

# Admissions to Dorset Schools

A parents' guide 2009-2010

**Dorset County Council**



Improving the quality of life for people in Dorset,  
**now and for the future**

## Travelling to school

Dorset County Council is fully committed to promoting walking, cycling and, for longer distances, greater use of buses for the school journey.

When you are thinking about schools you would like your child to attend, please consider the following:

- Children who walk to school are fitter, have better developed social skills, are more familiar with their surroundings, have better road sense and arrive at school more relaxed and ready to learn.
- Walking, cycling or using the bus reduces congestion on the roads. Parents in Dorset who drive their children to and from school increase congestion on the roads by 20%, drive 13.5 million miles per year and generate 4,013 tonnes of carbon dioxide per year. If all parents chose to send their children to their nearest school we would save in excess of 6.85 million miles and 1273 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year!
- Consider the cost of driving your child to school. Current figures put the average cost at £535 per year.
- Unless the school you choose is less than 800 metres from your home (2km for secondary) you will probably drive your child to school.
- Walking, cycling or using public transport offers children greater independence and flexibility – which is especially important at a time of change in the nature of the school day, with greater numbers of pupils staying for extra study, extra curricular activities and sport.

Where walking, cycling or public transport are not feasible, car sharing may be an option. This can save time and money and helps cut traffic congestion and air pollution as well as being sociable for children. Car sharing can also reduce the costs for children whose families do not own a car.

If you are interested in encouraging walking, cycling or bus use, then please speak to your child's current Headteacher who will be able to explain the school's travel plan to you. Alternatively you can contact the School Travel Plan Team at Dorset County Council.

**For information on school transport click on  
[www.dorsetforyou.com.schooltravelplans](http://www.dorsetforyou.com.schooltravelplans)  
or telephone 01305 228650/01305 221717**



This publication can be made available in audio tape, large print and Braille, or alternative languages on request.

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## Dorset County Council contacts

For information on Free School Meals, Ethnic Minority Achievement Service, Education Welfare, Traveller Education, Children's Information Service, Boarding Provision or Transport contact **Dorset Direct on 01305 221000**.

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### **Borough of Poole**

Children & Young People's  
Integrated Services,  
Dolphin Centre, Poole BH15 1SA  
**01202 261936**  
[www.boroughofpoole.com](http://www.boroughofpoole.com)  
email: [school.admissions@poole.gov.uk](mailto:school.admissions@poole.gov.uk)

### **Bournemouth Borough Council**

20-22 Christchurch Road,  
Bournemouth BH1 3NL  
01202 456223  
[www.bournemouth.gov.uk/learning](http://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/learning)

### **Devon County Council**

County Hall, Topsham Road  
Exeter EX2 4QG  
**0845 1551019**  
[www.devon.gov.uk](http://www.devon.gov.uk)

### **Hampshire County Council**

The Castle, Winchester S023 8UG  
**01962 846004**  
[www.hants.gov.uk](http://www.hants.gov.uk)

### **Somerset County Council**

County Hall, Taunton, Somerset TA1 4DY  
Parentline - **0845 345 9122**  
[www.somerset.gov.uk](http://www.somerset.gov.uk)

### **Wiltshire County Council**

County Hall, Trowbridge BA14 8JB  
**01225 713000**  
[www.wiltshire.gov.uk](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk)

### **Salisbury Diocesan**

**Board of Education**  
Devizes Road, Salisbury, Wilts SP1 9LY  
**01722 428428**  
[www.saled.org](http://www.saled.org)

### **Winchester Diocesan**

**Board of Education**  
1st Floor Peninsula House  
Wharf Road, Portsmouth PO2 8HB  
**02392 899657**  
[www.winchester.anglican.org](http://www.winchester.anglican.org)

### **Plymouth Roman Catholic Diocese**

Newman House,  
Wonford Road, Exeter EX2 4PF  
**01392 671320**  
[www.plymouth-diocese.org.uk](http://www.plymouth-diocese.org.uk)

### **Portsmouth Roman Catholic Diocese**

Park Place Pastoral Centre  
Winchester Road, Fareham PO17 5HA  
**01329 835363**  
[www.portsmouth-dio.org.uk](http://www.portsmouth-dio.org.uk)

### **OfSTED** [www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspect](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspect)

**The Secretary of State for Children,  
Schools & Families (DCSF)**  
Sanctuary Buildings,  
Great Smith Square,  
Westminster, London, SW1P 3BT  
**0870 000 2288**  
[www.dcsf.gov.uk](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk)

### **Local Government Ombudsman**

Mr J White, The Oaks,  
No 2 Westwood Way  
Coventry, CV4 8JB  
**02476 820000**

### **ISIS**

**(Information Service for Independent  
Schools) (South & West)**  
Woodpeckers, Green Lane  
Queen Camel  
Somerset BA22 7NP  
**0845 999 2223**  
E-mail: [Morwenna.Ford@isc.co.uk](mailto:Morwenna.Ford@isc.co.uk)  
Website: [www.isc.co.uk](http://www.isc.co.uk)

## Policy statement for equality

The Local Authority (LA) is committed to the fundamental principles of equality of access and opportunity, unbiased treatment and equal value of all individuals. The primary purpose of the LA is to ensure the provision of a high quality education for all learners irrespective of gender, ethnicity, social and economic background and circumstances, sexual orientation, physical or intellectual capability, nationality, religion, age or chosen lifestyle.

