Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Primary and Secondary Schools 2027-2028

School Admissions & Access Service

February 2026

Barnsley – the place of possibilities.

BARNSLEY
Metropolitan Borough Council

Introduction

Barnsley Local Authority is the admissions authority for all community and voluntary controlled schools within the administrative area of Barnsley and these admission arrangements only apply to these schools.

A list of schools is provided at Appendix 1 with their admission numbers.

For Penistone Grammar School Post-16 admissions, see separate admissions arrangements.

Admission to all the Authority's schools is into the Relevant Year Group which is:

Reception Year group in primary schools.
Year 7 in secondary schools.

Schools are required to admit children up to their admission number in the Relevant year group.

Attendance at a nursery unit attached to a primary school does not guarantee a place at that school.

The Authority does not operate defined communities (catchment areas) or feeder primary schools for allocating places in secondary schools.

Nothing in these arrangements relates to:

(i) voluntary aided schools, trust schools, Academies
(ii) any school which becomes their own admission authority following the determination of these admission arrangements

The Governing Bodies of these schools are the admission authority for their respective arrangements.

The timetable for the normal admissions round is given at Appendix 2.

Definition of the normal admission round is the process by which:

a) an application for the admission of a child to a relevant age group at a school is submitted in accordance with the requirements of the *scheme.

b) that application is considered by the relevant admission authority for the school in determining, in accordance with the school's admission arrangements, the order of priority in which the application is ranked; and

c) a determination relating to that application is communicated to the parent on the offer day.

Where any date specified in these arrangements falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or any day which is a recognised bank holiday, any action which is stated to be undertaken on that day will occur on the next working day.

*The scheme referred to is a scheme adopted by a local authority to co-ordinate the admissions process. Details of the scheme to be adopted in Barnsley is contained in the document: *Co-ordinated scheme for the Admission Arrangements for pupils to Primary and Secondary Schools 2027-2028.*

1. Date of Admission to Primary and Infant schools

1.1 Although the law does not require children to be admitted to school until the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday, (compulsory school age), the School Admissions Code makes provision for all children to be admitted to school in the September following their 4th birthday.

1.2 Parents will be able to access this entitlement through one of the following options.

- **Option 1**
  Full-time in the Reception Year from 1 September following the child's 4th birthday.
- **Option 2**
  Part-time in the Reception Year from 1 September following the child's fourth birthday.
- **Option 3**
  Part-time in an Early Years setting.

2. Deferred Entry to Primary Schools

2.1 Where the Authority offers a place at a primary or infant school, a parent who accepts that school place can defer entry to that school until the term after the child's fifth birthday.

2.2 There may be Spring and Summer Term admissions as a result of parents who have deferred their child's entry.

2.3 The deferred place at that school will be held for that child and will not be available to be offered to another child.

2.4 The deferred place must be taken up during the same school year for which the offer of the place was made and accepted.

2.5 Entry to a school cannot be deferred to the next academic year or beyond the beginning of the term following the child's fifth birthday.

3. Summer Born Children

3.1 Parents of summer born children, (those born from 1 April to 31 August) may choose not to send their child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to reception rather than year 1.

3.2 The child would then be admitted into Reception Year group in the following year when other children in their age range are beginning Year 1.

3.3 Parents must write to the Admissions Team requesting to delay their admission to school and provide any information in support of their request.

3.4 A decision is taken by the Admission Authority based on the circumstances of the case and in the best interests of the child.

4. Admission of Children Outside of Their Normal Age Group

4.1 Parents of gifted and talented children, summer born children, or those who have experienced problems or missed part of a year, for example due to ill health, can seek places outside their normal age group.

4.2 A determination on the exceptional circumstances will be made by the Authority based on the information provided by the parent.

4.3 Where the decision is to refuse admission there is no right of appeal if the child is offered a place in another year group in the school.

5. Children of UK Service Personnel

5.1 For families of service personnel with a confirmed posting to their area, or crown servants returning from overseas, the admission authority must allocate a place in advance of the family arriving in the area provided the application is accompanied by an official letter declaring a relocation date, and a Unit postal address or quartering area address when considering the application against oversubscription criteria.

