

BCP
Council



Admission to secondary school (Year 7 and Year 9)

A Guide for Parents and Carers

Introduction

Welcome to our guidebook for parents and carers which has been designed to help you find the right school for your child whether your child is starting at a secondary or studio school or moving school during the school year. It outlines what information we need from you, and what you can expect in return from us.

Across Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole we have 96 schools. BCP Council works in close partnership with them. The aspirations for our area are ambitious and include investing in our children and young people and enabling access to high quality education.

We understand that moving on to secondary or studio school is an exciting milestone for both children and their families. At the same time, we know it can be a challenging period as you consider which schools to apply for. This process is often followed by an anxious wait to find out whether your child has been offered a place, and we appreciate how important and emotional this time can be for parents.

Like other areas, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council has experienced increased demand for school places due to rising birth rates and movement of families.

It is important that you express your preferences for schools you wish your child to attend. Our schools are popular; there is no guarantee that a place will be offered at your preferred school(s), so expressing **four** school preferences will maximise our ability to offer you one of them. Please list your choice of schools in your order of preference. Our online application system provides a simple and secure way for you to send us your application. It also means you can log in again in March 2026 to view your child's allocated school.

It is important to make a well-informed decision about which school you wish your child to attend. We strongly recommend that parents take the opportunity to visit schools to see what they can offer their child before making an application. It is also important to read the schools' admission policies to understand how your application will be considered by them. You can also view information about how places were offered last year.

The information in this guide is designed to help you to understand the admissions process. If, at any time, you are unsure or feel that the information available is unclear, please contact our school admissions team who are here to help you.

We wish your child every success in this important stage in their learning.

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Information in other languages

If you require information on school admission arrangements, please see our website where it can be viewed in a variety of languages bcpcouncil.gov.uk

You can also use translation websites to view this Guide in other languages. You can copy and paste sections of this Guide into a website translation tool. Some translation websites allow you to upload a file to translate. You can therefore save a copy of this PDF document and upload the file to the translation tool you are using. Use your preferred search engine to find out more about how to translate this Guide.

Jeśli potrzebujesz informacji na temat rekrutacji do szkół w innym języku, skontaktuj się z [zespołem ds. rekrutacji](#).

Można również użyć stron tłumaczeń, by zobaczyć tę Guide w innych językach. Można kopiować i wklejać fragmenty tego przewodnika w narzędzie tłumaczenie stron internetowych. Niektóre strony internetowe kursowe pozwalają przesłać plik do przetłumaczenia. Można zatem zapisać kopię tego dokumentu PDF i przesłać plik do narzędzia do tłumaczenia, którego używasz. Użyj preferowanego wyszukiwarki, aby dowiedzieć się więcej o tym, jak tłumaczyć tego przewodnika.

Se precisar de informações sobre admissões em escolas noutra língua, contacte a [equipa de admissões](#).

También puede utilizar los sitios web de traducción para ver esta guía en otros idiomas. Puede copiar y pegar secciones de esta Guía en una herramienta de traducción de páginas web. Algunos sitios web de traducción le permiten cargar un archivo a traducir. Por lo tanto, se puede guardar una copia de este documento PDF y cargar el archivo a la herramienta de traducción que está utilizando. Utilice su motor de búsqueda preferido para encontrar más información acerca de cómo traducir esta guía.

如果您需要有關其他語言學校的招生信息，請聯繫[招生團隊](#)。

您还可以使用网站翻译其他语言来查看本指南。您可以复制和本指南的部分粘贴到网页翻译工具。一些翻译网站允许你上传文件翻译。因此，您可以保存此 PDF 文档的副本，并把文件上传到您所使用的翻译工具。使用您的首选搜索引擎来了解更多关于如何翻译这个指南。

Disclaimer

All the information contained within this Guide was correct at the time of publishing. This is a dynamic document on BCP Council's website and will be updated as and when new information is available, or changes are necessary. However, the admission arrangements, including the oversubscription criteria of all the schools in BCP Council remain the same as they were when they were approved by each of the school admission authorities.

Names, addresses and telephone numbers contained in this booklet are correct at the time of publication. The information only relates to admissions for and during the 2026/27 school year. There may be changes to the details shown due to developments in central or local government policies and determinations by the Office of the Schools Adjudicator.

Explanation of terms used in this guide

Acceptance Date	The date by which you must tell us whether you will accept the school place offered.
Admission Arrangements	The policies, procedures, practices, and oversubscription criteria used in deciding the allocation of school places.
Admission Authority	Every school has a body responsible for setting and applying its admission arrangements. For community and voluntary controlled (VC) schools this is their local authority, whilst for academies, studio, foundation and voluntary aided (VA) schools it is the governing body or trust.
BCP Council	Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council.
Catchment Area	This is a geographical area from which children are given a level of priority for admission to a school. You can find out whether a school has a catchment area by looking at their policy.
Closing Date	The date by which you must apply for a school place. All applications received by the published closing date will be processed together as on time applications.
Information Service	A free, friendly, confidential and impartial service offering information to all members of the family on local childcare, activities for 0-19-year-olds and other family services.
Home Local Authority	A child's home local authority is the local authority which the child lives in (who you pay your Council Tax to).
Mainstream schools	All publicly funded schools that are not special schools are called mainstream schools.
Notification Date	The date you will find out the result of your application.
Oversubscription Criteria	The criteria applied when a school has more applications than places available. It is used to decide which children will be allocated places up to the published admission number.
Published Admission Number (PAN)	The published admission number (PAN) is the maximum number of children that can be admitted to the year group.
Schools Adjudicator	A statutory officer who is appointed by the Secretary of State for Education but is independent. The Adjudicator considers and decides upon objections and variations to published admission arrangements.
Special schools	Special schools are for children who have complex special educational needs. Children attending these schools must have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

