



OAKFIELD ACADEMY

BELIEVE AND ACHIEVE

Admissions Policy 2023-24

This is a STATUTORY policy
Recommended for review by Admissions Committee every year

Written/

Reviewed by: Admissions Officer/SLT

Approved by: Admissions Committee (Under Pupils, Staff and Wellbeing Committee)

Ratified on: 27 January 2022

Next review due: January 2024

Admissions Arrangements for 2023/24 Academic Year

These admission arrangements apply to all applications for admissions to Oakfield Academy for Year 5 entry in September 2023 and any in year applications from 1st September 2023.

Introduction

The Admissions Authority for Oakfield Academy is the Board of Trustees.

An Admissions Committee comprising of Trustees is responsible for taking all admission decisions for children transferring into Year 5 and for joining the school during the academic year.

Somerset Local Authority is responsible for co-ordinating all applications for children who transfer into Year 5. These admissions arrangements should be read in conjunction with Somerset's published co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for September 2023.

The Published Admission Number

The Board of Trustees has set an Admission Number of 174 for the year of entry. This indicates the maximum number of children who would be admitted and is designed to make maximum use of space and resources.

Applying for a school place

In order to be considered for a place at Oakfield Academy, an application form must be completed. Applications can be made on-line at www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions or paper forms can be obtained from Somerset Local Authority. In-year application forms are available from the Academy. School place application forms must be received by the following closing dates and times:

Applications for Year 5 in 2023

The closing date for year 5 applications in September 2023 is 15 January 2023. Outcomes will be sent by the Local Authority on behalf of the Board of Trustees by e-mail or second class post on the published outcome date, 17 April 2023.

Any application received after the closing date will be recorded as late and cannot then be administered until all on time applications have been considered by which time places may no longer be available within the Published Admission Number.

Where there are fewer applications received than places available in the particular year group, every child will be allocated a place. Where there are more applications received at any one time than places available within the Admission Number, then every application will be considered against the oversubscription criteria. Children will be allocated places in priority order to the Admission Number and all other applications will be refused. Places will be allocated strictly in accordance with the National Equal Preference with ranking allocation method.

In Year Applications

Applications for a place during the academic year must be made directly to the Academy office, by completing the in-year application form. The Trustees' Admissions Committee will consider applications promptly and applicants will receive a response within 10 school days following receipt of the application. Where a school place is offered it will be held open for 14 school days and applicants will need to confirm acceptance within this time.

Oversubscription Criteria

The school will be required to admit any child where the Academy is named as their Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) (as previous statement conditions), for SEND.

1. Children Looked After– Children who are in the care of a Local Authority or have previously been and are now formally adopted or subject to a residence/child arrangement order or special guardianship order. Children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. (See important note 1)
2. Children without a statement of Special Educational Needs, identified with a sensory, physical or medical disability (High Needs Pupils), where a multi-agency professional team has identified the School as the nearest accessible school. (See important note 2).
3. Children living in the catchment area, with a sibling at the school at the time of admission, and who live at the same address.
4. Children living in the catchment area.
5. Children living outside the catchment area, with a sibling at the school at the time of admission, and who live at the same address.

6. Children not satisfying a higher criterion

Important Notes

1. A “Looked After Child” means any child who is in the care of a local authority in accordance with Section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989. A child who was “a previously Looked After Child” means a child who after being Looked After became subject to an Adoption Order under Section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002, a Residence Order under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 or Special Guardianship Order under Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 as well as those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. Relevant evidence will be required to be submitted.
2. Criterion 2 enables schools to plan with SEN Officers for the school entry of children with physical, medical or sensory impairments, where significant capital works (e.g. accessible toilets, changing space, access to classrooms) are required. The lead time on these projects mean that school place outcome dates are too late for work to be completed in time for school entry in September. However, with the support of this criterion plans can be actioned with certainty early in the year.

Tie Breaker

In the event of oversubscription within any of the criteria listed above, preference will be given to applicants who live closest to the school, as measured in a straight line by a Geographical information System (GIS) method from the address point of the school site to the address point for the pupil's home. Where two distances are equal and it is therefore not possible to differentiate between them, priority will be determined by independent drawing of lots supervised by someone independent of the school..

However, if children of multiple births (twins and triplets) are tied for the final place, those siblings will be admitted over PAN

Waiting Lists

Where an application has been refused, the child will be placed on a waiting list. This will be kept strictly in order of oversubscription criteria by the Board of Trustees, and will be maintained until the end of the academic year. Where places become available within the Admission Number they will be allocated to the highest ranked eligible child on the maintained list.

Children who are the subject of a direction by a Local Authority to admit or who are allocated to the school in accordance with the In-Year Fair Access Protocols, will take precedence over those children on a waiting list.

Withdrawal of places

The Board of Trustees will consider withdrawing the offer of a place if;

- The place has been offered on the basis of an application which is subsequently found to be fraudulent or intentionally misleading.
- The parent has not responded to the offer within 14 days.

