

## First Preference Secondary School in Hampshire

More than 98 per cent of parents in Hampshire (14,312) have been offered a place for their child at one of their three preferences for a secondary school in September 2024.

Of those who applied for a Year 7 place for September 2024 by the application deadline, 90.71 per cent (13,232) have been offered a place at their first preference school. The County Council received 14,587 on-time applications this year – a decrease of 306 on-time applications compared with the number received for places in September 2023 (14,893).



For those parents and carers who have not secured a place at one of their preferred secondary schools this year, I would urge them to please visit our website for advice and guidance on their options - <https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/admissions>

Pupils who did not secure a place at one of their preferences have been allocated a place at their catchment school or the next nearest school with a place available. Parents have the right to appeal against any refusal in these situations and their child's name will be added to the waiting list for their preferred schools. Places can become available via the waiting list for various reasons including parents changing their mind, or families moving home.



Parents who applied online have been notified of their offers by email. They can also view their offer by logging into the secure, online portal using the same log-in details provided when making their online application. Those parents who applied on paper have been notified by email if an email address was provided in their application form or by post where no email address was provided and should receive their letters in two to three days.

A set of Frequently Asked Questions to help with parents' queries has been published on the Admissions webpage - <https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/admissions/year-seven-offer-day-faqs> This includes information on school transport assistance which may be available in certain circumstances, where the national eligibility criteria are met (application deadline 31 May).

The Admissions Team is now busy processing main round infant, junior and primary school applications with school place offers due to go out to parents on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

## Budget

£2.6 billion of public spending on the ongoing delivery of important local services to Hampshire's 1.4 million residents in 2024/25 was approved by Hampshire County Council at the Council meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2024.

From 1st April 2024, Hampshire County Council's portion of council tax will increase by a total of 4.99%, of which 2% will go specifically towards adults' social care and supporting the County's higher numbers of older people and adults with complex needs and disabilities - in line with Government policy. This equates to an annual charge of £1,533.24 for a Band D property – an increase of £72.99 per year or approximately £1.40 a week. The increase will generate an extra £39 million of vital income towards the delivery of crucial services to the people of Hampshire in 2024/25, and still means that Hampshire has one of the lowest council tax precepts of any county in England.

Drawing from our reserves will see us safely through the forthcoming financial year but this money will very soon run out without the fundamental national changes that HCC and other Councils have been calling for to the way local Government is funded. Consequently, we must look closely at what the County Council can continue to deliver in the years to come. This is why we are already consulting local people on options to help towards meeting the £132 million budget shortfall expected from April 2025. We are encouraging as many people as possible to have their say in our future services consultation - <https://www.hants.gov.uk/aboutthecouncil/haveyoursay/consultations/future-services-consultation> - before 31st March. Tell us your views on 13 key proposals to help lower costs in future, and what it might mean for residents if the County Council were to do things differently after April 2025.

Alongside revenue budget plans, which relate to the day-to-day delivery of local services to Hampshire residents, the County Council has also approved new capital spending of £880.6 million over the next three years which will boost jobs and the local economy, the quality of the environment and contribute towards the County

Council's commitment to tackling climate change. This provision for Hampshire's infrastructure is one of the largest in the country and brings the County Council's four-year total investment in the fabric of Hampshire, to £1.4 billion, providing a huge boost to the local economy through jobs, skills and construction.

The three-year programme includes:

- £173 million to safeguard the long-term viability of the Older Adult care estate.
- £192 million investment in new and extended school buildings to provide school places for children in Hampshire - delivering a further 5,312 school places and giving a total of 19,989 new school places by September 2027.
- £163 million for structural maintenance and improvement of roads and bridges.
- £73 million of Integrated Transport Plan schemes including £43 million of schemes focused around walking and/or cycling improvements.
- £76 million to address condition-based enhancements to schools.

### **Funding Approved to expand Childcare Before and After School**

Hampshire County Council has approved funding of £5.9 million to help more parents access childcare before and after school. The funding has been granted by the Department for Education to support schools and Local Authorities to set up or expand the provision of childcare which 'wraps around' the school day, enabling parents and carers of primary school-aged children to access and pay for term time childcare from 8.00am – 6.00pm.

The funding will be allocated from September 2024 over two academic years until April 2026. The expectation is that after this point, settings will be able to run successfully on income from parental fees, without the need for further financial assistance.

### **Volunteers Plant 950 trees to create Mini-Forest**

A new woodland has been created in Havant thanks to local volunteers who have planted 950 trees in Havant Rugby Ground - helping to boost wildlife and biodiversity. A team of around 30 people planted a mixture of species including oak, beech, field maple, hawthorn, blackthorn, wild cherry, and hazel. The project was organised by Hampshire County Council's Hampshire Forest Partnership.



Groups or communities interested in planting a mini forest or orchard can contact the Hampshire Forest Partnership via its website. The Forest Partnership's Coronation fund is open for projects that can be planted by March 2025. see - <https://www.hants.gov.uk/hampshireforestpartnership/get-involved/people-communities>

### **Silver Line**



The Silver Line Helpline, run by Age UK, is a free confidential helpline for older people which is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call free on Phone 0800 470 8090.

### **Successful Prosecution of Fraudulent Trader**

Hampshire County Council has welcomed the successful prosecution of a rogue trader who has been sentenced for roofing fraud to the value of £642,850.320 involving 29 properties across Hampshire, West Sussex and the Isle of Wight. The prosecution was brought by Hampshire County Council Trading Standards.

### **Rights of Way**

To report a problem on a footpath [not pavement] or right of way contact - <https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/rightsofway/reportaproblem>

Patricia Stallard

Chairman

Hampshire County Council

Division: Winchester Southern Parishes

[Denmead, Newlands, Boarhunt, Southwick, Knowle, Wickham, Soberton, Newtown]