

# **Wedmore First School Academy & Nursery**



**School Admissions Policy  
2016/17 Academic Year**

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## **School Admission Arrangements 2016/17 Academic Year**

### **Part 1 – Introduction**

These Admission Arrangements reflect the statutory requirements of the Department for Education 2014 School Admissions Code and the 2012 School Admission Appeals Code [www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk). The following Acts have also been taken into account: The Sex Discrimination Act, The Race Relations Act, The Human Rights Act, The Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005 and the Equalities Act 2006.

The documents were compiled by the Governing Body (the Admissions Authority for the school) and published on the school website following a public consultation. The administrative practices described in these arrangements are designed to be fair and reasonable and the information provided is intended to explain clearly:

- How to apply for a place at Wedmore First School Academy & Nursery
- How the Admissions Authority administers admission applications
- How to appeal against a decision to refuse admission

Please contact the school office if you would like to discuss these admission arrangements or your particular circumstances in more detail:

School website: [www.wedmorefirstschool.org.uk](http://www.wedmorefirstschool.org.uk)

Admissions contact: Val Jones

E-mail: [vjones@educ.somerset.gov.uk](mailto:vjones@educ.somerset.gov.uk), Tel: 01934 712643

School Office: Email: [office@wedmore.somerset.gov.uk](mailto:office@wedmore.somerset.gov.uk)

Tel: 01934 712643

Headteacher: Jackie Hipwell E-mail [jhipwell@educ.somerset.gov.uk](mailto:jhipwell@educ.somerset.gov.uk)

For information during holiday periods, contact Val Jones or Jackie Hipwell on the email addresses above.

#### **1.1 About our School**

The Trustee Body of Wedmore First School Academy & Nursery is the Admissions Authority responsible for all admission decisions in connection with the school. Day to day admission decisions are delegated to an Admissions Committee formed from the Trust members. The Academy is inclusive and welcomes applications on behalf of all children.

Wedmore First School Academy & Nursery is for children from the age of four to nine. We also run a nursery on site for children aged two to four. The school is organised into eight classes and serves the community of Wedmore and the surrounding area. We provide extended school care for children aged four upwards from 7:30 am to 6 pm every evening and a holiday club every day except bank holidays. We work closely with a number of organisations in the community including the Church, the Green Group and Wedmore in Bloom. All at Wedmore are committed to working together, valuing each child as a whole and developing our children's curiosity for learning through an exciting and innovative curriculum. Children have the use of our extensive resources, including access to a variety of sporting facilities and a Forest School area within the school grounds.

Teachers and support staff at the school are highly skilled and committed to their work and keen to keep abreast of new developments or initiatives in the field of education. All staff work closely together to provide children with a broad and balanced curriculum, including French from year one to four. Children take part in a wide range of extra curricular activities including sport, music, chess and gardening. Our children make good progress, achieving at above national expectations in the Key Stage 1 SATs and in the national year one Phonics Test. Our SEN (Special Educational Needs) team ensures that children who need extra help are well supported and encouraged with their learning.

Further information can be found on our school website please take time to visit the site and find out more about the daily life of the school.

## **1.2 Relevant Documents: Please read this information before applying for a school place**

Important documents published by your Local Authority will be relevant to some areas of school admissions procedure. Prospective applicants are strongly advised to contact their home Local Authority or access the Local Authority website and ensure that they read and understand the relevant sections of this information before proceeding with an application for a school place. Documents of particular importance include:

- The Local Authority Coordinated Admissions Scheme (this applies to starting or transferring school for the very first time)
- The Local Authority School Transport policy
- Free School Meal Entitlement
- The Local Authority Fair Access Protocol (applies only for applications made in connection with a place required during the academic year).

### 1.3 **The Published Admission Number (PAN) and Admission Limits**

A statutory Published Admission Number applies for the Reception year group, which indicates the minimum number of places available. The governors' Admissions Committee will consider all applications received for the Reception year group in accordance with these admission arrangements and places will be offered until the PAN is reached. At this point the governors will consider whether the resources available at the time will enable additional places to be made available. If not, the decision will be to refuse all applications that would lead to admission of a pupil above the PAN.

