



## **ADMISSION POLICY FOR COMMUNITY INFANT, JUNIOR AND PRIMARY SCHOOLS 2020-2021**

Reading Borough Council is the Admission Authority for community schools and the following policy is proposed for admissions to these schools in 2020/2021.

### **Cohort**

Applications for children born between 1-9-2015 and 31-8-2016 will be considered for admission to a reception class 2020-2021 as part of the 2020/2021 routine admission round.

Applications for admission to junior schools in September 2020 will be considered for those born between 1-9-2012 and 31-8-2013.

### **Admission of children outside the normal age to Reading Borough Council Community Primary Schools**

Children are normally allocated according to their chronological age. Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. In addition, the parents of a summer born child may choose not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to reception rather than year 1 - in September 2021.

Reading Borough Council as the Admission Authority for community primary schools will consider each case individually and make a decision in every case that is in the best interest of the child, taking into account:

- The parents'/carers' views;
- Information about the child's academic, social and emotional development from their current setting;
- The child's medical history and the views of a medical professional (where relevant);
- Whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group;
- Whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if they had not been born prematurely.

In each case the headteacher of the school to which the parents are seeking admission will be consulted and their views will be taken into account.

To request a child's admission is delayed to start in September 2021 parents/carers need to complete the offset request form and read the separate guide. They are recommended to make an application for a reception place in the normal way for September 2020 by 15 January 2020 so that the application can be forwarded to the headteacher(s) for consideration. Each case will be carefully considered and parents/carers will be informed of the decision in writing, before the national offer day, setting out clearly the reasons for the decision. If the request to delay admission is agreed, the parents/carers must issue a formal acceptance, declaring their intention to proceed

on this basis. In this case, the application submitted for September 2020 entry will be withdrawn (before a Reception place is offered) and new application must then be submitted, for entry in September 2021, when the next primary admissions round opens in November 2020. Parents will not be made aware of the school they would have been allocated before the decision is accepted or declined. The decision made by Reading Borough Council is not binding on any other Admission Authority and therefore schools may come to different decisions based on the evidence. If the request is refused, parents must decide whether to accept the offered place for Reception 2020 or refuse it and make an in year application for Year 1 in September 2021.

### **Over-Subscription Criteria for Community Primary and Infant Schools**

Children with a statement of special educational needs or Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC) that names the school will be allocated a place above all other children.

The Oversubscription Criteria take no account of the parents’/carers’ order of preference. Applications for each school named by the parents/carers will be ranked according to the criteria set out below if there are more applications than places available.

Category		Notes
1	Looked after Children in the care of a Local Authority or Children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order) immediately after they had been looked after.	Provided appropriate evidence is submitted – See Note 1.
2	Children who were previously in state care outside England (children 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) but have been adopted and are no longer in state care.	Provided appropriate evidence is submitted – See Note 2.
3	Families who have strong medical or social grounds for their child’s admission to a particular school.	See Note 3.
4	Children whose permanent home address is in the catchment area of the school and have a sibling at the school at the time of application who is expected to be attending the school when the child is due to start school.	This category may apply in other circumstances - See Notes 4 and 5.
5	Children whose permanent home address is in the catchment area of the school.	
6	Children whose permanent home address is not in the catchment area of the school but have a sibling at the school at the time of application who is expected to be attending the school when the child is due to start school.	See Note 5.
7	Children in receipt of Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) at the time application who attends the nursery unit at the school.	
8	Other Children	

**Priority within the Over-subscription Criteria**

Within each of the above categories 1-6 and 8, priority will be given to children who are in receipt of the Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP), Service Premium or Pupil Premium (PP) at the time of application. To be considered for this priority parents/carers will be required to complete a Supplementary Information Form which **must be endorsed by the child's current school or nursery** confirming that they receive Early years or pupil premium for the child. This form must be completed and returned to the admissions team prior to 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2020 in order to be awarded this priority on time for the routine admissions round. Any applications received later than this date will be awarded the priority after the 1<sup>st</sup> May 2020.

**Over-Subscription Criteria for Community Junior Schools – Geoffrey Field Junior School**

Children with a statement of special educational needs or Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC) that names the school will be allocated a place above all other children.

The oversubscription criteria take no account of the parents'/carers' order of preference and applications for each school named by the parents/carers will be ranked according to the criteria set out below if there are more applications than places available.

