

Moving up to Secondary School

School Admissions and Transport Team
2026



How to apply

If you do not submit an application, you will not be offered a school place

- ✓ Application information will be sent to your child's current school in September
- ✓ You can apply online from 1 September 2026
- ✓ You must apply to the Local Authority where you live
- ✓ You can name a school in any Local Authority area on your application



Key points

- ✓ We strongly suggest you apply for four different schools
- ✓ Think about how your child will get to the schools you name (most children are not eligible for free home to school transport assistance)
- ✓ List the schools in the order you want them - your favourite should be listed first
- ✓ Answer all the questions asked on the form
- ✓ Make sure you name any relevant sibling(s) on the application, including those attending a linked school (check the school's policy for details)
- ✓ Provide any evidence of religious faith (if relevant)
- ✓ Check school policies and submit completed Supplementary Information Forms directly to schools by 31 October 2026

Key points

- ✓ You have a right to express a preference for the school you prefer
- ✓ Preference is not the same as choice
- ✓ Make sure you provide your child's main address
- ✓ If you move house, you must inform the school and your local authority
- ✓ Using a fraudulent address could result in any offered place being withdrawn

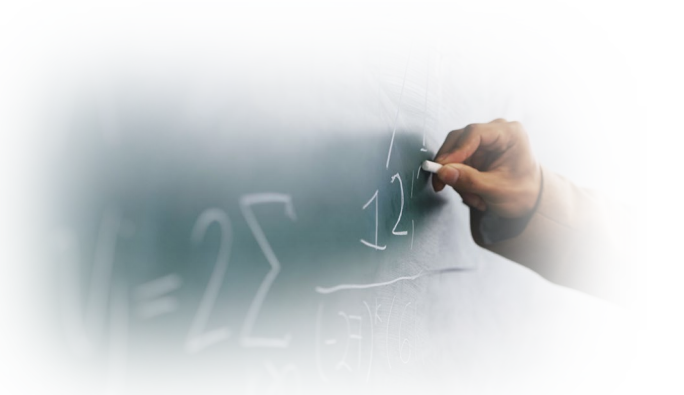


You must apply on time, by the deadline of 31 October 2026

Useful Information

We strongly recommend that you:

- ✓ Read the admission policies for schools you want to apply to
- ✓ Look at Ofsted Reports and School Prospectuses
- ✓ Look at statistics from previous years' allocations
- ✓ Read our Parent's guide at bcpcouncil.gov.uk from 1 September 2026
- ✓ Read our Home to School Transport Policy to find out if your child is likely to be eligible for assistance to the school(s) you name



Academic testing – Grammar schools



Bournemouth School

Bournemouth School for Girls

Parkstone Grammar School

Poole Grammar School

- ✓ You can register your child for testing now
- ✓ Registration closes on Friday 4 September 2026 at midday
- ✓ Download registration form from the schools' websites, or
- ✓ Request a form from the schools' directly or register online
- ✓ Grammar school tests take place on Saturday 26 September 2026
- ✓ Tests in Maths, English and Verbal Reasoning
- ✓ Test results posted by the schools in mid-October 2026
- ✓ Sitting a school's test is not the same as making an application
- ✓ **You must also include the grammar school(s) on your local authority application by 31 October 2026 if you wish your child to be considered for a place**

Academic testing – Poole High School



Expressly Academic Class
Poole High School

- ✓ You must register your child for testing
- ✓ Registration closes on Friday 18 September 2026 at 23:55
- ✓ Download registration form from the school's website, or
- ✓ Request a form from the school directly or register online
- ✓ The test is on Saturday 3 October 2026
- ✓ The test will include English, Maths and a Reasoning test
- ✓ Test results published on 16 October 2026
- ✓ Sitting a school's test is not the same as making an application
- ✓ **You must also include the school on your local authority application by 31 October 2026 if you wish your child to be considered for a place**

Faith schools – religious evidence



St Edward's RC/CE VA School

St Peter's Catholic School

The Bishop of Winchester
Academy

- ✓ If you are applying on faith grounds, check the school's admissions policy about how to provide any required evidence of faith
- ✓ You must submit this evidence directly to the school by 31 October 2026
- ✓ **You must also include the school(s) on your local authority application by 31 October 2026 if you wish your child to be considered for a place**

Children with an EHCP

- ✓ If your child has an EHCP, the process for changing school is different
- ✓ You will need to speak to your child's Education Health and Care Co-ordinator (EHCCO) to discuss your options
- ✓ You should visit schools you are interested in for your child
- ✓ An offer of a school place will be coordinated by your EHCCO
- ✓ Your EHCCO will update you on consultations for a school place
- ✓ You will be advised when a school has been named on your child's EHCP
- ✓ You will not receive notification of a school place from the School Admissions Team on National Offer Day



Before submitting the application

- ✓ Take your time – places are not offered on a first come first served basis
- ✓ Think carefully about the order you list your preferred schools
- ✓ Consider how your child will get to the schools you name (and the potential costs involved)
- ✓ Always list your most preferred school first
- ✓ If we can offer your first preference, we will do so and discard lower preferences
- ✓ If more than one of the schools you listed can offer you a place, we will give you the one you ranked highest on your application.
- ✓ Consider any test results – you will receive these before the closing date
- ✓ Contact us before submitting your application if you have any questions (before 31 October 2026)

The importance of preference order

List up to four schools to improve your chances of getting a preferred place.

