

Whitchurch CE Primary School ADMISSIONS POLICY

The Education Act 1996 states that children must be admitted to school at the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday.

The Local Education Authority has delegated to school governors the power to admit Arising fives at the beginning of the academic year in which they will be five. In accordance with this delegation the school's policy is as follows:

children will be admitted in the September of the academic year in which they will be five

children whose 5th birthdays fall between 1 May and 31 August will be admitted for morning sessions until the Autumn half term.

Application

For children entering the Reception year, forms are sent directly from the Local Education Authority with guidance on the application procedure. Parents are warmly invited to visit the school prior to application. The school and parents will be notified of allocated places in the following March.

Number of places

The maximum number for which the school can cater is 120. The maximum number of admissions to year R (reception) is 17.

The governors of Whitchurch School have agreed to support and comply with the co-ordinated admission arrangements as defined by Herefordshire School Admission Forum, including the following Oversubscription Policy criteria in the event of the school, a class or a year group having more applications than places.

Appeals

A parent whose preference cannot be met may appeal against the decision. Details of the appeals procedure may be obtained from the school. All appeals must be submitted in writing within three weeks of the date of notification of the refusal of a place.

Oversubscription Policy

Criteria in rank order

1. Pupils in the 'Looked After' system and children who are adopted, where the approved agencies, in consultation with the Governors, agree that the school is the most appropriate to meet the child's needs.
2. Pupils whose principal address is **within** the catchment area of the school as defined by the LA and who have a **sibling in school** at the time of entry. 'sibling' is defined as:
 - A full or half brother or sister
 - A step brother or step sister
 - Children or parents who are married or cohabiting, where the parents and children live together in the same family household.
4. Pupils whose principal address is **within** the catchment area of the school as defined by the LA and who request a **Church (faith) place** supported by the appropriate Vicar/Rector/Minister. Faith in this context defined as being an adherent to the Christian Trinity. Please see attached appendix for explanation of a church place.
5. Pupils whose principal address is **within** the catchment area of the school as defined by the LA and who have the '**shortest available walking route to school**'.
6. Pupils whose principal address is **outside** the catchment area of the school as defined by the LA and who have a sibling at the school both at the time of application for a place **and** when the younger child is due to commence school.
7. Pupils whose principal address is **outside** the catchment area of the school as defined by the LA, but who may be living within the parish boundaries of Churches within the catchment area, and whose family is actively involved in the worship, life and work of a Christian faith Church. This application must be supported by the appropriate Vicar/Rector/Minister. Please see attached appendix for explanation of a church place.
8. Pupils whose principal address is **outside** the catchment area of the school as defined by the LA but who live nearest by the 'shortest available walking route' as defined by the LA.

Date reviewed: January 2009

Review date of policy: January 2011 Appendix 1

Admissions: Church Places Criteria

The following extract is adapted from the National Society's admissions advice and explains how Church places are determined in our school:

National context: On 14 March 2006, the Archbishop of Canterbury asked the Church to find "some simple objective criteria, applicable across the country, for admissions; and, to avoid misunderstanding, some clear public commitment in the whole sector to guarantee places for local children and for children of other faith backgrounds". The Hereford Diocesan Board of Education has responded by recommending the following criteria and understandings which have been adopted by this school's Governing Body.

Christian commitment – "faith priority" places

- (i) **Baptism** is the basic criterion for the identification of the children of practising Christian families. **Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child** could also be taken into account for those Christians who do not practise infant Baptism. However, that will not normally be enough on its own, if over-subscribed schools are going to be able to distinguish those most clearly admissible on faith grounds. There needs also to be some evidence of Christian commitment and practice for those seeking admission on the basis that they are of the faith of the school.
- (ii) We operate, therefore, a three-tier stratification for faith-based places:
- known to the church
 - attached to the church and
 - at the heart of the church.
- (iii) Applicants for a faith priority place will be asked to identify themselves as being: known to the church; or attached to the church; or at the heart of the church. The period in question will normally be the past two years. Applicants new to the area would need to provide evidence from a previous church or churches.
- (iv) An applicant '**known to the church**' will not be a frequent but probably an occasional worshipper, someone who is perhaps known through a family connection, or one or more of whose family would be involved in

some church activity, such as a uniformed or other church organisation.

- (v) An applicant '**attached to the church**' will be a regular but not frequent worshipper, by which is meant (for example) one who usually attends a monthly family or church parade service or is regularly involved in a weekday church activity including an element of worship.
- (vi) An applicant '**at the heart of the church**' will be a regular worshipper. This might normally mean one who worships usually twice a month. To accommodate difficult patterns of work and family relationships account will be taken of week-day worship. **The worshipper could be the child** for whom application is made or one or both parents.

Application form and church reference

- (vii) Applicants for faith priority places will need an application form (available from ...) to give evidence of their Christian (or other faith) commitment.
- (viii) Christian applicants should give evidence that the child for whom a place is sought has been baptised or had a service of Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child. A copy of a certificate of Baptism or of a service of Thanksgiving should be included if possible with the application.
- (ix) There needs to be confirmation through a worship community reference of applicants' claims, where they are applying on a faith priority basis. This reference will simply confirm or reject the objective facts as proposed by the family: this family is known to the church; this family is attached to the church; this family is at the heart of the church.
- (x) Once the reference is available to the governing body of the school it becomes objective evidence for the admissions committee in forming their judgement on the application. The same will apply in the case of any subsequent appeal or adjudication.

Whitchurch CE Primary

5 June 2009