

ADMISSIONS ARRANGEMENTS 2026-2027

**Initio Learning Trust
Bridport Primary School
Burton Bradstock CE Primary School
St Mary's CE Primary School
The Sir John Colfox Academy**

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Policy Written by

Initio Learning Trust

Ratified by Initio Learning Trust Board

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Date for Review

January 2026

This policy applies to the following schools for which Initio Learning Trust is the Admissions Authority under the School Admissions Code 2021.

The Sir John Colfox Academy
Bridport St Mary's CE Primary School
Bridport Primary School
Burton Bradstock CE Primary School

1. Admission of Pupils – General Principles

- The Schools within the Initio Learning Trust follow the School Admission Code 2021
- It serves Bridport and a wide area around.
- The School Admissions Code, legislative guidance including coordination, equal preference scheme and infant class size legislation are adhered to.
- Each school's catchment area is a geographical area defined by the authority following consultation with the governors and neighbouring schools and is available for parents to view on the Dorset Council website.
- Where possible, within the current constraints and legislation, children attend schools preferred by their parents.
- Every (Dorset) child will be allocated a place in an educational setting once an application is submitted.
- Admission arrangements are consistently and equally applied to all.
- Resources are used efficiently.
- Allocation of school places are made up to the planned admission number in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.
- The Dorset Council Admissions Arrangements adhere to the principles of the Equalities Act 2010.
- **Burton Bradstock CE Primary School and Bridport St Mary's CE Primary School**, recognising their historic foundation, will preserve and develop the religious character of their schools in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the churches at parish and diocesan level. These schools aim to support children and their families by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. They encourage an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promote Christian values through the experience they offer.
- In all of the schools, parents have the right to withdraw their children from the daily act of worship and from Religious Education.

2. Published Admission Numbers (PANs)

- All admission authorities must set an admission number for each 'relevant age group' and places will be allocated according to the published oversubscription criteria.
- The PAN for each school is:

Bridport Primary School	60
Burton Bradstock CE Primary School	15
St Mary's CE Primary School	30
The Sir John Colfox Academy	150

3. Admission of Pupils to School for the First Time at Age 4+/5

3.1 Statutory school age

- Children reach compulsory school age the school term following their fifth birthday. The start of term is defined as 1 September/January/April (this may not be the first day of term for the school being considered).

3.2 Admission at 4+

- An application must be submitted for every child to Dorset Council. Children can attend full-time in September of the year they are due to start school. Parents can request part-time attendance until compulsory school age is reached. This needs to be agreed with the headteacher of the school where a place is offered. Parents can also request deferred entry within the first academic year or until compulsory school age. A record of the deferment should be kept by the school and parent. The place is held and is not available to be offered to another child unless it is not taken up by the agreed date when it will be considered vacant. If this request for deferred entry goes beyond the start of the academic year, the parent will need to reapply for a school place in the next academic year for entry to year 1.
- Whether the child attends part/full-time will depend upon individual circumstances. The Initial Learning- West recognises that for some pupils and families, full day attendance in the first term may be inappropriate. Therefore, schools may, through consultation with parents and pre-schools, offer a more personalised provision, considering the needs of each individual child.

4. Transfer to the next school by age – entry to the Sir John Colfox Academy

- Parents who wish their children to be admitted to the Academy must complete the Common Application Form available through the local authority (LA) they reside in. The timetable, and information on how to apply for Year 7, is available from Dorset Council. The Co-ordinated Admission Scheme may be read at www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk . This is also the source for information regarding arrangements for late applications and for applications that relate to different year groups and deadlines. Please also read 'A Parents' Guide', available on this website. Parents are responsible for providing all relevant information with the application.

5. In year Admissions

- In-year or casual admissions will be processed by the local authority. If uncertain of whether the preferred school takes in-year applications directly, parents can contact the school itself or contact Dorset's school admissions department. A formal application must be made in all instances with relevant information attached to the application. Should a place not be allocated at a preference school the parents have a right of appeal. Any alternative placement offered will take account of the distance to travel consistent with the national guidance on journey times i.e.

the alternative placement will not exceed a journey of 45 minutes for primary aged children and 75 minutes for secondary age children.

6. Admission of children outside their normal age group

- Applications for a child to be placed outside of their normal chronological year group will only be considered under the most exceptional circumstances. The placement of a child outside his or her normal age group is not an appropriate strategy for meeting special educational needs. There can be a significant and long-term impact on children who are placed outside of their normal year group. This is at the discretion of the headteacher.

6.1 Back Yearing and Delayed Transfer

- There are instances when a child's overall best interests are served by delaying admission or remaining in the existing year. The social and educational implications of this must be considered. Such arrangements will be considered only if agreed or recommended by the child's headteacher and/or any other professional involved. Any decision will also be in line with the LA's guidance on the Placement of a Pupil outside of his or her normal age group' and with the parent's agreement.

