

Sonning Church of England Primary School Admissions Policy 2023-24 - Determined



Aim of Policy: This Policy details the Admissions arrangements for Sonning Church of England Primary School for September 2023 to August 2024. The policy has been prepared by the Governing Body in consultation with The Keys Academy Trust and the Oxford Diocesan Board of Education and agreed with the relevant Admissions Authority and parents.

Description: This Policy details the Admissions arrangements for Sonning Church of England School for entry into Reception from September 2023 to August 2024, as determined by The Keys Academy Trust. The school is a partner in the coordinated admission arrangements for primary admissions in the Wokingham LA and follows their admissions timetable.

The policy includes details of the Admissions Criteria, Waiting Lists, In Year Admissions, Appeals and all other related issues. It also includes a Supplementary Information Form for applications made under the church criteria and a map of the catchment area.

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Approval by:	Admissions Team and Foundation Governors	Team Reviewing:	Admissions Team
Based on Model Policy?	Yes – Oxford Diocese	Date uploaded to website:	Yes

Approved by:	Admissions Team and Foundation Governors	Date:	October 2021
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1.0 Admissions Arrangements for September 2023 – August 2024

The Governing Body of the school, not Wokingham Local Authority (the LA), is responsible for deciding on admissions to the school. The school is a partner in the coordinated admission arrangements for primary admissions in Wokingham LA and follows their admission timetable.

This policy has been prepared by the Governing Body in consultation with the Keys Academy Trust and the Oxford Diocesan Board of Education and agreed with the relevant Admissions authorities and parents. The Governing Body has made every effort to ensure this policy complies with the School Admissions Code 2014 and all relevant legislation, including that on infant class sizes and equal opportunities.

Sonning Church of England Primary School values highly its Christian ethos and its close links with St Andrew's Church and the Diocese of Oxford. We provide a distinctively Christian, yet inclusive, environment which gives each child the skills they need to build strong foundations for the years ahead and to make positive choices in everything they do. As a church school, we welcome applications from Christian families, and those of other faiths or none. We ask all parents applying for a place at our school to respect this ethos and its importance to the whole school community.

2.0 Admission arrangements to the Reception Year in September 2023

Applications for entry to Sonning Church of England Primary School in the school year September 2023 - August 2024 must be included on the LA Common Application Form for the applicant's Home Authority (i.e. the Authority in which the parents/legal guardian pays council tax) and must be submitted to that LA. Parents may submit their applications to Reception Class on-line. Full details are available in the LA Admissions Guide.

The Governors' Admissions Committee will consider all applications during March 2023 and applications will be ranked in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. Wokingham LA will be notified by 15 March 2023. Offers and refusals of places will be posted by the home LA on 16 April 2023. Parents (see Note 1) will be given a date by which to accept an offer. Applications received after the deadline for receipt will only be considered **after** all those received by the deadline. This means that, if no places are left after considering all the applications received by the deadline, even if you fulfil a higher criterion than that under which places have been offered to other applicants, your application will be unsuccessful.

For admission to school for the 2023/2024 school year, the school will offer all children a full-time school place from the September following their fourth birthday. Parents may request that their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age.

Parents of a child whose fifth birthday falls between 1 September 2023 and 31 March 2024 may request that their child is not admitted until later in the school year 2023/2024 (no later than the term [using a three term year] after the child's fifth birthday, when s/he reaches compulsory school age). The school will hold any deferred place for the child, although, in the majority of cases, we find that children benefit from starting at the beginning of the school year, rather than part way through it.

Where parents choose to defer their child's admission, or take up the place part-time but later wish to increase it to full-time before their child has reached compulsory school age, this must be discussed with the Headteacher to agree the effective date.

For children whose fifth birthday falls between 1 April 2024 and 31 August 2024 (summer-born children), parents who do not wish them to start school in school year 2023-24, but to be admitted to the Reception Year in September 2024, should proceed as follows. They should apply at the usual time for a place in September 2023 together with a written request that the child is admitted outside his or her normal age group to the Reception Class in September 2024. N.B. Parents would need to provide strong supporting reasons for seeking a place outside the normal age group and should discuss the position with the Headteacher as early as possible.

