ADMISSIONS POLICY 2027

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 trustee body and its implementation is delegated to the admissions committee. The detailed execution of the policy is further delegated to the headteacher 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	210 girls:137 community places (65% of the whole) and up to 73 specialist places (35% of the whole)
Year 12	65 places for external students who have fulfilled the entry requirement.

2. Admission to Year 7 (Secondary Transfer in 2027)

Girls will be admitted at the age of 11 or after having completed National Curriculum Year 6. To apply for admission, parents/carers 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 2026. Our online School Information Form can be found on the school website, Year 7 admissions page- here.

The school will meet its legal obligation to admit a girl 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 210 applications, oversubscription criteria will be applied. The school will designate 137 places (65% of the whole) as community places and up to 73 places (35% of the whole) as specialist places.

2.1 Specialist places

The school will reserve 21 places (10% of total admissions) for girls selected on the basis of aptitude for music and a further 52 places (25% of total admissions) for girls 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 girls 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 girls from within the admission area[1].

Watford area: The school will reserve 44 specialist places (60% of the total specialist places) for girls whose normal home address lies within the Watford area. Of these places, 13 are reserved for musical aptitude and 31 are reserved for academic ability. In the event of more than 44 such applications, places will be offered strictly in descending order of candidates' test scores.

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

Rest of the admission area: The school will reserve 29 specialist places (40% of the total specialist places) for girls whose normal home address lies within the 'rest of the admission area.' Of these places, 8 are reserved for musical aptitude and 21 are reserved for academic ability. In the event of more than 29 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 girls from the other area.

The Admissions Code requires that the outcomes of admission tests are communicated to parents/carers 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/carers on or around mid-September.

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/carers on or around mid- October. Those who intend to apply **only** for a community place or **only** for a place on the basis of aptitude in music need not take 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 Girls, Parmiter's School, Watford Grammar School for Boys, Rickmansworth School, Queen's School, St Clement Danes School and Croxley 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, with examples of the test questions and information regarding access arrangements.

2.2 Community places

The school will reserve 137 places (65% of total admissions) for applicants 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 73 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 girl 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 girl'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/carer with whom the girl 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 girl'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 trustees 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 trustees may withdraw the offer of a school place or refuse future applications made on behalf of the girl's sibling 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 girls 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 Girls) to have been in state care outside of England, but ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted or became subject to a child arrangement order or a special guardianship order.

2. Girls 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 21 places, 10% of the total admissions).
3. Girls 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 girl.
4. Girls with a sibling (sister) enrolled at the school, excluding sisters who first entered the school in the Sixth Form (Year 12 or Year 13).
5. Girls with a sibling (brother) enrolled at Watford Grammar School for Boys, excluding brothers who first entered the school in the Sixth Form (Year 12 or Year 13).
6. Places will then be allocated to girls in increasing distance order using straight line distance between the family's normal home address and the school.

Specialist places

7. Girls selected on the basis of aptitude for music as measured by the school's assessment procedures, in merit order (up to 21 places, 10% of total admissions).
8. Girls selected by academic ability as measured by the school's assessment procedures, in merit order (52 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 applicants are strongly recommended to sit the school's admissions tests.

Girls 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 criteria[2]. If any places remain unfilled once all applications from within the admissions area and those under criterion 1, 3 or 4 have been considered, those places will be allocated to girls from outside the admissions area in distance order using the 'straight line' distance measurement system applied by Hertfordshire County Council (HCC). 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 girls are equally entitled to be offered a place under a criterion, it will be offered to the girl whose normal home address is nearest to the school, using the 'straight line' distance measurement system applied by Hertfordshire County Council (HCC). In the event of two girls living an equal distance from the school (e.g. in a block of flats) the applicants will be ranked numerically by house/door number, the lower number taking priority. If the girls 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

Girls 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 girls will move up and down the list as the list will be re-ordered every time a new girl is added to it. The school participates in HCC's Fair Access

[2] *Example 1:* *A girl who has a sister 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 girl 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.*

protocol, which means that children will be admitted under this protocol after the start of Year 7 and, if necessary, over PAN.

