

ADMISSION RULES AND ARRANGEMENTS

YEAR 7 TO YEAR 11



THE CHERWELL SCHOOL

Part of the
RLT RIVER
LEARNING
TRUST

Introduction

The Cherwell School is an academy. [River Learning Trust \(RLT\)](#) is responsible for admissions decisions. The Trust has delegated this responsibility to the Local Governing Board (LGB). The Trust and LGB will work closely with Oxfordshire County Council and will use the Council as their agent for the processing of applications for places.

This admissions policy meets all lawful requirements including those set out in the following Acts, Codes, policies and relevant case law:

- [Children Act 1989](#)
- [School Standards & Framework Act 1998](#)
- [Education Act 2002](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [School Admissions Code 2014](#)
- [Oxfordshire County Council's Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme](#)

School Admissions Appeals will be conducted under arrangements set out in

- [School Standards & Framework Act 1998](#)
- [School Admissions Appeals Code 2012](#)

Admission Number

The admission number for entry to Year 7 each academic year will be 270.

Coordination of admissions for the normal admissions round (Entry to Year 7 each September)

The Academy is part of the coordinated admission process for Oxfordshire for transfer from primary to secondary school for children to start Year 7 each September.

Children starting Year 6 each September must transfer from primary or junior school to secondary school the following September. Applications must be made by 31 October of their Year 6 academic year. Applications made after this date will be considered to have been made late. Applications can be made online by using the link on Oxfordshire County Council's website www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/secondaryadmissions

Online applicants will receive an email on 1 March of their child's Year 6 academic year (or next working day) notifying them of the outcome of their application.. If the first preference was offered and the Council determines that the child will not be eligible for free home to school travel assistance, this will be the only notification sent. For other online applications (those not offered their first preference school or those where the Council determines the child will be eligible for free home to school travel assistance) and those who applied on paper by 31 October, notification will be sent by second-class post on 1 March of their child's Year 6 academic year (or next working day).

Late applications received after 31 October of the child's Year 6 academic year but by the closing date for late applications published in Oxfordshire County Council's co-ordinated admissions scheme will be treated as late applications. Notifications for late applications will

be sent by second-class post on the date published in Oxfordshire County Council's co-ordinated admissions scheme (early-May of the child's Year 6 academic year). Notifications will not be sent by email.

Late applications or changes of preference received after the late closing date for applications published in Oxfordshire County Council's co-ordinated admissions scheme will not be processed until after the response date for late applications (late-May of the child's Year 6 academic year).

[The full scheme is published on Oxfordshire County Council's public website.](#)

In-Year Admissions (Years 7 to 11)

The academy is part of the coordinated in-year admissions process for Oxfordshire.

Applications for entry to other year groups at the school (Years 7 to 11) to start during the academic year, can be made at any time. Applications for entry to other year groups each September can be made no earlier than the first day of the second-half of the Summer Term (June each year). Because of the volume of in-year applications received during June, July and August each year, a phased approach will be used to process these applications. The dates of these phases are available in the co-ordinated in-year admissions scheme [available online.](#)

Applications can be made via Oxfordshire County Council's website:
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/schooltransfer

5pm on each Thursday during term-time will be treated as a "closing date" for applications for that week.

Applications received by each "closing date" will be considered during the following 15 school days. In most cases the Admissions Authority would aim to respond to applications by the Thursday, 15 school days after the "closing date".

The last date for which an application can be accepted for immediate entry during each academic year will be the last Thursday in June of that academic year.

It is possible to apply in advance of an intended start date. However, in-year applications can be made no more than six weeks before the requested entry date if this is not the beginning of a school term or half-term or from the beginning of the half-term prior to the requested start date (at the earliest).

Usually, places will be offered if there are places available in the year group (the number of children in the year group is less than the published Admission Number for the Academy). Where the Admission Number has changed since that particular year group joined the academy, the previous Admission Number may be used. Sometimes, it will not be possible to offer places even though there are less children in the year group than the Admission Number because the academy has had to organise in a way that means the admission of a further pupil would cause prejudice to the efficient education of the children already there.

If a place is available in the appropriate year group and there are less applications for places than places available, all applicants will be offered a place regardless of home address and distance from home to school.

If there are no places available in the appropriate year group, no applicants will be offered a place.

If a place is available in the appropriate year group but there are more applications for places than places available, the over-subscription criteria (below) will be applied and the child(ren) with the highest priority under the rules will be offered place(s).

When a place is offered, a child is expected to start as soon as possible, unless the place has been offered during the previous term for a start at the beginning of the following term. In this latter case, the child is expected to start no later than the beginning of the term requested.

