

Reading School Admissions Policy and Guidelines for Year 7 boarding places for entry in September 2026

These arrangements set out how Reading School will handle boarding applications for admission to the School for Year 7.

[Co-ordinated secondary admissions](#)

Reading School's admissions process is in line with the co-ordinated secondary school admissions scheme as set out in the DfE Code of Practice 2021. These arrangements set out how Reading School will handle applications for admission to the School for Year 7 boarding.

[School covered by these arrangements](#)

These admission arrangements apply to Reading School.

All applications from parents **who reside in England** are covered by the co-ordinated admissions arrangements in which parents make an application to the Local Authority (LA) in which they live. Boarding applications are now part of this scheme and applications will be made on the appropriate Local Authority (LA) common application form. Parents/carers may express a number of preferences and reasons for those preferences.

Only weekly boarding is available.

[Admissions Authority](#)

As an Academy, Reading School ('the School') is its own admissions authority. However, the School operates its admissions policy and procedures in line with the Local Authority ('LA') coordinated scheme for school admissions, which in turn follows the Department for Education School Admissions Code. The School is a selective grammar school under S.104 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and places will therefore be offered to boys on the basis of ability, as determined by performance indicating appropriate ability in the entrance test.

The School admits 150 boys into Year 7 each year (this is our Published Admission Number – PAN), which is made up of 138 day places and 12 boarding places.

[Further Information](#)

[Application Process](#)

Anyone wishing to name Reading School on their CAF must have registered to sit the test at Reading School. The online registration process opens on 1st April 2025 and closes at midday on Friday 13th June 2025.

[Key Dates for Parents](#)

[Registration](#)

In order for a student to sit the entrance test, an online registration form via the school website [Reading School Registration form](#) must be completed. The registration window opens on 1st April 2025 and closes at midday on Friday 13th June 2025.

[I haven't registered to sit the test, am I able to apply?](#)

[Catchment Area](#)

There is no Catchment area for boarding Candidates.

[Late Registration](#)

Registration for the test after the deadline will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances beyond the control of the parents. The Director of Admissions will make a decision based on the evidence provided.

[I have missed the deadline to register for the tests, am I too late?](#)

Inclusion

The School acts at all times in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and will therefore consider a request for reasonable adjustments from the parents of any child with a disability or Special Educational Need who wishes to sit the entrance test. Parents should notify Reading School on the registration form if their child will need additional support in order to access the Test, and supporting information will need to be provided at least 2 months before the Test. Children with a visual impairment will be assessed in an appropriate manner that makes reasonable adjustments for their needs, in line with RNIB guidance.

Children with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) who meet the academic entrance requirements of the school and name Reading School on the CAF will be offered a place.

Children directed via the Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over any child already on the School waiting list provided they meet the academic entrance requirements of the school.

Children currently studying outside of the normal age group are able to register and make an application. A decision on whether to offer them a place will be made by the school in the child's best interests. Any child who has already moved on to Year 7 will not be considered.

Further information and next steps relating to inclusion

Entrance Test

A child may only take the test once. The Entrance Test consists of subjects covered in the KS2 curriculum and creativity. Children are expected to show ability appropriate to the Key Stage 2 curriculum. No additional preparation is necessary. All elements will be tested on one day in September and all tests will take place at Reading School. There are no 'practice papers', but a familiarisation paper is available on the website.

Creativity: The ability to think of new and imaginative ideas, or to solve problems in original and unique ways.

Reference to subjects: The Year 7 entrance test may assess knowledge and skills from any National Curriculum subject taught up to and including the [Year 5 programme of study](#):

Art & Design	Languages
Computing	Mathematics
Design & Technology	Music
English	Physical Education
Geography	Science
History	

Working with our test provider, we are committed to making the test content accessible to all candidates regardless of primary school, socio economic background and disabilities.

Sporting Aptitude Assessment

Up to 15 sporting aptitude places are available for entry to Year 7. A candidate is only eligible for a Sporting Aptitude place if they have achieved eligible scores in all aspects of the entrance test, are of the standard in creativity, and have surpassed the threshold for Sporting Aptitude. Sporting Aptitude places will be allocated as per the oversubscription criteria and allocated in rank order of scores from the Sporting Aptitude Assessment Day.