Supplementary Information Form (SIF)	This is a form that you will need to provide evidence to the school. SIFs are used for faith, pupil premium, free school meals and UK service family evidence. For faith schools, you will need your form to be signed by your priest or minister to confirm that you and your child attend church regularly. Supplementary information forms (SIFs) can be found here or obtained from the school. You must complete a school application too. The SIF must also be returned by the closing date.
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Categories of schools

Community (C)	A school maintained by a local authority. The local authority is responsible for the admission policy
Voluntary Aided (VA)	A school jointly supported by church diocesan boards and a local authority. The school is responsible for its own admission policy
Foundation (F)	A school maintained by a local authority but responsible for its own admission policy.
Academy (A)	A school funded directly by central government. The school is responsible for its own admissions.
Voluntary Controlled (VC)	A school jointly supported by church diocesan boards and a local authority. The local authority is responsible for the admission policy.
Studio School (S)	Studio schools provide education for 13-19-year-olds. They normally have a similar curriculum to a secondary school but may also have employer involvement in the curriculum and a focus on developing employability skills and qualifications needed in work, or to take up further education.
University Technical College	University technical colleges (UTCs) are technical schools for 14-19-year-olds, working alongside employers and universities. They operate as a type of academy.
Independent	These operate on a fee-paying basis and cover a variety of age ranges. Any application for a place should be made direct to the school as local authorities are not involved in the admission arrangements for these schools.

Key dates

Starting Secondary School in September 2026

1 September 2025

Applications and information booklets available

By 12 noon 5 September 2025

Parents can register their children with the grammar schools to sit the entrance test (test date is 20 September 2025)

By 23:59 14 September 2025

Parents can register their children for the Expressly Academic test at Poole High School

(test date is 27 September 2025)

31 October 2025

National Closing date for applications

2 March 2026

Offers made to on time applicants

15 March 2026

Deadline for parents to respond to offer of places made on 2 March 2026

25 March 2026

Offers made to late applicants (for applications received between 1 November 2025 and 23 January 2026)

8 April 2026

Parents respond to offer of places made on 25 March 2026

Summer term 2026

Appeal hearings

September 2026

Start at secondary/upper/studio school

Which year group is my child in?

Children are usually grouped with their chronological peers, in other words, with children of the same age.

This table is correct for the academic year 01 September 2025 - 31 August 2026:

Date of birth	Age	School year
01 September 2020 – 31 August 2021	4 – 5	Reception
01 September 2019 – 31 August 2020	5 – 6	Year 1
01 September 2018 – 31 August 2019	6 – 7	Year 2
01 September 2017 – 31 August 2018	7 – 8	Year 3
01 September 2016 – 31 August 2017	8 – 9	Year 4
01 September 2015 – 31 August 2016	9 – 10	Year 5
01 September 2014 – 31 August 2015	11 – 11	Year 6
01 September 2013 – 31 August 2014	11 – 12	Year 7
01 September 2012 - 31 August 2013	12 – 13	Year 8
01 September 2011 – 31 August 2012	13 – 14	Year 9
01 September 2010 – 31 August 2011	14 – 15	Year 10
01 September 2009 – 31 August 2010	15 – 16	Year 11
01 September 2008 – 31 August 2009	16 – 17	Year 12
01 September 2007 – 31 August 2008	17 – 18	Year 13

How will I know which schools to apply for?

One of the best ways to see if a school would suit your child is to visit it. This way you will see how the school works on a day to day basis and get a feel for the atmosphere of the school. You may also find Ofsted reports useful.

We strongly recommend that you name **four** preferences on your application.

It is very important that you read the schools' admission policies to work out whether it is likely that you will be offered a place. These can be found at [Admission arrangements for BCP schools 2026-27 | BCP](#) and on each individual school's website.

You can look at how each school allocated its places in previous years. If you do, make sure you look at the admission policies for the correct year as categories can change from one year to the next.

You need to consider how you will get your child to school each day, the time it will take, how this will fit into your routine and how much it will cost to take your child to school. If you apply for and are offered a place at a school which is not your nearest school, you will not normally qualify for free transport and will have to take on the costs yourself.

You may not want to name your nearest or catchment school on your application. If you decide not to do so, you should not assume that there will be a place available for you if you cannot be offered one of your preferred schools as it may already be full. If you do not include your nearest or catchment school as a preference on your application form and the school fills, you are unlikely to qualify for transport assistance to the school you are offered.

Admission Policies

Oversubscription criteria in school admission policies

The admission authority for each school is required to set out in its admissions policy how it will prioritise applicants if the school receives more applications than it has places available. This is known as the oversubscription criteria. It is also used for in year applications during the school year.

Before naming a school as a preference you should look at the oversubscription criteria to see how the school offers places.

Information on the number of applications the school received and how many places were allocated in each category in the previous year can be found at [Places offered in previous years | BCP](#).

A copy of the full admission policy for each school is available on both the BCP Council website and each school's website. It is recommended that you read the full policy as it contains more information on the admission arrangements for each school. Please read the policies at [Admission arrangements for BCP schools 2026-27 | BCP](#).

