

## Secondary 1 school places - Frequently Asked Questions

Please note that these questions only relate to S1 places for the new school year beginning in August 2025

If you would like a place in another year group (S2 to S6), you must apply to the school directly. Go to: [Apply for a school place – The City of Edinburgh Council](#) to check which year group you should apply for and download the request for a school place form.

Further information is contained within the [Placing in Schools booklet](#).

Every address in Edinburgh has two catchment schools:

- A non-denominational catchment school
- A Roman Catholic catchment school

Each November, we allocate a S1 place to all P7 pupils living in Edinburgh.

The school we allocate depends on the denomination of the primary school your child attends and the address held on their education record:

- we'll allocate your catchment non-denominational high school if your child attends a non-denominational primary school
- we'll allocate your catchment Roman Catholic high school if your child attends a Roman Catholic primary school

### Questions about catchment places

1. **Am I guaranteed a place in one of my catchment schools if I am living in the catchment area?**

#### **If you are living in the catchment area before 24 December:**

##### Non-denominational catchment school

The Council will guarantee a place at your non-denominational catchment school, provided you are resident in the catchment area by 24 December and are still living at the same address at the start of session.

##### Roman Catholic catchment school

We cannot guarantee places at Roman Catholic schools as often there are more requests than places available. You need to tell us if:

- your child has been baptised in the Roman Catholic faith (and provide proof by 24 December)
- an older brother or sister is already attending the school
- you have any exceptional grounds for consideration, if you feel your child should be given priority over others

Visit [www.edinburgh.gov.uk/placingrequest](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/placingrequest) and complete the online form by 24 December.

Catchment children who are not baptised in the Roman Catholic faith will then be prioritised on distance from the school.

Any child we are unable to allocate a place will be allocated a place in their non-denominational catchment school.

Please see section 5 of the [Placing in Schools Procedure](#) for further information about places at Roman Catholic schools.

We will check Council Tax records to establish residence at an address.

**If you move into Edinburgh/move to a new catchment area between 25 December and 31 July:**

You must complete a [Change of address form](#).

Catchment spaces available

If there are spaces available in your preferred catchment school, you will be offered a place there.

Intake limit reached / no spaces available

If the intake limit has been reached for your preferred catchment school, you will be offered a place at an alternative school with available places. Your child will also be added to a catchment waiting list and if a place becomes available for your child at your preferred catchment school, we will contact you by 31 May to offer you a place.

If no place is available in your preferred catchment school by 31 May, we will formally refuse your application and you will have the right of appeal against this decision. Your child will remain on the waiting list at your preferred catchment school, and we will contact you if a place becomes available before the start of term.

Previous address in a different catchment area in Edinburgh

If you were allocated a place in the school in your previous catchment area, this will be withdrawn when you move, and we will contact you to confirm if there is a place available in your new catchment school.

Reserved places

In the S1 year group, where possible, we reserve places for incoming catchment children.

However, where out of catchment places are granted by an Appeal Committee or a Sheriff, this may result in fewer reserved places being available.

**2. What if I want to change my preferred catchment school?**

You can ask us to change the allocated catchment school if:

- your child is allocated a place at a Roman Catholic school and want to request a place in your non-denominational high school.
- your child is allocated a place at a non-denominational school, and you want to request a place in your Roman Catholic high school.

Visit [www.edinburgh.gov.uk/placingrequest](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/placingrequest) and complete the online form by 24 December.

Late requests will still be considered but there is no guarantee that we can make changes after this date. If you live in an area with two non-denominational secondary schools, you will be asked to tell us your preferred school.

### **3. What happens if I move into the Edinburgh area or move to a different catchment area after 31 July?**

You must contact your catchment school to check if a place is available for your child. School staff will get back to you as soon as possible to confirm if there is a place available, but this may be after the term has started.

## **Questions about non-catchment places**

### **1. What happens if I don't want a place at one of my catchment schools?**

If your first preference is for your child to attend a school out with your catchment area, you must submit a Placing Request for your preferred non-catchment school.

[School placing request form](#)

### **2. How will my Placing Request be dealt with?**

#### **If you submit a form on or before 24 December:**

Non-catchment placing requests will be granted if there are places available after all children living in the catchment area have been accommodated and reserved places retained within the agreed intake limit.

