



ADMISSIONS ARRANGEMENTS

for children starting school in September 2026
and during the academic year 2026-2027



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Next Review:	Admissions arrangements are reviewed annually

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1. Aims

This document aims to:

- Explain **how to apply** for a place at the school
- Set out the school's arrangements for allocating places to those who apply
- Explain **how to appeal** against a decision not to offer your child a place

2. Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on the following advice from the Department for Education (DfE):

- [School Admissions Code \(2021\)](#)
- [School Admission Appeals Code \(2022\)](#)

As an academy, the school is required by its funding agreement to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the [School Standards and Framework Act 1998](#).

A child reaches **compulsory school age** on the prescribed day following their fifth birthday (or on their fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August.

3. How to apply for a place in the Normal Admissions Round

The **normal admissions round** is the period during which parents/carers can apply for state-funded school places at the school's normal point of entry, Reception, using the Common Application Form (CAF) provided by their home local authority.

Parents/carers should use the application form provided by their home local authority (regardless of which local authority their preferred schools are in). This form is used to express a preference for a minimum of 3 state-funded schools, in rank order.

All parents/carers who submit an on-time application (i.e. by midnight on 15 January) will receive an offer for a school place directly from their local authority on National Offer Day (16 April or the next working day).

Parents/carers living in the Buckinghamshire Council area should visit the [Bucks Council School Admissions website](#).

Please note: attendance at Bourton Meadow Nursery, does not guarantee admission at Bourton Meadow Academy. An application must be made for any transfer from nursery to primary school.

4. Allocation of places

4.1 Published Admission Number (PAN)

The school has an agreed Published Admission Number (PAN) of 90 for entry in Reception.

Places will first be allocated to children who have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan that names the school as appropriate provision.

4.2 Oversubscription criteria

When there are more applications for places than there are places available, priority will be given in the following order:

1. Looked after children and all previously looked after children
2. Children who have a sibling continuing at the school at the time of admission and who live within the defined [catchment area](#)

3. Children who live in the defined catchment area
4. Children of staff at the school, in either or both of the following circumstances:
 - a) Where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time which the application for admission to the school is made, and or
 - b) The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skills shortage
5. Children who have a sibling continuing at the school at the time of admission and who live outside the defined catchment area
6. Other children

4.3 Allocation to PAN

If the admission number is exceeded within any criterion, priority will be given to those who live closest to the school (see Distance Measurements for more information on how distances are measured).

4.4 Tie breaker

If two or more applications cannot otherwise be separated and there is only one place available, random allocation will be used to determine who should be allocated the place.

5. Definitions

5.1 Looked after children

A 'looked after child' is a child who, at the time of making an application to a school, is:

- a) In the care of a local authority, or
- b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in exercise of its social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989)

5.2 Previously looked after children

Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they:

- a) were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see Section 12 adoption orders) or the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see Section 46 adoption orders), or
- b) became subject to a child arrangements order (as defined in Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 and as amended by Section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014), or
- c) became subject to a special guardianship order (see Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 which defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

This includes 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. A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

5.3 Siblings

A sibling is defined as a child's brother or sister. A sibling must be living at the same permanent address and as part of the same family unit (one or two parents/carers plus children) to qualify under this criterion. For School Admissions purposes, the term sibling includes:

- half-brothers and half-sisters
- step-brothers and step-sisters

- adopted children
- children in foster care
- children living in the same family unit, even if they are not biological brothers and sisters – for example when the parents/carers are not married/in a civil relationship.

Cousins are not regarded as siblings.

5.4 Home Address (child's)

The child's home address is defined as the address at which the child normally resides with their parent/carer on the closing date for applications (15 January), or at the time of application for an in-year application.

When parents/carers live separately and the child spends time with each parent/carer, the home address will be treated as the place where the child sleeps for most of the school week (i.e. Sunday night – Thursday night inclusive).

If the child spends equal amounts of time at two addresses, the parents/carers must agree which address they wish to be the child's main address.

