

Co-ordinated Scheme for the Admission of Pupils to Primary and Secondary Schools 2026-2027

School Admissions & Access Service

December 2024



Barnsley – the place
of possibilities.



BARNSELY
Metropolitan Borough Council

Interpretation

In this scheme;

“The Authority” means Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council acting in their capacity as local authority.

“Admission authority” in relation to a community or voluntary controlled school means the Authority and, in relation to a voluntary aided school, trust school or Academy means the governing body of that school.

“Admission arrangements” means the arrangements for a particular school or schools which govern the proceedings and decision making for the purposes of admitting pupils to the school.

National Offer days: the days determined by legislation on which the decision to offer or refuse a child admission to a school of their preference will be communicated to parents.

Within this Scheme, any reference to a ‘school’ includes the following:

- community and voluntary controlled schools
- voluntary aided schools
- trust schools
- academies
- free schools
- foundation schools

Introduction

For the school year 2026-2027 the Authority will be co-ordinating the admission to school arrangements with these local authorities that share a border with Barnsley:

- Kirklees
- Wakefield
- Doncaster
- Rotherham
- Sheffield

There is no cross-border movement of pupils between Barnsley and Derbyshire due to the geographical locations, and full co-ordination with Derbyshire is therefore not necessary.

The co-ordinated scheme for admission to primary and secondary school is a mechanism that will enable the Authority to determine between potential offers of a school place at more than one school, which is the single offer of a school place that will be offered to a Barnsley resident.

Eligibility for admission to a school is determined by the respective admissions authority. These are:

- i) for community and voluntary controlled schools in Barnsley, the Local Authority.
- ii) for voluntary aided schools, trust schools, free schools, foundation schools and Academies, the respective Governing Bodies.
- iii) for schools in the five neighbouring local authorities, the respective Authority or governing body.

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

- 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.
- That application is considered by the relevant admission authority for the school determining, in accordance with the school's admission arrangements, the order of priority in which the application is ranked; and
- A determination relating to that application is communicated to the parent on the offer day.

A potential offer of a school place is where the pupil is eligible for admission to that school.

The co-ordinated scheme will enable the Authority to manage all applications for admission to school in the following way;

Barnsley residents

To determine for children resident in Barnsley a single offer of a school place from potential offers at schools in Barnsley and/or any other local authority.

Non-Barnsley residents

The scheme will not determine a single offer of a school place to a child living in another local authority area, it will be the Authority's admission to school policy which will determine the child's eligibility for admission and consequently a potential offer.

This potential offer will be communicated to the child's home Authority and through that Authority's scheme the single offer of a school place will be communicated to the parent.

The single offer of a school place

The Authority will be the body that makes the single offer of a place to Barnsley residents as follows:

- for community and voluntary controlled schools where the Authority is the admissions authority.
- on behalf of the VA schools, trust schools, Academies, free schools, foundation schools.
- on behalf of any primary or secondary school maintained by another local authority.

The single offer of a school place will be communicated to parents on **16 April 2026** for primary schools and **1 March 2026** for secondary schools.

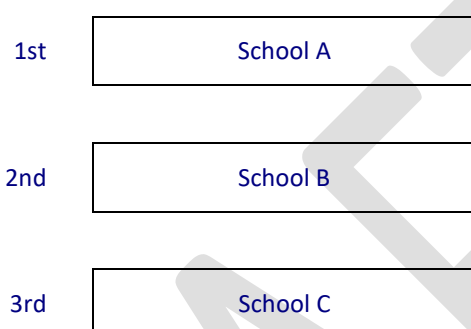
Under the co-ordinated scheme the local authority responsible for the area in which the parent and child reside is known as the 'home authority'.

Dates

Where any date specified in this scheme 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.

1. The Coordinated Scheme

- A parent resident in Barnsley will express three preferences 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 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 school place.