Admission Policies for schools in Dorset and Hampshire

You can apply for schools that are not in the BCP Council area. If you wish to do so you need to add them as a preference on your application form. Further information can be found about the schools and their admission policies:

[Starting secondary or upper school - Dorset Council](#)

[School admissions | Hampshire County Council](#)

How do I apply for a school place?

The application form will be available from the local authority where you pay your council tax. If you live in BCP Council, your application must be submitted to BCP Council.

If you live in a different local authority (for example Dorset Council or Hampshire County Council) you must contact them or visit their website to find out more.

Where can I find the application form?

You can apply online at:

<https://bcp.cloud.servelec-synergy.com/ParentPortal/>

The parent portal will be able to accept applications from 1 September 2025. Once an application has been submitted, an email acknowledgement is sent to the applicant. This email is proof that you have applied on time and should be kept. If you do not have access to the internet at home, you may use the free computers available at all BCP Council libraries.

All online applicants will be able to log back into their accounts on the morning of 3 March 2025 from 10:00am. You will also be emailed a link to a PDF version of your offer letter to download.

Applications must be received by the national closing date of 31 October 2025.

Can I apply for schools outside BCP Council?

If you live in BCP Council and want to apply for a school outside the area, you should enter it on your BCP Council application. The details of your application will be sent to the local authority for your preferred school(s). BCP Council will advise you of the outcome of your application. Please check the point of entry for the schools you name on your form.

How many schools can I name?

You can name **four** preferences on your BCP Council application form.

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, even if it is not your first preference, because there is no guarantee that a place will be available there if you do not name it and none of your named schools can offer you a place.

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.

Think carefully about how your child will travel to school each day. Consider the time it will take, how it fits into your daily routine, and the cost. Your child may attend this school for up to seven years, so it's important to be confident that the journey is manageable long-term.

If you are offered a place at a school that is not your nearest and your child could have been offered a place at a closer school (had it been listed on your application), you will usually not be eligible for free school transport. In these cases, you would be responsible for arranging and paying for transport. BCP Council will check whether a place could have been offered at a nearer school when assessing transport applications.

The difference between choice and preference

You should be aware that preference is not the same as choice. The law says that parents are entitled to express a preference for a school, but it does not give parents the right to choose a school for their child and to have their choice met.

Does it matter in which order I name my preferences?

Yes. It is important that you name the school you would most like your child to attend as your first preference. Your second, third and fourth preferences need to

be named in order as well. If more than one of your preferences can offer your child a place, we will always offer the school listed highest on your application.

Closing and notification dates for September 2026 admissions

The table below shows the national closing and notification dates for applications that have been received on time. You can still submit an application after the closing date, but different timescales will apply. Please speak to the admissions team for more information.

	Closing date	Notification date	Response date
Reception	15 January 2026	16 April 2026	1 May 2026
Junior and Middle	15 January 2026	16 April 2026	1 May 2026
Secondary	31 October 2025	2 March 2026	16 March 2026

Feeder schools

Some schools operate feeder school links. Children attending a linked school may have higher priority in the oversubscription criteria than children who don't attend the linked school. Please click [here](#) to read the admission policies for the schools you are interested in and talk to the schools to find out more.

Catchment Areas

Some schools in the area continue to have catchment areas. **However**, there are some addresses in BCP Council that will have two or more catchment schools and some addresses that will have no catchment school at all.

Living in a school's catchment area does not mean your child will automatically be able to have a place at the school even if you name it as a preference.

To find out if your preferred school has previously offered to children outside of their catchment area or the distance of the last offer made, you can look [Places offered in previous years | BCP](#).

Sometimes the school closest to your home is not your catchment school. You can find out more information by reading the [admissions policies](#) or by contacting the school admissions team or the relevant school(s).

You should be aware that schools are not permitted to keep places in reserve for children who may move into their area.

For home to school transport assistance purposes, grammar schools in the BCP Council area are not considered to be catchment schools. Instead, they operate using defined Priority Areas to ensure that children in the surrounding area of each school are given higher priority for at least one grammar school compared to those living further away.

Information provided by estate agents, third-party websites, including Artificial Intelligence software such as ChatGPT is not always correct. Only BCP Council or the school you are interested in can give you accurate information. You should check the availability of school places within an area before renting or purchasing a property. The school admissions team can help you with this.

Address of the child

Only one address can be used on the application form. You will need to check the policies of the schools you are interested in to find out more.

You cannot use the address of someone who provides a temporary care arrangement for your child, a business address, childminder's address, a relative's address or any other address other than the child's permanent home address.

Informal residence arrangements with family and friends will not normally be accepted unless there are exceptional circumstances.

You may be asked for evidence of your address.

Applications from separated parents

Only one application and one address can be considered for each child. Where parents are separated it is essential that agreement is reached by both parents about which schools are named on the form by the closing date.

The local authority is unable to mediate in any dispute between parents. If parents are unable to agree lines of communication between themselves on issues involving their child, they may wish to seek independent legal advice and explore other options. These might include referring the matter to non-court dispute resolution, such as mediation.

If parents cannot agree, they should resolve the issue through the court system, for example to obtain a 'Specific Issues Order' which specifies which parent has responsibility to make decisions on school preferences. Any Court applications would need to be made on an urgent basis, because you will need a decision from the Court that fits in with the timeline for applying for a school place.

