

Stoke Row CE School



Admissions (2019-2020) Policy

Document Approval Record

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Stoke Row C. E. School
Admissions (2019-2020)
Policy

These policies are all created in line with the Christian foundation of this school which is expressed through our five core values and our view that every child is unique and valued.

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1. Introduction

Stoke Row CE Primary School is a Church of England, Voluntary Aided School. It can accept up to 105 pupils of both sexes of the ages 4-11 years, although Governors aim to ensure that all classes do not exceed 30 pupils. The school's Published Admissions Number (PAN) for entry to the Foundation Stage 1 (FS1) Year is 15. Other year groups at the school also have 15 places. The school welcomes all pupils within its catchment area (**Appendix A**) and from further afield. Although the school is a Church of England school, all children are welcome whatever their faith background. The school does not use academic or other ability as selection criteria.

Stoke Row CE Primary School values highly its Christian ethos, its close links with local churches and the Diocese of Oxford. We provide a distinctively Christian, yet inclusive, environment in which each child is motivated to acquire skills for life and a love of learning. As a Church school, we welcome applications from Christian families, and those of other faiths or none. We ask all parents applying for a place at our school to respect this ethos and its importance to the whole school community.

The Governors have made every effort to ensure that these arrangements comply with the School Admissions Code 2014 and all relevant legislation, including that on infant class sizes and equal opportunities.

This policy has been drawn up taking account of the Oxfordshire County Council guidance entitled 'A guide to School Admissions in Oxfordshire', School Admissions Code 2014, Oxford Diocesan Board of Education guidelines and appropriate legislation. It should be read in conjunction with the current issue of the School prospectus, which will give further details of the school.

2. Admission Arrangements to the Reception Year in September 2019

At our school, pupils are normally admitted at the beginning of the school year (1 September – 31 August) in which they reach their fifth birthday. Parents whose children were born between 1 September 2014 and 31 August 2015 may apply for them to be admitted to the Reception Year in September 2019. There are 15 places (the published admission number) available. Our policy is to not offer admission in September 2019 to children who were born on or after 1 September 2015.

Parents of a child whose fifth birthday falls between 1 September 2019 and 31 March 2020 may defer entry until their child reaches compulsory school age (the term beginning January or April after his or her fifth birthday). The school will hold the deferred place for the child (provided it is taken up during the school year 2019-20), although, in the majority of cases, we find that children benefit from starting at the beginning of the school year, rather than part way through it.

For children whose fifth birthday falls between 1 April 2020 and 31 August 2020 (summer-born children), who do not reach compulsory school age until September 2020, parents who do not wish them to start school in school year 2019-20 but to be admitted to the Reception Year in September 2020, should proceed as follows: They should apply at the usual time for a place in September 2019 together with a written request that the child is admitted outside his or her normal age group to the Reception year in September 2020. N.B. parents would need to provide supporting reasons for seeking a place outside the normal age group and should discuss the position with the head teacher as

early as possible. The school will consider the request carefully and if it is agreed this should be clear before the national offer day (16 April 2019), their application for the normal age group may be withdrawn before any place is offered. They should reapply in the normal way (no later than 15 January 2020) for a Reception place in September 2020. If their request is refused, the parents must decide whether to wait for any offer of a place in September 2019 (N.B. it will still be subject to the over-subscription criteria below) or to withdraw their application and apply in the second half of the summer term 2020 for a Year 1 place in September 2020. Parents should be aware that the Year 1 group may have no vacancies as it could be full with children transferring from the 2019-20 Reception Year group.

Until the child reaches compulsory school age, s/he may attend part-time. If parents wish to exercise this right they should discuss detailed arrangements with the head teacher.

Parents (see Note 1) wishing to apply for the Reception [Foundation] Year in September 2019 must complete the common application form provided by their home local authority (the home LA). The home LA is the LA in whose area the parents live at the time of the application. The form must be returned to that LA no later than 15 January 2019. Applications received after this date will normally only be considered after all those received on or before the cut-off date. Offers and refusals of places will be posted by the home LA on 16 April 2019.

3. Children with Statements of Special Educational Needs or EHC plans

The Admissions procedure for children with Statements or Education, Health, and Care (EHC) plans, is different and these children take priority. Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 requires schools to admit a child with a Statement of Educational Needs or an EHC plan that names the school irrespective of whether they have places or not. This is therefore not an oversubscription criterion. The LA is responsible for issuing the statement and consulting the Governors of Stoke Row, if a preference has been made for the school, before the school is named in the statement.

4. Fair Access

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

5. Admission outside normal 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;

- any information about the child's academic, social and emotional development;
- whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group;
- the views of the Head teacher.

