

**Admission Arrangements and  
Over-subscription Criteria for  
Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools  
for the 2026/27 school year**

**(Consulted between 1 November 2024 and  
31 December 2024)**

**(Determined on 20 January 2025)**

## Details of changes since the Admission Arrangements and Over-subscription Criteria for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for the 2025/26 academic year

The following changes have been made:

- Legal Framework  
Added “Education Act 1996” and URL  
URL changed for “Oxfordshire County Council’s Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme”
- Over-subscription Criteria for entry to the Reception year group  
Dates changed.
- Over-subscription Criteria for entry to Year 3  
Dates changed.
- Over-subscription Criteria for entry to Year 7  
Dates changed.
- Over-subscription Criteria for entry to Year 7 to 11  
Dates changed.
- ‘Definition of a “parent” section added
- “Looked After” children  
Added “In Oxfordshire these children are also known as ‘Children We Care For” (CWCF).”
- Designated (Catchment) Areas  
Title changed to “Catchment areas”  
Text changed from “Designated areas can be viewed on the Oxfordshire public website. Living within a particular school’s designated area...” to “Catchment areas can be viewed on the Oxfordshire public website. Living within a particular school’s catchment area...”  
Text changed from “There is also no guarantee that free transport will be provided to the designated (catchment) area school...” to “There is also no guarantee that free transport will be provided to the catchment area school...”
- Time of Entry (siblings)  
Bullet 5 changed from “...there is no expressed intention of staying on into Year 12...” to “...the sibling is due to leave for post-16 provision elsewhere...”  
New bullet 7 added.
- Children eligible for Service Pupil Premium  
Bullet points removed due to change in national guidance. Updated in line with guidance online at [www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-service-pupil-premium/service-pupil-premium-what-you-need-to-know](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-service-pupil-premium/service-pupil-premium-what-you-need-to-know)
- Measuring distances from home to school  
Delete: “For admissions purposes for all schools where the Local Authority (LA) is the Admission Authority for the school, and any OAA schools that have adopted the LA’s measuring system, ...”  
“British Co-ordinate System” changed to “British (all-numeric) Co-ordinate System”  
Deleted: “It is possible to move the location of an individual seed point, but this is not necessary for most addresses.”
- Fraudulent Applications  
“...a false claim to residence in a designated/catchment area)...” changed to “...a false claim

to residence in a catchment area)...”

- Start date in school  
Dates changed.
- “Shortest safe route” for home to school travel assessments  
“...supplied by Liquid Logic (<http://www.liquidlogic.co.uk/>)” changed to “...supplied by System-C (Liquid Logic) – [systemc.com/](http://systemc.com/)”
- Home to School Travel Assistance  
“...free travel assistance to the designated area school...” changed to “...free travel assistance to the catchment area school...”  
“If a child is eligible the council will notify the parent in writing in an offer letter.” changed to “If a child is eligible the council will notify the parent in writing when the school place is offered.”  
“Oxfordshire County Council” changed to “The council”
- Fair Access Protocol  
URL changed.
- In-Year Admissions (Reception to Year 11)  
URL changed.
- Waiting Lists  
Subsection: “Waiting List duration for normal phased transfer for starting primary or infant school for the first time in Reception”  
“...the Waiting List will be maintained from shortly following initial allocation in the April preceding the start of the academic year in September...” changed to “...the Waiting List will be maintained from the next working day after the response date for Offer Day 2..”  
  
Subsection: “Waiting List duration for normal phased transfer from primary or junior to Year 7 in a secondary school”  
“...the Waiting List will be maintained from shortly following initial allocation in the March preceding the start of the academic year in September...” changed to “...the Waiting List will be maintained from the next working day after the response date for Offer Day 2 ...”
- Admission to an older or younger age group  
Dates changed.
- Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools converting to Academy status  
Dates changed.

