

# CABINET



Report subject	<b>School Admissions Arrangements – Co-ordinated Scheme and Relevant Area(s)</b>
Meeting date	12 July 2019
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>To advise Cabinet of the Department for Education advice that the Council is required to determine a single Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for the 2020-21 academic year and a Relevant Area for consultation on admission arrangements.</p> <p>To recommend the arrangements to be adopted.</p> <p>To seek permission to consult on a single Relevant Area for consultation on school admission arrangements for the 2021-22 academic year.</p>
Recommendations	<p><b>It is RECOMMENDED that:</b></p> <p><b>(a) Cabinet adopt:</b></p> <p><b>(i) the Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for the administration of the 2020-21 school admissions application process as set out in para. 10 Appendix 1 as required by Para 3.2 of The School Admissions Code 2014</b></p> <p><b>(ii) the continuation of the Relevant Areas for consultation for admission arrangements for the 2020-21 year as determined by the previous authorities as set out in para 7</b></p> <p><b>(b) Cabinet approve the commencement of statutory consultation on a single Relevant Area for consultation on school admission arrangements for 2021-22 onwards as set out in para 9 in accordance with 1998 School Standards and Framework Act</b></p>
Reason for recommendations	<p>To ensure that Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Council is able to meet its statutory duties in relation to school admissions and to support consistency and transparency for schools and BCP residents who apply for a school place.</p>

Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Sandra Moore, Portfolio Holder for Children and Families
Corporate Director	Judith Ramsden, Corporate Director of Children's Services
Contributors	Neil Goddard, Director Quality and Commissioning; Felicity Draper, Service Manager Access and School Commissioning; Julie Gale, Senior Manager Access
Wards	All
Classification	For Decision

## Background

1. The Council and schools which are deemed to be an 'admission authority' are required each year to set arrangements explaining how and when they will decide to whom they will offer a school place. To ensure that these arrangements meet all legal requirements and are transparent the Council must put in place a Relevant Area(s) for consultation and a co-ordinated scheme which explains the administrative process by which applications for school places will be processed and places offered.
2. The predecessor authorities of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole had set arrangements in accordance with the Department for Education's School Admissions Code 2014 relating to the 2020-21 academic year as they were required to be in place no later than 28 February 2019. However, the Department for Education has advised that the new Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Council needs to formally set a Relevant Area(s) and a Co-ordinated Scheme for admissions relating to the 2020-21 year.
3. For the 2020-21 year this will reflect the arrangements set previously by the preceding authorities. An extended full consultation on all school admission arrangements across the local authority area for the 2021-22 academic year will take place in the Autumn of 2019.
4. Those admission arrangements relating to individual maintained schools for which the local authority is the admission authority (oversubscription criteria and numbers of places) are legally permitted to be automatically carried forward for the 2020-21 year.

## Relevant Area(s)

5. The 1998 School Standards and Framework Act requires a local authority to set a relevant area(s) for consultation by admission authorities on proposed school admission arrangements.
6. The predecessor authorities of Bournemouth Borough Council, Dorset County Council (for Christchurch) and Borough of Poole set Relevant Areas co-terminus with their local authority boundaries plus an area including as a minimum, primary schools within 1 mile and secondary schools within 3 miles of the outside of the local authority boundary.
7. As an interim measure it is proposed to continue with these local arrangements until a full consultation on arrangements for the 2021-22 year onwards can be undertaken and determined by BCP Council.

8. All schools, the four local Diocese and neighbouring local authorities of Dorset and Hampshire have been consulted on this proposal and there have been no objections.
9. With, regard to a Relevant Area for consultation on admission arrangements for the 2021-22 academic year permission is sought to consult on a single Relevant Area for the whole of BCP. The outcome of the consultation will be brought back to Cabinet in the Autumn as part of a wider report on the overall admission arrangements of schools in the Council's area.

### **Co-ordinated Scheme**

10. The Council is required under Paragraph 3.2 of the Department for Education's School Admissions Code to set a Co-ordinated Scheme for the processing of school applications for entry to school in September 2020.
11. The scheme attached in Appendix 1 is a single scheme for the whole of the Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole area. Consultation was first carried out by the predecessor authorities. A single set of dates was agreed across the three areas in preparation for LGR. Appendix 1 is an amalgamation of the 3 scheme and there are no changes to the dates previously agreed. A further consultation has been undertaken by the Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Council with all schools, neighbouring local authorities and the four local Diocese. No objections were received.

### **Summary of financial implications**

12. The admissions function is entirely funded from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). Therefore, there are no wider revenue budget implications to the Council. The recommendations set out above are intended to be accommodated within the existing budget allocated from within the DSG for this purpose for the 2019-2020 year.