If more than one application is submitted for the same child, or if the admissions team becomes aware that the application was made without the agreement of all

parties with parental responsibility, the application will not be processed. A new application will be required, and confirmation of agreement must be provided by all parties involved. **If this single application is submitted after the closing date, it will be treated as a late application.**

If a child lives at more than one address during the school week, you will need to check each school's admission policy to see how dual addresses are considered.

If a child is moving from one parent or carer to live with another on a long-term basis you will need to provide written confirmation from both parents. Confirmation will need to explain the new arrangements and the date they start. You may also need to provide proof to support the change. This could be a change in Child Benefit recipient or a change in the address registered with the GP and/or other services the child is registered for.

What happens if I move address during the application process?

If you are buying a property, you will need to provide the school admissions team with a solicitor's letter confirming exchange of contracts has taken place and giving a specified completion date.

If you are renting a property, you will need to provide the tenancy agreement which should be signed and dated by all parties and the tenancy start date must be given. You may also be asked to provide proof of your notice to cease your current tenancy or your move from your currently owned property and any other appropriate additional evidence.

If you are moving to live with a friend or relative you will need to provide a letter confirming the arrangements and the move-in date. You will also need to provide proof that this is your permanent residence, such as a Council Tax or utility bill. You can only use the address for the purpose of applying for school once you are living at the address.

You will need to check the policies for the schools you are interested in to find out if they will accept any changes to your application after the closing date.

The school admissions team will not be aware of any changes you make to your online application or contact details once your application has been downloaded. If you need to advise us about changes to your application please complete the [Change Request Form](#).

Fraudulent or intentionally misleading applications

Applying for a school place must be a fair and transparent process for everyone. Schools and local authorities must be clear on how school places are allocated so it's important that parents provide the correct information on their form.

By submitting an application, parents declare that the information on the form is correct and that they are only submitting one application for the child.

If you think a family is making a fraudulent or misleading application, please contact the [school admissions team](#). You do not have to provide your personal details (if you wish, you can remain anonymous). The school admissions team will follow up all allegations of potentially fraudulent applications to make sure offers are made to the correct children.

Admission authorities can withdraw an offer of a place should an application be found to be fraudulent or misleading, even if a child has started in the school.

BCP Council and schools carry out spot checks on applications and addresses. We can ask applicants to provide additional evidence to verify addresses and/or other details provided. Checks are made with other council departments and with other local authorities for the purposes of verification of details including residence. Applications can also be referred to BCP Council's audit team for further investigation. This may include arranging for credit reference checks to be undertaken, for the purposes of verifying an address.

These processes are in place to ensure fairness and transparency for all families living within the BCP Council area.

Supplementary information form (SIF) – religious grounds

Some of the schools in BCP Council include religious faith and practice within their admission policies. It is important to check the policies for each school as they may differ from one another. Any family can apply for a place at a faith school, but some of these schools give priority to children on faith grounds. For example, some faith schools will require evidence of attendance at a place of worship.

To be considered under religious oversubscription criteria by a school, some schools require that you complete a supplementary information form (SIF). Where necessary, these can be found on the school's website. Some schools will require sight of your child's baptism certificate. You should contact any school for which you are applying for priority under faith grounds to discuss the evidence required and ensure you submit this along with your application form before 31 October 2025.

Make sure you leave yourself enough time to get a SIF completed, signed, and submitted before the closing date of 31 October 2025.

UK Service Families and the Armed Forces Covenant

The Armed Forces Covenant is an agreement between the armed forces community, the nation and the government. The covenant's twin underlying principles are that members of the armed forces community should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services; and that special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given the most such as the injured or the bereaved.

Schools cannot reserve blocks of places for families who move into the area. However, admission authorities must allocate a school place in advance of a UK service family arriving in the area provided the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date and a unit postal address or quartering area address when considering the application against oversubscription criteria. Families wanting an address other than a unit postal address to be considered should contact the school admissions team to discuss this. Normally families are asked for proof of residence or intention to reside (e.g., evidence of exchange of contract to purchase or a signed tenancy agreement to rent).

A UK service family may be disadvantaged when applying for a school place (either during service or upon leaving service). When an application is made by a UK service family and a place cannot ordinarily be offered, the admission authority will assess the circumstances, considering the underlying principles of the Armed Forces Covenant. BCP Council will specifically look at whether the school to be offered is reasonable considering the following:

- Whether or not serving in the armed forces prevented an application being made on time during the normal admissions round
- Whether or not it would have been reasonable to expect a place at the requested school had the application been made on time during the normal admissions round
- Whether or not the alternative offer is one that other families in the area would be offered
- Whether or not the alternative offer is within a reasonable distance. For further information, please find out more at [School transport | BCP](#)

The school admissions team can provide advice to own admission authority schools about whether to offer a place based on the above. Ultimately the relevant admission authority will make the decision.

The decision will be based on all the circumstances including those relevant to the family and child and the impact on the school, including the provision of efficient education and efficient use of resources. Please be aware that there may be some circumstances, e.g., where a family may move to a new house for non-work-related reasons, which may not be considered to cause the family disadvantage due to their UK service family status. Every decision made will be unique to the

family being considered and it is important to ensure that the school admissions team have full information to help the decision-making process.

UK service families can contact the school admissions team to discuss how the Armed Forces Covenant may or may not impact on your school applications.

