BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

Coordinated scheme for primary school reception year admissions 2027/28

1. Coordinated scheme

1.1 Bristol City Council has the responsibility to coordinate the admissions process for all maintained primary schools in Bristol. This document outlines the procedures for applying and the allocation of places for children starting reception year in September 2027.

2. Participants in scheme

2.1 Bristol City Council, as the Admission Authority for community and voluntary controlled (VA) infant and primary schools in Bristol.

2.2 Own Admission Authority Schools including; academies, foundation schools and voluntary aided (VA) schools.

2.3 Admission Authorities for other maintained infant and primary schools and Academies in England.

3. Applications

3.1 All parents and carers must complete the common application form for the Local Authority in which the child is resident, known as the 'home' Local Authority.

3.2 Applications for reception places for all schools within Bristol, including community and voluntary controlled schools, academies, foundation and voluntary aided schools, will be made on the Bristol common application form. The Local Authority will take all reasonable steps to ensure that every parent and carer of a child of reception year age and a resident of Bristol will receive information about the coordinated admissions scheme. The application form may be used to express a preference for any school in Bristol or another Local Authority. The common application form cannot be used to express a preference for an independent school.

3.3 Applications for places at schools in Bristol made by parents and carers of children residing outside the Bristol Local Authority area will be made on a common application form issued to them by the Local Authority in which they are a resident. The home Local Authority will notify the relevant Local Authority of applications received for schools in their area. Bristol will inform the relevant Local Authority of any applications received for Bristol resident children for schools outside of Bristol.

3.4 All applications for reception places made on the Bristol common application form

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must be submitted to the Bristol School Admissions Team by midnight on the closing date of 15 January 2027. This is the date set by Government for all Local authorities in England.

3.5 After the closing date of 15 January 2027 and up to 19 January 2027, applicants can make limited changes to their applications. Applicants can only make the following changes:

- Changing the order of school preferences
- Confirming a change of address. The Local Authority will need documentary evidence to confirm your new address
- Confirming a sibling link at your preferred school(s). The Local Authority will need documentary evidence to confirm a sibling link.

3.6 For families of service personnel with a confirmed posting, or crown servants returning from overseas the Local Authority will accept applications after the closing date of 15 January 2027, up to 19 January 2027.

3.7 Applications submitted after the closing date will be considered as 'late' applications and will be dealt with at a later stage when all 'on time' applications have been processed. In very exceptional circumstances e.g. illness of a lone parent, a late application may be considered as on-time if the application is made before 19 January 2027, the date the authority exchanges application details with other admission authorities.

3.8 All parents and carers will be invited to express up to 3 preferences in ranked order, together with the option to give reasons for each stated preference. The preferences can be any school in any Local Authority. Applications for Independent Schools cannot be made on the common application form.

3.9 If an application for a school within Bristol is received from a resident living in another Local Authority on a Bristol common application form then the applicant will be advised of the need to make application through their home Local Authority and of the need to meet the closing date of the home Local Authority if they are to be considered as an on-time applicant.

3.10 Some schools may require applicants to complete a supplementary form in order to apply their oversubscription criteria. The requirement will be stated in the relevant school's admissions arrangements. The supplementary form should be completed online, on the school's website or returned directly to the school as the relevant admissions authority. For further information about supplementary information forms please see your preferred school's website and the Bristol school admissions website.

3.11 Applications submitted using the common application form but without completion of a supplementary form will still be considered but the school will be unable to assess the application against the relevant criteria. Parents and carers should be made aware that they must also complete a common application form; the supplementary

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form is not regarded as an application in itself. Applications will only be considered if a common application form has been completed and sent to the home Local Authority. For an application to be considered as on time, the common application form must be submitted to the home Local Authority before midnight on 15 January 2027.

3.12 Where applicants state a child is in care or previously in care, documentary evidence will be required for the home Local Authority to confirm this status. If documents are not submitted the admission authority will be unable to assess the application against the criterion of the child on care/previously in care.