When informing a parent of the decision on the year group to which their child should be admitted, the Governors 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 Governors will not give a lower priority on the basis that the child is not of the correct age.

It should be noted that if a place in the requested age group is refused, but one in the normal age group is offered, then there is no right of appeal.

6. Oversubscription Criteria

In the event of there being a greater demand for admissions than there are places available, the places will be allocated using the following criteria; these are listed in order of priority.

1. Looked-after children and children who were previously looked after, but ceased to be so because, immediately after being looked after, they became subject to an adoption, child arrangements, or special guardianship order. (See **Note 2**).
2. Families who have exceptional medical or social needs that make it essential that their child attends Stoke Row CE Primary School rather than any other. These needs must be fully supported by written evidence from the appropriate professional person involved with the family. (See **Note 3**).
3. Children whose siblings (see **Note 4**) are on the school roll at the time of application and who are expected still to be in attendance at the school at the point of entry by the child to the school and live in the catchment area as outlined on the map below. The catchment area is defined within the Civil Parish Boundary. (See **Appendix A** for a map of the catchment area; this is also available on the school website).
4. Children whose siblings are on the school roll at the time of application and who are expected still to be in attendance at the school at the point of entry by the child to the school.
5. Children living in catchment.
6. A child with a sibling who is in Year 6 at the time of application, but who will no longer be in attendance at the time of entry.

7. A child of a member of staff, where the member of staff has been employed for two or more years at the time the application is made, or, where member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skills shortage.
8. Other children.

Proximity of the child's normal home address (see **Note 5**) is measured by the shortest designated public route defined by the Directorate for Education, Children and Families. This geographic system will serve to differentiate between pupils in criteria 3-8 should the need arise. When measuring distance we define the two determining points as being the "seed point" of the home address and the school gate in School Lane (see **Note 6**).

In the unlikely event of a case where the measurement of distance 'tiebreak' produces an identical measurement for two or more applicants, and if the school cannot offer a place to all of these children, the available place will be allocated by a random draw in the presence of a person independent of the school. In order to ensure that no child is disadvantaged because of the date when they are added to the waiting list, a fresh round of random allocation will be applied each time it is necessary to decide which child is to be offered a place from the waiting list.

The school will ensure that only the full Governing Body or the Admissions Committee can take decisions on offers or refusals of places.

Note *1: A parent is defined in law (The Education Act 1996) as either:

- a) Any person who has 'parental responsibility' (defined in the Children Act 1989) for the child or young person; or
- b) Any person who has care of the child or young person.

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

Note *2: By a "looked after child" we mean one in the care of a local authority or being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of its social services function. An adoption order is one made under the Adoption Act 1976 (Section 12) or the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (Section 46). A 'child arrangements order' is one settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live (Children Act 1989, Section 8). A 'special guardianship order' is one appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian/s (Children Act 1989, Section 14A). Applications under this criterion must be accompanied by evidence to show that the child is looked after or was previously looked after (e.g. a copy of the adoption, residence or special guardianship order).

Note *3: When applying under criterion 2 (exceptional medical or social needs), you must include supporting evidence from an independent professional person who is aware of the situation and supports your reasons for preferring Stoke Row C.E. Primary School. This supporting evidence must clearly demonstrate why the school is the most suitable and must illustrate the difficulties that would be caused if your child had to attend another school. The person supplying the evidence should be a doctor, health visitor, social worker, etc. who is aware of your child's or your own case. The school reserves the right to ask for further evidence or clarification where necessary and may seek the advice of an appropriate education professional where necessary.

Note *4: By sibling we mean a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister or the child of the parent / carer's partner where the child for whom the school place is sought is living in the

same family unit at the same address as that sibling. It is helpful if parents make it clear on the application form where the sibling has a different family name. Where there is more than one sibling at the school, only the youngest should be listed on the application form.

In cases where there is one place available, and the next child on the list is a twin, triplet, etc., we would admit both twins (and all children in the case of other multiple births) even if this meant exceeding the agreed admission number of 15 for Reception or the number of 15 places in other year groups.

Note *5: By normal home address, we mean the child's home address. This must be where the parent or legal carer of the child lives with the child unless it is proved that the child is resident elsewhere with someone else who has legal care and control of the child. The address should be a residential property that is owned, leased or rented by the child's parent/s or person with legal care and control of the child.

