

Admissions Arrangements – Academic Year 2023/24

These admission arrangements apply to all applications for admissions to Huish Episcopi Primary School for Reception entry in September 2023 and any in-year applications from 1 September 2023.

Introduction

The Admissions Authority for Huish Episcopi Primary School is the Governing Body.

An Admissions Committee comprising of Governors, or a nominated member of such a committee, is responsible for taking admission decisions for children starting in reception and for joining the school during the academic year.

Somerset Local Authority is responsible for co-ordinating all applications for children starting School in the Reception year group. These admissions arrangements should be read in conjunction with Somerset's published co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for September 2023.

The Published Admission Number

The Governing Body has set an Admission Number of 30 for the year of entry and for all subsequent year groups.

Applying for a school place

Whilst parents can make initial enquiries by telephone, to be considered for a place at Huish Episcopi Primary School, an application form must be completed. For Reception places starting in the autumn term, applications should be made on-line at www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions or paper forms can be obtained from Somerset Local Authority. In-year application forms are available from the school or the website. School place application forms must be received by the following closing dates and times:

Applications for the Reception year in 2023

The closing date for Reception year applications in September 2022 is 15 January 2024. Outcomes will be sent by the Local Authority on behalf of the Governing Body by e-mail or second class post on the published outcome date, 19 April 2024.

Any supplementary information must be submitted alongside the application form. Any applications received after the closing date will be recorded as late and cannot then be administered until all on time applications have been considered by which time places may no longer be available within the published admission number.

Places will be allocated strictly in accordance with the National Equal Preference with the ranking allocation method.

In-year applications

Applications for a place during the academic year must be made directly to the school office, by completing the in-year application form. Applications will not be processed more than half a term in advance of being required. Proof of address is required to be submitted with the application. This will

be either the formal 'exchange of contracts' letter from the solicitor for a house buy, a recent utility bill or the signing of a minimum of a six month tenancy agreement. The Governing Body reserve the right to seek further documentary evidence to support a claim of residence.

The Governors' Admissions Committee, or a nominated member of such a committee, will consider all applications in order of receipt. Applicants will receive a written response within 10 school days following receipt of the application. Where a school place is offered it will be held open for 10 school days and applicants will need to confirm acceptance within this time before the offer is withdrawn.

Oversubscription Criteria

Where there are more applications received than places available within the published admission number or admission limit, the following criteria will be applied to determine how the places will be allocated.

1. The school will be required to admit any child with a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN)/Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC) if it names the school and the school can provide the facilities and provision to meet the child's needs
2. Looked After Children: children who are in the care of a Local Authority or have previously been and are now formally adopted or subject to a residence/child arrangement order or special guardianship order. Children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. (**see note 1**)
3. Children of permanent staff who have been employed at the school for at least two years between the start of employment date and the term start date
4. Children of permanent staff who have been employed at the school for which there is a demonstrable recruitment shortage
5. Children living in the catchment area, with an older sibling at the school at the time of admission, and who live at the same address. Siblings are defined as children sharing at least one parent from birth, by legal adoption or fostering
6. Children living outside the catchment area, with an older sibling at the school at the time of admission, and who live at the same address. Siblings are defined as children sharing at least one parent from birth, by legal adoption or fostering
7. Children living in the catchment area of the school

Important Notes

Note 1: A 'Looked After Child' means any child who is in the care of a local authority in accordance with Section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989. A child who was 'a previously Looked After Child' means a child who after being looked after became subject to an Adoption Order under section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002, a Residence Order under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 or Special Guardianship Order under Section 14A of the Children Act 1989; as well as those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. Relevant evidence will be required to be submitted.

Tie Breaker

In the case of two or more applications that cannot be separated by the oversubscription criteria outlined above, the school will use the distance between the school and a child's front door, possibly inside a stairwell, as a tie breaker to decide between applicants. Priority will be given to children who live closest to the school. Distance will be measured in a straight line from the child's home address to the school's front gates on North Road. A child's home address will be considered to be where he/she is resident for the majority of nights in a normal school week.

Where the distance between two children's homes and the school is the same, random allocation will be used to decide between them. This process will be independently verified.

Multiple birth applications

In the case of multiple birth applications, where it would only normally be possible to admit one child within admission number, a place(s) will be allocated above admission number at the point of allocation. This will ensure that multiple birth siblings can be allocated places at the same school.

Waiting Lists

Where an application has been refused in a year group, the parent applying can request for the child to be placed on a waiting list.

This will be kept strictly in order of receipt for in-year admissions and for Reception places the oversubscription criteria will be applied. The child will remain on the waiting list until the end of the term the refusal was made, or 31 December 2023 for first admission applications.