### **Summary of legal implications**

13. The Council must have in place a Relevant Area(s) within which admission authorities located within the local authority area must consult on proposed school admission arrangements. The Council is also required to have in place a scheme for co-ordinating all the school applications within its area.
14. If no action is taken, the Council will not meet its statutory duty to have in place a Relevant Area(s) for consultation as required by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and a Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme as required in Para 3.2 of the School Admissions Code 2014.

### **Summary of human resources implications**

15. None

### **Summary of environmental impact**

16. None

### **Summary of public health implications**

17. None

### **Summary of equality implications**

18. The Co-ordinated Scheme and Relevant Area are governed by statute, statutory regulation and a Code of Practice and are required to meet all legislative requirements of equality legislation.

### **Summary of risk assessment**

19. The main strategic risk is a breach of a statutory requirement to have in place a Relevant Area for consultation and a Co-ordinated Scheme to enable school places to be allocated in accordance with the School Admissions Code 2014.

### **Background papers**

Department for Education School Admissions Code 2014 – Published works

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1 Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme

Appendix 2 School Admissions Protocol for Looked After Children

**BOURNEMOUTH CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL****COORDINATED ADMISSION SCHEME FOR 2020/21**

All schools in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole together with the Local Authority have, in accordance with statutory requirements, agreed to coordinate the main entry admission and transfer process for 2020-21. The agreed scheme enables an application to be made on a single application form.

The coordinated scheme applies to the following admission points of entry:

Point of Entry	National Closing Date (Applying on Time)
Entry in Reception at all First, Infant Primary and All-Through schools	15 January 2020
Entry into Year 3 at Junior schools	15 January 2020
Entry into Year 5 at Broadstone Middle School	15 January 2020
Entry into Year 7 at all secondary schools with, the exception of Corfe Hills School and LeAF Studio School	31 October 2019
Entry into Year 9 at Corfe Hills School and LeAF Studio School	31 October 2019

Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole (BCP) Council will coordinate with other local authorities to ensure that a child receives only a single offer of a school place. It will seek to offer the highest preference able to be agreed subject to the receipt of information in sufficient time and the other local authorities' schemes providing for this.

Parents/carers should complete an application and name three different schools in the order they would like their child to attend. Parents/carers must submit their application to their home local authority by the published closing date specified in the table above.

**Preferences on faith grounds**

Parents/carers expressing a preference on faith grounds must provide a completed Supplementary Information Form to the Local Authority by the published closing date. The Supplementary Information Forms can be downloaded from the BCP website or from the relevant school website.

**Changes or applications received after the closing date**

Applications or any change of preference received after the national closing date for applications will be considered as a late application unless otherwise specified within the school's admissions policy.

Applications that are considered late will be processed after all on-time applicants have been notified of their result. Late applications received before the published late closing date will be processed in accordance with the timetable (see below).

Any applications received after the published closing date for late applications will be processed as quickly as possible after the timetable (see below) has been completed. Once processed, they will be immediately added to the waiting list(s) if a place is not available.

### **Living or applying for schools outside BCP Council**

Parents/carers who live outside the BCP Council who wish to apply for a school will need to complete their home local authority's application form in accordance with timescales published in that Local Authority's scheme.

BCP Council will send a list of all applicants to all school Admission Authorities within the council's area. It will send applications for schools in other local authorities to the relevant local authority to administer.

### **Information from other admission authorities**

Where a parent/carer lists a school, which is its own admission authority, or a school in another local authority as one of their preferences, information is electronically transferred to the relevant school or local authority. The admission authority will then be required to rank in order the applications they received in accordance with their admission arrangements and decide whether, or not they can offer the child a place.

Once the decisions have been made by the relevant admission authority, they are returned to the Local Authority by the deadline specified (see timetable below). The LA then compares the provisional offer lists; if a child's name appears on more than one offer list, the LA will then refer to the preference order on the parent/carer application to see which school the family wants the most. Then, in accordance with the order of preference on the application form, the child's name will be retained on the list of the highest preference school able to offer a place and removed from the lower preference school(s) offer list(s).

Places freed up by this process will then be offered to applicants who are next on a school's ranked order of priority.

### **When preferences cannot be met**

For those applicants who are not able to be offered any of their preferred schools:

- if they are resident in BCP Council, they will be offered a place at the nearest school to their home address which still has places available with agreement from the relevant admissions authority; or
- if they are resident outside of BCP Council, they will be referred to their own local authority to discuss schooling.

Those applicants who apply after the national closing date go through a similar process again, resulting in further offers being made in accordance with the agreed late application timetable.

## **Outcome of application**

BCP Council will advise parents/carers who applied online by uploading the outcome to the online system. Parents/carers will be able to view the outcome of their application online on the relevant national offer date. BCP Council will issue letters to all parents on the national offer dates.

## **Waiting list**

The length of time a child's name is on the waiting list cannot be taken into account when places become available. Places are offered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria in the school's published admissions policy.

Waiting lists for the point of entry must be held until 31 December 2020. Not all schools hold waiting lists after this time. Parents will receive information in their notification letter about how the waiting lists are managed.

All waiting lists held for the academic year 2020/21 will expire on 31 August 2021. Parents/carers must submit a new school application form for 2021/2022 and any subsequent years. Applications can be submitted from 1 June 2021.

## **Appeals**

School Admission Authorities will inform the BCP Council of the outcome of any appeals within 2 working days.

## Coordinated Admission Scheme for 2020-2021

	Secondary	Junior/Middle	Reception
Closing date for applications	31/10/19	15/01/20	15/01/20
BCP Council (BCP) to exchange applicant information with other local authorities (LAs) by  BCP to exchange applicant information with other school Admission Authorities (AAs) in Council's area, with the exception of any applications received from outside the area, by	20/11/19	04/02/20	04/02/20
BCP sends a list of all applicants from outside the area to other AAs in BCP	25/11/19	18/02/20	18/02/20
AAs to send electronically a list of pupils to BCP in the order to be considered, together with the relevant criteria for each applicant	08/01/20	02/03/20	02/03/20
First exchange of offers between BCP and other LAs for applicants resident in their respective areas by	20/01/20	16/03/20	16/03/20
Deadline for final exchange of offers between LAs for applicants resident in their respective areas	03/02/20	31/03/20	31/03/20
BCP to inform other AAs of final allocation of places by	25/02/20	14/04/20	14/04/20
BCP issues notification letters to all applicants and on-time notifications to be uploaded on	02/03/20	16/04/20	16/04/20
Parents accept/refuse offer by	16/03/20	30/04/19	30/04/19



## Late Applications

	Secondary	Junior	Reception
Closing date for late applications	28/01/20	14/02/20	14/02/20
BCP Council (BCP) to exchange applicant information with other school Admission Authorities (AAs) in BCP	04/02/20	09/03/20	09/03/20
AAs to send electronically a list of pupils in the order to be considered, together with the relevant criteria for each applicant	25/02/20	23/03/20	23/03/20
BCP to inform other AAs of final allocation of places	04/03/20	08/05/20	08/05/20
BCP issues notification letters to all applicants on	10/03/20	11/05/20	11/05/20
Parents accept/refuse offer by	24/03/20	26/05/20	26/05/20

### Please note

At the end of the above timetable, the BCP Council will continue to coordinate the allocation on a regular basis until the end of the school year.

## IN YEAR ADMISSIONS

With the agreement of the school admission authorities, BCP Council coordinates all applications for school places in the council's area except Highcliffe School. Parents are advised to contact Highcliffe School directly for an application form.

One application form will be available for parents/carers wishing to apply for any school located in BCP Council. The application will invite parents to list up to three schools ranked in the order they would like their child to attend. The parents/carers should then submit the application to the BCP Council.

Parents/carers applying for a church school who request a place on faith grounds must provide a completed Supplementary Information Form. The Supplementary Information Form (SIF) is available from the school or a copy can be downloaded from the BCP website. The SIF must be sent directly to the school when completed.

For applications for schools in the council's area, BCP Council will send the application details to the relevant school Admission Authority, normally within 3 working days of receipt.

Admission Authorities will inform BCP Council within 7 school days of the outcome of the application. BCP Council will send out an offer or refusal letter (except for

Highcliffe School which will send the letter to the parent, copied to the Local Authority). Only in exceptional circumstances will BCP Council agree an extension to the time taken for an application outcome. It will be expected from the relevant admission authority that they will be able to give a clear explanation to the parents/carers as well as the Local Authority why there are further delays. Information regarding schools that do not process applications in a timely manner may be passed on to the Schools Adjudicator and/or relevant Department for Education agencies (e.g. RSC, EFSA). The need to request direction may also be considered.

All Admission Authorities will inform BCP Council of the results of any appeal hearings within 2 working days of the appeal outcome.

### **Applications to start in September 2020 for places in a year group different to the point of entry**

With, the exception of applications for Grammar Schools, these applications will not be processed until after 1 June 2020.

Any applications received prior to 1 May 2020 will be too early to be processed and the parent will be asked to submit a new application after 1 June 2020. Applications received between 1 May and 1 June 2020 will be retained by the School Admissions Team and processed after 1 June 2020.

Applicants applying before 1 June 2020 will be informed that their application will not be processed until after this date. This does not constitute a refusal to offer a school place at any of the preferred schools and therefore there will be no right of appeal until, such time as the application has been processed.

Grammar School applications will need to be processed early to allow sufficient time for testing and, if appropriate, to allow appeals to be heard before the end of the Summer Term. Therefore, applications for grammar school will be processed as and when received.

