

DRAFT POLICY FOR CONSULTATION



BLETCHINGDON PAROCHIAL C.E. (VA) PRIMARY SCHOOL

ADMISSIONS POLICY FOR SEPTEMBER 2017- AUGUST 2018

It is extremely important that parents read and understand the following admission details:

Bletchington Parochial CE Primary School values highly its Christian ethos, its close links with local churches and the Diocese of Oxford. We provide a distinctively Christian, yet inclusive, environment in which each child is motivated to acquire skills for life and a love of learning. As a church school, we welcome applications from Christian families, and those of other faiths or no faith but we expect all parents to respect the Christian ethos of our school and our values: Love, Respect, Honesty and Courage.

The governors have made every effort to ensure that these arrangements comply with the School Admissions Code 2014 and all relevant legislation, including that on infant class sizes and equal opportunities.

Admission arrangements to the Reception Year in September 2017

At our school, pupils are normally admitted at the beginning of the school year (1 September - 31 August) in which they reach their fifth birthday. Parents whose children were born between 1 September 2012 and 31 August 2013 may apply for them to be admitted to the Reception Year in September 2017. There are 15 places available. Our policy is not to offer admission in September 2017 to children who were born on or after 1 September 2013.

Parents of a child whose fifth birthday falls between 1 September 2017 and 31 March 2018 may request that their child is not admitted until later in the school year 2017/18 (no later than the term [using three term year] after the child's fifth birthday, when s/he reaches compulsory school age). The school will hold any deferred place for the child, although, in the majority of cases, we find that children benefit from starting at the beginning of the school year, rather than part way through it.

For children whose fifth birthday falls between 1 April 2018 and 31 August 2018 (summer-born children), parents who do not wish them to start school in school year 2017-18, but to be admitted to the Reception Year in September 2018, should proceed as follows. They should apply at the usual time for a place in September 2017 together with a written request that the child is admitted outside his or her normal age group to the Reception year in September 2018. NB parents would need to provide strong supporting reasons for seeking a place outside the normal age group and should discuss the position with the head teacher as early as possible. If their request is agreed, and this should be clear before the national offer day, their application for the normal age group may be withdrawn before any place is offered and they should reapply in the normal way (no later than 15 January 2018) for a Reception place in September 2018. If their request is refused, the parents must decide whether to wait for any offer of a place in September 2017 (NB it will still be subject to the over-subscription criteria below) or to withdraw their application and apply in the second half of the summer term 2018 for a Year 1 place in September 2018. Parents should be aware that the Year 1 group may have no vacancies as it could be full with children transferring from the 2017-18 Reception Year group.

Until the child reaches compulsory school age, parents may also request that s/he attends part-time. In such cases, detailed arrangements should be discussed with the head teacher.

Parents (see Note 1) wishing to apply for the Reception [Foundation] Year in September 2017 must complete the common application form provided by their local authority (LA). The local authority is the one in whose area the parents live at the time of the application. The form must be returned to that LA no later than 15 January 2017. Applications received after this date will normally only be considered after all those received on or before the cut-off date. Offers and refusals of places will be posted by the home LA on 18 April 2017.

Over-subscription criteria

Children with a Statement of Special Educational Need or with an Education, Health and Care plan (EHC) naming Bletchingdon Parochial CE Primary School will always be offered places. If there is then greater demand for admission than there are places available, the following criteria will be applied in the order set out below:

1. Looked-after children and children who were previously looked after, but ceased to be so because, immediately after being looked after they were adopted or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order. (See Note 2)
2. Families who have exceptional medical or social needs that make it essential that they attend Bletchingdon Parochial CE Primary School rather than any other. These needs must be fully supported by written evidence from the appropriate professional person involved with the family. (See Note 3)
3. Children with a normal home address (See Note 4) in the Bletchingdon catchment and with a sibling (see Note 5) on the roll of the school at the time of application or whose parent has accepted an offer of a place at the school and who is expected still to be in attendance at the time of entry to the school.
4. Children with a normal home address in the Bletchingdon catchment.
5. Children with a normal home address outside the Bletchingdon catchment and with a sibling on the roll of Bletchingdon Parochial CE Primary School at the time of application or whose parent has accepted an offer of a place at the school and who is expected still to be in attendance at the time of entry to the school.
6. Other children

Proximity of the child's home is measured by the shortest designated public route defined by the Directorate for Education, Children and Families. This geographic system will serve to differentiate between pupils in criteria ii - vi should the need arise. When measuring distance we define the two determining points as being the "seed point" of the home address and the school gate in School Lane.