6. Oversubscription Criteria

6.1 Where the number of applications for a primary or secondary school received during the normal admissions round exceeds the admission number of the school, or an admission limit set higher than the admission number, then admission will be determined in accordance with the following priority of admission criteria:

- Children who have an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) which names the school are required to be admitted.
- First, to Looked After Children (LAC), Previously Looked After Children (PLAC), and children who have been in state care outside of England (IPLAC).
- Second, to children with brothers and/or sisters attending the school* on the proposed date of admission.
- Third, to children living nearest the school; the distance to be measured by a straight line between the centre point of the child's ordinary place of residence and the main entrance to the school building.

6.2 The child's ordinary place of residence will be deemed to be a residential property at which the person or persons with parental responsibility for the child resides at the closing date for receiving applications for admission to school.

*siblings must be attending in reception to Year 11 at the time of admission, this does not include Penistone post-16 centre.

6.3 Where parental responsibility is held by more than one person and those persons reside in separate properties, the child's ordinary place of residence will be deemed to be that property at which the child resides for the greater part of the week including weekends.

6.4 Where responsibility for a child is shared evenly, the address where the child is registered at the Doctor's, is the address that will be used for admissions purposes.

6.5 For the sibling criterion to be applicable one of the following conditions must exist:

a) brother and/or sister to be permanently resident at the same address.

b) stepbrother and/or stepsister to be permanently resident at the same address (to include half-brothers/sisters).

6.6 A 'looked after child' is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social care functions at the time of making an application to the school.

6.7 Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order). This also includes those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

7. Expressing a Preference for Admission to the relevant Year Group

7.1 This procedure applies to admission for the Reception Year in either a primary school (age range 5-11) and to Year 7 in a secondary school.

7.2 For admission to the Reception Year Group or Year 7, parents will be invited to express three preferences for those schools at which they wish their child to receive education.

7.3 Preferences will be made via the online admissions system or on the common application form.

7.4 The application will provide three spaces in which parents can state their preferences in rank order and give reasons for those preferences.

7.5 Applications can be submitted through the Council Website using the Online Admissions System, which is the preferred method of application recommended to parents. Forms can also be posted or emailed directly to School Admissions (parents are advised to obtain proof of posting if using a postal service).

7.6 For primary applications, the common application form for admission to school during the normal admissions round can be handed in to the school ranked first on the common application form. For secondary schools the completed form can be handed in to the child's current primary school. Parents are advised to gain a receipt from the school they have handed the form to.

7.7 Applications must be submitted by the closing dates of **31 October 2026** for secondary schools and by **15 January 2027** for primary schools.

8. Single Offer of a School Place

8.1 All preferences for individual schools will be treated equally.

8.2 For each preference expressed the Authority will determine whether the child is eligible for admission.

8.3 Where a preference is expressed for a primary or secondary school which is oversubscribed the Authority will apply the priority of admission oversubscription criteria.

8.4 The Authority will make a single offer of a school place for the highest ranked preference where the child is eligible for admission to school. (See Appendix 3)

8.5 For children not resident in Barnsley, the offer of a place will be made by the Authority in which the child resides.

8.6 The Authority will only make a single offer of a school place.

8.7 The offer of a place to a parent will be communicated to the parent on the offer day of **16 April 2027** for primary schools and **1 March 2027** for secondary schools.

8.8 No acknowledgement of an offer will be required from the parent where they accept that offer of a place. However, where a parent declines the offer of a place made to them by the Authority, they must inform the Authority within 10 working days from the date of receipt of the letter.

8.9 Where the Authority cannot make a single offer for any of the preferences expressed by a parent resident in Barnsley, an offer will be made to the parent for the nearest school in Barnsley with places available to the child's ordinary place of residence. This may also include a voluntary aided school or academy. The offer of a place under these circumstances will be completed after the offers made for all other preferences to schools, and before the offer day.

8.10 For definition of 'nearest' and 'ordinary place of residence' see Section 6.

8.11 Where a place has been allocated and the parent declines that place and requires a place at a school ranked lower on the original common application form, the parent must notify the Authority in writing.

8.12 Where a place has been allocated and the parent declines that place and requires a place at a school not originally named by the parent, the parent will be required to complete another application.

8.13 The allocated place will remain assigned to the child until such time as the parent accepts an offer for another school.

8.14 Where an application submitted by a parent contains fewer than three preferences it will be processed using the same criteria as one which contained three.

