



# Changing Schools

**Applying for a place at a school in Cornwall  
during the school year ('in-year')**

[www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions)

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# Where to get help

## School Admissions Team

**Website:**

[www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions)

**Email:**

[schooladmissions@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:schooladmissions@cornwall.gov.uk)

**Post:**

School Admissions Team  
Cornwall Council  
County Hall  
Treyew Road  
Truro  
TR1 3AY

**Telephone:**

0300 1234 101

## Family Information Service

For help with completing the application, understanding the process or other aspects of starting school, or if a parent/carer's first language is not English, please contact the Family Information Service.

**Telephone:**

0800 587 8191

## Family Learning – what is it all about?

Would you like to be able to support your child with their learning? Perhaps you need to refresh your own skills or just find out about the language and methods used in schools to teach your child.

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 update their skills.

**There are courses to help improve the support you can offer your child with maths, reading, writing or IT, including our new Scratch programming course. There are also courses designed to prepare you and your child for the transition between nursery and primary school or primary to secondary school.**

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 them on 01872 327519 or look at the Cornwall Family Information Service website and type Family Learning into their search box: [www.cornwallfisdirectory.org.uk](http://www.cornwallfisdirectory.org.uk)

# Introduction

An 'in-year application' refers to an application made to change schools during the school year - i.e. not at the normal points of entry (starting in reception, transferring to year three in junior school or transferring to year seven in a secondary school). You might make an application if you are moving into or out of Cornwall or moving within Cornwall. You might make an application to change schools even if you are not moving house.

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 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.

## Responsibility for admissions

Cornwall Council co-ordinates applications for all schools in Cornwall using a process set out in the 'Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme' for the relevant year which is summarised in this booklet.

The Scheme can be found at [www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions).

Cornwall Council and schools must follow the School Admissions Code 2014. Each school has an 'admission authority' which sets the arrangements including the priority order they will use if there are more applications than places available – the 'oversubscription criteria'. Cornwall Council is the admission authority for community and voluntary-controlled schools. For foundation, trust and voluntary-aided schools the admission authority is the school's governing body and for academies it is the academy trust.

# Applying for a school place

## Special Educational Needs

If your child has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan) or a Statement of Special Educational Needs, you **do not** need to complete an application form as a school place will be identified through a separate process. However, **if a request has been made for an EHC needs assessment** for your child, or your child is **currently being assessed** to decide whether an EHC Plan is necessary, you will need to make an application using the normal process.

Please contact the SEN Assessment and Provision Team for more information:

**Tel:** 01872 324242      **Email:** [specialeducation@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:specialeducation@cornwall.gov.uk)

See the section 'Special Educational Needs' later in this booklet for more information.

## Identifying your preferred schools

Before you make your decision regarding the schools you would prefer for your child, you may wish to visit several schools in order to find out more about them. You should contact the schools direct to arrange this. You could also have a look at the schools' websites or ask for a copy of their prospectus.

## Designated areas

Cornwall Council has divided the County into geographical areas called 'designated areas' which are each served by a specific school or schools. **Please note: your designated school may not be the one nearest to your home address.**

Some schools include living in the designated area as a priority in their oversubscription criteria (the criteria they will use to decide on who should be allocated places when there are more applications than places available). However, entitlement to transport to **all** schools will be determined by Cornwall Council with regard to whether the school is in the designated area for your address or is your nearest school.

If you want to identify the designated school or schools for your address, access [www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions) or contact the School Admissions Team.

## Applying for a school outside Cornwall

If you want to apply for 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.

## Living 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.

## Applying for a place from overseas

Children who hold a full British Citizen passport or children whose passport has been endorsed to show they have a right to abode in the country are entitled to apply for a place in a maintained school. The passport or visa should be made available for inspection before an offer of a school place can be made. Asylum seekers should make available evidence of their right to abode as provided by the National Asylum Support Service.

Applications on behalf of children currently living outside the UK will be considered but until the child is resident in the country their home address will be considered as being their place of residence outside the UK. Exceptions to this would be instances where the children are of parents returning from foreign postings, such as UK Service Personnel and other Crown Servants who have been posted abroad on a fixed term contract and who are returning to live within the UK. Proof of the future UK residency will be required if an application is made to an oversubscribed school.