6.2 Out of Dorset Requests

- Some families seek places in Dorset schools (e.g. where they have moved to the County from elsewhere) for their children to be placed in a year group other than their chronological year group. Requests are dealt with, and recommendations made by the admitting school, regardless of the child's home address, in line with the decision-making process indicated above.
- Such requests are refused unless there are very exceptional circumstances.

6.3 Delaying entry into Reception Year Group – Summer Born Children

- Where a child is born in the summer and parents wish to consider the delay of their child starting school in the Reception Class until after their 5th birthday, they will have to discuss this directly with the headteacher of the proposed school. These requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis and with reference to the 'Guidance on the Placement of a Pupil Outside his or her Normal Age Group'.
- If a parent applies for a reception place to be taken up after the child's 4th birthday and is allocated a place in the normal transfer round and then subsequently wishes for their child to enter the school in reception after their 5th birthday – they will have to make a new application in the next application year and surrender their current place. Their application will be considered afresh, and no guarantee will be given that they will get a place in the subsequent allocation as it will be subject to the relevant admissions code and the overall number of applications.

7. Placements in Alternative Settings and Managed Moves

- Policies are available on In Year Fair Access and Managed Move protocols on Dorset's school admissions webpage.
- Pupils from outside of Dorset who have been placed in alternative provision (PRU) and move into Dorset will initially be placed in a learning centre where consideration will be given to the most suitable placement to support the child's educational achievement. Should integration to

mainstream be considered appropriate, and on receipt of an application from the parent, this will be considered by the In Year Fair Access Panel.

8. Children in Care

- There is an additional policy and guidance available for Children in Care and children who have previously been in care applications. Children in Care applications are given the highest priority on the oversubscription criteria.

9. School Transport

- Details about school transport are provided in the Home to School Transport Policy. Advice is also provided in the Policy and Parents' Guide to ensure parents, guardians and carers are aware that their preference of school and the admissions criteria will affect their entitlement to 'free' school transport. This includes later changes (e.g. change of address) which could have a bearing on continued eligibility for school transport.

10. Withdrawal of School Places

Places will only be withdrawn where:

- A place has been offered in error by the admission authority and the affected child/ren have not yet started at the preferred school.
- A place has been offered based on a false, fraudulent or deliberately misleading application. The place will be withdrawn if the case has been identified by the first October half-term following admission.
- The place has not been taken up by the specified date – the parent will be contacted in advance of the withdrawal of a place.
- The place has been declined by the parent.

11. Waiting Lists

- The Local Authority operates a limited waiting list policy. Parents can apply to have their child's name placed on a waiting list for a period of one term following refusal. If parents wish to keep a child on a waiting list beyond this term, they will need to write in for an extension by the start of each term. There is no guarantee of a school place by remaining on the waiting list.

12. Appeals

- If the LA is unable to offer a place at a school that has been applied for, the parent has the right to appeal to an independent Appeals Panel. The decision of the Panel is binding on all parties and where parents succeed with their appeal, the place at the school originally offered by the LA will automatically be withdrawn.

13. OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

Where all parental preferences for places at the school can be satisfied, all children seeking a place will be admitted. Where there are too few places available to satisfy all preferences, places will be allocated according to the following priority order:

- a) **Children who are looked after by the local authority**, i.e. children with either a care order (full or interim) or who are accommodated under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989. Or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order - a copy of the adoption order, residence order or special guardianship order and a confirmation letter from the LA that last looked after the child should be provided with the application.
- b) Where a **Child Protection Order or Child in Need document** identifies that there is a need for the child to be educated in a school closest to home or in an identified particular school/setting for their own safety.
- c) **Vulnerable children with a physical, medical or social need.**
Medical need means where written evidence has been provided from a senior clinical medical officer or the child's GP/specialist showing that the child's condition would make it detrimental to the child's health not to admit him/her to the school.
Social Need means where the child is of confirmed refugee status. Written evidence of this from the LA must be submitted with the Supplemental Information Form and sent to the school on or before 15 January 2026 for the primary schools or 31 October 2025 for The Sir John Colfox Academy.
Registered Young Carer. Where a child is a registered young carer and it would be detrimental for the child to attend a different school. This must be supported by evidence of the child as a young carer.
- d) **Children living within the school's catchment area who will have a sibling*(s)** attending the school at the time of admission.
- e) **Children living outside the school's catchment area who will have a sibling(s)** attending the school at the time of admission
- f) **Children living within the school's catchment area.**
- g) **Children living outside the school's catchment area and who were attending one of the preferred school's recognised maintained feeder* schools or on-site Foundation Unit** during the previous year.
- h) **Children of staff** with at least two years continuous service at the school or who have been recruited to a vacancy to meet a demonstrable skills shortage as at the date of application (in year) or relevant closing date under the LA co-ordinated scheme (normal year of entry) and who still intend to be employed at the school at the time of the child's admission.
- i) **Burton Bradstock CE Primary School and St Mary's CE Primary School** will consider applications for children living outside the catchment area who are regular practising Christians of whatever denomination at a regular church or religious group, i.e. a member of Churches together in Britain and Ireland (see ctbi.org.uk); the Evangelical Alliance (see eauk.org); the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches (see www.fiec.org.uk); Affinity Fellowship of Churches (see www.affinity.org.uk).