[The full scheme is published on Oxfordshire County Council's public website.](#)

Over-subscription Criteria

In accordance with legal requirements, children who have an Education, Health & Care (EHC) Plan¹ naming the school will always be admitted.

The admission rules for the academy are shown below in descending order of priority.

1. Children who are "looked after"² by a Local Authority (LA) within the meaning of Section 22 of the [Children Act 1989](#) at the time of their application, and "previously looked after" children³. The term "previously looked after" refers only to children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order⁴ or special guardianship order⁵).
2. Children who were previously in state care outside England⁶ but have been adopted and are no longer in state care. Evidence of the previously looked after status and/or the adoption will be requested. Where such evidence is not available, the Admissions Authority will liaise with the Council to make a pragmatic decision based on the information available so that there is a local consistent approach.
3. Up to a maximum of 3 children in a single year group with a parent who is a staff member at the academy.

¹ An Education, Health and Care plan is a plan made by the local authority under Section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014 specifying the special education provision required for that child. ***This is therefore not an oversubscription criterion.***

² A 'looked after child' is a child who is either (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) at the time of making an application to a school.

³ This group includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see section 46 adoption orders).

⁴ Under the provisions of Section 14 of the Children and Families Act 2014, which amend section 8 of the Children Act 1989, residence orders have now been replaced by child arrangements orders.

⁵ Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

⁶ Children in state care outside England means those who were looked after or accommodated by a public or state authority or a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society. The care may have been provided in an orphanage or other setting.

4. Children who live in the designated (catchment) area and attend Cutteslowe Primary School.
5. Children who live in the designated (catchment) area of Wolvercote Primary School (part of the designated area of the academy).
6. Children who live in the designated (catchment) area and have a brother or sister on roll at the time of application who will still be attending at the time of entry.
7. Children who live in the designated (catchment) area.
8. Children who have a brother or sister on roll at the time of application who will still be attending at the time of entry but live outside the designated (catchment) area.
9. All other children who do not live in the designated (catchment) area and also do not have a brother or sister on roll at the time of application who will still be attending at the time of entry.

In all categories above, priority will be given to children who are eligible for Service Pupil Premium and then to children who live closest to the academy by the straight line distance as calculated by Oxfordshire County Council.

“Looked After” children

A 'looked after child' is a child who is either:

- (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 of the [Children Act 1989](#)) at the time of making an application to a school.

Previously “Looked After” children

The School Admissions Code 2012 introduced a requirement for all admission authorities to broaden the existing priority for 'looked after' children or children in care (defined in section 22 of the [Children Act 1989](#)) to also include 'previously looked after' children. Children who were 'previously looked after' were defined for admissions purposes as those who, immediately after being in care, became subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order.

A revised School Admissions Code came into force on 19 December 2014 and this states that 'previously looked after' children include those who were adopted under the [Adoption Act 1976](#) (see Section 12 - Adoption Orders) and not simply those children who were adopted under the [Adoption and Children Act 2002](#) (see Section 46 - Adoption Orders). In addition, residence orders have now been replaced by child arrangements orders. Those who previously received a residence order are now deemed to have a child arrangement order.

If applying on behalf of a “previously looked after” child the parent will need to provide the following evidence:

- an Adoption Order under Section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002; or
- an Adoption Order under the Adoption Act 1976; or
- a Child Arrangements Order; or
- a Residence Order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989; or
- a Special Guardianship Order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian(s), under section 14A of the Children Act 1989.

Children previously in state care outside England

Guidance was issued by the school's minister in 2018 asking Admission Authorities to consider prioritising children who were previously in state care outside England. When reaching a decision whether to offer a place under Criterion 2, the Admissions Authority will use the guidance to determine whether a child should be considered under this Criterion, requesting evidence from the applicant and taking a pragmatic approach to the decision-making process where evidence is lacking.

Children of members of staff working at the academy

In order to be considered under this category, the member of staff must:

- (a) have been employed at the academy for two or more years at the time the application is made; or
- (b) have been recruited to fill a vacant post at the academy for which there is a demonstrable skills shortage.

A member of staff working for the Trust but not employed by the academy cannot be considered under this criterion.

In line with paragraph 1.39 of the School Admissions Code (December 2014, DfE) the school may give priority to the children of staff in the circumstances detailed above. If there are more than 3 staff children applying in any year the priority will be given to those either in a post, or being recruited to a post which has the highest degree of a demonstrable skills shortage, both in the subject area and as reflected by the challenge to the school of appointing a like for like replacement, and as indicated by either local and national recruitment trends. In the event of a tie-break on this priority the next priority will be decided by distance to the school as detailed elsewhere in this policy. Once 3 staff spaces have been filled according to those rules, children of staff would have no greater priority than other children.