## Service Families (UK Armed Forces)

Cornwall Council acknowledges that Service Families may be disadvantaged when applying for a school place as they are more likely to need to apply outside the normal admissions round when schools may already be full or be unable to provide a specific address ahead of a posting in good time for the relevant admissions processes. There are certain legislative provisions for the admission of children of Service Families and processes within the local authority which seek to address the disadvantage that might be experienced by Service Families. These are described in the Local Authority's Service Families Protocol available at [www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions) or from the School Admissions Team along with signposting to sources of support and further information.

Applications will be processed and places allocated **based on the proposed address** with supporting evidence **or**, if you 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 your child is not left without a school place, although it is accepted that you may want/need to change your 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.

## Children in care/previously in care

Applications for children in care and children who were previously in care (but immediately after being in care became subject to an Adoption, Child Arrangement, or Special Guardianship Order) will be prioritised and a school place identified in

accordance with this scheme as well as the additional provisions of the separate Protocol for these children, available at [www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions) or on request from the School Admissions Team. **Applications for children in care must be completed by the Social Worker.**

## Home to school transport

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 'Home to School Transport'.

## Applying for a place 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 their agreed admission numbers in order to place siblings at the same school. You should complete one application form for each child.

## Admission of children outside their normal age group

Parents may seek a place for their child outside their normal age group, for example if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. A school's admission authority must make the decision on whether or not to accept a pupil outside their normal age group. Those seeking placement outside the normal age group during the school year should contact the School Admissions Team for advice in the first instance. Guidance on the process can be found at: [www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions) or on request from the School Admissions Team.

Parents who are refused a place at a school for which they have applied have the right to appeal to an independent admission appeal panel. They do not have a right of appeal if they have been offered a place and it is not in the year group they would like.

## Home address

Each child can 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 Local Authority 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 booklet in relation to providing a home address.

### **Shared parental responsibility – duplicate and disputed applications**

Only one application can be processed for each child and only one offer of a school place made. Disputes on the preferred schools by those with parental responsibility should be settled between the parties, neither the Local Authority nor the admission authority will become involved in any parental disputes. If a person with parental responsibility submits an application that is disputed by another person with parental responsibility then parents may need to settle the matter through the courts. Where no agreement is reached or order obtained in time for the Local Authority to carry out its duties in accordance with the published timescales, the admission authority will proceed with the admissions process on the basis of the current application form. If more than one parent submits an application within the processing timescales and those applications have different preferences, the Local Authority will only proceed with the allocation process where agreement on preferred schools is reached and notified to the Local Authority by both parties in writing or where a court order is obtained and a copy provided to the Local Authority. This may mean that the Local Authority is unable to offer a school place within the stated timescales.

### **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 the 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.



# The allocation process

## When to apply

You can apply for a change of school at any time, however 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 school weeks). The deadline for applications is midnight on each working day.

## Processing timescales

Applications will generally be processed within twenty school days. Applications which fall under Level 2 of the Fair Access Protocol will be handled outside the normal admissions process and you will be advised of the likely timescales once your application has been received.

## Allocation of places

Places will be allocated, wherever possible, within the stated timescales where the number on roll in the year group in question is below the agreed admission number for that year group. The agreed number will either be the Published Admission Number (PAN) as it has followed the year group through the school from the normal point of entry (starting in reception, year 3 of a junior school or year 7 of a secondary school) or another agreed admission number for that year group if that is different due to organisational or other changes. Where there are more applications than there are places available, the school's oversubscription criteria will be used to determine the priority order for places. The oversubscription criteria can be found in full at [www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions) or on request from the school. Where a child is not eligible for a place at any school named on the application form, the child will be allocated a place at the nearest suitable school in Cornwall with a space available.

## Notification of allocated place

You do not need to do anything when you receive your notification of the place allocated if you wish to accept the offer. The letter offering a school place will ask you to confirm in writing if the place is no longer required. If you do not respond it will be assumed that the place is accepted. If your child fails to arrive at the allocated school by the 'open until' date stated in your letter, the procedure described in the Co-ordinated Scheme will be followed. This may involve withdrawal of the offer of a place if the school and Local Authority are unable to contact you.

## Change of mind

If you change your mind about your preferences before a school has been allocated, you will need to inform the School Admissions Team in writing. There will be a new 'process start date' for your new preferences which will be the day after you notify us of the change.