## Legal Framework

These arrangements and over-subscription criteria meet all lawful requirements including those set out in the following Acts, Codes, policies and relevant case law:

- Adoption Act 1976  
[www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1976/36/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1976/36/contents)
- Children Act 1989  
[www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents)
- Education Act 1996  
[www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/contents)
- School Standards & Framework Act 1998  
[www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/31/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/31/contents)
- Adoption and Children Act 2002  
[www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/38/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/38/contents)
- Education Act 2002  
[www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents)
- Equality Act 2010  
[www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents)
- School Admissions Appeals Code 2012  
[www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-appeals-code](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-appeals-code)
- Children and Families Act 2014  
[www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents)
- School Admissions Code 2021  
[www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-code--2](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-code--2)
- Oxfordshire County Council's Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme  
[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/apply-school-place/school-admission-rules-and-policies/admission-rules](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/apply-school-place/school-admission-rules-and-policies/admission-rules)

## Published Admission Numbers (PANs)

The PAN for the relevant admissions year for the relevant age group for each community and voluntary controlled school in Oxfordshire is available online at:

[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/apply-school-place/school-admission-rules-and-policies/admission-rules](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/apply-school-place/school-admission-rules-and-policies/admission-rules)

These PANs should be considered alongside and in conjunction with these arrangements.

The relevant age group is the age group at which pupils are or will normally be admitted to the school, e.g. Reception year group (for primary or infant school) and Year 7 (for secondary schools).

## **Over-subscription Criteria for entry to the Reception year group in Community and Voluntary Controlled schools in the 2026/27 academic year (normal phased transfer for starting primary or infant school for the first time) and for entry to year groups Reception to Year 6 during the 2026/27 academic year (in-year transfers)**

Even if a child already attends the nursery class at a primary school a new application must be made to start Reception year group in a primary or infant school for the first time (see Paragraph 15.d) of the 2021 School Admissions Code).

In accordance with legal requirements, children who have an Education, Health & Care (EHC) Plan<sup>1</sup> in which the school is named in Section I must always be admitted.

The oversubscription criteria below will be followed in descending order of priority.

1. Children who are “looked after”<sup>2</sup> (LAC) by a Local Authority within the meaning of Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 at the time of their application, and all “previously looked after” children<sup>3</sup> (PLAC), including those who appear to this Admission Authority to have been in state care outside England (IAPLAC)<sup>4</sup> and ceased to be in state care having been adopted. Evidence of the previously looked after status and/or the adoption will be requested.
2. Children who live in the catchment area and have a brother or sister on roll at the time of application who will still be attending at the time of entry.
3. Children who live in the catchment area.
4. Children who have a brother or sister on roll at the time of application who will still be attending at the time of entry but live outside the catchment area.
5. All other children who do not live in the catchment area and also do not have a brother or sister on roll at the time of application who will still be attending at the time of entry.

In all categories above, priority will be given to children who are eligible for Service Pupil Premium and then to children who live closest to the school by the straight-line distance as calculated by Oxfordshire County Council.

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<sup>1</sup> An Education, Health and Care Plan is a plan made by the LA under Section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014 specifying the special education provision, health and social care required for that child. **Therefore, this is not an oversubscription criterion.**

<sup>2</sup> A 'looked after child' is a child who is either (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 (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school.

<sup>3</sup> Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) are children who are no longer looked after by a LA in England because they are subject to an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order.

<sup>4</sup> The 2021 School Admissions Code regards a child as having been in state care outside England if they were in the care of, or were accommodated by, a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

## **Over-subscription Criteria for entry to Year 3 in Community and Voluntary Controlled junior schools in September 2026 (normal phased transfer from infant to junior school) and for entry to Year 3 to Year 6 during the 2026/27 academic year (in-year transfers)**

A separate application must be made for any transfer from infant to junior school [Paragraph 15.d) of the 2021 School Admissions Code].

There are no community or voluntary controlled infant or junior schools in Oxfordshire.

## **Over-subscription Criteria for entry to Year 7 in Community and Voluntary Controlled schools in September 2026 (normal phased transfer from primary or junior to secondary school)<sup>5</sup>**

In accordance with legal requirements, children who have an Education, Health & Care (EHC) Plan<sup>6</sup> in which the school is named in Section I must always be admitted.

The oversubscription criteria below will be followed in descending order of priority.

1. Children who are “looked after”<sup>7</sup> (LAC) by a Local Authority within the meaning of Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 at the time of their application, and all “previously looked after” children<sup>8</sup> (PLAC), including those who appear to this Admission Authority to have been in state care outside England (IAPLAC)<sup>9</sup> and ceased to be in state care having been adopted. Evidence of the previously looked after status and/or the adoption will be requested.
2. Children who attend one of the designated feeder schools in the partnership (listed separately) and live in the catchment area and have a brother or sister on roll at the time of application who will still be attending at the time of entry.
3. Children who live in the catchment area and have a brother or sister on roll at the time of application who will still be attending at the time of entry.