Older siblings still attending the linked junior school will be considered as siblings for admission to the infant school.

Category		Notes
1	Looked after Children in the care of a Local Authority or children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order) immediately after they had been looked after.	Provided appropriate evidence is submitted – See Note 1.
2	Children who were previously in state care outside England (children 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) but have been adopted and are no longer in state care.	Provided appropriate evidence is submitted – See Note 2
3	Families who have strong medical or social grounds for their child's admission to a particular school.	See Note 3.
4	Children whose permanent home address is in the catchment area of the school and have a sibling at the school, or Geoffrey Field Infant School at the time of application who is expected to be attending the school when the child is due to start school.	This category may apply in other circumstances - See Notes 4 and 5.
5	Children whose permanent home address is in the catchment area of the school.	
6	Children whose permanent home address is not in the catchment area of the school but have a sibling at the school or Geoffrey Field Infant School at the time of application who is expected to be attending the school when the is due to start school.	See Note 5.

7	Children who are attending Geoffrey Field Infant School at the time of application.	
8	Other Children.	

### Priority within the over-subscription criteria

Within each of the above categories 1-8, priority will be given to children who are in receipt of Pupil Premium (PP) or Service Premium at the time of application. To be considered for this priority, parents /carers will be required to complete a Supplementary Information Form which must be endorsed by the child’s current school or nursery confirming that they receive pupil premium for the child. This form must be completed and returned to the admissions team prior to 2nd February 2020 in order to be awarded this priority on time for the routine admissions round. Any applications received later than this date will be awarded the priority after the 1st May.

### Notes relating to the above over-subscription criteria.

#### Note 1 – Category 1 – Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children

A ‘Looked After’ child is 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 as defined in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 at the time of making an application for a school place.

A previously ‘Looked After’ child is a child who was looked after, but has been adopted or became subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order immediately following having been ‘Looked After’. Confirmation will be required from the local authority that last looked after the child that the child was looked after immediately prior to the issuing of one of the following orders:

These are children adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (Section 12) and children adopted under the Adoption and Children’s Act 2002 (Section 46).

The Children and Families Act 2014 amended the Children Act 1989 and replaces residence orders with child arrangement orders.

#### Note 2 – Category 2 – Children who were previously in state care outside England

These are children who were previously in state care outside England (children 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) but the child may have been adopted and is 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 work closely with Reading Borough Council Virtual School for Looked After Children to make a pragmatic decision based on the information available so that there is a local consistent approach.

#### Note 3 – Category 3 Medical / Social Reasons

When submitting an application under criterion 2, families who have strong medical or social grounds for their child’s admission to a particular school must provide written evidence. This may come from an independent professional aware of the case relating to the child, parent/carer or other children living at the same address (e.g. doctor, hospital consultant or psychologist for medical grounds or registered social or care worker, housing officer, the police or probation officer for social needs). This evidence must: be specific to the school in question; show why that school is the most suitable; what facilities will benefit the child, and why no other school can offer the same support. It

is not enough for the professional to report what the parent/carer has told them.

If failure in awarding this priority would result in no appropriate school being allocated, the panel, after taking into account the evidence submitted, the parental preference and the catchment school, will allow categorization of medical/social grounds to the most appropriate school. This applies to those children whose social/medical needs can be met by one than one school but not many schools. For example, when reasons are due to mobility issues and a number of schools are equal distance and failure to award this would result in no appropriate school being allocated.

In addition, this category includes children who are subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order awarded to a family member in order to prevent the child being taken into care by a local authority. A copy of the order must be provided.

No individual officer will take responsibility for determining whether a case is ranked in the category. A panel of officers will make the final decision. Evidence must be provided by **2<sup>nd</sup> February 2020** to be considered as on time for national offer day. If evidence is received by the team after this date then it is at the discretion of the panel whether to accept these documents for “on time” allocations. The admissions team will not prompt parents to send evidence to support admission under this category but they may ask for further evidence if this is required to make a decision. If evidence is received before the **2<sup>nd</sup> February 2020** parents will be informed, in writing, before national offer day as to whether this has been granted. This is not a guarantee of a place at a particular school.

#### **Note 4 – Category 4 – Siblings**

Children whose home address is in the former catchment area of a school and have a sibling at the school and that sibling was admitted to the school from the same address will be treated as category 3 of the over-subscription.

