

Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools within the Christchurch area of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council 2020-21



Mudford Community Infants School (MIS) Admissions

This is the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council Local Authority's (LA) admissions policy for schools within the Christchurch area which applies to statutory school aged children in mainstream schools. This policy commences for children applying to schools starting in September 2020 and should be read in conjunction with the parents' guide, available at www.bcpCouncil.gov.uk from 1 September 2020. Admissions policies for other types of schools and further information can also be found on the website.

1. Admission of Pupils – General Principles

- The School Admissions Code, legislative guidance including co-ordination, equal preference scheme and infant class size legislation are adhered to,
- The majority of schools serve traditional areas (catchments/communities) to ensure fair access. The school's catchment area is a geographical area defined by the authority following consultation with the governors and neighbouring schools,
- Where possible, within the current constraints and legislation, children attend schools preferred by their parents,
- Every child resident within Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council will be allocated a place in an educational setting once an application is submitted,
- Admission arrangements are consistently and equally applied to all,
- Resources are used efficiently,
- Allocation of school places are made up to the planned admission number, in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.
- The Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council Admissions Arrangements adhere to the principles of the Equalities Act 2010.

2. Published Admission Numbers (PANs)

All admission authorities must set an admission number for each 'relevant age group' and places will be allocated according to the published oversubscription criteria.

A school will be asked to exceed the admission number only where:-

- The last place within PAN is allocated to one of multiple birth siblings, then the other birth siblings will be admitted,
- Where an error occurs and the child should have been offered a place,
- A large group of families with children arrive in the area where it has not been possible to accommodate them within the normal allocation of places because of the short notice. If this is the case, the Local Authority will identify an appropriate setting to accommodate the children as quickly as possible,
- An unexpected event/incident occurs necessitating urgent/temporary placement,
- There is a need to comply with other agreed protocols, e.g. Children in Care, Fair Access, SEN Code of Practice and the Military Covenant

In Year Admissions only

Where no other school would provide suitable education within a reasonable distance of the home. In this instance the distance will be considered based on the transport offered to the alternative setting, following national guidance on transport times i.e. the alternative placement will not exceed a journey of 45 minutes for primary aged children and 75 minutes for secondary aged children. The length of journey does not include walking to the 'stop'. Transport is also based on consideration of efficient use of resources and prejudice to the school or neighbouring schools.

3. Admission of Pupils to School for the First Time at Age 4+5

3.1 Statutory school age

Children reach compulsory school age the school term following their fifth birthday. The start of term is defined as 1 September/January/April (this may not be the first day of term for the school being considered).

3.2 Admission at 4+

An application must be submitted for every child to the LA. Children are able to attend full-time in September of the year they are due to start school. Some schools offer a phased integration. Parents can request part-time attendance until compulsory school age is reached. This needs to be agreed with the headteacher of the school where a place is offered. Parents can also request deferred entry within the first academic year or until compulsory school age. A record of the deferment should be kept by the school and parent. The place is held and is not available to be offered to another child unless it is not taken up by the agreed date when it will be considered vacant. If this request for deferred entry goes beyond the start of the academic year, the parent will need to reapply for a school place in the next academic year for entry to year 1.

4. Transfer to the next school by age – Normal Year of Entry

Different age ranges of schools within the Christchurch area of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council means children may transfer to the next school, depending on where they live, at ages 7+ (Year 3), or 11+ (Year 7). In all cases an application should be submitted by the published closing date and through the Home Local Authority. This is the local authority in whose area the child resides. Applications should be submitted by the person who has parental responsibility for the child.

5. In Year Admissions

In year admissions will be processed either through the LA where schools have opted in to the LA co-ordinated scheme (subject to availability) or directly to the school, where the school has opted out. If uncertain of whether the preferred school takes in year applications direct, parents can contact the school itself or contact the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council's school admissions department. A formal application must be made in all instances with relevant information attached to the application. Should a place not be allocated at a preference school the parents have a right of appeal. Any alternative placement offered will take account of the distance to travel consistent with the national guidance on journey times i.e. the alternative placement will not exceed a journey of 45 minutes for primary aged children and 75 minutes for secondary age children.