Designated (Catchment) Areas

[Designated \(Catchment\) areas can be viewed on the Council's public website.](#) Living within a particular school's designated area gives a high priority for admission but there is no guarantee that a place will always be made available. There is also no guarantee that free home to school travel assistance will be provided to the designated (catchment) area school if it is not the closest or nearest available school.

Brothers and sisters (siblings)

For admissions purposes, a brother or sister is defined as one of the following:

- A brother or sister (both parents the same) living at the same home address; or
- A half- brother or half-sister (one parent the same) living at the same home address; or
- A step-brother or step-sister (sharing a parent who is married or in a civil partnership) living at the same home address; or
- An adopted child who, by reason of the adoption, now shares one or more parents with a child living at the same home address.

Time of Entry (siblings)

The admission rules give some priority to those with a brother or sister attending the academy at the applicant's "time of entry". This means that, in the normal admissions round, there will be no sibling connection for admission purposes for the following:

- applicants for entry to Year 7 if they have a brother or sister in Year 13; or
- applicants for entry to Year 7 if they have a brother or sister in Year 11 and there is no expressed intention of staying on into Year 12.

Twins and Children from Multiple Births

Where the parent has made the same preferences of school and, through the normal operation of the admission arrangements, the last available place at a school has been allocated to one twin, or child from a multiple birth, the other twin, or the other children from the multiple birth, will be offered a place at that school. This means that, in these circumstances, the Published Admission Number would be exceeded.

Children eligible for Service Pupil Premium

Central Government defines that children who meet the following criteria are eligible for Service Pupil Premium (SPP):

- one of their parents is serving in the regular armed forces
- they have been registered as a 'service child' on the January school census at any point since 2015
- one of their parents died whilst serving in the armed forces and the pupil receives a pension under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme or the War Pensions Scheme
- pupils with a parent who is on full commitment as part of the full time reserve service are classed as service children

Parents will need to provide evidence of eligibility.

Measuring distances from home to school

(The straight line distance calculated by Oxfordshire County Council)

Information about how measurements will be made to calculate home to school distances using a straight line distance using the Council's Geographic Information System is [available online](#).

The start point of the measurement is the "seed point" of the home address. The "seed point" is provided by Ordnance Survey from information compiled from Royal Mail and/or Local Land & Property Gazetteers (LLPG). The seed point normally falls within the bounds of a property. The accuracy of seed points is to the nearest ten centimetres and uses the British Co-ordinate System (Easting/Northing). It is possible to move the location of an individual seed point, but this is not necessary for most addresses. It is not possible to verify the individual location of every seed point prior to measuring due to the number of addresses in Oxfordshire and surrounding areas.

The end point of the straight line distance for applications for Year 7-9 is at the front doors to the main Reception on the South site.

The end point of the straight line distance for applications for Years 10 and 11 is at the front doors to the main Reception on the North site.

The calculation of the distance will be made in metres using a Pythagoras calculation. This calculation will be converted into miles by dividing the distance by 1609.344 to achieve a distance in miles accurate to three decimal places.

For addresses outside the British Coordinate System an internet mapping solution will be used to determine a start point using longitude and latitude via getlatlong.net/ A straight line distance will then be calculated to the end point at the academy in statute miles using www.nhc.noaa.gov/gccalc.shtml

Random Allocation

If the distance "tie break" produces an identical result for two or more applicants and these applicants live at different addresses and are not children of a multiple birth (see above), the Admission Authority will use random allocation to determine who will be offered a place.

Home address – Secondary School Transfer (Year 7)

The address on the application **should be the child's address at the time of application**. This is the address at which the child spends the majority of term-time school nights (Sunday night to Thursday night).

The **time of application** is the entire time period from the point when applications can start to be made in the September when a child starts Year 6 until National Offer Day on 1 March (or next working day) the following calendar year.

Sometimes an application is made based on an address at the time of application and the address then changes after the application has been submitted. It is important to tell the Admissions Authority (and/or Local Authority) about changes of address so that places can be offered fairly and so notification can be sent by post to the correct home address.

If the application address is found to have subsequently changed after the application was submitted and this information could have been provided when the application was first made or before places were offered, the Admissions Authority (or Local Authority) will consider the application to have been made on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading address. This may result in the offer of a school place being withdrawn.

