

GAINING A PLACE AT MONMOUTH COMPREHENSIVE

When should I apply for a place in a secondary school?

Children are transferred from primary to secondary school in the year in which their twelfth birthday falls (i.e. 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024).

How do I apply for a secondary school for my child?

Having read all the information available from the Local Authority and from individual schools, parents may indicate their preferred school for their child.

Parents and their children are welcome to visit our school before making a decision. The school Open Evening is advertised on our school website. Before deciding to apply for a place at a particular school, you need to consider carefully how your child will travel to school, as you will not necessarily be eligible for transport assistance. (See page on the Council's School Transport Policy).

Where do I obtain an application form?

Application forms will be available online from 25th September 2023 until midnight 13th November 2023. For further information on School Admissions and to access the online application system, please visit: [Applying for a school place - Monmouthshire](#).

It is the parent /carer's responsibility to apply for a school place within the required timescales and notify the Local Authority of any change of address.

Parents have the right to express a preference for their child to be admitted to any school maintained from public funds.

Monmouth Comprehensive admits up to 270 students in each Year Group from Y7 to Y11.

Where there are more applications than places in a school, the over-subscription criteria given below, in priority order, will be applied to determine which children will be offered places.

The highest preference (as declared on the application form) will be offered in the event that one or more preferences can be met.

Children in receipt of a Statement of special educational needs/ Individual Development Plan (IDP) (statutory requirement for admission)

1. Looked after children or previously looked after children i.e. children that are in the care of or have previously been in the care of a local authority, will be afforded priority over those fulfilling points 2-9 below.
2. Children with exceptional medical circumstances, will be afforded priority over those fulfilling points 3-9 below.
3. Children residing within the catchment area for the preferred school who have relevant siblings will be afforded priority over those fulfilling points 4-9 below.
4. Children residing outside of the catchment area for the preferred school, but with relevant siblings who will continue to be in attendance at the preferred school due to being unsuccessful in their application for a place at their catchment school. will be afforded priority over those fulfilling points 5-9 below.

5. Children residing outside of the catchment area, but with relevant existing siblings enrolled at the preferred school by September 2019, will be afforded priority over those fulfilling points 6-9 below.

6. Children residing inside the catchment area for the preferred school will be afforded priority over those fulfilling points 7-9 below.

7. Children residing outside of the catchment area for the preferred school, with a relevant sibling (who will be in attendance at the preferred school at time of admission) that does not meet criteria points 4 and 5 above, will be afforded priority over those fulfilling points 8-9.

8. Children currently on roll at a primary school that is designated to be a feeder school for the preferred secondary school will be afforded priority over those fulfilling point 9.

9. After applying the categories above, or should the school continue to be in a position of over-subscription in any of the above categories, priority will be based on closeness to the preferred school, measured using the shortest safe walking route.

To clarify, any over-subscription in the above criteria will result in the final determination of the allocation of a place being made on distance. For example, if there are more applications than places available after applying point 6 above, places will be allocated to those children whose home address is determined to be closer to the preferred school.

Explanatory Notes

Priority rank 4 - This criteria would apply only in the event that a parent has been unsuccessful in obtaining a place for their child at their catchment school, and is subsequently attending an alternative school with a younger sibling eligible to attend.

Priority rank 5 - This criteria would be relevant for existing siblings only, placed on roll at the preferred school by September 2019, with younger siblings eligible to transfer from Primary to Secondary in September 2020, September 2021, September 2022, September 2023, and September 2024.

Priority rank 8 - This criteria would be relevant within Secondary School oversubscription criteria for children who are in attendance at a feeder Primary School for the preferred secondary school. Feeder schools are determined as being the schools that have formal transitional arrangements with a secondary school.

Please refer to the MCC Starting Schools Booklet 24/25 for full details of the over-subscription criteria.

Determination of the shortest safe walking route will be calculated using official routes known to the Local Authority and Highways agencies. The starting point of the calculated route will be determined as being the nearest network point to the main entrance of the property. The main entrance of the home address is determined by the Local Authority to be where the property receives post. The finishing point of the calculated route will be determined as being the nearest official open gate adopted for use by the preferred school.

The coordinates of an applicant address will be determined using the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) and Ordnance Survey address base data.

Where a safe walking route cannot be determined for an applicant, the shortest driving route will be used for allocation purposes.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING ADMISSIONS TO SCHOOLS

Can applications be considered for pupils who do not live in Monmouthshire?

Yes, applications for the admission of pupils who live outside the county are considered on an equal basis.

Application forms are available from the Local Authority to whom you pay your council tax. The form should then be returned to them. They will forward the form onto the School and Student Access Unit. It may also be appropriate to forward a letter to the School and Student access unit to ensure that we are aware of your request for a place.

