



**OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL**

**Scheme of co-ordination for
admissions to schools at the normal points of
entry/transfer for the 2027/28 school year**

**(Consulted between 1 December 2025
and 26 January 2026)**

(Determined on 24 February 2026)

Details of changes since the scheme of co-ordination for admissions to schools at the normal points of entry/transfer for the 2026/27 school year

The following changes have been made:

- Paragraph 1.3 – date change
- Paragraph 1.9 – date change
- Paragraph 1.13 – date change
- Paragraph 2.16 – “and fourth” added
- Paragraph 2.17 – date change
- Paragraph 2.18 – date change
- Paragraph 2.21 added: Please see Annex G for information about how the LA will process school admission applications where there is a parental dispute.
- Paragraph 3.1 – date change
- Paragraph 3.2 – date change
- Paragraph 4.3 – date change
- Paragraph 5.18 – “or” added
- Paragraph 5.27 – paragraph deleted and subsequent paragraphs renumbered accordingly
- Paragraph 5.28 – “report” deleted and replaced with “list”
- Paragraph 6.1 – date change
- Paragraph 6.3 – paragraph deleted and subsequent paragraphs renumbered
- Paragraph 6.4 – second and third bullet points deleted
- Paragraph 6.5 - paragraph deleted and subsequent paragraphs renumbered accordingly
- Paragraph 8.6 – date change
- Paragraph 9.4 – “for that school” added to last bullet point
- Annex B – date change
- Annex B – “Date by which the LA will finish determining transport entitlement for those allocated a school place (see 5.27 above) deleted
- Annex C – date change
- Annex C - “Date by which the LA will finish determining transport entitlement for those allocated a school place (see 5.27 above) deleted
- Annex C – “CILs” replaced with “Waiting Lists”
- Annex G – deleted
- Annex G – “Processing School Admission Applications Where There Is a Parental Dispute” added

1. Introduction

1.1 These arrangements are compliant with the following:

- School Standards & Framework Act 1998
www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/31/contents
- Education Act 2002
www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents
- School Admissions Code 2021
www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-code--2

1.2 A glossary of key terms used in the scheme is shown at Annex A.

1.3 The scheme covers all state-funded mainstream infant, junior, primary and secondary schools in Oxfordshire, for the normal admissions round for the 2027/28 school year. It specifically covers the following:

- Phases that will use the 'primary transfer phase' dates:
 - entry to the Reception year group
(children born 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023)
Even if a child already attends the nursery class at a primary or infant school, a new application must be made to start Reception year group in a primary or infant school for the first time (Paragraph 15.d) of the 2021 School Admissions Code].
 - transfer from Year 2 in an infant school to Year 3 in a junior school
(children born 1 September 2019 to 31 August 2020)
A separate application must be made for any transfer from infant to junior school [Paragraph 15.d) of the 2021 School Admissions Code].
- Phase that will use the 'secondary transfer phase' dates:
 - transfer from Year 6 in a primary or junior school to Year 7 in a secondary school
(children born 1 September 2015 to 31 August 2016)

All applications received by 31 August 2027 will be considered using these arrangements. Applications received from 1 September 2027 onwards will be processed using the arrangements in the In-Year Admissions Scheme.

1.4 An outline of key dates in the 'primary transfer phase' is shown at Annex B. An outline of key dates in the 'secondary transfer phase' is shown at Annex C.

1.5 The Local Authority (LA) will coordinate admissions and act as the 'clearing house' for all applications for the normal phases of transfer listed in 1.3 above.

1.6 The coordinated scheme for admission is an 'equal preference' scheme. This means that, when the admission rules need to be applied, or when there are vacancies and there is no need to apply the admission rules, if more than one of the listed schools can be offered, the one offered will be the one that has been ranked the highest by the parent.

- 1.7 The coordinated admission scheme is part of the published admission arrangements for all Community and Voluntary Controlled schools in Oxfordshire. The LA is the Admission Authority for these schools and is responsible for determining whether places can be offered and offering any places at the schools concerned.
- 1.8 The coordinated admissions scheme will also become part of the published admission arrangements, for all Own Admission Authority (OAA) state-funded schools in Oxfordshire, including all Academies, Foundation Schools, Free Schools, Studio Schools and University Technical Colleges (UTCs) once this scheme has been determined.
- 1.9 The UTC Oxfordshire (Didcot) and the Futures Institute (Banbury) opted out of the scheme from the 2021/22 admissions round onwards. Therefore, it is expected they will remain outside the co-ordinated scheme for the 2027/28 admissions round. However, if these institutions wish to opt into the scheme, they must inform the LA in writing by the last working day in February 2026.
- 1.10 Any applications for admission received directly by schools for any transfer phase outlined in 1.3 above must be passed to the LA, which is the 'clearing house' for all applications for these phases.
- 1.11 When applying for a transfer for any of the phased transfers listed in 1.3 above, the applicant (parent) will receive no more than a single offer of a place.
- 1.12 Relevant information concerning a preference for a school as part of one of the transfers listed in 1.3 above, will be shared securely with other LAs where a preference has been requested for a school in that LA's area. This is in line with the General Data Protection Regulations.
- 1.13 The LA will publicise the coordinated admissions process for each phase of education. This will be done by:
- publishing a composite prospectus online by 12 September 2026 for children due to start the Reception year group for the first time called "Starting School"; and
 - publishing a composite prospectus online by 12 September 2026 for children due to transfer from infant school to junior or primary school called "Stepping Up"; and
 - publishing a composite prospectus online by 12 September 2026 for children due to transfer from Year 6 in a junior or primary school to Year 7 in a secondary school called "Moving On"; and
 - publishing a composite prospectus online by 12 September 2026 for children able to transfer from Year 9 in a secondary school to Year 10 in a Studio School or UTC called "Further Steps"; and
 - publicising coordinated admission arrangements on the LA public website; and
 - producing posters and/or other advertising information via social media; and
 - enabling parents to apply online or on paper; and
 - writing to parents of children regarding the opportunity to transfer from Year 9 in a secondary school to Year 10 in a Studio School or UTC.
- 1.14 The Governing Bodies or Academy Committees and/or Directors of OAA schools

covered by the scheme remain responsible for setting admission rules, applying them and determining the offer of places. Where an OAA school consults on a change to its admission arrangements and/or rules, which it must at least once every seven years or when a change is made to those arrangements or rules (whichever happens sooner), it must consult, determine and publish according to the timescales laid down in the 2021 School Admissions Code.

- 1.15 For all OAA schools, the parent will receive the official offer from the LA as the 'clearing house' made on behalf of the school or Governing Body or Academy Committee or Directors. Offers for the transfer phases listed in 1.3 above **must not** be sent directly by the school or Governing Body or Academy Committee or Directors before the LA notification has been sent on their behalf.

2. The Application

- 2.1 As outlined in 1.13 above, the LA will enable parents to apply online for any of the transfers outlined in 1.3 above. Online will be the principal means of application.
- 2.2 It will also be possible to apply on paper.
- 2.3 There are 3 paper application forms which are used for the phases listed in 1.3 above:
- CAF (PRIMARY) for entry to the Reception year group
Parents of all children of the appropriate age (see Paragraph 1.3) must apply for a place to start Reception year group in a primary or infant school even if the child already attends a nursery class at a primary or infant school.
 - CAF (JUNIOR) for transfer from Year 2 in an infant school to Year 3 in a junior school
A separate application must be made for any transfer from infant to junior school [Paragraph 15.d) of the 2021 School Admissions Code].
 - CAF (SECONDARY) for transfer from Year 6 in a primary or junior school to Year 7 in a secondary school
- 2.4 Information about how to apply for and obtain a school place will be available online through the LA website. This is the principal means of communication. All parents will need to use the relevant online process or the relevant paper form to express a preference for a child's admission to any state-funded mainstream school in England.
- 2.5 Parents of children resident in Oxfordshire will be able to request a maximum of 4 preferences on their application (online or paper). These preferences can be for any state-funded mainstream school in England.
- 2.6 Parents of children resident in Oxfordshire who wish to apply for a transfer for their child from Year 9 in a secondary school to Year 10 in at a state-funded mainstream Studio School or UTC in the normal transfer phase will need to apply online or on paper direct to the Studio School or UTC. This is because most LAs no longer offer a coordinated admissions process for this phase of transfer and most Studio Schools and UTCs process applications direct.