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<sup>5</sup> There are no Voluntary Controlled schools in Oxfordshire with a Year 7 age range. Currently the only community secondary school in Oxfordshire is Carterton Community College. The following schools are the traditional designated feeder schools: Carterton Primary School, Edith Moorhouse Primary School, Gateway Primary School, St John the Evangelist Church of England Primary School, St Joseph’s Catholic Primary School, Carterton.

<sup>6</sup> An Education, Health and Care Plan is a plan made by the LA under Section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014 specifying the special education provision, health and social care required for that child. **Therefore, this is not an oversubscription criterion.**

<sup>7</sup> A 'looked after child' is a child who is either (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 (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school.

<sup>8</sup> Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) are children who are no longer looked after by a LA in England because they are subject to an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order.

<sup>9</sup> The 2021 School Admissions Code regards a child as having been in state care outside England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

4. Children who attend one of the designated feeder schools in the partnership (listed separately) and live in the catchment area.
5. Children who live in the catchment area.
6. Children who attend one of the designated feeder schools in the partnership (listed separately) and have a brother or sister on roll at the time of application who will still be attending at the time of entry but live outside the catchment area.
7. Children who have a brother or sister on roll at the time of application who will still be attending at the time of entry but live outside the catchment area.
8. Children who attend one of the designated feeder schools in the partnership (listed separately).
9. All other children who do not live in the catchment area and also do not attend a designated feeder schools in the partnership (listed separately) and also do not have a brother or sister on roll at the time of application who will still be attending at the time of entry.

In all categories above, priority will be given to children who are eligible for Service Pupil Premium and then to children who live closest to the school by the straight-line distance as calculated by Oxfordshire County Council.

### **Over-subscription Criteria for entry to Years 7 to 11 in Community and Voluntary Controlled schools during the 2026/27 academic year (in-year transfers)**

In accordance with legal requirements, children who have an Education, Health & Care (EHC) Plan<sup>10</sup> in which the school is named in Section I must always be admitted.

The oversubscription criteria below will be followed in descending order of priority.

1. Children who are “looked after”<sup>11</sup> (LAC) by a Local Authority within the meaning of Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 at the time of their application, and all “previously looked after” children<sup>12</sup> (PLAC), including those who appear to this Admission Authority to have been in state care outside England (IAPLAC)<sup>13</sup> and ceased to be in state care having been adopted. Evidence of the previously looked after status and/or the adoption will be requested.

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<sup>10</sup> An Education, Health and Care Plan is a plan made by the LA under Section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014 specifying the special education provision, health and social care required for that child. **Therefore, this is not an oversubscription criterion.**

<sup>11</sup> A 'looked after child' is a child who is either (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 (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school.

<sup>12</sup> Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) are children who are no longer looked after by a LA in England because they are subject to an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order.

<sup>13</sup> The 2021 School Admissions Code regards a child as having been in state care outside England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

2. Children who live in the catchment area and have a brother or sister on roll at the time of application who will still be attending at the time of entry.
3. Children who live in the catchment area.
4. Children who have a brother or sister on roll at the time of application who will still be attending at the time of entry but live outside the catchment area.
5. All other children who do not live in the catchment area and also do not have a brother or sister on roll at the time of application who will still be attending at the time of entry.

In all categories above, priority will be given to children who are eligible for Service Pupil Premium and then to children who live closest to the school by the straight-line distance as calculated by Oxfordshire County Council.

### **Definition of a “parent”**

“Parent” is defined in law (Section 576 of the Education Act 1996) as either:

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

### **“Looked After” children**

A 'looked after child' is a child who is either:

- (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 (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 at the time of making an application to a school.

In Oxfordshire these children are also known as ‘Children We Care For’ (CWCF).

### **Previously “Looked After” children**

The School Admissions Code 2012 introduced a requirement for all admission authorities to broaden the existing priority for 'looked after' children or children in care (defined in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) to also include 'previously looked after' children. Children who were 'previously looked after' were defined for admissions purposes as those who, immediately after being in care, became subject to an adoption<sup>14</sup>, residence, or special guardianship order<sup>15</sup>.

A revised School Admissions Code came into force on 19 December 2014, and this stated that 'previously looked after' children include those who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976

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<sup>14</sup> An adoption order is an order under the Adoption Act 1976 (see Section 12 adoption orders) or an order under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see Section 46 adoption orders).