8.15 In the case where a parent fails to complete and submit an application form, they will not receive a single offer of a school place on National Offer Day

9. Late Applications

9.1 Late applications received for primary schools after **15 January 2027** by the Authority will be considered after the determination of the single offer of a school place for those applications received by **15 January 2027**.

9.3 Late applications for secondary schools received after **31 October 2026** by the Authority will be considered after the determination of the single offer of a school place for those applications received by **31 October 2026**.

10. Waiting Lists

10.1 The Authority will establish a waiting list for all schools where the number of applications for those schools has exceeded the places available in the relevant year group.

10.2 Names of children will automatically be placed on the waiting list for a school where they have not been offered a place where that school is ranked above that at which a place has been offered to the parent.

10.3 Parents will have the right to request their child's name placed on the waiting list or a school where they have not been offered a place which is ranked lower than that at which they have received a single offer of a school place.

10.4 A vacancy arises in Reception Year and Year 7 only when the number of allocations to a particular school fall below the admission number (or a higher admission limit where one has been set). Any vacancy which arises in Year R or Year 7 following allocation of places will be filled from the waiting list.

10.5 The waiting list will be established on the offer day and be maintained up to the end of the Autumn Term in the admission year.

10.6 The waiting list is determined according to the Authority's priority of admission oversubscription criteria.

10.7 Following the offer day should an application be received for a school where the pupil has a higher priority, as determined by the admissions criteria for a place at the school, they will be placed on the waiting list above those with a lower priority.

10.8 Parents who intend to appeal against the Authority's decision not to offer a place at a preferred school(s) should do so irrespective of having their child's name placed on the waiting list.

10.9 For those parents who proceed to an independent appeal, no consideration is given to a child's position on the waiting list.

11. False Information

11.1 Where the Authority has made a single offer of a place at a school based on a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application from a parent, which has effectively denied a place to a child with a stronger claim to a place at the school, the offer of a place will be withdrawn.

11.2 Where a child starts attending the school based on fraudulent or intentionally misleading information, the place may be withdrawn depending on the length of time that the child has been at the school. Where a place or an offer has been withdrawn the application will be re-considered and an independent appeal offered where the child is not re-admitted to the school.

11.3 Where it is established that the place was obtained based on fraudulent or intentionally misleading application and the child continues to attend the school, the sibling criterion will cease to apply in the event of the parent making an application to the same school on behalf of a younger child in the family.

12. Appeals Against the Authority's Decision Not to Offer a School Place

12.1 Any parent whose child is not offered a school place for which they have expressed a preference has the right to an independent appeal.

12.2 The right of an independent appeal applies to all preferences expressed.

12.3 Parents who intend to make an appeal must submit a Notice of Appeal to the Authority within 20 school days of receiving the offer letter.

12.4 Normally appeal hearings will be held within 40 school days of the closing date for receiving the notice of appeal.

12.5 For twice excluded pupils see section 15.

13. No Common Application Form Received for Children Resident in Barnsley

13.1 On 1 July 2027 the Authority will identify children for whom no common application form has been received.

13.2 These parents will be contacted to determine whether they intend to apply for a maintained school in any local education authority area.

13.3 Where parents inform the Authority that their child will be attending a school not maintained by a local education authority (private/independent) no place will be allocated to the child.

13.4 All other children not included under paragraph 13.3 will be allocated a place as follows:

a) where subsequently a common application form is submitted – a single offer of a school place will be made in accordance with the admission arrangements.

b) where no common application form is received – a place will be allocated to the child at the nearest school in Barnsley with places available to their normal place of residence.

14. Application for Admission to Schools Outside the Normal Admission Round

14.1 Where applications are received for admission to school following the offer day they will be dealt with as follows:

a) admission where the year group is below the admission number (or higher admission limit where one has been set), the parent will be offered a place.

b) admission where the year group is above the admission number (or higher admission limit where one has been set).

i. where the Authority determines that there would not be prejudice to the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources by the admission, the parent will be offered a place.

ii. where the Authority determines that there would be prejudice to the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources by the admission the parent will not be offered a place.

14.2 The prejudice referred to under b(ii) may arise by reason of measures required to be taken in order to ensure compliance with the duty imposed on the Authority to comply with the statutory limit on infant class sizes.