- 2.7 Parents whose children are resident in England but outside Oxfordshire who wish to apply for a place for their child at a state-funded mainstream Oxfordshire school will need to apply online or on paper via the home LA where their child lives for the following transfers:
- for entry to the Reception year group
 - for transfer from Year 2 in an infant school to Year 3 in a junior school
 - for transfer from Year 6 in a primary or junior school to Year 7 in a secondary school
- 2.8 Parents whose children are resident in England but outside Oxfordshire who wish to apply for a transfer for their child from Year 9 in a secondary school to Year 10 at a state-funded mainstream Oxfordshire Studio School or UTC in the normal transfer phase will need to apply online or on paper direct to the Studio School or UTC.
- 2.9 Parents whose children are resident outside England (e.g. Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland or overseas) who wish to apply for a place for their child at a state-funded mainstream Oxfordshire school on the basis that they will be moving to Oxfordshire in the future, will need to apply online or on paper via Oxfordshire County Council for any transfer listed in 1.3 above.
- 2.10 The application form (whether online or paper) will be used for the admission of pupils in the specified year. The form and/or the accompanying notes will also:
- state the closing date for the transfer phase; and
 - allow the parent to express preferences for (up to four) schools ranked in order of preference where the first preference is the school most wanted; and
 - explain that the parent will receive a maximum of one school place offer on Offer Day (see 6.1 below) for their child as a result of the application they have made via the coordinated admissions scheme; and
 - explain that, subject to the availability of places and the application of the oversubscription criteria, parental preference will be complied with (i.e. a place at the highest preference school will be offered unless it cannot because no places are available or there are too many other applicants with a higher criterion or living closer to the preferred school); and
 - enable the parent to give reasons for their preference(s) for the school(s) listed; and
 - enable parents who wish to, to state whether their child belongs to a particular faith, for example the Catholic Church or the Church of England, or have other reasons of faith for requesting a particular school; and
 - enable parents to provide other reasons for their preference(s) where relevant (e.g. that they work at a school where priority is given to ‘children of staff’ within the oversubscription criteria).
- 2.11 The LA will take all reasonable steps to ensure that parents with children of the appropriate age, resident in Oxfordshire or attending a school in Oxfordshire, are provided with information on the key features of the coordinated admissions scheme. This will include making arrangements for parents to apply (online or by making a paper form available) and explaining the admissions process and the admission rules

for all state-funded mainstream schools in Oxfordshire. The primary means of providing this information will be online.

- 2.12 The Governing Body or Academy Committee or Directors of any state-funded mainstream OAA school included in this scheme may request parents who wish to list, or have listed, that school on the application to provide additional information to the school on a Supplementary Information Form (SIF). When this is requested, the details and procedural arrangements must be consistent with the requirements of the 2021 School Admissions Code and the coordinated admission scheme. Information **must not** be requested on the SIF that is specifically prohibited by the School Admissions Code 2021.
- 2.13 If parents complete an application and have listed a state-funded mainstream OAA school on the form but they have not completed any SIF for that school, the application will still be valid. However, if a parent does not complete a SIF this may affect the criterion under which their child is considered.
- 2.14 If parents complete a SIF for a state-funded mainstream OAA school but do not request a place at that school on the application, the SIF on its own cannot be considered as an application for a place and the child cannot be considered for a place at that school. The SIF is a device to collect additional information not covered by the LA application process to enable the Admissions Authority of the state-funded mainstream OAA school to make an admissions decision based on its oversubscription criteria.
- 2.15 Where the Governing Body or Academy Committee or Directors of a state-funded mainstream OAA school request completion of a SIF, the closing date for this SIF **must be** the same as the closing date for the relevant transfer phase (see 3.2 below), unless a different return date has been consulted upon, determined and published by the Admissions Authority of the school. The Governing Body or Academy Committee or Directors of a state-funded mainstream OAA school **must not** contact an applicant and request completion of a SIF after the school has received the list of applications to consider for places (see 5.6 below).
- 2.16 After the closing date of the relevant transfer phase (see 3.2 below), all mainstream state-funded schools in Oxfordshire will be provided with information on the number of first, second, third and fourth preferences received by the LA on their behalf.
- 2.17 The LA will destroy all paper-based application forms for the transfers in 1.3 above no later than 31 August 2028.
- 2.18 The LA will destroy all electronic records of the details of the content of applications made for the transfers in 1.3 above as follows:
- Entry to the Reception year group.
 - Electronic records will be destroyed no later than 31 August 2034.
 - transfer from Year 2 in an infant school to Year 3 in a junior school
 - Electronic records will be destroyed no later than 31 August 2031.
 - transfer from Year 6 in a primary or junior school to Year 7 in a secondary school

- Electronic records will be destroyed no later than 31 August 2032.
- 2.19 The applicant will have the right to request a copy of the electronic record of the content of the application before the destruction date in 2.18 above.
- 2.20 The applicant will have the right to request the electronic record of the content of the application to be destroyed on any date after the date in 2.17 above but before the scheduled data destruction date in 2.18 above. If the electronic record of the content of the application is destroyed before the scheduled destruction date, the applicant will no longer be able to request a copy of the electronic record of the content of the application.
- 2.21 Please see Annex G for information about how the LA will process school admission applications where there is a parental dispute.

3. Opening and Closing Dates

- 3.1 The transfer phases in 1.3 above will open according to the following schedule:
 - 00:01 (12.01am) on 11 September 2026 for all applications for the following phases:
 - transfer from Year 6 in a primary or junior school to Year 7 in a secondary school
 - 00:01 (12.01am) on 3 November 2026 for all applications for the following phases:
 - entry to the Reception year group
 - transfer from Year 2 in an infant school to Year 3 in a junior school
- 3.2 The deadlines for receipt of on-time applications will be:
 - 31 October 2026 for paper applications for the following phase:
 - transfer from Year 6 in a primary or junior school to Year 7 in a secondary school
 - 23:59 (11.59pm) on 31 October 2026 for online applications for the following phase:
 - transfer from Year 6 in a primary or junior school to Year 7 in a secondary school
 - 15 January 2027 for paper applications for the following phases:
 - entry to the Reception year group
 - transfer from Year 2 in an infant school to Year 3 in a junior or primary school
 - 23:59 (11.59pm) on 15 January 2027 for online applications for the following phases:
 - entry to the Reception year group

- transfer from Year 2 in an infant school to Year 3 in a junior or primary school
- 3.3 All applications and all preferences on those applications received by the dates/times above for the relevant transfer phase will be processed as on-time applications.
- 3.4 It will continue to be possible to apply online or on paper after the relevant transfer phase has closed at the date/time above. Such applications will be considered as late applications except in the circumstances set out in Section 4 below. Late applications will not be considered before the National Offer Day (see 6.1 below).