Additional classes will not be created for non-catchment children.

If there are more requests than places available, your child will be added to a waiting list and will keep the place at their catchment school.

Please see section 9 of the [Placing in Schools Procedure](#) for further information.

#### **If you submit a request after 24 December:**

Your request will be treated as late but will still be considered, although you will have less chance of being successful.

Requests received between 25 December 2024 and 15 March 2025 will be notified before the end of April 2025.

Requests received after 15 March 2025 will be notified within two months of the application being made.

### **3. What is the priority order for Placing Requests?**

#### **Non-denominational schools**

1. Children with exceptional circumstances (as agreed by Committee)
2. Non-catchment children who will have older brothers/sisters who are attending the requested school in the next session

3. Non-catchment children who are resident within the City of Edinburgh Council area but who do not have brothers/sisters who will be attending the requested school in the next session
4. Non-catchment children who are not resident within the City of Edinburgh Council area and who will not have brothers/sisters attending the requested school in the next session.

#### Roman Catholic schools

1. Catchment children who are baptised in the Roman Catholic faith
2. Catchment exceptional children
3. Catchment children who will have older brothers/sisters who are attending the requested school in the next session
4. Catchment children who do not have brothers/sisters who will be attending the requested school in the next session

If there is more than one placing request in any of the categories above, the shortest, safest walking distance from each child's home to the nearest school gate is measured. Children living closer to the school in each category are placed above those living further away.

#### **5. What happens if my Placing Request is granted?**

We will contact you to confirm that your Placing Request has been granted and your child's place at their catchment school will be automatically withdrawn.

#### **6. What happens if my Placing Request is refused?**

We will tell you which school your child has been offered a place at and they will be placed on a waiting list for your first preference non-catchment school.

You can:

- submit a further Placing Request for a school with available spaces if you don't want your child to go to their catchment school. You can find a list of schools with places available on our website.
- And/or**
- appeal the decision. If you choose to appeal, you must do this within **28 days**. There is more information about appeals on this page: [Placing in schools appeal](#)

If you submit a 2<sup>nd</sup> Placing Request for another school, your child will remain on the waiting list for your first preference non-catchment school. This will not affect any appeal you choose to submit.

If a place becomes available at your first preference non-catchment school before the start of term, we will contact you to offer you the place. Please be aware that places can be offered right up to the day before term starts.

If at any point you no longer wish to remain on the waiting list, please tell us straight away using our [Contact form](#)

#### **7. How does the waiting list work?**

The waiting list is based on the priority order detailed in question 3.

There is constant movement across schools right up to the start of term, therefore we don't provide your child's position on the waiting list. If you do not hear from us, then you can assume that there is no place within the requested school. From the start of the school term in August 2025 the school will contact you if a place becomes available.

#### **8. How can the waiting list change?**

- A parent chooses to place their child in a private sector school so no longer needs the place
- A parent moves out of the Edinburgh area so no longer needs the place
- A parent's Placing Request for another school is granted so the place is no longer needed
- A child has moved into the catchment area
- A late Placing Request has been received for a child who lives closer to the school

The above list is not exhaustive

#### **9. What happens if I am not offered a place at my first preference non-catchment school by the start of term?**

The waiting list is handed over to the school at the start of the term. The school will contact you if a place becomes available after the start of term. If you no longer wish to remain on the waiting list, please contact the school directly to let them know.

#### **10. What happens if I change my mind?**

Tell us straight away if you have changed your mind, even if you haven't heard from us. You can use our [Contact form](#) to get in touch.

We will contact you to confirm your Placing Request is granted and your child's catchment place will be automatically withdrawn.

If you change your mind, we can only reinstate your catchment place if there are still places available at that time.

#### **11. If a Placing Request was granted for my older child, will my younger child get a place this year?**

A place for your younger child is not guaranteed.

If places are available after all catchment pupils, and any children with exceptional circumstances are placed, priority will then be given to children with older brothers or sisters attending the same school.

If there are several families with older brothers or sisters attending the same school, they will be prioritised on distance from the school.