14.3 Where the admission is for Years 8-11 inclusive, and the pupil is deemed to be a pupil with challenging behaviour the Authority can determine not to offer a place even though there may be places available in the appropriate year group because to do so would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources.

14.4 This will be where the school to which the application is made has a particularly high concentration of pupils with challenging behaviour and where either:

a) it is under special measures or has recently come out of them (within the last two years); or

b) it has been identified by OFSTED as having serious weaknesses; or

c) it is subject to a formal warning notice.

14.5 Where a parent is not offered a place at a school outside of the normal admission round, they have the right to an independent appeal.

15. Twice Excluded Pupils

15.1 Where a child has been permanently excluded from two or more schools, parents can express a preference for a school place, but the requirement to comply by the Authority does not apply.

15.2 Where the Authority does not comply with a parent's preference, the parent does not have the right of an independent appeal.

15.3 Where a child has been permanently excluded from two or more schools this provision applies to them during the period of two years beginning with the date on which the latest of those exclusions took effect.

16. Distance Criterion: Tie Break

16.1 Where the offer of the remaining place in the relevant year group could be made to the parent of eligible multiple siblings, resident at the same address, it will be for the parent to determine for which sibling the single offer of the school place will be made.

a) Where the offer of the remaining place in the relevant year group could be made for a number of eligible children resident equidistant from the school the determination of the single offer will be by Random Allocation.

b) The Random Allocation will be completed by the Local Authority's admission system.

17. Parental Responsibility & disputes

17.1 Parents/carers who hold parental responsibility have the right to make the application for school. However, only one application can be made so a decision must be taken as to which parent/carer will complete the application.

17.2 The school preferences must be agreed by all parties, if they do not agree all application(s) will be withdrawn and may cause the application to be late which may disadvantage the child if the school(s) applied for are oversubscribed.

17.3 If parents/carers are not in agreement of the application to school, the application will not be processed until written consent is given by both parties or a court order has determined the school preferences.

APPENDIX 1

Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools

NAME OF SCHOOL	ADMISSION NUMBER
Athersley North Primary School	40
Birkwood Primary School	60
Brierley C of E VC Primary School	30
Burton Road Primary School	45
Cawthorne C of E VC Primary School	24
Cherry Dale Primary School	40
Gawber Primary School	30
Joseph Locke Primary School	60
Jump Primary School	30
Keresforth Primary School	30
Lacewood Primary School	30
Millhouse Primary School	20
Oxspring Primary School	20
Shawlands Primary School	45
Silkstone Common Primary School	20
Silkstone Primary School	30
Springvale Primary School	30
Thurgoland C of E VC Primary School	30
Thurlstone Primary School	25
Secondary Schools	
Penistone Grammar School	320

APPENDIX 2

Timetable for admission to Primary School

Closing date for receiving applications	15 January 2027
Offer day	16 April 2027
Appeals completed	End of Summer Term 2027

Timetable for admission to Secondary School

Closing date for receiving applications	31 October 2026
Offer day	1 March 2027
Appeals completed	End of Summer Term 2027

APPENDIX 3

Criteria for the offer of a single place at a primary, infant, junior or secondary school

A resident in Barnsley will only receive a single offer of a school place at any primary, infant, junior or secondary school if they have completed a common application form.

Parents are to express three preferences for the school they wish their child to attend and list them in rank order.

All three preferences will be treated equally by the Authority.

Where a preference meets the criteria for a school the child becomes eligible for a potential offer.

Where there is only one potential offer, that will be the single offer of a school place at a primary, infant, junior or secondary school made to the parent on the offer day.

Where there are two or three potential offers, the ranking of the expressed preferences on the common application form will be used to determine which of those potential offers becomes the single offer of a place.

1st	School A
2nd	School B
3rd	School C

Preferred Schools in rank order		Outcomes							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1st	School A	P ✔			P ✔	P ✔	P ✔		
2nd	School B	P	P ✔		P			P ✔	
3rd	School C	P	P	P ✔		P			

Key

P	Places available – child eligible for admission and therefore a potential offer
R	School oversubscribed – child not eligible for admission based on priority of admission criteria

✔ Highest ranked preference available for which the single offer of a school place will be made

Further Reading

School Admissions Code 2021

Summer born children starting school: advice for parents

Contact & Information

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