All applicants who have registered for sporting aptitude places will be invited to attend a Sporting Aptitude Assessment Day. There is one opportunity for candidates to be assessed for sporting aptitude. Any candidate who has expressed an interest in the sporting aptitude test (by way of registration) will be invited to attend the Sporting Aptitude Assessment which will take place on **Tuesday 2nd September 2025**. There will be no other opportunity to attend the Sporting Aptitude Assessment.

The sporting aptitude assessment will give all participants the opportunity to demonstrate their potential and propensity to develop ability in sport through a variety of scored tasks and tests. The process will be subject to oversight by an independent assessor. When all assessments have been completed, a rank order of applicants for the Sporting Aptitude places will be produced and a threshold will be applied. Parents will be told whether their son has achieved the threshold and is therefore eligible to be considered for a place under the Sporting Aptitude criterion.

[Further information about the Sporting Aptitude Assessment](#)

[Late Testing](#)

Where a child is unable to sit the entrance test through exceptional circumstances beyond the control of the parents, the school may decide to make arrangements for testing to take place at a later date. The Director of Admissions will make a decision based on the evidence provided.

[My son is unable to sit the test on the published date, can he sit at a later date?](#)

[Entrance Test Result](#)

You will be informed of your son's entrance test result by email in mid-October. This will indicate if he has achieved an eligible score. On the basis of this, you may wish to list Reading School as one of your preferences on the Common Application Form. Achieving an eligible score does NOT guarantee the offer of a place, as there are likely to be more children with eligible scores than places available.

[How is the 'eligible score' decided?](#)

[Eligible Score & Oversubscription](#)

An eligible score is no guarantee of a place at Reading School, as places are likely to be oversubscribed. In the case of oversubscription, the following criteria will be applied until the Published Admissions Number is complete:

- Category 1: (Previously) Looked After Children and/or Children previously in care outside of England with a score up to 5 marks below an eligible score;
- Category 2: Children with Pupil or Service Premium with a score up to 5 marks below an eligible score;
- Category 3: Children with a boarding need: Children for whom it can be demonstrated that they have a significant social or welfare need to attend the school. Applications under this criterion must be supported by written evidence from a relevant professional, such as a doctor, social worker, or other specialist, outlining the child's or family's social or welfare circumstances. The evidence should explain why these needs can only be met by the child attending this specific school, as opposed to another local school.
- Category 4: Up to 15 places for children who have demonstrated aptitude in sport, who live within the Catchment area or who have registered for a boarding place, (by achieving a score in the Sporting Aptitude Assessment above the threshold) by rank order of performance in the sporting aptitude assessments;
- Category 5: All other Candidates;

Evidence of all of the above will need to be submitted and approved in order for a child to be admitted.

[Further information and my son has achieved the eligible score, is he guaranteed a place?](#)

[CAF](#)

For the Local Authority to offer you a place at Reading School, you must name the school on the Local Authority's Common Application Form and be ranked high enough in the entrance test results, according to the school's admissions criteria. The Local Authority will announce offers on National Offer Day (2nd March 2026). Unless a CAF preference is registered, a place will not be offered, even if a child achieves a high enough test score to be eligible.

[Further information on the CAF and should I name Reading School as my first preference on the CAF?](#)

[Tie Break](#)

In the event of standardised scores being tied for two or more candidates and where admission would exceed the PAN, the final rank order will be determined using performance in the creativity element.

Where this still leads to a tie break situation an independent person will supervise random allocation. In the case of Reading School, this will be Reading Local Authority.

[Conversion from Day to Boarding](#)

If you decide that you wish to convert your registration from day to boarding, you may do so by emailing admissions@reading-school.co.uk. In order for your child to be considered in the first round of allocations, you must make this conversion no later than 31st October 2025. If you make this decision after this date, your child will be placed below those applicants already on the waiting list after the initial round of allocations on 2nd March 2026 and will not be re-ranked on the waiting list until every boarding applicant on the waiting list has been offered a place.

[Waiting List](#)

If your son achieves an eligible score but is not offered a place, he will be placed on a waiting list until 31st January 2027. This waiting list is ranked in accordance with our Admissions Criteria. If a place at the School becomes available in Year 7 between 2nd March 2026 and 31st January 2027, the next eligible boy on the ranked waiting list will be offered the place by the Local Authority without having to sit a further Entrance Test.