#### **Note 5 – Category 4 – Siblings**

If parents/carers applied for a place at their catchment area school for their child and it was not possible to offer a place at that school because the school was over-subscribed a sibling protection applies. Where the child was admitted to a lower preference Reading community primary school, or allocated a place by the authority at an alternative Reading community primary school the application for any younger siblings for that school will be treated as catchment area and considered as category 3. Where a parent does not list all schools in the catchment area for the home address at the time of application and a place would have been offered at a catchment area school had it been listed, they forfeit the right to sibling protection. Parents/carers must inform the Admission Team at the time of application if they consider this exemption applies.

Where a space is allocated as part of an in-year admission at a school listed second preference or lower, if a school closer to the child’s home address was available to parents and was refused, parents forfeit the right to this sibling protection for future admissions. Parents will be informed at the time of allocation if this right has been forfeited.

#### **Catchment area**

The catchment area of the schools can be seen from attached maps. These are a guide only. Exact catchment area information for individual address can be found on Reading Borough Council’s website.

### **Tiebreaker**

If a school does not have enough places for all children in a particular category, places will be allocated to those living nearest the school. The distance is measured in miles as a straight line between the Ordnance Survey data point for the child's home address and the school using Reading Borough Council digital mapping software. This distance is measured to three decimal places. In the rare event that it is not possible to decide between the applications of those pupils who have the same distance measurement then the place will be offered using random allocation. A member of Committee services staff for Reading Borough Council will supervise the selection process.

### **Multiple births (twins, triplets etc.)**

Places are offered according to the oversubscription criteria. In the event that this would result in splitting multiple birth families, in the majority of cases the other child/children will be offered a place. In very exceptional circumstances, where the admission of more than one additional child to the year group causes prejudice to the provision of efficient education and efficient use of resources it may not be possible to offer a place to all multiple birth children.

In the event that siblings with a different date of birth, but in the same year group, are split by the oversubscription criteria, only one child will be offered a place. This applies to children during Key stage 1, up to and including Year 2, if admission would take a class over 30. Selection will be made randomly by a representative of Reading Borough Council's Committee Services.

It is open to the parents to decline this offer and seek places for all their children at another school or suggest the place is given to one of the other siblings. The other sibling(s) name(s) will put on the waiting list. If the admission is in Key Stage 2 or admission of the other siblings will not contravene infant class size regulations then each case will be considered and in most cases the other child/children will be offered a place. (On the condition that the admission will not prejudice the provision of efficient education and efficient use of resources).

### **Parent/Carers**

A parent/carer is any person who has parental responsibility or care of the child. Parental responsibility for a child is set out in the Children Act 1989. Normally this parent/carer would reside with the child at the permanent home address stated on the application.

### **Home address**

Applications are processed on the basis of the child's single permanent home address, where the child lives with parent(s) or a carer/legal guardian and are living at this address on the closing date for applications. By submitting an application parent(s)/ carer/legal guardian are confirming the child will be living at that address on national offer day on the 16<sup>th</sup> April 2020. An address will not be accepted where the child was resident other than with a parent or carer unless this was part of a private fostering or formal care arrangement.

Checks will be made to determine whether an address declared on the application form is that of a second home with the main home being elsewhere. Some residential arrangements will be considered to be temporary arrangements. The Council will consider the available evidence to determine if, on the balance of probability, the declared home address is the child's permanent home. Where the applicant, or their partner or spouse, is reasonably considered to be living with them as a single family unit owns another property, has previously lived in it and has chosen not live in it (including where a home is rented out to a third party) the owned property will ordinarily be considered to be the permanent home. Special circumstances that might lead to the declared address being considered as a permanent home despite another home being owned or otherwise available for occupation will need to be declared at the point of application by parents. Without being exhaustive these might include:

- an owned property being a considerable distance from the preferred school, indicating that the family had permanently relocated to the new home; or
- that the owned property is uninhabitable and cannot reasonably be made habitable in the period leading up to admission to the school; or
- that the owned property is in the process of being sold and the family live permanently in the declared property; or
- that following divorce or separation the family home cannot be occupied by the applicant or otherwise treated as the child's permanent home.

Where the declared address is rented and the applicant has no claim on any other property the declared address may be considered to be a temporary address if there is evidence the applicant has chosen to rent the property solely for the period necessary for a child to be admitted to a particular school.