Places cannot be allocated on the basis of an intended future change of address unless house moves have been confirmed through the exchange of contracts or signing of a formal lease.

Documentary evidence of ownership or rental agreement may be required together with proof of actual permanent residence at the property concerned.

6. Multiple Birth Groups

In the case of twins or other siblings from a multiple birth, if the last child to be admitted is from a multiple birth group, the other children in the group will also be offered places, even if it means exceeding the Published Admission Number.

In the case of siblings in the same year group, where there is only one place remaining, places will be allocated over the published admission number to accommodate all siblings unless this would make the class too large and prejudice the education of the other children or when this would breach infant class size limits.

7. Distance Measurements

Distances are measured on a straight-line basis from the child's home address, as set out by Ordnance Survey, to the nearest open school gate available for pupils to use. A computerised system is used to measure straight line distance.

The point measured to at the child's address is determined by the Ordnance Survey AddressBase which is an Ordnance Survey data product that provides a National Grid coordinate and a unique reference for each postal address in Great Britain that is on the Royal Mail's Post Office Address File.

In the case where there are multiple applications from the same shared dwelling (e.g., flats) or where the distance between two or more children's homes to the school (using the system referred to above) is identical, random allocation will be used to decide which child gets priority. Random allocation will be carried out by someone independent of the school.

8. Fraudulent or Misleading Applications

The admissions authority (or the LA processing an application on behalf of the admission authority) has the right to investigate any concerns we may have about an application and to withdraw the offer

of a place if it is considered that there is evidence that an applicant has made a fraudulent claim or provided misleading information.

9. Conflicting Applications

The LA can only process one application. Where more than one adult shares parental responsibility and if the adults live at different addresses, it is important that an agreement be reached on which schools to apply for, prior to making the application.

If multiple applications are received for the same child with conflicting address and/or preferences, or the School Admissions Team is made aware of a dispute between two parents/carers, all applications will be placed on hold and will **not** be processed until:

- a new single application is made, signed by all parties; or
- written agreement is provided from both parents/carers indicating which application they have agreed on; or
- a court order is provided confirming which parent's/carer's application carries precedence.

If no agreement can be made, parents/carers are recommended to seek legal advice. If an agreement cannot be reached before the closing date, this may affect the chances of your child being allocated a place at your preferred school/s.

10. Late Applications

Late applications are any common application forms (for the normal point of entry) received by the local authority after its statutory closing date of 15 January. Late applicants will not receive an offer of a school place by the local authority on National Offer Day (16 April or the next working day).

Late applications will be processed in the subsequent rounds of allocations between May and July (for more details, refer to your local authority's timescales in their co-ordinated scheme on their website).

11. Children below Compulsory School Age

Where children below compulsory school age are offered a place at the school, they will be entitled to attend the school full-time in the September following their fourth birthday.

Parents/carers may defer their child's entry to the allocated school until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age, and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which the offer was made when the place will cease to be available for the child. Please discuss this with the school directly once a place has been offered.

Where parents/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. Please discuss this with the school directly once you have received an offer of a school place.

12. Admission outside the normal age group

Parents/carers may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. In addition, the parents/carers of a summer born child may choose not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to reception rather than year 1.

12.1 Requests for admission to Reception outside the normal age group (summer born children)

Parents/carers of summer born children (those born between 1 April and 31 August) who do not reach compulsory school age until a full year after they would normally start school, may wish to delay their child's start to school until the September following the child's 5th birthday.

If parents wish to delay their summer born child's start at school until the September after their 5th birthday, the expectation is that they will join their normal age group as they move from Reception to Year 1. Parents should make an in-year application in the summer term for a Year 1 place in September.

If parents do not want their child to miss their Reception year, they may instead request that their child be admitted out of their normal age group, i.e. into Reception instead of Year 1. Please note, this is a 'request' and parents do not have the right to insist that their child is admitted to a particular age group. The school's admission authority is responsible for making the decision about which year group a child should be admitted to.

