Community and voluntary controlled infant, junior and primary schools admissions policy

2027-2028

Admissions policy 2027-28

The admission authority for all community and voluntary controlled mainstream schools in the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council area is the local authority.

This policy applies to applications for school places starting in September 2027 and should be read in conjunction with the parents' guide available at bcpcouncil.gov.uk/schooladmissions from 12 September 2027.

Children with an education, health and care plan (EHCP) issued by a local authority naming a school where a child should receive their education will be admitted to that school before preferences are considered for admission in September.

Where there are more applications than places available the following criteria will be used, in numerical order, to decide the priority list for the offering of places up to the school's published admission number:

1. "Looked after children" or "previously looked after children" (note one) including children who appear to have been in state care outside of England (note two).

2. Children who BCP Council accepts have an exceptional medical or psychological need and where there is a need for a place at one specific school (note three).

3. Children who live in the school's catchment area who have a sibling who is already on the roll of the school and will continue to attend the school at the time of admission (note four).

4. Children living within the school's catchment area who are attending a recognised feeder school and are on that school's roll at the time of application. This applies to Mudeford Infant and Junior Schools only.

5. All other children who live in the school's catchment area.

6. Children who live outside the school's catchment area who have a sibling who is already on the roll of the school and will continue to attend the school at the time of admission (note four).

7. Children living outside the school's catchment area who are attending a recognised feeder school and are on that school's roll at the time of application. This applies to Mudeford Infant and Junior Schools only.

8. Children living outside the school's catchment area and whose parents wish them to attend a Church of England voluntary controlled school on denominational grounds (note five). This applies to Burton C of E Primary School only.

9. Children of staff where the member of staff has been employed for two or more years at the school applied for at the time the application for admission is made or who have been recruited to a vacancy to meet a demonstrable skills shortage as at the date of application (in year) or relevant closing date under the local authority co-ordinated scheme (normal year of entry) and who still intend to be employed at the school at the time of the child's admission (note six and note seven).

10. All other children who live outside the school's catchment area.

If a school is oversubscribed in any of the categories above, children in the oversubscribed category who live closest to the school will be given priority (note eight).

If the distance measurement is equal for two or more applicants (excluding children of multiple birth, please see below), the place will be allocated by the drawing of lots. The person drawing the names will be an officer within BCP Council who is not involved in the school admissions process.

Please ensure you read notes one to eight and the remainder of this policy for further information.

Admission arrangements

Admission will be in accordance with the agreed scheme for coordinated admission arrangements 2027-28.

Starting reception in 2027-28

All children can start in reception on a full-time basis in September 2027. Where parents and carers wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age. Parent and carers should discuss this with the headteacher. The final decision will rest with the parent or carer of the child.

Delayed or deferred start

For children born between 1 September and 31 March, parents and carers can delay their child's start date until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age (i.e., by the start of the term following their fifth birthday). For children born between 1 April and 31 August, parents can also delay their child's start date; but not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year (i.e., the term that starts after the Easter/Spring holidays).

The school place offered cannot be delayed until the following academic year – it must be taken-up in the academic year for which it is offered. Parents and carers who do not take-up the offer of a place during the reception year will need to re-apply for a school place the following year. Places offered but not taken-up by the beginning of the final term (i.e., the term that starts after the Easter/Spring holidays) will be withdrawn.

If parents and carers want to apply for the following year, they would normally apply for a place in year one. Parents and carers need to be aware that year one in the school they were previously offered could be full at this stage.

Applications for a place in a year group different to that determined by date of birth, including delayed entry to reception for summer born children

Applications for children to be educated in a year group different to that determined by their date of birth, including delayed admission to reception for summer born children, will be considered on their individual merits by a specialist panel.

Details of what you need to do to apply for a different year group can be found in the policy document “Policy for responding to parental requests for admission to community and voluntary controlled schools to a year group different to that determined by their date of birth, including delayed admission to reception for summer born children” available online at bcpcouncil.gov.uk/schooladmissions or from the school admissions team.

Parents and carers considering this should contact BCP Council at the earliest possible opportunity (preferably before 30 November 2026) to ensure a decision is made before the national closing date for applications.