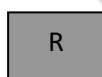


Preferred Schools in rank order		Outcomes							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1st	School A	P ✓	R	R	P ✓	P ✓	P ✓	R	R
2nd	School B	P	P ✓	R	P	R	R	P ✓	R
3rd	School C	P	P	P ✓	R	P	R	R	R

Key



Places available – child eligible for admission and therefore a potential offer



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

- Where the Authority cannot make a single offer for any of the preferences expressed by a parent resident in Barnsley – outcome 8, a place will be allocated to the child at the nearest school in Barnsley with places available to their normal place of residence.

2. Applying for a school place

2.1 Applications for admission to a school in Barnsley or any other local authority area from a parent resident in Barnsley must be made via the Barnsley online system or on the Barnsley common application form.

2.2 Applications for Barnsley schools from parents' resident in another local authority area must be made on that Authority's common application form.

2.3 Parents will be invited to state on their application three preferences for schools in rank order and give reasons for those preferences.

2.4 Where parental responsibility is shared, all persons must agree on the school preferences. If the Authority receives information that another person with parental responsibility does not agree with the preferences, the application will be withdrawn and placed on hold until written agreement is received by all parties, or a court determines the preferences.

2.5 The Authority cannot process any application that is under dispute, any disputes must be resolved by the respective closing date, or the application will be treated as late.

2.6 For Barnsley residents the recommended process of application is via the online admissions system accessible from the Council website. Alternatively, a common application form for primary schools must be handed in to the school ranked first on the common application form. Application forms for secondary schools must be handed in to the child's current primary school or directly to the Local Authority if the child's primary school is in another authority.

2.7 For children not resident in Barnsley the common application form must be returned to the home authority's admissions service.

2.8 Applications must be received by the closing date of **15th January 2026** for primary schools and **31st October 2025** for secondary schools.

3. Procedure

3.1 The closing date for the receipt of the common application form is **15th January 2026** for primary schools and **31st October 2025** for secondary schools.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS

3.2 By **8 February 2026** the Authority will:

- I. have sent to other LAs details of applications where a school maintained by them is named by a parent.
- II. have sent to oversubscribed VA, trust, foundation schools and Academies, details of applications where that school is named by the parent.
- III. have received from other LAs copies of their common application forms where a Barnsley school is named by a parent resident in their respective areas.

3.3 By **13 March 2026** the Authority will have;

- I. received the eligibility lists for own admission authority schools
- II. a list of potential offers for undersubscribed own admission authority schools

3.4 By **19 March 2026** the Authority will have determined eligibility for those schools for which it is the admission authority.

- Where a child is eligible for admission to more than one Barnsley school, the Authority will apply the scheme to determine the single offer of a school place.
- Where an application has been received from a resident in a neighbouring local authority, that authority will be informed of the outcome of the application.
- Where a Barnsley resident has applied for a place at a school maintained by a neighbouring local authority, that authority will inform Barnsley of the outcome of that application.

3.5 By **25 March 2026** the Authority applies the scheme for a second time to take account of those offers made by neighbouring LAs to Barnsley resident.

3.6 By **25 March 2026** Barnsley and the neighbouring LAs will exchange information on which offers of school places in their respective authorities are to be accepted. This exchange of information will allow Barnsley to identify vacancies at its schools.

3.7 By **30 March 2026** the Authority will allocate to vacant places at schools where it is reasonable and practicable to do so.

3.8 In addition, for those applications from Barnsley residents where none of the three preferences can be met a place will be allocated to the child in accordance with paragraph 5.1.

3.9 On **16 April 2026** Barnsley residents will be sent the single offer of a school place as determined by the co-ordinated scheme. On the same day all Barnsley primary schools will be able to access a list of those children whose parents have been sent a single offer of a school place at their respective schools.

SECONDARY SCHOOLS

3.10 By **5 December 2025** the Authority will:

- I. have sent to other LAs copies details of applications where a school maintained by them is named by a parent.
- II. have sent to voluntary aided schools, trust schools, free school, Academies, details of applications where that schools are named by the parent.
- III. have received from other LAs copies of their common application forms where a Barnsley school is named by a parent resident in their respective areas.