Include:

- ✓ Your favourite school first
- ✓ Other schools you would be happy with
- ✓ At least one school where your child is more likely to be offered a place

Be realistic

- ✓ Popular schools may not be able to offer everyone a place
- ✓ If you list only one or highly oversubscribed schools, you may not receive any of your preferences

What happens if you don't?

- ✓ If none of your preferences can be offered, we will allocate a place at a school with spaces remaining
- ✓ This school may be further from home and not one you would have chosen

Consider transport implications

- ✓ Choosing a school further away can affect home to school transport eligibility
- ✓ If your child does not attend the nearest suitable school, you will usually need to cover travel costs yourself

Example

What happened

Emma lives in Poole and wanted her son, Jack, to attend a very popular school about three miles away. She listed only that one school on her application.

Unfortunately, the school received far more applications than places available, and Jack did not meet the higher priority criteria. Because no other schools were listed, the Local Authority had to offer Jack a place at a different school that still had spaces remaining.

This school was much further away from home and not one Emma had considered.

As this was not the nearest suitable school, Jack was not eligible for free home to school transport, meaning Emma had to make her own travel arrangements and cover the costs.

What Emma could have done differently

If Emma had listed four schools, including:

- ✓ Her preferred school
- ✓ Other schools she would have been happy with
- ✓ A nearer school where Jack was more likely to be offered a place

Jack may have been offered a place at one of those schools instead.

This could have meant:

- ✓ A school closer to home
- ✓ A more suitable option for the family
- ✓ A better chance of qualifying for free transport assistance

Submit the application



Apply online



Paper application

- ✓ The online system will allow applications to be submitted until 23:59 on 31 October 2026
- ✓ Paper forms are available on request and can be posted or emailed to BCP Council
- ✓ Completed paper forms must be received by BCP Council by 23:59 on 31 October 2026
- ✓ The address and email address are listed on the application form

Changes to your information

If something changes, let us know

- ✓ Tell us in writing (including email) if your information changes after submitting your application
- ✓ These changes must be submitted by 31 October 2026 to update your on-time application
- ✓ Any changes received after this date will be considered late
- ✓ Check the school's policy for a cut-off date for considering a change of address
 - ✓ Most (but not all) schools use 31 October 2026
- ✓ If you move home, you must inform the school and BCP Council

How decisions are made

- ✓ Your application is sent to each school you have requested but they are not told which preference number you put them on your form
- ✓ The school's job is to order the applications in line with their admissions policy and send back a list ranked in order of their oversubscription criteria
- ✓ Your preference order becomes important where more than one school could offer your child a place. If more than one school can offer, we will allocate a place at the one you listed highest on your form
- ✓ If you cannot be offered any of your preferences, we will offer an alternative school place – this will be the closest school with places, but may not be very near your home

When you will hear

- ✓ The national notification date is 1 March 2027
- ✓ Parents who applied online can login and view their offered school on this date
- ✓ Parents who supplied an email address will be sent a link to their offer letter on 1 March 2027
- ✓ For parents who did not supply an email address, an offer letter will be posted on 1 March 2027
- ✓ Late applicants who apply between 1 November 2026 and 22 January 2027 will hear on 25 March 2027
- ✓ If you apply from 23 January 2027 onwards, you will hear from April 2027 onwards, depending on the date the application was submitted



If you are unhappy with the offered school

- ✓ Accept the place offered
- ✓ Visit the school you have been offered if you haven't already
- ✓ Check your outcome letter to find out how to:
 - Be placed on your preferred school's waiting list
 - Appeal against the decision not to offer a place at your preferred school
- ✓ Accept the offered place even if you plan to appeal. Doing so:
 - does not impact upon an appeal panel's decision
 - does not affect your position on another waiting list
 - ensures you have a school place if the outcome of the appeal is not what you want

Late applications

- ✓ Applications received after the closing date of 31 October 2026 are classed as late
- ✓ Late applications are considered after all on-time applicants have been offered a place
- ✓ It is very likely that parents may not be offered a place at the school they want if they apply late
- ✓ Regularly oversubscribed schools may be full before late applications are considered
- ✓ If you apply late, it is very likely that most schools will be full and not able to offer you a place

Home to 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
- ✓ If you apply for and are offered a place at a school which is not your local school, you will not normally qualify for free transport and will have to take on the costs yourself
- ✓ Transport assistance is not usually provided to attend a grammar school, because there is normally a suitable school nearer home

Contact details

For information about schools in the BCP Council area you can contact our teams:

The Children's Information Service (CIS)
01202 123222 or cis@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

The School Admissions and Transport Team
01202 127963 or school.admissions@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

It is important you ask any questions in time to make an on-time application

The deadline for on-time applications is 31 October 2026