If I apply for a place at an independent School, Voluntary Aided School, or out of County School will my application for a Monmouthshire School be jeopardised?

Application forms invite parents to express up to three preferences, and it is important to include your application to a VA or Independent School as one of these preferences. All preferences will be considered equally in line with the Authority's over-subscription criteria. Your highest ranked preference will be offered in the event that one or more preferences can be met.

Can I state just one preference?

Yes. However, if this school is oversubscribed, this may delay the process of your application. You are encouraged to express three preferences that can be a combination of schools within Monmouthshire, and another authority or other authorities alone.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT

Many of our students travel on buses, some setting out early in the morning to cover considerable distances. We are delighted that our Safe Routes to School Scheme has resulted in a safe bus bay and a number of safety improvements for school students and members of the community throughout the town.

At the rear of the school, from the Dixton Road, there is access to the main school car park for staff parking and the use of school transport. Within this area, there is a dedicated 'drop-off' point for students travelling to school by car in the morning.

At the end of the school teaching day, students who are being collected by parents in a car may also use the bus bay entrance after **3.20pm** and collect their child from the designated pick-up point.

Parents are asked not to park on the Dixton Road adjacent to the bus bay as this causes problems for residents and becomes a hazard if children are crossing the road between parked vehicles.

There is no vehicular access to school via The Burgage.

For whom is assistance with transport provided?

Free transport is generally restricted to students who attend their catchment area school and live more than two miles from that school.

How is the distance calculated?

The distance is measured electronically as being the shortest, safest walking route between the home and the main school entrance.

If my child is eligible for free home to school transport, where will (s)he be collected from?

It is not always possible to arrange the routes of vehicles to pass close to the homes of pupils. Therefore, it may be necessary for parents to make arrangements for their child(ren) to reach the nearest, safe 'pick-up' point of the contract route. Every effort is made to keep this distance as short as possible and it should not exceed one mile along a safe route for pedestrians.

Will expenses incurred in travelling to and from school be reimbursed?

No. Expenses incurred in travelling to and from school are not reimbursed.

If I move home to an address outside the catchment areas school, will free transport be provided?

No, if you move to an address outside the catchment area school, your child will not be provided with free transport, unless the child is in Year 10 or 11 of study and there are existing contract services available.

If my child has more than one home, will travel assistance be given to both?

Free transport is provided to the main home only as confirmed by the application and school databases. Dual residency where parents or guardians are not living together will only be considered if the child is living in more than one residence and that they still qualify under the nearest suitable school and distance criteria.

What type of transport assistance is available?

The Local Authority decides on the most suitable transport arrangements, bearing in mind all relevant factors, including cost. Depending on individual circumstances, transport is arranged usually by contract bus, service bus or taxi, though sometimes other individual arrangements have to be made. Transport is provided at the beginning and end of the normal school day, but is not provided for out-of-hours activities.

Can children who do not qualify for assistance with transport take up spare seats on school buses?

Yes. The Authority currently operates a concessionary fare scheme under which pupils may be allowed to occupy spare seats on school buses as a temporary concession even though they do not satisfy the criteria. Further details of this scheme can be supplied on request from the Passenger Transport Unit on 01633 644777 or email passengertransportunit@monmouthshire.gov.uk.

What happens if a child is disruptive on the provided transport?

The Authority will not tolerate anti-social behaviour on its school transport. We have issued various sanctions to deal with situations of anti-social behaviour, which, in the most serious cases, could result in the child being removed from all Local Authority transport. All parents are required to enter a "Parental Contract" with the Passenger Transport Unit which will detail the conditions of pupil travel and the parents responsibilities should these conditions not be met. The withdrawal of transport will not be without consultation with the Parent, Police and School. The purpose of this consultation will be to agree any future arrangements available thereafter to transport the child to

school. Those children on transport will also be obliged to participate in other safety initiatives employed such as the Bus Behaviour Scheme. Transport applications will be subject to the agreement for the Authority to utilise CCTV footage where fitted to Home to School Transport vehicles.

What do I do if I have a concern or complaint about the school transport service?

The Authority is committed to providing parents and carers with confidence in the service provided. In the event that parents/carers have concerns, we need to know about it. You can inform us either in writing, in person or by email to any officer or councillor at any of the Council's buildings. Should you wish to complain about the assessment of transport entitlement, the Authority has a Complaints Procedure. Further information can be found at www.monmouthshire.gov.uk. Please contact the Passenger Transport unit on 01633 644777 or email passengertransportunit@monmouthshire.gov.uk if your complaint is about the assessment or the provision of transport.