If you change your mind after a place has been allocated, you will need to reapply for a place at your new preference and the offer of a place at the allocated school will be withdrawn.

### Appealing against an allocation

The letter will tell you whether you have been allocated a place at your second or third preference schools. If you did not name any other preferences or your other preferred schools are also full, your child will be offered a place at the nearest school with room. If you are not allocated a place at your preferred school you will have the right to appeal to an independent panel - the letter will tell you how to do this.

Appeals for in-year refusals must be heard within 30 school days of an appeal being lodged.

### Applying/appealing again

A further application within the same academic year will only be accepted if the admission authority decides that there has been a significant and material change in your circumstances or that of your child or the school. You can only appeal again for a place in the same school within the same academic year if the admission authority has accepted a further application but has had to refuse the place again.

### Waiting lists

**Please note that not all schools hold waiting lists.**

Parents will be asked to state if they wish their child to be added to a waiting list for any schools where they are refused a place, if a waiting list is held. You need to have been refused a place before you can be added to a waiting list for a school.

If you lodge an appeal, your child's name will automatically be added to the waiting list for a place at the school being applied for, if a waiting list is held.

The Local Authority, where it holds a waiting list for community and VC schools and on behalf of those governing bodies or academy trusts that request it, will maintain the list for the whole of the academic year for which the application is made. Parents will be reminded during the summer holidays that the waiting lists are being reviewed and that they have the option to remain on it for a further year. If parents do not respond to the reminder it will be assumed that they no longer require their child's name to remain on the waiting list. Where a waiting list is held, it will be based on the school's oversubscription criteria and children's places on a waiting list are subject to change according to additional information received about applications or children being added to the list. No priority is given to the length of time that a child has been on the list. Children in care and those that were previously in care, children with an Education, Health and Care Plan or Statement of Special Educational Needs or who are allocated to a school in accordance with the Fair Access Protocol will be given priority over children on the waiting list.

## Starting at the new school

If you do not specify a date when the school place is required, we would expect the place to be taken up within two school 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](mailto:schooladmissions@cornwall.gov.uk).

## Home to school transport

The responsibility for a child's attendance at school rests with parents/carers. This includes making the necessary arrangements for travel to school, including accompanying your child (or arranging suitable supervision) to and from school as necessary.

Cornwall Council provides transport free of charge to school in line with its duties under Section 508 and 509 of the Education Act 1996 and Schedule 35B inserted by the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

**Please note that eligibility for transport to school is assessed separately from admission to school and allocation of a school place should not be taken as an indication that transport will be provided.**

The designated areas used to determine eligibility for transport to school are those defined by Cornwall Council and may occasionally differ from the designated areas used (if any) in an individual school's admissions policy. To find out the designated school or schools for your address access [www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions) or contact the School Admissions Team.

If you are in any doubt as to whether your child would be eligible for home to school transport, please contact the School Admissions Team to confirm before submitting your application.

See the full Home to School Transport Policy at [www.cornwall.gov.uk/schooltransport](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/schooltransport).

# Special Educational Needs

Children and young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN) have learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for them to learn than most children and young people of the same age. These children and young people may need additional or different help.

Many children and young people will have SEN of some kind at some time during their education. Early years settings (for example, nurseries or childminders), mainstream schools, colleges and other providers can help most children and young people succeed with adaptations to their practice and some additional support. But there are a small number of children and young people who will need extra help for most of their time in education and training.

If a school or setting thinks that your child may have SEN they will discuss your child's needs with you, tell you what they will be doing to support them and how you can help. Children and young people identified as having SEN are described as being at 'School Support'.

If you are concerned about your child's needs or progress you should speak to their class teacher first. They may then share your concerns with the school's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO). Every school has to have a SENCO. They will also be available to discuss your child's needs and the arrangements to support them.

A very small proportion of children and young people need a more intensive level of specialist help that cannot be met from the resources available to schools and other settings. In these circumstances, you or your child's school or other setting could consider asking Cornwall Council for an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment for your child. This assessment could lead to your child getting an EHC Plan. Some children and young people will have needs that clearly require an EHC needs assessment and plan and when Cornwall Council is aware of them it will start without delay.