[Further Information on Waiting List](#)

[In-Year/Later Admissions](#)

In Year vacancies are rare. If a vacancy occurs after the Autumn Term of Year 7, those on the 'continued interest' list for the relevant year group are invited to take our In-Year Entrance Test which will usually take place in the June of each year. Further details can be found on the Non-Routine Admissions Policy.

[Appeals](#)

All Candidates refused a place have a right of appeal to an independent appeal panel constituted and operated in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code. Appeals must be made in writing and the appellants must set out the reasons on which the appeal is based.

Details of appeals can be found at the following link: [Appeals](#)

ADMISSIONS PROCESSES

[Admissions Authority](#)

In accepting a place, parents undertake to ensure their child's full commitment to both the curricular and co-curricular life of the School.

Note that wherever the term 'parent(s)' is used in this document it is also deemed to include a carer or any other person who is in loco parentis.

The GAC (Governors' Admissions Committee) is a sub-committee of the Full Governing Body (FGB). It comprises at least three Governors plus the Headmaster, and is supported by the Clerk to the FGB. It has delegated authority to govern and monitor routine admissions policy and processes, and to reach judgements about how individual admissions cases should be managed in a fair and equitable manner.

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Registration

Anyone unable to complete an online registration should contact the school. Any candidate who does not register to take the test and names us on the CAF (Common Application Form) will not be included in the Reading School ranking. Registering for the entrance test is NOT an application for a place at Reading School.



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Late Registration

A registration after the closing date for registering for tests will only be accepted for the entrance tests where the school is satisfied that illness, bereavement or other exceptional circumstance beyond the control of the parents prevented a timely registration, or the child moved into the area after the closing date for test registration. Evidence will be required in these circumstances. Late notification of the testing timetable by a child's current school or otherwise will not be accepted as a reason why timely registration was not possible. Any such candidates will be tested in June 2026. The final decision on whether there are exceptional circumstances will be made by the Director of Admissions.

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Inclusion

The places offered each year will be the number remaining after the school has admitted boys with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) who meet the School's academic entrance standard and whose EHCP names Reading School. If your child has special educational or medical needs which may require positive action, you must inform the School via the Registration Form to ensure appropriate arrangements are made for the entrance test sitting. It would be expected that there would be supporting information from an accredited professional recommending arrangements appropriate to the need sent to admissions@reading-school.co.uk two months before the test. It would also be necessary to establish a history of need by demonstrating that similar arrangements are in place at the candidate's current school. Reading School will contact the candidate's primary school to verify and confirm existing arrangements. If it is unclear what additional arrangements are required, a SENCO to SENCO conversation will take place. Possible adjustments may include but are not limited to extra time, scribes and modified formats of the test paper. Where alternative assessment methods are required, candidates must demonstrate ability commensurate with other students in the year group. It is for the School to decide what adjustments are appropriate, having taken account of all the information provided.

Children with an Education Health and Care plan (EHC plan) are admitted under separate statutory procedures, and not under this policy. In the normal admission round (i.e. entry to Year 7 in September), children who qualify and who have EHC plan that names Reading School will be admitted prior to the allocation of places to other candidates, and the number of places available to other children within the PAN for Year 7 will be reduced. At all other times, children who qualify and have an EHC plan that names Reading School will be admitted even if that means going over the PAN for that year group.

In exceptional circumstances applications may be received for children who are being taught in a school year group outside that which is appropriate to their age. Where this arises, parents must outline their reasons for the request and supply any supporting documents (e.g. information from their child's education setting or medical evidence) to the School Admissions Team as soon as possible. The School will make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of the parent's views; information about the child's academic, social and emotional development; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional; whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group; and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely. They must also take into account the views of the head teacher of the school concerned

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Entrance Test

Candidates will be tested in English and Maths and creativity. The English and Maths elements are marked by computer and age-standardised. Boarding applicants who achieve an eligible score from those two elements will have their creativity element assessed. Day applicants who convert to boarding status after the 31st August 2025, who achieve an eligible score from those two elements will have their creativity element assessed after the 2nd March 2026 and will be ranked accordingly.

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Sporting Aptitude Assessment

If your child participates in the Sporting Aptitude Assessment but is not successful in meeting the required threshold to be considered for one of these places, he can still be considered for a place at the school under the other admission criteria provided he has passed the entrance examinations. Taking part in the Sporting Aptitude Assessment in no way disadvantages your son in his chances of gaining a place in the school under other of the admission criteria.