Reference to council tax records will be made to determine a single address for consideration of a place under criteria 3 or 4. It is for the applicant to satisfy the local authority that they live at the address stated.

Applicants will be asked to declare that the address used is expected to be their place of residence beyond the date of the pupil starting school. Applicants are required to advise of any change of circumstance at any time prior to the child starting school. If the applicant does not declare such arrangements, or a different address is used on the application where the child does not usually live; it will be considered that a false declaration has been made and it may be decided to decline to offer a place at a particular school, or to withdraw the offer of a place. In deciding whether a place was allocated on the basis of a misleading or fraudulent application, an admissions panel will consider any supporting evidence giving reasons why the move was necessary prior to the child starting school.

It is important to declare if there is to be a change of address prior to the child starting school. If the applicant already owns a property which is in the process of being sold, the admissions team are able to accept the address of the new property only on submission of the appropriate evidence in support e.g. completion of contracts letter on both the new property and, where possible, disposal of their current property. The deadline for submission of evidence to support a move is 1<sup>st</sup> February 2020. If the move takes place later or evidence is submitted later, the application will be marked late and considered after national offer day.

If the applicant is renting property the tenancy agreement must be dated 1<sup>st</sup> February 2020 or prior, to be accepted as on time. If the tenancy agreement then expires prior to the 16<sup>th</sup> April 2020 the applicant must provide evidence showing that they still reside at the property past that date. If the applicant moves to a new rented after the 1<sup>st</sup> February the application will be marked late and considered after national offer day.

A temporary address cannot be used to obtain a school place. Temporary addresses will only be considered where evidence is provided of a genuine reason for the move e.g. flooding or subsidence.

The local authority reserves its right to carry out further investigation and require additional evidence and to reject applications or withdraw offers of places if it believes it has the grounds to do so. In such cases, the applicant will have recourse to the independent appeals process. Where Reading Borough Council believes an address provided is not the only address then the Corporate Audit & Investigation Team will look into the address.

The home address should be the child's current address and is assumed to be the address on the national offer day. Any change of address after submitting the application must be notified to the Admissions Team at Reading and the application will be reviewed using the new address. Any place offered based on misleading information with the intention of deception or fraud concerning a permanent home address will have the place withdrawn even if the child has started at the school.

### **Split living arrangements**

Where a family claims to be resident at more than one address, justification and evidence of the family's circumstances will be required, e.g., formal residence order, child arrangements order or legal separation documentation. The application must be completed by the parent using the address which is owned, leased or rented where the child lives for the majority of the school week. This is based on the number of school nights a child spends at the home (Sunday night 1800hrs to Friday 0900hrs).

Where there is an equal split or there is any doubt about residence, the school admissions team will assess and make a judgment about which address to use for the purpose of the allocation of a school place where necessary requesting further information, for example:

- any legal documentation confirming residence;
- the pattern of residence;
- the period of time over which the current arrangement has been in place;
- confirmation from any previous school or early years setting of the contact details and home address supplied to it by the parents;
- the address where child benefit or other benefit (if applicable) is paid;
- where the child is registered with the GP;
- any other evidence the parents may supply to verify the position.

It is recommended that consensus is reached by both parents and child on the school preferences to be expressed and it should be noted that only one offer letter will be sent to the main applicant unless otherwise requested and agreed by both parents.

The information provided to determine the home address to be used will be considered by an admissions panel of at least two officers and their decision is final.

### **Siblings**

Siblings are older siblings for purposes of admission criteria during the routine admission rounds, except those for Geoffrey Field Junior School, which will consider a younger sibling at Geoffrey Field Infant School. In year applications will consider younger siblings but not a sibling attending the nursery class of a school.

Siblings are children who have either the same mother or father, or they are children who live together in a family unit and with their parents/carer(s). Siblings must live at the same permanent home address as each other. If they do not live at the same address, then they are not treated as siblings for the purpose of admission.

### **Deferring a Place**

There is a legal requirement to offer a full-time place to every child whose parents wish to take up that option from the September following a child's fourth birthday. Places offered in a Reading school are on a full-time basis from September 2020 as a "rising 5" admission. Children do not need to be in statutory education until the September, January or April after their fifth birthday. When children are offered "rising 5" places, parent/carers may defer the place until January 2021 or April 2021 or until their child reaches statutory school age whichever is earlier, but may not defer after April 2021 as admissions beyond that are in the next school year. Parents will then need to re-apply



for a place in Year 1, which may not have any places because the places will have been allocated to children in the previous year as part of the routine admissions round.