6. Admission of children outside their normal age group

This section of the policy should be read in conjunction with the guidance on the placement of a pupil outside his or her normal age group. Normal age group refers to the year group in which the child would normally be according to their chronological age.

Applications for a child to be placed outside of their normal chronological year group will only be considered under the most exceptional circumstances. The placement of a child outside his or her normal age group is not an appropriate strategy for meeting special educational needs. This is in recognition of the significant and long term impact on children who are placed outside of their normal year group.

6.1 Admission above Normal Age

Only in exceptional circumstances, where a child is outstanding in every respect, will a child be considered for admission early or above their normal year group. It will also only be considered through the agreement of the Head Teacher, in conjunction with other professionals, where they have identified exceptional medical, physical, social or/and educational reasons for this.

6.2 Back Yearing and Delayed Transfer

There are instances when a child's overall best interests are served by delaying admission or remaining in the existing year. The social and educational implications of this must be considered. Such arrangements will be considered only if agreed or recommended by the child's Head Teacher and/or any other professional involved. Any decision will also be in line with the LA's guidance on the placement of a pupil outside of his or her normal age group and with the parent's agreement.

6.3 Out of area Requests

Some families seek places in schools located in the Christchurch area of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council (e.g. where they have moved in to the area from elsewhere) for their children to be placed in a year group other than their chronological year group. Requests are dealt with and recommendations made by the admitting school, regardless of the child's home address. Such requests are refused unless there are very exceptional circumstances.

6.4 Admission/Transfer of Children Outside Normal Year Groups – PAN

Where it is agreed that children can be admitted/transferred to a year group which is not the chronological year group, the application will be considered against the relevant school's PAN (not in addition) and the school's oversubscription criteria, along with all other applications received.

6.5 Delaying entry into Reception Year Group – Summer Born Children

Where a child is summer born and parents wish to consider the delay of their child starting school in the Reception Class until after their 5th birthday, parents will have to discuss this directly with the Head Teacher and/or the Admission Authority of the proposed school. These requests will be considered on a case by case basis.

If a parent applies for a reception place to be taken up after the child's 4th birthday and is allocated a place in the normal transfer round and then subsequently wishes for their child to enter the school in reception after their 5th birthday – they will have to make a new application in the next application year and surrender their current place. Their application will be considered afresh and no guarantee will be given that they will get a place at the same school in the subsequent allocation as it will be subject to the relevant admissions code and the overall number of applications.

7. Placements in Alternative Settings and Managed Moves

Policies are available on In Year Fair Access and Managed Move protocols on the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council website.

8. Children in Care

Information about applications for children in care and children who have previously been in care can be found on the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council website. Children in Care applications are given the highest priority in the oversubscription criteria.

9. School Transport

Details about school transport are provided in the Home to School Transport Policy. Advice is also provided in the Policy and Parents' Guide to ensure parents, guardians and carers are aware that their preference of school and the admissions criteria will affect their entitlement to 'free' school transport. This includes later changes (e.g. change of address) which could have a bearing on continued eligibility for school transport.

10. Withdrawal of School Places

Places will only be withdrawn where:

- A place has been offered in error by the admission authority and the affected child/ren have not yet started at the preferred school,
- A place has been offered on the basis of a false, fraudulent or deliberately misleading application. The place will be withdrawn if the case has been identified by the first October half-term following admission,
- The place has not been taken up by the specified date – the parent will be contacted in advance of the withdrawal of a place,,
- The place has been declined by the parent.

11. Waiting Lists

The LA operates a limited waiting list policy. Parents can apply to have their child's name placed on a waiting list for a period of one term following refusal. If parents wish to keep a child on a waiting list beyond this term they will need to write in for an extension. There is no guarantee of a school place by remaining on the waiting list.

12. Appeals

If the LA is unable to offer a place at a school that has been applied for, the parent has the right to appeal to an independent Appeals Panel. The decision of the Panel is binding on all parties

OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

The admission of children with Education Health & Care Plans and Statements of Special Educational Needs is covered by Sections 324 to 328 of, and Schedule 27 to, the Education Act 1996. Guidance on the Admission of EHCP and Statemented pupils is given in the Special Education Needs Code of Practice.

