# Starting School in Buckinghamshire

## For children born between 01/09/2022 and 31/08/2023









Buckinghamshire Council



## Introduction

**This leaflet gives you some information on starting school and explains how to apply for a primary school place for your child.**

You must apply through the Local Authority or council where you live. If you live in Buckinghamshire, you can list up to six schools, including schools in other areas. If you live outside Buckinghamshire, you must apply through your own council or local authority, even if you want a Buckinghamshire school. Councils will share the information needed to process your application.

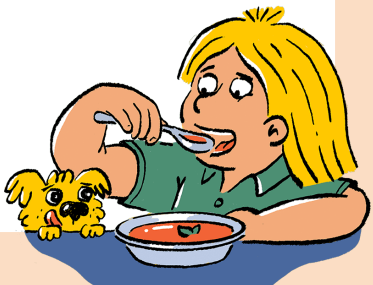
## What should you be doing now?

Visit our website for information about starting school:

**buckinghamshire.gov.uk/school-admissions**

The 'Find my child a school place' service on the website has additional information about our schools: **schools.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/school-admissions**

Check school websites for open events and information. You can also check your nearest or catchment school to see if it meets your child's needs.



## How are places allocated?

Sometimes a school receives more applications than places available, admission rules are used to decide who is offered a place. Admission rules can vary between schools, so please check the school's admission rules on our website. If you are applying for a school in another area, you should check that area's admission rules.

Some schools have a supplementary form for you to fill in. You must check the School Directory for more information: **schools.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/school-admissions/schools**

We use distance to help us work out who can be offered a place. Most but not all Buckinghamshire schools use straight line distance, you need to check this. Danesfield School and St Pauls CE School use routed distance.

Buckinghamshire LA uses an Equal Preference Scheme. This means the order you list school (1st - 6th) does not affect how likely it is that your child's chance of getting a place. If your child is eligible for more than one school, they will be offered the school you ranked highest on your application.

List the schools in the order you prefer. After the closing date, you cannot change your choices until later in the admissions process, so make sure you choose carefully and put them in your preferred order.

You can find information about starting school, including making an application, on our website:

**buckinghamshire.gov.uk/schools-libraries-and-parks/school-admissions-and-appeals**



## **How to apply** (Buckinghamshire residents only)

Please read the timeline in this leaflet. You can apply online, using a laptop, desktop, smart phone or tablet. Our system is safe and easy to use. Set up a username (your email address) and password. You can then fill in your details and your child's details and list up to six preferences for primary schools. Your home address and your child's should be the same.



Apply online from 11am on 04 November 2026 at:
**buckinghamshire.gov.uk/apply-primary-place**

Once we have received your preferences, we will send an automatic email confirming which schools you have applied for. You can log back in to change your application at any time before the deadline. Please remember to re-submit your application if you make any changes.

It is important that you use the same email address and remember your password. We will use your email address to contact you throughout the process, so it is important that you let us know if you change it.

**Make sure you apply by the deadline of 15 January 2027.**

When you apply, we ask for your council tax reference number to confirm your address. If you cannot provide this, please check our website for other accepted documents.

If you apply online, you will know which school we have offered your child a day early. You can log onto your account on 16 April to accept the school offer. You will also get this information in an email.

If you apply with a paper form, you will not know the outcome of your application until 17 April.



## Home to School Transport

If home to school transport is important to you, make sure you read and understand the rules about free home to school transport. We provide free transport to eligible children.

**To be eligible for free school transport your child must:**

1. **Attend their nearest suitable school. The nearest suitable school is determined at the point places are allocated.**
2. **The nearest suitable school must be over the statutory walking distance of 2 miles for children under the age of eight.**
3. **Your child must be statutory (compulsory) school age, i.e. the term following their fifth birthday.**

For your child to be considered for free transport you must include your child's nearest school as a preference on your application.

It does not have to be the highest preference. If your child's nearest school is not listed as a preference on your application, then we will not consider providing free transport to a school further away.

## Starting school with confidence

Every child develops at their own pace, but there are lots of skills you can practice with your child now to help them have a confident start to school in September.

- Growing independence, e.g. using the toilet and washing their hands, putting on clothes and shoes, using cutlery.
- Building relationships and communicating, e.g. taking turns, sharing their feelings and following simple instructions.
- Physical development, e.g. climbing and jumping, doing simple puzzles and crafts.
- Healthy routines, e.g. going to bed at around the same time each night, limited screen time, brushing their teeth twice a day.

## Early support for your child

Every child is unique and children develop at different rates. If your child has SEND, developmental differences, or is learning English as an additional language, some skills may take longer to develop.

Early support can make a big difference, ask your child's nursery or childminder, health visitor or Family Hub for advice and share information with your child's new school when you are allocated a place so they can plan the right support.

**For more information including advice on toilet training and tooth brushing visit: buckinghamshire.gov.uk/support-reception-skills**



# Timeline - What happens when?



You need to know these important dates if you live in Buckinghamshire.

### Autumn Term 2026

Learn about schools in Buckinghamshire using the School Directory in the 'Find my child a school place' service on our website. Visit schools' websites too. Attend any open days.

### 4 November 2026

Make your application online buckinghamshire.gov.uk

### 15 January 2027

Application Deadline - do not leave it until the last minute to submit your child's application.

### 16 April 2027

We offer school places. Parents who applied online will receive an email and can log on to accept the school offered.

## How to contact us

You need to know these important dates if you live in Buckinghamshire.

If you have a question that is not answered on our website, visit **buckinghamshire.gov.uk/contact-school-admissions** to contact us

**Or you can write to us:**

Admissions & Transport Team,
Children's Services,
Buckinghamshire Council,
Walton Street Offices, Walton Street,
Aylesbury, HP20 1UA

**Office Hours:**

9am – 5.30pm Monday to Thursday
9am – 5.00pm Friday

**Notes**

