



**THE CHERWELL SCHOOL**  
OPPORTUNITY, RESPONSIBILITY, EXCELLENCE

# **ADMISSIONS POLICY**

Person responsible for policy: Headteacher

Revised: September 2019

Review Date: July 2020

Governor Committee: FGB



## Admissions Policy for The Cherwell School 2020/21: 11-16 Provision (Years 7 to 11)

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### Introduction

The Cherwell School is an 11-18 comprehensive school which aims to provide excellent education to all students. The school's aim is to be a *Centre of Opportunity* to enable students to achieve success in whatever they undertake. The School is an Academy managed by the River Learning Trust (formerly The Cherwell School Academy Trust).

This policy has been approved by The Cherwell School Governing Body and the River Learning Trust Board of Trustees, the body responsible for admission arrangements and decisions. These arrangements come into force for admissions planned for 2020-21.

The Cherwell School follows the Admissions process of the Oxfordshire Local Authority co-ordinated scheme and further details of this process, including important dates can be found at:

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/secondary-school-applications>

This policy is for entry to Years 7 to 11; the policy for entry to 16-19 Provision (Years 12 to 13) is available separately and applications are made directly to the school. Further details can be found at: <http://www.cherwell.oxon.sch.uk/sixthform>

### Admission Number

The Published Admission Number (PAN) is **270** students for Years 7 to 11.

The school will accordingly admit this number of pupils each year if there are sufficient applications.

### Oversubscription Criteria

When the school is oversubscribed, after the admission of children with an Education, Health and Care plan naming the school (or children who have a Statement of Special Educational Needs naming the school in Part 4 of the Statement), priority for admission will be given to those children who meet the criteria set out below, in priority order:

1. Children who are “looked after” 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” children. 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 residence order or special guardianship order).
2. Disabled children who need to be admitted to a school on the grounds of physical accessibility. The definition of disability is that contained within the Equality Act 2010.
3. Up to a maximum of 3 children in a single year group of staff at the school where 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, or b) the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.
4. Children who live in the school's designated (catchment) area. If there are more applicants than places in this category, priority will be given in the following descending order:
  - a. The following categories have joint first priority in category 4:

- i. Those children who are on the roll of Cutteslowe Primary School and live in the designated area of The Cherwell School. However, if there are more applicants than places in this category (4a part i) priority will be given, within this group, to those children who live closest to the school using the [shortest designated public route](#) as defined on the Directorate for Children, Education & Families' Geographic Information System.
    - ii. Those children who live in the designated area of Wolvercote Primary School. However, if there are more applicants than places in this category (4a part ii) priority will be given, within this group, to those children who live closest to the school using the [shortest designated public route](#) as defined on the Directorate for Children, Education & Families' Geographic Information System.
  - b. Second priority in category 4 will go to those children who have a [brother or sister](#) on roll already at the time of application who will still be attending at the time of entry. However, if there are more applicants than places, priority will be given to those children who live closest to the school using the [shortest designated public route](#) as defined on the Directorate for Children, Education & Families' Geographic Information System.
  - c. Third priority in category 4 will go to those children who live closest to the school by the [shortest designated public route](#) as defined on the Directorate for Children, Education & Families' Geographic Information System.
5. Children living outside the designated (catchment) area who will have a [brother or sister](#) on roll at the time of application who will still be attending at the time of entry. If there are more applicants than places, priority will be given to children who live closest to the school by the shortest designated public route as defined on the Directorate for Children, Education & Families' Geographic Information System.
  6. Those children who live closest to the school by the [shortest designated public route](#) as defined on the Directorate for Children, Education & Families' Geographic Information System.

### **Tie Break (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 below), the Admission Authority will use random allocation to determine who will be offered a place.

### **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 the 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 the school. This means that, in these circumstances, the Published Admission Number would be exceeded.

## Explanation of Oversubscription Criteria

### 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 relevant school 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.

### Children of Staff and Order of Priority for Staff Children

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 as indicated by 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.

