

September 2026 first round allocation statement for Bristol Free School

As Bristol Free School is oversubscribed, the admissions criteria published on the School and Local Authority website have been applied to allocate the places that are available at the school.

Number of applications received.

643 on-time applications (303 first preferences, 225 second preferences and 115 third preferences) have been received for Bristol Free School which has a published admission number of 200.

In anticipation of families in the Admissions Priority Area (APA) who also seek places in the independent sector, the school has agreed to Bristol City Council temporarily applying an “over allocation” of 25 places on 2 March 2026. This is to maximise parental preference.

The criteria stated in Bristol Free School’s admissions policy have been applied to allocate the 225 offers of places at the school in the first round. Any places, including those over 200, accepted in the first round, will be admitted by the school in September 2026.

How the initial allocation of places was made.

7 places were required for pupils with the school named in their Education, Health and Care Plan.

This left 218 places to allocate using the published criteria.

The 218 places have been offered to the following children:

1. Children who are in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by that authority in accordance with section 22 of the Children Act 1989, at the time an application for a school is made; and children who have left care through adoption, a residence order or special guardianship order. (5 places)
2. Children who, on the date of admission, will have a sibling on the roll of the school. Sibling means a full, step, half, adopted or fostered brother or sister, but not cousin, who will be living permanently with them at the same address at the date of their entry to the school; the school may require proof of relationship. This will only apply, if at the time of entry, both siblings reside at the same address inside the defined Admissions Priority Area (APA) (78 places)
3. Children of staff directly employed by the Russell Education Trust on a permanent full time or fractional contract at Bristol Free School in either of the following circumstances:
 - i) The member of staff has been employed for two years or more before the admission application and still employed, without having given notice or been given notice that the employment will end, at the time the offer is made.

ii) The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant teaching post for which there is a demonstratable skill shortage (determined by the Headteacher with the Chair of Governors and CEO of RET) (4 places)

4. For entry into the school (normally Year 7) an Admissions Priority Area (APA) will apply. The APA is a geographic area based upon the Neighbourhood Partnership Area (NPA), centred upon, the BS9 area, modified to incorporate the area close to the school.

i. 20% of the available places will be allocated to those applicants whose home address is closest to the school. The point to which measurements will be made is the mid-point on a line drawn between the centre of the Burghill Road and Concorde Drive entrances to the school. (26 places)

The furthest distance offered a place in this category was 0.616km.

ii. 80% of the available places will be allocated to those whose home address is closest to a point defined by the mid-point at the junction of Elmlea Avenue and Rylstone Grove; this point lies close to the centre of the NPA. (105 places)

The furthest distance offered a place in this category was 1.658km.

5. Should there be fewer applications from within the APA than there are places available, then all applicants from outside the APA will be considered. Again, 20% of the available places will be allocated to those applicants whose home address is closest to the school. The point to which measurements will be made is the mid-point on a line drawn between the centre of the Burghill Road and Concorde Drive entrances to the school. 80% of the available places will be allocated to those whose home address is closest to a point defined by the mid-point at the junction of Elmlea Avenue and Rylestone Grove; this point lies close to the centre of the NPA. (0 places were offered on this basis as the school was oversubscribed from within the APA)

Letter of Appeal for Bristol Free School

Parent Carer Contact Details: use block capital letters

Parent/Carer Name

Telephone number and email address

Child's details

First name(s):

Surname/Family name:

Date of birth:

Address

Reasons for preference or grounds for appeal

Please provide your grounds for appeal in writing as soon as possible. We can't set up an appeal hearing until your written grounds for appeal are received. If required, please continue on a separate sheet.

Signed (Parent/Carer):

Date:

Return by email to school.admissions@bristol.gov.uk or upload to the Parent Portal by **5 May 2026**.

If you have no alternative, please post to School Admissions (City Hall), PO Box 3399, Bristol, BS1 9NE

*****Do not return this document to the school*****

Appeals Guidance

The appeal panel will take into account the reasons for your preference, and individual circumstances relating to your application. You may wish to write a further letter to the appeal panel in advance of your appeal. Any additional correspondence should be sent to School Admissions as soon as possible.

You will be given not less than 10 school days' notice of the date, time and place of the hearing at which you can be present and speak. You can, if you wish, be accompanied by a friend who may speak for you and represent your views to the appeal panel. Parents for whom English is not the first language may wish to arrange for an interpreter to be present. You are encouraged to attend the appeal panel meeting. If you prefer not to attend the panel will consider the case based on your written submission(s). Alternatively, a friend or representative may present the appeal on your behalf.

You may wish to write down in advance what you wish to say to the panel and use your own notes to speak from on the day. It is important that you don't think afterwards of something you forgot to say, or wish you had said, as the panel must not accept additional information after the appeal has been heard. You will need to demonstrate that your child's need for a place at the school outweighs the Admission Authority's reasons for refusing a place. You should consider how that school will meet your child's individual needs. What will your child gain from attending your preferred school that he/she will not get from attending any other school?

You are also welcome to submit additional letters of support from professionals or other parties who have been, or are currently, involved with your child. Please submit all supporting documentation by 5th May 2026. These may be letters which substantiate your case, or actively support your preference. The appeal panel will consider all submissions received by 5th May 2026.

Appeals are normally held at City Hall, College Green, Bristol although may need to take place via video-link this year depending on pandemic restrictions. If you are attending at City Hall when you arrive for your appeal, you will be directed to a waiting area. The Clerk to the Independent School Appeals Panel will explain the procedure of the appeal hearing before the appeal begins. The sequence of events is likely to be:

School's case:

- Presentation of the school's case by the representative of the Admission Authority
- Questioning by the parent/carer(s) and the Appeal Panel
- Summing-up by the representative of the Admission Authority

Parent/carer's case:

- Presentation of the case by the parent/carer
- Questioning by the Appeal Panel/representative of the Admission Authority
- Summing-up by the parent/carer

If more than one family are appealing for the same school on the same day all parents/carers are invited to the same School's case hearing. The parent/carer's case will be held in private and will be confidential. It should not be necessary for a child to attend, or for there to be witnesses, other than a friend or interpreter mentioned previously. The appeal panel will ask all parties to withdraw while considering a decision. The decision of the appeal panel will be sent to you in writing by the Clerk to the School Appeals Panel. The decisions of appeal panels are binding upon the parent and the Admission Authority, but parents have statutory rights under other legislation should they wish the matter to be investigated further.

Useful link - Department for Education (DfE) Link to [School Admissions Code](#)