubt on the accuracy or completeness of an application. The governors may refuse to base an allocation on an address which might be considered to be only a temporary address.

If an address is found not to be a genuine address, the governors may withdraw the offer of a school place or refuse future applications made on behalf of the boy's siblings under the sibling or cross-sibling criterion.

2.3.2 Exceptions from the definition of normal home address: Where Service families or other Crown Servants, who often move within the UK and from abroad, are posted to the area, we will be able to allocate a place in advance of the family move if an official government letter is provided declaring a relocation date and an intended address within the admission area. Evidence must be provided by 1st December of the calendar year preceding proposed admission in order to be included in the first allocation round.

2.4 Oversubscription criteria

If the school is oversubscribed, after the admission of pupils with an EHC Plan, priority for admission will be given to those boys who meet the criteria below, in order.

Community places

1. Looked After Children and children who were previously looked after, including those who appear (to Watford Grammar School for Boys) to have been in state care outside of England, and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or a special guardianship order.
2. Boys whose normal home address is nearest to the school and who would not be allocated a place under any other criterion, except criterion 6 (up to 22 places, 10% of the total admissions).
3. Boys with a parent who is a permanent full-time or part-time member of the school staff (inclusive of teaching and support staff roles). To qualify, the member of staff must either have been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission is made or have been recruited to fill a post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage. In all cases, the member of staff must have parental responsibility (sole or shared) for the boy.
4. Boys with a sibling (brother) enrolled at the school, excluding brothers who first entered the school in the Sixth Form (Year 12 or Year 13).
5. Boys with a sibling (sister) enrolled at Watford Grammar School for Girls, excluding sisters who first entered the school in the Sixth Form (Year 12 or Year 13).
6. Places will then be allocated to boys in increasing distance order using straight line distance between the boy's normal home address and the school.

Specialist places

7. Boys selected on the basis of aptitude for music as measured by the school's assessment procedures, in merit order (up to 22 places, 10% of total admissions).
8. Boys selected by academic ability as measured by the school's assessment procedures, in merit order (up to 56 places, 25% of total admissions)

Qualification under criteria 1, 3 and 4 does not require residence at a home address within the admission area.

Except for those applying under criteria 1, 3 or 4, all boys are strongly recommended to sit the school's admissions tests.

Boys who are entitled to be offered a place under more than one of criteria 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 or 8 will be offered a place under the lowest numbered of those criteria². If any places remain unfilled once all applications from within the admission area, and those under criteria 1, 3 and 4 have been considered, those places will be allocated to boys from outside the admission area in distance order using the 'straight line' distance measurement system applied by Hertfordshire County Council. Distances are measured using a computerised mapping system to two decimal places. The measurement is taken from the AddressBasePremium address point of the normal home address to the address point of the school. AddressBasePremium data is a nationally recognised method of identifying the location of schools and individual residences.

2.4.1 Tie-breaker: In the event that two or more boys are equally entitled to be offered a place under a criterion, it will be offered to the boy whose normal home address is nearest to the school, using the 'straight line' distance measurement system applied by Hertfordshire County Council. In the event of two boys living an equal distance from the school (e.g. in a block of flats) the boys will be ranked numerically by house/door number, the lower number taking priority. If the boys live at equal distance but in different locations, the place will be allocated by independently verified random allocation.

2.5 Late Transfer to Year 7 – The Waiting List

Boys who are unsuccessful in gaining admission to Year 7 and have expressed continuing interest will be kept on a waiting list for one academic year. During that year any vacancies that arise in Year 7 will be filled using the same criteria as those applied to the original allocation of places. The waiting list will be ranked in accordance with the order of priority shown in the oversubscription criteria. This means that boys will move up and down the list as the list will be re-ordered every time a new boy is added to it. The school participates in HCC's Fair Access protocol, which means that children can be admitted under this protocol after the start of Year 7, taking priority over those on the waiting list, and, if necessary, over PAN.

² Example 1: A boy who has a brother at the school (criterion 4) and who lives close enough to be offered a place under criterion 6 will be offered a place under criterion 4.

Example 2: A boy whose musical aptitude is sufficient to be offered a place under criterion 7 and who achieves a sufficient score in the tests to be offered a place under criterion 8 will be offered a place under criterion 7.

3. Late Transfer Procedure (Years 8-11)

Boys seeking admission to Years 8 to 11 will be considered in accordance with the school's late transfer procedure.

