

## Moving up to Secondary School: Useful Information

### Key Dates

1 September 2023	Applications for school places open
8 September 2023	Deadline to register for the Grammar School test ( <b>midday</b> )
16 September 2023	Deadline to register for Poole High School's Expressly Academic Class test ( <b>midday</b> )
23 September 2023	Grammar School test date
30 September 2023	Expressively Academic Class test date (Poole High School)
<b>31 October 2023</b>	Deadline for applications to be submitted to BCP Council
1 March 2024	Date of allocation results – online results available and letters posted

### How do I apply for my child's secondary school place for September 2024?

The deadline to submit your application is **31 October 2023**

If you are a BCP Council resident you must apply to BCP Council, either online or using a paper form.

Online applications may be made at <https://bcp.cloud.servelec-synergy.com/Synergy/Parents/default.aspx> from 1 September 2023. You will need an email address to create an online account.

Paper applications can be requested from BCP Council or collected from the Customer Services Centre, BCP Council Civic Centre, Bourne Avenue, Bournemouth, BH2 6DY. There will also be some available from your child's primary school.

If you are applying to a school with religious criteria, you will need to complete a Supplementary Information Form (SIF) in addition to your application to prove your religious commitment and be considered on these grounds. These can be found on each individual school's website. They need to be completed and returned by **31 October 2023**. The form will explain where it needs to be returned to.

Please remember that half term is Monday 23 October 2023 until Friday 27 October 2023 as the schools will not be open to accept any forms between these dates.

### How do I decide which schools I should apply for?

Firstly, you should be aware that there is currently heavy demand for secondary school places. We recommend that you seriously consider naming your catchment or nearest school. There is no guarantee that a place will be available at your local school after all preferences have been dealt with. This means if you do not name it and none of your named schools can offer you a place you will be offered a school further away.

We strongly suggest that you name four schools and that you think carefully about the order you request them as this can have an impact upon which one you may be offered. The school you want the most **must** be named as your first preference.

Consider how you will get your child to school and the potential costs involved. Your child will be attending this school for at least five years and you will need to be sure they will be able to get there for the entirety of this time.

If you apply for and are offered a place at a school which is not your local school, you will not usually qualify for free transport and will have to take on the costs yourself.

You may find it useful to look at Ofsted reports and the websites for the schools you are considering. You can also look at the breakdown of last year's allocation. This shows how many applications were made for each school, and how many places were refused. However, this should only be used as a guide. You can find these statistics on the BCP website.

You can only apply for a school which has a point of entry in Year 7 or is an all through school with an intake at year 7. As well as the secondary and all through schools in the BCP Council area, Broadstone Middle School also has a point of entry at year 7 and can be named as a preference. If you are interested in a school where Year 7 is not the typical point of entry for the school, you will need to check how to apply.

### When do I need to return my application?

All applications from BCP Council residents (online and paper) must be submitted by

**31 October 2023**

The online system will automatically close after 11:59pm on 31 October and no further applications will be accepted. Paper forms will need to arrive in the post on 31 October to be considered on-time.

Paper forms can be returned to the following addresses:

- School Admissions Team, BCP Civic Centre, Bourne Avenue, Bournemouth, BH2 6DY

### Am I guaranteed a place at one of the schools I name?

No. The law is clear that parents have the right to express a preference for a school they wish their child to attend. Preference is not the same as choice. The law does not give parents the right to choose a particular school for their child and to have this choice met.

It is possible that you will not be offered a place at any of the schools you name, for example if you do not live near any of them, or (for church schools) you do not fulfil the school's religious criteria, or (for grammar schools) your child does not pass the entrance test.

This is why we always recommend that you consider naming your catchment or nearest school as one of your preferences. You can add it as your final preference if you prefer other schools.

If none of your requested schools can offer you a place, and you live within the BCP Council area, your child will be offered a place at another school with vacancies. If you live outside of the BCP Council area, you should contact your home Local Authority to find out what they will do in this event.

### How do I apply for a place at a Grammar School?

You must name the grammar school as one of your preferences on your Local Authority preference form and submit it by **31 October 2023**. Sitting and passing the test is not an application for a place.

