BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

Coordinated scheme for secondary school year 7 admissions for 2027/2028

1. Coordinated scheme

1.1 Bristol City Council has the responsibility to coordinate the admissions process for all maintained secondary schools in Bristol. This document outlines the procedures for applying and the allocation of places for children starting year 7 in September 2027.

2. Participants in scheme

2.1 All secondary schools within Bristol, including; all academies and voluntary aided (VA) schools.

2.2 Admission Authorities for other secondary schools 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 Year 7 places at all schools within Bristol including academies and voluntary aided schools, will be made on a common application form. The Local Authority will take all reasonable steps to ensure that every parent and carer of a child of secondary transfer age and resident of Bristol will receive information about the coordinated admissions scheme. The application form may be used to express preference for any school in Bristol or another Local Authority, including academies and voluntary aided schools. 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 secondary schools made on the Bristol common application form must be submitted to the School Admissions Team by midnight on the closing date of 31 October 2026. This is the date set by Government for all Local authorities in England.

3.5 After the closing date and until 4 November 2026, applicants can make limited

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changes to their application. 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 31 October 2026, up to 4 November 2026.

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 13 November 2026, 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 direct 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 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 31 October 2026.

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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 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 31 October 2026 to be regarded as on time must be made by 13 November 2026

3.16 The home address is 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.

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

3.18 If the family are living at a permanent address in the UK this address will be used for school admission purposes.

3.19 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.

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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 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.

3.22 The final date for changes of address to be accepted, for the initial round of allocations, will be 4 November 2026. Changes received after this date will be taken into account for any subsequent allocations.

3.23 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.

3.24 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 should consult the Local Authority to which they are moving for guidance.

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

3.26 Submitted preferences may be changed up to midnight on 31 October 2026. The most recent application submitted will be considered. The application will be considered to be late if changes are made after midnight on 31 October 2026.

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 13 November 2026. Details of applications for own

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admission authority schools in Bristol will be sent to the relevant schools by 25 November 2026.

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 5 January 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 1 March 2027.

4.4 By 8 February 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.

4.7 By 8 February 2027 Bristol Local Authority will electronically send the final list of pupils to be allocated places to its neighbouring Local Authorities

4.8 By 1 March 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 1 March 2027, the Local Authority will make the offer of one place at a secondary school to the parents and carers of children due to start secondary school in September 2027. Parents and carers will be notified of the outcome of

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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 and 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 15 March 2027. Including placing a child on the waiting list for the preferred school and/or lodging an appeal against the decision to not offer a school place to an independent appeals panel.

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

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

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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 1 March 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.

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Timetable for Secondary Admissions 2027/2028

31 October 2026
Closing date for all applications

4 November 2026
Final date for changes of address to be taken into account

13 November 2026
By this date Bristol will send details of applications received for schools in other Local Authorities (LAs) to the relevant LA

25 November 2026
By this date Bristol sends details of applications received to own admission authority schools in Bristol

5 January 2027
By this date own admissions authority schools send lists of pupils to be offered and/or refused places at their schools, ranked in order, to Bristol LA

8 February 2027
By this date Bristol will provide other LAs with the final list of pupils allocated places

1 March 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 Results of the application process)

1 March 2027
Offers of a school place made to residents in Bristol, including offers on behalf of other Local Authorities and own authority schools

15 March 2027
By this date parents and carers respond to offers made

20 April 2027
By this date Bristol LA informs schools of offers accepted

Between **15 March 2027 and 25 March 2027**
Details of those still seeking a place (including late applications) to be exchanged between LAs as far as possible to enable a second round of allocations.

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

May/July 2027
Appeals

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