The school participates in HCC's Fair Access protocol, which means that children will be admitted under this protocol before the late transfer procedure.

3.1 Late transfer oversubscription criteria

Where a place becomes available, the following criteria will be applied in the order set out below to determine which boy to admit:

1. Looked After Children and children who were previously looked after, including those who appear (to Watford Grammar School for Boys) to have been in state care outside of England, and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or a special guardianship order.
2. Boys with a parent who is a permanent full-time or part-time member of the school staff (inclusive of teaching and support staff roles). To qualify, the member of staff must either have been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission is made or have been recruited to fill a post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage. In all cases, the member of staff must have parental responsibility (sole or shared) for the boy.
3. Boys who have moved into the admission area within the preceding 12 months.
4. Places will then be allocated to boys in increasing distance order using straight line distance between the normal home address and the school. In the event of two boys living an equal distance from the school (e.g. in a block of flats) the boys will be ranked numerically by house door number, the lower number taking priority. If the boys live at equal distances, but in different locations, the place will be allocated by independently verified random allocation.

Boys who have an Education, Health and Care Plans that name the school will be admitted prior to the application of the late transfer oversubscription criteria.

3.2 Normal home address

Normal home address means the address where the boy is resident for a majority of school nights at the time of the closing date for applications. A school night is defined as Sunday through to Thursday night.

An address is presumed not to be a genuine address if-

- the address has not been the boy's normal home address since 1st September of the calendar year preceding proposed admission,
- the property is rented and the tenancy agreement is less than 12 months, or
- if a parent with whom the boy is resident for the majority of school nights, owns an alternative property further from but within 20 miles of the school which has been the main family home within the last five years.

In these cases, further evidence must be provided to demonstrate that the address given as the boy's normal home address is genuine.

The school may require additional evidence of residence qualification if there are reasons for casting doubt on the accuracy or completeness of an application. The governors may refuse to base an allocation on an address which might be considered to be only a temporary address.

If an address is found not to be a genuine address, the governors may withdraw the offer of a school place or refuse future applications made on behalf of the boy's siblings under the sibling or cross-sibling criterion.

3.3 Late transfer waiting list

Boys who have applied for admission under the late transfer procedure who are not allocated a place in the first instance may have their name placed on a waiting list. The waiting list will be ranked in accordance with the school's late transfer oversubscription criteria as detailed in 3.1 above. Parents are required to indicate their desire to remain on the waiting list in each subsequent year and the school reserves the right to require additional evidence of residence qualification in each successive year.

Places are allocated in the expectation that they will be taken up immediately. Places may be withdrawn if the boy is not able to start at the school within 10 school days of the offer of a place.

4. Admission to Sixth Form (Lower 6th / Year 12) in 2026

The school's published admission number for the Sixth Form will be 65 (external) students. Applications from external students should be made by completing and submitting an application form, available on the school's website, before 31st December, 2025.

Minimum entry requirements: Candidates are required to achieve a minimum of 46 points from the best eight GCSEs (or equivalent) including at least a Grade 5 in English and Maths. This is the same for both internal and external applicants.

The point score will be determined through the addition of the numerical grades awarded in reformed GCSEs. Unreformed GCSEs will be ascribed with a numerical score as follows:

A* = 8; A = 7; B = 6; C = 5; D = 4; E = 3; F = 2; G = 1

All GCSE subjects are equally valid for inclusion in the calculation of the best 8 score.

In addition, candidates must meet the entry requirements for each course for which they have applied. These are published annually in the school's sixth form prospectus.

4.1 The Sixth Form application process

The applicant must complete an online application form, which can be found [here](#), by 31st December 2025. Predicted GCSE grades will be requested. If the applicant's predicted GCSE grades meet the entry requirements, he may be invited to the school to meet a member of staff to discuss the suitability of his subject choices. Applicants will receive notification in writing of any conditional offer of a place, subject to final GCSE results, and will be required to accept this place in writing by the date given on the letter.

If the boy's predicted grades do not meet the entry requirements, he will be invited to contact the school upon receipt of his GCSE results, should he have a continuing interest in a Sixth Form place and achieves the required qualifying grades.

Places will be confirmed upon receipt of final GCSE grades on Results Day in August.

4.2 Sixth Form oversubscription criteria

Where the number of academically qualified external applications exceeds the number of places available, the following criteria will be applied in the order set out below to decide which students to admit.