A non-statutory admission limit has been set for all other year groups. This may be adjusted from time to time according to the level of resource available at the Academy and the preferred year group/class organisation.

The Published Admission Number is set at **42**.

## **Part 2 - Over Subscription Criteria**

2.1 Where there are more applications than there are places available within the requested year group, the Admissions Committee will apply the following oversubscription criteria for every application received. This will rank applications according to priority and so identify a priority for the places available within the Published Admission Number or the admission limit applying at the time.

2.2 Before applying the oversubscription criteria, a place will be allocated for any child with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education Health and Care Plan that names Wedmore First School Academy & Nursery as the school the child must attend (The Special Educational Needs Code requires the governors to admit any children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs naming the school, before the consideration of any other applications).

### 2.3 **Over Subscription Criteria**

1. A 'Looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, Child Arrangements Order, or special guardianship order. A looked after child is a child who 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. The definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 applies
2. Children of full time staff who have been employed at Wedmore First School Academy & Nursery for two or more years at the time at which the application to the Academy is made, or

children of staff recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

3. Children living within the defined Wedmore First School Academy & Nursery catchment area with a sibling attending the school at the time of application and remaining so at the time of admission.
4. Children living within the defined Wedmore First School Academy & Nursery catchment area.
5. Children living outside the defined Wedmore First School Academy & Nursery catchment area with a sibling attending the school at the time of application and remaining so at the time of admission.
6. Children entitled to receive an Early Years Premium, Pupil premium, or Service Premium funding.
7. Children not satisfying a higher criterion

#### **2.4 Applying a Distance Measurement and Tie Breaker**

Where the Published Admission Number is reached part way through any criterion, a straight-line measurement between home and the Academy will be calculated for every child satisfying that criterion. The distance will be measured using a Geographic Information System method to calculate on an electronic map, the distance between the front door of the child's permanent home and the main gate of the Academy. Places will be offered for those children living closest to the Academy until all available places have been allocated.

Random allocation will be used as a tie-break to decide who has the highest priority for admission if the distance between two or more children's homes and the Academy are exactly the same. This will involve the drawing of lots, which will be supervised by a person independent of the Admissions Authority.

### **Part 3 – Starting School in the Reception Year Group for the first time**

- 3.1 Applications to start school are coordinated by local authorities. Before applying for a school place, applicants should refer to the Coordinated Admissions Scheme and the Composite prospectus 'primary guide for parents' published by the Local Authority in which area the child subject to the application lives (the home Local Authority). This explains the application process in detail. These documents are available on Local Authority websites or upon request to the Local Authority concerned.

- 3.2 Parents may apply for their child to start school, for the first time in the September following his/her fourth birthday, either full time, or on a part time basis. However, a child becomes of compulsory school age when he/she reaches the age of five and, where registered at a maintained school, must be attending during the term following his/her fifth birthday.
- 3.3 Parents of children who have not yet reached age five, may choose to formally defer their child's entry to school until later in the academic year, but cannot defer beyond the term following his/her fifth birthday or the start of the last term in the academic year. In the case of children born between 1st April and 31st August (summer born), parents may choose to defer their child's entry to school for the entire academic year and start school in the following September. In these circumstances, the child would be admitted to Year 1, although parents may submit a new application and request that their child is taught in the Reception year group where it is considered that this would be in his/her best educational interests. This must clearly set out the reasons for the request, which the governors will consider when making their decision. A request will only be supported where a place is legally available and it is clearly in the educational interests of the child concerned.
- 3.4 Applications must be submitted to the home local authority by 23.29 hours on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2016, in order to be considered as 'on time'.
- 3.5 The home Local Authority will forward applications to the Local Authority in which area the preferred school is located and the governors will be sent all applications received for Wedmore First School Academy & Nursery.
- 3.6 Provisional allocation decisions will be notified to Somerset Local Authority in accordance with this authority's Coordinated Admissions Scheme timetable. Decision letters or electronic notifications will be sent out by the home Local Authority on behalf of Wedmore First School Academy & Nursery on 16th April 2016.