<sup>15</sup> Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian/s.

(see Section 12 - Adoption Orders) and not simply those children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see Section 46 - Adoption Orders). In addition, residence orders have now been replaced by child arrangements orders. Those who previously received a residence order are now deemed to have a child arrangement order<sup>16</sup>.

If applying on behalf of a “previously looked after” child, who was previously in state care in England, the parent will need to provide the following evidence:

- an Adoption Order under Section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002; or
- an Adoption Order under the Adoption Act 1976; or
- a Child Arrangements Order; or
- a Residence Order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989; or
- a Special Guardianship Order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian(s), under section 14A of the Children Act 1989.

### **Children who appear to this Admission Authority to have been in state care outside England and ceased to be in state care after being adopted (“internationally adopted previously looked after children”) (IAPLAC)**

A further revised School Admissions Code was agreed in July 2021, and this came into force on 1 September 2021. The new Code further broadens the existing priority for 'looked after' children and 'previously looked after' children to include those children who appear to an Admission Authority to have been in state care outside England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. In the School Admissions Code 2021 they are referred to as “internationally adopted previously looked after children” (IAPLAC).

The Code regards a child as having been in state care outside England if they were in the care of, or were accommodated by, a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

Responsibility for determining whether a child is eligible to be considered as an IAPLAC rests with the Admission Authority. Subject to ministerial approval, the Department for Education plans to publish non-statutory guidance on the admission of IAPLAC. This guidance will aim to assist and support admission authorities in assessing evidence provided by parents. If there is doubt about the acceptability of evidence provided by the parent, advice will be sought from the Head of Oxfordshire’s Virtual School. This Admission Authority will take a pragmatic approach to the decision-making process where evidence is lacking.

### **Catchment areas**

Catchment areas can be viewed on the Oxfordshire public website. Living within a particular school’s catchment area gives a high priority for admission but there is no guarantee that a place will always be made available. There is also no guarantee that free transport will be provided to

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<sup>16</sup> A ‘child arrangements order’ is an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 as amended by Section 14 of the Children and Families Act 2014.

the catchment area school if it is not the closest or nearest available school.

### **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 stepbrother or stepsister (sharing a parent who is married or in a civil partnership) 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 (siblings)**

The admission rules give some priority to those with a brother or sister attending the relevant school at the applicant's "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 the Reception year group in an infant school if the only sibling already at the school is a brother or sister in Year 2; or
- applicants for entry to Reception year group in a primary school if the only sibling already at the school is a brother or sister in Year 6; or
- applicants for entry to Year 3 in a junior or primary school if the only sibling already at the school is a brother or sister in Year 6; or
- applicants for entry to Year 7 if the only sibling already at the school is a brother or sister in Year 13; or
- applicants for entry to Year 7 if the only sibling already at the school is a brother or sister in Year 11 and the sibling is due to leave for post-16 provision elsewhere; or
- applicants for entry to Year 7 if the only sibling already at the school is a brother or sister in Year 11 and the school does not have a Sixth Form; or
- applicants for immediate entry to any year group and the sibling is not currently at the school.

### **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 allocated 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.

### **Children eligible for Service Pupil Premium**

Central Government defines online which children are eligible for Service Pupil Premium (SPP) at:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-service-pupil-premium/service-pupil-premium-what-you-need-to-know](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-service-pupil-premium/service-pupil-premium-what-you-need-to-know)

Parents will need to provide evidence of eligibility when they apply for school (for example, a copy of the military ID of the parent who makes the school application or a letter from a commanding officer confirming status).

## **Measuring distances from home to school (the straight-line distance calculated by Oxfordshire County Council)**

The straight- line distance from home to school will be calculated as set out below.

The start point of the measurement is the “**seed point**” of the home address. The “seed point” is provided by Ordnance Survey from information compiled from Royal Mail and Councils via National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG). The seed point normally falls within the bounds of a property. The accuracy of seed points is to the nearest metre and uses the British (all-numeric) Co-ordinate System (Easting/Northing). 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.

The end point of the straight line distance will be determined by the Admission Authority for each school. For schools where the LA is the Admission Authority the end point is the nearest open gate of the school first arrived at from the direction of travel 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 LA consults with each individual school annually to ensure accurate placement of gates and their availability for use.