If their request is agreed, and this should be clear before the national offer day, their application for the normal age group may be withdrawn before any place is offered and they should reapply in the normal way (no later than 15 January 2024) for a Reception place in September 2024. If their request is refused, the parents must decide whether to wait for any offer of a place in September 2023 (N.B. it will still be subject to the over-subscription criteria below) or to withdraw their application and apply in the second half of the summer term 2024 for a Year 1 place in September 2024. Parents should be aware that the Year 1 group may have no vacancies as it could be full with children transferring from the 2023-24 Reception Year group.

The number of available places for the year commencing 1st September 2023 is 30. This number is compatible with the school's duty to comply with infant class size regulation. The Published Admission Number (PAN) only applies to the relevant age group. The relevant age group is the age group to which children are normally admitted. The school will refuse admission above this number as the admission of another child would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources.

Please note that living in the school's catchment area does not guarantee places since this is dependent on the number of applicants for each admission criterion.

3.0 Children with a Statement of Special Educational Need

Children with a Statement of Special Educational Need or with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) naming Sonning Church of England Primary School will always be offered places. However, if there is then greater demand, the following criteria will be applied in the order set out below:

1. Children with an EHCP (see note 2)
2. Looked-after children and children who were previously looked-after, but ceased to be so because, immediately after being looked after, they became subject to an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order (see note 3), children who appear to have been in state care outside England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.
3. Families who have exceptional medical or social needs that make it essential that their child attends Sonning Church of England Primary School rather than any other. These needs must be fully supported by written evidence from the appropriate professional person involved with the family (see note 4).

4. A child with a normal home address in the Ecclesiastical Parish of Sonning, **and** with a sibling (see note 6) already on the roll of Sonning Church of England Primary School at the time of application and who is expected to still be in attendance at the time of entry to the school.
5. A child with a normal home address in the Ecclesiastical Parish of Sonning where a parent has been a regular worshipper (at least twice per month) for a year prior to the date of application at St Andrew's Church, Sonning and whose name is on that Church's Electoral Roll (Church Membership List) (see Note 7).
6. A child with a normal home address in the Ecclesiastical Parish of Sonning.
7. A child with a normal home address outside the Ecclesiastical Parish of Sonning **and** with a sibling already on the roll of Sonning Church of England Primary School at the time of application and who is expected to still be in attendance at the time of entry to the school.
8. A child with a normal home address outside the Ecclesiastical Parish of Sonning where a parent has been a regular worshipper (at least twice per month) for a year prior to the date of application at St Andrew's Church Sonning, and whose name is on that Church's Electoral Roll (Church Membership List) (see Note 7).
9. All other children.

- ❖ Proximity of the child's home will be measured by Wokingham Borough Council's GIS system.
- ❖ Priority will be given within any of the above oversubscription criteria to the applicant whose permanent home address is nearest to the preferred school in terms of radial (straight line) distance.
- ❖ Distances will be measured consistently and will be measured as a straight line between the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) address points for the respective home address and school, using the Easting and Northing for each address point.
 - These are then used to calculate the distance between the two address points using a 'direct distance mathematical routine' within the Capita ONE system used by the council's School Admissions Team into which the LLPG address points are imported.
 - This calculates the distance from the values created through this process using Pythagoras' Theorem by measuring the distance in metres between the Easting and Northing for each end address point then multiplying by 0.000621317 to convert to miles.
 - It should be noted that this calculation may not be exactly the same as that created by a Geographical Information System (GIS) product as the GIS product may build in a formula to allow for the curvature of the earth. This curvature does not begin to affect distance values until the distance is least 10 miles
- ❖ If there are two identical distances and only one place available, the place will be decided by random allocation in the presence of an independent person.

- ❖ Applications will not be considered more than once in a school year, unless there is a major change in circumstances, e.g. change of address.

4.0 Waiting Lists

In the event of the school being over-subscribed, a waiting list will be maintained by Wokingham LA until 31st December 2023. The list will then be transferred to the school. The order of priority on the waiting list is the same as the list of criteria for over subscription. No account is taken of length of time on a waiting list. Children who may be allocated to the school in accordance with the In-Year Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over those children already on the waiting list.