Withdrawal of places

The Governing Body will consider withdrawing the offer of a place if:

- The place has been offered on the basis of an application which is subsequently found to be fraudulent or intentionally misleading
- The parent/carer has not responded to the offer within 10 school days

Issues relating to shared residency arrangements

Legislation and guidance states that only one offer per child is made by the Local Authority. Therefore, where separated parents issue separate applications for their child the Local Authority can only offer one place. In this situation the Local Authority requires parents to resolve matters between themselves. If an agreement cannot be reached parents may wish to seek legal advice. The Governing Body will not become involved in private disputes. The Local Authority does recognise that there may be situations where parents cannot ultimately reach an agreement between themselves and it is, therefore, necessary for the Local Authority to take a decision. Where this is the case the Local Authority will try to establish where the child spends the majority of their time and prioritise the application made by the parent living at this address.

Each parent will be required to write to the Local Authority and inform them of the number of days each week the child spends with them. Where the child spends equal time with both parents the Local Authority may ask for additional information including evidence of which parent/carer is in receipt of child benefit, and/or the name of the GP surgery at which the child is registered. When the Local Authority has received all the necessary information from both parents a decision will be reached by the Governing Body based on the evidence provided.

Admission of children below compulsory school age

Parents are entitled to a part-time or full-time place at school for their child in the September following their fourth birthday. 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. A child becomes of compulsory school age when they reach the age of five and, where a parent has elected to register their child at school, they must start school on a full time basis in the term following their fifth birthday.

Deferred Entry

The Department for Education (DfE) requires all Admission Authorities to offer parents the opportunity to defer their child's entry to school. This means rather than the usual September entry, you can choose for your child to start later in the year, usually in January at the beginning of the Spring Term. You can defer until later in the year if you wish but not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which the application was made.

Summer Born Children

Parents of summer born children may request that they are admitted into reception rather than year one when they become of compulsory school age. Applications will be considered as set out below (see Retained or Accelerated Entry).

Retained or Accelerated Entry

The Governing Body will consider applications for retained or accelerated entry in cases where parents would like their child to be admitted to a year group either side of their child's chronological year group. The reasons for the request must be in writing with any supporting evidence and included with the school place application form. The Governing Body will make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. The Governing Body will set out clearly the reasons for their decision.

Children from outside the UK

The Local Authority will process applications for children living in the European Economic Area (EEA) or UK citizens living abroad. If proof of the Somerset address and a date of arrival is provided by the closing date the application can be considered on this address. If proof of the Somerset address is not available by the closing date the application will be considered on the current address.

The Local Authority will not allocate a place to anyone moving into Somerset from a country outside the EEA prior to their arrival in the country. The Local Authority will require copies of the passports, appropriately endorsed visas and proof of residency – see home address definition. The only exceptions are children of UK Service personnel and other Crown servants (including Diplomats) returning to the area.

Appeals

Applicants whose school place application is turned down have the legal right to appeal against the decision to refuse admission. Details concerning how to appeal are explained in the decision letters sent out when a place is refused.

Children of UK Service Personnel

The Admissions Authority endeavour to ensure that their admission arrangements support the Government's commitment to removing disadvantage for service children. In year applications are usually considered for admission up to a maximum of half a term in advance of the place being taken

up. An exception is made for children of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting to the area and other Crown servants returning from overseas to live in the area where a place can be made available up to a year in advance of being required providing the appropriate documentation is provided as proof of posting (an official government letter (e.g. MOD, FCO or GCHQ) declaring a relocation date and intended posting.)

Usually, an in year place may be allocated prior to actual residency, only on receipt of exchange of contracts or a formal signed rental agreement. An exception is made for children of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting to the area and other Crown servants returning from overseas to live in the area. This means that, providing the application is accompanied by an official government letter (e.g. MOD, FCO or GCHQ) declaring a relocation date and intended posting, the admissions authority will process the application on that address. If proof of a home address is not available at this stage the admissions authority will accept a unit postal address or quartering area address. An offer of service family accommodation from the housing department is not sufficient to be accepted as proof of address, the signed tenancy agreement would be required.

If the parent/carer is moving to the area as a result of leaving the armed forces then no special consideration will be given to the application under the grounds of the application being made by a service family.

Definitions:

Home Address

The home address is very important as school places are allocated on the basis of the home address of each child. A child's home address is considered to be where the child spends the majority of their time with primary parents/carers.

Documentary evidence of home ownership or suitable rental agreement may be required, together with proof of permanent residence at the property concerned. Places cannot be allocated on the basis of an intended future address, unless the house move can be confirmed through the formal 'exchange of contracts' or the signing of a minimum of a six month tenancy agreement. An address change due to a move to live with family or friends will not be considered until the move has taken place and suitable proof of residency has been obtained. Proof that a move from the previous address has taken place may also be required e.g. proof of the house sale, a tenancy agreement showing the end date of the tenancy or a notice to quit from the landlord. The Governing Body reserve the right to seek further documentary evidence to support a claim of residence.

An address used for childcare arrangements cannot be used as a home address for the purpose of applying for a school place. Fraudulent claims relating to the home address of a particular child may lead to the withdrawal of any offer of a school place.

The Admissions Authority must be notified of any change of address during the admissions procedure.

Sibling

For the purpose of admissions, siblings are defined as children sharing at least one parent from birth, by legal adoption or fostering. Siblings must reside at the same address.