Excepted pupils for infant classes (Years R, 1 and 2)

Infant classes must not contain more than thirty pupils with a single schoolteacher. Additional children may be admitted under limited exceptional circumstances. These children will remain an ’excepted pupil’ for the time they are in an infant class or until the class numbersfall back to the current infant class size limit. The excepted children are:

- children admitted outside the normal admissions round with education, health and care plans (EHCPs) specifying the school
- looked after children and previously looked after children admitted outside the normal admissions round
- children admitted after initial allocation of places, because of a procedural error made by the admission authority or local authority in the original application process
- children admitted after an independent appeals panel upholds an appeal
- children who move into the area outside the normal admissions round for whom there is no other available school within reasonable distance
- children of UK (United Kingdom) service personnel admitted outside the normal admissions round
- children whose twin or sibling from a multiple birth is admitted otherwise than as an excepted pupil
- children with SEND who are normally taught in a SEND unit attached to the school, or registered at a special school, who attend some infant classes within the mainstream school.

In year fair access

All the admission authorities in BCP Council have established an in year fair access protocol. The purpose of the protocol is to ensure that – outside the normal admissions round – unplaced children, especially the most vulnerable, are provided with a place at a suitable school as quickly as possible.

Cases are considered by a panel comprising Headteachers and/or their representatives. When seeking to place a child, the panel will consider all schools in a fair, equitable and consistent manner. Decisions of the panel may mean that individual schools admit children above the published admission number. Admission authorities will not normally be asked to admit a child to an infant class where there are already thirty children in the class.

In year admissions – looked after children

A looked after child may be admitted to a school above the admission number if it is felt by the local authority that a particular school is the most appropriate placement to meet the needs of the individual child.

Home address

The home address where a child lives is a residential property that is the child's main or only address during term time.

Applicants can be asked to provide additional evidence to verify addresses and/or other details provided. It is at the discretion of the local authority what evidence is required (evidence may include, but is not limited to, child benefit, GP (general practitioner) registration, evidence of home ownership/tenancy etc.). The final decision on the home address of a child will be made by BCP Council. If any information supplied by an applicant is judged by the local authority to be fraudulent or intentionally misleading, BCP Council may refuse to offer a place, or if already offered, may withdraw the offer.

Applications from separated parents and carers

Only one application and one address can be accepted for each child. Where parents and carers are separated, it is essential that agreement is reached by both parties about which schools are named on the application 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 through mediation, they should resolve the issue through the court system, for example a 'Specific Issues Order' which specifies which parent has responsibility to make decisions on school preferences.

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 parent signs the declaration to say that they have parental responsibility and indicates that all others with parental responsibility also consent to the application, and BCP Council subsequently is informed that this was incorrect, this may result in the application not being processed. In the event that a place has already been allocated, that place may be withdrawn in accordance with the statutory School Admissions Code, which allows for withdrawal of places offered in error or obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application. Any decision to continue processing or to withdraw an application will be made based on the specific circumstances of the case, with the child's safeguarding and welfare as the highest priority.

Where a child spends part of their week with one parent or carer and part with the other, only one address can be provided. This must be the address at which the child spends most of their time during term time.

If a child spends equal time with each parent, both parties must also come to agreement about which address to use on the application, as well as the schools and preference order.

Changes of address

When applying for point of entry, BCP Council will not accept a change of address once the National Closing Date has passed.

The National Closing Date for point of entry year groups (Reception and Year 3) is 15 January 2027. This means if your moving date is after 15 January 2027, we will use your old address to categorise your application. You will need to tell us your new address so we can update your child's record.

If you move house after you have submitted your application but before the National Closing Date, you **must** inform us **by** the 15 January 2027 to ensure your application is considered from your new address.

Alternatively, a house move occurring by the closing date, also includes:

- (if purchasing) exchange of contracts occurring on or before the closing date;
- (if renting) signed tenancy agreement which commences on or before the closing date

This information **must** be provided **by 15 January 2027**.

Application for children of multiple births

If there are insufficient places to accommodate all the children of a multiple birth (i.e., twins, triplets etc.) in any year group and one child can be admitted, the other siblings of the multiple birth will be admitted over the school's published admission number. If it is in an infant class (Years R, 1 and 2) the additional children over the published admission number will be considered as excepted pupils for the entire time they are in an infant class at the school or until the class numbers fall back to the infant class size limit in accordance with the school admissions code.

Waiting lists

BCP Council maintains waiting lists for its schools. When a child is added, the waiting list must be ranked again in line with the oversubscription criteria. Priority will not be given to children based on the date their application was received or when their name was added to the waiting list.

