

**Determined admission arrangements for community and  
voluntary controlled secondary schools for 2015/16**

**Status:** A102/14 determined admissions arrangements 2015/16

## **Determined secondary admission arrangements**

Wiltshire Council's determined admission arrangements for admission to Voluntary Controlled and Community (VC and C) Secondary Schools for the 2015/16 academic year

### **1. General information**

This policy applies solely to applications for places at Voluntary Controlled (VC) and Community (C) Secondary Schools in Wiltshire. Foundation (F) Voluntary Aided (VA) Schools and Academies (A) are their own admission authorities and the governing bodies are responsible for determining their own procedures and policies.

**Determined arrangements for the co-ordination of secondary admissions are made within the co-ordinated admissions scheme determined for 2015/16.**

#### **a. Designated area**

A designated area is a discrete geographical zone served by a school. The address that determines a child's designated area is the place where s/he is ordinarily resident with his/her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) for the majority of the school week. Most schools have a discrete designated area but some addresses fall within areas shared by two or more schools. Children living outside the county boundary are treated as if the children live within Wiltshire but outside the designated area for the school(s) in question. Maps for each designated area are held by the local authority.

#### **b. Preferences**

Parents will be invited to state up to three ranked preferences. Each preference will be considered equally. This means that Wiltshire Council will consider all applications against the published admissions criteria without reference to how the school applied for has been ranked on the application form. As far as possible applicants will be offered a place at a school to which they have expressed a preference. Where the applicant has made more than one preference the Local Authority (LA) will make an offer for the highest ranked preferred school possible with available places in accordance with the standard admission criteria. Where it is not possible to offer a place at a preferred school, and the applicant lives in Wiltshire, the LA will allocate a place. Allocations will be made after all expressed preferences have been considered. An applicant will normally be offered a place at the designated school for their home address, if possible. An alternative school may be allocated in cases where the designated school is full and the alternative school is within the safe statutory 3 mile walking distance and has places available or it is a school to which free home to school transport would be provided.

#### **c. Children with statement of special educational needs**

Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs must be admitted to the school named on their statement. Once a statement reaches the formal proposed stage the administration of the admission of the young person becomes the responsibility of Statutory SEN Service at which point this policy ceases to apply.

d. **Published Admission Number**

A Published Admission Number (PAN) is agreed for each school annually and defines the number of places available for the year of entry. All applications must be agreed until the PAN has been reached and this figure will not be exceeded other than in exceptional circumstances. For example, a child living within a school's designated area and for whom no reasonable alternative school place is available, would be allocated a place at the designated school even if this exceeds the PAN. Reasonable in this circumstance is defined as a school within the statutory three mile safe walking distance from the child's home address or a school to which free home to school transport would be provided.

e. **Shared parental responsibility**

Where two (or more) adults both have parental responsibility for a child it is preferable that they should agree before submitting an application form which school(s) to name as their preference(s). In cases of dispute, or where two application forms are submitted, the LA will process the application received from the adult who has a residence order. If no such order has been made, preference will be given to the parent with whom the child is living for the majority of the school week.

If both parents are in dispute as to whom the child lives with the majority of the school week, , the LA will process the application received from the adult who is in receipt of the child benefit, if this is not available then the address used on the NHS card will be used.

In the event of a further dispute regarding the address used, parents may wish to take independent legal advice on whether they should seek a specific issue order from the court to decide on where the child is schooled. For in year transfer applications, until any such order is made, the placement will continue in the best interests of securing educational provision for the child with a minimum of disruption.

For year of entry, where possible, a place will be offered in accordance with the preferences to the parent who can provide evidence that they are in receipt of child benefit

f. **Multiple births**

The LA will endeavour to place siblings (e.g. twins, triplets etc) in the same school. If necessary schools will be required to admit over PAN to accommodate such children.

g. **Children of UK Service Personnel (UK Armed Forces)**

Applications for children of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting to the county, or crown servants returning from overseas to live in the county, will be considered in advance of the family moving into the county if necessary. Where possible, an application must be included in the normal admission round.

An official letter, such as a posting note or letter of support from the commanding officer should be sent to the LA as soon as possible. This should include the relocation date and unit postal address or quartering area address (the address of the closest house in the nearest 'quartering area').