## What are the different types of schools in Dorset?

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Dorset is committed to providing a comprehensive system of education and has a variety of different school structures operating in different parts of the County.

**All schools are organised into groups of schools called pyramids/areas.**

**Beaminster/Blandford/Bridport/Christchurch & Highcliffe/Corfe Hills/Dorchester/Ferndown & West Moors/Gillingham/Lyme Regis/Lytchett & Upton/Purbeck/Shafesbury/Sherborne/Sturminster Newton/Weymouth & Portland/Wimborne & Cranborne.**

**The LA is responsible for four different types of school:**

- **Community** – a school wholly funded by the LA, which is also responsible for admissions;
- **Voluntary Controlled** – a school set up by a voluntary body, usually a church, totally funded through the LA which is responsible for admissions;
- **Voluntary Aided** – a school started and owned by a voluntary body, usually a church, and part funded through the LA. The school governors are responsible for the running of the school and are also responsible for admissions;
- **Foundation** – a school funded by the LA. However, the school governors are responsible for admissions.

Voluntary Aided and Foundation schools have their own admissions policies (see website). Some schools are also specialist schools, details of which can be found on the relevant school pyramid information sheet for the school you are interested in or alternatively on the School Admissions website on [www.dorsetforyou.com/schooladmissions](http://www.dorsetforyou.com/schooladmissions).

## How is education organised in Dorset?

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Schools in Dorset are categorised as:

Infant School (aged 4-7)	Reception – Year 2
First schools (aged 4-9)	Reception – Year 4
Junior Schools (aged 7-11)	Year 3 – Year 6
Middle Schools (aged 9-13)	Year 5 – Year 8
Primary Schools (aged 4-11)	Reception – Year 6
Secondary Schools: Upper schools Aged from 11-16 or 11-18 Aged from 13-18	Entry at Year 7 Entry at Year 9

### National Curriculum Year Groups and Key Stages

Key Stages	Year Groups
Key Stage 1	Reception – Year 2
Key Stage 2	Year 3 – Year 6
Key Stage 3	Year 7 – Year 9
Key Stage 4	Year 10 – Year 11

**SATS are Standard Assessment Tests.** These are taken at the end of the Key Stages to provide an overall judgement on a pupil's achievement.

### School Leaving Age

The law allows children who reach the age of 16 during the 2009/10 school year to leave school on 25 June 2010. Please note that these dates are set by law and the LA has no discretion to alter them.

### Post 16 Education

There will be a sixth form serving your area. School sixth forms and further education colleges can offer a wide range of A level, vocational and other courses. Pupils can appeal if refused admission. For further details please contact the appropriate schools and colleges direct.

### Independent Schools in Dorset

The LA has no responsibility for independent or private schools. However, a list of schools in the South West can be obtained from ISIS (The Independent Schools Information Service) see page 4 of this booklet for contact details.

## Which School? – How do I decide?

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The admissions policy for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools can be found on page 11. For admissions policies for Voluntary Aided and Foundation schools please refer to the school pyramid information enclosed with this booklet. For more information on the catchment area or other pyramids please contact the school admissions team.

You should gather as much information as possible to help you decide which school you think would best suit your child. The best way to do this is to look at school prospectuses which will give details of:

- The school's aims and objectives;
- Details of the curriculum offered;
- National Curriculum test results;
- Attendance figures;
- Details of policies such as behaviour and discipline;
- Out of school activities offered;
- School specialisms in the case of secondary schools.

It is a good idea to make an appointment to visit any schools which you are interested in. At the beginning of the Autumn term 2008 a number of schools will be hosting open days and/or evenings for parents about admission to middle/secondary/upper schools. Parents are advised to contact the schools direct to obtain details about these arrangements.

The Office for Standards in Education (OfSTED) inspects all schools. You may wish to obtain copies of latest OfSTED inspection reports and the subsequent action plans for development. They can be obtained from the school, local libraries or the Internet via the following website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspect](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspect).

Primary and secondary performance tables information can be obtained via [www.dcsf.gov.uk/performance/tables](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/performance/tables)

Applying for a school place can seem difficult and confusing. However if you are unsure how to make your application for a school place or have concerns about how admissions works, help is on hand. You can contact the School Admissions Team via Dorset Direct who can provide comprehensive help and advice.

To find out your catchment area school you must contact the schools admissions team.

## Choice Advisors - Independent advice

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Through the Dorset Parent-Partnership a Choice Advisor can provide a range of advice about secondary schools and explain how the co-ordinated admission scheme works both in the home and neighbouring authorities and thereby make the whole process of applying for a school place much easier.

The service offers:

- free independent advice to parents/carers;
- help and support to enable families to make the best and most realistic choice of school using all resources and information available;
- help to maximise choices by interpreting and explaining the information to meet a family's specific needs. This will include information about admission arrangements in other local authority areas and how to apply for schools in those areas.