On the day of the Sporting Aptitude Assessment candidates will take part in fitness tests and sports related practices. While we appreciate that some candidates might feel nervous about taking part in the day, the environment will be relaxed, friendly and supportive. The tests will be administered by our own experienced specialist PE staff, coaches and external assessors. The Sporting Aptitude Test will take place on **Tuesday 2nd September 2025**. If you want your child to be considered for a sporting aptitude place all you need to do is register your child to sit the Entrance Tests which you can do via the school's website. On the registration form, you will find a section on Sporting Aptitude which you can select if you wish your child to participate in the Sport Aptitude test.

Please note that there is no other date available for the sporting aptitude test to take place.

The rationale for reserving up to 10% of the school's Year 7 places for those who achieve the minimum standard in the entrance test, and excel in the sporting aptitude assessment is to ensure we widen opportunity for young people who show academic excellence and an additional range of skills.

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[Late Testing](#)

Where a child is unable to sit the entrance tests through serious illness, bereavement or other circumstance beyond the control of the parent(s), (notified to the school on or before test day), or the child moved into the area after the test dates, the school may consider these applications to be timely and make arrangements for testing to take place as soon as possible after the original test date. Evidence will be required in these circumstances. Children sitting these tests will be considered alongside those children who sat the tests in September 2025. Where the school is not satisfied that a timely registration was prevented, this will mean that it will be refused on the grounds that the school's admission criteria had not been met and the child will not be permitted to take the Test. For children whose registration or Common Application Form (or both) were submitted after the closing dates and where they were not considered to be timely, there will be an opportunity to sit the school entrance tests for consideration after the first round of allocations on 2nd March 2026 (usually June 2026). Such cases might be if illness prevented a single parent/carer from returning the form on time, if the reason for lateness is supported in writing by a medical professional involved in the case, or if the candidate has moved into the area after the deadline, (evidence will be required). If an applicant cannot sit the test on the date of testing due to their child sitting the test at another school, then consideration will be given as to whether they will be allocated the late test date in June 2026. The final decision on whether there are exceptional circumstances will be made by the Director of Admissions.

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[Entrance Test Result](#)

In order to be eligible for admission to the school, candidates must achieve an 'eligible score' which includes minimum standards in each element of the test. This is not a pre-defined pass mark, but reflects a candidate's position in the rank order of standardised scores in the Maths and English elements, once a minimum standard for creativity has been achieved. The Admissions Committee will determine, by reference to performance in the tests, an appropriate eligible score and a rank order of children who should be offered a place. Parents who apply for testing on time will receive notification if their child is placed on the eligible list as soon as possible

Reading School will post results of tests securely online to parents in advance of the Common Application date (31st October 2025). If your son is assessed as eligible for admission to Reading School, you may wish to list Reading School as one of your preferences on your Common Application Form. However being assessed as eligible for Reading School will not guarantee that your son will be offered a place as it is extremely likely that more boys will qualify for places than the School can accommodate. In this case we will apply our oversubscription criteria as listed in this policy.

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Oversubscription Criteria

After the admission of boys who have a statement of special educational needs or an Educational Health and Care Plan which names the school and who achieve the eligible score, the following oversubscription criteria will be applied if there are more Candidates than places available. An eligible score will be determined, below which students not be considered for admission to the school and not therefore ranked according to the oversubscription criteria below. There is no guarantee of a place being available, but places up to the Published Admissions Number will be allocated in the following order, where boys meet the necessary academic and eligibility entry requirements, assuming that an offer from a higher preference has not been made.

All Candidates above the eligible score will be ranked in the following order and within each category strictly by their performance in the test

Category 1 The candidate is a looked after child or previously looked after child who achieve the eligible score or above for Reading School, for this particular year of entry up to and including five marks below the eligible score. A Looked After Child is 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 (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) or (c) the applicant was previously in care outside of England. Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order).

Category 2 The student is Pupil Premium or Service Premium child who achieve the eligible score or above for Reading School, for this particular year of entry or whose scores are up to and including five marks below the eligible score (including any re-offers which are made from the waiting list in this category after 2nd March 2026. Documentary evidence that the parent has been or is in receipt of the appropriate support payment entitling the child to pupil premium/service premium will be required. Children given priority under this criterion fall into the following categories: Children currently registered as eligible for free school meals and children who have been registered as eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years; and children whose parent(s) are serving in the regular UK armed forces, to the children of regular armed forces personnel who were serving in the past 3 years, or to children who are in receipt of a pension under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme and the War Pensions Scheme because their parent(s) died on active service with the UK armed forces.