Looked After or Previously Looked After Children (children in care and children previously in care)

Special arrangements apply if your child is looked after by a local authority, or was previously looked after but immediately following this, was subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order. This includes those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

It is important that you indicate in the box provided on the online application form if your child is a Looked After or a Previously Looked After Child as the schools need to be aware of this information to take it into account when they allocate places. You may be asked to provide evidence of this.

Looked After and Previously Looked After Children are given high priority in admissions. Please read the [admission policies](#) for the school(s) you are interested in for your child to ascertain how high a priority they may give to a Looked After Child.

Special Educational Needs and or Disabilities (SEND) and Education Health & Care Plans (EHCPs)

Special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are legally protected characteristics. Children with SEND have learning difficulties or disabilities that may make it harder for them to learn than most children of the same age. They may need extra or different help from that given to other children of the same age.

There are stages of support to try and help children with special educational needs. If your child is getting the help they need and they're learning well, there is no need for them to go on to the next stage. The stages are:

1. SEND Support
2. Assessment for Education Health & Care Plan
3. Education Health & Care Plan (EHCP)

All mainstream schools in BCP Council can provide appropriate extra help to meet a child's needs except where a child's EHCP identifies that a special school is an

appropriate provision. This means that your child's SEND will not be considered as a reason for them to be allocated a place at a specific school.

Further information about BCP's Local Offer for children and young people 0-25 years-old with SEND is available at [The Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole SEND Local Offer - BCP Council](#).

Children with an EHCP will normally have their places at mainstream schools allocated before all other applications are considered during the normal admissions round. If your child has an EHCP, you will need to discuss with your local authority's SEND team which school you would prefer. Once the school is named on your child's EHCP, then a place will be allocated there.

If you complete the school admissions application form for a place and your child has an EHCP, the application will be referred to the SEND team. The team will follow the process outlined in the SEND Code of Practice in order to identify a school to name on your child's plan.

Refugee and asylum-seeking families

Foreign national children resident in the UK normally have the right to attend state funded and independent schools in England.

To lawfully enter the country to access a school, foreign national children resident outside the UK will normally need either:

- a [right of abode](#)
- an immigration status which otherwise permits them to enter the UK to study at a school

It is the responsibility of the parents/carers of foreign national children to check that their children have a right under their [UK entry conditions](#) to study at a school before applying for a place.

You can apply for a school place using the online application form.

If we are unable to offer you a place at your preferred school(s), we will advise you about schools with vacancies and your rights of appeal.

Where necessary, we will allocate your child a school place. We may use the Fair Access Protocols to do this. Find out further information about [Fair Access Protocols](#).

Requesting a place at a school for a year group different to that determined by date of birth (including summer born children)

Parents must speak with the school(s) they are interested in to find out how to make a request. Previous agreement from another school or the child's date of birth does not mean that the request will be automatically agreed. Evidence in support of your request (e.g. of prematurity or any developmental delay) may help with your application and should be submitted for consideration. Please check each individual school's policy to check where you need to send this.

It is important to be aware that some schools may agree to your request, whilst others may choose not to do so. It is also possible that a school which agrees to your request may not be able to offer your child a place if they are oversubscribed.

Parents who are considering applying for a year group different to that determined by date of birth should talk to BCP Council and relevant school(s) as early as possible.

If your child had a delayed entry to Reception, you should approach any Secondary or Upper school before the normal admission round closes for your child's chronological year group. This is so you will know the outcome of their decision in time to submit an application for your child's chronological year group should your request be turned down.

The School Offered

Decision makers

The school admissions team will work with the different admission authorities to make sure your application is considered in line with the relevant admission policies. To find out who the admission authority for the school you are applying for is, you can find the school's policy [here](#) or speak to the school or the school admissions team.

How BCP Council liaises with schools and other local authorities about your school application

By law, local authorities must coordinate applications to all schools within their area for the point of entry in September. This means that all applications are sent to BCP Council and all decision letters come from it. If you would like to see a copy of the coordinated admission scheme please contact the school admissions team or you can view it at [Admission arrangements for BCP schools 2026-27 | BCP](#).

Decision making

After the closing date preferences are sent to each admission authority. If you have applied for a place at a school outside of BCP Council, your request will be sent to the local authority where the school is located.

Admission authorities will use their admission policy's oversubscription criteria to rank the applications in priority order. They will then give BCP Council a 'provisional list' containing the names of all the children in order of priority.

The school admissions team will check the provisional offer lists against your application. If your child's name appears on more than one offer list, we look at your application form using the order of your preferences to decide the school you will be offered:

- 1) If we can offer a place at your first preference, we will do so.
- 2) If we are unable to offer a place at your first preference but can offer a place at your second preference, we will offer a place at your second preference school.
- 3) If we cannot offer a place at your first or second preference school but can offer a place at your third preference, we will offer a place at your third preference school.
- 4) If we cannot offer a place at your first, second or third preference school but can offer a place at your fourth preference, we will offer a place at your fourth preference school.
- 5) If we cannot offer a place at any of your preferred schools, we will allocate you a place at a different school.

Schools are not told whether they were your first, second, third or fourth preference. They are only sent the list of details of the applicant. This means that they cannot prioritise children who have named them as a first preference. Schools must only rank applications according to the school's published admission policy.

National Offer Day

If you applied online, you can find out the school you have been offered by logging back into the parent portal (where you applied for a school place) on National Offer Day – 2 March 2026.

If you have provided a valid email address, you will receive an email containing a link where you can read and download your offer letter. Otherwise, offer letters will be posted to on time BCP Council applicants who did not provide a valid email address.