3. Late Transfer Procedure (Years 8-11)

Girls 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 girl to admit:

1. Looked After Children and children who were previously looked after, including those who appear (to Watford Grammar School for Girls) to have been in state care outside of England, but 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. Girls with a parent who is a permanent member of the school staff. 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 girl.
3. Girls who have moved into the admission area within the preceding 12 months.
4. Places will then be allocated to girls in increasing distance order using straight line distance between the normal home address and the school. In the event of two girls living an equal distance from the school (e.g. in a block of flats) the applicants will be ranked numerically by house door number, the lower number taking priority. If the girls live at equal distances, but in different locations, the place will be allocated by independently verified random allocation.

Girls who have EHC Plans that name the school will be admitted prior to the application of the late transfer oversubscription criteria.

3.2 Normal home address

In order to qualify for admission by late transfer under rules referring to the school's admission area, the girl must be resident at her home address for a majority of school nights. A school night is defined as Sunday through to Thursday night.

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

- the property is rented and the tenancy agreement is less than 12 months, or
- if a parent/carer with whom the girl 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 girl'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 girl's sibling under the sibling or cross-sibling criterion.

3.3 Late transfer waiting list girls 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/carers 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 applicant is not able to start at the school within 10 school days of the offer of a place**.**

4. Admission to Sixth Form (Year 12) in 2027

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 January 2027.**

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* = 9 & 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 on the school's website, Year 12 admissions page, **by 31st January 2027** and predicted GCSE grades will be requested from her current school. If the applicant's predicted GCSE grades meet the entry requirements, she may be invited to the school to meet a member of staff to discuss the suitability of her subject choices. Applicants will receive notification in writing of any conditional offer of a provisional place, subject to final GCSE results, and will be required to accept this place in writing. Places will be confirmed upon receipt of final GCSE results and the deadline for the school for receiving these will be given in the offer letter.

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

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 Girls) to have been in state care outside of England, but ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted or became subject to a child arrangement order or a special guardianship order.

2. Places will then be allocated to girls in distance order using straight line distance between the family's normal home address and the school. In the event of two girls living an equal distance from the school (e.g. in a block of flats) the girls will be ranked numerically by house door number, the lower number taking priority. If the applicants 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 girl with priority over all other oversubscription criteria. 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/carers 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 a Statement or EHC Plan, the oversubscription criteria will be applied.

6. Admission of children outside their normal age group

The school's policy is for girls to be educated within their correct chronological year group. An application for a girl to be educated out of her age group must be supported by information submitted with the application. When assessing such an application, the school will consider headteachers' views, parents/carers' views, information about the girl's academic, social and emotional development, whether she has been previously educated out of her normal age group and, where relevant, her medical history and the views of medical professionals. Having considered the request, the school will write to the parents/carers to notify them of the decision and set out the reasons for the school's judgement. The trustee body is under no obligation to comply with a request nor to offer the girl 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/carers 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 log in 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 girl must have a sibling who will be a student at Watford Grammar School for Girls (criterion 4) or Watford Grammar School for Boys (criterion 5), in Years 7–13, at the time the girl would be admitted to the school (not when the place is accepted). This means that girls with an elder sibling in Year 13 cannot apply for a place under criteria 4 or 5. Those girls 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 Trustee Body to admit both (or all) sisters or brothers 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 arrangement 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 Children Looked After providing there is a Placement Order and the application would be prioritised under criteria 1.

Appendix 1

A link to complete both Year 7 SIF (School Information Form) and our Sixth Form Application Form for entry for September 2027 will be available on the school website from September 2026.

Late Transfer Applications for entry to Years 8 to 11 please contact:

admissions@watfordgirls.herts.sch.uk