5.0 Multiple Births

In cases where there is one place available, and the next child on the list is a twin, triplet, etc., we would admit both twins (and all the children in the case of other multiple births) even if this meant exceeding the agreed admission number of 30 for Reception 2023-2024 or the number of places (30) in other year groups.

6.0 Fair Access

The school participates in Wokingham Borough Council's Fair Access Protocol. Children qualifying under the Fair Access Protocol may be offered a place even if there are no places available in the relevant year group and also take priority for admission over any child on the waiting list.

7.0 All Other Admissions

Admission to the school during the school year depends on whether or not there are places available. All year groups at the school have 30 places. Applications for in-year admissions should be submitted to Wokingham LA. Admissions outside the normal age group will be dealt with as indicated below.

If there is a vacancy, and there is no child on the relevant waiting list with a higher priority (according to the over-subscription criteria 1-9 above), a place will be offered.

7.1 In Year Admissions

In-year admissions or admissions at the beginning of school years other than Reception will only be considered by the Governing Body up to half a term [using the three term year] in advance of the desired date for entry. For example, for entry in January, the application will not be considered until after the October half term break.

The school will participate in Wokingham Local Authority's In-Year Fair Access protocols which may mean children are admitted over the admission number.

7.2 Moving House

If parents are moving house, the school will ask for evidence of the move, before considering any application for a place. Documentary evidence in the form of a solicitor's letter to confirm exchange of contracts, a rental agreement for at least a period of six months will be required (Armed Forces personnel are exempt). If you are returning from elsewhere, to live in a home

that you own, we will require evidence to show that you have returned. We will also ask for evidence that any previous house owned has been sold or is being sold. We would not accept an address where the one given is that of a second home with the main home being elsewhere. If there are two or more homes, we will check which is the main home, and may refuse to base an allocation of a place on an address which might be considered only temporary.

Nor would we accept an address where the child was resident other than with a parent or carer unless this was part of a fostering or formal care arrangement. We would not normally accept an address where only part of a family had moved, unless connected with a divorce or permanent separation arrangement, in which case we would require proof.

7.3 Admissions Outside Normal Age Group

Requests from parents for places outside a normal age group will be considered carefully e.g. for those who have missed education due to ill health. Each case will be considered on its own merits and circumstances. However, such admissions will not normally be agreed without a consensus that to do so would be in the pupil's interests. It is recommended that parents discuss their wishes with the Headteacher in advance of applying for a place. The Governors may ask relevant professionals for their opinion on the case. It should be noted that if a place in the requested age group is refused, but one in the normal age group is offered then there is no right of appeal.

8 Applications in the Previous Year/s

In the year 2021/22 there were 81 applications for places at Sonning Church of England Primary School via the Wokingham Borough Council's Coordinated Admissions System. Applications were made as follows:

- Children with statements naming the school = 0
- Cat 1 = 0
- Cat 2 = 0
- Cat 3 = 0
- Cat 4 = 5
- Cat 5 = 0
- Cat 6 = 0
- Cat 7 = 6
- Cat 8 = 24
- Cat 9 = 46

Number of places successful/allocated 2021/22= 30

There were no admissions appeals for this group.

As in previous years, there were a high number of applications naming Sonning Church of England Primary School. 11 sibling places were initially offered for the 2021/22 academic year (Cats 3, 6 and 1 in 5) and there were a high number of non-catchment applications (Cats 8).

9 Appeals

There are established arrangements for appeals against non-admission. In the event of an appeal, parents should contact the school office to obtain an Appeal Form which should be completed and

returned to the Chair of Governors within 20 school days of being notified of the refusal of a school place. These are heard by an independent appeal panel, convened by the Diocesan Admissions and Appeals Officer. It should be noted that, in the event of an unsuccessful appeal against non-admission to the school, the school does not consider any further application in the same school year (1st September – 31st August) unless there has been a significant change of circumstances.

10 Register interest

Parents may register their interest in the school for their child from the age of 2 years. They are welcome to visit the school during this period on one of our open mornings that are advertised on the school website. However, by registering their interest, this does not guarantee a child a place within the school. Any data held is for the purpose of gauging numbers for subsequent years. Application for a school place is a separate process which must be made directly through the appropriate Local Authority.