**Julie Daulby** Telephone: 01305 250766

email: [j.daulby@dorsetcc.gov.uk](mailto:j.daulby@dorsetcc.gov.uk) (covers Beaminster, Bridport Dorchester, Lyme Regis, Purbeck. Sherborne and Weymouth and Portland area)

**Jane Schmidt** – Telephone: 01202 513855

email: [j.e.schmidt@dorsetcc.gov.uk](mailto:j.e.schmidt@dorsetcc.gov.uk) (covers Blandford, Christchurch, Corfe Hills, Ferndown, Gillingham, Lytchett, Shaftesbury, Sturminster and Wimborne areas)

### Further information concerning school admissions is available:

- via the School Admissions website on [www.dorsetforyou.com/schooladmissions](http://www.dorsetforyou.com/schooladmissions)  
You can identify the local/preferred school for the area in which you live by using the interactive map facility. However, you are strongly advised to contact the Caseworker for your area in order to find out further information. Telephone 01305 221000
- On the Schools Information System website which can be accessed on [www.dorsetforyou.com/schools/sis](http://www.dorsetforyou.com/schools/sis).

## Points to consider when making application

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Ensure you enclose all relevant supporting evidence required with your application (see admissions policies for details)

### Early years education

Children do not legally have to attend any educational setting until the term following their fifth birthday and parents will decide whether early education –in whatever setting – is right for their child.

All children born between **1 September 2004** and **31 August 2005** can, if their parents wish, start school in September 2009.

The government has made it possible for every child to benefit from a good quality pre-school education and has given parents or guardians the responsibility of choosing what type of place will give their child the best start in life. Under the government's Early Years programme, all 4 year olds are entitled to 3 terms of free part-time education from the term following their 4th birthday (that is, the 3 terms before they are of compulsory school age). This can be provided in reception classes in state schools, pre-schools, playgroups and day nurseries. For further information about the availability of pre-school education in your area you may wish to contact the Dorset Childrens' Information Service telephone 01305 221000.

### Deferred entry

It is expected that most parents will choose the September admission date for their child. However, all Dorset first, infant and primary schools offer parents the option of deferring their child's entry until later in the same school year in cases where early admission to school may disadvantage the child.

Where deferred entry is requested there needs to be a record of the agreement with the school. Parents should note, however, that deferment of admission cannot be allowed beyond the academic year for which the original application was accepted nor beyond the beginning of the term after the child's 5th birthday.

Where the parent does not take up the place when agreed, whether full/part time, that place will be considered vacant and may be offered to another child. Please do not hesitate to contact your local or preferred school for further details about deferred entry.

If you decide to postpone your child's admission to school until the following academic year, your child will start school in Year 1 on a full-time basis.

### Home address

You can make an application from an address outside of Dorset or if you are moving, you can wait and apply once you have proof of an address in the area.

If you are moving into or within Dorset, for your application to be considered from your new address, we will require documentary evidence of your move which should be one of the following:

- A solicitor's letter confirming exchange of contracts on your sale and purchase;
- A copy of the rental/tenancy agreement showing the address of the property, duration of the tenancy and the signatures of yourself/ves and the landlord/s and proof of your sale or Notice to Quit on your current property;
- If you are moving in with a relative we require a letter from them confirming the date you will be moving in, together with a copy utility bill showing their name and address eg Council Tax bill, gas bill,etc. We also require exchange of contracts on the sale or Notice to Quit on your current property;
- If you are taking over the care or guardianship from another party we will require a letter from them confirming the move, and proof of your parental responsibility, together with proof of address (see above).

If you are a non EEA citizen we will not consider the application until you and the children are resident in the country and you must contact us at that time. We also require copy passports and any visas necessary for yourself/ves and the children, together with the documentary evidence mentioned above in order to process any application.

If you are moving to the area but wish to apply from your current address on parental preference grounds ahead of your move please indicate this clearly on your application form.

Please note: It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide all the necessary documentation.

### Your preference school

Due to oversubscription it is not always possible to offer a place at your catchment or preferred school. **Moving into a catchment area does not guarantee a place at the catchment school.**

If it proves possible to offer your child/ren a place in your preferred school and it is not your catchment school your acceptance of the place offered may mean that the daily travelling arrangements and costs will be your responsibility. If you have any younger children whom you later wish to attend the school there is no guarantee that a place will be available. There is no guarantee a place will be available in the recognised receiver school. Any application will be considered in line with the admissions policy for the school.

Parents are advised that if they do not express a preference for their catchment area school and the LA have to re-direct to an alternative school, the parent will be responsible for travel costs and arrangements.

If your child has a full Statement of special educational needs please be aware the School Admissions Team will not be involved in their school placement. **This will be dealt with by the Dorset LA SEN Team and you should contact an SEN Caseworker to discuss your child's continued education.**

# Admission Policy for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools

Dorset LA is the Admissions Authority for all Community and Voluntary Controlled schools in the County.

**The policy set out below does not apply to Voluntary Aided and Foundation schools. Details of all admission policies including Voluntary Aided and Foundation schools can be found on pyramid information sheets or can be viewed on the School Admissions website or contact the individual schools for details. The oversubscription criteria are published below.**

The admission of children with Statements of Special Educational Need is covered by Sections 324 to 328 of, and Schedule 27 to, the Education Act 1996. Guidance on the admission of Statemented pupils is given in the Special Education Needs Code of Practice.