### Measuring distances from home to school

Children who live closest to the school using the shortest designated route as defined on Oxfordshire County Council's Directorate for Children, Education and Families' Geographic Information System.

The River Learning Trust (formerly The Cherwell School Academy Trust) continues to use the Local Authority's measuring system, whereby the route from home to school has been measured using the "shortest designated route" since September 2005 \*.

The start point of a 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 district or city councils. The seed point normally falls within the bounds of a property. The accuracy of seed points is to the nearest ten centimetres. 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.

From the seed point the route firstly connects to the nearest point of the digitised network namely the road on which the house is situated. The positioning of front doors, driveways and back gates are not relevant to the route or the measurement and are not programmed to be used by the measuring system.

The digitised network is constructed from road data supplied by Ordnance Survey called the Integrated Transport Network (ITN). The Integrated Transport Network has been accurately digitised to measure along the centre of roads and takes corners at right angles. This is the same underlying information as used by internet-based mapping solutions (e.g. Google Maps). However, the LA 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). Ordnance Survey assures that the augmented ITN used by the LA 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 “shortest designated route” is the nearest open gate of the school, on either the north or south sites, first arrived at from the direction of travel from the seed point officially available for use by students for entry and exit to the school site at the start and end of the school day. The location of these gates has been set by the LA and consulted with each individual school to ensure accurate placement of the gate and its availability for use.

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

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

The “shortest designated 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 designated route” is also not necessarily a walking route for example, where roads are used, the measurement is along the centre of the road not along the edge (pavement or equivalent) of the road.

Other measuring systems may give a different measurement but the LA cannot take a measurement from another measuring system into account because this would constitute mal-administration of the admissions process by the Local Authority for the school.

## **Home Address and Multiple Addresses**

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). 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 this should be declared in writing and signed by all parties with parental responsibility. The Local Authority Admissions process may ask for proof of the living arrangements (i.e. a court decision) and they may ask for confirmation of an address you have given. If it is accepted by the Local Authority that a child spends time equally at two different addresses (for example, one week with each parent in turn during term-times), the address used for admissions purposes will be the address most favourable (i.e. closest) to the first preference requested.

## Changes of Address

Changes of address which occur during the time period as set out in the Local Authority's guide for admissions (usually early to mid November in the year proceeding entry) can be taken into account if proof of this change is provided (see below). To confirm your new address the Local Authority, acting on behalf of the school, will need one of the following:

1. A solicitor's letter advising contracts have been exchanged (if the property is being purchased);  
*or*
2. A copy of a tenancy agreement (if the property is to be rented). If this tenancy agreement comes to an end before September 2016 we may not accept the address for admissions purposes; *or*
3. A copy of your Council Tax Bill showing the same name(s) as in Section 5 of the CAF.

## 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 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 of a place unless it has been offered in error, a parent has not responded within a reasonable amount 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 had 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.*

## Appeals

All applicants refused a place have a right of appeal to an independent appeal panel constituted and operated in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code.

The Independent Panel hearing the appeal has a statutory duty to act in accordance with the following legal requirements both of which govern all school admission appeals/reviews.

- The School Standards and Framework Act (SSFA) 1998, as amended by subsequent legislation and case law;
- The Codes on School Admissions and School Admission Appeals produced by the Department for Education (DfE);

Details of the procedure are available from the Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) website: [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals) and details of the procedure will be sent out with the response letter.



Information on the timetable for the appeals process is on our website at <http://www.cherwell.oxon.sch.uk/information/admissions>

## **Repeat Applications**

Any parent can apply for a place for their child at any time outside the admissions round. Parents do not have the right to a second appeal in respect of the same school for the same academic year unless, in exceptional circumstances, the admission authority has accepted a second application from the appellant because of a significant and material change in the circumstances of the parent, child or school but still refused admission.

## **Continued Interest List**

The school will operate a waiting list for each year group. In Oxfordshire, lists for children who cannot be offered a place at a school but where parents want them to continue to be considered, should a place become available, are called "Continued Interest" (CI) lists. Where in any year the school receives more applications for places than there are places available, a waiting list (CI List) will operate until the end of the academic year. This will be maintained by the Academy Trust, via the Local Authority, and it will be open to any parent to ask for his or her child's name to be placed on the waiting list, following an unsuccessful application.

