Dorset Council Sixth Form Admissions Policy 2028 to 2029

Dorset LA is the Admissions Authority for all community and voluntary controlled schools in the Dorset Council area. Arrangements for entry to sixth forms are administered by the respective governing bodies. The policy set out below does not apply to voluntary aided, free schools, academies and foundation schools.

Schools will also have entry requirements for particular subject courses and this policy does not overwrite those requirements.

Should more than one parent have parental responsibility, only one application will be considered. Unless a court order rules otherwise, the application must be made by the parent who has day to day care of the child for the majority of the school days or weeks. Where this is unclear, disputed, or care is split equally and there is no agreement between the parents, the application considered will be that made by the parent at the address identified on the child's registered general practitioner (GP) record. If separated parents reside at the same address, they should reach agreement or, if not possible, obtain a Court Order to clarify the preferences before an application can be considered by the local authority (LA) or the governing body.

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 1) to satisfy all preferences, places will be allocated according to the following priority order:-

   i) A "Child in Care" or who was "previously a Child in Care" (see footnote 2)
   ii) Children who the authority accepts have an exceptional medical or social need and where there is a need for a place at one specific school (see footnote 3).
   iii) Children living within the school's catchment area who will have a sibling(s) attending the school at the time of admission. (see footnote 4)
   iv) Children living within the school's catchment area.
   v) Children living outside the school's catchment area who will have a sibling(s) attending the school at the time of admission. (see footnote 4)
   vi) Children living outside the school's catchment area and whose parents wish them to attend a CE Voluntary Controlled school on denominational grounds. (see footnote 5)
   vii) Children of staff with at least two years continuous service at the school or who have been recruited to a vacancy to meet a demonstrable skills shortage as at the date of application (in year) or relevant closing date under the LA co-ordinated scheme (normal year of entry) and who still intend to be employed at the school at the time of the child's admission. (see footnote 6 & 7)
   viii) All other children living outside the school's catchment area.

3. If oversubscribed within any of the priority order categories above, places will be allocated on the basis of the shortest straight line measurement using a geographical information based system which identifies an easting and northing for the home address and the school and calculates the distance between the two locations. School transport is based on walking and driven distances.

4. 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 (of the LA) person to determine the final place(s).

5. Where applications are received from families with multiple birth siblings and by adhering to sixth form PAN these siblings could not be offered the same school, the admission number will be exceeded to accommodate the multiple birth siblings. This is not an indication that schools can exceed the admission number other than under these exceptional circumstances.

Footnotes

1. The places are defined as the published admission number for year group 12.

2. A “Child in Care” means any child who is in the care of a local authority in accordance with Section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989. A child who was “previously a Child in Care” means a child who after being Looked After became subject to an Adoption Order under Section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002, a Residence Order under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 or Special Guardianship Order under Section 14A of the Children Act 1989.

3. Applications will only be considered under this category if there is evidence provided such as a Child Protection Order, Children in Need document or a written statement from a doctor, social worker or other relevant independent professional. The information must confirm the exceptional medical or social need and demonstrate how the specified school is the only school that can meet the defined needs of the child. The local authority is all inclusive and will meet all legislative requirements to accommodate children within their educational setting as appropriate to their need.

4. The term ‘sibling’ means full brother or sister, half or step brother or sister, adoptive brother or sister and other non-blood related children who live with married or cohabiting parents in the same household and relates to all year groups provided by the school.

5. In order 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 to have been attending their local church at least once a month for a minimum of a year prior to the closing date for applications. The application must also be supported by a written statement from the vicar/priest/minister or leader of the church confirming this.

6. The term children includes full, half, step, adopted and those non-blood related but resident through marriage, civil partnerships or single family co-habitation arrangements at the time of application or deadline.

7. Staff are all Dorset Council employed teaching and support staff at the preferred school. 'Children of staff' refers to situations where the staff member is the natural parent, the legal guardian or a resident step parent. If applicants wish to be considered under this criterion then a letter from the Headteacher confirming the above applies to the applicant must be provided at the time of application.

Failure to provide sufficient evidence will result in the application being processed against the next highest criteria.

Find all policies and our parents' guide which provides further information and clarification on our website.