4. Late Applications

- 4.1 All parents who need or want a school place for their child/children in one of the transfer phases set out in 1.3 above and have not made an on-time application (online or on paper), will be asked to complete an application. Where appropriate, a SIF for an OAA school should also still be completed.
- 4.2 On-time applications will be considered before late applications except:
 - where the reason for the late application can clearly be shown to be the responsibility of an Admissions Authority or the LA acting as the ‘clearing house’; or
 - where extenuating circumstances, which have been provided in writing in support of the application, are the reason for the late application (e.g. sudden illness or death of a close family member or the family has very recently moved to the area).
- 4.3 A committee of three specialist LA officers will consider the extenuating circumstances of any late applications received after the closing date (see 3.2 above) but by the dates below:
 - 17:00 (5pm) on 16 November 2026 for late paper applications with extenuating reasons for the following phase:
 - transfer from Year 6 in a primary or junior school to Year 7 in a secondary school
 - 17:00 (5pm) on 29 January 2027 for late paper applications with extenuating reasons for the following phases:
 - entry to the Reception year group
 - transfer from Year 2 in an infant school to Year 3 in a junior or primary school
- 4.4 Therefore, if a late application is submitted it will be advisable to provide extenuating reasons in writing to support the late application.
- 4.5 Late applications received prior to the response date for the relevant transfer phase (see dates at Annexes B and C) will be considered for places at schools listed on the CAF alongside those added to the relevant Waiting List and any

changes of preference also received by the response date during the second round of the allocation process.

- 4.6 The Procedure that will be followed when late applications are received is set out in Annex D.

5. Processing applications and determining offers

- 5.1 The LA, as 'clearing house', will receive all applications.
- 5.2 The LA, as 'clearing house', will process all applications received.
- 5.3 The LA, as 'clearing house', will allocate all places for state-funded mainstream schools or academies for the transfer phases in 1.3 above. Where the school is Community or Voluntary Controlled, the offer will be on behalf of the relevant Local Authority. Where the school is not Community or Voluntary Controlled, the offer will be on behalf of the Admissions Authority for the school (school, diocese or trust).
- 5.4 For schools which are not Community or Voluntary Controlled, the Admission Authority for the individual school concerned retains the legal responsibility for applying the oversubscription criteria if there are more applicants than places and for determining which children will be offered places.
- 5.5 Other LAs will receive complete details of every preference for schools in that LA's area for children living in Oxfordshire for any of the transfer phases in 1.3 above. This data will include all information provided by the parent in support of the application and the rank of the preference (first, second, third or fourth). The expectation will be that the receiving LA will pass on all information about the application with the exception of the rank of the preference to the OAA school, where the individual school needs to consider the application, apply the oversubscription criteria and determine whether a place can be offered.
- 5.6 OAA schools or academies in Oxfordshire will receive a list of children for whom the school has been listed as a preference by the parent. The OAA school will also receive details of how many first, second, third and fourth preferences were received. However, the school **will not** be informed whether the preference is a first, second, third, or fourth preference at the time information is provided about applications. This information will remain confidential between the parent and the LA, as 'clearing house', until after the allocation process has been completed. If, after the process has been completed a place could not be offered, a school admissions appeal is lodged on behalf of an individual child, all parties at an independent appeal panel hearing will receive information about the preferences and the order of them for that child.
- 5.7 Where a school is oversubscribed (there are more applications for places than places available), the applications will be ranked according to the determined and published admission rules and arrangements only for that school, in compliance with Paragraph 2.7 of the School Admissions Code 2021.

- 5.8 The Admission Authority for each state funded mainstream OAA school in Oxfordshire will rank the list provided by the LA, as 'clearing house', (see 5.6 above) according to the criteria set out in its determined and published admission rules and arrangements only, indicating the criterion and rank order in which places should be allocated when the allocation process begins. This 'ranked list' will include all applicants for the school, irrespective of whether the Admission Authority believes a place can or should be offered during the allocation process. The Admission Authority should not refuse to rank any child for whom a preference has been received irrespective of whether the Admission Authority believes a place will or will not be offered as part of the allocation process. This means that Admission Authorities will not normally need to be contacted for further decision making while the allocation process is being run.
- 5.9 When the LA, as 'clearing house', has received ranked information from every state funded mainstream OAA school in Oxfordshire, the allocation process will begin.
- 5.10 The allocation process automatically applies the rank information against each preference for each child for the entire transfer phase to determine whether the child has a rank that is high enough for a place to be offered within the Published Admission Number of each preferred school.
- 5.11 During the first stage (or intermediate stage) of the allocation process, it is possible for a child to be identified as able to be offered more than one school.
- 5.12 During the first stage (or intermediate stage) of the allocation process, it is possible for a child to be identified as able to be offered none of the schools listed as preferences.
- 5.13 When the intermediate stage is resolved, the status for any child identified as able to be offered a place at his/her first preference school will change from 'offer' to 'allocated'. If the child had also been identified in the intermediate stage as able to be offered a place at their second, third or fourth preference school as well, the 'offer' at the second, third or fourth preference school (if applicable) will be released and the status for that child changed from 'offer' to 'not required'. This will create a *temporary* space at the second, third or fourth preference school which will be available as part of the allocation process to a child who was previously identified as not able to be offered a place at that school.
- 5.14 After the intermediate stage has been resolved, the LA, as 'clearing house', will import 'offer' or 'no offer' information from other LAs.
- 5.15 If the LA, as 'clearing house', is informed by another LA that a child living outside Oxfordshire, who has been reserved a place at an Oxfordshire school as part of the allocation process but does not need to be reserved an Oxfordshire school because a higher preference in their home LA can be offered, the child's status for the Oxfordshire school will be changed to 'not required'. This ensures that all children in England receive one offer of one school place for the relevant transfer phase.
- 5.16 If a child cannot be offered a place at the first preference school but can be *provisionally* offered a place at the second preference school, the LA, as 'clearing

house', will hold that provisional offer, pending further changes as the intermediate stage continues to be resolved during the allocation process. If the child, who is holding a provisional offer at a second preference school, also had a status of 'offer' for his/her third or fourth preference school, this status will change to 'not required' so that a space becomes *temporarily* available during the allocation process to be offered to a different child who was previously identified as not able to be offered a place at that school. If the child, who is holding a provisional offer at a second preference school, had a status of 'no offer' for his/her third or fourth preference school, this status will change to 'not required'.

- 5.17 If a child cannot be offered a place at the first or second preference schools but can be *provisionally* offered a place at the third preference school, the LA, as 'clearing house', will hold that provisional offer, pending further changes as the intermediate stage continues to be resolved during the allocation process.
- 5.18 If a child cannot be offered a place at the first, second or third preference schools but can be *provisionally* offered a place at the fourth preference school, the LA, as 'clearing house', will hold that provisional offer, pending further changes as the intermediate stage continues to be resolved during the allocation process.
- 5.19 The allocation process will automatically refill *temporary* spaces created at oversubscribed schools or academies with the next ranked child on that school's list who previously could not be offered a place at that school. This automatic process will be run for all schools or academies regardless of the Admission Authority for that school. Where the school is a state funded mainstream OAA school, the automatic offer will be made by the LA, as 'clearing house', on behalf of the Admission Authority.
- 5.20 The intermediate stage will be resolved as many times as necessary to achieve a stable state where all children have an offer status for every preferred school listed on their application and no further changes can be made.
- 5.21 When a stable state has been achieved (see 5.20 above), some schools or academies will be full (all places offered to children up to the Published Admission Number) and will still have children ranked below the last child offered a place who could not be offered places. Other schools will not be full (with fewer children offered a place than the Published Admission Number).
- 5.22 The LA, as 'clearing house', will make a list of those schools that are not full.
- 5.23 For some children living in Oxfordshire, it will not have been possible to offer a place at any of the schools or academies listed as preferences on their application. For the following transfer phases, the LA, as 'clearing house', will make a list of such children and then, for each child, will identify his/her nearest available school based on the list of schools that are not full (see 5.22 above):
- entry to the Reception year group
 - for transfer from Year 2 in an infant school to Year 3 in a junior or primary school
 - for transfer from Year 6 in a primary or junior school to Year 7 in a secondary school

The LA will use its measuring policy (see Annex F) to determine the nearest school with an available place not offered to other children. A new '*LA Referral*' for this school will be added to that child's list of preferences and a status of '*provisional offer*' will be set for that child for that school. State-funded mainstream OAA schools will not need to be provided with a list of children identified in this way so that they can consider the children as applicants and determine whether they will be offered a place. Because the school will have spaces available, the LA, as 'clearing house', has the right, under this coordinated scheme, to allocate spare places to children identified in this way. State-funded mainstream OAA schools will receive a list of such children as part of the report they receive after the allocation has been completed (see 5.28 and 5.30 below).