Wherever possible Cornwall Council aims to provide for children with SEN in mainstream schools. This includes most children with EHC Plans. However, for children with the highest level of need Cornwall Council has four Special Schools and some Area Resource Bases (ARBs) attached to mainstream schools. To attend a Special School or ARB a child or young person must have an EHC Plan. All admissions to Special Schools and ARBs are decided by Cornwall Council. Placement at a Special School outside Cornwall is possible in exceptional cases where no appropriate provision is available in Cornwall. Education is also provided for children in hospital and for those who cannot attend a school or educational setting for medical reasons.

If your child has an EHC Plan or Statement of SEN you are not required to make an application through the online admissions scheme. School admissions for children with an EHC Plan or Statement of SEN will be handled by the SEN Assessment and Provision Team, outside the Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme. Any application for these children will be processed in accordance with the SEN Code of Practice and associated regulations. See contact details on the next page.

## Sources of information and support

### SEN Assessment and Provision Team, Cornwall Council

Tel: 01872 324242

Email: [specialeducation@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:specialeducation@cornwall.gov.uk)

### SENDIASS

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service (known as SENDIASS) is an independent service for the parents of children with SEN. It can be contacted by telephone or via the SENDIASS website.

[www.cornwallsendiass.org.uk](http://www.cornwallsendiass.org.uk)

Tel: 01736 751921

### The Local Offer

The Local Offer aims to help families of children and young people with SEN by gathering useful information, in one place, so they can make informed choices about support. Cornwall's Local Offer describes the provision and guidance available for children and young people with SEN, aged 0 to 25, with or without an EHC Plan.

Visit [www.cornwallfisdirectory.org.uk](http://www.cornwallfisdirectory.org.uk) for more information.

### SEN Information Report

Every school has to prepare a SEN Information Report. This will be on each school's website. The report needs to include things such as the types of SEN support the school provides and arrangements for consulting families and involving them in their child's education.

### Department for Education Guidance

The Department for Education has provided a summary guide for families 'Special educational needs and disability Guide for parents and carers August 2014':

[www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/417435/Special\\_educational\\_needs\\_and\\_disabilities\\_guide\\_for\\_parents\\_and\\_carers.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/417435/Special_educational_needs_and_disabilities_guide_for_parents_and_carers.pdf)

# 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 and ensures that all schools in an area admit their fair share of children with challenging behaviour, including children excluded from other schools.

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](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions) or by contacting the School Admissions Team.

# Data protection statement

The information on your 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 this does not include the details of any persons who have notified the Council of alleged fraud or the details of any allegations or 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.

# Glossary

**Academies/free schools** are state-funded schools which are independent from the local authority. The academy trust sets the admission arrangements but parents/carers still apply to the local authority for a place at the school.

**Admission arrangements** are the overall procedures used in the allocation of school places. Admission arrangements are set by the admission authority.

**Admission authority** is the body responsible for setting and applying a school's admission arrangements. For community and voluntary-controlled schools this body is Cornwall Council. For foundation, trust, voluntary-aided, academy or free schools it is the governing body or academy trust.

**Community schools** are maintained by the local authority which sets the admission arrangements.

**Co-ordinated admissions scheme** is the process by which local authorities co-ordinate the allocation of places for schools in the area.

**Designated area** is a geographical area from which children **may** be afforded priority for admission to a particular school. If used as part of a school's admission arrangements, the designated area must therefore be consulted upon, determined and published in the same way as other admission arrangements.

**Fair Access Protocol** is a document that sets out how Cornwall Council and schools will ensure that during the school year children without a school place, particularly the most vulnerable, can be offered a place at a suitable school as soon as possible.

**Foundation schools** are maintained by the local authority and the governing body sets the admission arrangements.

**Oversubscribed** is where a school has a higher number of applicants than there are places available at the school.

**Oversubscription criteria** refers to the published criteria that an admission authority applies when a school has more applications than places available in order to decide which children will be allocated a place.

**Published admission number (PAN)** is the maximum number of children that a school will admit at the normal point of entry to a school. The number depends on the amount and type of accommodation available.

**Trust schools** are a type of foundation school which forms a charitable trust with outside partners.

**Voluntary-aided (VA) schools** are maintained by the local authority and the governing body sets the admission arrangements.

**Voluntary-controlled (VC) schools** are maintained by the local authority which sets the admission arrangements.

**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](mailto:enquiries@cornwall.gov.uk)  
[www.cornwall.gov.uk](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk)**