Where the LA is not the Admission Authority, the relevant Admission Authority will provide the determined end point to the LA.

The calculation of the distance will be made in metres using a Pythagoras calculation. This calculation will be converted into miles by dividing the distance by 1609.344 to achieve a distance in miles accurate to three decimal places.

For addresses outside the British Coordinate System an internet mapping solution will be used to determine a start point using longitude and latitude via [getlatlong.net/](http://getlatlong.net/) A straight line distance will then be calculated to the end point at the school in statute miles using [www.nhc.noaa.gov/gccalc.shtml](http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/gccalc.shtml)

## **Random allocation**

If the distance “tie break” produces an identical result for two or more applicants and these applicants live at different addresses and are not children of a multiple birth (see above), the Local Authority will use random allocation to determine who will be offered a place.

## **Home address for families of service personnel with a confirmed posting, or crown servants returning from overseas**

For families of service personnel with a confirmed posting, or crown servants returning from

overseas, the Admission Authority will allocate a place in advance of the family arriving in the area (as long as one is available), provided the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date. It will not refuse to process an application and will not refuse a place solely because the family does not yet have an intended address or does not yet live in the area.

In addition, the Admission Authority will use the address at which the child will live when applying oversubscription criteria, provided the parents provide some evidence of the intended address. If requested by a parent, the Admission Authority will use a Unit or quartering address as the child's home address when considering the application against the oversubscription criteria.

The Admission Authority will not reserve blocks of places for children of service personnel, or crown servants returning from overseas.

The council will also, in both its role as an Admission Authority and in its wider educational responsibilities, ensure that arrangements in Oxfordshire support the Government's commitment to removing disadvantage for Service children.

## **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).

### Normal phased transfer for starting primary or infant school for the first time in Reception

The **time of application** is the entire time period from the point when applications can start to be made in the November when the application process opens until 16 April (or next working day) the following calendar year.

### Normal phased transfer from primary or junior to Year 7 in a secondary school

The **time of application** is the entire time period from the point when applications can start to be made in the September when a child starts Year 6, and the application process opens until National Offer Day on 1 March (or next working day) the following calendar year.

### Changes of address

Sometimes an application is made based on an address at the time of application and the address then changes after the application has been submitted. It is important to tell the Admission Authority (and/or Local Authority) about changes of address so that places can be offered fairly, and so notification can be sent by post to the correct home address.

If the application address is found to have subsequently changed after the application was submitted, and this information could have been provided when the application was first made or before places were offered, Oxfordshire County Council will consider the application to have been made on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading address (see below). This may result in the offer of a school place being withdrawn.

If an application is made on the basis of a new address or intention to move to an area, information about the new address will need to be provided in order for it to be taken into account.

### Changes of Address normal phased transfer for starting primary or infant school for the first time in Reception

Changes of address which occur after the closing date for applications (15 January in the allocation year) can be considered if proof of this change is provided no later than the date in February set

down in Oxfordshire County Council's co-ordinated admissions scheme.

### Changes of Address for normal phased transfer from primary or junior to Year 7 in a secondary school

Changes of address which occur after the closing date for applications (31 October when the child is in Year 6) can be considered if proof of this change is provided no later than the date in November set down in Oxfordshire County Council's co-ordinated admissions scheme.

### Changes of Address (all)

To confirm a new address, the Local Authority needs one of the following:

- A solicitor's letter advising that 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 the September when the child is due to start school, the Local Authority may not accept the address for admissions purposes**; *or*
- A copy of the Council Tax Bill **showing the same name(s) as on the school place application (CAF)**; *or*
- **A letter from a new employer** (e.g., University college) where accommodation is being provided by the employer and is tied to the new post/job giving details of this new address; *or*
- **Service Family Accommodation (New Quarter)** if this is a military posting with provided accommodation and the parent has requested that this address should be used for allocation purposes; *or*
- **Assignment Order** if this is a military posting but new quarter has not yet been notified and the parent has requested that the address of the military base be used for allocation purposes.

### 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).

If children spend time at more than one address the address used for admissions purposes will be the one registered and confirmed as the main address by the nursery/school. If it is not possible to establish the main address from the nursery/school records and the parents state that the child spends 50% of time with each parent, the parents will be asked to agree which address will be used as the main address for admissions purposes or they will be required to have this determined legally via a Court Order.