In the unlikely event of a case where the measurement of distance 'tiebreak' produces an identical measurement for two or more applicants, and if the school cannot offer a place to all of these children, the available place will be allocated by a random draw in the presence of a person independent of the school. In order to ensure that no child is disadvantaged because of the date when they are added to the waiting list, a fresh round of random allocation will be applied each time it is necessary to decide which child is to be offered a place from the waiting list.

All Other Admissions

Admission to the school during the school year depends on whether or not there are places available. All year groups at the school have 15 places. Applications must be made directly with the Admissions Team at Oxfordshire County Council.

If there is a vacancy, and there is no child on the relevant waiting list with a higher priority (according to the over-subscription criteria i - vi above), a place will be offered.

In-year admissions or admissions at the beginning of school years other than Reception will only be considered by the Governing Body up to half a term [using the three term year] in advance of the desired date for entry. For example for entry in January, the application will not be considered until after the previous October half term break.

If parents are moving house, the school will ask for evidence of the move, before considering any application for a place. Documentary evidence in the form of a solicitor's letter to confirm exchange of contracts, a rental agreement for at least a period of six months will be required (Armed Forces personnel are exempt). If you are returning from elsewhere, to live in a home that you own, we will require evidence to show that you have returned. We will also ask for evidence that any previous house owned has been sold or is being sold. We would not accept an address where the one given is that of a second home with the main home being elsewhere. If there are two or more homes, we will check which is the main home, and may refuse to base an allocation of a place on an address which might be considered only temporary. Nor would we accept an address where the child was resident other than with a parent or carer unless this was part of a fostering or formal care arrangement. We would not normally accept an address where only part of a family had moved, unless connected with a divorce or permanent separation arrangement, in which case we would require proof.

Admission outside normal age group

Requests from parents for places outside a normal age group will be considered carefully e.g. for those who have missed education due to ill health. Each case will be considered on its own merits and circumstances. However, such admissions will not normally be agreed without a consensus that to do so would be in the pupil's interests. It is recommended that parents discuss their wishes with the headteacher in advance of applying for a place. The governors will ask relevant professionals for their opinion on the case. Those refused places outside the normal age group will be informed of their statutory right to appeal.

Waiting Lists

The LA maintains waiting lists for those children who are not offered a place, and the parents ask for the child's name to be added to the waiting list. The order of priority on the waiting list is the same as the list of criteria for over-subscription, and does not depend on the date on which an application is received. No account is taken of length of time on a waiting list. The school periodically seeks confirmation that parents wish a child to be kept on the waiting list.

Multiple births

In cases where there is one place available, and the next child on the list is a twin, triplet, etc., we would admit both twins (and all the children in the case of other multiple births) even if this meant exceeding the agreed admission number of 15 for Reception 2017-18 or the number of places (15) in other year groups.

Fair Access

The school participates in Oxfordshire LA's Fair Access Protocol. This covers, for example, children who have moved into our area after the normal admission round, or who need to move school as a result of severe bullying or social issues. Children qualifying under the Fair Access Protocol may be offered a place even if there are no places available in the relevant year group and also take priority for admission over any child on the waiting list.

Appeals

There are established arrangements for appeals against non-admission. Details are available from the school, including the date by which an appeal should be submitted. It should be noted that, in the event of an unsuccessful appeal against non-admission to the school, the school does not consider any further application in the same school year (1 September - 31 August), unless there has been a material change in circumstances, for example a change of address which results in a move from outside the catchment area to inside it.

Parents who wish their children to attend the school are most welcome to visit. Arrangements can be made through the school office.

Admissions in September 2016

The school received applications expressing a preference for admission to the Reception Year in 2016 by the closing date in January 2016. These were ranked as follows:

Children with statements naming the school
Looked after children
Medical and social needs
Catchment and siblings
Catchment
Sibling
Other/distance

Further information

Further information can be obtained from the Jackie Taylor (School Administrator) on 01869 350393

Notes

Note 1 "Parent" is defined in law (The Education Act 1996) as either:

- any person who has 'parental responsibility' (defined in the Children Act 1989) for the child or young person; or
- any person who has care of the child or young person.

If you are in any doubt, please contact the school for advice.

