Admission arrangements and over-subscription criteria for 1 September 2028 to 31 August 2029

Last consultation	6th November to 18th December 2026
Determined	January 2027
Determined by	Trust Board
Review	Annually, October each year

Introduction

West Witney Primary School is an academy. EPA Trust (epa-mat.org/) is responsible for admissions decisions. The Trust and Academy Committee will work closely with Oxfordshire County Council and will use the council as their agent to collect and process applications for places on their behalf.
EPA admissions are always set within the legal guidance provided by the DfE, Oxfordshire County Council and for Church schools, The Diocese of Oxford.

Admission Number

The admission number for entry to Reception year group each school year will be 60.

Coordination of admissions for the normal admissions round (Starting Reception year for the first time)

The academy is part of the coordinated admission process for Oxfordshire for children starting primary school for the first time in Reception year group each school year.

Children generally start primary school in the September after their 4th birthday. Applications must be made by 15th January of the previous school year. Applications made after this date will be considered to be late. Applications can be made online by using the link on Oxfordshire County Council's website www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/primaryadmissions or on paper.

Online applicants will receive an email on 16th April of the same school year in which the application is made (or next working day). This may be the only official notification sent by the Council on behalf of the academy. For other online applications (e.g. those not offered their first preference school) and those who applied on paper by 15th January, a notification may be by email and also sent by second-class post on 16th April (or next working day).

Applications received after 15th January but by the closing date for late applications published in Oxfordshire County Council's co-ordinated admissions scheme will be processed as late applications. Notifications for late applications will be sent by email and/or by second-class post on the date published in Oxfordshire County Council's co-ordinated admissions scheme (early-June of the application year).

Late applications or changes of preference received after the late closing date for applications published in Oxfordshire County Council's co-ordinated admissions scheme will not be processed until after the response date for late applications (late-June of the application year).

The full scheme is available on the Council's website
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/schools/apply-school-place/school-admission-rules-and-policies/admission-rules

In-Year Admissions (Reception to Year 6)

The academy is part of the coordinated in-year admissions process for Oxfordshire.

Applications for entry to other year groups at the academy (Reception to Year 6) to start during the school year, can be made at any time. Applications should usually be started no more than 6 weeks (or one half term) before the intended start date. Applications for entry to other year groups each September can be made no earlier than the first day of the second-half of the Summer Term (June each year). The last date for which an application can be accepted for immediate entry during each school year will be the last school day in June of that school year.

Applications can be made via Oxfordshire County Council's website:

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/schooltransfer or on paper.

The Council expects to respond to applications on behalf of the academy within 15 school days.

Usually, places will be offered if there are places available in the year group. Sometimes, it will not be possible to offer places even though there are fewer children in the year group because the academy has had to organise in a way that means the admission of a further pupil would cause prejudice to the provision of efficient education of the children already there.

If a place is available in the appropriate year group and there are fewer applications for places than places available, all will be offered a place regardless of home address and distance from home to school.

If there are no places available in the appropriate year group, no places will be offered.

If a place is available in the appropriate year group but there are more applications for places than places available, the over-subscription criteria (below) will be applied and the child(ren) with the highest priority under the rules will be offered place(s).

When a place is offered, a child is expected to start as soon as possible, unless the place has been offered during the previous term for a start at the beginning of the following term. In this latter case, the child is expected to start no later than the beginning of the term requested.

The full scheme is available on the Council's website
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/schools/apply-school-place/school-admission-rules-and-policies/admission-rules

Over-subscription Criteria for entry to Reception year group at schools that operate a nursery class* (normal phased transfer for starting primary school for the first time)

In accordance with legal requirements, children who have an Education, Health & Care (EHC) Plan[1] in which the school is named in Section I must always be admitted. This is not an over-subscription criterion but these children must be admitted first thus reducing the number of places available to offer to other children.

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

1. Children who are "looked after"[2] (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[3] (PLAC), including those who appear to this Admission Authority to have been in state care outside England (IAPLAC)[4] and ceased to be in state care having been adopted.
2. Children of a member of staff at the school.
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.
4. Children who live in the catchment area.
5. Children who live outside 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.
6. Children who live outside the catchment area and are on the roll of the nursery class at the school.
7. All other children who live outside the catchment area.

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.

* *All primary schools in EPA Trust with the exception of Hanborough Manor CofE School operate a nursery class.*

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[1] 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.***

[2] 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.

[3] 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.