### 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 catchment area) and this results in the denial of a place to a child with a stronger claim, the local authority may withdraw the offer of the place. This follows the guidance in paragraphs 2.13 and 2.14 of the School Admissions Code (1 September 2021) published by the Department for Education:

[2.13] An admission authority **must not** withdraw an offer unless it has been offered in error, a parent has not responded within a reasonable period of time, or it is established that the offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application. Where the parent has not responded to the offer, the admission authority **must** give the

parent a further opportunity to respond and explain that the offer may be withdrawn if they do not. 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.

[2.14] 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 has 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.

## Start date in school

### Normal phased transfer for starting primary or infant school for the first time (entry to the Reception year group)

Children are entitled to start school in the September after their fourth birthday [Paragraph 2.17 of the 2021 School Admissions Code].

Children are entitled to a full-time place from the September after their fourth birthday if this is desired [Paragraph 2.17.a) of the 2021 School Admissions Code].

Parents can defer the date their child is admitted to the school until later in the academic year but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age (see table below) and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the academic year for which it was made [Paragraph 2.17.b) of the 2021 School Admissions Code].

Parents who wish it, may have their child attend part-time until later in the academic year but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age (see table below) [Paragraph 2.17.c) of the 2021 School Admissions Code]. Schools will be expected to comply with parents' wishes.

The table below shows when children can and must start school (compulsory school age):

| Children born...                                                                                                                    | Can start school...                                                              | Must start school...       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 April 2021 to<br>31 August 2021<br><i>(those with an agreed delay to start Reception year group in the 2026/27 academic year)</i> | September 2026 (full-time)                                                       | September 2026 (full-time) |
| 1 September 2021 to<br>31 December 2021                                                                                             | September 2026 (part-time or full-time)                                          | January 2027 (full-time)   |
| 1 January 2022 to<br>31 March 2022                                                                                                  | September 2026 (part-time or full-time)<br>January 2027 (part-time or full-time) | April 2027 (full-time)     |

|                                           |                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>1 April 2022 to<br/>31 August 2022</p> | <p>September 2026 (part-time or full-time)<br/>January 2027 (part-time or full-time)<br/>April 2027 (part-time or full-time)</p> | <p>September 2027 (full-time)<br/>Unless otherwise agreed, if a child of this age starts school in September 2027, it will be in Year 1 and not the Reception year (please read information about delay requests for summer-born children). The offer of a place will lapse if the child does not start school by April 2027. In cases of this kind the parent would need to reapply in June 2027 for a place to start in Year 1 in September 2027.</p> |
|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Normal phased transfer for starting junior (primary) school in Year 3 (transfer from infant to junior school)

Children must start at their new school full-time at the beginning of September 2026.

Normal phased transfer from primary or junior to secondary school (entry to Year 7 in secondary school)

Children must start at their new school full-time at the beginning of September 2026.

Entry at other times of the year and to other year groups

Children will be expected to start at the new school no later than the start date given in their offer letter. This will be expected to be within 6 weeks of the application or at the beginning of the following half term. Parents should contact the new school to arrange a start date.

**Multiple applications (Applicants unable to agree on the schools to be listed on the application)**

If parents cannot agree on the schools to list on the application and submit separate applications, the Local Authority will write to all parties and request they reach agreement (using legal arbitration if necessary). If agreement cannot be reached in a timely manner and this would risk no application being processed and the child being without a school place, the Local Authority will process the application from the parent with the address registered and confirmed as the main address by the nursery/school. If it is not possible to establish the main address from the nursery/school records and the parents state that the child spends 50% of time with each parent, the parents will be asked to agree which address will be used as the main address for admissions purposes. If they cannot agree or a parent is unhappy with a decision made by the Local Authority their recourse would be to seek an order from the Court.

**“Shortest safe route” for home to school travel assessments**

This is measured from the same start point defined in the straight-line distance measuring rules.

From the start point the route firstly connects to the nearest point of the digitised network.

The digitised network is constructed from a subset of the national road and path data supplied by Ordnance Survey. This data has been accurately digitised to measure along the centre of roads and takes corners at right angles. This is the same underlying information 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 network has been augmented by the LA to take into account other available public routes (e.g., alleyways, public footpaths, bridleways, etc). The augmented network used by the LA is accurate to at least 1 metre.

All roads and paths 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 as public routes.

The end point of the route is the nearest open gate of the school first arrived at from the direction of travel 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 Admission Authority. The LA consults with each individual school annually to ensure accurate placement of gates and their availability for use.