Children who have been refused a place will automatically be added to the waiting list for the relevant academic year. If parents or carers wish for their child to remain on the waiting list beyond that academic year, a new application must be submitted from 1 June for the following year.

Being on a waiting list does not guarantee a school place. A child's position may change as new applications are received, or others are removed.

Appeals

If the local authority is unable to offer a place at a school that has been applied for, the parent or carer has the right to appeal to an independent appeals panel. Details will be included in the letter refusing the school place. The decision of the appeal panel is binding on all parties.

Notes

1. A "looked after child" means any child who is in the care of a local authority in accordance with Section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989. A child who was "previously a looked after child" means a child who after being looked after, became subject to an Adoption Order under the Adoption Act 1976 or under Section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002, a Residence Order or Child Arrangement Order under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 or Special Guardianship Order under Section 14A of the Children Act 1989. Applicants can be asked to provide additional evidence to verify the previously looked after status of a child. It is at the discretion of BCP Council what evidence is required. The final decision will be made by BCP Council. If any information supplied by an applicant is judged to be fraudulent or intentionally misleading, BCP Council may refuse to offer a place, or if already offered, may withdraw the offer.

2. A child is regarded as having been in state care in a place outside of England if

they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society. Applicants can be asked to provide additional evidence to verify the previously looked after status of a child. It is at the discretion of BCP Council what evidence is required. The final decision will be made by BCP Council. If any information supplied by an applicant is judged to be fraudulent or intentionally misleading, BCP Council may refuse to offera place, or if already offered, may withdraw the offer.

3. If applying under medical or psychological grounds, written advice from an NHS consultant (for medical grounds), or an NHS consultant psychiatrist (for psychological grounds) that documents the child's medical or psychological needs must be included with the application. Children will only meet this criterion if the school(s) named on the application form is assessed by BCP Council to be the only school(s) that can meet any specific medical or psychological needs identified. The final decision whether an application can be considered using this criterion will be made by BCP Council.

4. "Sibling" means:
   - a full brother or sister who lives with one or both parents or carers in the same property during the school week.
   - a half-brother or half-sister who lives with one or both parents or carers in the same property during the school week.
   - an adoptive brother or sister who lives with one or both parents or carers in the same property during the school week.
   - a foster brother or sister who lives with one or both parents or carers in the same property during the school week.
   - non-blood related children who, together, all live with one or both parents or carers in the same property during the school week.

   For Mudeford Community Infants School the sibling link will apply if the sibling is on roll and will continue to attend Mudeford Junior School at the time of admission and vice versa. For those applying for a place at Mudeford Infant School, this includes pupils who have a sibling in Year 2 and have applied for Year 3 at Mudeford Junior School.

5. To qualify for consideration under this category for Burton CE Primary School, parents and carers will need to show that at least one adult family member and the child to whom the application relates to have been attending their local church at least once a month for a minimum of a year prior to the closing date for applications. The application must also be supported by a supplementary information form signed by the vicar/priest/minister or leader of the church confirming this.

   If during the period specified for attendance at worship the church has been closed for public worship and has not provided alternative premises for that worship, the requirements of these admissions arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the period when the church or relevant place of worship or alternative premises have been available for public worship.

6. Staff are defined as all teaching and support staff employed at the preferred school. 'Children of staff' refers to situations where the staff member is the natural parent, the

legal guardian, or a resident step-parent. If applicants wish to be considered under this criterion, then a letter from the headteacher confirming the criterion applies to the applicant must be provided at the time of application.

7. A demonstrable skill shortage refers to a post which the school has had difficulties fulfilling. For priority to be given on this basis, the school must have taken part in a recruitment drive to fill the post where the post was not filled after two attempts at recruitment have been made.

8. The distance between the child's home and preferred school will be determined by the shortest straight-line measurement calculated using the local authority's geographical information system in use at the time of allocation. The system at the time of setting the policy is Servelec Synergy and it takes the measurement between the address mapping points of the school and the applicant's home. Please note that eligibility for school transport assistance is based on walking distance measurements.

Published admission numbers 2027-28

School Name	Published Admissions Number 2027/28
Burton CE Primary School	30
Mudeford Community Infant School	60
Mudeford Junior School	66
Somerford Primary School	30

BCP Council School Admissions and Transport Team

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