

Admissions Rules

The Admission Rules for Years 7 to 11 at Community and Voluntary Controlled Secondary Schools in Oxfordshire for 2014/15

In accordance with legal requirements, children who have a Statement of Special Educational Needs naming a particular school in Part 4 of that Statement will be admitted to that school.¹

The admission rules for community and voluntary controlled secondary schools are shown below in descending order of priority.

- 1 Children who are looked after by a local authority² within the meaning of section 22 of the Children Act 1989 at the time of their application or previously looked after children. The term "previously looked after children" refers only to children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order).
- 2 Disabled children who need to be admitted to a school on the grounds of physical accessibility. The definition of disability is that contained within the Equality Act 2010.
- 3 Children who live in the school's designated area. If there are more applicants than places in this category priority will be given in the following descending order:
 - a First priority in category 3 will go to those children with a brother or sister on roll at the time of application who will still be attending the preferred school at the time of entry. However, if there are more applicants than places in category 3(a) priority will be given, within this group, to those children who live closest to the school by the nearest designated public route as defined on the Directorate for Children, Education & Families' Geographic Information System.
 - b Second priority in category 3 will go to those children who live closest to the school by the nearest designated public route as defined on the Directorate for Children, Education & Families' Geographic Information System
- 4 Children living outside the designated area who have a brother or sister on roll at the time of application who will still be attending the preferred school at the time of entry. If there are more applicants than places in this category priority will be given within this group to children who live closest to the school by the nearest designated public route as defined on the Directorate for Children, Education & Families' Geographic Information System.
- 5 Children who attend a partner school, and live outside the designated area. If there are more applicants than places in this category priority will be given, within this group, to those children who live closest to the school by the nearest designated public route as defined on the Directorate for Children, Education & Families' Geographic Information System.
- 6 Those children who live closest to the school by the nearest designated public route as defined on the Directorate for Children, Education & Families Geographic Information System.

¹ Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 requires schools to admit a child with a Statement of Special Educational Needs that names the school, irrespective of whether they have places or not. This is therefore not an oversubscription criterion.

² A "looked after child" is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions at the time of making an application to a school.

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Measuring distances from home to school

Children who live closest to the school using the shortest designated route as defined on the Directorate for Children, Education and Families' Geographic Information System.

For all schools where the Local Authority (LA) is the Admissions Authority (AA) for the school and any schools where the Admissions Authority (the Governing Body) has a policy to use the LA's measuring system, the route from home to school has been measured using the "**shortest designated route**" since September 2005 *.

The start point of a measurement is the "**seed point**" of the home address. The "seed point" is provided by Ordnance Survey from information compiled from Royal Mail and/or district or city councils. The seed point normally falls within the bounds of a property. The accuracy of seed points is to the nearest ten centimetres. It is possible to move the location of an individual seed point, but this is not necessary for most addresses. It is not possible to verify the individual location of every seed point prior to measuring due to the number of addresses in Oxfordshire and surrounding areas.

From the seed point the route firstly connects to the nearest point of the digitised network namely the road on which the house is situated. The positioning of front doors, driveways and back gates is not relevant to the route or the measurement and they are not programmed to be used by the measuring system.

The digitised network is constructed from road data supplied by Ordnance Survey called the Integrated Transport Network (ITN). The Integrated Transport Network has been

accurately digitised to measure along the centre of roads and takes corners at right angles. This is the same underlying information as used by internet-based mapping solutions (e.g. Google Maps). However, the LA has a more accurate start point than internet-based mapping solutions and the ITN has been augmented by the LA to take into account other available public routes (e.g. alleyways, public footpaths, bridleways, etc). The augmented ITN used by the LA is accurate to at least 1 metre.

All 548,000 kilometres of roads in Great Britain are accurately mapped in a consistent and logical network. The network does not include routes that are not defined as public; these include crossing parks with no paths where the park is not open and available all the time, "short-cuts" across patches of open land without paths, or footpaths across private land which are not defined by Ordnance Survey as public routes.

The end point of the "shortest designated route" is the **nearest open gate** of the school first arrived at from the direction of travel from the seed point that is officially available for use by students for entry and exit to the school site at the start and end of the school day. The location of these gates has been set by the LA. The LA consults with each individual school annually to ensure accurate placement of the gate and its availability for use.

The shortest designated route is established using an algorithm within the bespoke software used by the LA. This software is called RouteFinder and is produced by Higher Mapping Solutions (www.highermappingsolutions.com). This programme integrates with the LA's database (ONE) which is supplied by Capita Children's Services (www.capita-cs.co.uk).

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RouteFinder measures in kilometres and the measurement is converted into miles accurate to three decimal places, which gives an accuracy up to 1.609344 metres.

The “shortest designated route” is not necessarily a driving route because it may use in whole or in part a non-driveable route (e.g. footpaths). The “shortest designated route” is also not necessarily a walking route for example, where roads are used, the measurement is along the centre of the road not along the edge (pavement or equivalent) of the road.