**Please Note:** Where a child(ren) lives with parents with shared responsibility the home address will be identified as the address of the person whose name is on the relevant Child Benefit. (See page 9 for address information).

1. Where all parental preferences for places at the school can be satisfied all children seeking a place will be admitted.
2. Where there are too few places available (see footnote 2) to satisfy all preferences places will be allocated according to the following priority order:
  - i.) Looked After Children who are in the care of a local authority (see footnote 3);
  - ii.) children living within the school's catchment area and who will have a sibling(s) attending the school at the time of admission (see footnotes 4, 5,6, and 7 );
  - iii.) children living within the school's catchment area (see footnote 4);
  - iv.) children living outside the school's catchment area who have a sibling(s) attending the school at the time of admission (see footnotes 5,6 and 7);
  - v.) children living outside the school's catchment area.
3. Where there are too few places available to satisfy all preferences in any category above, the following priority order will apply:
  - i.) children who have exceptional medical reasons for attending the preferred school. Applications would need to be supported by the clinical/medical officer's report which can demonstrate the reasons why the child must attend the preferred school rather than any other;
  - ii.) children who were attending one of the preferred school's recognised maintained feeder schools during the previous year (see footnotes 8 & 9);

iii.) children whose parents wish them to attend a Voluntary Controlled school on denominational grounds (see footnote 10);

iv.) all other children.

4. If there are too few places available to satisfy preferences expressed within any of the priority order categories above, places will be allocated on the basis of the child's closeness to the preferred school (defined by straight line measurement using a geographical information based system which identifies the straight line distance between them the home address and school building from an easting and northing for the two locations – see footnote 11).
5. In the event that the LA is unable to distinguish between applications despite applying the priority categories above, lots will be drawn by an independent person (of the LA) to determine the final place(s).

### **Footnotes**

1. Ferndown Upper School – Priority will be given to up to 26 pupils who can demonstrate an aptitude in Visual Arts. Should the number of applications for these places exceed availability, places will be allocated in accordance with the Local Authority's Admissions Policy. Remaining places up to the planned admission limit of 260 will be allocated in accordance with the Local Authority's Admissions Policy.
2. The places available are defined as the published Admission Number for the school for that year of entry.
3. The term criterion specifically relates to children with either a care order (full or interim) or who are accommodated under Section 22 of the Children Act 1989.
4. The school's catchment area is a geographical area defined by the Authority following consultation with the governors of the school and neighbouring schools. Details are held by each school.
5. The term "sibling" means full brother or sister, stepbrother or sister, adoptive brother or sister and non-blood related children who live with married, single cohabiting parents in the same household and relates to all year groups provided by the school.
6. In the case of an infant school the sibling link will apply to the related junior school and vice versa.

7. Where parents/guardians have children of multiple births (twins, triplets, etc) and the LA is unable to allocate all the children a place at the preferred school, the parents/guardians will be invited to decide which of the children should be allocated the available place(s).
8. For details of recognised maintained feeder schools parents are advised to refer to the School Admission website.
9. This category applies to statutory aged pupils only. It does not apply to children attending pre-schools, day nurseries and playgroups.
10. To qualify for consideration under this category, parents/guardians will need to show that at least one adult family member and the child to whom the application relates has been attending church at least once a month for a minimum of a year prior to the closing date for applications, and the application must be supported by a written statement from the vicar/priest/minister or leader of the church confirming this.
11. The use of the "straight line" measurement method applies to the allocation of places only. It will not be used to determine transport entitlement, where it is a legal requirement to measure by the nearest available walking or driven routes.
12. Separate admission policies apply to Community schools in Gillingham and Verwood. Details of these policies can be found on pyramid lists on the School Admissions website.

# Applying to start school or transferring to Junior or Middle School September 2009

## Reception, Year 2-3 (Infant to Junior) and Year 4-5 (First to Middle)

- If you live in the Dorset LA area but your first preference school is in another LA area, please complete the LA application process for that area. You can name Dorset schools on the application.
- If you are applying for a Dorset first, infant, primary school as your first preference school you should ensure that your application is made on a Dorset LA application form, or via the Dorset on line system on [www.dorsetforyou.com/schooladmissions](http://www.dorsetforyou.com/schooladmissions) from 1 September 2008.
- Completed application forms must be given to the Headteacher of your first preference school **by the end of the school day on Friday, 21 November 2008**.
- On line applications must be submitted **by 4pm Friday 21 November 2008**
- Parents who have applied by Friday, 21 November 2008 will be notified about the school place for their child by the LA. Letters will be sent out on **Friday, 13 March 2009**.

If you apply online you can view the outcome of your application on **13 March 2009** and a letter will follow.

Closing Date	Notification Date
21 November 2008	13 March 2009

**You must advise School Admissions if you move house before 30 January 2009 and the application will be considered from the new address. Failure to do this may result in the place being withdrawn.**

# Applying for Secondary/upper School places – September 2009

## Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme

As a result of legislation all LAs are required to operate a Co-ordinated Admission Scheme covering all secondary schools. The arrangements and timetables set out in this booklet are part of the Scheme. The main purpose of the Scheme is to ensure that every child applying for a school place within the area served by the LA receives one offer of a school place on the same day.