- 5.24 For some children living outside Oxfordshire, it will not have been possible to offer a place at any of the Oxfordshire schools listed as preferences on their application. For these children it is the responsibility of their home LA where they live to offer them a place at a school. If their home LA has been unable to offer a place at any of the schools or academies listed as preferences on their application, their home LA must follow its own process to identify and offer a nearest available school for that child.
- 5.25 Sometimes an Oxfordshire school will be the nearest available school for a child who does not live in Oxfordshire. The LA, as 'clearing house', will work closely with the home LA for the child where the home LA for the child seeks to find a nearest available school that is in Oxfordshire.
- 5.26 The allocation process will be considered complete when every child living in Oxfordshire, for whom an on-time application was received for the relevant transfer phase, has been offered a place at a school. This allocation process will be completed before offers are published on Offer Day (see 6.1 below) so that information can be prepared for parents to receive notification of the formal school offer on Offer Day.
- 5.27 When the allocation process is completed, the LA, as 'clearing house', will create a report of the number of places allocated at each school in the relevant transfer phase for each of the oversubscription criteria for that school. This report will be created before offers are published on Offer Day (see 6.1 below) so that information can be published on Offer Day about how places were offered at each school.
- 5.28 When the allocation process is completed, the LA, as 'clearing house', will create a report of the schools or academies in the relevant transfer phase that still have places available. This report will be similar to the list compiled at 5.22 (above) but some of these schools or academies may have been filled as part of the process of allocating places shown in 5.23 and 5.25 (above). This report will be created before offers are published on Offer Day (see 6.1 below) so that information can be published on Offer Day and copies of the report sent to parents of children who were not offered a school listed as a preference on their application.
- 5.29 When the allocation process is completed, the LA, as 'clearing house', will create a report of the names of the children allocated a place at each school in the relevant transfer phase. This report will include the preference rank (first, second,

third, fourth or LA Referral) for each child and will be the first time the school will receive this information. It will also include the contact details of the parent who applied for the place and the name of the child's current school (if applicable). This report will be created before offers are published on Offer Day (see 6.1 below) and provided to the school as a confidential document so that the school can prepare for Offer Day and for sending out relevant information after Offer Day.

5.30 When the allocation process is completed, the LA, as 'clearing house', will create a report of the names of the children refused a place at each school that was oversubscribed in the relevant transfer phase. This report will include the preference rank (first, second, third or fourth) for each child and will be the first time the school will receive this information. It will not include the contact details of the parent who applied for the place. This report will be created before offers are published on Offer Day (see 6.1 below) and provided to the school as a confidential document so that the school can prepare for answering queries from parents on Offer Day.

5.31 When the allocation process is completed, the LA, as 'clearing house', will create a report of the names of the children attending each school for the following transfer phases with details of the school each child has been allocated:

- for transfer from Year 2 in an infant school to Year 3 in a junior school
- for transfer from Year 6 in a primary or junior school to Year 7 in a secondary school

This report will be created before offers are published on Offer Day (see 6.1 below) and provided to the school as a confidential document so that the school can make preparations for answering queries from parents on Offer Day and preparing information to send to the new school to which the child will be due to transfer the following September.

6. Offer Day

6.1 The Offer Day for on-time applications will be:

- 1 March 2027 (published as National Offer Date for secondary school transfers in the 2021 School Admissions Code) for the following transfer phase:
 - transfer from Year 6 in a primary or junior school to Year 7 in a secondary school
- 16 April 2027 (published as National Offer Date for primary and junior school transfers in the 2021 School Admissions Code) for the following phases:
 - entry to the Reception year group
 - transfer from Year 2 in an infant school to Year 3 in a junior or primary school

6.2 For all parent who made an on-time online application for their child, an email will be sent on the Offer Day (see 6.1 above). The LA, as 'clearing house', will aim to send the email by 2pm on Offer Day.

- 6.3 The LA, as 'clearing house', **will** send a letter by post for the following categories of application:
- the original application was made on paper
- 6.4 If a place has been offered at a school that was not listed as a preference on the parent's application, the LA, as 'clearing house', will provide a list of state-funded mainstream schools in Oxfordshire that were not full on the Offer Day for the relevant transfer phase (see 6.1 above).
- 6.5 If a place has not been offered at one or more schools or academies listed as a preference on the application, the LA, as 'clearing house', will provide information about how the child's name can be added to a Waiting List.
- 6.6 If a place has not been offered at one or more schools or academies listed as a preference on the application, the LA, as 'clearing house', will provide information about how the parent can appeal for a place at the relevant schools or academies where a place was refused.

7. Children for whom no application has been received

- 7.1 Where no application has been received on behalf of a child who is of the correct age range for the any of the transfer phases shown below and the LA, as 'clearing house', is aware that the child is resident in Oxfordshire, and the LA has not been informed of any alternative educational arrangements that have been made for the child, the LA, as 'clearing house', will take appropriate steps to encourage the parent to make an application. Where applicable the LA, as 'clearing house', will provide details of schools where places are still available after the allocation process has been completed as detailed in Section 5 (above). The transfer phases are:
- entry to the Reception year group
 - transfer from Year 2 in an infant school to Year 3 in a junior school
 - transfer from Year 6 in a primary or junior school to Year 7 in a secondary school
- 7.2 If the LA, as 'clearing house', has taken appropriate steps to enable and encourage a parent to make an application and request preferences for their child, and the parent has made neither an application nor provided information about alternative arrangements that will be made so that the child is in receipt of an education suitable to his/her age, aptitude and ability, the LA will refer the child's details to the appropriate services for tracking 'children missing education'.