If an application is made on the basis of a new address or intention to move to an area, information about the new address will need to be provided in order for it to be taken into account (see 'Changes of Address' below).

Oxfordshire County Council will act as the agent for the academy to establish the home address.

Home address – In-Year applications

The address on the application **should be the child's address at the time of application**. This is the address at which the child spends the majority of term-time school nights (Sunday night to Thursday night).

If an in-year application is made on the basis of a new address or intention to move to an area, information about the new address will need to be provided in order for it to be taken into account (see 'Changes of Address' below).

Oxfordshire County Council will act as the agent for the academy to establish the home address.

Changes of Address

Changes of address which occur after the closing date for applications (31 October when the child is in Year 6) can be taken into account if proof of this change is provided no later than the address set down in Oxfordshire County Council's co-ordinated admissions scheme. To confirm a new address, the Admissions Authority (and/or Local Authority) needs one of the following:

- A solicitor's letter advising contracts have been exchanged (**if the property is being purchased**); *or*
- A copy of a tenancy agreement (if the property is to be rented). **If this tenancy agreement comes to an end before the September when the child is due to start Year 7, the Admissions Authority (and/or Local Authority) may not accept the address for admissions purposes**; *or*
- A copy of the Council Tax Bill **showing the same name(s) as on the school place application (CAF)**; *or*
- **A letter from a new employer** (e.g. University college) where accommodation is being provided by the employer and is tied to the new post/job giving details of this new address; *or*
- **Service Family Accommodation (New Quarter)** if this is a military posting with provided accommodation; *or*
- **Assignment Order** if this is a military posting but new quarter has not yet been notified – the address of the military base will be used for allocation purposes.

The Admissions Authority (and/or Local Authority) may also ask for proof from HM Revenue & Customs, Child Benefit Division or Tax Credits Division. **Such correspondence must pre-date the application.**

Oxfordshire County Council will act as the agent for The Cherwell School to establish the home address.

Multiple Addresses

Where children spend time with parents at more than one address then the address given on the form should be the one that they live at (i.e. sleep at) for the majority of term-time school nights (Sunday night to Thursday night).

If children spend time equally at different addresses then the address which will be used for admissions purposes will be the one registered for child benefit. The Admissions Authority (and/or Local Authority) will request proof of the registered address, which must pre-date the application.

Oxfordshire County Council will act as the agent for the academy to establish the address which will be used.

Fraudulent Applications

If a place has been obtained on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application (for example, a false claim to residence in a designated/ catchment area) and this results in the denial of a place to a child with a stronger claim, the admission authority for the school may withdraw the offer of the place. This follows the guidance in paragraphs 2.12 and 2.13 of the School Admissions Code (December 2014) published by the Department for Education:

[2.12] An admission authority **must not** withdraw an offer unless it has been offered in error, a parent has not responded within a reasonable period of time, or it is established that the offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application. Where the parent has not responded to the offer, the admission authority **must** give the parent a further opportunity to respond and explain that the offer may be withdrawn if they do not. Where an offer is withdrawn on the basis of misleading information, the application **must** be considered afresh, and a right of appeal offered if an offer is refused.

[2.13] A school **must not** withdraw a place once a child has started at the school, except where that place was fraudulently obtained. In deciding whether to withdraw the place, the length of time that the child has been at the school **must** be taken into account. For example, it might be considered appropriate to withdraw the place if the child has been at the school for less than one term.

Oxfordshire County Council will act as the agent for the academy to establish whether a fraudulent application has been made and whether to withdraw a school place offer.

Multiple Applications (Applicants unable to agree on the schools to be listed on the application)

If parents cannot agree on the schools to list on the application and submit separate applications, the Admissions Authority (and/or Local Authority) will only consider the application made by the parent who receives Child Benefit for that child.

If a parent is unhappy with this decision their recourse would be to seek an order from the Court.

“shortest safe route” for home to school travel assistance assessments

This is measured from the same start point defined in the straight line distance measuring rules (see above). From the start point the route firstly connects to the nearest point of the digitised network.

The digitised network is constructed from road data supplied by Ordnance Survey called the Integrated Transport Network (ITN). The ITN has been accurately digitised to measure along the centre of roads and takes corners at right angles. This is the same underlying information used by internet-based mapping solutions (e.g. Google Maps). However, the Council has a more accurate start point than internet-based mapping solutions and the ITN has been augmented by the LA to take into account other available public routes (e.g. alleyways, public footpaths, bridleways, etc). The augmented ITN used by the Council is accurate to at least 1 metre.