### Year 6-7 (Primary – Secondary) and Year 8 – 9 (Middle to Upper)

- If you live in the Dorset LA area regardless of the preference of schools, please complete a Dorset LA application form naming any schools you have a preference for, or apply on line at [www.dorsetforyou.com/schooladmissions](http://www.dorsetforyou.com/schooladmissions) from 1 September 2008
- If you live outside of the Dorset LA area (including Poole and Bournemouth) you should ensure that your application is made through your home LA. You can name Dorset schools on this application.
- Completed application forms should be given to the Headteacher of your child's current school **by the end of the school day on Friday, 24 October 2008** or if you are not attending a Dorset school return the application form to Dorset LA **by 4pm on 24 October 2008**.
- Parents who meet the deadline will be notified about the school place for their child by the LA. Letters will be sent out on **Monday, 2 March 2009**. If you apply on line you can view the outcome of your application on **2 March 2009** and a letter will follow.

Closing Date	Notification Date
24 October 2008	2 March 2009

**You must advise School Admissions if you move house before 30 January 2009 and the application will be considered from the new address. Failure to do this may result in the place being withdrawn.**

**Please Note:** Parents are asked **not** to contact the LA or individual schools to enquire about the outcome of the application **prior** to notification by letter as this may delay the notification process.

If you are applying for a place other than normal year of entry i.e. (into established year group) this will not be considered until June July (see in year applications).

## Applications received after the deadline dates

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Applications received after the closing date but by 30 January 2009 will be considered as part of the first round allocations process if they meet the following strict criteria:

- Families moving within or into Dorset (not including Bournemouth or Poole; (proof will be required see page 9)
- Families returning from abroad (including proof of move);
- Single/both parent(s)/guardian(s) who has(ve) been ill for a significant period between the time the application forms were distributed and the closing date (supported by a medical officer's report);
- A bereavement which has resulted in the family relocating for a significant period between the time the application forms were distributed and the closing date. This applies to Dorset residents only. You should contact your home authority to enquire about their protocol.

If applying from another LA or for another LA school please contact the LA concerned as their arrangements may differ.

## Late applications for Dorset schools

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Applications which do not meet the criteria set out above will be regarded as late applications. Applications received after **30 January 2009** will be regarded as late applications, irrespective of the reason, and will be considered as part of the appropriate late round. The first closing date for late applications will be **27 March 2009**. Parents will be notified about the outcome of their applications by the LA by letter dated **15 May 2009**. Applications received after **27 March 2009** will be administered on a fortnightly basis after **15 May 2009**. Late applications will be processed alongside anyone on the waiting list and any one who has a pending appeal.

If applying from another LA or for another LA school please contact the LA concerned as their arrangements may differ.

## In year applications

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If you are moving to the area and need a place in an established year group or wish to change your child's current school:

- Contact School Admissions to discuss your application. They will advise how to make application and what documents are required;
- Places are not allocated more than one month in advance of the requested admission date;
- Places will only be held for one month and must be taken up within this time;
- If your request is for a place in September the application will be looked at towards the end of June and we will contact you in July to let you know the outcome;
- Applications received during the Summer will where possible, be processed by the end of the first week of the Autumn term.
- Dorset LA operates an In Year Fair Access Protocol in line with DCSF guidelines. This means in very limited circumstances an applicant may be offered over the admissions number, or refused where a place is available should they meet the criteria. For further information please contact the Schools Admission team.

## Appealing for a school place

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If you are unsuccessful in getting the place you wanted for your child you have the right to appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel.

Normally this means that you have applied for a place at a school which is oversubscribed and:

- Either you have not been offered a place because the available places have been offered to children who according to the LA's (or in the case of Voluntary Aided or Foundation schools the governing body's) published criteria, have a higher priority of a place at the school than your child;
- Or the class/teaching group at the school is full and there are no further places available for your child.

**Information about the appeals process is available from:**

**Democratic Services  
County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ  
Telephone 01305 224188**

or in the case of Voluntary Aided and Foundation schools, from the Clerk to the Governing Body at the school address.

To appeal for a place at a Community or Voluntary Controlled school you should write to the School Admissions Team enclosing an A5 self addressed envelope or download the form from School Admissions website at

**[www.dorsetforyou.com/schooladmissions](http://www.dorsetforyou.com/schooladmissions).**

For a Voluntary Aided or Foundation school you should contact the Clerk to the Governing Body at the school. An application form and information booklet will be sent to you.

- Once completed the appeal form must be sent to Democratic Services, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ, or the school if requested to do so;
- You will be told about the date, time and place of the hearing as soon as possible by the Clerk to the Appeals Panel not by the School Admissions Team;
- You are encouraged to attend and speak at the panel hearing, or you can bring a friend to help you put your case to the panel or you may prefer to put your case in writing. If your appeal is turned down, you cannot appeal again in the same academic year unless there has been a significant change in circumstances or other new material evidence becomes available which you could not reasonably have obtained or submitted at the original hearing.

If you have a complaint about the way your case was dealt with and you feel you have suffered an injustice you can complain to the Commission for Local Administration known as the Ombudsman whose contact details are shown on page 4 of this booklet.

## Key Stage 1 appeals

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The appeal arrangements for children in Key Stage 1 classes (Reception, Years 1 and 2) may differ from other year groups if admitting your child would take a class over the limit of 30.