Until a fixed address is available, the unit postal address or quartering area address will be used and a school place allocated accordingly.

The local authority will not refuse a child of UK service personnel a place because the family does not currently live in the area nor will it reserve blocks of places for these children.

Children will be considered to be siblings if any brother or sister is going to be attending a school. Their position on any waiting list will be set accordingly. The sibling link will not apply if the child that is going to be attending the school will be in year 11.

**h. Armed forces personnel relocating to Salisbury Plain - a proposed special planning area for admissions**

Leading up to September 2017 there is initiative to rebase serving armed forces personnel in Germany back to England. The garrison towns around Salisbury Plain in Wiltshire will be target destinations for a significant proportion of these service families.

Wiltshire Council is proposing from September 2015 to declare the community areas of Amesbury and Tidworth a 'special planning area for admissions'. The proposal is to give an admission priority to families of the troops rebasing to settlements around Salisbury Plain until 2017. Wiltshire Council is working closely with the Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS), a tri-service organisation funded by the MOD, to make the transition for children and families in Germany as smooth as possible and remove unnecessary complexity.

Wiltshire Council is proposing to add criteria 'G' to the oversubscription criteria for all community and voluntary controlled schools in the 'special planning area for admissions' and is requesting other admission authorities in the area to consider making similar arrangements.

The 'special planning area for admissions' will be kept under review by Wiltshire Council, including the option of extending the area to include Salisbury in subsequent years.

Applications for children of service personnel with a confirmed posting will be considered in advance of the family moving into the county if necessary. Where possible, an application must be included in the normal admission round.

An official letter, such as a posting note or letter of support from the commanding officer should be sent to the LA as soon as possible. This should include relocation date and unit postal address or quartering area address (the address of the closest house in the nearest 'quartering area') in the 'special planning area for admissions'.

Until a fixed address is available, the unit postal address or quartering area address will be used and a school place allocated accordingly.

The LA will not refuse a child of UK service personnel a place because the family does not currently live in the area, nor will it reserve blocks of places for these children.

Children will be considered to be siblings if any brother or sister is going to be attending a school. Their position on any waiting list will be set accordingly.

All applications will be dealt with in accordance with these admission arrangements.

## **2. Early or delayed transfer**

### **a. Early transfer**

Children may only transfer early to a secondary school if it can be shown that not to do so would be detrimental to their academic progress or social welfare. Each such request involves consultation with the current school, the school to which the child wishes to transfer and where appropriate, the Authority's professional adviser(s). The application will not be agreed if one or more parties consider that the transfer would be inappropriate. Agreement to such a request would be considered exceptional.

### **b. Delayed transfer**

Children may remain for a further year in a primary school if it can be shown that not to do so would be detrimental to their academic progress or social wellbeing. The presence of special educational needs or underachievement are not in themselves sufficient reasons to delay transfer.

Children for whom a delayed entry to school or year group retention has already been agreed by the relevant parties will continue in the lower year group unless it can be shown that it is in their best interests to rejoin their chronological year group. The continuation of this arrangement will continue on transfer to secondary school unless the parent/carer, current school, the school to which the child would otherwise wish to transfer and, where appropriate, the LA's professional adviser consider it in the child's best interest to rejoin the chronological year group. An application for transfer to secondary school must still be made in the same way as expected of other children in the year group in which they are working (rather than their chronological age group).

## **3. Deadline – applications received by the deadline date of 31 October 2014 will be considered as first round applications**

The closing date for main round applications (i.e. applications for entry into secondary year 7 in September 2015) is 31 October 2014.

All applications received after the deadline of 31 October 2014, including those directed incorrectly to schools and not forwarded to the LA before the deadline, will be treated as late applications and considered only after those applications received before the deadline have been determined. Applications may be considered as being received on time if they meet the exceptional circumstances criteria as detailed in the co-ordinated admissions scheme 2015/16.