8. Waiting Lists

- 8.1 A waiting list is a list of children whose parent continues to be interested in a possible place at the relevant school should one become available in the future that was ranked higher on the child's application than the school where a place was offered. Names on the list will be in order of the determined and published admission rules and arrangements for that school only. Children will not be organised on a list based on the date or time an application was made.
- 8.2 For Community and Voluntary Controlled schools in Oxfordshire, the LA will hold the waiting list. For OAA schools in Oxfordshire, the LA will jointly hold the waiting list on behalf of the Admission Authority for any transfer phase listed in 1.3 above.
- 8.3 For schools outside Oxfordshire, local arrangements and terminology will be used according to the coordinated scheme of the LA for that area and/or the admission arrangements and rules published by the school.
- 8.4 On Offer Day (see Section 6 above), parents will be provided with details of how to add their child's name to the Waiting List for any state-funded mainstream school in Oxfordshire where a place could not be offered that was listed as a higher preference on the application than the school offered. This system is known as the 'opt-in' system. A child will not automatically be added to the Waiting List for an Oxfordshire school unless the parent requests this in writing.
- 8.5 Some LAs and some schools outside Oxfordshire administer an 'opt-out' system for Waiting Lists. This means that a child's name is automatically added to the Waiting List for any school where a place could not be offered that was listed as a higher preference on the application than the school offered. The child's name will remain on that list unless the parent requests in writing for the child's name to be removed from that list or a place is offered at a later date.
- 8.6 The LA, as 'clearing house', acting on behalf of all state-funded mainstream schools in Oxfordshire, will maintain (jointly maintain in the case of OAA schools) the Waiting Lists for entry to any transfer phase listed in 1.3 above. These lists will normally be maintained from the working day after Response Date 2 (as shown in the schedule of dates at Annexes B and C) until 21 July 2028. The only exceptions to this will be:
- OAA schools that are part of the co-ordinated in-year admissions scheme that have formally determined that the Waiting List will be discontinued at an earlier or later date; or
 - OAA schools that are not part of the co-ordinated in-year admissions scheme. In this case, the LA, as 'clearing house', will provide the Waiting List to the OAA school by 1 September 2027 and will cease to maintain any list thereafter.
- 8.7 Once added, a child's name will remain on the relevant Waiting List until one of the following circumstances occurs:
- a place becomes available that is offered to the child; or
 - the parent requests in writing that the Admission Authority maintaining the list should remove their child's name from the list; or

- the list ceases to be maintained (see 8.6 above).
- 8.8 In the case of state funded mainstream OAA schools, the relevant Admission Authority will liaise with the LA, as ‘clearing house’, to ensure that the data held by the LA is kept up to date.
- 8.9 The Waiting List will be maintained in order of priority according to the published admission arrangements and rules of the relevant school. Children will not be organised on a list based on the date or time an application was made.
- 8.10 If a place becomes available at an OAA school after the normal allocations of places have been completed (see Section 9 below), that school will be asked to determine to whom the place should be offered from those listed on the Waiting List. The expectation will be that the place will be offered to the child whose name appears at the top of the list.
- 8.11 Places will only be offered via the Waiting List if the number of places allocated falls below the Published Admission Number for the relevant school. It is entirely possible that a place will never be offered via the Waiting List because sufficient places never become available.

9. Offer Day 2 (Second Allocation)

- 9.1 After Offer Day, parents will have time to respond to the offer and request to add their child’s name to Waiting Lists, as appropriate.
- 9.2 Some allocations on Offer Day are not accepted because parents have made alternative arrangements for their child to receive an education (e.g. independent school). This creates a *temporary* space at the relevant state-funded mainstream school. This space is not immediately re-offered.
- 9.3 These spaces will be re-offered on the Second Allocation Day.
- 9.4 After the Response Date (see Annexes B and C), the following types of applications will be considered or re-considered for these spaces:
- late applications received after the Closing Date (see 3.2 above) but by the Response Date (see Annexes B and C); and
 - changes of preference received by the Response Date (Annexes B and C), where the child was allocated a place at a school on Offer Day but the parent request in writing for the original preferences to be changed and/or new preferences added; and
 - children who were not allocated a place at a preferred school on Offer Day whose parent requested their name to be added to the Waiting List for that school.
- 9.5 The LA, as ‘clearing house’, will continue to coordinate with all state-funded mainstream schools in Oxfordshire and all LAs in England to continue the process of one school offer for each child in the relevant transfer.

10. School Appeals

- 10.1 Parents will have the right to a school admissions appeal for a place at any school where a place was not offered (including schools ranked lower on the list of preferences than the school where a place was offered).
- 10.2 Children for whom an appeal has been lodged will be added automatically to the Waiting List for that school. If that school is listed as a lower preference than the school where a place was offered, the LA, as clearing house, will contact parents to ask if the order of preferences should be changed. Parents will be able to opt to remove their child's name from the Waiting List by writing to the LA.
- 10.3 The schedule and dates for school admission appeals will be published separately by the Democratic Services Team of the Council's Law & Governance Directorate or by individual Admissions Authorities where they have taken responsibility to organise school appeal hearings.
- 10.4 Parents of children living in Oxfordshire who wish to appeal for a place at an Oxfordshire school where a place was not offered must do so via the Council's appeals process or via the process for an individual Oxfordshire school. The Democratic Services Team publishes a list of schools that do not use the Council's appeals service.
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals
- 10.5 Parents of children living in Oxfordshire who wish to appeal for a place at a school that is not in Oxfordshire where a place was not offered must do so via the relevant process for the home LA for the school concerned or via the process for the individual school. Details of the relevant school appeals process will be available on the school's website and/or on the home LA's website.
- 10.6 Parents of children living outside Oxfordshire who wish to appeal for a place at an Oxfordshire school where a place was not offered must do so via the Council's appeals process or via the process for an individual Oxfordshire school. The Democratic Services Team publishes a list of schools that do not use the Council's appeals service.
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals

ANNEX A – GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

Academies

Academies are independent, state-funded schools, which receive their funding directly from central government, rather than through a local authority. The day-to-day running of the school is with the head teacher or principal, but they are overseen by individual charitable bodies called academy trusts and may be part of an academy chain.

These schools are not controlled by Local Government. However, they **must** participate in the coordinated admissions process and they are subject to the School Admissions Code under the terms of their Funding Agreement with the Secretary of State for Education.

Admission arrangements and rules

The arrangements and rules for a particular school or schools that determine the procedures and decision-making for admitting pupils to the school(s).

Admission Authority

The body responsible for setting and applying admission rules for a school or schools. In the case of schools that are Community or Voluntary Controlled (see below), the responsible body is the Local Authority. However, for any other type of school (i.e. academies, free schools, foundation and trust schools, University Technical Colleges (UTCs), studio schools and voluntary aided schools), the responsible body is the individual school's governing body or academy committee or trust board.

“CAF (Primary)”, “CAF (Junior)”, “CAF (Secondary)” and “CAF (UTC/Studio)”

The application forms supplied by the LA on paper or electronically which need to be used by all Oxfordshire parents seeking a place for their child in a state-funded mainstream school in England.

Community Schools

A state-funded school for which the LA is the Admission Authority (see above).

Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)

An executive agency sponsored by the Department for Education:

- accountable for £58 billion of funding for the education and training sector, providing assurance that public funds are properly spent and delivering the policies and priorities set by the Secretary of State;
- that regulates academies, further education and sixth-form colleges, and training providers, intervening where there is risk of failure or where there is evidence of mismanagement of public funds;
- delivering major projects and operating key services in the education and skills sector, such as school capital programmes, the National Careers Service, the National Apprenticeship Service and the Learning Records Service

Equal Preference System

A system created by statute to prevent Admission Authorities giving a higher priority to parents who request a school as first preference. Each preference is treated as a separate application

and all are considered equally based only on the admissions rules for the school without reference to whether the school was requested as a first or lower preference. Admissions Authorities are not allowed to know the preference number for an individual preference and the School Admissions Code expressly forbids Local Authorities from passing on this information. After the allocation process has been started and it has been determined which school(s) can offer a place (if any), each child is offered a place at the school which was ranked highest on their application among those that could offer a place. Any lower preference where a place could be offered is not needed and released so that a place can be offered to a lower-ranked child.

Free Schools

A type of academy established since 2010 under the Government's free school policy initiative. From May 2015, usage of the term was formally extended to include new academies set up via a local authority competition. Like other academies, free schools are non-profit-making, state-funded schools which are free to attend but which are mostly independent of the local authority.

Each of these schools has a Funding Agreement with the Secretary of State for Education that stipulates that they **must** participate in the coordinated admissions arrangements and conform to the requirements of the School Admissions Code. The Governors or Directors of a Free School set admissions rules and make admissions decisions.