Children's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. The waiting list will be reordered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria whenever anyone is added to or leaves the waiting list.

## **Applications other than the normal intake to Year 7 (In Year Applications)**

As part of the coordinated scheme parents/carers are required to complete a CAF form available on-line [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/admissions) or by telephoning the Admissions Team on 01865 815175. In-year applications can be made one term in advance of the requested entry. The application will then be considered by the admissions authority who would aim to respond to applications within 10 days of receipt of the application form.

## **Admission of a child outside their normal age group**

Parents may request that their child is admitted outside their normal age group. When such a request is made, the academy trust will make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case and in the best interests of the child concerned, taking into account the views of the Headteacher and any supporting evidence provided by the parent.

This will include:

- taking account of the parent's views; and
- any information about the child's academic, social and emotional development; and
- where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional; and
- whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group; and
- whether they may naturally have fallen into the lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely; and
- the views of the headteacher 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 admissions 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**

The River Learning Trust (formerly The Cherwell School Academy Trust) will comply with the agreed policy of the Local Authority for admissions of previously excluded or hard to place children.

[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/admissions)

**To be reviewed annually.**



## Terms used in this explanation

“shortest designated route”	The shortest distance between two points calculated using a computer programme as defined in this explanatory document
Geographic Information System (GIS)	A system designed to capture, store, manipulate, analyse, manage and present all types of geographic data. The Admissions Team of Oxfordshire County Council uses MapInfo (supplied by Pitney Bowes Software) for its GIS needs
Local Authority (LA)	Oxfordshire County Council
Admissions Authority (AA)	The Governing Body of The River Learning Trust (formerly The Cherwell School Academy Trust). Specifically a sub-group of 3 staff given authority to make admissions decisions by the Governing Body.
Continued Interest List (CIL)	Continued Interest List made up of children who have not been and cannot be offered a place at the school.
Ordnance Survey	The national mapping agency for Great Britain, an executive agency and non-ministerial government department of the UK Government
“seed point”	A geographically defined spatial point set by Royal Mail and/or district or city councils, and supplied to Ordnance Survey which then sells that data to other organisations (e.g. Oxfordshire County Council). The seed point used by the Admissions Team of Oxfordshire County Council is the “all numeric British Co-ordinate System” (easting and northing)
easting	a measurement in metres east of the south-west corner of the SV square of the Ordnance Survey mapping grid (this square is in the far south-west of the British Isles and includes the Scilly Isles). Oxfordshire County Council uses a six-digit integer and a single decimal place (accuracy to 10 centimetres)
northing	a measurement in metres north of the south-west corner of the SV square of the Ordnance Survey mapping grid (this square is in the far south-west of the British Isles and includes the Scilly Isles). Oxfordshire County Council uses a six-digit integer and a single decimal place (accuracy to 10 centimetres)
digitised network	the geographic database of all possible, available, measurable routes. The digitised network is based on the Integrated Transport Network (ITN) produced by Ordnance Survey augmented to include additional non-driveable public routes
“nearest open gate”	the first gate arrived at, on either north or south site of the school, from the direction of travel which is available for use by students for entry and exit to the school site at the start and end of the school day
algorithm	a series of programmed instructions carried out by the RouteFinder software which calculates all available routes between the start and end points and outputs the shortest

RouteFinder	GIS-based software produced by Higher Mapping Solutions ( <a href="http://www.highermappingsolutions.com">www.highermappingsolutions.com</a> ) which is designed to find the shortest measurement between two defined points using the available network.
ONE database	Database created by Capita Children's Services ( <a href="http://www.capita-cs.co.uk">www.capita-cs.co.uk</a> ) used by Oxfordshire County Council to hold information about children and their applications for school places

## Annex A: The Cherwell School Catchment Area from September 2014

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/school/4116>