3.11 By **19 December 2025** the Authority will have received the eligibility lists for own admission authority schools.

3.12 By **17 January 2026** the Authority will have determined eligibility for those schools which it is the admission authority.

3.13 Where a child is eligible for admission to more than one Barnsley school the authority will apply the scheme to determine the single offer of a school place.

3.14 Where an application has been received from a resident in a neighbouring local authority, that authority will be informed of the outcome of the application.

3.15 Where a Barnsley resident has applied for a place at a school maintained by a neighbouring local authority, that authority will inform Barnsley of the outcome of that application.

3.16 By **30 January 2026** the authority applies the scheme for a second time to take account of those offers made by neighbouring LAs to Barnsley resident.

3.17 By **13 February 2026** Barnsley and the neighbouring LAs will exchange information on which offers of school places in their respective authorities are to be accepted. This exchange of information will allow Barnsley to identify vacancies at its schools.

3.18 By **20 February 2026** the Authority will allocate to vacant places at schools where it is reasonable and practicable to do so.

3.19 In addition, for those applications from Barnsley residents where none of the three preferences can be met a place will be allocated to the child (in accordance with paragraph 5.1 below).

3.20 On **1 March 2026** Barnsley residents will be sent the single offer of a school place as determined by the co-ordinated scheme. On the same day all Barnsley secondary schools will be able to access a list of those children whose parents have been sent a single offer of a school place at their respective schools using the School Access Module (SAM).

4. The offer of a school place

4.1 Parents will only receive a single offer of a place for admission into the Reception Year at a primary school or Year 7 in a secondary school from their home authority.

4.2 All offers will be communicated on the offer day **16 April 2026** for primary schools and **1 March 2026** for secondary schools.

4.3 Barnsley Authority, as the home authority for the co-ordinated scheme will make all offers:

- I. for community and voluntary controlled schools where it is the admissions authority; and
- II. on behalf of voluntary aided, trust, free, foundation schools and Academies where the governing body are the admissions authority.
- III. On behalf of other LA's where offers can be made for schools in that Authority.

4.4 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, they must inform the Authority within 10 working days.

4.5 There will be a number of applications for which no potential offers have been determined. These can be categorised as listed below and will be dealt with in that order to enable the Authority to make a single offer of a school place:

- I. First - child resident in Barnsley not eligible for any school for which a preference has been expressed and where the common application form was handed in on time.
- II. Second - late application for which the child is eligible for one or more potential offers.

- III. Third - late application where the child resident in Barnsley is not eligible for any school for which a preference has been expressed.

4.6 For children not resident in Barnsley, the Authority will not make a single offer of a place at a Barnsley school where the child is not eligible for all the preference expressed by the parent on the common application form.

5. Preferences not met

5.1 Where the Authority cannot make a single offer for any of the preferences expressed by a parent resident in Barnsley, a place will be allocated to the child at the nearest school in Barnsley with places available to their normal place of residence.

5.2 The single allocation of a place will be determined after all preferences for schools have been dealt with and communicated to them on the national offer day.

- I. 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.
- II. where a place has been allocated and the parent declines that place and requires a place at a school not named on the original common application form, the parent will be required to complete another common application form.

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

5.4 A determination of the nearest school is the distance 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.

5.5 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.

5.6 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.

5.7 Where residency for a child is shared evenly, the address where the child is registered at their Doctor's/GP will be used for admissions purposes.

6. Transfers between schools during the school year

6.1 Applications received from 1 September 2026 onwards for admission into any year group are classed as an in-year transfer.