Funding Agreement

A legal document between the Secretary of State for Education (via the ESFA) and a provider.

Infant schools

A school for children aged 5 to 7 (Years Reception to Year 2) or 3 to 7 (if the school has attached nursery provision).

Junior schools

A school for children aged 7 to 11 (Years 3 to 6).

The LA

In this document "LA" refers to Oxfordshire County Council.

The LA area

This means the administrative area for which Oxfordshire County Council is responsible.

Measuring policy

Please see Annexes E and F.

Own admission authority (OAA) schools

This term is used to describe any school which is not Community or Voluntary Controlled (i.e. academies, free schools, foundation and trust schools, University Technical Colleges (UTCs), studio schools and voluntary aided schools). The Local Authority is not the Admission Authority for these schools.

Parent

Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines 'parent' as:

- all natural parents, whether they are married or not;
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person;
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person (having care of a child or young person means that a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child, is considered to be a parent in education law).

Having parental responsibility means assuming all the rights, duties, powers, responsibilities and authority that a parent of a child has by law. People other than a child's natural parents can acquire parental responsibility through:

- being granted a residence order;
- being appointed a guardian;
- being named in an emergency protection order (although parental responsibility in such a case is limited to taking reasonable steps to safeguard or promote the child's welfare);
- adopting a child (in the case of stepparents) in agreement with the child's mother (and other parent if that person also has parental responsibility for the child) or as the result of a court order.

Where a child's parents are not married to each other, the child's father can gain parental responsibility:

- by registering the child's birth jointly with the mother;
- through a 'parental responsibility agreement' between him and the child's mother;
- as the result of a court order.

In addition, a Local Authority can acquire parental responsibility if it is named in the care order for a child.

Primary schools

A school for children aged 5 to 11 (Years Reception to Year 6) or 3 to 11 (if the school has attached nursery provision).

Published Admission Number (PAN)

This is the number of places the school will offer to start in the relevant year group (Reception year group, Year 3, Year 7 or Year 10) in the allocation year subject to receiving enough applications for places. A school cannot refuse to admit a child if the PAN has not been reached. A school can choose to (or be required to) admit children above the PAN.

Schools

In this document "school" refers to any state-funded mainstream establishment (see below) for children aged 4 to 18. Special schools are not mainstream schools and are not covered by this scheme. A child can usually only attend a special school if he/she has an Education, Health & Care (EHC) Plan.

Secondary schools

A school for children aged 11 to 16 (Years 7 to 11) or 11 to 18 (where the school has an attached Sixth Form).

State-funded mainstream school

Any school that is funded by Central Government (whether via the Local Authority or via the ESFA). This is all Academies, Community schools, Foundation schools, Free schools, Studio Schools, Trust schools, University Technical Colleges (UTCs), Voluntary Aided schools and Voluntary Controlled schools. Independent (fee-paying) schools are not state-funded mainstream schools. This scheme does not cover independent schools. Parents will not be able to apply for a place at an independent school using this scheme.

Studio schools

A school for children aged 14 to 18 (Year 10 to 13) that is designed to give students practical skills in workplace environments as well as traditional academic and vocational courses of study. Studio schools are funded by the ESFA. Studio Schools usually run on a business model where students wear business attire and the school day operates business hours.

Trust Schools

A school funded by the ESFA, independent of local authority (LA) control, self-governing, registered as a charity (or part of a charity) and run by a Trust. They have a Funding Agreement with the Secretary of State for Education that stipulates that they must participate in the coordinated admissions arrangements and conform to the requirements of the School Admissions Code. The Governors or Directors of a Trust School set admissions rules and make admissions decisions.

University Technical Colleges (UTCs)

A school/college for children aged 14 to 18 (Years 10 to 13) which specialises in technical studies and is sponsored by a university. It offers full-time courses which combine practical and academic studies. Employers are involved from the start in shaping the curriculum. UTCs are funded by the ESFA.

Voluntary Aided schools

State-funded schools in England and Wales in which a Foundation or Trust (usually a religious organisation), contributes to building costs and has a substantial influence in the running of the school. Such schools have more autonomy than Voluntary Controlled schools. In most cases the Foundation or the Trust owns the buildings. The governing body of these schools is responsible for setting admissions rules and making admissions decisions.

Voluntary Controlled schools

A state-funded school for which the LA is the Admission Authority (see above).

ANNEX B – KEY ADMISSION DATES (PRIMARY TRANSFER PHASE)

As specified in 1.3 above, these dates are for the following transfer phases:

- entry to the Reception year group
- transfer from Year 2 in an infant school to Year 3 in a junior school

Dates in bold are national dates specified by the 2021 School Admissions Code.

Date	Description
11 September 2026	“Starting School” booklet and ‘Stepping Up” booklet published online; Printed copies of “Starting School” and/or “Stepping Up” available on request from the LA
3 November 2026	Opening Date for paper and online applications
15 January 2027	National Closing Date for on-time applications (online or paper)
29 January 2027	Final date for confirmation of change of address as part of the on-time application process; Final date for late applications with extenuating reasons to be considered as on-time applications (See Annex D)
29 January 2027	Oxfordshire SEN Team to supply details of children whose EHCPs have been amended to ‘name’ a school
10 February 2027	Exchange date for the LA to send information about applications to other LAs in England for schools in that LA’s area
3 March 2027	Send date for the LA to send information about applications to OAA schools in Oxfordshire so that OAA schools can consider applications and rank applicants (see 5.6 and 5.7 above)
25 March 2027	Receive date for the LA to receive a ranked list of applications from all OAA schools in Oxfordshire
31 March 2027	The process to allocate school places begins (see 5.10ff above); the LA will liaise with other LAs to exchange offer information so that each child will be offered one school
2 April 2027	Stable state is achieved (see 5.20 above)
6 April 2027	The process to allocate places for children who cannot be offered any preferred school is completed (see 5.23 above)

Date	Description
14 April 2027	All letters and reports prepared; confidential notifications sent to schools
16 April 2027 (National Offer Day)	National Offer Day; Emails sent by 2pm for those who applied online; Letters sent by second-class post for those applicants to be notified by post (see 6.3 and 6.4 above)
30 April 2027 (Late Closing Date)	Response date for offers made on National Offer Day (online or paper responses); Response date for requests to join Waiting Lists for consideration in the second allocation; Date for change of preference requests to be received for consideration in the second allocation; Date for late applications to be received for consideration in the second allocation
7 May 2027	Start of second allocation process
7 June 2027 (Offer Day 2) (Later Closing Date)	Second Allocation Day Offer sent for offers or re-offers Date for later applications to be received for consideration in July
21 June 2027	Response date for offers made on 2 nd Offer Day Response date for requests to join Waiting Lists
22 June 2027	Waiting lists start
Early July 2027	Applications received by Later Closing Date considered Offers made <i>ad hoc</i> as places become available at schools considering those on the Waiting List or new applicants whose applications have not yet been determined
Mid July to end of August 2027	Applications received after Later Closing Date considered; Offers made <i>ad hoc</i> as places become available at schools considering those on the Waiting List or new applicants whose applications have not yet been determined
September 2027	Children start Reception year group at the new primary or infant school at which they were allocated a place on National Offer Day or 2 nd Offer Day or at a later date. Children born 1 April 2022 to 31 August 2022 start full time. Children born 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023 can start full-time or part-time.
September 2027	Children start Year 3 at the new junior school at which they were allocated a place on National Offer Day, or 2 nd Offer Day, or at a later date.

