

# Bath & North East Somerset

## Co-ordination of Secondary Admissions and Timetable 2021-22

### 1. Participants in scheme

All secondary schools and academies within Bath & North East Somerset and all Local Authorities in England. This scheme will apply to all applications from parents/carers, resident in Bath & North East Somerset at the time of application, for Year 7 admission in **September 2021** for Secondary Schools or Academies and for Year 10 admission in **September 2021** for any Schools or Academies where their first admission is into Year 10.

For Bath & North East Somerset Local Authority the 'relevant area' is the whole of Bath & North East Somerset and for own admission authority schools and academies it is the district in which the school or academy is located. For VA Catholic church schools this will be for the parish area that they serve.

### 2. Applications

- 2.1 Residents of Bath & North East Somerset will make applications on a common application form. This application form will be available online or paper copies will be issued on request to the parent/carers of all pupils resident in Bath & North East Somerset who are due to transfer to the Year 7 age group in a Secondary school in **September 2021**. The application form can be used to apply for **any** school within **any** authority including Foundation, Voluntary Aided schools and Academies. Bath & North East Somerset will inform the other LAs of any applications made for schools within their area.

Applications for children seeking a place at a School or Academy in Bath & North East Somerset with a first admission at Year 10. The IKB Studio School and The Mendip Studio School are not part of the Local Authority's co-ordinated arrangements. Therefore, parents, guardians and carers need to apply directly to these schools. All processes and timescales relating to Year 10 applications will be available via the schools.

- 2.2 Applications for places at schools within Bath & North East Somerset made by people who live outside the LA will be made on application forms from the LA in which they are resident and submitted to their home LA. This can be sent by paper copy or the application can be made online through the appropriate authority.
- 2.3 All applications for secondary schools made on the Bath & North East Somerset common application form must be submitted by midnight on the closing date of **31 October 2020**. Any applications received after this time will be considered as 'late applications' and will be dealt with at a later stage when all 'on-time' applications have been processed.
- 2.4 If an application for a school within Bath & North East Somerset is received from a resident living in the boundaries of another LA on a Bath & North East Somerset common application form, the applicant will be advised of the need to make an application through their home LA using the common application form for that LA.

- 2.5 All applications will be made on the common application form either as a paper copy or online. Voluntary Aided, Foundation Schools and Academies who may want additional information in order to apply their over-subscription criteria, may require a separate form in addition to the common application form. The common application form will detail which schools have this requirement and parents will be advised to obtain a copy of the relevant supplementary information form direct from the school. The supplementary information form should be sent direct to the appropriate school. Applications for a place will only be considered if the common application form has been completed and submitted to the LA by midnight on the closing date of **31 October 2020**.
- 2.6 Parent/carers will be advised of the importance of making their application to their home authority by the national closing date to ensure that their application is on time and not a late application.
- 2.7 When deciding upon their preferred schools parent/carers can make up to **5** preferences. We **strongly** advise parent/carers to use all **5** preferences when completing their application. Parent/carers are not **disadvantaged** by doing this as all preferences are given equal consideration and we only consider other preferences if the highest preference school named cannot be offered. When deciding on preferences Appendix 1 of the Secondary School booklet will show schools which have either been over or undersubscribed over the past 3 years. Parent/carers should read this to help decide on their preferred schools. If parent/carers name schools which are usually oversubscribed and do not qualify for a place they may be offered a school which is further from their home address. This is because legally the Council has to give priority, when considering applications, to those parent/carers who have named the school as a preference. Rather than only selecting popular schools parent/carers may therefore wish to consider naming an **undersubscribed** school or one where places have previously been allocated to pupils living further away from their home address (see table under Appendix 1) as one of their preferences which will improve their chance of being allocated a place at a local school.
- 2.8 Should any parent/carer include on their application form a preference for an independent fee paying school the independent school preference will be disregarded and remaining preferences for schools will be given a higher preference than that shown on the original application form.

### **3. Documentary Evidence**

- 3.1 In fairness to all parent/carers, the Council reserves the right to require documentary evidence of the genuineness of a family address and if this is not produced the Council reserves the right to make its own enquiries with, for example, the Council Tax Office.
- 3.2 The child's normal permanent home address where he or she lives with his or her parents or legal guardians will be used to decide where the child lives. Temporary addresses cannot be used to obtain school places. If parents or guardians plan to move documentary evidence will be required and in order for any address changes to be taken into account in the first round of allocations made on **01 March 2021** the appropriate documentary evidence must be received before **14 November 2020** to be considered in the first round of applications. In all cases, it is the responsibility of the applicant to confirm that the LA has received the documentary evidence.