If you live in another local authority, you will receive information about any application to a BCP Council school in the letter you receive from your home local authority.

Accepting the place offered

If you are happy with the place you have been offered it is important that you accept the offer as soon as possible and at the latest, by 15 March 2026.

You can accept the place via the parent portal (where you applied).

If you are not offered a place at one of your preferred schools

If it has not been possible to offer you any of your preferred schools, BCP Council will allocate your child a place at a school. This will normally be your nearest catchment school or the next nearest BCP school to your home address that has a place available.

If you are refused a place at any of your preferred schools, you have a right to appeal to an independent appeal panel and further information will be provided with the notification letter.

Next steps if you are offered a school you did not apply for

It is a good idea to visit the alternative school if this is possible and find out more information about it. We strongly recommend that you do this.

It is also important to accept the place you have been offered. This will prevent your child being left without a school place. This does not stop you from looking at what to do next.

The options available to you are:

- 1) Submit applications for alternative schools with vacancies
- 2) Request to be placed on waiting lists for schools you did not apply for
- 3) Submit an admission appeal request

Waiting lists

Your offer letter will provide more information about waiting lists and your next steps.

Schools are required to hold a waiting list until 31 December 2026 however some schools operate one beyond this date. Please check each school's policy to find out what you will need to do to remain on their waiting lists.

Appeals

If you are refused a place at a school which you have named on your application, you have the right of appeal against this decision.

Appeals are heard by a panel that are not connected to the school you are appealing for. It is an independent decision-making process.

Appeals are normally heard after the May half term if you are appealing for a place for the following September. For secondary school appeals, these are normally timetabled for end of May through June.

Each school is responsible for administering its own appeals. If you wish to appeal, please visit the school's website for details on how to appeal.

Applying for Studio Schools and University Technical Colleges

There are no university technical colleges within the BCP Council area. The nearest studio schools are LEAF Studio School in Bournemouth which has a point of entry at Year 9, and Dorset Studio School near Dorchester which has a point of entry at Year 7. More information about the schools can be found on their websites.

If you are interested in a place at either school we recommend that:

- Your child discusses their options with a careers advisor at their current school and looks at the curriculum on offer at their school.
- You work out how your child will get to and from the studio school, including travel time, cost and type of transport. In most cases, children would not normally qualify for transport assistance. If your child does qualify this would normally be in the form of a bus pass.
- Read through the admissions policies available on their website and arrange visits to discuss what they offer so that you can be sure that this is right for your child.

Travel to School

Considering how your child/ren travels to school is vital. We would expect that most Secondary aged children are able to travel independently to school, whether by walking, wheeling, scooting, cycling or by dedicated school bus or public transport. We would discourage parents from driving their senior school children to school if possible. The benefits of an active start to the day include enhanced learning in the classroom alongside improved wellbeing and mood.

Talk to your preferred schools about their school site. They can give you best advice on walking, scooting, wheeling or cycling opportunities alongside park and stride suggestions. They will also be able to show you the cycle and scooter parking during open days.

School Transport

Most children and young people living in the BCP Council area are not eligible for home to school transport assistance because they have access to a suitable school within a reasonable distance from their home.

A reasonable distance is legally defined as:

- Up to two miles walking distance from home to school for statutory school age children and young people aged eight-16 years old (years 4-11) where the parent is receiving Universal credit with a maximum income of £7,400 (after tax and not including benefits) or the child/young person is eligible for free school meals.
- Up to three miles walking distance from home to school for all other statutory school age children and young people aged eight-16 years old (years 4-11).

This means that families **do not** normally receive free travel to school because there is often a school within a reasonable of their home address. Where families send their child to a school further away, free transport assistance will not be provided unless there are exceptional circumstances.

An example of an exceptional circumstance is where a child is required to attend a specific school due to their medical or special educational need and/or disability. As all schools within BCP Council can provide for a range of needs, for an exception to be agreed there will need to be substantial evidence provided.

For further information please visit [School transport | BCP](#) to read the Home to School Transport Policy.

Grammar Schools and Home to School Transport Assistance

All schools in BCP Council can provide education suitable for children and young people of all ages, ability and aptitude. Therefore, we do not provide transport assistance for children who are offered a place at selective schools (including grammar schools) unless they are eligible as follows:

- Over two miles walking distance from home to school where the parent is receipt of Universal Credit with an income of £7,400 or the child is eligible for free school meals **and** the school is one of the three nearest schools to the child's home address.

- Over three miles walking distance from home to school where the school is the nearest school to the child's home address.

For home to school transport assistance purposes, grammar schools in the BCP Council area are not considered to be catchment schools. Instead, they operate using defined Priority Areas to ensure that children in the surrounding area of each school are given higher priority for at least one grammar school compared to those living further away.

Home to School Transport Assistance for Siblings

Applications for home to school transport assistance are considered based on the individual circumstances and needs of each child or young person. This means that if you have previously received transport assistance for a sibling of the child or young person that you are applying for, they may not be eligible and/or not receive the same offer of transport.

It is therefore important to read the BCP Council [Home to School Transport Policy](#) that is valid at the time you wish to make an application for assistance.

Pupil Premium

The Pupil Premium Grant provides funding to schools and they can use it to provide targeted support for:

- Children who qualify for Free School Meals
- Looked After and Previously Looked After Children
- Children from Service Families

It is important to inform your child's school if you think they qualify so the school can claim the additional funding. Please talk to your child's school to find out what you need to do.