Category 3 The applicant has a boarding or social/welfare need. Children for whom it can be demonstrated that they have a significant boarding, social or welfare need to attend the school. Applications under this criterion must be supported by written evidence from a relevant professional, such as a doctor, social worker, or other specialist, outlining the child's or family's social or welfare circumstances. The evidence should explain why these needs can only be met by the child attending this specific school as a boarder, as opposed to another local school.

Priority under this criterion will only be given in exceptional cases where the evidence shows that attending the designated school is essential for the well-being of the child.

Category 4: Up to 15 students who have demonstrated aptitude in sport, who live within the Catchment area or who have applied for a boarding place, (by achieving a score in the Sporting Aptitude Assessment above the threshold) by rank order of performance in the sporting aptitude assessments;

Category 5 All other Candidates

A Boarding Need can be defined as a child who needs to attend boarding. A Social/Welfare need is a child who needs to attend the school. Further details can be found below:

Boarding Need:

- i) Those at risk or with an unstable home environment and children of service personnel who have died while serving or who have been discharged as a result of attributable injury; or
- ii) children of key workers and Crown Servants working abroad (e.g. the children of charity workers, people working for voluntary service organisations, the diplomatic service or the European Union, teachers, law enforcement officers and medical staff working abroad) whose work dictates that they spend much of the year overseas.

Examples of evidence that could support an application under the **Social/Welfare need** criterion might include but is not limited to:

1. Social Worker Reports:

A report from a social worker or caseworker that details the family's or child's circumstances (e.g., involvement in child protection plans, foster care placements) and why the school's location or resources are uniquely suited to meet the child's needs.

2. Police or Court Documents:

Where there are safety concerns, such as a restraining order, witness protection, or family relocation due to domestic violence, which make it essential for the child to attend a school in a specific area.

3. Housing or Refuge Documentation:

Evidence from housing officers or support workers in cases where the family is living in temporary accommodation, a women's refuge, or where relocation to a particular area is essential due to social welfare needs.

4. Support Letters from Charities or Advocacy Groups:

A letter from a charity or non-profit organisation (e.g., domestic abuse or disability support services) providing evidence that the child or family has received support from the organisation and that attending the specific school will benefit their social welfare.

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CAF

The rank order of eligible students will be communicated to the Local Authority for use in the coordinated allocation process. Test performance can be used to help parents choose which schools to apply for, but notification that your child has achieved the eligible score does not constitute an offer of a place at Reading School, the school is not legally permitted to make such offers. It is the LA, under the coordinated admissions scheme, that has the legal responsibility to administer admissions.

Completing the CAF (Common Application Form)

There is a coordinated admissions process in England with exchange of information between local authorities (LA). This means that you must apply to your home LA for any state-maintained secondary school in England. Parents/carers must apply for Year 7 secondary school place to their home local authority by **31st October 2025**. Preferences should be ranked with your most preferred school listed first (ie Preference 1).

You should list your school preferences **in your genuinely preferred order**. You should contact your own Local Authority if you have any queries on completing the CAF

The "Equal Preference System" was created to prevent admission authorities (particularly where an individual school is the admission authority) giving higher priority to parents who make a particular school their first preference. The system is enshrined in the School Admissions Code and it has legal force.

Every school that you place on your Common Application Form (CAF) is treated as if it was a separate application – each one is *equal* – and the highest possible preference will be offered. The admission

authority **cannot** discriminate against your application simply because you did not put a school in first place on the CAF.

Schools are **not** told where you ranked them in your preferences. Admission authorities are expressly forbidden by law (again, it is enshrined in the Admissions Code) from passing on this information

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Waiting List

Parents who have named Reading School on the CAF but whose child has not been offered a place at Reading School will automatically go on the waiting list if Reading School was a higher preference choice on the CAF than the school they have been allocated and their child achieved the qualifying score or above.

Parents of children who have achieved the eligible score who change their preference following allocation day i.e. because their child was offered a higher preference will be added to the waiting list according to the over-subscription criteria.

On 31st January 2027, the ranked waiting list will cease and children will have to sit a further Entrance Test if a vacancy were to arise. In this case, a non-routine application form will need to be completed once the waiting list ceases.

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