[4] 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 Reception year group at schools without a nursery class (normal phased transfer for starting primary school for the first time)

In accordance with legal requirements, children who have an Education, Health & Care (EHC) Plan[5] in which the school is named in Section I must always be admitted. This is not an over-subscription criterion but these children must be admitted first thus reducing the number of places available to offer to other children.

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

1. Children who are "looked after"[6] (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[7] (PLAC), including those who appear to this Admission Authority to have been in state care outside England (IAPLAC)[8] and ceased to be in state care having been adopted.
2. Children of a member of staff at the school.
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.
4. Children who live in the catchment area.
5. Children who live outside 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.
6. All other children who live outside the catchment area.

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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[5] 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.***

[6] 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.

[7] 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.

[8] 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.

Additional Information and Definitions

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

(c) in the care of a local authority, or

(d) 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.

Evidence may be requested.

Previously "Looked After" children

If applying on behalf of a "previously looked after" child, who was previously in state care in England, the parent/carer 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.

Evidence may be requested.

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 (in the School Admissions Code 2021 they are referred to as "internationally adopted previously looked after children" (IAPLAC)) and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. 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/carers. If there is doubt about the acceptability of evidence provided by the parent/carer, 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.

Exceptional medical or social needs

Exceptional medical or social needs must be fully supported by written evidence from an appropriate independent professional person (e.g. doctor, health visitor, social worker, etc.) who is involved with the family, is aware of the situation and who is able to demonstrate why they support the preference being requested. This supporting evidence must clearly demonstrate why the school is the most suitable and must illustrate the difficulties that would be caused if the child had to attend another school.

'Medical need' does not include mild medical conditions. 'Social need' does not include a parents'/carers' wish that a child attends the school because of a child's aptitude or ability or because their friends attend the school.

Children of a member of staff at the school

A member of staff is defined as a person:

- employed by the Trust who has worked at the school for two or more years at the time the application is made; or
- recruited by the Trust to fill a vacant post at the school for which there is a demonstrable skills shortage.

The member of staff must work at the school site as their principal work location.

Catchment areas

The catchment area can be viewed online. Living within the catchment area gives a high priority for admission but there is no guarantee that a place will always be offered. There is also no guarantee that free home-to-school transport will be provided if it the school is not the nearest suitable 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.

The brother or sister must be attending at the time of application and still on roll at the time of entry. This means that there will be **no sibling connection**, for admission purposes, for:

- children with an application to start Reception year group for the first time, whose only sibling already at the school is a brother or sister in Year 6.
- children with an application for immediate entry to any year group and the sibling is not currently at the school.

Children eligible for Service Pupil Premium

The central government website ('gov.uk') advice has been updated about Service Pupil Premium. www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-service-pupil-premium/service-pupil-premium-what-you-need-to-know Parents/carers will need to provide evidence of eligibility when they apply for school (for example, a copy of the military ID of the parent/carer 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 is the end point listed below.

West Witney Primary School
Edington Road
434080 East
209885 North

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 www.latlong.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

Twins and Children from Multiple Births

Where the parent/carer has made the same preference 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.

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 Admission Authority will ask the Local Authority to administer 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/carers provide some evidence of the intended address. If requested by a parent/carer, 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 Admission Authority will assist the council to 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 school for the first time in Reception year group

The **time of application** is the entire time period from the point when applications can start to be made in the autumn term when the application process opens until 16th April (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 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, the Admission Authority 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 for starting primary school for the first time in Reception year group

Changes of address which occur after the closing date for applications (15th January in the application year) can be considered if proof of this change is provided no later than the date in January set down in Oxfordshire County Council's co-ordinated admissions scheme.

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/schools/apply-school-place/school-admission-rules-and-policies/admission-rules

Changes of Address (all)

To confirm a new address, the Admission Authority needs 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 the September when the child is due to start school, the Admission 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/carer 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/carer has requested that the address of the military base be used for allocation purposes.

The Admission Authority will ask Oxfordshire County Council to act as the agent for the academy to establish the home address that will be used for admissions purposes.

Multiple Addresses

Where children spend time with parents/carers 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 current/previous school. If it is not possible to establish the main address from the current/previous school records and the parents/carers state that the child spends 50% of time with each parent/carer, the parents/carers 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.

The Admission Authority will ask Oxfordshire County Council to act as the agent for the academy to establish the home address that will be used for admissions purposes.

Parent/Carer disputes (applicants unable to agree on the schools to be listed on the application)

Where only one individual holds parental responsibility, the Local Authority (acting on behalf of the Admission Authority) will process an application submitted by that person.

Where a Court Order identifies the individual authorised to decide on schooling matters, the Local Authority (on behalf of the Admission Authority) will follow the Order and process the application submitted by the authorised party.