#### **Part 4 - Admission to a year group during the 2016/17 academic year (in-year admission)**

- 4.1 Applications may be submitted at any time during the academic year, by completing the Wedmore First School Academy & Nursery in-year application for and returning this directly to the school office. This is available to download from the school website, or a copy can be provided upon request to the main school office.
- 4.2 Applications will be considered strictly in the order that they arrive although the Admissions Committee does not consider any applications received during school holidays until school resumes. Where the governors receive more than one application on the

same calendar date, for the same year group, they may need to apply the published oversubscription criteria in order to determine a priority for admission.

- 4.3 The Admission limit provides a guideline to the number of places available within a year group and while full account will be taken of this, places will be offered according to the level of resource available at the time. If the Admissions Committee determines that the admission of a further child would impact on the efficient delivery of education or efficient use of resources, the application will be refused despite the admission limit applying to the year group concerned.
- 4.4 Applications must be refused where the admission of a child would breach the statutory Government infant Class Size Limit, which requires that infant classes do not exceed 30 pupils to one qualified teacher unless very limited exceptional circumstances apply. These are set out in Section 2.15 of the School Admissions Code.
- 4.5 Applicants will receive a written decision by first class letter post within 10 school days of receipt of the in-year application form, or of receipt of any subsequent information submitted to support the application, where this is necessary in order to determine the admission decision. The reasons for refusal and information about how to appeal against the governors' decision (see Part 5 of these arrangements) will also be provided.
- 4.6 The offer of a place during the academic year will remain open for six calendar weeks from the date of the decision letter. If the child concerned is not on roll and attending before this deadline, the Admissions Committee will consider withdrawing the offer of a place and, where appropriate, reallocating this for another child.
- 4.7 The Governing Body supports fair access to school for all children. Therefore, subject to the information provided on the application form and the circumstances at the school, the Admissions Committee may decide to refer an application that has been refused to Somerset Local Authority in order that, where appropriate, it may be considered in line with the authority's Fair Access Protocol. A referral would be made where one or more of the Fair Access criteria set out in the protocol are identified and the child is deemed to require a higher level of support than can be provided by the academy. The Fair Access Protocol enables the local authority to engage directly with a family and so help identify an alternative educational placement as soon as possible. Applicants are advised to refer to the Local Authority Fair Access Protocol before submitting an in-year application form.

## **Part 5 - Appeals Procedure**

- 5.1 Where any application for a school place has been refused, the decision letter will set out the reasons why a place cannot be made

available and the legal right to appeal against the decision will be offered to the applicant.

- 5.2 An appeal timetable will be published on the academy website by February. This sets out the timeframe for the various stages in the appeal process and includes statutory dates by which appeals must be heard. Appeal forms relating to starting school in the Reception Year for the first time each September, must be submitted in line with the instructions and appeal closing date set out in the home Local Authority Coordinated Admissions Scheme. An appeal form relating to an in-year application decision may be submitted directly to the School Office at any time following the issue of the decision letter.
- 5.3 The Wedmore First School Academy & Nursery Appeal Form is available to download from the school website, can be collected or sent out from the School Office. This form must be used for all appeals in connection with decisions issued by or on behalf of the Wedmore First School Academy & Nursery Admissions Committee.
- 5.4 Wedmore First School Academy & Nursery does not arrange appeal hearings to take place during school holidays. Appeal forms received when the Academy is closed will not be considered until the school term resumes.

## **Part 6 – Definitions and important Information**

### **6.1 Waiting Lists**

The governors operate waiting lists for every year group and these are maintained throughout the academic year. Where a child is formally refused admission to any year group, parents may request that their child's name is entered onto the appropriate list. Names are held strictly in ranked order according to the published oversubscription criteria and each time a child's name is added, the waiting list will be re-ranked. If a place becomes available within the Published Admission Number or appropriate admission limit, or resources enable an additional place to be made available, this will be offered for the highest ranked child at that time.