If you are applying for a place at one of the grammar schools in Bournemouth or Poole, your child will need to sit a test. You will need to register her/him for testing. The deadline to register for testing is **12 noon on 9 September 2023**. Registration forms can be downloaded from the schools' websites or requested from the schools directly.

The grammar schools use the same test, so if you are interested in any of the grammar schools within BCP Council, your child only needs to sit the test once. You should register with the school where you would prefer him/her to sit the test in September.

The tests will take place on Saturday **23 September 2023**, where pupils will be tested in Maths, English and Verbal Reasoning. Results will be posted in the third week of October 2023 so you will know if your child has passed the test before you need to submit your application.

### **How do I apply for a place for the Expressly Academic Class in Poole High School?**

You must name the school as one of your preferences on your Local Authority preference form and submit it by **31 October 2021**. Sitting the test is not an application for a place.

If you want your child to be considered for the Expressly Academic Class at Poole High School you will need to register your child for them to sit the test. The deadline for this is **midday on 16 September 2023**. No late registrations to sit the test are accepted by the school after this time.

The test takes place on Saturday **30 September 2023**. Children will be tested in Maths, English and sit a Reasoning Test. For more information about the tests, please contact the school direct.

The Expressly Academic Class comprises students who have been selected as a result of tests taken in the September preceding the year of entry and is limited to 10% of the school's intake in year 7. Places are allocated to the 32 who receive the highest marks in tests and who have not been made a higher preference offer by another school.

### **I'm a BCP Council resident, am I able to apply for schools outside of the BCP Council area?**

Yes. You can list any schools on your BCP Council application, including those outside of the BCP Council area.

### **Where do I apply if I am not a BCP Council resident?**

If you are not a BCP resident, you must apply to the Authority where you live (this would be where you pay your council tax). You can apply for schools located within the BCP Council area on another authority's form if you wish. Our neighbouring Local Authorities are Dorset Council and Hampshire County Council.

### **Where can I get help and advice about the process of applying for a secondary school place?**

For information about schools in the BCP Council area you can speak to a member of the Children's Information Service (CIS) on 01202 124232 or email at [cis@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:cis@bcpcouncil.gov.uk), or the School Admissions Team on 01202 127963 or email [school.admissions@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:school.admissions@bcpcouncil.gov.uk).

You can also read our Parent's Guide, which will be available online at [bcpcouncil.gov.uk/schooladmissions](http://bcpcouncil.gov.uk/schooladmissions) from 1 September 2023.

### **What happens if my application is late?**

If your application is not received by the closing date of **31 October 2023** it will be classed as late. This means all applications received by **31 October 2023** will be considered before yours and the chance of getting the place you want will be reduced.

## **How will I know if you have received my application?**

Online applicants will receive an automatic email confirming the application has been received. This email will list your schools in the order you named them. Please check the preference order is correct. If you do not receive this email, please contact us to check you have submitted your application correctly.

Once your application has been uploaded by the school admissions team you will receive a second email. Please check your spam and junk folders if you do not receive either of these emails in your usual inbox. If you apply on paper, you can telephone or email to find out if your application has been received.

## **What happens if my child lives part time with each parent?**

Only one application and address can be considered for each pupil. If parents are separated, you must come to an agreement about the schools you apply for. Where a child lives at more than one address you will need to check each school's admission policy to see how they will decide which address to use.

If you are unable to come to a mutual decision about your child's application (including the schools or the order they are named), you will need to seek legal advice prior to the closing date. BCP Council will not process applications where there is a parental dispute, and no concessions will be made if an application is late for this reason.

## **When will I receive the outcome of my application?**

All on time applicants who provided a valid email address will receive an email containing a link to a PDF copy of their offer letter on 1 March 2024. They will be able to download and print this letter and return the reply slip by post or email. Online applicants will be able to log in to their accounts from 10am on 1 March 2024 and accept the offer online.

Letters will be sent on 1 March 2024 to all applicants who have not provided a valid email address.

You can accept a place online, by email or by returning the paper reply slip. Details will be provided in the offer letter.

## **What if I forget the password to my online account?**

BCP Council are unable to help with forgotten passwords so it's important that you remember the one you choose.