1. Where all parental preferences for places at the school can be satisfied, all children seeking a place will be admitted.
2. Where there are too few places available to satisfy all preferences, places will be allocated according to the following priority order:-
 - i) A "Child in Care" or who was "previously a Child in Care" (see footnote 1)
 - ii) Children who the authority accepts have an exceptional medical or social need and where there is a need for a place at one specific school (see footnotes 2).

- iii) Children living within the school's catchment area who will have a sibling(s) attending the school at the time of admission. (see footnote 3)
 - iv) Children living within the school's catchment area who are attending the preferred school's recognised maintained feeder school during the previous year and are on that school's roll at the time of application. (see footnote 4).
 - v) Children living within the school's catchment area.
 - vi) Children living outside the school's catchment area who will have a sibling(s) attending the school at the time of admission. (see footnote 3,5)
 - vii) Children living outside the school's catchment area and who are attending one of the preferred school's recognised maintained feeder schools during the previous year at the time of application. (see footnote 5)
 - viii) Children living outside the school's catchment area and whose parents wish them to attend a CE Voluntary Controlled school on denominational grounds. (see footnote 6)
 - ix) Children of staff with at least two years continuous service at the school 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 LA 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. (see footnote 7 & 8)
 - x) All other children living outside the school's catchment area.
3. If oversubscribed within any of the priority order categories above, places will be allocated on the basis of the shortest straight line measurement calculated using the LA's geographical information system in use at the time of allocation (the system at the time of setting the policy is Synergy, and takes the measurement between the address mapping points of the school and the applicant's home). NB. School transport is based on walking and driven distances.
 4. In the event that the LA is unable to distinguish between applications despite applying the priority categories above, the remaining place(s) will be allocated using a random allocation process. The process will be electronically administered through the IT providers in use at the time. At the time of setting this policy the providers are Synergy.
 5. Where applications are received from families with multiple birth siblings and by adhering to PAN these siblings could not be offered the same school, the admission number will be exceeded to accommodate the multiple birth siblings. This is not an indication that schools can exceed the admission number other than under these exceptional circumstances.

Footnotes

1. A "Child in Care" 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 Child in Care" means a child who after being Looked After became subject to an Adoption Order under Section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002, a Child Arrangement Order under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 or Special Guardianship Order under Section 14A of the Children Act 1989.
2. Applications will only be considered under this category if there is evidence provided such as a Child Protection Order, Children in Need document or a written statement from a doctor, social worker or other relevant independent professional. The information must confirm the exceptional medical or social need and demonstrate how the specified school is the only school that can meet the defined needs of the child. The local authority is all inclusive and will meet all legislative requirements to accommodate children within their educational setting as appropriate to their need.
3. The term 'sibling' means full brother or sister, half or step brother or sister, adoptive brother or sister and other non-blood related children who live with married or cohabiting parents in the same household and relates to all year groups provided by the school. In the case of an infant school the sibling link will apply to the related junior school and vice versa.

4. The feeder school criteria only applies to children attending the recognised feeder Infant School and are applying to the recognised receiver Junior School. This applies to Mudeford Infant & Junior School and Christchurch Infant & Junior School.
5. This does not include independent schools, pre-schools or nurseries.
6. In order to qualify for consideration under this category, parents/guardians 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 written statement from the vicar/priest/minister or leader of the church confirming this.
7. The term 'children' includes full, half, step, adopted and those non-blood related but resident through marriage, civil partnerships or single family co-habitation arrangements at the time of application or deadline.
8. Staff are defined as all Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council employed teaching and support staff 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 above applies to the applicant must be provided at the time of application.

Failure to provide sufficient evidence will result in the application being processed against the next highest criteria.

Policy review

This policy has been adopted by the governors and is approved annually by the full governing body at its first routine meeting of each academic year (usually in September). In the meantime it is reviewed as necessary by the head teacher assisted by a governor, and any resultant changes other than minor clarifications or those of a typographical nature are brought to the attention of the governing body. The policies master record index (MRI) is updated to reflect the dates of the last and next review.

Reviewed Approved and Adopted as detailed in the current MRI.