Issues relating to shared residency arrangements

Legislation and guidance states that only one offer per child is made by the Local Authority. Therefore where separated parents issue separate applications for their child the Local Authority can only offer one place. In this situation the Board of Trustees requires parents to resolve matters between themselves. If an agreement cannot be reached parents may wish to seek legal advice. The Board of Trustees will not become involved in private disputes. The Board of Trustees does recognise that there may be situations where parents cannot ultimately reach an agreement between themselves and it is, therefore, necessary for the Board of Trustees to take a decision.

Where this is the case the Board of Trustees will try to establish where the child spends the majority of their time and prioritise the application made by the parent living at this address.

Each parent will be required to write to the Board of Trustees and inform them of the number of days each week the child spends with them. Where the child spends equal time with both parents the Board of Trustees may ask for additional information including evidence of which parent is in receipt of child benefit, and/or the name of the GP surgery at which the child is registered. When the Board of Trustees has received all the necessary information from both parents a decision will be reached based on the evidence provided.

Retained or Accelerated Entry

The Board of Trustees will consider applications for retained or accelerated entry in cases where parents would like their child to be admitted to a year group either side of their child's chronological year group. The reasons for the

request must be fully explained on a Supplementary Information Form and included with the school place application form.

Admission of children outside their normal age group

Parents may request that their child is admitted to a year group outside their normal age range, for instance where the child is summer born or where the child is gifted or talented or where a child has suffered from particular social or medical issues impacting his or her schooling.

When such a request is made, the admissions authority will make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case and in the best interests of the child concerned, taking into account the views of the Headteacher and any supporting evidence provided by the parent. If a request is refused, the child will still be considered for admission to their normal age group.

The parent is required to make an on-time application for the child's normal age group (if relevant) but can submit a request for admission out of the normal age group at the same time. The admissions authority will ensure the parent is aware of whether the request for admission out of age group has been agreed before National Offer Day and the reason for any refusal.

Requests for admission out of the normal year group will be considered alongside other applications made at the same time.

If a request for delayed admission is agreed, the school place application may be withdrawn before a place is offered and a new school place application will need to be made as part of the normal admissions round the following year.

If a request for a child to be admitted to the school a year early is agreed, the school place application will be processed and an outcome will be sent on the National Offer Day.

If a request for a child to be admitted to school a year early is refused, the school place application will not be processed and a new school place application will need to be made as part of the normal admissions round the following year.

There is no right of appeal against the decision not to allow your child to be admitted outside of their normal age group.

One admission authority cannot be required to honour a decision made by another admission authority on admission out of the normal age group. Parents, therefore, should consider whether to request admission out of the normal year group at all their preference schools, rather than just their first preference schools.

For further information and important things you should consider please visit;

<https://www.somerset.gov.uk/education-and-families/starting-school-early-or-late/>

Children from Overseas

The Board of Trustees will treat applications for children coming from overseas in accordance with Home Office rules for Foreign nationals.

This is the most recent guidance;

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/schools-admissions-applications-from-overseas-children>

Appeals

Applicants whose school place application is turned down have the legal right to appeal against the decision to refuse admission. Details concerning how to appeal are explained in the decision letters sent out when a place is refused.

Children of UK Service Personnel

The Admissions Authority endeavour to ensure their admission arrangements support the Government's commitment to removing disadvantage for service children. In year applications are usually considered for admission up to a maximum of half a term in advance of the place being taken up. An exception is made for children of UK service personnel and other Crown servants where a place can be made available up to a year in advance of being required providing the appropriate documentation is provided (an official government letter (e.g. MOD, FCO or GCHQ) declaring a relocation date and intended address.)

Usually, an in year place may be allocated prior to actual residency, only on receipt of exchange of contracts or a formal signed rental agreement. An exception is made for children of UK service personnel and other Crown servants. This means that, providing the application is accompanied by an official government letter (e.g. MOD, FCO or GCHQ) declaring a relocation date and intended address, the Admissions Authority will process the application on that address. If a home address is not available at this stage the Admissions Authority will accept a unit postal address or quartering area address.

If the parent is moving to the area as a result of leaving the armed forces then no special consideration will be given to the application under the grounds of the application being made by a service family.

Definitions:

Home Address

The home address is very important, as school places are allocated on the basis of the home address of each child. A child's home address is considered to be where the child spends the majority of their time with parents.

Documentary evidence of home ownership or suitable rental agreement may be required, together with proof of permanent residence at the property concerned. Places cannot be allocated on the basis of an intended future address, unless the house move can be confirmed through the formal 'exchange of contracts' or the signing of a minimum of a six month tenancy agreement. The Board of Trustees reserve the right to seek further documentary evidence to support a claim of residence.

An address used for childcare arrangements cannot be used as a home address for the purpose of applying for a school place. Fraudulent claims relating to the home address of a particular child may lead to the withdrawal of any offer of a school place.

The Admissions Authority must be notified of any change of address during the admissions procedure.

Sibling

For the purpose of admissions, a sibling is defined as a child living at the same address as a half or full brother or sister, an adoptive brother or sister or children of the same household.

Parent

Natural parents, whether they are married or not, any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person. Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person (having care of a child or young person means that a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child is considered to be a parent in education law).