Date	Description
January 2028 (Spring Term)	<p>Children start (or continue) Reception year group at the new primary or infant school at which they were allocated a place on National Offer Day or 2nd Offer Day or at a later date.</p> <p>Children born 1 September 2022 to 31 December 2022 <u>must</u> be full-time.</p> <p>Children born 1 January 2023 to 31 August 2023 can be full-time or part-time.</p>
April 2028 (Summer Term)	<p>Children start (or continue) Reception year group at the new primary or infant school at which they were allocated a place on National Offer Day or 2nd Offer Day or at a later date.</p> <p>Children born 1 January 2023 to 31 March 2023 <u>must</u> be full-time.</p> <p>Children born 1 April 2023 to 31 August 2023 can be full-time or part-time.</p>
21 July 2028	Waiting Lists cease to be maintained (unless an earlier end date for Waiting Lists was specified in an OAA school's admission arrangements)
August 2028	Paper-based application forms will be destroyed
August 2031	Phase of education ends for children who transferred to Year 3 in a junior school in September 2027 – electronic record of the content of the application for this transfer destroyed
August 2034	Phase of education ends for children who started Reception year group in the 2027/28 school year – electronic record of the content of the application for this transfer destroyed

ANNEX C – KEY ADMISSION DATES (SECONDARY TRANSFER PHASE)

As specified in 1.3 above, these dates are for the following transfer phase:

- transfer from Year 6 in a primary or junior school to Year 7 in a secondary school

Dates in bold are national dates specified by the 2021 School Admissions Code.

Date	Description
11 September 2026	“Moving On” booklet published online; Printed copies of “Moving On” available on request from the LA Opening Date for paper and online applications
31 October 2026	National Closing Date for on-time applications (online or paper)
16 November 2026	Final date for confirmation of change of address as part of the on-time application process; Final date for late applications with extenuating reasons to be considered as on-time applications (See Annex D)
24 November 2026	Exchange date for the LA to send information about applications to other LAs in England for schools in that LA’s area
15 December 2026	Send date for the LA to send information about applications to OAA schools in Oxfordshire so that OAA schools can consider applications and rank applicants (see 5.6 and 5.7 above)
15 January 2027	Receive date for the LA to receive a ranked list of applications from all OAA schools in Oxfordshire
29 January 2027	Oxfordshire SEN Team to supply details of children whose EHCPs have been amended to ‘name’ a school
2 February 2027	The process to allocate school places begins (see 5.10 above); the LA will liaise with other LAs to exchange offer information so that each child will be offered one school
10 February 2027	Stable state is achieved (see 5.20 above)
16 February 2027	The process to allocate places for children who cannot be offered any preferred school is completed (see 5.23 above)
26 February 2027	All letters and reports prepared; confidential notifications sent to schools

Date	Description
1 March 2027 (National Offer Day)	National Offer Day; Emails sent by 2pm for those who applied online; Letters sent by second-class post for those applicants to be notified by post (see 6.3 and 6.4 above)
15 March 2027 (Late Closing Date)	Response date for offers made on National Offer Day (online or paper responses); Response date for requests to join Waiting Lists for consideration in the second allocation; Date for change of preference requests to be received for consideration in the second allocation; Date for late applications to be received for consideration in the second allocation
23 March 2027	Start of second allocation process
7 May 2027 (Offer Day 2) (Later Closing Date)	Second Allocation Day; Offers sent Date for later applications to be received for consideration in late May/June
21 May 2027	Response date for offers made on 2 nd Offer Day (paper responses); Response date for requests to join Waiting Lists
24 May 2027	Waiting Lists start
Late May to early June 2027	Applications received by Later Closing Date considered. Offers will be made <i>ad hoc</i> as places become available at schools considering those on the Waiting List or new applicants whose applications have not yet been determined
Mid June to August 2027	Applications received after Later Closing Date considered. Offers will be made <i>ad hoc</i> as places become available at schools considering those on the Waiting Lists or new applicants whose applications have not yet been determined
September 2027	Children start Year 7 at the new secondary school at which they were allocated a place on National Offer Day or 2 nd Offer Day or later
21 July 2028	Waiting Lists cease to be maintained (unless an earlier end date for Waiting Lists was specified in an OAA school's admission arrangements)
August 2028	Paper-based application forms will be destroyed
August 2032	Children who started Year 7 in a secondary school in September 2026 reach Post-16 – electronic record of the content of the application for this transfer destroyed

ANNEX D – LATE APPLICATIONS PROCEDURE

1. The LA will follow the procedure set out below when dealing with and considering late applications received after the National Closing Date or Local Closing Date. The National Closing Dates for transfers are:
 - 31 October for applications for secondary school transfer;
 - 15 January for applications for transfer from infant school to junior or primary school;
 - 15 January for applications to start primary or infant school for the first time.
2. Between the Closing Date and the date published in the LA's Co-ordinated scheme for receipt of proof of address or late applications with extenuating reasons (hereinafter called 'Late Closing Date 1'), all late applications received (with any evidence as appropriate) will be collected and collated.
3. The preferences will be recorded on the database and will be tagged as 'Late', within 2 school days of the receipt of the application.
4. The LA will constitute a sub-committee of three specialist officers with a portfolio in Education Sufficiency (School Admissions) to meet to look at all late applications received between the dates set out in paragraph 1 above. This committee will be known as the 'Late Applications Sub-Committee' (LASC). The membership of the Sub-Committee will always be:
 - One Senior Officer (School Admissions portfolio); and
 - One Senior Admissions Officer (School Admissions portfolio); and
 - One Officer from either of the above categories.
5. Where a late application has been received but no mitigating reasons have been provided, each individual member of the LASC will consider the late application but shall record a decision that the application has no extenuating reasons and is therefore late.
6. Exceptions to the above will be made where a child has an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan or is a Looked After child (known in Oxfordshire as a 'Child We Care For' - CWCF) or previously Looked After child. Such applications will be recorded as having been received on-time. Where the parent has provided no mitigating reasons for the late application but the child's current school has provided information/evidence about the family circumstances, the individual members of the LASC have discretion to take these circumstances into account and accept the application as having been received on-time.
7. Where a late application is supported by mitigating reasons, each individual member of the LASC will consider the reasons and record their decision. It is desirable (but not essential) that consensus is reached between the members of the LASC and each member can discuss their reasons for their decision with the other two members of the LASC before the decision is formally recorded. Where the decision is not unanimous, the dissenting vote will be recorded and kept with the late application.
8. After the conclusion of the LASC meeting, the decisions for each late application will be recorded on a spreadsheet within 3 school days.
9. Where the LASC makes a unanimous or majority decision that a late application will not be considered on-time, no further notification will be sent to the applicant (parent). Their

original notification at the time they submitted the late application will constitute receipt of the late application.

