

Types of schools

All children in England between the ages of 5 and 16 are entitled to a free place in a state school.

Community schools

These are schools run by the local council. They teach the national curriculum and anyone can apply for a place.

Academies

Academies are funded by the government but aren't run by the local council. Some academies also receive money from businesses, universities, other schools, faith groups or charities. Academies don't have to follow the national curriculum and can set their own term times. They have to follow the same rules on admissions, special educational needs and exclusions as other schools. Anyone can apply for a place in an academy.

Special schools

Special schools are for pupils with a learning difficulty or disability. These schools often have smaller classes and more support staff. Some special schools provide for very specific groups of young people; for example, schools for pupils with autism.

Faith schools

Faith schools are schools associated with a particular religion. Lots of different religious groups such as Catholics, Muslims and Jews have their own schools.

Faith schools are mostly run like other schools. They teach the national curriculum for all subjects except religious studies.

Anyone can apply for a place in a faith school but some are less likely to give places to pupils who practise a different religion.

Free schools

Free schools are funded by the government but aren't run by the local council. They can be set up by community groups, parents or businesses.

Free schools can change the length of school terms and the school day and they don't have to teach the national curriculum.

Private/independent schools

Private, or independent, schools charge fees to attend. They do not get money from the government or their local council. Scholarships are sometimes available. Private schools don't have to teach the national curriculum and can decide the length of their school terms.

State school - any school that is funded by the government
National curriculum - a set of subjects and standards which ensure pupils learn the same things.

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