3.13 Any school which operates criteria for selection by ability or aptitude must ensure that its arrangements for assessing ability or aptitude, to enable decisions to be made on preferences received, conform to the timing requirements of the coordinated admissions scheme.

3.14 Only in very exceptional circumstances will an application submitted after the submission date be treated as on time. Examples include:

- The child is from the family of a Crown Servant or UK Service Personnel
- The application was late due to a significant health/medical reason and this is confirmed independently
- The child becomes a 'Child in Care'

3.15 Applications received once admissions files have been shared with other Local Authorities will be regarded as late, whatever the circumstances. All requests for applications received after 15 January 2027 to be regarded as on time must be made by 19 January 2027

3.16 The home address is the permanent address where the child spends the majority of their time and is living with the person who has parental responsibility as the main 'carer', as defined in section 576 of the Education Act 1996. A permanent home address is the place where applicants with parental responsibility resides or have legal residence. It is the address used for official identification. For example; voter registration, driving licence and council tax. It is also where you call home and can be verified through various means, such as; utility bills, rental agreements or mortgage documents.

3.17 Bristol will not accept more than one address as the child's home address. Where a child regularly lives at more than one address the Local Authority will have to reach a conclusion about which should be counted as the main address when allocating places, taking relevant evidence into account. Normally this will be the address where the child is registered with a medical GP. Where parents or carers are living separately and do not agree on the child's home address, they are urged to reach an agreement. If this does not happen evidence may be required by providing court documents or other legally binding documentation such a sworn affidavit confirming where the child resides for the majority of the school week. Where satisfactory

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evidence cannot be provided Bristol Local Authority will determine the address be used for allocating a school place.

3.18 If the family have a permanent address in the UK, this address will be used for school admission purposes. If the family do not have a permanent address and reside in atypical accommodation such as a van on the public highway or boat without permanent mooring, the home to school distance will be calculated from City Hall, College Green, Bristol to the preferred schools.

3.19 Parents and carers must inform Bristol of any change of address as soon as possible. Failure to do so may result in any offer of a place being withdrawn. Documentary evidence will be required before any change is accepted. Examples of independent confirmation of a change of address are a solicitor's letter confirming the exchange of contracts with a completion date, or a tenancy agreement signed by both parties. Confirmation may also be required that family have left the previous address. An example is a final account utility bill. If the child is from a family of a Crown Servant or of UK Service Personnel, parents and carers should provide a letter from the MOD, FCO or GCHQ declaring a return date and residency area.

3.20 If the family live outside the UK at the point of submitting the application, the address where the family currently resides will be used for school admissions purposes.

3.21 The final date for changes of address to be accepted, for the initial round of allocations will be 19 January 2027. Changes received after this date will be taken into account for any subsequent allocations.

3.22 Bristol may undertake checks to ensure that information provided in the application is true and accurate. Documentary evidence may be requested. If evidence requested is not provided within the timescale stated Bristol will determine the status of information before the application will be considered.

3.23 Where a child moves from one Local Authority area to another, the Local Authority for the address where the child has moved to will usually be considered as the home Local Authority and will process the application. Parents or carers should consult the Local Authority to which they are moving for guidance.

3.24 Where parents or carers share parental responsibility for a child and two applications are received for the one child, Bristol will ask the parents to determine which application should be considered. The other application will be withdrawn. This is because Bristol will offer only one school place to a child at any one time. If parents cannot agree, they should resolve the issue through the court system, for example to obtain a 'Specific Issues Order' which specifies which parent or carer has responsibility to make decisions on school preferences. If no agreement is reached and no Order is made the decision as to which application is accepted will be determined by drawing lots, overseen by a member of staff from Bristol City

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Council Legal Services. The home address will still be the address the child spends the majority of their time.

