

Oatlands School



Admissions Policy

Date of last review: Summer 2023

Date of next review: Summer 2024

Overview

Oatlands School is a co-educational infant school. The Governors of Oatlands School are responsible for determining the Admissions Policy and for setting the Published Admission Number (PAN) for entry to Reception in September. For September 2023 the PAN will be 90.

This document is written with reference to Admission arrangements for Surrey County Council (SCC) community and voluntary controlled schools 2023/24. It is reviewed annually to reflect any SCC amendments to admission arrangements.

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools/admissions>

Starting School

Local authorities and schools must provide all children with the opportunity to join a Reception class in the September following their fourth birthday. However, a child does not reach statutory school age until the start of the school term following their fifth birthday. In recognition that some parents will feel that their child is not ready to start school in the September after their child turns four, parents can defer their start date until later in the same academic year, but not beyond the start of the summer term of the academic year for which a place has been offered. If the child does not start by this point, then the place will be withdrawn and parents will have to **apply for an in-year place** for the following year.

However, Oatlands School Governors would wish parents to accept and follow current school policy on the admission of children and start full time from the September following their fourth birthday. Allowances can be made for individual pupils where parents and the Head Teacher agree that a part time education would support a child's full time education would not be beneficial to the individual child.

Applications

Applications will be accepted without reference to ability or aptitude within the application window designated by the Department for Education. Parents should make an application on line or as a hard copy and return their application to the address shown on the form by the appropriate deadline, which for entry in September 2024 will be 15th January 2024.

Late Applications

Applications received after the published closing date (where it is reasonable that a parent could have submitted an on time application) will not be processed until after places have been offered to all of those whose applications met the closing date. Should places be available then late applications will be considered by Surrey County Council and admission criteria applied. If no places are available, the applicant will be offered an alternative placement by Surrey County Council and added to our waiting list.

Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

Children with an EHCP that names a school will be allocated a place before other children are considered. In this way, the number of places available will be reduced by the number of children with an EHCP that has named the school.

Applications for Children Outside of their Chronological Year Group

Applicants may choose to seek a place outside their child's chronological (correct) year group. Decisions will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and what is in the best interests of the child concerned.

- Applicants who are applying for their child to have a decelerated entry to school, i.e. to start later than other children in their chronological age group, should initially apply for a school place in accordance with the deadlines that apply for their child's chronological age. **If, in liaison with the Head Teacher**, the local authority agrees for the child to have a decelerated entry to a community or voluntary controlled school the place cannot be deferred and instead the applicant will be invited to apply again in the following year for the decelerated cohort.
- Applicants who are applying for their child to have an accelerated entry to school, i.e. to start earlier than other children in their chronological age group, must initially apply for a school place at the same time that other families are applying for that cohort. **If, in liaison with the Head Teacher**, the local authority agrees for the child to have an accelerated entry to a community or voluntary controlled school, the application will be processed. If it is not agreed for the child to have an accelerated entry to a community or voluntary controlled school, the applicant will be invited to apply again in the following year for the correct cohort.

Applicants must state clearly why they feel admission to a different year group is in the child's best interest and provide what evidence they have to support this. More information on educating children out of their chronological year group and the process for making such requests is available on Surrey's admissions web page.

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools/admissions>

Offer of places

Places will be offered in accordance with the co-ordinated offer scheme at a date designated by the Department for Education. The national offer date is around 16th April, other than where this date falls on a weekend or public holiday in which case it will be the next working day.

Oversubscription Criteria

When a community or voluntary controlled school is over-subscribed for any year group, applications for entry in 2024/25 will be ranked in the following order:

First Criterion: Looked after and previously looked after children

Children who are in the care of a local authority or who are provided with accommodation by a local authority in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989(a), e.g. fostered or living in a children's home, at the time an application for a school is made; and

Children who have previously been in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by a local authority in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989(a) and who have left that care through adoption, a child arrangements order (in accordance with Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 and as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014) or special guardianship order (in accordance with Section 14A of the Children Act 1989)

Second Criterion: Exceptional Social/Medical Needs

The exceptional social or medical circumstances might relate to either the child or the parent/carer. Supporting evidence from a professional is required such as a doctor and/or consultant for medical cases or a social worker, health visitor, housing officer, the police or probation officer for other social circumstances. This evidence must confirm the circumstances of the case and must set out why the child should attend a particular school and why no other school could meet the child's needs.

In addition, children who were previously in state care outside of England, and have ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted, will be considered under this criterion. A child will be regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society. The parent/carer will need to provide evidence to demonstrate that the child was in state care outside of England and left that care as a result of being adopted. Admission Arrangements 2021 8 Providing evidence does not guarantee that a child will be given priority at a particular school and in each case a decision will be made based on the merits of the case and whether the evidence demonstrates that a placement should be made at one particular school above any other.

Common medical conditions and allergies can usually be supported in all mainstream schools, therefore priority under a school's exceptional medical criterion would not normally be given for these. Some mainstream schools have units attached which provide specialist provision for children with an education, health and care plan which names the school. The facilities in these units are not normally available to children in the mainstream school and as such priority under a school's exceptional social or medical criterion would not normally be agreed for a mainstream place on the basis of a specialist unit being attached to the school.

In addition, routine child-minding arrangements would not normally be considered to be an exceptional social reason for placement at a particular school.

Third criterion: Children of a member of staff

If their parent is a permanent member of staff at the school and meets either or both of the following circumstances:

- a) 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
- b) The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage. For applications made as part of a normal intake, the length of employment will be considered as of the closing date for applications. For in year applications and for the purpose of maintaining a waiting list, the length of employment will be considered as of the date the application is received or the date a place becomes available, if a place is considered from the waiting list.

Fourth Criterion: Sibling

A sibling will be considered to be a brother or sister (that is, another child of the same parents, whether living at the same address or not), a half-brother or half-sister or a step-brother or step-sister or an adoptive or foster sibling, ordinarily living as part of the same family unit at the same address.

A child will be given sibling priority if they have a sibling on roll at the school concerned and that sibling is still expected to be on roll at that school at the time of the child's admission.

Fifth criterion: Any other children

Remaining places will be offered to children for whom the school is the nearest to their home address, giving priority to those whose permanent home address (See definition A below) is nearest to the school.

When assessing which school is nearest, distances to Surrey schools will be measured in a straight line from the address point of the child's home address, as set by Ordnance Survey, to the nearest point within each school which is used to measure distance for the purpose of prioritising admissions, as set out in each school's admission arrangements. Where a Surrey school does not use distance to prioritise admissions, the measuring point will be the nearest official school gate for pupils to use. Distances to schools outside of Surrey will be calculated using the postal address coordinates for the school. Parents can view Surrey's School map to see their home to school distances at <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools/admissions/about-map/find-a-school>.

The address on your application must be the **child's current permanent place of residence**, usually the parents' address.

- If the parents do not live together, the address is where the child spends most of their time usually the address of the parent receiving child benefit (where applicable). If there is equal shared custody of the child, it is left to the parents to decide which address to use.
- You should not use a business, relative's or carer's/childminder's address.
- Surrey County Council will not accept a temporary address if the main carer of the child still owns or rents a property that has previously been used as a home address, nor if they believe it has been used to obtain a school place when an alternative address is still available to that child.
- An application can only be made from one address, and only one application per child can be made.

SCC will need proof of where you live – usually your council tax number, or if you are not responsible for council tax, some alternative evidence, which should be a copy of your signed tenancy agreement and a utility bill.

SCC will check the address on your application against the records we hold for your child's current school and we may also check council tax records or write to ask you to provide proof of your address.

SCC will investigate any applications where there is doubt about the address being given. Use of false information may lead SCC to withdraw and offer of a place, even after a child has started at a school.

Tie breaker and the admission of twins, triplets, other multiple births or siblings born in the same academic year

Unless stipulated otherwise, if within any criterion there are more children than places available, any remaining places will be offered to children who meet the criterion on the basis of proximity of the child's home address to the school, with children living nearest receiving the greater priority. Distance will be measured in a straight line from the address point of the child's home address, as set by Ordnance Survey, to the nearest official school gate for pupils to use. This is calculated using the admissions team's Geographical Information System.

Where two or more children share priority for a place, e.g. where two children live equidistant from a school, Surrey County Council will use random allocation to determine which child should be given priority. In the case of multiple births, where children have equal priority for a place, Surrey County Council will use random allocation to determine which child should be given priority. If after the allocation one or more places can be offered but there are not sufficient places for all of them, each child will be offered a place.

Waiting Lists

Where there are more children than places available, waiting lists will operate for each year group according to the oversubscription criteria for each school without regard to the date the application was received or when a child's name was added to the waiting list.

Waiting lists for each year group at each community and voluntary controlled school will be maintained until the 31 July 2024 when they will be cancelled. Applicants who wish a child to remain on the waiting list for the 2024/25 academic year must complete a **continuing** Interest form through Surrey County Council between 1 July 2024 and 31 August 2024. Fully completed **forms** received during July 2024 will be used to reform the waiting list during August 2024. Applications received between **1 August and 31 August** will be added to the waiting list as soon as they have been processed. If a **Continuing Interest form** is not received by 31 August 2024 the applicant will be required to submit a new in year application.

Appeals

All parents have the right to appeal against any decision made by or on behalf of an admission authority as to the school your child attends under legislation produced by the Department for Education (DfE). You have the right of appeal if you have parental responsibility, whether or not you are the natural parent or if you care for a child who lives with you. It does not have to be the same person who submitted the application form.

If you do wish to appeal, you will need to complete an appeal form stating why you want your child to attend that school. You can appeal for a place at more than one school, but you cannot appeal for a school you did not name on your application form.

Your appeal must be made in writing and you must explain the reasons why you are lodging an appeal. If you submit an appeal form without setting out your grounds of appeal, it will be returned to you as you will not have lodged your appeal correctly. Therefore, it is very important for you to state clearly your reasons for lodging your appeal.

Further information is available at: <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools/admissions/appeals>

Transfer/applications at other ages – In year Applications

In year applications must be made via Surrey County Council. Should a place become available for a pupil to join the school at a time other than when starting in Reception, Surrey County Council will review the waiting list and make appropriate school place offers.
<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools/admissions/in-year>