**Transferring Schools**

A Guide for Parents, Carers and Social Workers

If your child is due to start primary school Reception Class or start Year 7 at secondary school in September, there are set dates by which you need to make your application. If you need further information on these processes, please contact the Admissions Team via any of the methods listed at the bottom of this page.

Applications for other year groups and for Reception or Year 7 after that class has started are called in-year applications; these can be made all year round. This guide relates to in-year applications for schools in the Bradford district.

If you wish to apply for **Idle CE Primary School**, **Eden Boys’ Leadership Academy** or **any Catholic school**, you will need to contact the school directly to make an application because these schools manage their own admissions processes.

Applications for all other schools in the district are made on the Bradford Council In-year Common Application Form (ICAF) and are processed by the Admissions Team. The Admissions Team makes decisions on places at Community Schools and Voluntary Controlled School. The Academy Trust or governing body makes decisions on places at Academies, Foundation Schools and Voluntary Aided Schools. The Admissions Team co-ordinates the application process for these schools by sending your ICAF to the school then passing on the school’s decision to you.

Things to consider before making an application

***•* Changing schools will usually be disruptive to a child’s education and should only be considered as a last resort.** *Children take time to settle, make new friends and adapt to different teachers. In most cases a transfer between local schools can be avoided by speaking to the current school about any difficulties you or your child are experiencing. If you feel any issues you raise are not dealt with effectively, consulting your school’s complaints procedures may be more appropriate than attempting to transfer your child to a different school.*

***•* Your child could miss important work or might not be able to continue studying the same subjects.**

*Although the National Curriculum is taught in most schools (academies do not have to follow it), different topics will be taught at different times of the year. As a result, transferring primary school during a year when your child is due to sit SATs is not recommended. Secondary school exam boards and courses differ between schools so your child may not be able to complete a course they have started.* **Transferring secondary school during Year 10 and Year 11 will be disruptive to your child’s education and is likely to have a negative impact on their chances of gaining good grades.**

***•* Your child might receive less support in a different school.**

*If your child has specific needs and their current school provides additional support, a new school might not be able to match it. If you are unhappy with the support your child currently receives, a new school may not be able to provide anything extra. Please visit the Local Offer website (*[*localoffer.bradford.gov.uk*](file:///%5C%5Cbradford.gov.uk%5Cdatavault%5Ccyp%5CES%5CSchool%20Admissions%5CSecure%5CIN%20YEAR%20ADMISSIONS%5CForms%5Clocaloffer.bradford.gov.uk)*) for further information on what assistance may be available to you. Also, Bradford SENDIASS provide independent advice to support families of children with additional needs and can be reached on (01274) 513300.*

***•* Consider the costs involved.**

*The school may start / finish at a time that means you have to make changes to child care arrangements. Amongst other things, you will need to buy a new uniform and P.E. kit.*

***•* Unless you have moved house your child will not normally transfer until the start of a new term.**

*A new pupil starting school not only affects that child but also the other children in the class and school staff. To minimise disruption Bradford operates a ‘mid-term transfer policy’. This states that children who currently hold a local school place and are not in need of an immediate transfer should only transfer at the start of a new term.*

***•* The law on school attendance.**

*Your child must continue to attend their current school until they are given a place in a new school. Parents who fail to ensure their child attends regularly at the school at which they are a registered pupil can be prosecuted (Education Act 1996, section 444). In all situations, you must inform the school* ***before*** *your child stops attending.*

**• Further advice**

*The Admissions Team can be contacted on* ***01274 439200*** *between 9am and 4pm Monday to Friday, or via* *schooladmissions@bradford.gov.uk* *. Please note that Covid-19 restrictions mean we are currently unable to provide face-to-face assistance but our postal address is:*