Note 2 By a "looked-after child" we mean one in the care of a local authority or being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of its social services function. An adoption order is one made under the Adoption Act 1976 (Section 12) or the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (Section 46). A 'child arrangements order is one settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live (Children Act 1989, Section 8, as

amended by the Children and Families Act 2014, Section 14). A 'special guardianship order' is one appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian/s (Children Act 1989, Section 14A). Applications under this criterion must be accompanied by evidence to show that the child is looked after or was previously looked after (e.g. a copy of the adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order).

Note 3 When applying under criterion ii (exceptional medical or social needs), you must include supporting evidence from an independent professional person who is aware of the situation and supports your reasons for preferring Bletchingdon Parochial CE Primary School. This supporting evidence must clearly demonstrate why the school is the most suitable and must illustrate the difficulties that would be caused if your child had to attend another school. The person supplying the evidence should be a doctor, health visitor, social worker, etc. who is aware of your child's or your own case. The school reserves the right to ask for further evidence or clarification where necessary and may seek the advice of appropriate educational professionals where necessary.

Note 4 By normal home address, we mean the child's home address. This must be where the parent or legal carer of the child lives with the child unless it is proved that the child is resident elsewhere with someone else who has legal care and control of the child. The address should be a residential property that is owned, leased or rented by the child's parent/s or person with legal care and control of the child.

To avoid doubt, where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility, each for part of a week or month, the address where the child lives will be determined having regard to a joint declaration from the parents stating the exact pattern of residence. If the residence is not split equally, then the relevant address used will be that at which we are satisfied that the child spends the majority of the school week. Where there is an equal split or there is any doubt about residence, we will make the judgment about which address to use for the purpose of determining whether or not to offer a place. We will take into account, for example, the following:

- any legal documentation confirming residence
- the pattern of the residence
- the period of time over which the current arrangement has been in place
- confirmation from any previous school of the contact details and home address supplied to it by the parents
- where the child is registered with his/her GP
- any other evidence the parents may supply to verify the position.

We may ask for evidence of the normal home address in the form of a recent bill. This could be, for example, the most recent Council Tax bill, utility bill no more than three months old, a current TV licence, buildings and contents insurance, mortgage statement or rent book which shows the address concerned. Parents who are unable to provide this evidence should contact the school to discuss what evidence might be acceptable. If it becomes clear or if there is any doubt that the parents and child are not living at the address given on the application form, the school may seek further evidence. The school works closely with the LA to ensure that places are not obtained at the school on the basis of false addresses, and, in cases of doubt, will take steps to verify the information provided. If a place at the school is offered, and it later becomes clear that the offer was made on fraudulent or misleading information (e.g. a false claim to living in the catchment area), and the school has denied a place to a child with a stronger claim, the school will withdraw the offer of a place. The offer can also be withdrawn even after the child has started at the school.

We regard a child's home address to be where he or she sleeps for the majority of the school week (Monday to Friday). We may ask to see official documentation, such as a child benefit book or medical card if there are reasons why a child does not live at his or her parent's address.

For example, if he or she is resident with a grandparent, this needs to be made clear on the application form. If such arrangements are not declared or a relative's address is used on the application, we may consider that a false declaration has been made, and withdraw the offer of a place. Childcare arrangements are **not** sufficient reason for listing another address.

If parents move house after the application has been made, but before any offer of a place has been made, the home LA must be informed.

If parents are moving, we will ask for evidence of the move, before considering any application for a place under the co-ordinated scheme.

We would not accept an address where the one given is that of a second home with the main home being elsewhere. If there are two or more homes, we will check which is the main home, and may refuse to base an allocation of a place on an address which might be considered only temporary. Nor would we accept an address where the child was resident other than with a parent or carer unless this was part of a fostering or formal care arrangement. We would not normally accept an address where only part of a family had moved, unless connected with a divorce or permanent separation arrangement, in which case we would require proof.

Note 5 By sibling we mean a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or the child of the parent's/carer's partner where the child for whom the school place is sought is living in the same family unit at the same address as that sibling. It is helpful if parents make it clear on the application form where the sibling has a different family name. Where there is more than one sibling at the school, only the youngest should be listed on the application form.

Note 6 The shortest designated route is used to determine proximity of the home to the school and will be measured by Oxfordshire County Council's geographical information system as described in their composite prospectus: 'Starting School 2017' and is also available online from the local authority and from the school office.

For further information in the first instance please contact the Admissions Secretary at the school. Contact details are as follows:

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Policy was approved by the Governing Body at their Meeting on:
