



Changing Schools 2015/16

Applying for a place at a school in Cornwall during the school year (making an 'in-year' application)

Guide for parents/carers

Advice and support

If you need help in finding a school place, or need any advice during the process, please contact the Family Information Service or School Admissions Team:

Family Information Service

Telephone: 0800 587 8191

Email: fis@cornwall.gov.uk

Website: www.cornwallfisdirectory.org.uk/

Facebook: www.facebook.com/CornwallFIS

School Admissions Team

Email: schooladmissions@cornwall.gov.uk

Website: www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions

Telephone: 0300 1234 101

Post: School Admissions Team, New County Hall, Treyew Road, Truro, TR1 3AY

Please read these notes carefully before submitting an in-year application.

Introduction

An 'in-year' application is an application for a school place other than at the usual entry points into a school (i.e. September into a Reception class or year 3 at a junior school or starting secondary school). You might make an application if you are moving into or out of Cornwall or moving within Cornwall. You might also make an application to change schools even if you are not moving house.

The in-year admissions application process applies equally to all state-funded schools i.e. both local authority maintained schools (such as community, trust, voluntary-aided and voluntary-controlled schools) and academy/free schools (state-funded independent schools which are not under local authority control). Parents/carers living in Cornwall should apply to Cornwall Council for a place in any of these types of school.

Changing schools is a significant step and often difficult to avoid because of a house move. There are also situations when a parent/carer might decide that they are not happy with their child's current school and have to make the difficult decision about whether or not to apply for a change. In this situation, we strongly recommend that you first talk to someone at your child's current school about your reason/s for considering a change as it might be that any issues could be addressed without having to change schools. Before making an application, you could consider:

- discussing any concerns with the headteacher, class teacher or other senior member of staff at your child's current school;
- contacting the Family Information Service (0800 587 8191);
- if bullying is an issue, looking at the guidance on the DfE website www.gov.uk/bullying-at-school/the-law.

If you decide to apply for a change of school, you may also wish to consider:

- transport: you should be aware that your entitlement to home to school transport might change depending on where you are applying, even if you are not changing your address;
- implications for secondary-age students: you should be aware of the possible implications of your child not being able to continue studying the same subjects/option choices and their existing coursework not being applicable to a different examining body.

About the application process

To find out more about admissions, visit www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions.

Can I change my child's school even if I am not changing my address?

Yes. You should be aware, however, that your entitlement to transport might change depending on which school you are applying for. For more information visit www.cornwall.gov.uk/schooltransport or contact the School Admissions Team.

How can I find out about designated schools?

To find out which school is designated for your home address or your proposed new home address, please visit www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions or contact the School Admissions Team.

What do I do if I live outside Cornwall?

If you do not currently live in Cornwall please apply to your own Local Authority who will co-ordinate your application with us. If your local authority does not co-ordinate in-year applications (they will advise you of this) you can then apply direct to Cornwall's School Admissions Team for a school place in Cornwall.

What if we are applying for a place from overseas?

If your child is not currently resident in the UK, an application will be accepted if evidence can be provided (usually by a copy of the relevant page(s) of a passport) that the child is a British citizen, or has a right of abode in the UK or is a national of the European Economic Area (EEA). Evidence of residence in Cornwall by the required date of admission must also be provided. Applications from non-EEA nationals and other applicants will be dealt with in accordance with the non-statutory guidance on the DfE website www.gov.uk/dfes.

What if I want to apply to a school outside Cornwall?

You should contact the local authority for the school where you are seeking a place. They may direct you back to the Cornwall School Admissions Team if their schools do not handle their own admissions but will advise you what you need to do.

What about Service families?

The Admissions Code 2014 requires admission authorities to have arrangements that support the Government's commitment to removing disadvantage for children of UK Service Personnel. We will allocate a place outside the normal admissions (up to twelve weeks in advance) for a Service family arriving in the area, provided that the application is accompanied by an official letter with a relocation date and a Unit postal address or quartering area address or confirmation of the most likely living address. The provisions of the Code are to help remove disadvantage for Service Families but this does not mean that they will be entitled to preferential treatment – this is made clear in 'Admissions to Schools in England and The Armed Forces Covenant' (Ministry of Defence 2013) – available at www.gov.uk. Cornwall Council's Protocol for the Admission of Service Children can be found at www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions or on request from the School Admissions Team.

Applications for Service children will be processed and places allocated based on the proposed address (with supporting evidence) or, if the family are not able to confirm a proposed address and a unit or quartering address is provided, an allocation will be made based on the unit or quartering address. This is to ensure that the child is not left without a school place, although it is accepted that the family may want/need to change their preference when a new address is confirmed in order to try to secure a school closer to that address. The School Admissions Team will then offer support and guidance, advising on available places and likely timescales.

Will I be entitled to transport if I change schools?

You should be aware that your entitlement to transport might change depending on where you are applying, even if you are not changing your address. See details under 'What about transport to school?'

What if I want places for more than one child?