In the event that during the period specified for attendance at worship the church [or, in relation to those of other faiths, relevant place of worship] has been closed for public worship and has not provided alternative premises for that worship, the requirements of

these [admissions] arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the period when the church or alternative premises have been available for public worship.

j) **All other children living outside the school's catchment area**

If oversubscribed within any of the priority order categories above, places will be allocated based on the shortest straight-line measurement using a geographical information-based system which identifies an Easting and Northing for the home address and the school building and calculates the distance between the two locations. NB School transport is based on walking and driven distances.

Notes

The term 'sibling' means full brother or sister, half or stepbrother or sister, adoptive brother or sister and other non-blood related children who live in the same household and relates to all year groups provided by the school.

Any parent wishing to apply using the interim vulnerable children or the faith criteria must complete the Supplementary Information Form (attached) and send it to the school on or before 15 January 2026 for the primary schools or 31 October 2025 for The Sir John Colfox Academy.

Foundation Unit at Burton Bradstock CE Primary School

Burton Bradstock CE Primary School has a Foundation Stage Unit as an extension to their Early Years Provision. Children can attend the Foundation Unit from the September after they turn 3 (the year before they start school).

All 3- and 4-year-old children in England are entitled to 15 hours (for 38 weeks of the year) of free Early Learning Care and Development until they reach the statutory school age. They may be eligible for an additional 15 hours.

*Feeder schools: Bridport Primary School, Bridport, St Mary's CE Primary School, Burton Bradstock CE VC School, Loders CE VC Primary School, Powerstock CE VA Primary School, St Catherine's Catholic Primary School, Bridport, Symondsburry CE Primary School, Thorner's C of E School

The school has capacity for 12 Preschool aged children at any one time. Admission will be based on applications and if there is an available place. Attendance at the Foundation Unit does not guarantee a place will be available at the school.

14. National Closing dates for applications

31 st October 2025	National closing date for secondary school applications
15 th January 2026	National closing date for primary school applications
2 nd March 2026	National offer day for secondary schools
16 th April 2026	National offer day for primary schools

Appendix 1

Initio Learning Trust

2026/27 SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION FORM

Part A- Please ensure that you read before completing

The oversubscription criteria set out in section i) of the Governors published Admission Arrangements, will be used to prioritise the offer of school places where there are more applications received than places available. The oversubscription criteria include a priority for:

Children who are regularly (monthly) practising Christians, of whatever denomination, at a recognised church or religious group. (A recognised church or religious group is one that is a member of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (see ctbi.org.uk).

If you wish your admission application to be prioritised on this basis, you must ensure that this Supplementary Information is completed by the vicar, priest, pastor or churchwarden of the attended Church to confirm that the requirements of the above statement have been met. *

Part B – Submitting your Supplementary Information Form

- For a child to start in Reception for the first time in September 2026 – your admission application form must be submitted to Dorset Council and your completed Supplementary Information Form sent by letter post directly to the school office at the same time.
- For a child to join any year group during the 2026/27 school year – your completed Supplementary Information Form must be submitted by letter post with your admission application form directly to the school office

Part C – Declaration to be made by vicar, priest minister, pastor or church warden

I have consulted with the local church leadership team and can confirm that

..... (enter child's name)

attends Church and has done so for at least once per month for the last twelve months*.

Signed

Print name

Position

Date

Note: The church leadership team includes clergy, church wardens and those responsible for Sunday School.

*** In the event that during the period specified for attendance at worship the has been closed for public worship and has not provided alternative premises for that worship, the requirements of these [admissions] arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the period when the church [or in relation to those of other faiths, relevant place of worship] or alternative premises have been available for public worship.**

Admission appeals timetable

Action	Deadline
Local Authority to publish appeals timetable to include:	28 February
a. For a parent to submit an Appeal	At least 20 school days from the parent receiving notice of the refusal of a place at a school
b. Notice of the Appeal Hearing	At least 10 school days before the hearing
c. Appellants (usually the parents) to submit evidence	8 school days before the Appeal hearing
d. Admission Authority (the school) to submit their evidence	
e. The Clerk (the person organising the appeal) sends Appeal papers to parents, the panel and the school	5 school days before the Appeal hearing
f. Additional evidence from the Appellants. (Sometimes the Appellants wish to provide additional information after seeing all the papers)	
g. Decision letters sent to the Appellants. (The letter that informs the Appellant if their Appeal has been Upheld or Refused)	Within 5 school days of the hearing (wherever possible)
h. For applications made in the Normal Admissions Round Appeals must be heard	Within 40 school days of the deadline for lodging appeals (see a. above)
i. For In Year and Late Applications (those that came in after the deadline and have not been decided by the offer date) Appeals must be heard	Within 30 school days of the Appeal