If you have been refused a place for this reason your appeal would be an Infant Class Size appeal and you can only appeal against the decision if you feel that:

- the decision to refuse admission was not one which a reasonable Admission Authority would have made in the circumstances of the case or;
- your child would have been offered a place if the admissions arrangements had been properly implemented.

## Frequently asked questions

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### Q: Can I choose which school my child attends?

**A:** No, but parents can express a preference for a particular school. However, there is no guarantee that a place at the preferred school can be offered although the LA tries to meet the wishes of parents wherever possible. Parents may wish to refer to the information provided in Appendix 1 of the booklet or alternatively on the School Admissions website which shows how many first preference applications were successful for September 2008 (normal admissions round i.e those applications which met the initial closing dates for primary and secondary applications).

As a result of demand from families living in a catchment area and/or parental preference applications a number of Dorset schools are full and have no spare places available. When a child is refused a place at a particular school it is usually for two reasons: to avoid full class sizes and to maintain the quality of education on offer at the school.

If you are either planning to transfer schools or are moving into the area you must contact the Admissions Caseworker for the area you are interested in prior to submitting your application to discuss the application.

### Q: How are applications considered?

**A:** The application form invites parents to indicate three preferences. The system is known as the equal preference system and all Dorset schools operate this policy. Parents should note that they cannot automatically assume that they will be allocated a place at their local/catchment school if they do not list it as one of their preferences as other parents who have listed the school as a preference will be considered ahead of those who have not. This may also affect any transport entitlement.

The Admission Authority will try, wherever possible, to meet the preference ranked first by parents. However, due to oversubscription, this is not always possible and occasionally it may mean that a parent's second or third preference is given priority over another parent's first preference.

It may be possible to offer a place at more than one of the schools for which parents have expressed a preference. If this is the case only the highest ranked school where places are available will be offered.

If it is not possible to meet any of the preferences, then the nearest alternative school with places will be offered considering the efficient use of resources, if transport is to be offered by the LA.

Parents must ensure all relevant information/documents are enclosed.

## Q: Can an offer of a place at a school be withdrawn?

**A:** Once the offer of a place has been made, it may be withdrawn only in very limited circumstances, for example:

- Where the application was fraudulent or deliberately misleading (including if a sibling was stated but subsequently does not attend the school);
- Where an offer has been wrongly made by someone other than the Admissions authority.
- Where, following reminders from the school/LA, and appropriate warnings as to the consequences, the parent does not respond within one week of the final reminder and therefore is deemed to have declined the offer of a school place.

## Q: What is the admission number and how do I know how many places there are at the school?

**A:** The entry number of a school is called the Admission Number and is mainly decided by available accommodation or, in the case of primary schools, to meet class size limits. This is the number of children the admissions authority is legally obliged to admit to a year group. The Admission Numbers for schools in the pyramids/ area in which you live or are interested in can be viewed on the School Admissions website. For Community and Voluntary Controlled schools you should contact the School Admissions Team to find out if places are available. For Voluntary Aided and Foundation Schools contact the schools directly.

## Q: What happens if I change my mind for a school place in September?

**A:** Unless this is due to a house move, should any parent change any of their preferences after the relevant closing date, the new preference will be treated as a late application which is explained in this booklet. You do not need to resubmit the application form but you will need to put your change of preference school in writing to the Admissions Team for it to be considered. The date the Admissions Team is notified of the change of preference will determine the late round in which the revised preference will be considered.

For in year applications you must put your changes in writing to the school admissions team.

## Q: What happens if I decline the place offered?

**A:** If a parent decides to decline the school place offered, for whatever reason, the vacancy will be considered against applications for that school with the next round of allocations. This will include those on a waiting list and/or anyone who has submitted an appeal which has yet to be heard.

## Q: What options are available to me if I am not offered a place at my preferred school?

**A:** If you are not offered a place at your preferred school, you can:

- Accept the alternative place offered and/or;
- Appeal to an independent Appeals Panel;
- Ask to go on the waiting list.

Please note that accepting a place at an alternative school will not prejudice the appeal for your preferred school.

## Q: Can I put my name on a waiting list if I do not obtain a place at my first preference school?

**A:** If you are refused your first preference school and wish your child's name to be placed on a waiting list you will need to confirm this in writing. You should note that waiting lists will operate for one term following application. At the end of the term if the parent wishes the child to remain on a waiting list, they should renew the request in writing to carry their child's name forward on the waiting list for a further term. Parents are asked not to contact School Admissions to enquire about their child's position on a waiting list as it can change regularly and will only be used if a place becomes available. Should a place become available the admission policy will be used to allocate the place and is not allocated on a 'first come first served basis'.

If you are refused a place at a Voluntary Aided or Foundation school you will need to contact the school to find out if they hold a waiting list and, if so, the procedures for inclusion.

## Appendix 1:

### Other information for Parents

This section gives information about places that were allocated at each school the year before the one that you are applying for.