Where more than one person holds parental responsibility and there is no mutual agreement –and no Court Order naming who may make the decision – the application will be placed on hold until either:

- written agreement from all individuals with parental responsibility is provided; or
- a Court Order is provided that grants one party the authority to determine schooling arrangements.

For applications made as part of the phased transfer (starting primary school for the first time in Reception year group), the required agreement or Court Order must be received no later than the published date on which the Local Authority supplies information to the Admission Authority about applications received. Documents received after this date but before the late closing date will result in the application being processed within the second admissions process or later.

This approach aligns with national guidance and reflects established practice used by a number of local authorities to ensure compliance with education law while avoiding involvement in parental disputes.

If the Local Authority (or Admission Authority) later becomes aware that an application was submitted without the knowledge or consent of another individual with parental responsibility –and no relevant court order was in place – the allocated school place may be withdrawn where permitted in line with

provisions in the School Admissions Code. This may apply, for example, where an offer was made in error or where the application was considered to be fraudulent or intentionally misleading. Each case will be assessed on its individual circumstances, including the time elapsed and the child's situation.

Where the child has already started at the school, the Admission Authority (and Local Authority) will take into account the length of attendance and any potential impact on the child before deciding whether withdrawal of the place is appropriate, in line with local circumstances and the provisions within the School Admissions Code. The Admission Authority will follow the provisions set out in Annex B of the Council's Co-ordinated Admission Arrangements and Over-subscription Criteria for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools, available online:

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/schools/apply-school-place/school-admission-rules-and-policies/admission-rules

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 the catchment area) and this results in the denial of a place to a child with a stronger claim, the Admission Authority may withdraw the offer of the place. This follows the guidance in paragraphs 2.13 and 2.14 of the School Admissions Code (1st 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.

Oxfordshire County Council will act as the agent for the academy to establish whether a fraudulent application has been made and will act on instruction from the academy if the offer of a place at the academy will be withdrawn. The Admission Authority will ask Oxfordshire County Council to act as the agent for the academy to establish whether a fraudulent application has been made and will act on instruction from the academy if the offer of a place at the academy will be withdrawn.

Start date in school

When Children Can Start (Earliest)

- **September after the 4th birthday:** Most children can start full-time school in the Reception year from the September following their fourth birthday.
- **Part-time or deferred entry:** Please discuss this with the headteacher
- **Summer-born children (born 1 April to 31 August):** Please discuss this with the headteacher

When Children Must Start (Compulsory Age)

Children **must** be in full-time education (at school or via home education) by the beginning of the school term following their fifth birthday:

- **Turn 5 between 1 September and 31 December:** Must start by **31 December** (the spring term).
- **Turn 5 between 1 January and 31 March:** Must start by **31 March** (the summer term).
- **Turn 5 between 1 April and 31 August:** Must start by **31 August** (the autumn term of the next school year).

In-Year Fair Access (IYFA) Protocol

The Admission Authority will participate in the council's IYFA Protocol which is part of the admission arrangements for the academy as it is for all state-funded schools in Oxfordshire.

The Protocol is published on the County Council's public website:
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/schools/apply-school-place/school-admission-rules-and-policies/admission-rules

Admission Appeals

There is a statutory right to an admission appeal should a child be refused a place at the academy. The Admission Authority uses the service provided by the Council. Any appeals will be heard by an Independent Appeal Panel (IAP). Information about the process is available online.
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals

Waiting list

When oversubscribed, the admission authority must maintain a waiting list for **at least** one term in the academic year of admission i.e. until December 31st. Parents should proactively request to be placed on the waiting list if that is what they want to do. The oversubscription criteria must be used to rank children on the waiting list and the list must be re-ranked after every child join or leaves the waiting list. The school should periodically seek confirmation that parents wish a child to be kept on the waiting list.

Objections

Objections to these admission arrangements and over-subscription criteria can be referred to the Schools Adjudicator by 15th May in the determination year.
www.gov.uk/guidance/school-admissions-arrangements

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
- Children Act 1989
  www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents
- Education Act 1996
  www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/contents
- School Standards & Framework Act 1998
  www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/31/contents
- Adoption and Children Act 2002
  www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/38/contents
- Education Act 2002
  www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents
- Equality Act 2010
  www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents
- Children and Families Act 2014
  www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents
- School Admissions Code 2021
  www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-code--2
- School Admissions Appeals Code 2022

www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-appeals-code

- Oxfordshire County Council's Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme
  www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/schools/apply-school-place/school-admission-rules-and-policies/admission-rules