

OAKLEY LOWER SCHOOL

Admissions Policy with effect from September 2013

The Governing Body of Oakley Lower School is responsible for admissions to the school. Parents wishing to request a place for their child at Oakley Lower School need to complete the appropriate application form. For entry into the Foundation Class this can be done using the Local Authority online application system for the Local Authority in which the child lives or by completing the Local Authority application form, available from the school or the 'home' Local Authority.

The Governors will admit up to 40 children to the Foundation Class each academic year. Children will be admitted to school in the September following their fourth birthday.

When there are more applications than places available, the Governing Body will apply the following criteria (in the rank order shown) to decide the order in which places will be allocated when there are more requests from parents/carers than the number of places available:

- All 'looked after' children *or children who were previously 'looked after'* (see definition);
- Pupils living in the catchment area with siblings at the school (see definition of sibling);
- Other pupils living in the catchment area;
- 'Very exceptional' medical grounds (see definition)
- Other siblings (see definition)
- Any other children

Notes

1. If applying these criteria results in there being more children with an equal right to admission to the school than the number of available places, the tie break will be the distance the pupil lives from the school, measured in a straight line, using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system, with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority. The Local Authority will measure the distance from the address point of the pupil's home to the front door of the main entrance to the school. The governing body will not give priority within each criterion to children who meet other criteria.
2. The Local Authority will normally offer a place at the catchment area school if parents apply for a place at that school during the normal admissions round. However, a place at the catchment area school cannot be guaranteed. If a pupil moves into the catchment area outside the normal admissions round (or after the allocation process has begun) it may be more difficult to offer a place at the catchment area school if this would mean exceeding the admission number at the school. In this case, a place will normally be offered at the next nearest school or academy which caters for pupils of the same age and has places available.
3. Pupils who have a Statement of Special Educational Needs are required to be admitted to the school which is named on the statement, even if the school is full. Pupils identified for admission through the Fair Access Protocol will also be admitted even if the school is full.

Definitions

'Looked after' children

A 'looked after' child is a child who is (a) in the care of the local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

Previously 'looked after' children

A previously 'looked after' child is one who immediately after being 'looked after' became subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order. An 'adoption order' is an order under section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002. A 'residence 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. 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 (or special guardians).

Sibling

A sibling refers to a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister or the child of the parent/carer's partner, and in every case, the child should be living at the same address. The sibling must be in the school at the time of application and be likely to remain in the school at the proposed date of admission.

"Very Exceptional" Medical Grounds

"Very Exceptional" Medical grounds refers to cases where there are **exceptional** medical reasons which make it **essential** that a child should attend a particular school and where the preferred school is the **only** school locally that could meet the child's needs. A medical report from the child's doctor or consultant must be submitted with the application form, setting out valid medical reasons why it is essential for the child to be admitted to the school in question and the difficulties that would be caused if the child had to attend another school. The Governors reserve the right to seek further information in order to determine whether it is essential for a child to be admitted to the preferred school on medical grounds. Admission on medical grounds cannot be considered where the medical condition relates to that of a parent/carer, brother or sister or other relative/childminder.

Home Address

A pupil's home address will be regarded as the address of the parent/carer with parental responsibility with whom the child normally lives. This will not usually include grandparents, aunts or uncles. Where a child spends time with parents/carers at more than one address, the address used to allocate a school place will be the one at which the pupil is ordinarily resident and where the child spends the majority of the school week (Mondays to Fridays) including nights. If there is any query on the home address this will be checked against original official documentation e.g. council tax bill, a recent utility bill (gas, electricity or water), a rental agreement, child benefit annual statement or family tax credit information.

Admissions above the published admission number

The Bedford Borough Admissions Forum has agreed the following exceptions which have been adopted by the Governors and which may result in the admission number for the school being exceeded:

For the normal admissions round:

- The admission of catchment area pupils, where the parent has expressed a preference (whether first, second or third), for the catchment school as part of the normal admissions round and in accordance with the published admissions arrangements. This is not, however, a guarantee of a place.

For in-year admissions:

- The admission of pupils who have a Statement of Special Educational Needs which names the school, when that pupil has either been assessed or moved into the area outside the normal admissions round.
- The admission of pupils in accordance with the Fair Access Protocol.
- The admission of pupils who have moved into the area, where there is no other suitable school within a reasonable travelling distance, or where the admission of an additional catchment area child would not prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources. Before admitting children under this exception, governing bodies that are their own admission authority should consult their Local Authority who will be able to advise whether the first of these conditions applies.
- The admission of a looked after child or a previously looked after child (as defined in the School Admissions Code) outside of the normal admissions round.
- The admission of a twin or child from multiple births provided that admission would not cause a breach of infant class size limits.
- The admission of a child in very exceptional circumstances in which the Local Authority and the headteacher are in agreement that not to agree to admit the child would be perverse.

In Year Admissions

Requests for admission into other year groups should be made on the 'In Year' Application Form and returned to Oakley Lower School. The form is available from the school or can be downloaded from the Local Authority website

Appeals/Waiting Lists

Parents of pupils not offered a place at the school will have the right of appeal to an independent admissions appeal panel. Any child refused a place at the school will be placed on the waiting list which will be prioritised according to the admissions criteria. Waiting lists for the normal year of entry will be maintained until the end of the Autumn Term.