Other measuring systems may give a different measurement but the LA cannot take a measurement from another measuring system into account because this would constitute maladministration of the admissions process.

For addresses which are outside the digitised network (approximately 6 miles outside Oxfordshire’s county boundary) an internet mapping solution will be used. For addresses in Europe, we use maps.google.co.uk For addresses outside Europe we measure a straight line distance using longitude and latitude. Firstly, we derive a start point (the home address) using itouchmap.com/latlong.html We then measure the straight line distance in statute miles from this start point to the end point (the school gate) using www.nhc.noaa.gov/gccalc.shtml

*** A small number of ‘Own Admission Authority’ schools measure using a straight-line distance from home to school. The LA also calculates these distances for those particular schools.**

Home Address Policy

Home Address

The address on the application should be the child’s address at the time of application. This is the address at which the child spends the majority of term-time school nights (Sunday night to Thursday night).

Changes of Address

Changes of address which occur after 31 October 2013 can be taken into account if proof of this change is provided no later than 22 November 2013 (see below). To confirm your new address we need one of the following:

- A solicitor’s letter advising contracts have been exchanged (if the property is being purchased); or
- A copy of a tenancy agreement (if the property is to be rented). **If this tenancy agreement comes to an end before September 2014 we may not accept the address for admissions purposes;** or
- A copy of your Council Tax Bill **showing the same name(s) as on the online application form or in Section 5 of the CAF.**

We may also ask for proof from HM Revenue & Customs, Child Benefit Division or Tax Credits Division. **Such correspondence must pre-date the application you have made.**

Multiple Addresses

Where children spend time with parents at more than one address then the address given on the form should be the one that they live at (i.e. sleep at) for the majority of term-time school nights (Sunday night to Thursday night).

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If children spend time equally at different addresses then the address we will use for admissions purposes will be the one registered for child benefit. We will request proof of the registered address, which must pre-date the application.

Fraudulent Applications

If a place has been obtained on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application (for example, a false claim to residence in a designated/ catchment area) and this results in the denial of a place to a child with a stronger claim, the admission authority for the school may withdraw the offer of the place. This follows the guidance in paragraphs 2.12 and 2.13 of the School Admissions Code (February 2012) published by the Department for Education:

"[2.12] Where an offer is withdrawn on the basis of misleading information, the application **must** be considered afresh, and a right of appeal offered if an offer is refused.

[2.13] A school **must not** withdraw a place once a child has started at the school, except where that place was fraudulently obtained. In deciding whether to withdraw the place, the length of time that the child had been at the school **must** be taken into account. For example, it might be considered appropriate to withdraw the place if the child has been at the school for less than one term."

Checking Process

Each year two secondary schools will be selected at random and, prior to places being offered on 1 March, all applicants who have requested a place at either school as their first preference will be required to provide proof of address.

Brothers and Sisters (siblings)

For admissions purposes, a brother or sister is defined as one of the following:

- A brother or sister (both parents the same) living at the same home address;
- or
- A half- brother or half-sister (one parent the same) living at the same home address;
- or
- A step-brother or step-sister (sharing a parent who is married, in a civil partnership or living together as if married) living at the same home address;
- or
- An adopted child who, by reason of the adoption, now shares one or more parents with a child living at the same home address.

Time of Entry

The admission rules give some priority to those with a brother or sister attending the relevant school at the applicants "time of entry". This means that in the normal admissions round there will be no sibling connection for admission purposes for the following:

- Applicants for entry to Year 7 if they have a brother or sister in Year 13
- Applicants for entry to Year 7 if they have a brother or sister in Year 11 and there is no expressed intention of staying on into Year 12 or the school does not have a sixth form.

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Twins and Children from Multiple Births

Where the parent has made the same preferences of school and through the normal operation of the admission arrangements the last available place at a school has been offered to one twin, or child from a multiple birth, the other twin, or the other children from the multiple birth, will be offered a place at that school. This means that in these circumstances the Published Admission Number would be exceeded.

Random Allocation

If the distance "tie break" produces an identical result for two or more applicants the LA will use random allocation to determine who will be offered a place.

Admission to an older or younger age group

There is no legal barrier to children being admitted outside their normal year group but it is relatively uncommon.

If a request for early or late admission is received it is for the admission authority for the relevant school to make the decision as to which year group the child will be admitted to and a decision of this kind has to be made on the circumstances of the individual case.

Where, through the agreed procedure, a pupil is transferring school outside the normal year they will be treated equally to other children in the transfer group.

Does your child have a disability as defined in the Equality Act (2010)?

The Act is available online at:
www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents

If you believe that your child has a disability as defined in this Act then you should add the details to section 3 of the Common Application Form.

This information will only affect your child's priority for a school place if your child's disability affects your child's access to school and you are applying for a school that gives a degree of priority to children who fall in this category. Evidence of a child's disability must be submitted in writing by a medical professional before a child can or will be considered disabled by the AA for admissions purposes.

The AA will not consider a child to be disabled until this evidence has been received and approved.

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