3.25 Submitted preferences may be changed up to midnight on 15 January 2027 and the most recent application submitted will be considered. The application will be considered as late if changes are made after midnight on 15 January 2027.

4. The process of allocation

4.1 Bristol Local Authority will send details of applications for schools outside Bristol to the relevant Local Authorities by 29 January 2027. Details of applications for own admission authority schools in Bristol will be sent to the relevant schools by 3 February 2027.

4.2 All 1st, 2nd or 3rd preferences will initially be considered equally regardless of ranking. The ranking will subsequently be used to ensure each child receives a single offer that is for the highest ranked preference school for which they qualify for a place.

4.3 The school's admission authority will then apply their published admission arrangements and inform the Bristol Local Authority by 24 February 2027. The list provided to Bristol will be in ranked order according to the school's oversubscription criteria. If the school is oversubscribed it will inform the Local Authority of the reasons for refusing school places so that the information may be included in correspondence sent to parents and carers on the National Offer Day of 16 April 2027. Bristol Local Authority will apply the published admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools for which it is the admissions authority.

4.4 By 18 March 2027 Bristol Local Authority will inform other Local Authorities of the initial outcome of applications by their residents for schools in Bristol. Other Local Authorities will inform Bristol of the initial outcome of applications for schools in their area by Bristol residents by the same date.

4.5 Using the ranked lists received from schools in Bristol and the information received from other Local Authorities, Bristol Local Authority will:

- Where the child is eligible for a place at only one of the nominated schools, allocate a place at that school to the child
- Where the child is eligible for a place at two or more of the nominated schools, allocate a place at whichever school is the highest ranked preference

4.6 Where the child is not eligible for a place at any of the nominated schools, Bristol Local Authority will consider how to place them in a school within its area, giving regard to any reasons expressed by the parent or carer for their (unsuccessful) preferences. This may include approaching other admission authorities in Bristol with vacancies, should this be appropriate.

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4.7 By 18 March 2027, Bristol Local Authority will electronically send the final list of pupils to be allocated places to its neighbouring Local Authorities.

4.8 By 16 April 2027, all schools in Bristol will be informed of all final offers which will be made up to the admission number for each school. Schools will not notify parents and carers of the results of the application process.

5. Offers of a school place

5.1 On 16 April 2027, the Local Authority will make the offer of one place at a primary or infant school to the parents and carers of children due to start school in September 2027. Parents and carers will be notified of the outcome of their application by first class post or email.

5.2 Parents and carers not offered a place for their child at their preferred school(s) will be offered a place at a school with a place available.

5.3 All parents and carers refused a place for their child at any preferred school will be informed of their other options at that stage, including their right of appeal.

5.4 Where necessary a place may be reserved rather than offered where further clarity of the child's circumstances is required.

5.5 Where parents or carers indicate their wish to remain on a waiting list for a school, the waiting list will remain until at least 31 December 2027 Some school and Local Authorities may decide to operate a list for longer than this.

5.6 Parents and carers will be requested to respond to the offer of a place directly to the Local Authority by 30 April 2027.

5.7 Bristol reserves the right to withdraw an offer of a place in certain limited circumstances. Examples include:

- Where a parent or carer has given fraudulent or intentionally misleading Information such as a false address
- Where a parent or carer has not responded to an offer within a reasonable time
- Where the offer was made as a result of an administrative error
- Where following the original offer, an offer can be made at a higher preference school
- Where an offer can be made at the highest preference school on the latest application.

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6. Multiple births

6.1 Where the last place offered is to a child of multiple births (e.g. twins, triplet etc) the remaining child will also be offered a place above the Published Admission Number (PAN) if necessary. This would also apply to a brother or sister born in the same academic year.

7. Late applications

7.1 Any applications received after the closing date will be regarded as a late application except in very exceptional circumstances. This includes any change of preference which is received after the submission date even if the original application was an on time application.