Please be aware that having a child admitted into a particular school does not guarantee a place for their sibling(s). All schools have to follow their published oversubscription criteria and cannot generally exceed published admission numbers in order to place siblings at the same school. You should complete one application form for each child.

Will we have to have an interview for a place?

No – interviews are strictly forbidden by the School Admissions Code 2014 and you should not be invited for an interview or be offered/refused a place based on the outcomes of a meeting with the school. Cornwall Council takes this very seriously and you should notify us if you are asked to attend an interview or believe that you have been treated unfairly. Contact the School Admissions Team for advice.

Completing the application form

What is considered to be my child's 'home address'?

Each child may have one registered address only for the purposes of determining priority for admission and transport entitlement. This address should be the place where the child is normally resident at the point of application or evidence of the address from which a child will attend school, in the form of written confirmation of a house purchase or a formal tenancy agreement. Exceptional circumstances in relation to the provision of a home address will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If there is shared residence of the child or a query is raised regarding the validity of an address, the LA will consider the home address to be with the parent with primary day to day care and control of the child. Residency of a child may also be clarified through a child arrangement order where it is shown who has care of the child. Evidence may be requested to show the address to which any Child Benefit is paid and at which the child is registered with a doctor's surgery. It is expected that parents will submit only one application for each child - any disputes in relation to the child's home address should be settled before applying, the admission authority will not become involved in any parental disputes if agreement cannot be obtained before an application is made then parents/carers may need to settle the matter through the courts. Where no agreement is reached or order obtained, the admission authority will determine the home address. Please note the

additional information under 'Fraudulent applications' and the 'Data Protection Statement' within this guidance in relation to providing a home address.

Why do you recommend that I name more than one preference?

It will not always be possible to meet your first preference for a school place therefore we recommend that you list three schools. You will be offered a place at the highest preference school at which you qualify for a place. Where you are eligible for a place at more than one of your preferences, only the highest preference school will be allocated. In the event that we can't offer your first preference school and you haven't named any other schools on the form, we will allocate the nearest school with room.

What is a Fair Access Protocol?

All local authorities are required to have a Fair Access Protocol which:

- ensures that children who are most vulnerable can be offered a place at a suitable school as soon as possible, even if that school is already full;
- ensures that all schools in an area admit their fair share of children with challenging behaviour, including children excluded from other schools.

Your in-year application will be assessed to see if it could potentially fall under the Fair Access Protocol.

For children that have been permanently excluded or are/have been attending an Alternative Provision Academy and do not have a school place, or children that fall under any other 'Level 2' categories in the Protocol, their application will be handled separately to the normal in-year process. We will let you know more about this when we have received your application.

The Protocol and further details can be found here: www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions or by contacting the School Admissions Team.

What if my child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care Plan?

If your child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) you should discuss this with the SEN Assessment and Provision Team (0300 1234 101) before making an application.

About the allocation of places

Processing the application

Applications will be processed no more than eight school weeks in advance of a school place being required, so we would not treat your application as 'being received' in advance of that eight-week period (unless you are a Service family, in which case the timescale will be twelve weeks). The 'closing date' for applications – in hard copy, electronically or by fax - is midnight on each working day. Usually, all applications received by midnight each working day will be considered equally.

Will I get confirmation that you've received my application?

If you would like us to confirm that we have received your application, you must include a stamped addressed envelope with your form. Forms sent in by email to schooladmissions@cornwall.gov.uk will generate an automated response confirming receipt.

How long will it take to process my application?

Applications are dealt with by Cornwall Council and will usually be processed within ten school days, however at peak times this may be longer, up to a maximum of twenty school days. Applications which fall under Level 2 of the Fair Access Protocol will be handled outside the normal admissions process.

How will places be allocated?

If the number of pupils in the year group at the school you are applying for is below the number that it is agreed they can take (the 'Published Admission Number [PAN] or an agreed number above this [the 'operational capacity']) and there are no other applications to be considered for that year group, your child will qualify for a place.

What if the school I want to apply to is full – can I go on a waiting list?

You can request to go on a waiting list if the school (or Cornwall Council on behalf of the school) hold one but should remember that the order of children on a waiting list may change depending on who is added to the list and their priority under the school's oversubscription criteria. No priority is given to the length of time that a child has been on the list. In addition, children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan which names the school, Children in Care or those that were previously in care or those allocated a place through the Fair Access Protocol will get priority over those on the waiting list.

How can I find out what the school's oversubscription criteria is?

All schools have a set of criteria which are used to prioritise applications in the event that there are more applications than places available at the school. If the school is a community or voluntary-controlled school, the oversubscription criteria is set by Cornwall Council, as the admission authority for these types of school. These criteria can be found at www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions or by contacting the School Admissions Team. If the school is an academy, free school, trust or voluntary-aided school, they set their own oversubscription criteria which will be available on their own website or on the Council's website or by contacting the school direct.

What if a place is refused?

The School Admissions Team will be able to tell you about places available at other schools in the area. You also have the right to appeal which the Team will inform you about.

Can I apply again if my request is refused or my appeal is dismissed?