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

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

We may ask for evidence of the normal home address in the form of a recent bill. This could be, for example, the most recent Council Tax bill, utility bill no more than three months old, a current TV licence, buildings and contents insurance, mortgage statement or rent book which shows the address concerned. Parents who are unable to provide this evidence should contact the school to discuss what evidence might be acceptable. If it becomes clear or if there is any doubt that the parents and child are not living at the address given on the application form, the school may seek further evidence. The school works closely with the LA to ensure that places are not obtained at the school on the basis of false addresses and, in cases of doubt, will take steps to verify the information provided. If a place at the school is offered and it later becomes clear that the offer was made on fraudulent or misleading information (e.g. a false claim to living in the catchment area), and the school has denied a place to a child with a stronger claim, the school will withdraw the offer of a place. The offer can also be withdrawn even after the child has started at the school.

We regard a child's home address to be where he or she sleeps for the majority of the school week (Monday to Friday). We may ask to see official documentation, such as a child benefit book or medical card if there are reasons why a child does not live at his or her parent's address. For example, if he or she is resident with a grandparent, this needs to be made clear on the application form. If such arrangements are not declared or a relative's address is used on the application, we may consider that a false declaration has been made, and withdraw the offer of a place. Childcare arrangements are **not** sufficient reason for listing another address.

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

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

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

Note *6: The shortest designated route is used to determine proximity of the home to the school and will be measured by Oxfordshire County Council's geographical information system as described in their composite prospectus: 'Starting School 2020' which is available online from the local authority and from the school office.

7. 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 the catchment area) and this results in the denial of a place to a child with a stronger claim, the Governors may withdraw the offer of the place. This follows the guidance in paragraphs 2.12 and 2.13 of the School Admissions Code 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.

8. All Other Admissions

Admissions to other years at the school or to the Foundation Year, once offers of places have been made, depend on whether or not there are places available.

Stoke Row C.E. School is part of the in-year admission scheme for Oxfordshire. Therefore, in-year applications will be processed through Oxfordshire County Council. If there is a vacancy, and there is no child in the relevant continued interest (waiting) list with a higher priority (according to the over-subscription criteria 1-8), a place will be offered. As soon as school places become vacant, we fill these vacancies from any waiting list, even if this is before any admission

appeals have been heard. Children who are the subject of a direction by a local authority to admit or who are allocated to this school in accordance with an In-Year Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over those on a waiting list.

For children of UK Service personnel and other Crown Servants, we will treat a family returning to the area as meeting the residency criteria for that catchment even if no house is currently owned in that area once proof of posting has been provided. In the situation, where the Service does not yet have a postal address, the Governors will use the Unit postal address or quartering area address, provided there is official confirmation of the future move.

If parents (see **Note 1**) are moving house, the school will ask for evidence of the move, when considering any application for a place. Documentary evidence in the form of a solicitor's letter to confirm exchange of contracts, or a rental agreement for at least a period of six months will be required (Armed Forces personnel are exempt). If you are returning from elsewhere, to live in a home that you own, we will require evidence to show that you have returned. We will also ask for evidence that any previous house owned has been sold or is being sold. We would not accept an address where the one given is that of a second home with the main home being elsewhere. If there are two or more homes, we will check which is the main home, and may refuse to base an allocation of a place on an address which might be considered only temporary. Nor would we accept an address where the child was resident other than with a parent or carer unless this was part of a fostering or formal care arrangement. We would not normally accept an address where only part of a family had moved, unless connected with a divorce or permanent separation arrangement, in which case we would require proof.

We will endeavor to handle admission applications outside the normal admissions round, or in-year applications, as quickly as possible to minimise the time a child is not at a school.

If a parent (see **Note 1**) has not responded to the offer of a place within 21 days we will remind the parent of the need to respond and point out that the place may be withdrawn if they do not.

It has to be noted that the only way that a place can be offered once there are 15 children in the year group is to appeal. More details of this process are given at the end of this document.

9. Continued Interest Lists

Stoke Row C.E. School maintains waiting lists for those children who are not offered a place, and the parents (see **Note 1**) ask for the child's name to be added to the waiting list. The order of priority on the waiting list is the same as the list of the criteria for over-subscription, and does not depend on the date on which an application is received. No account is taken of length of time on a waiting list. The school periodically seeks confirmation that parents wish a child to be kept on the waiting list.

For those applying through the normal admissions round for Reception the continued list will be maintained immediately following initial allocation to the end of the academic year of entry.

In the case of those applying in-year the continued interest lists will be

maintained from 1 August until 31 July of the year of application.

10. Home to School Transport

Information regarding the Home to School Transport can be found at the following link on:

<https://m.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/travelling-school>

11. Appeals

There are established arrangements for appeals against non-admission. Details are available from the school, including the date by which an appeal should be submitted. It should be noted that, in the event of an unsuccessful appeal against non-admission to the school, the school does not consider any further applications in the same school year (1 September – 31 August), unless there has been a material change in circumstances, for example a change of address which results in a move from outside the catchment area to inside it.