***Admissions Team, Department of Children’s Services, Margaret McMillan Tower, Princes Way, Bradford, BD1 1NN***

**• What should I do before submitting an application?**

* If your child is having difficulties at school, speak to relevant staff at the current school. Most issues can be resolved this way but the school can only provide additional support if the right people are made aware of the problem.
* Research your preferences. Schools have different strengths and children react differently to particular learning environments. Only you know what you’re looking for, so speak to the staff at a school before applying for it. Check the school’s admissions policies to see if any priority can be given to your situation.
* Apply for the schools you want, not where you think might have a place. The Admissions Team can tell you which schools may have places, but availability changes daily and we cannot guarantee a child will qualify for a vacancy until an application has been assessed.
* Inform your child’s current school that you are making an application. If you are moving house, you must make the school aware of the situation **before** you move. Your application may be delayed if Part 2 of the form has not been completed by your child’s current or most recent school.

**• How do I make an application for a Child in Care?**

Applications must be made by the social worker, not the carer or Children’s Home. Social workers must follow the statutory guidance, *Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children*. Guidance includes consulting the Virtual School on appropriate placements and visiting schools before deciding upon the setting best suited to the child’s needs (you should only apply for one school). **Please submit a cover letter with the ICAF** explaining why the specific school has been selected as this will speed up an allocation, if we need to consult the school.

**• How long will my application take and how will I be informed of the outcome?**

All applications are processed as quickly as possible but the length of time it takes varies depending on the situation. We will write to you to confirm the outcome of your application and aim to send you a decision letter within **20 school days.** If your child has complex needs, the application is for an Academy, Voluntary Aided or Foundation school or the ICAF has not been completed fully, this process may take longer.

**• When is the best time to apply?**

Applications are accepted all year round so the best time to apply will depend on your personal circumstances.

* If you are moving house, you should apply as early as possible. Your child must continue to attend their current school until a new school place has been secured, even if you have moved to the other side of the city; applying early will minimise any inconvenience this may cause you.
* You can apply before you move house but we can only consider your application from a new address once you have provided evidence of the move. Until that point, your application will be considered from your old address.
* If your child is not yet in the country, we will not be able to process your application unless you provide copies of airline tickets or similar documentation confirming an arrival date. We will also require proof of a Bradford address.
* Places can only be held for a limited time so, if you want your child to transfer at the start of the next academic year, the earliest we can accept your application is 1 June each year.

**• How do you decide who is given a place?**

Every school has an admissions policy that sets out how places are allocated; this is all that can be considered when filling an available place. Different schools have different policies so you should consult the policies for your preferred schools to see if there are any documents you can submit to give yourself more chance of gaining a place.

**• What happens if there are no places in the schools I’ve applied for?**

Most schools are full in at least one year group and the most popular schools are full in all year groups. As a result, you may not be offered the school you want, but your decision letter will confirm what options are available to you:

* If your child is a Bradford resident but not on roll at a local school, we will find the nearest available vacancy for you.
* If your child is not in school but not a Bradford resident, we will not offer an alternative but will inform your council.
* If your child is on roll at a local school, we will simply inform you that your application has been unsuccessful, but you are welcome to contact us to discuss potential availability elsewhere.

**• Can I be placed on a waiting list for my preferred schools, if my application is unsuccessful?**

In most cases, yes, but being on a waiting list does not mean you will eventually be offered a place. Primary school waiting lists are generally only kept open for one academic year and secondary school lists usually only last one term; you will need to reapply if you have not been offered a place by the time the waiting list closes. Please note that Feversham Academy only holds a waiting list for the autumn term of Year 7.

**• What is the Fair Access Protocol (FAP)?**

Every local authority is required to have a FAP. This is used to allocate the most vulnerable or difficult to place pupils. The Admissions Team will use the information provided on your ICAF to determine whether your application requires consideration under the FAP. In certain specific situations, schools may refer an application for processing under the FAP. Further information and Bradford’s full protocol can be found at [www.bradford.gov.uk](http://www.bradford.gov.uk).