Parents/carers are advised to still make their application for a Reception place for their child's normal year of entry. If it is agreed that an application for Reception out of the normal age group will be accepted, this application for their normal age group can be withdrawn.

In addition to the above, parents/carers wishing to seek a place for their child out of the normal age group for Reception at Bourton Meadow Academy should make a formal request in writing (email is sufficient) directly to the school giving some information about their child to explain why they believe it would be in their best interests to be educated out of their normal age group and not miss Reception. Parents can provide any additional evidence to support their request as this information will help the admission authority to make their decision.

The request will be passed to the admission authority who will then consider the request and decide on the best year group for the child to start school in on the basis of the circumstances of the case and in the best interests of the child concerned. The admission authority of the school will then respond to parents/carers in writing, letting them know the reasons for their decision about the year group the child should be admitted to.

If it has been decided that the child should start school in Reception out of the normal age group, the parent/carer will then need to make an application for a place in Reception in the normal admissions round in the following academic year.

12.2 General requests for admission outside the normal age group

Parents/carers wishing to seek a place for their child out of their normal age group for any year group other than Reception, or for Reception after the start of the school year in September, must make a formal request in writing (an email is sufficient) directly to the school in the first instance giving some information about their child and explaining why they are requesting a place out of the normal age group. Parents/carers should also indicate in their request whether the child has been educated out of their normal age group at the current/previous school.

The admission authority of the school will consider the request and make a decision on the appropriate year group for the child on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned.

The admission authority of the school will inform parents/carers in writing of their decision about the year group the child should be admitted then parents should contact the school to apply for a place for the year group which has been agreed.

13. Children moving to the UK from overseas

Documentary evidence to verify an address may be required if an application is made following a move to the UK or as a result of an impending move to the UK. A copy of the rental agreement or an exchange of contract letter is usually sufficient. The admission authority reserves the right to seek further documentary evidence as necessary.

14. Children of UK Service Personnel (UK Armed Forces) and Crown Servants

Special conditions apply to applications from UK Armed Service Personnel and Crown Servants.

For families of service personnel with a confirmed posting to their area, or crown servants returning from overseas to live in the area, Buckingham Council will endeavour to allocate a place in advance of the family arriving in the area, provided the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date. Buckingham Council will not refuse to process an application or refuse to offer a place solely because the family do not yet have an intended address, or do not yet live in the area.

Buckingham Council will use the address at which the child will live when applying the oversubscription criteria as long as evidence of an intended address is provided. Buckingham Council will use a Unit or quartering area address as the child's home address where a parent requests this.

15. In-year Admissions

An in-year admission refers to an application for a school place made during the school year or an application for admission to a school made at the start of the school year for any year group other than the normal year of entry.

Applications for in-year admissions should be made to the school directly. More information, including the in-year admission form, can be found on the school website admissions page.

16. Waiting Lists

Following an unsuccessful application, parents/carers can request that their child's name be placed on the waiting list.

Waiting lists are held for all year groups by the school (the local authority manage the list for the main allocation round, for its duration, which is then passed to the school to manage).

Each added child will require the list to be ranked again in line with the published oversubscription criteria (see section 4.2 of these arrangements) and when a place becomes available it will be allocated to the child at the top of the waiting list. Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest and children being allocated places under the Fair Access Protocol will be given priority.

Waiting lists will be held until 31 December. If you wish your child's name to remain on the waiting list for the remainder of the academic year, you will need to inform the School in writing via email, by 31 December and again by 31 March to renew your interest. A new application will be required for a new academic year.

17. Appeals

If a parent/carer's application for a place at the school is unsuccessful, they will be informed why admission was refused and have the right of appeal against the decision not to offer their child a place at the school.

For more information and to submit an appeal, parents/carers should visit the School Admissions Appeals pages of the [Bucks Council Website](#).