### **Part Time Admissions**

Where the parents wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age. If parents choose this option they cannot insist on part-time provision that is individually tailored to their needs. Parents/carers must discuss this with the headteacher of the allocated school to agree the best arrangements for the child and School.

### **Waiting Lists**

After 17th April 2020 'waiting lists' will be created for Reading schools where it has not been possible to offer a place at the parents/carers first or a higher preference school to the school offered. A child's position on the waiting list is determined according to the over-subscription criteria and will be re-ranked when new children are added to the list as a result of late applications or change of preference. When a place becomes available this will be offered to the next child on the waiting list. After the 1 September 2020 children identified for placement as part of the Fair Access Protocol can be placed above those on the waiting list. Positions on the waiting lists may go up or down due to pupil withdrawals, new or revised applications. Reading Borough Council will keep waiting lists until end of August 2021 (End of Term 6 for reception classes). After this date the waiting lists will be abandoned. Parents/carers must then re-apply for a place in Year 1 as an in year admissions application if they are still interested in obtaining a place for their child.

### **Returning Crown Servants and Armed Forces Personnel**

Families of crown servants returning from overseas to live in the Reading Borough or applicants relocating in the armed forces may apply for a place in advance of their move provided the application is accompanied by an official letter confirming the posting to the UK and the expected relocation date. A school will be offered in advance of a move and held until the appropriate time. If the schools listed on an application form are oversubscribed, the family will need to provide an address in order to be ranked accordingly. Where a parent is unable to provide confirmation of a relocation address, an indication of the area may be provided, narrowed down as far as possible, to which the family intend to return. Preferences will be processed but applications will be considered under criterion 7 (other children) until the parent is able to provide confirmation of the new address such as proof of exchange of contracts or a signed rental agreement. If a place cannot be offered at a preferred school an alternative school will be offered and parents will be advised of the right of appeal for a place at the preferred school. It is the responsibility of parents to keep the school admissions team informed of any changes to their planned address during the application process.

### **In Year Admission Arrangements for the School Year 2019-20.**

Parents/carers seeking admission for their child into Year 1 – Year 6 in a community primary school in Reading Borough must apply to Reading Borough Council. Parents/carers may apply direct to some voluntary-aided or academy schools in the Borough but the majority of these schools have opted to be part of the coordinated admission arrangements and applications are normally submitted to the admissions team at Reading Borough Council. A list of those schools to which a direct application is necessary is available from the Reading Borough Council website.

If there is a place in the parents'/carers' preferred school the place will be allocated but if there are more applications than places available the over-subscription criteria, as outlined above will apply and the places allocated to the child with the highest priority. Remaining applicants will be added to the waiting list which will also be ranked according to the oversubscription criteria. Children

allocated according to the Fair Access Protocol will take precedent over children on the waiting list.

Children new to the area or who have moved within the borough will be able to start at the school as soon as possible after their move. If the request is to move schools within the Borough without a move of home, the children will normally be expected to start at the beginning of the following term.

Waiting lists for admission to Year 1-Year 6 will be held until 31 December 2019 after which parents/carers must reapply for their child to remain on the waiting list until July 2020. The waiting list will be abandoned after July 2020 and parents/carers must re-apply if they are still seeking a place for September 2020.

### Appeals

If it is not possible to offer a place at the preferred school(s) parents/carers will be advised of their right of appeal.

### Admissions Numbers – Reading Community Infant, Junior and Primary Schools.

The following are the proposed admission numbers for 2020.

School	September 2020 - Admission Number
Alfred Sutton Primary	90
Caversham Park Primary	30
Caversham Primary	60
Coley Primary	30
Emmer Green Primary	60
EP Collier Primary	60
Geoffrey Field Infant	90
Geoffrey Field Junior	90
Katesgrove Primary	90
Manor Primary	45
Micklands Primary	60
Moorlands Primary	60
Oxford Road Community	30
Park Lane Primary	60
Redlands Primary	30
Southcote Primary	90
St Michael's Primary	60
Thameside Primary	60
The Hill Primary	60
The Ridgeway Primary	90
Whitley Park Primary School	90
Wilson Primary	60