6.2 The Authority will not be co-ordinating applications for in-year transfers between local authorities.

6.3 Applications for schools in other authorities from parents' resident in Barnsley must be made on that authority's common transfer form

6.4 The Authority will be co-ordinating applications for in-year transfers for all schools in Barnsley.

6.5 Applications for admission to any school in Barnsley must be made on the Barnsley Common transfer form.

6.6 A single offer of a place will be made by the maintaining authority.

7. Right of Appeal

7.1 Any parent/carer* whose child is not offered a school place for which they have expressed a preference, has the right to an independent appeal. The right to appeal also applies at times other than the normal times of entry to school (e.g., when families move into an area during the year), and in respect of admissions at other than the normal age (such as a year early or a year late for transfer from primary to secondary school).

7.2 Parents who have missed the normal deadlines for applying for admission (late applications) or who have had an offer of a place withdrawn also have a right to appeal if they are refused a place.

*(Except, temporarily, the parent/carer of a child who has been permanently excluded from two schools and where at least one of the exclusions took place since 1 September 1997. This applies to a twice excluded pupil for a period of two years beginning with the date the latest exclusion took place).

8. Late Applications

8.1 The closing date for applications in the normal admission round is 15 January 2026 for primary schools and 31 October 2025 for secondary schools.

8.2 Applications received by the Authority up to 15 January 2026 for primary schools, and applications received up to 31 October 2025 for secondary schools will be included in the determination of potential offers on offer day.

8.3 Applications received after 15 January 2026 for primary schools and 31 October 2025 for secondary schools up to 31 August 2025 for admission to the Reception Year and Year 7 will be considered as a late application outside of the normal admission round as defined in this scheme.

8.4 Applications received after 15 January 2026 for primary schools and after 31 October 2025 for secondary schools will be considered after the determination of the single offer of a school place for those applications received by the respective closing date.

8.5 On 1 March 2026, secondary applications received between 1 November 2025 and 28 February 2026 and on 16 April 2026, primary applications received between 16 January 2026 and 15 April 2026 inclusive will be processed in accordance with the admissions criteria, regardless of the date the application was received.

8.6 Late applications received from 1 March 2026 up to and including 31 August 2026 for secondary schools, and from 16 April 2026 up to and including 31 August 2026 for primary schools will be processed in date order of receipt.

8.7 Late applications should be made on the common application form via the online system. The provisions of the co-ordinated scheme as set out in section 1 will determine the single offer of a school place.

8.8 Parents who have submitted a late application and are not offered a place at any or all their preferred schools have the right to appeal.

9. Waiting Lists

9.1 The Authority will establish a waiting list for all schools where the number of applications for those schools has exceeded the places available in Reception year and year 7.

9.2 The waiting lists for schools will be determined as follows:

- I. for community and voluntary controlled schools in accordance with the Authority's admission to school oversubscription priority of admission criteria.
- II. for own admission authority schools in accordance with the Governing Body's priority of admission criteria.

9.3 The waiting list for a Barnsley school will comprise of:

- I. those applicants with a single offer of a school place ranked lower than that of the school for which the waiting list refers.
- II. those applicants who have informed the Authority they wish their child's name to be placed on the waiting list of a school ranked lower than the school for which they have received the single offer of a school place.

9.4 A vacancy arises in Year R or Year 7 only when the number of offers to a particular school falls 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 the allocation of places will be filled from the waiting list.

9.5 The waiting lists will be established on the offer day and be maintained up to the end of the Autumn Term 2026.

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

10. Information required by own admission authority schools

10.1 Some schools, e.g., voluntary aided schools, require additional information which is not contained on the common application form.

10.2 In addition to the common application form, some schools in Barnsley and other LAs will therefore have a supplementary information form for prospective applicants to complete, to provide the additional information.

10.3 The supporting information provided by parents will be used by the school, in applying their admissions criteria.

10.4 This form is not an application form for admission to a school.

10.5 Parents who intend to express a preference or preferences for schools which are their own admission authority must follow the procedure set out below:

- I. complete the supplementary information form for the school(s) for which they intend to express a preference on the common application form.
- II. submit their application via the online system or a common application form.
- III. return the supplementary information form(s) with the online application or directly to the school by 15 January 2026 for primary schools and 31 October 2025 for secondary schools.