All 548,000 kilometres of roads in Great Britain are accurately mapped in a consistent and logical network. The network does not include routes that are not defined as public; these include crossing parks with no paths where the park is not open and available all the time, “short-cuts” across patches of open land without paths, or footpaths across private land which are not defined by Ordnance Survey as public routes.

The end point of the route is the nearest open gate of the Academy first arrived at from the direction of travel that is officially available for use by students for entry and exit to the academy site at the start and end of the school day. The location of these gates has been set by the Admissions Authority. The Council consults with the Admissions Authority annually to ensure accurate placement of gate(s) and their availability for use.

The shortest safe route is established using an algorithm within the bespoke software used by the Council. This software is called RouteFinder and is produced by Higher Mapping Solutions (www.highermappingsolutions.com). This programme integrates with the Council’s database (ONE) which is supplied by Capita Children’s Services (www.capita-cs.co.uk).

RouteFinder measures in kilometres and the measurement is converted into miles accurate to three decimal places, which gives an accurate reading up to 1.609344 metres.

The shortest safe route is not necessarily a driving route because it may use, in whole or in part, a non-driveable route (e.g. footpaths). The shortest safe route is also not necessarily a walking route because, for example, where the measurement uses a road, the route is along the centre of the road not along the edge (pavement or equivalent) of the road. In calculating the shortest safe route, certain parts of the network of roads and/or paths have been specified as unsafe and the route will use an alternative which will be longer. This longer distance will be used to determine whether a child is eligible for free home to school travel assistance.

Other measuring systems may give a different measurement but the Council cannot take a measurement from another measuring system into account because this would lead to inconsistency in the method used to measure the shortest safe route and determine a child's eligibility for free home to school travel assistance.

Home to School Travel Assistance

Some children qualify for free travel assistance from home to school.

The Council does not accept responsibility for the provision or cost of free travel assistance to the designated area school if it is not the closest or nearest available school and is over the statutory walking distance or where the route is assessed to be unsafe for a child to walk accompanied by a responsible adult as appropriate.

Where a child is eligible for free travel assistance, but spends time with different parents at different addresses, Oxfordshire County Council will only accept responsibility for the provision and/or cost of free travel from the registered home address.

[The home to school transport policy is available online.](#)

Admission to an older or younger age group

Parents of gifted and talented children, or those who have experienced problems or missed part of a year, for example due to ill health, can seek places outside their normal age group. Any decision will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case. This will include:

- taking account of the parent's views; and
- any information about the child's academic, social and emotional development; and
- whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group; and
- the views of the head teacher of the school(s) concerned.

When informing a parent of the decision on the year group to which their child should be admitted, the Admission Authority will give clear reasons for the decision. Where it has been agreed that a parent's request for their child to be admitted out of their normal age group and, as a consequence of that decision, the child will be admitted to a relevant age group (i.e. the age group to which pupils are normally admitted to the school) the application will be:

- processed as part of the main admissions round, unless the parental request is made too late for this to be possible; and
- considered against the determined admission arrangements only, including the application of oversubscription criteria where applicable.

The Admission Authority (and/or Local Authority) will not give a lower priority on the basis that the child is not of the correct age.

Parents' statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied will not apply if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.

In-Year Fair Access Arrangements

The In-Year Fair Access Protocol is part of the admission arrangements for the academy as it is for all state-funded mainstream schools in Oxfordshire.

[The Protocol is published on the County Council's public website.](#)

Continued Interest Lists (CILs)

Oxfordshire County Council will act as the agent for the academy for Continued Interest Lists (the name for waiting lists in Oxfordshire).

For those applying through the normal admissions round for Reception the CIL will be maintained from the date published in the Council's co-ordinated admissions during the operation of the scheme preceding the start of the academic year in September until the end of June of the children's Reception year.

In the case of those applying in year the CIL will be maintained until the end of June of that academic year. It will be possible to place a name on the list from 1 August, the beginning of the academic year, and the list will be discontinued on 30 June each year.

[Information about how CILs will operate is published on the Council's public website.](#)

Admission Appeals

There is a statutory right to an admission appeal should a child be refused a place at the academy. The Trust uses the appeals service provided by the Council. Any appeal will be heard by an independent Appeal Panel and information about the process is [available online](#).

Determined

Paragraph 1.46 of the 2014 School Admissions Code requires Admission Authorities to determine Admission Arrangements by 28 February each year regardless whether a consultation has taken place.

[Objections to these arrangements and rules can be made to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator by 15 May in the determination year.](#)