You will only be able to have one application per child processed for the same year group for the same school. A second application would only be considered where there has been a significant and material change in yours or the school's circumstances which

would affect the level of priority to be given to the application. Please note that a school changing to academy status is not considered to be a significant change.

What about transport to school?

Children are not eligible for transport free of charge and this will usually have to be organised and paid for by parents or carers (although there are some arrangements for lower income families of secondary school age children). You can apply for assistance with transport if **all** of the following details apply to your child:

- Your child lives in Cornwall;
- They attend the designated or nearest primary or secondary school; and
- The journey to school is two miles* or more for a child at a primary school, and three miles or more for a child at a secondary school.

*this applies for the 2015/16 academic year only. There are changes to the Home to School Transport Policy for primary aged children from 1 September 2016.

Distances are calculated using Cornwall Council's Geographical Information Service (GIS), currently 'Datamap'.

If transport is likely to be an issue for you, we would advise you to contact us to see if we can help with transport before deciding on your preferred schools. You can obtain a list of your nearest schools by using the 'My Area' tool on the www.cornwall.gov.uk homepage; however, please note that this will only give a straight line distance from your postcode to the school. Entitlement to assistance with transport is based upon actual travelling distances calculated using Cornwall Council's Geographical Information Service (GIS), currently 'Datamap'. More information can be found here: www.cornwall.gov.uk/schooltransport.

When will the school place be available?

If you do not specify a date when the school place is required, we would expect the place to be taken up within two weeks of allocation. Places cannot be held indefinitely. It is your responsibility to notify us **in writing** if you no longer require the place. Write to: School Admissions Team, New County Hall, Truro, TR1 3AY or email: schooladmissions@cornwall.gov.uk.

Fraudulent applications

Please note that if you make a false statement or omit any relevant and appropriate information in your application you could be subject to investigation and may potentially face criminal proceedings. The information you supply in the application may be shared, as the law allows, for the purpose of preventing and detecting fraud. The offer of a school place may be withdrawn if my application is found to be fraudulent. You must notify the Council immediately of any change in your circumstances – failure to do so or providing false or misleading information may lead to prosecution action being taken against you. As part of the process of ensuring that school places are allocated fairly, Cornwall Council undertakes address checks on a random sample of applications each year to ensure that information submitted by parents/carers is correct. If you are randomly selected you will receive a letter requesting evidence of your current address. Cornwall Council may also request evidence where it is alerted to potential false statements. In either of these circumstances, any concerns about the validity of the information provided may lead to investigation and applicants could face criminal proceedings in addition to the withdrawal of the offer of a school place.

Data protection statement

The information on this application form is collected by Cornwall Council as data controller in accordance with the data protection principles contained within the Data Protection Act 1998. This information is collected by Cornwall Council to allow it to carry out its functions in relation to the allocation of school places. Your data may be shared by Cornwall Council with other relevant admission authorities or Council departments (e.g. other local authorities, schools, Cornwall Council's Democratic Services etc.) for the purpose of dealing with your application and any related matters (e.g. appeals). In addition, the information you provide in connection with your application may be used for the purposes of dealing with matters connected with or ancillary to your child's education (e.g. school transport, school meals, etc.) or the purpose of updating any other records (e.g. social care, health records, etc.) which either the Council or the schools hold in relation to your child. Your data may also be shared, as the law allows, for the purpose of preventing and detecting fraud.

By completing and submitting your application you give your express consent that all data submitted by you may be processed by us in accordance with the above mentioned purposes.

The information you provide in connection with your application will be retained by Cornwall Council and/or the school at which your child is placed for the duration of your child's compulsory education. You have a right to apply for a copy of the information we hold on you or your child and to correct any inaccuracies. However, please note that this does not include details of any allegations of fraud or the details of any investigations that may have been carried out. In addition, in the event that you no longer wish us to process the information for the purpose(s) provided you may withdraw your consent at any time by giving us written notice. You should understand, however, that we may nevertheless need to continue processing your personal information in accordance with our statutory obligations to the extent permitted by law.

If you have any concerns regarding the processing of your data then please contact the School Admissions Team.

Family Learning – what's it all about?

Are you a parent or carer for children? Do you understand the teaching methods and language used today? Can you help your child with their studies to help them achieve at their level?

Family Learning delivers free courses across Cornwall to help parents and carers get back in touch with the school curriculum, support their children's learning, meet other parents and generally have a fun time learning and updating their skills.

We also offer short 6 to 10 hour courses focusing on starting Primary and Secondary School – aimed to help you and your child look forward to this new chapter in their lives.

All Family Learning tutors are DBS cleared for working with vulnerable children and adults

To find out about free Family Learning courses in your area either call us on 01872 327519 and speak to our admin team or look at the Cornwall Family Information Service website and type Family Learning into their search box.

If you would like this information in another format please contact:

**Cornwall Council
County Hall
Treyew Road
Truro TR1 3AY**

Telephone: **0300 1234 100**

Email: enquiries@cornwall.gov.uk

www.cornwall.gov.uk