10.6 Where a supplementary information form is not submitted with the application, it may affect the consideration by the governing body of that school of the preference expressed.

10.7 The governing body of a school may determine whether to obtain a copy of the supplementary information form where the parent has failed to submit one with their common application form.

10.8 Where a governing body determines to obtain the supplementary information form from a parent it may do so up to and including 15 January 2026 for primary schools and 31st October 2025 for secondary schools and must do so for all applications.

10.9 The completion and return of the supplementary information form does not guarantee a place at the school.

10.10 A supplementary information form is not an application for admission to school. Where a parent only submits a supplementary information form, without a common application form, this will not be a valid application for admission to the school.

11. Information required by neighbouring local authorities

11.1 Other LAs have oversubscription criteria for voluntary controlled and community schools that is different to those operated by Barnsley.

11.2 Parents who make an application for a school in another LA should:

- I. obtain a copy of that LA's Admission to School Booklet.
- II. make themselves aware of the oversubscription criteria.
- III. ensure that any additional information required by that LA is provided and attached to the common application form to be used by Barnsley residents.

11.3 The additional information provided by the parent will be used by that LA to determine eligibility. Failure to supply the additional information will affect that LA's consideration of the application.

12. False Information

12.1 Where the Authority has made an offer of a place at a primary 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 where this provision is included in the respective admission authority's admission arrangements.

12.2 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.

12.3 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.

13. No common application form received for children resident in Barnsley

13.1 On 1 July 2026 the Authority will identify children for whom no common application form has been received under the scheme.

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

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

13.4 All other children will be allocated a place as follows:

- I. where subsequently a common application form is submitted – a single offer of a school place will be made in accordance with the provisions of the scheme.
- II. 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. Arrangements for those authorities who do not border with Barnsley

14.1 The Authority will only co-ordinate admission arrangements with those local authorities which share a border, however, information will be exchanged with any other authority where appropriate.

14.2 Where a resident in any other authority applies for a Barnsley school the application will be dealt with as follows:

a) for non-Barnsley residents relocating to Barnsley:

- I. complete the Barnsley common application form
- II. determination of eligibility and single offer of a school place communicated to parent by Barnsley
- III. allocation of a place if preference(s) cannot be met

b) for non-Barnsley residents remaining in their home authority area:

- I. complete home authority common application form
- II. determination of eligibility and single offer of a school place communicated to parent by Barnsley
- III. allocation of a place does not apply

15. Timetable for co-ordinated admissions for primary schools

Closing date for applications	15 January 2026
LA sends applications to own admission authority schools	8 February 2026
Own admission authority schools send LA list of pupils in priority of eligibility order	13 March 2026
LA determines potential offers	19 March 2026
LA determines single offer	25 March 2026
LA to offer places to pupils where no preferences have been met	30 March 2026
Offers made to parents by LA	16 April 2026
Appeals	May to July 2026

16. Timetable for co-ordinated admissions for secondary schools

Closing date for applications	31 October 2025
Barnsley LA sends applications for schools in other LAs to those LAs and forwards applications to academies/VAs	5 December 2025
Academies and other LAs send the lists of pupils in eligibility order to the Authority	19 December 2025
Barnsley LA applies its admission to school oversubscription criteria and the scheme for own schools and informs other LAs of potential offers for their residents	17 January 2026
Barnsley LA applies the scheme for the second time to take account of offers from neighbouring LAs	30 January 2026
Barnsley and neighbouring LAs exchange information on the confirmation of offers to be made	13 February 2026
Allocation to vacancies where reasonable and practicable and identification of the single offer to be made to Barnsley residents where no preferences can be met	20 February 2026
Offers made to parents by Barnsley LA	1 March 2026
Appeals	May to July 2026