



## **GOVERNORS' POLICY STATEMENT**

### **(25) ADMISSIONS**

In line with all Surrey's Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools, Oakwood School follows Surrey County Council's Admissions arrangements for 2019/20, which is published on an annual basis. The following was adopted by the Local Authority in March 2005, following widespread consultation. In subsequent years we will adhere to any alterations made to the Surrey Admissions Policy.

Adopted by the SLT on: March 2019

Review date: March 2020

# Admissions policy

## 1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Explain **how to apply** for a place at the school
- Sets out Surrey County council's admissions policy which includes **arrangements for allocating places to the students** who apply

## 2. Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on the following advice from the Department for Education (DfE):

- [School Admissions Code](#)
- [School Admission Appeals Code](#)

The school is required to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the [School Standards and Framework Act 1998](#).

## 3. Definitions

The **normal admissions round** is the period during which parents can apply for state-funded school places at the school's normal point of entry, using the common application form provided by their home local authority. Applications for a secondary school must be made by 31 October 2018. Places at Surrey secondary schools will be offered on the basis of the preferences that are shown on the application form. Applicants will be asked to rank up to six preferences and these will be considered under an equal preference system. The Surrey County council admission arrangements for 2019/20 for our school are set out in Section 6.

Children with an education, health and care plan (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.

## 4. How to apply

For applications in the normal admissions round you should use the application form provided by Surrey Admissions and it will be managed in accordance with Surrey's coordinated schemes on primary and secondary admission. Please see Surrey County Council's coordinated schemes for further details regarding applications, processing, offers, late applications, post-offer and waiting lists. You will receive an offer for a school place directly from your local authority.

## 5. Requests for admission outside the normal age group

Parents are entitled to request a place for their child outside of their normal age 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 Headteacher, 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 Headteacher, 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 at [www.surreycc.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/admissions).

Parents will always be informed of the reasons for any decision on the year group a child should be admitted to. Parents do not have a right to appeal if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.

## **6. Allocation of places**

### **6.1 Admission number**

The school has an agreed admission number of *300 students* for entry in Year 7.

### **6.2 Oversubscription criteria**

All children whose statement of special educational needs (SEN) or education, health and care (EHC) plan names the school will be admitted before any other places are allocated.

If the school is not oversubscribed, all applicants will be offered a place.

In the event that the school receives more applications than the number of places it has available, places will be given to those children who meet any of the criteria set out below as detailed in the Surrey County council admission arrangements, in order until all places are filled:

#### **Looked after and previous looked after children**

Within the admission arrangements for all community and voluntary controlled schools looked after and previously looked after children will receive the top priority for a place. Looked after and previously looked after children will be considered to be:

- Children who are registered as being 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), e.g. fostered or living in a children's home, at the time an application for a school is made; an
- Children who have previously been the care of 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)

Places will be allocated under this criterion when places are first offered at a school and the local authority may also ask schools to admit over their published admission number at other times under this criterion.

#### **Exceptional social/medical need**

Occasionally there will be a very small number of children for whom exceptional social or medical circumstances apply which will warrant a placement at a particular school. 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

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.

We reserve the right to refer medical evidence to our designated medical officer, where necessary, to assist us in making a decision about medical priority for a school place.

Places may be allocated under this criterion when places are first offered at a school and the local authority may also ask schools to admit over their published admission number at other times under this criterion.

### **Siblings for community and voluntary controlled schools**

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.

### **Nearest school**

For the normal intake to a school in 2019, the nearest school will be defined as the school closest to the home address with a published admission number for children of the appropriate age-range and which has admitted children without regard to faith or boarding in the initial allocation of places in 2015, 2016 and 2017. Exceptions to this would be:

- where a faith school has changed its admission arrangements and that change has meant that they would be expected to offer places to children who do not demonstrate a commitment to faith in future; and
- where a new school has opened or an existing school has opened a new phase of education since 2015 and that school does not admit all children with regard to faith; and
- some named out of County schools which would not have offered places to Surrey applicants in the initial allocation of places in 2015, 2016 and 2017 and where that school's inclusion in the assessment of nearest school would lead to difficulty in identifying a school for a Surrey resident.

The nearest school may be inside or outside the county boundary. Under this criterion all Surrey community and voluntary controlled schools will be considered, as will most academies and foundation, free, trust and voluntary aided schools. A list of the academies and foundation, free, trust and voluntary aided schools in Surrey and the out of county schools that will NOT be considered in the assessment of nearest school can be seen on the Surrey Admissions website or directly from the Surrey Admissions team.

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.

Any child remaining on the waiting list after 1 September 2019 will be considered to be an application for in year admission. After this date, when assessing nearest school, all schools with the appropriate year group will be taken in to account.