Examples of evidence that may be acceptable to determine a child's address are:-

- A solicitor's letter confirming exchange of contracts and completion date for a property which is being purchased or a property which is being sold.
- A copy of a signed rental agreement or a solicitor's letter if moving to a council or rented property and proof of your sale or Notice to Quit on your current/previous property.
- A copy of a council tax bill or utility bill such as water, gas or electricity in your name for your newly owned or rented property together with proof of your sale or Notice to Quit on your current/previous property.
- A child benefit book.
- If you are moving in with a relative a letter from them will be required confirming the date you will be moving in together with a copy utility bill showing their name and address. A solicitor's letter will also be required confirming that completion of contracts has taken place on your sale or Notice to Quit on your current/previous property.
- In the case of children of UK Service Personnel with a confirmed posting to the area or Crown Servants returning from overseas, an official letter declaring the relocation date and a Unit postal address or quartering area address should be provided.

3.3 A random sample of 10% of all applications received each year will be checked to confirm addresses using for example the electoral roll, council tax offices and if appropriate the school currently attended before allocations are made. A copy of a recent utility bill may also be requested. In certain additional cases proof of residency will also be determined by using the above methods. Once proof is obtained to the LA's satisfaction that the parent is resident at the address given it will be accepted that the child is also resident at the same address.

3.4 The LA reserves the right to withdraw an offer of a school place in certain limited circumstances. Examples include:

- Where a parent has given fraudulent or intentionally misleading information such as a false address.
- Where a parent has not responded to an offer within the deadline set by the LA.
- Where a higher preference school has been offered or where the highest preference school on the latest application has been able to be met.
- Where the offer was made as a result of an administrative error.

3.5 If false information is provided on an application form before an offer of a school place is made then the application will be void. Parents could submit a further application if they so wished. If this application is received after the closing date it will then be regarded as a late application. If it is found that a sibling currently at the school was offered a place on the basis of false information then for any further application received the LA will discount the sibling connection.

#### **4. The process of allocation**

- 4.1 Applications for all schools will be considered under an 'equal preference' system. All preferences will initially be considered equally regardless of ranking. The LA will produce a report of all applications for Y7 places for all schools including Voluntary Aided schools and Academies within Bath & North East Somerset. This report will not reveal the order of the applicant's preferences and will be sent to other LAs as appropriate by **13 November 2020**. Bath & North East Somerset will also receive details of applications from other LA's as appropriate on this date. All information will be sent to the appropriate Secondary Schools within Bath & North East Somerset on **20 November 2020**.
- 4.2 In the case of applications for Y7 places in Secondary schools the Voluntary Aided and Academy admissions authorities within Bath & North East Somerset will then apply their admissions criteria to all applications and produce a list explaining the ranking of each applicant against the admissions criteria. This list will then be sent to the LA by **11 December 2020**.
- 4.3 Using all the available information the LA will determine which is the highest preference which can be met for each applicant. If no preferences can be met for any applicant from Bath & North East Somerset the LA will determine the nearest school with an available space.
- 4.4 By **5 February 2021** Bath & North East Somerset will inform other LA's of potential offers and / or refusals to be made for applications for places within Bath & North East Somerset schools made by residents living outside the LA. By the same time other LA's will inform Bath & North East Somerset about potential offers and refusals to be made for applications from residents within this authority for school places in other authorities.
- 4.5 On **24 February 2021** all schools within Bath & North East Somerset will be informed of all final offers which will be made up to the Admissions Number for each school. The LA will also include details of any children being refused a place at their preferred school. All information provided to schools at this stage will be confidential.
- 4.6 Where a child qualifies for a place at more than one school the final offer will be the highest stated preference of the places available.

## **5. Offers of a school place**

- 5.1 On **1 March 2021** the LA will make the offer of one place at a secondary school to parent/carers resident within the authority. Parent/carers who applied online will receive an offer via email notification and need to log into their online admissions account to view details of the offer made. Parent/carers who made a paper application will receive a notification letter, posted 2nd class.
- 5.2 Parent/carers not offered a place at one of their preferred schools will be offered a place at the nearest suitable school with a place available. Parent/carers who applied online will receive brief details of the school place offer via an email notification but all parent/carers (both online and paper applicants) refused a place at any preferred school will receive a notification letter, posted 2nd class. This letter will provide full details of their options at that stage including their right to appeal.
- 5.3 Parent/carers will be asked to make an initial response to the offer direct to the LA by **15 March 2021**. Parents who applied online will be asked to respond via their online admissions

account. If parents are refused their preferred school[s] they then have until **01 April 2021** to prepare and submit their written appeal.

## **6. Late applications**

- 6.1 Late applicants who live in Bath & North East Somerset should complete and return a paper copy of the common application form as the online application facility is not available after the closing date. Any applications received after the closing date of **31 October 2020** will be regarded as a 'late application'. This includes any change of preference which is received after the closing date even if the original application was an 'on time' application unless the local authority considers that there are extenuating reasons for allowing the application to be treated as if it had arrived on time. This will only apply to late applications received before **14 November 2020**.

Examples of extenuating circumstances might include a close family bereavement or a serious illness for which documentary evidence would be required.