7.2 For oversubscribed schools, late applications received after submission date but before 1 September 2027 will be considered together with original applicants refused a preference who have lodged a formal appeal or have asked to remain on a waiting list. In all cases, the admissions criteria will be used to determine the allocation of any places that may become available within the school's admission number. Any late applicants refused a preference will be informed that they can lodge a formal appeal and/or remain on a waiting list. There will be no priority given to the length of time an applicant has spent on the waiting list or whether they have indicated that they wish to appeal. The waiting list will be maintained until at least 31 December 2027.

7.3 Applications for schools where all late applicants can be offered a school place on national offer day, will be offered a school place on 16 April 2027, or as soon as possible after that date.

7.4 If a school becomes oversubscribed by receiving more late applications than places available, school places will be offered to late applicants by applying the admission authority's published admissions criteria.

7.5 On time appeals where Bristol City Council presents appeals for schools or academies need to be submitted by 4 June 2027.

8. Admission of children below compulsory school age and deferred entry to school

8.1 Children are entitled to a full-time place in the September following their fourth birthday.

8.2 Legally children do not have to be in full time education until the term after their fifth birthday. This is known as compulsory school age. Parents and carers can defer the date that their child is admitted to the school until later in the school year. Entry cannot be deferred beyond the beginning of term 5 or until the child reaches compulsory school age.

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9. Part-time attendance

9.1 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.

10. Admission of children outside their normal age group

10.1 All parents and carers may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group.

10.2 In addition, the parents and carers of a summer born child (children born between 1 April and 31 August) may choose not to send their child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted to reception rather than year 1.

10.3 Where parents and carers wish to make an application for a place outside of their normal age group an application must be made by 15 January 2027, together with written reasons for wishing to delay admission. Parents and carers will receive the response to their request before primary national offer day of 16 April 2027.

10.4 Decisions are made on an individual basis, in the best interests of the child. When making the decision the admission authority will take account the views of; parents and carers, professionals. e.g. medical, and the Head Teacher at the requested school, together with information concerning academic, social and emotional development.

10.5 If the request is agreed, the application for the normal age group may be withdrawn before a place is offered. The parents or carers must make a new application as part of the main admissions round the following year by the closing of 15 January 2027.

10.6 If the request is refused, the parents or carers must decide whether to accept the offer of a place for the normal age group or to refuse it and make an in year application for admission to Year 1 for the September following the child's fifth birthday.

10.7 The statutory right of appeal does not apply if a place is offered at the preferred school but not in the preferred age group.

10.8 Parents and carers must make separate requests to each of their preferred school. The decision of one admission authority may be different from the decision made by another.

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Timetable for coordinated primary admissions for academic year 2027/2028

15 January 2027
Closing date for all applications

19 January 2027
Final date changes of address will be accepted

29 January 2027
By this date Bristol will send details of applications received for schools in other Local Authorities (LAs) to the relevant LA

3 February 2027
By this date Bristol sends details of applications received to own admission authority schools in Bristol

24 February 2027
By this date own admission authority schools send lists of the pupils to be offered and/or refused places at their schools, ranked in order, to Bristol LA

18 March 2027
By this date Bristol to provide other LA with the final list of pupils allocated places

16 April 2027
By this date Bristol informs all schools of final offers up to the Admission Number. (Schools will not notify parents and carers of the outcome of the application process)

16 April 2027
Offers of a place made to residents in Bristol, including offers on behalf of other Local Authorities and own admission authority schools

30 April 2027
By this date parents and carers to respond to the offer of a school place

10 May 2027
By this date Bristol LA informs schools of offers accepted

Details of; late applications, on-time applicants still seeking a place at their preferred schools, and of places not accepted to be exchanged between LAs as far as possible between **30 April 2027 and 10 May 2027** to enable a second round of allocations.

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4 June 2027
The deadline for on-time appeals where BCC presents appeals on behalf of the school or academy

From late June 2027
Appeals

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