It shows which schools had more applications than places available and the number of first preferences that were refused. It also tells you under which criterion children were offered places (please refer to the admission policy for the school). This is intended to help you make your decision but it is only an indication and you should be aware that this information does change each year. More data is available on

**[www.dorsetforyou.com/schooladmissions](http://www.dorsetforyou.com/schooladmissions).**

This information does not include details of the late round of allocations eg those parents who missed the closing date of 19 October 2007 (secondary) or 23 November 2007 (primary).

# Appendix 1

## 4+ Admissions - September 2008 (Normal Admissions Round)

School	Criteria										Admission No.				
	SEN	Looked After	In area sibling	In area	Sibling	D/R sibling	D/R	Distance	Next nearest	Catchment		2nd Pref	3rd Pref	Total	1st pref refused
<b>Beaminster area</b>															
Broadwindsor Primary		5	2	2	2					2			13	1 = distance	13
Greenford Primary		8	7							1			17		20
Parrett & Axe CE VA Primary		1	4	3					1	2	1		12		15
Salway Ash CE VA Primary	1	5	7	1						1			15	3 = sibling 4 = distance	15
Sticklands CE VA Primary		6	1	2									9		17
St Mary's CE VA Primary	1	7	10										18		30
<b>Blandford area</b>															
Archbishop Wake CE VAPrimary	1		24	19						1			45		45
Blandford St Mary's CE VA Primary		5	9	4						5			23		30
Downlands Primary		7	10							2			19		30
Durweston CE VA Primary		7	5	6						2			20		20
Milldown Primary		5	5	1						2			13		30
Pimperne Primary		2	6	4						9			22		25
Spetisbury Hall & Sloper's CE Primary	1		13	3									21		25
The Dunbury School		7	8							1			16		30



School	SEN					Criteria					Admission No.		
	Looked After	In area sibling	In area	Sibling	D/R sibling	D/R	Distance	Next nearest	Catchment	2nd Pref		3rd Pref	Total
<b>Dorchester area</b>													
Frome Valley CE VA First	7	8	1									16	25
Piddle Valley CE VA First	2	3	1									6	23
The Prince of Wales First	1	8	5	2	11							27	30
Puddletown CE First	10	14			2							26	30
St Mary's CE First, Charminster	11	27	1		1							40	40
St Mary's Catholic First,													
Dorchester			4		15	1		1				21	30
Winterbourne Valley CE VA First	2	5			2							9	18
<b>Ferndown/West Moors area</b>													
Ferndown First	16	17	5		8							46	60
Hampreston CE VA First	4	4	7		8			1				25	28
Oakhurst Community School	4	12	6		8							30	30
Parley First	10	19	4		11			2				46	60
St Ives First, Ringwood	2	4	2		2			1		2		13	30
West Moors													
St Mary's CE VC First	3	7	4		2							16	30
Three Legged Cross First	5	3	1		2			1				12	30
<b>Gillingham area</b>													
St George's CE VA Primary,													
Bourton	4	4	1		4			1				15	17
Gillingham Primary	13	13	2					1				29	60
Milton on Stour CE VA Primary	6	11										17	17
Wyke Primary	17	13										30	30
												1 = c/a 2=sibling	
St Gregory CE VA Primary,													
Marnhull	7	1	5		2							15	24
St Mary Catholic Primary,													
Marnhull			5		2			1				10	25
St Mary the Virgin CE VA													
Primary	13	15										28	30
Stower Provost													
Community School		1	1		3			1				6	21



School	Criteria										1st Pref refused	Admission No.					
	SEN	Looked After	In area sibling	In area	Sibling	D/R sibling	D/R	Distance	Next nearest	Catchment			2nd Pref	3rd Pref	Total		
<b>Shaftesbury area</b>																	
The Abbey CE VA Primary			5	5					5		1	16					30
Motcombe CE VA Primary		4	2	2					6		1	15					16
Shaftesbury CE VC Primary	1	16	20							1		38					60
St Andrew's CE VA Primary, Fontmell Magna		7	9	7					2			25					25
<b>Sherborne area</b>																	
All Saints Primary,																	
Bishops Caundle		3	6	1								10					17
Buckland Newton Primary		5	3						1			9					15
St Andrew's Primary, Yetminster		5	3						2			10					30
St Mary's Primary, Bradford Abbas		4		1								10					17
Sherborne Primary		10	7	2					2			23					48
Sherborne Abbey Primary		12	14	2					1			29					45
Thornford CE VA Primary		4	4						7			15					15
Trent Young's CE VA Endowed Primary		3	2	4					6			17					17
<b>Sturminster Newton area</b>																	
Hazelbury Bryan Primary		7	2	2					3			14					17
Okeford Fitzpaine CE VA Primary			10						3			13					15
St Nicholas CE VA Primary	1	4	6	3					2			17					17
Shillingstone CE VA Primary		3	3	4					2			12					15
Stalbridge Primary	1	9	13	3					4			30					30
William Barnes Primary		5	13							2		20					40