Free School Meals

You could be entitled to free school meals if you are claiming the following benefits:

- Universal Credit - if your household income is less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

To apply for Free School Meals, you can either:

- Obtain an application form from your child's school or
- Apply at [Free school meals | BCP](#)

If you have no recourse to public funds or would like to find out more, contact the [Children's Information Service](#).

School Uniform

Most schools require children to wear a school uniform. Individual school websites set out their policy on school uniform. If you are experiencing financial hardship you can contact the school who may be able to assist you with the cost of purchasing items of uniform.

In-year applications

Moving School During the School Year

There are many reasons you might want to change your child's school. One of the main reasons is moving home. If you have not moved far and are still able to get your child to their current school, you can continue to send your child there. If this is not possible, you will need to apply for a new school place.

Applications can be made online. For more information, please visit [Requesting a school place during the school year | BCP](#).

Fair Access

All Local Authorities must have a [Fair Access Protocol](#) for in year admissions. Fair access protocols exist to ensure that appropriate education is secured quickly for children without a school place, particularly the most vulnerable or those with challenging behaviour. The protocol ensures that all schools in an area admit their fair share of children with challenging behaviour, including children excluded from other schools. If your application is to be considered by the In Year Fair Access Panel you will be advised by the school admissions team.

BCP Council school admissions team contact details

School Admissions and Transport Team

BCP Council Civic Centre

Bourne Avenue

Bournemouth

BH2 6DY

Tel: 01202 127963

Email: school.admissions@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

Children's Information Service

Tel: 01202 123222

Email: CIS@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

Bournemouth all-through, secondary and studio schools contact details

School name and address	Headteacher, telephone number, email and web address	School category	Age range & Year Groups	Admission Number
Avonbourne Boys' Academy Harewood Avenue Bournemouth BH7 6NY	Ms Michelle Dyer Telephone 01202 398451 Email office@avonbourneacademy.org.uk Web avonbourneboysacademy.org.uk	Academy United Learning	11-18 (Yr7 to Yr3)	180
Avonbourne Girls' Academy Harewood Avenue Bournemouth BH7 6NY	Ms Michelle Dyer Telephone 01202 398451 Email office@avonbourneacademy.org.uk Web avonbournegirlsacademy.org.uk	Academy United Learning	11-18 (Yr7 to Yr13)	210
The Bishop of Winchester Academy Mallard Road Bournemouth BH8 9PW	Mr Paul McKeown Telephone 01202 512697 Email office@tbowa.org Web tbowa.org	Academy Church of England	11-18 (Yr7 to Yr13)	210
The Bourne Academy Hadow Road Bournemouth BH10 5HS	Mr Mark Avoth Telephone 01202 528554 Email admin@bourneacademy.com Web thebourneacademy.com	Academy	11-16 (Yr7 to Yr11)	180
Bournemouth School East Way Bournemouth BH8 9PY	Dr Dorian Lewis Telephone 01202 512609 Email office@bournemouth-school.org Web bournemouth-school.org	Academy Grammar	11-18 (Yr7 to Yr13)	180
Bournemouth School for Girls Castle Gate Close Bournemouth BH8 9UJ	Mr David Sims Telephone 01202 526 289 Email office@bsg.bournemouth.sch.uk Web wearebsg.uk	Academy Grammar	11-18 (Yr7 to Yr13)	180
Glenmoor Academy Beswick Avenue Bournemouth BH10 4EX	Mr Leon Lima Telephone 01202 527818 Email info@glenmoorandwinton.org.uk Web glenmoorandwinton.org.uk/glenmoor	Academy United Learning	11-16 (Yr7 to Yr11)	180
LEAF Studio Holloway Avenue Bournemouth BH11 9JW	Ms Nadine Lapskas Telephone 01202 578886 Email office@lss.weareauthentic.education Web leafstudio.co.uk	Academy Authentic Education	13-18 (Yr9 to Yr13)	80

Livingstone Academy Madeira Road Bournemouth BH1 1PA	Mrs Jen Warr Telephone 01202 124555 Email office@livingstone-aspirations.org Web livingstone-aspirations.org	Academy Aspirations Academies	4-18 (Reception to Yr13)	150 for Yr 7
Oak Academy Duck Lane Bournemouth BH11 9JJ	Ms Hayley Richley Telephone 01202 774600 Email office@oa.weareauthentic.education Web oak-academy.co.uk	Academy Authentic Education	11-16 (Yr7 to Yr11)	180
St Peter's School St Catherine's Road Bournemouth BH6 4AH	Mr Ben Doyle Telephone 01202 421141 Email info@st-peters.bournemouth.sch.uk Web st-peters.bournemouth.sch.uk	Academy Catholic	4-18 (Reception to Yr13)	180 for Yr 7
Winton Academy Winton Way Bournemouth BH10 4HT	Mr Leon Lima Telephone 01202 527818 Email info@glenmoorandwinton.org.uk Web glenmoorandwinton.org.uk/winton	Academy United Learning	11-16 (Yr7 to Yr11)	180