All passwords contain at least one upper case and at least one lower case letter, and at least one number.

If you are unable to log in to your account, you will still have your notification letter emailed to you on 1 March 2024. You do not need a password to open your emailed letter.

We are not usually able to give results on the telephone.

## **What if I do not get offered the school I want?**

If we are unable to offer you any of the schools you have requested and you are a BCP Council resident, we will offer you a place at a school with vacancies. This may not be close to your home.

If you are not a BCP Council resident, you will need to speak to your home Authority to find out what action they take in these circumstances.

You will find out from your offer letter how the waiting lists work for the schools that have refused your child a place. You may also request additional preferences at this stage if you wish. These will be dealt with after all the late applications have been processed.

If you decide to appeal against a decision not to offer your child a place, your offer letter will provide you with further details.

We strongly recommend that you accept whichever school is offered to you, as it may not be available again if you decline it straight away. If you are offered a different school at a later date (such as at appeal or from the waiting list), you can **then** decline the original offer. Accepting a place at one school will not affect any waiting lists, applications or appeals for any other schools.

### **Is it possible to lose a school place once it has been offered?**

An offered place may be withdrawn if you do not accept the offer within a reasonable timescale. The deadline to respond to the offer will be included on the letter you receive.

A school may also withdraw a place if it was offered based upon a fraudulent or misleading application, such as under a false address.

### **My child has an Education, Health and Care Plan – who do I apply to?**

If your child has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) you should speak to the SEND Inclusion Team on 01202 128880.

You may also contact SENDiass on 01202 128181, they are independent and confidential and offer guidance on issues relating to SEND, exclusions and school admissions appeals (see back page for contact details).

### **How will my child get to school?**

You should also consider how you will get your child to school each day. If you apply for and are offered a place at a school which is not your catchment or nearest school, you will not usually qualify for free transport and will have to take on the costs yourself.

BCP Council is fully committed to promoting walking, cycling and, for longer distances, greater use of buses for the school journey wherever possible.

### **What has happened in previous years?**

You can find detailed statistics for the main allocation for children transferring to secondary school in September 2023 online at [bcpcouncil.gov.uk/schooladmissions](https://bcpcouncil.gov.uk/schooladmissions). The categories correspond with those in the admissions policies (criteria/categories) for 2023-24 which may differ from those in effect in 2024-25. These can also be found on the BCP Council website.

Figures from previous years are available on request. Categories in use for previous years may have been different so you should check the school's past policy for the correct information.

Please remember that this information should only be used as a guide. The figures differ from year to year, for example if there are more/fewer children living in a particular area. Changes in the popularity of a school (or a neighbouring school) can also affect the number of applications a school receives.

If you are unsure about anything within these tables, please contact us.

## Useful contact details

<b>Children's Information Service (CIS)</b> BCP Council Civic Centre Bourne Avenue Bournemouth BH2 6DY Tel:01202 124232 <a href="mailto:cis@bcpcouncil.gov.uk">cis@bcpcouncil.gov.uk</a> <a href="http://bcpcouncil.gov.uk">bcpcouncil.gov.uk</a>	<b>School Admissions Team</b> BCP Council Civic Centre Bourne Avenue Bournemouth BH2 6DY Tel:01202 127963 <a href="mailto:school.admissions@bcpcouncil.gov.uk">school.admissions@bcpcouncil.gov.uk</a> <a href="http://bcpcouncil.gov.uk/schooladmissions">bcpcouncil.gov.uk/schooladmissions</a>
<b>Dorset Council School Admissions</b> Dorset Council County Hall, Dorchester DT1 1XJ Tel: 01305 231060 <a href="mailto:admissions@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk">admissions@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</a> <a href="http://dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/schooladmissions">dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/schooladmissions</a>	<b>Hampshire County Council School Admissions</b> Children's Services Dept Elizabeth II Court North Winchester SO24 8UG Tel: 0300 555 1377 <a href="mailto:Admissions.team@hants.gov.uk">Admissions.team@hants.gov.uk</a> <a href="http://hants.gov.uk/admissions">hants.gov.uk/admissions</a>