# Appendix 1

School	Criteria										1st Pref refused	Admission No.	
	SEN	Looked After	In area sibling	Sibling	D/R sibling	D/R	Distance	Next nearest	Catchment	2nd pref			3rd pref
<b>Weymouth/Portland area</b>													
Beechcroft St Pauls CE VA Infant		8	7	6		3	1				25		30
Brackenbury Infant		6	22			1			1		30		50
Chickerell Primary		19	20			2					41		48
Grove Infant		2	3	2		9					16		20
Holy Trinity CE VC Primary		18	27	18		2	22		2		89		90
Bincombe Valley Primary		16	22					1	1		40		48
Portesham CE VA Primary		4	2								6		15
Radipole Primary		18	20	11		11					60	27=distance	60
Southhill Primary		1	5	7		9			8		30		30
Southwell Primary		11	8	2		2					23		30
St Andrew's CE VA Primary		6	15			24			7	1	53		60
St Augustine's Catholic Primary						14			2		24		30
St George's Primary, Portland		15	22	10		8	5				52		60
St John's CE VA Primary		11	9	3		1			6		30		30
St Nicholas & St Laurence CE VA Primary			9	15					6		30		30
Conifers Primary		10	13	8		13					44		60
Wyke Regis Infant	2	16	38	4		10			2		72		90
<b>Wimborne/Cranborne area</b>													
Colehill First		7	10	9		4					30	6=distance	30
Cranborne CE VA First		2	5	3		10					20		22
Sixpenny Handley First		4	4	2		3					13		20
Hillside First	1	18	16			4			1		40		60
Hayeswood First		2	19	3		5			1		30	4=distance	30
Pamphill CE VC First	1			7		2					10		18
St Catherine's Catholic Primary				1		20					21		30
St James' First, Alderholt		10	17			2					29		30
St James' First, Gaunts Common		4	5	2		7			1		19		23
St John's First, Wimborne		5	10	1		8			1		25		30
Trinity CE VA First		8	15								23		30
Verwood CE VA First		22	32								54		60
Wimborne First		7	9	5		12			1	1	35		45
Wimborne St Giles CE VA First		1	1	2		3					7		25
Witchampton CE VA First				2	2	5					9		12



## Infant to Junior School Transfers - September 2008 (Normal Admission Round)

School	Criteria										1st Pref refused	Admission No		
	SEN	In area stiling	In area	Stiling	Feeder	Distance	Catchment	2nd Pref	3rd Pref	Total				
Christchurch & Highcliffe area														
Christchurch Junior	2	21	83	5	13					124	7=feeder 1=distance	124		
Mudford Junior		7	30	4	17				2	60		66		
Lytchett/Upton area														
Upton Junior		12	37	8	10					67		96		
Weymouth/Portland area														
Wyke Regis Junior	1	8	29	8	11					58		99		
Underhill Junior		5	18	2						25		43		

# Primary to Secondary Transfers - September 2008 (Normal Admission Round)

School	Criteria											1st Pref refused	Admission No.			
	SEN	Looked After	In area sibling	In area feeder	Sibling	DIR	Exam	Med	Feeder	Other	Distance			Next/Nearest	Catchment	2nd Pref
Beamminster area	5	38	46	5	1	8	12		1	6	4	126				126
Beamminster School																
Blandford area	2	81	103						4	5	2	200				210
Blandford School																
Bridport area																
The Sir John Colfox School	1	48	63	2		1	1		3	6	1	126				150
<b>Christchurch/Highcliffe area</b>																
The Grange School	4	35	36	3		4	10		1	8	6	107				120
Twynham School	5	49	118	31		23	1			11		240				240
Highcliffe School			177	26		22			5			242				242
<b>Gillingham area</b>																
Gillingham School	2	97	151	17						5		273				273
																5 = sibling 10 = feeder 42 = distance
<b>Lyme Regis area</b>																
The Woodroffe School	2	42	53	29		6				17		150				150
<b>Lytchett/Upton area</b>																
Lytchett Minster School	2	48	3	3		99	11					166				168
<b>Shaftesbury area</b>																
Shaftesbury School	4	41	60	3		2	3		15	23	8	165				180
<b>Sherborne area</b>																
The Gryphon School	2	73	117	17						1		210				210
																6 = sibling 4 = denom 8 = feeder 37 = distance
<b>Sturminster Newton area</b>																
Sturminster Newton High	4	47	56							8	3	120				120
																1 = feeder 3 = sibling
<b>Weyport area</b>																
All Saints CE School	5			37	99		32			6	1	180				180
The Royal Manor School		47	83	1		1				7	12	150				150
The Wey Valley School	3	36	72	15		4	5		8	19	18	200				210
Budmouth Tech College	5	2	96		27	10	99			13		252				252
																42 = distance

## Middle to Upper School Transfers - September 2008 (Normal Admissions Round)

School	Criteria											Admission No.				
	SEN	Looked After	In area sibling	In area feeder	Sibling	D/R	Feeder	Distance	Catchment	Next Nearest	2nd Pref		3rd Pref	Total	1st pref refused	
<b>Dorchester area</b>																
The Thomas Hardy School	12	4	366	19	4		30	15	1				451			475
<b>Ferndown/West Moors area</b>																
Ferndown Upper	3	2	59	86	4		15		13	10	21	18	231			344
<b>Lychett/Upton pyramid</b>																
Lytchett Minster School	1			1	1		35					1	50	3=distance		50
<b>Purbeck area</b>																
The Purbeck School	2	1	83	169	1		5			4			265			330
<b>Wimborne/Cranborne area</b>																
Queen Elizabeth's School	5			247	6		1			7	1		360	1=denom 25=feeder 20=distance		360

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