### **6.2 Applications for Children to Enter a Year Group Other Than Chronological Age**

Parents may choose to request a place for their child in a year group other than his/her chronological age year group. The governors will consider these requests on a 'case by case' basis according to the information submitted in support of the request. This should clearly demonstrate the particular needs of the child. For example that he/she requires some additional support or that there are overwhelming reasons for a gifted and talented child to be taught above his/her age range. If a place cannot be made available in the preferred year group, but can be provided in the chronological age year group, there will be no right of appeal against the Admission

Committee's decision. If the request is refused and an alternative place cannot be made available in the chronological year group, then the applicant will have the legal right to appeal against the decision to refuse.

Placements secured in year groups other than chronological age will be reviewed on a termly basis and, where appropriate, a decision taken in conjunction with the child's parents, teaching staff and other professionals as to whether the arrangement should continue or the child be relocated to his/her chronological age year group.

### **6.3 Multiple Birth Applications (for example twins)**

In the case of multiple birth applications, the Published Admission Number or admission limit will be increased at the point of allocation or exceeded to ensure that multiple birth siblings can be allocated places at the same school (the sibling definition still applies).

### **6.4 Children from Overseas**

The Governors will process admission applications for children living overseas and returning to the UK, who have European Economic Area (EEA) citizenship or are United Kingdom (UK) citizens living abroad, or children who hold an appropriate Home Office Visa at the time of application. All overseas applications will be considered according to the child's home address at the time of submission unless proof of the child's future UK address is provided with the application (see 6.7 Home Address). The only exceptions are children of UK Service personnel and other Crown Servants (including Diplomats) returning to the UK with a confirmed posting within the area.

### **6.5 Siblings**

For the purpose of school admission, the definition of a sibling is 'a child living at the same address as a half or full brother or sister, an adoptive brother or sister, or children of the same household at the time of application and remaining so at the time of admission'.

### **6.6 Parent**

Wedmore First School Academy & Nursery have adopted the definition of a "parent" as specified in education law. This includes; natural parents, whether they are married or not and a person other than the natural parent(s) who has parental responsibility or care of a child or young person. Having 'care' of a child or young person means that person who looks after the child and with whom the child lives, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child.

### **6.7 Home Address**

For the purposes of school admission the definition of a child's home address is considered to be where the child spends the majority of his/her time with the person(s) who legally have care of the child. Documentary evidence of house ownership or a minimum six-month rental agreement may be required, together with proof of actual

permanent residence at the property concerned. Places will not be allocated on the basis of a future house move unless this can be confirmed through the exchange of contract or the signing of a formal lease agreement in place at the time of application and no more than six weeks ahead of the place being required. An address used for childcare arrangements cannot be used as a home address for the purpose of applying for a school place.

**6.8 Distance Measurements**

For the purpose of measuring home to school distance, all calculations will be based on a straight-line measurement between the main gate of the school and the front door of the child's permanent home, using a Geographical Information System (GIS) method. In the case of multi-level dwellings such as flats, the staircase will be included in the distance measurement (refer to Section 2.4 of these arrangements).

**6.9 Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education Health and Care Plan**

A child with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education Health and Care Plan is admitted to school in accordance with a separate process administered by the Local Authority (LA) in whose area the family lives. The Trustees must always admit a child whose Statement or Plan names Wedmore First School Academy & Nursery.

**6.10 Withdrawing an Allocated Place**

The Admissions Committee will consider withdrawing a place that has been formally offered for a child if he/she is not attending the Academy within six calendar weeks of the date of the offer letter. The governors may also withdraw the offer of a school place if the child's home address is subsequently found to be fraudulent and where this address was a factor in reaching the decision to admit.

No place will be withdrawn without written communication with the original applicant and the opportunity provided to explain the family circumstances.

**6.11 Catchment Map**

Wedmore First School Academy & Nursery has a defined catchment area that is used to prioritise the offer of school places in the event of oversubscription. A copy of the map is available to view on the school website or at the school office.