### **Home Address**

Within the admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools the child's home address excludes any business, relative's or childminder's address and must be the child's normal place of residence. Where the child is subject to a child arrangements order and that order stipulates that the child will live with one parent/carer more than the other, the address to be used will be the one where the child is expected to live for the majority of the time. For other children, the address to be used will be the address where the child lives the majority of the time. In other cases, where the child spends an equal time between their parents/carers, it will be up to the parent/carers to agree which address to use. Where a child spends their time equally between their parents/carers and they cannot agree on who should make the application, we will accept an application from the parent/carer who is registered for child benefit. If neither parent is

registered for child benefit we will accept the application from the parent/carer whose address is registered with the child's current school or nursery.

We will not generally accept a temporary address if the main carer of the child still possesses or rents a property that has previously been used as a home address, nor will we accept a temporary address if we believe it has been used solely or mainly to obtain a school place when an alternative address is still available to that child. All distances will be measured by the computerised Geographical Information System maintained by Surrey's admissions team.

The address to be used for the initial allocation of places to Reception, Year 3 and Year 7 will be the child's address at the closing date for application. Changes of address may be considered in accordance with Surrey's coordinated scheme if there are exceptional reasons behind the change, such as if a family has just moved to the area. The address to be used for waiting lists, after the initial allocation, will be the child's current address. Any offer of a place on the basis of address is conditional upon the child living at the appropriate address on the relevant date. Applicants have a responsibility to notify Surrey County Council of any change of address.

If an applicant is found to have supplied false or deliberately misleading information or to have withheld any relevant information, the local authority reserves the right to withdraw any offer of a place, even if the child has already started at the school.

### **6.3 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 Surrey 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, wherever it is logistically possible, each child will be offered a place. Where it is not logistically possible to offer each child a place the child(ren) ranked the highest will retain their offer and the applicant will be advised of their right of appeal and informed about waiting lists.

### **6.4 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 31 July 2020 when they will be cancelled. Applicants who wish a child to go on the waiting list for the 2020/21 academic year must apply for in-year admission through Surrey County Council. Fully completed applications received during July 2020 will be used to reform the waiting list during August 2020. Applications received after the end of July 2020 will be added to the waiting list as soon as they have been processed.

## **7. In-year admissions**

You can apply for a place for your child at any time outside the normal admissions round. As is the case in the normal admissions round, all children whose statement of SEN or EHC plan names the school will be admitted.

The following applications will be treated as in-year admissions during 2019/20:

- Applications for admission to Year 7 which are received after 1 September 2019
- All other applications for admission to Years 1 to 6 and 8 to 11

Applications for Surrey's community and voluntary controlled schools must be made to the local authority on Surrey's common application form. Where there are more applications than places available, each application will be ranked in accordance with the published oversubscription criteria for each school.

## **8. Appeals**

If your child's application for a place at the school is unsuccessful, you will be informed why admission was refused and given information about the process for hearing appeals directly from Surrey County Council admissions team.

## **9. Home to School transport**

Surrey County Council has a Home to School Transport policy that sets out the circumstances in which children might qualify for free home to school transport, this is managed solely by the Local Authority and is not the responsibility of Oakwood School.

Generally, transport will only be considered if a child is under 8 years old and is travelling more than two miles or is over 8 years old and travelling more than three miles to the nearest school with a place. Transport will not generally be provided to a school that is further away if a child would have been offered a place at a nearer school had it been named as a preference on the application form, although exceptions may apply to secondary aged children whose families are on a low income if they are travelling to one of their three nearest schools and to children whose nearest school is out of County but over the statutory walking distance.

Eligibility to transport is not linked to the admission criteria of a school. Some schools give priority to children who are attending a feeder school, but attending a feeder school does not confer an automatic right to transport to a linked school. In considering admission criteria and school preferences it is important that applicants also consider the home to school transport policy so they might take account of the likelihood of receiving free transport to their preferred school before making their application.

In considering eligibility for home to school transport, the local authority will take account of all state funded schools, including free schools and academies. Applicants should note that the opening of a new school or the permanent relocation of an existing school might change which school is assessed to be the nearest to an address when compared to assessments made in previous years. If for any reason a school educates children on a temporary site, the assessment of nearest school for the purpose of home to school transport eligibility will disregard the temporary site and will instead use the intended permanent site of the school or, if that has not yet been determined, the current main site of the school. Where a school is operating on a temporary site and that school's permanent/current site is deemed to be a child's nearest qualifying school, the home to school walking distance will be measured to the school's temporary site to determine if the child lives over the statutory walking distance and is eligible for transport assistance. Eligibility will be reassessed at the point a child ceases to be educated at the temporary site.

A full copy of Surrey's Home to School Transport policy is available on Surrey's website at [www.surreycc.gov.uk](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk) or from the Surrey Schools and Childcare Service on 0300 200 1004