Parents who wish their children to attend the school are most welcome to visit. Arrangements can be made through the Secretary at the school.

The Governing Body has made every effort to ensure that this policy complies with all relevant legislation including the School Admissions Code 2014, equal opportunities legislation and the Infant Class Sizes rules.

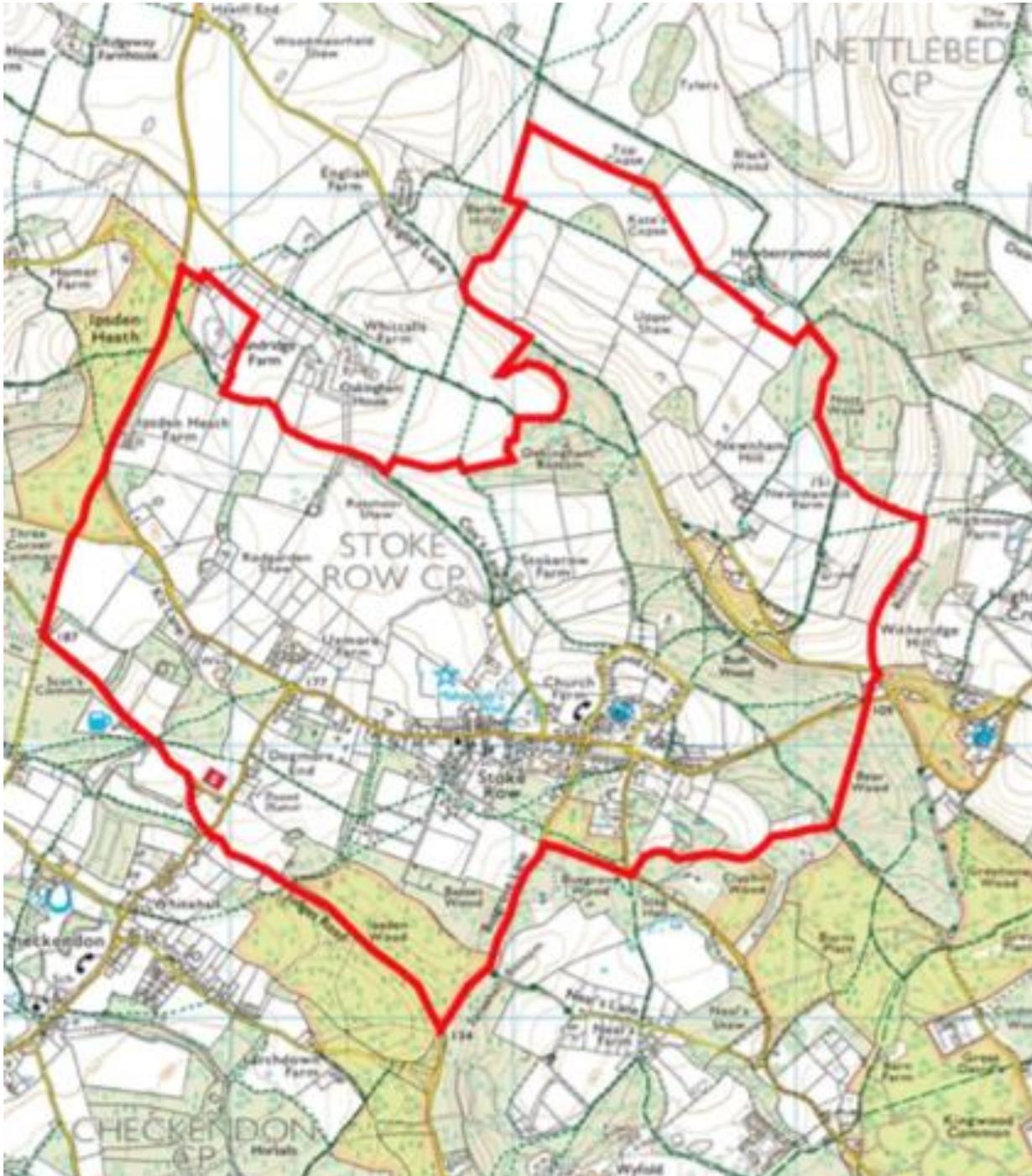
For further information, in the first instance, please contact the Admissions Committee at the school.

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 School Lane
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APPENDIX A: CATCHMENT MAP



Stoke Row Parish Boundary – Red
Crown Copyright, reproduced by Permission Ordnance
Survey