For further information, in the first instance, please contact Louise Brown, Compliance Officer at the school:

- **Tel:** 0118 9693399
- **Email:** compliance@sonning.wokingham.sch.uk

11 Supplementary Notes

11.1 Note 1

“Parent” is defined in law (The Education Act 1996) as either:

- ❖ any person who has ‘parental responsibility’ (defined in the Children Act 1989) for the child or young person; or
- ❖ any person who has care of the child or young person.

If you are in any doubt, please contact the school for advice.

11.2 Note 2

Children with EHCP - Following professional assessment an EHCP is a legal document, provided by a child or young person's Local Authority, which describes a child or young person's special educational needs, the support they need, and the outcomes they would like to achieve.

11.3 Note 3

By a “looked-after child” we mean one in the care of a local authority or being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of its social services function. An adoption order is one made under the Adoption Act 1976 (Section 12) or the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (Section 46). A ‘child arrangements order’ is one settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live (Children Act 1989, Section 8, as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014, Section 14). A ‘special guardianship order’ is one appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian/s (Children Act 1989, Section 14A).

Applications under this criterion must be accompanied by evidence to show that the child is looked after or was previously looked after (e.g. a copy of the adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order).

11.4 Note 4

When applying under criterion 3 (exceptional medical or social needs), you must include supporting evidence from an independent professional person (e.g. doctor, psychologist, health visitor or social worker) who is aware of the situation and supports your reasons for preferring Sonning Church of England School.

This supporting evidence must clearly demonstrate why the school is the most suitable and must illustrate the difficulties that would be caused to the child if they had to attend another school. The person supplying the evidence should be aware of the child's or the family's case. The school reserves the right to ask for further evidence or clarification where necessary and may seek the advice of appropriate educational professionals where necessary.

11.5 Note 5

By normal home address, we mean the child's home address. This must be where the parent or legal carer of the child lives with the child unless it is proved that the child is resident elsewhere with someone else who has legal care and control of the child. The address should be a residential property that is owned, leased or rented by the child's parent/s or person with legal care and control of the child.

To avoid doubt, where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility, each for part of a week or month, the address where the child lives will be determined having regard to a joint declaration from the parents stating the exact pattern of residence. If the residence is not split equally, then the relevant address used will be that at which we are satisfied that the child spends the majority of the school week. Where there is an equal split or there is any doubt about residence, we will make the judgment about which address to use for the purpose of determining whether or not to offer a place.

We will take into account, for example, the following:

- ❖ any legal documentation confirming residence
- ❖ the pattern of the residence
- ❖ the period of time over which the current arrangement has been in place
- ❖ confirmation from any previous school of the contact details and home address supplied to it by the parents
- ❖ where the child is registered with his/her GP
- ❖ any other evidence the parents may supply to verify the position.

We may ask for evidence of the normal home address in the form of a recent bill. This could be, for example, the most recent Council Tax bill, utility bill no more than three months old, a current TV licence, buildings and contents insurance, mortgage statement or rent book which shows the address concerned. Parents who are unable to provide this evidence should contact the school to discuss what evidence might be acceptable.

If it becomes clear or if there is any doubt that the parents and child are not living at the address given on the application form, the school may seek further evidence. The school

works closely with the LA to ensure that places are not obtained at the school on the basis of false addresses, and, in cases of doubt, will take steps to verify the information provided. If a place at the school is offered, and it later becomes clear that the offer was made on fraudulent or misleading information (e.g. a false claim to living in the catchment area), and the school has denied a place to a child with a stronger claim, the school will withdraw the offer of a place. The offer can also be withdrawn even after the child has started at the school.

We regard a child's home address to be where he or she sleeps for the majority of the school week (Monday to Friday). We may ask to see official documentation, such as a child benefit book or medical card if there are reasons why a child does not live at his or her parent's address. For example, if he or she is resident with a grandparent, this needs to be made clear on the application form.

If such arrangements are not declared or a relative's address is used on the application, we may consider that a false declaration has been made, and withdraw the offer of a place. Childcare arrangements are **not** sufficient reason for listing another address.

If parents move house after the application has been made, but before any offer of a place has been made, the home LA must be informed.

If parents are moving, we will ask for evidence of the move, before considering any application for a place under the co-ordinated scheme.