Christchurch secondary schools contact details

School name and address	Headteacher, telephone number, email and web address	School category	Age range & Year Groups	Admission Number
The Grange School Redvers Road Christchurch BH23 3AU	Mrs Laura Concar Telephone 01202 486536 Email office@thegrangeschool.com Web thegrangeschool.com	Academy Twyndham Learning	11-16 (Yr7 to Yr11)	120
Highcliffe School Parkside Highcliffe Christchurch BH23 4QD	Mr Patrick Earnshaw Telephone 01425 273381 Email office@highcliffe.school Web highcliffe.school	Academy HISP	11-18 (Yr7 to Yr13)	264
Twyndham School Sopers Lane Christchurch BH23 1JF	Miss Kate Ball Telephone 01202 486237 Email office@twynhamschool.com Web twynhamschool.com	Academy Twyndham Learning	11-18 (Yr7 to Yr13)	270

Poole middle and secondary schools contact details

School name and address	Headteacher, telephone number, email and web address	School category	Age range & Year Groups	Admission Number
Broadstone Middle School Dunyeats Road Broadstone BH18 8AE	Miss Jade Palmer Telephone 01202 696121 Email schooloffice@broadstonemiddle.poole.sch.uk Web bmsweb.co.uk	Academy Castleman Academy Trust	9-13 (Yr5 to Yr8)	30 for Yr 7
The Cornerstone Academy Blandford Close Poole BH15 4BQ	Mr Chris Phillips Telephone 01202 676789 Email enquiries@cornerstoneacademy.org.uk Web cornerstoneacademy.org.uk	Academy United Learning	11-16 (Yr7 to Yr11)	180
Corfe Hills School Higher Blandford Road Broadstone BH18 9BG	Mr James Sankey Telephone 01202 656300 Email office@corfehills.net Web corfehills.net	Academy Initio Learning	13-18 (Yr9 to Yr13)	375
Magna Academy Adastral Road Poole BH17 8RE	Mr Phil Midworth Telephone 01202 604222 Email office@magna-aspirations.org Web magna-aspirations.org	Academy Aspirations Academies	11-18 (Yr7 to Yr13)	180
Parkstone Grammar School Sopers Lane Poole BH17 7EP	Mr David Hallsworth Telephone 01202 605605 Email office@parkstone.poole.sch.uk Web parkstone.poole.sch.uk	Academy Grammar	11-18 (Yr7 to Yr13)	192
Poole Grammar School Gravel Hill Poole BH17 9JU	Mrs Katie Etheridge Telephone 01202 692132 Email pgsoffice@poolegrammar.com Web poolegrammar.com	Academy Grammar	11-18 (Yr7 to Yr13)	180
Poole High School Wimborne Road Poole BH15 2BW	Mrs Sian Phillips Telephone 01202 666988 Email school@poolehigh.poole.sch.uk Web poolehigh.co.uk	Academy Twynham Learning	11-18 (Yr7 to Yr13)	325

St Aldhelm's Academy Herbert Avenue Poole BH12 4HS	Ms Nadine Lapskas Telephone 01202 732500 Email office@staldhelms-academy.co.uk Web staldhelms-academy.co.uk	Academy Authentic Education	11-16 (Yr7 to Yr11)	180
St Edward's CE/VA School Dale Valley Road Poole BH15 3NY	Mr Chris Barnett Telephone 01202 740950 Email enquiries@stedwards.poole.sch.uk Web st-edwards.poole.sch.uk	Voluntary Aided	11-18 (Yr7 to Yr13)	182

BCP Council special schools and alternative provision contact details

School name and address	Headteacher, telephone number, email and web address	School Category	Age Range & Year Groups
Christchurch Learning Centre 29 Stour Road Christchurch BH23 1PJ	Mr Philip Gavin Telephone 01202 471410 Email office@clc.dorset.sch.uk Web christchurchlc.org.uk	Pupil Referral Unit	11-16 (7-11)
Linwood School Alma Road Bournemouth BH9 1AJ	Ms Gemma Talbot Telephone 01202 525107 Email linwoodcampus@linwood.bournemouth.sch.uk Web linwood.bournemouth.sch.uk	Community Special	3-19 (N-14)
Longspee Academy Learoyd Road Canford Heath Poole BH17 8PJ	Mr Gavin O'Connell Telephone 01202 380266 Fax 01202 380270 Email reception@longspeeschool.co.uk Web longspeeacademy.co.uk	Academy Special Ambitions Academies Trust	4+ (R+)
Montacute School 3 Canford Heath Road Poole BH17 9NG	Ms Ginny Bellard Telephone 01202 693239 Fax 01202 657363 Email office@montacute.poole.sch.uk Web montacute.poole.sch.uk	Academy Special	3-19 (R-14)
The Quay School 160 Herbert Avenue Poole BH12 4HU	Mr Russell Arnold Telephone 01202 716910 Email info@thequayschool.com Web thequayschool.com	Academy Alternative Provision Delta Education Trust	11-18 (7-13)

Tregonwell Academy Petersfield Road Bournemouth BH7 6QP	Mr Jo Phillips Telephone 01202 424361 Email petersfield.campus@tregonwell.co.uk Web tregonwell-academy.co.uk	Academy Special Ambitions Academies Trust	12-16
Tregonwell Academy Nigel Bowes Campus 70 Ensbury Avenue Bournemouth BH10 4HG	Mr Steve Jackson Telephone 01202 524041 Email nbcpreception@tregonwell.co.uk Web tregonwell-academy.co.uk	Academy Special Ambitions Academies Trust	5-12
Winchelsea Special School Guernsey Road Parkstone Poole BH12 4LL	Mr Geoff Cherrill Telephone 01202 746240 Fax 01202 733024 Email enquiries@winchelsea.poole.sch.uk Web winchelseaschool.co.uk	Community Special	3-16 (R-11)