### **Looked After Children**

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. BCP Council has adopted a Protocol for dealing with In Year applications for Looked After Children. All applications will be processed in accordance with the Protocol.

### **Waiting lists**

New waiting lists are normally created from September each year.

Where waiting lists are held, BCP Council will ensure any places that become available are offered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria within the published admissions policy of the school.

The waiting list for 2020/21 will expire on 31 August 2021. Parents/carers must submit a new application for 2021/2022 and any subsequent years. Applications for the new waiting list can be submitted from 1 June 2021.

# BOURNEMOUTH CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL

## SCHOOL ADMISSIONS PROTOCOL FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

### Introduction

- 1.1 In accordance with the Education ((Admission of Looked After England) Regulations 2006 all admission authorities must give highest priority in their oversubscription criteria to Looked After Children (LAC). Although there is some flexibility with faith-based schools, all admission authorities within BCP Council conform to these Regulations.
- 1.2 The Local Authority receives a number of in-year applications and there is an expectation that the authority which looks after the child in partnership with carers (and the maintaining authority in appropriate cases) decides which school **best meets the child's needs**, even if the school is in another authority and that they should be admitted without delay. Local authorities may direct other admission authorities including other local authorities (or request the Secretary of State to direct academies), and that such action must be taken **in the best interests of the child**.
- 1.3 There is a need to try and ensure that LAC are placed in a school as quickly as is reasonably possible. However, the speed of allocation will depend upon the nature and complexity of the individual case. The following protocol is not designed to prevent LAC from getting a preferred school place; it is about establishing the basis of that preference, whether it is the appropriate school or whether an alternative school would best meet the child's individual needs.
- 1.4 In view of the need to involve both foster parents and Social Workers in the school admissions process it is required that an application form be completed for all LAC applications. The in-year admissions form is available from the BCP Council website.
- 1.5 The in-year application form should be accompanied by a "LAC in-year admissions supplementary information form" which must be completed and signed by the child's social worker. This form must explain why the preferred schools are the only schools which can meet the child's needs.

### Protocol for Looked After Children

- 2.1 All applications/or other notifications of admission request for a LAC (including other local authorities acting as the "corporate parent") must be made directly to BCP Council School Admissions Team using the "in year" admissions form accompanied by a supplementary information form completed and signed by the child's social worker. If an in-year application form is received for a LAC without the completed and signed supplementary information form it will be returned to the applicant.

- 2.2 Upon receipt of an application and supplementary information form the School Admissions Team, may approach the relevant Virtual School for Looked After Children for background information.
- 2.3 Upon receipt of the information, the School Admissions Team will check the space availability at the preferred schools. The relevant Virtual School may contact the school(s) to discuss whether they can best meet the child's needs. Where these are Academies, Foundation or Voluntary Aided schools this may also involve contact with the Governing Body of the school(s). It is expected that the Virtual School will advise all relevant parties which of the preferred schools are appropriate (i.e. can best meet the child's needs) or whether an alternative school should be considered.
- 2.4 In the case of Key Stage 1 where Infant Class Size legislation must be taken into consideration, LAC will only be exceptionally admitted over PAN if it is considered that the school is the only one which can meet the child's needs.
- 2.5 If BCP Virtual School consider that an alternative school to those preferred can best meet the needs of the pupil, the school(s) will be identified with reasons given and the matter will be referred back to the applicant and/or social worker for further consideration.
- 2.6 If the agreed appropriate school is a Community or Voluntary Controlled school then BCP Council, as the admission authority for the school, will inform the school that the local authority has allocated a place.
- 2.7 If the appropriate school is an Academy, Foundation or Voluntary Aided school, the School Admissions Team will request that the child be admitted over PAN. If the Academy, Foundation or Voluntary Aided school refuses to admit the pupil, the School Admissions Team will liaise with the relevant Virtual School to consider direction under Section 97A to 97C of the Schools Standards & Framework Act 1998 as inserted by Section 50 of the Education & Inspections Act 2006 for Foundation and Voluntary Aided Schools or request direction from the Secretary of State for Academies. A Foundation or Voluntary Aided school may refer the direction to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator.
- 2.10 If the applicant or social worker does not agree with the allocation of the school for the LAC, further discussions must take place between the relevant Virtual School(s), School Admissions Team and the local authority which is acting as the corporate parent of the child to resolve the matter.
- 2.11 Where a LAC has an Education, Health and Care Plan or is undergoing a Statutory Assessment the SEN Statutory Services Team, not the Schools Admissions Team, must be contacted by the applicant to arrange a school placement. If an in-year application form and supplementary information form is received by the School Admissions Team for a LAC who has an Education, Health and Care Plan, the form will be referred to the SEN Statutory Services Team for processing.