The shortest safe route is established using an algorithm within the bespoke software used by the LA. This software is called EYES (Early Years and Education System) which is supplied by System-C (Liquid Logic) – [systemc.com/](http://systemc.com/)

EYES measures in miles accurate to three decimal places, which gives an accurate reading up to 1.609344 metres.

The shortest safe 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 safe route is also not necessarily a walking route because, for example, where the measurement uses a road, the route is along the centre of the road not along the edge (pavement or equivalent) of the road. In calculating the shortest safe route, certain parts of the network of roads and/or paths have been specified as unsafe and the route will use an alternative which will be longer. This longer distance will be used to determine whether a child is eligible for free home to school travel assistance.

Other measuring systems may give a different measurement, but the Council cannot take a measurement from another measuring system into account because this would lead to inconsistency in the method used to measure the shortest safe route and determine a child’s eligibility for free home to school travel assistance.

## **Home to school travel assistance**

Some children qualify for free travel assistance from home to school. If a child is eligible the council will notify the parent in writing when the school place is offered.

The council does not accept responsibility for the provision or cost of free travel assistance to the catchment area school if it is not the closest or nearest available school.

Where a child is eligible for free travel assistance, but spends time with different parents at different addresses, the council will only accept responsibility for the provision and/or cost of free travel from the registered home address.

The home to school transport policy is available online at:

[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/schooltransport](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/schooltransport)

## **Admission to an older or younger age group**

Parents of gifted and talented children, or those who have experienced problems or missed part of a year, for example due to ill health, can seek places outside their normal age group.

In addition, the parents of a summer born child (born between 1 April 2021 and 31 August 2021) may choose not to send that child to school until September 2026 and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to Reception year group rather than Year 1. Parents will need to use the form online to request this delay:

[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/apply-school-place/delay-reception-application](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/apply-school-place/delay-reception-application)

In addition, the parents of a summer born child (born between 1 April 2022 and 31 August 2022) may choose not to send that child to school until September 2027 and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to Reception year group rather than Year 1. Parent will need to use the form online to request this delay:

[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/apply-school-place/delay-reception-application](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/apply-school-place/delay-reception-application)

Any decision will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case. This will include:

- considering the parent's views.
- any information about the child's academic, social, and emotional development.
- whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group.
- the views of the head teacher of the school(s) concerned.

When informing a parent of the decision on the year group to which their child should be admitted, the Local Authority will give clear reasons for the decision. Where it has been agreed that a parent's request for their child to be admitted out of their normal age group and, as a consequence of that decision, the child will be admitted to a relevant age group (i.e., the age group to which pupils are normally admitted to the school) the application will be:

- processed as part of the main admissions round, unless the parental request is made too late for this to be possible; and
- considered against the determined admission arrangements only, including the application of oversubscription criteria where applicable.

The Local Authority will not give a lower priority on the basis that the child is not of the correct age.

Parents' statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied will not apply if they are offered a place at the school, but it is not in their preferred age group.

## **Fair Access Protocol**

The Fair Access Protocol is part of the admission arrangements for all community and voluntary controlled schools in Oxfordshire and all own admission authority mainstream schools in Oxfordshire schools.

The Protocol is published on the County Council's public website:

[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/apply-school-place/school-admission-rules-and-policies/admission-rules](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/apply-school-place/school-admission-rules-and-policies/admission-rules)

## **Waiting Lists**

Parents will be able to place their child's name on the Waiting List for a community or voluntary controlled school where a place could not be offered, and a lower preference was offered instead.

### Waiting List duration for normal phased transfer for starting primary or infant school for the first time in Reception

For those applying through the normal admissions round for entry to the Reception year group, the Waiting List will be maintained from the next working day after the response date for Offer Day 2 until the end of June of their Reception year.

### Waiting List duration for normal phased transfer from primary or junior to Year 7 in a secondary school

For those applying through the normal admissions round for entry to Year 7 in a secondary school, the Waiting List will be maintained from the next working day after the response date for Offer Day 2 until the end of June of their Year 7 year.

### Waiting List duration for other age ranges

In the case of those applying in year, the Waiting List will be maintained until the end of June of that academic year. It will be possible to place a name on the list from 1 August, the beginning of the academic year, and the list will be discontinued at the end of June each year. Children will not be automatically moved to a new Waiting List for the following academic year. A re-application will be necessary each year.