#### 4. **Oversubscription criteria for voluntary controlled and community schools**

Where a secondary school is over-subscribed, places are allocated to children in order of the ranked criteria listed below:

a. **Looked After Children/Previously Looked After Children**

The definition of Looked After Children - a 'looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order. A looked after child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989).

b. **Vulnerable children**

Children from families registered with the National Asylum Support Service; children or families with a serious medical, physical or psychological condition where written evidence is provided at the time of application from a senior clinical medical officer, general practitioner or specialist showing that it would be detrimental to the child or family not to admit to the preferred school; children with particular educational needs where written evidence is available from Statutory SEN Service to show that it would be detrimental to the child not to be admitted to the school;

For the purpose of the above criteria the word 'families' is determined as living at the same address at the time of application and also living at the same address on a permanent basis. Proof will be required and must be submitted by the deadline date.

c. **Designated area siblings and shared area siblings**

A child is considered under this criterion if a sibling is attending the school as at the deadline date and where the child lives within the designated area or shared area at the same address as the sibling. The sibling must not be in year 12 or 13 of the school at the deadline date. Step, half and foster siblings are included in this category;

d. **Other children from the designated area or shared area**

Children resident within the designated area or shared area who do not qualify under one of the criteria above.

e. **Other siblings**

A child is considered under this criterion if a sibling is attending the school as at the deadline date and where the child lives at the same address as the sibling. The sibling must not be in years 11, 12 or 13 at the school as of the deadline date. Step, half and foster siblings are also included in this category;

f. **Children of staff at the school**

A child is considered under this criterion:

- i) where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, and/or
- ii) the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

If applicants wish to be considered under this criterion then a letter from the Headteacher confirming the one of the above applies to the applicant must be provided at the time of application.

g. **Children of serving forces personnel relocating to Salisbury Plain**

The above criteria will only apply to the following schools:

Amesbury - Stonehenge

h. **Other children**

Children to whom none of the above criteria apply.

**Tie break**

If the school is oversubscribed within any of the above categories the straight-line distance from the child's home address to the school will be used as the determining factor. Distances will be measured according to the Ordnance Survey eastings and northings for the child's home address and the school. Those living closer to the school will be given priority.

If two or more children with the same priority for admission live an indistinguishable distance from the preferred school, but cannot all be admitted then the available places will be decided by means of casting lots.

## **5. Waiting lists**

Waiting lists for voluntary controlled and community schools will be maintained for all intake year groups in schools. Children will automatically be added to these lists if a preference higher than the school place offered has been refused. All applicants have the right of appeal against any refusal of a place. The existence of a waiting list does not remove this right from any unsuccessful applicant.

The position on the list will be determined by applying the published over-subscription criteria and not by date order of receipt. This will mean a position will change if a later application is received from someone with higher priority according to the oversubscription criteria.

Waiting lists for the all year groups will close on 24 July 2016.

Parents may submit a fresh application for the next academic year group which will be considered from 5 May 2016 onwards.

Places that become available will not be offered to pupils who are not on the waiting list.

If your child is offered a place from a waiting list for any voluntary controlled or community school then you must accept or decline the place within 10 working days of the date of offer. If the place is not accepted then a further letter will be sent informing the applicant that should they not accept or decline the place within five working days the place will be withdrawn. A further letter will be sent informing the applicant the place has been withdrawn.

Notes:

- Names will only be removed from the lists if a written request is received or if the offer of a place that becomes available is declined.
- Registration of interest on a school's pre-admission list will not be considered as an application for a school place.
- Parents must contact any voluntary aided, foundation school or the academy concerned to obtain information on the existence and or maintenance of a waiting list.
- Except for service families, children will be considered to be living within the designated area for a school on receipt of an exchange of contracts or a signed tenancy agreement.
- Except for service families, children will not be considered to be a sibling unless their brother or sister is attending the school and is expected to still be in attendance at the chosen start date.

## **6. Applications for secondary Year 7 intake – applications received after 31 October 2014**

Applications received after the deadline of 31 October 2014 will be considered as late applications.

Applications received between the 1 November 2014 and 9 March 2015 will be treated as second round applications.

Applications received after the 10 March 2015 will be treated as third round applications.

## **7. In year transfer applications for year groups other than secondary year 7 2015 intake**

Applications received after the 24 July 2015 for the year of entry and any applications received for other year groups are classed as transfer applications.

Other than in exceptional circumstances and in agreement with the two schools involved, a transfer will, if the applicant is not moving address, only be considered as being for the start of the next traditional term.

All applications will be considered together with any applications already on a school's waiting list.

Applications received at least one traditional term before the term in which admission is being sought are considered together and are ranked using the oversubscription criteria listed in this policy.

Applications received requesting more immediate admission are considered in the order that the school admissions team receives them. If more than one additional application for a particular



school is received on the same date places are allocated to children in order of the oversubscription criteria as listed in this policy.

In all cases parent(s)/guardian(s) will be invited to state up to a maximum of three secondary ranked preferences. An offer will be made at the school listed as highest preference possible which has an available place.

If your child is offered a place at any voluntary controlled or community school then you must accept or decline the place within 10 working days of the date of offer. If the place is not accepted then a further letter will be sent informing the applicant that should they not accept or decline the place within five working days the place will be withdrawn. A further letter will be sent informing the applicant the place has been withdrawn.

If your child is offered a place at any voluntary controlled or community school and you accept the place, you must take the place up within 28 working days of the required admissions date stated on the original application form. Should the place not be taken up within the 28 working days the LA will then write to the parents informing them that the place has been withdrawn.

Requests for places in year groups other than the one relating to the child's chronological age will only be agreed, if supported by the LA's relevant professional adviser(s) and the school.

## **8. Proof of address**

The LA reserves the right to ask parents for proof of their address. If the parents' current address is different to that held on the LA's computerised system the LA may ask parents to provide proof of the new address if one is indicated. Acceptable proof of address includes:

A copy of your council tax bill.

A solicitor's letter stating contracts have been exchanged and specifying a completion date.

A signed and dated tenancy agreement plus proof of residency (e.g. copy of a recent utility bill).

If parents fail to provide proof of a new address, the LA will use the old address for admission purposes. If parents notify the LA that they will be moving house, even if they provide the relevant proof of that address, they must move into that property by no later than the end of the first term following the notification. The LA reserves the right to check that parents are living in the address indicated within that timescale. If parents are not living there, the applications will be investigated and the allocated place may be withdrawn.

## **9. Fair access protocol**

All Wiltshire schools will act in accordance with the Fair Access Protocol which has been adopted to give access to educational provisions for hard to place children.

If the governing body of any school refuse admission to a child with challenging behaviour, when there are places available, (outside the normal intake round) the case must be referred to the LA for consideration under the In-Year Fair Access Protocol.

This protocol does not apply to a child in care (looked after child, a previously looked after child) or a child with a statement of Special Educational Needs, as these children must be admitted.

Further information on the In Year Fair Access Protocol including further criterions for referral, and a copy of the protocol, can be viewed at [www.wiltshire.gov.uk](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk)

## **10. Sixth form admissions**

Parents or students wishing to enrol for sixth form courses at voluntary controlled or community secondary schools should in the first instance contact the school and ask for a copy of the sixth form prospectus. This will detail the courses offered at the school and any specific entry requirements for any of those courses. The school will require an application form to be completed should the parent or student wish to make a formal application to join the school's sixth form.

## **11. Appeal process**

Parents have a right of appeal to an independent panel against any decision made by or on behalf of the Authority as to the school at which education is to be provided for their child.

Information about the appeal procedure will be provided where a place at one or more of the preferred schools has been refused. Parents should contact the customer services team (01225 713010) to obtain an appeals form which should be returned to Democratic and Members service team at County Hall, Trowbridge. The clerk for the appeals panel will be provided by the D&M service team.

If a place has been awarded by the independent appeal panel the place must be taken up within 28 days of the required date of admission stated on the original application form.

Should the place not be taken up within the 28 days the LA will then write to the parents informing them that the place has been withdrawn.

## **12. Further appeals**

Unless there are significant and material changes, as agreed by the Director for Children's Services, in the circumstances of the parent, child or school relevant to a further application, a repeat application during the same academic year will not be considered and no fresh appeal can be made.

Where there have been material changes in circumstances and the repeat application is considered and again refused, the parents will have the right to a fresh appeal.

Parents who have appealed unsuccessfully can reapply for a place at the same school in a later academic year, and have a right of appeal if unsuccessful with that application.

**Published Admission Numbers (PAN's) for voluntary controlled and community schools**

<b>DfES</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Agreed 2015 PAN</b>
<b>4000</b>	<b>Abbeyfield School, Chippenham</b>	<b>180</b>
<b>4013</b>	<b>Melksham Oak Community School</b>	<b>230</b>
<b>4070</b>	<b>The Stonehenge School, Amesbury</b>	<b>164</b>