1. Looked After Children and children who were previously looked after, including those who appear (to Watford Grammar School for Boys) to have been in state care outside of England, and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or a special guardianship order.
2. Places will then be allocated to boys in distance order using straight line distance between the family's normal home address and the school. In the event of two boys living an equal distance from the school (e.g. in a block of flats) the boys will be ranked numerically by house door number, the lower number taking priority. If the boys live at equal distances, but in different locations, the place will be allocated by independently verified random allocation.

Places will be offered using the oversubscription criteria until planned capacity in a given subject or course is reached and the school reserves the right to refuse access to subjects when planned classes are full.

5. SEND Admissions

Where the school is named in an EHC Plan, the school has a duty to admit the boy with priority over all other oversubscription criteria. This applies at all points of entry to the school. The criteria for naming a school are set out in the SEN and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (valid from April 2015). In such a case, the school will consult with parents and the LA to ensure that such naming is in the best interests of the pupil and is in accordance with the criteria. In the case of applicants with special educational needs but without an EHC Plan, the oversubscription criteria will be applied.

6. Admission of children outside their normal age group

The school's policy is for boys to be educated within their correct chronological year group. An application for a boy to be educated out of his age group must be supported by information submitted with the application. When assessing such an application, the school will consider headteachers' views, parents' views, information about the boy's academic, social and emotional development, whether he has been previously educated out of his normal age group and, where relevant, his medical history and the views of medical professionals. Having considered the request, the school will write to the parents to notify them of the decision and set out the reasons for the school's judgement. The governing body is under no obligation to comply with a request nor to offer the boy a place in any other year group. Such an outcome does not constitute the refusal of a place and carries no right of appeal.

7. Appeals

Parents wishing to appeal who applied through Hertfordshire's online system should log in to their online application and click on the link "register an appeal". Out of county residents and paper applicants should call the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 to request their registration details and log into www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals and click on the link "log into the appeals system".

For In Year Admissions:

We will write to you with the outcome of your application. If you have been unsuccessful, registration details to enable you to login and appeal online at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals will be sent separately.

8. Explanation of terms used in the oversubscription criteria

8.1. "Sibling": means one of two (or more) children who have at least one parent in common, or any other child (including an adopted child) who permanently lives at the same address and for whom the parent also has parental responsibility. For the purposes of criteria 4 and 5, the boy must have a sibling who will be a student at Watford Grammar School for Boys (criterion 4) or Watford Grammar School for Girls (criterion 5), in Years 7–13, at the time the boy would be admitted to the school (not when the place is accepted). This means that boys with an elder sibling in Y13 (the Upper Sixth) cannot apply for a place under criteria 4 or 5. Those boys with an elder sibling in Y11 can apply under this criterion because it is assumed (for admission purposes only) that Y11 students will enter the Sixth Form. It is the policy of each Governing Body to admit both (or all) brothers or sisters in the case of multiple births, provided that at least one of the siblings gains a place at one of the schools under any criterion and that the school is deemed appropriate for the educational needs of the additional child(ren). The additional place(s) will be counted as sibling admission.

8.2. "Looked After Children": means a child who is a) in the care of a Local Authority, or b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (section 22(1) of The Children Act 1989). All children adopted from care who are of compulsory school age are eligible for admission under criterion 1. Places are allocated to children in public care according to Chapter 7, Section 2 of the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012. Highest priority will also be given to children who were previously looked after, including those looked after outside England, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a child arrangements order or a special guardianship order. Children who were not "looked after" immediately before being adopted, or made the subject of a Child Arrangement Order or Special Guardianship Order, will not be prioritised under criterion 1.

8.2.1 "Child Arrangement Order": under the provisions of the Children and Families Act 2014, which amended section 8 of the Children Act 1989, Residence Orders have now been replaced by Child Arrangements Orders which settle the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live. Any Residence Order in force prior to 22nd April 2014 is deemed to be a Child Arrangements Order.

8.2.2 "Special Guardianship Order": under 14A of The Children Act 1989, an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian or guardians. Children in the process of being placed for adoption are classified by law as Looked After Children providing there is a Placement Order and the application would be prioritised under criteria 1.

Appendix 1

Use this link to complete our School Information Form for entry to Year 7 in September 2026:

[School Information Form](#)

Use this link to complete our Late Transfer Application Form for entry to Years 8 to 11:

[Late Transfer Application Y8-11](#)

Use this link to complete our Sixth Form Application Form for entry to Lower Sixth in September 2026:

[Sixth Form Application link](#)