More information about Waiting Lists is published on the County Council's public website.

[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/continuedinterest](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/continuedinterest)

## **In-Year admissions (Reception to Year 11)**

All community and voluntary controlled schools are part of the coordinated in year admissions process for Oxfordshire.

The In-Year Admission Scheme is published on Oxfordshire County Council's public website.

[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/apply-school-place/school-admission-rules-and-policies/admission-rules](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/apply-school-place/school-admission-rules-and-policies/admission-rules)

## **Community and Voluntary Controlled schools converting to Academy status**

When a school converts to academy status the school retains the existing admission arrangements. However, any new academy can consult on amending these at the next available opportunity.

Paragraph 1.45 of the 2021 School Admissions Code states that Admission Authorities must

consult on their admission arrangements at least every 7 years, even if there have been no changes to the arrangements in that period.

Therefore, unless a former Community or Voluntary Controlled school converting to Academy status in 2026/27 and subsequent years specifically consults upon and adopts different admission arrangements, the arrangements set out in this document will continue to apply.

## **Admission Appeals/Reviews**

There is a statutory right to an admission appeal for any community or voluntary controlled school where a place was not offered, even if this was listed lower on the application than the school where a place was offered. The Council operates an independent appeal service for community and voluntary controlled schools (and some other 'own admission authority' (OAA) schools that also use the service). Any appeals will be heard by an Independent Appeal Panel (IAP).

Information about the process is available online.

[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals)

### Infant Class-Size (ICS)

If a place cannot be offered in Reception year group, Year 1 or Year 2, this will usually be because the admission of a further child would breach the ICS legislation detailed in the School Standards & Framework Act (SSFA) 1998 (as amended by subsequent acts).

[www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/31/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/31/contents)

The class would be above the thirty children per one teacher allowed in law if an extra child were to join the school and the school would have to use additional resources to make sure that it did not break the law. The powers of the Independent Appeal Panel (IAP) will be limited to a review and **a case could only succeed in very limited circumstances.**

- the admission of additional children would not breach the infant class-size limit; and/or
- the co-ordinated admission arrangements did not comply with admissions law (i.e., the mandatory requirements of Part 3 of the SSFA 1998 or the School Admissions Code) or were not correctly/impartially applied and the child would have been offered a place if the admission arrangements had complied or had been correctly/impartially applied; and/or
- the decision to refuse admission was not one which a reasonable admission authority would have made in the circumstances of the case, as defined by the narrow legal meaning of the word "reasonable."

Normally parents will be notified about the outcome of the appeal by the end of the day when the appeal is heard.

### Two Stage Prejudice Appeals

If a place cannot be offered in Years 3 to 11, this will usually be because the admission of a further child would cause prejudice to the efficient education of the children already at the school or the efficient use of resources or both.

At the appeal, the Admission Authority will present the case why the admission of an additional child would cause prejudice. The Independent Appeal Panel (IAP) and/or appellants can question the evidence.

The IAP then decides, in private, if the case is proven and if the Admission Authority has complied with the mandatory requirements. The IAP can decide one of the following:

- the case is 'not proven.' This means the Admission Authority failed to prove there would be prejudice and all children appealing would be offered a place. The appeal ends at this Stage and there is no second stage; or
- the case is 'proven.'

If the IAP decides that the case is proven, the second (or balancing) stage starts. Parents can give their personal reasons in private why an exception should be made, and their child should be offered a place. After all parents have presented their personal cases, the IAP makes a further decision, again in private, whether any appeals should be upheld (whether the child(ren) should be given place(s) at the school).

Normally parents will be notified about the outcome of the appeal by the end of the day when the appeal is heard.

## **Determined**

Paragraph 1.49 of the 2021 School Admissions Code requires Admission Authorities (and/or the Local Authority) to determine Admission Arrangements by 28 February each year regardless of whether a consultation has taken place.

Objections to these arrangements and rules can be made to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator by 15 May in the determination year.

[www.gov.uk/guidance/schools-adjudicator-make-an-objection-appeal-or-referral#objections-to-and-referrals-about-determined-school-admission-arrangements](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/schools-adjudicator-make-an-objection-appeal-or-referral#objections-to-and-referrals-about-determined-school-admission-arrangements)

**20/01/2025**

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Date



**Lisa Lyons, Director of Children's Services**

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Signature