We would not accept an address where the one given is that of a second home with the main home being elsewhere. If there are two or more homes, we will check which is the main home, and may refuse to base an allocation of a place on an address which might be considered only temporary. Nor would we accept an address where the child was resident other than with a parent or carer unless this was part of a fostering or formal care arrangement. We would not normally accept an address where only part of a family had moved, unless connected with a divorce or permanent separation arrangement, in which case we would require proof.

11.6 Note 6

By sibling we mean a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or the child of the parent's/carer's partner where the child for whom the school place is sought is living in the same family unit at the same address as that sibling. It is helpful if parents make it clear on the application form where the sibling has a different family name. Where there is more than one sibling at the school, only the youngest should be listed on the application form.

11.7 Note 7

The Governing Body asks the priest or minister to complete the faith form attached to this policy confirming church commitment. If a family has moved within the last 12 months, the governors will look at previous church attendance and a separate declaration form must be completed for both churches. The supplementary form must be returned directly to the school by 15th January 2023 for the main admission round or with the application form for in year applications.

Places of Worship Closure – COVID-19: In the event that during the period specified for attendance at worship the church [or, in relation to those of other faiths, relevant place of worship] has been closed for public worship and has not provided alternative premises for that worship, the requirements of these [admissions] arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the period when the church [or in relation to those of other faiths, relevant place of worship] or alternative premises have been available for public worship.

Sonning Church of England Primary School
Ligugé Way, Sonning, Reading, Berkshire, RG4 6XF
Tel: 0118 969 3399
Website: www.sonning.wokingham.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mr Luke Henderson

Local Authority: Wokingham Borough Council

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION FORM

This form is only required to be completed by applicants for categories 5 and 8

PART 1

Name of Parent/Carer:

Name of Child:

Gender:M/F..... **Date of Birth:**

Home Address of Child:

.....
Home Telephone

Number: **Mobile Number:**

PART 2

Criteria for Admission (See Admission Policy) Category 5 and 8 applicants

5. *A child with a normal home address in the Ecclesiastical Parish of Sonning where a parent has been a regular worshipper (at least twice per month) for a year prior to the date of application at St Andrew's Church, Sonning and whose name is on that Church's Electoral Roll (Church Membership List).*
- 8 *A child with a normal home address outside the Ecclesiastical Parish of Sonning where a parent has been a regular worshipper (at least twice per month) for a year prior to the date of application at St Andrew's Church Sonning, and whose name is on that Church's Electoral Roll (Church Membership List).*

Both Category 5 and 8:

Have you been a regular worshipper (at least twice per month) at St Andrew's Church, Sonning, for 12 months prior to this application?

Yes/No:

Is your name on the Electoral Roll of St Andrew's Church, Sonning?

Date of Trustees Determination 02/2022

Date of Consultation January 2021

Yes/No:

Signature of Parent/Carer:

Date:

For completion by the priest or minister: I confirm that the above-named parent fulfils the requirements of regular attendance at St Andrew's Church, Sonning and is on the Church Electoral Roll (if appropriate).

Signature of Vicar/Associate

Vicar/Priest/Minister:

Date:

Name of Vicar/Associate

Vicar/Priest/Minister (please print)

For those how have moved into the Ecclesiastical Parish of Sonning in the past year

Please provide details of your attendance at your previous Church.

Name of Church:

I attended the above Church at least twice a month from to
(insert dates)

Signature of Parent/Carer:

Date:

I confirm that the above-named parent attended my Church at least twice a month for the period indicated.

Signature of Vicar/Associate

Vicar/Priest/Minister:

Date:

Name of Vicar/Associate

Vicar/Priest/Minister (please print)

Please note that Wokingham Borough Council is the Administering Authority

The form should be completed and returned to Sonning Church of England School by 15th January 2023 for the main entry point or when the application form is returned to the LA for in year admissions.

Places of Worship Closure – COVID-19: In the event that during the period specified for attendance at worship the church [or, in relation to those of other faiths, relevant place of worship] has been closed for public worship and has not provided alternative premises for that worship, the requirements of these [admissions] arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the period when the church [or in relation to those of other faiths, relevant place of worship] or alternative premises have been available for public worship.