After the closing date of **31 October 2020** parents/carers may make a **change of school preference or change of school preference order on the understanding that their previous application will be withdrawn and their child will not be considered for a school place in the first round of allocations even if the original application was received before the closing date**. The change of preference or school preference order will be considered as a completely new late application.

- 6.2 For over-subscribed schools 'late applications' received after **31 October 2020** will be considered together with original applicants refused a preference who have lodged a formal appeal or 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 schools admission number. Any late applicants refused a preference will then be informed that they can lodge a formal appeal and remain on a waiting list or, alternatively, just go on the waiting list.
- 6.3 For both over-subscribed and under-subscribed schools late applications will not be considered until the second round of allocations which commences on **07 May 2021**.
- 6.4 In the case of under-subscribed schools all late applications received since the closing date and up until the **13 April 2021** will be considered together in the second round of allocations. If the school is then oversubscribed all late applications will be considered under the admissions criteria. If the school is still under-subscribed all applicants will be offered places and any further late applicants dealt with on a first come, first served basis.
- 6.5 If any under-subscribed school becomes full, any places, which subsequently become available, will be offered to any late applicants by applying the admissions criteria.
- 6.6 Details of late applications, on time applicants still seeking a place at their preferred schools and of places not accepted following the initial allocations made, to be exchanged between Local Authorities as far as possible between **17 March 2021** and **16 April 2021**, to enable a second round of allocations to commence **on the 07 May 2021**.

- 6.7 The co-ordinated admissions process will continue to be operated, with application data being exchanged with other Local Authorities as necessary, for all applications received up to **31 August 2021**.

## **7. Waiting Lists**

- 7.1 **Waiting Lists.** The waiting list comprises of those children refused a place whose parents lodged a formal appeal or asked to go on the waiting list together with any later applications received. At the start of the **2021/22** academic year the admission authority of the individual school or academy will maintain their own waiting list which will be held for a minimum period of one term but each school may decide to hold their waiting list for a longer period. In all cases the admissions criteria will be used to determine the allocations of any place that may become available within the school's admission number. However, children who are the subject of a direction by a local authority to admit or who are allocated to a school in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol must take precedence over those on a waiting list.

Every effort will be made to contact applicants on the waiting list using the last contact details provided by the applicant, but, where a response to an offer has not been received within 10 school days, the offer will be withdrawn and the available place offered to the next child on the waiting list to qualify for the available place.

## Timetable for Coordinated Secondary Admissions

Date	Action
On 12 September 2020	The Secondary Admissions booklet and the application form will be available. Bath & North East Somerset parent/carers will be able to express up to five preferences for the new year 7 intake to start in September 2021.
31 October 2020	National closing date for secondary school applications. Bath & North East Somerset residents' applications will be accepted up to 23:59 on the national closing date.
By 13 November 2020	Bath & North East Somerset Council will send to other Local Authorities, details of applications for their schools.
By 20 November 2020	Bath & North East Somerset Council will send details of applications received to all own Admission Authority schools within Bath & North East Somerset. Schools will not reveal this information to anyone until after the National Offer Day. The order of the applicant's preferences will not be revealed to schools.
By 11 December 2020	Own Admission Authority schools in Bath & North East Somerset will then apply their admissions criteria to all applications and produce a list explaining the ranking of each applicant against the admissions criteria. This list will be sent to the LA.
By 5 February 2021	Bath & North East Somerset will inform other LA's of the outcome of applications made by their residents for schools in this LA. By the same time other LA's will inform Bath & North East Somerset about the outcome of applications for our residents who have applied for school places in other authorities.
On 24 February 2021	Bath & North East Somerset Council will inform all schools in their LA of the final offers which will be made up to the Admission Number and any refusals where applicable. All information at this stage will be confidential.
On 1 March 2021	'On time' Bath & North East Somerset applicants will be notified of the outcome of their applications. Applicants who made an online application will be able to log into their online account and paper applicants will be sent a letter by 2nd class post.
By 15 March 2021	Parent/carers to respond to the offer of a school place.
13 April 2021	Closing date for applications to be considered for the second round of allocations.
Up to and including 16 April 2021	Details of late applications, on time applicants still seeking a place at their preferred schools and of places not accepted following the initial allocations made, to be exchanged between Local Authorities.
Commencing 7 May 2021	Second round of allocations will be made and applicants will be informed of the outcome by post.
From May 2021	Secondary appeals start to be heard.
Up to and including 31 August 2021	Co-ordinated admissions will continue with subsequent rounds of allocations until the admissions process ends.
31 August 2021	The coordinated admissions process ends. Applications for school places received after this date will be considered under the In-Year admissions scheme.

The stated dates for sharing data between Councils and schools are intended target dates. It may not always be possible for the data to be exchanged or sent on those actual dates as we are reliant on other information coming from outside of this LA and occasionally LA's can experience technical difficulties beyond their control.