10. Where a late application is accepted as on-time, a member of the LASC will amend the record for the child on the database removing reference to the late application within 24 hours of the LASC meeting. Within 10 school days of the LASC meeting, a notification will be sent to the parent informing them of the decision to consider their application on-time.
11. If, after the LASC has made a decision, an applicant (parent) makes representation (with or without further mitigating information/evidence) for it to be reviewed, the original application with any supporting evidence received at that time together with any new information will be taken to the Admissions & Transport Service Manager for a new decision.
12. Late applications received after Late Closing Date 1 cannot be considered as on-time because processes will have already started which will make the addition of further applications/preferences problematic. The LASC will meet once after each Late Closing Date 1. It will not meet again to review a decision already made.
13. The Admissions & Transport Service Manager will never be a member of the LASC and has discretion to over-rule a decision made by the LASC.
14. Between the Late Closing Date 1 and the date by when the LA has published in its scheme that it will send details to other LAs of applications received for home residents (hereinafter to be called the 'LA swap date') the Admissions & Transport Service Manager has discretion to consider a late application with strong extenuating reasons as having been received on-time.
15. Late applications received after the LA swap date, regardless whether extenuating reasons have been provided, cannot be considered as on-time except as detailed in Paragraph 16 below.
16. If a late application is received after the LA swap date but before the date when the LA has published in its scheme that it will send lists of applications to Other Admissions Authority (OAA) schools within Oxfordshire (hereinafter to be called 'OAA send date'), and the application is supported by strong extenuating reasons as to why it should be considered on-time, and the preferences received on the late application are for schools in Oxfordshire only, then the Admissions & Transport Service Manager has sole discretion to consider the application to have been received on-time.
17. Late applications received after the OAA send date, regardless whether extenuating reasons have been provided, cannot be considered as on-time except as detailed in Paragraph 18 below.
18. If a late application is received after the OAA send date but before the date when the LA has published in its scheme that it will receive lists of applications from OAA schools within Oxfordshire (hereinafter to be called 'OAA receive date'), and the application is supported by strong extenuating reasons as to why it should be considered on-time, and the preferences received on the late application are for schools in Oxfordshire only where the LA is the Admission Authority or is acting as agent for the Admission Authority, then the Admissions & Transport Service Manager has sole discretion to consider the application to have been received on-time.

19. Late applications received after the OAA receive date, regardless whether extenuating reasons have been provided, cannot be considered as on-time under any circumstances.
20. Late applications and late changes of preference received after the Late Closing Date 1 but by the date when responses to the offers made on National Offer Day should be received as detailed in the LA's scheme (hereinafter to be called the 'Response Date') will be considered as late applications for Offer Day 2 of the admissions process as detailed in the LA's scheme. The National Offer Day is:
 - 1 March (or next working day) for applications for secondary school transfer;
 - 16 April (or next working day) for applications for transfer from infant school to junior or primary school;
 - 16 April (or next working day) for applications to start primary or infant school for the first time.The Response Date is usually approximately 10 school days after National Offer Day and is published each year in the LA's scheme.
21. The second round of the admissions process will run according to the dates published in the LA's scheme. For applications for secondary school transfer the second round of the admissions process will run in April and notification will be sent out in early May. For applications for transfer from infant to junior or primary school and to start primary or infant school for the first time, the second round of the admissions process will run in May and notification will be sent out in early June. Exact dates will be published in the LA's scheme each year. The LASC will not meet after Response Date to consider whether a late application received after that date with extenuating reasons will be considered for Offer Day 2.
22. Late applications and late changes of preference received after the Response Date will not be considered for Offer Day 2 of the admissions process. Such late applications will be considered after the response date for Offer Day 2, the date of which is published in the LA's scheme.

ANNEX E – MEASURING DISTANCES FROM HOME TO SCHOOL (STRAIGHT LINE)

There are two ways to measure children’s distances from home school for admissions purposes to determine which children live closest to the school. These are “straight line distance” (see below) and “shortest designated route” (see Annex F).

The LA uses the “straight line distance” (see below) to measure home to school distances for children to all schools where the LA is the Admission Authority.

The LA uses the “shortest designated route” (see Annex F) to determine the nearest school with an available place not offered to other children.

Some OAA schools also use “straight line distance” (see below).

Some OAA schools use “shortest designated route” (see Annex F).

“Straight line distance”

The start point of the measurement is the “**seed point**” of the home address. The “seed point” is provided by Ordnance Survey from information compiled from Royal Mail and Councils via Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG). The seed point normally falls within the bounds of a property. The accuracy of seed points is to the nearest ten centimetres and uses the British all-numeric Co-ordinate System (Easting/Northing). It is not possible to verify the individual location of every seed point prior to measuring due to the number of addresses in Oxfordshire and surrounding areas.

For schools where the LA is the Admission Authority the end point is the nearest open gate of the school first arrived at from the direction of travel that is officially available for use by students for entry and exit to the school site at the start and end of the school day. The LA consults with each individual school annually to ensure accurate placement of gates and their availability for use.

Where the LA is not the Admission Authority, the relevant Admission Authority will provide the determined end point to the LA.

The calculation of the distance will be made in metres using a Pythagoras calculation. This calculation will be converted into miles by dividing the distance by 1609.344 to achieve a distance in miles accurate to three decimal places.

For addresses outside the British Coordinate System an internet mapping solution will be used to determine a start point using longitude and latitude via getlatlong.net/. A straight line distance will then be calculated to the end point at the school in statute miles using www.nhc.noaa.gov/gccalc.shtml

ANNEX F – MEASURING DISTANCES FROM HOME TO SCHOOL (SHORTEST DESIGNATED ROUTE)

There are two ways to measure children’s distances from home school for admissions purposes to determine which children live closest to the school. These are “straight line distance” (see Annex E) and “shortest designated route” (see below).

The LA uses the “shortest designated route” (see below) to determine the nearest school with an available place not offered to other children.

Some OAA schools use “shortest designated route” (see below).

“Shortest designated route”

This is measured from the same start point defined in the straight-line distance measuring rules (see Annex E). From the start point the route firstly connects to the nearest point of the digitised network.

The digitised network is constructed from road data supplied by Ordnance Survey. This has been accurately digitised to measure along the centre of roads and takes corners at right angles. This is the same underlying information used by internet-based mapping solutions (e.g. Google Maps). However, the LA has a more accurate start point than internet-based mapping solutions and the network has been augmented by the LA to take into account other available public routes (e.g. alleyways, public footpaths, bridleways, etc). The augmented network used by the LA is accurate to at least 1 metre.

All 548,000 kilometres of roads in Great Britain are accurately mapped in a consistent and logical network. The network does not include routes that are not defined as public; these include crossing parks with no paths where the park is not open and available all the time, “short-cuts” across patches of open land without paths, or footpaths across private land which are not defined by Ordnance Survey as public routes.

The end point of the route is the nearest open gate of the school first arrived at from the direction of travel that is officially available for use by students for entry and exit to the school site at the start and end of the school day. The location of these gates has been set by the Admission Authority. The LA consults with each individual school annually to ensure accurate placement of gates and their availability for use.

The measurement is calculated using an algorithm within the bespoke software used by the LA. This software is called EYES (Early Years and Education System) which is supplied by Liquid Logic (<http://www.liquidlogic.co.uk>). Eyes measures in miles accurate to three decimal places, which gives an accurate reading up to 1.609344 metres.

The shortest designated route is not necessarily a driving route because it may use, in whole or in part, a non-driveable route (e.g. footpaths). The shortest designated route is also not necessarily a walking route because, for example, where the measurement uses a road, the route is along the centre of the road not along the edge (pavement or equivalent) of the road.

Other measuring systems may give a different measurement, but the LA cannot take a measurement from another measuring system into account because this would lead to inconsistency in the method used to measure the shortest designated route and would constitute

maladministration of the admissions process.

For addresses which are outside the digitised network (approximately 6 miles outside Oxfordshire's county boundary) an internet mapping solution will be used. For addresses in Europe, 'Directions' in google.co.uk/maps will be used. For addresses outside Europe the straight line distance using the same websites and method set out above will be used.

ANNEX G - OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL POLICY FOR PROCESSING SCHOOL ADMISSION APPLICATIONS WHERE THERE IS A PARENTAL DISPUTE

Purpose and scope

This policy explains how Oxfordshire County Council (The Council) will process school admission applications (normal round and in-year) where there is a dispute between parents and/or others with parental responsibility (PR) over school preferences. It applies to all applications coordinated or processed by the Council, including those made via the Parent Portal, and to all phases (primary, junior, secondary), alongside each school's determined admission arrangements and the Council's coordinated and in-year admissions schemes.

Legal and guidance framework

School Admissions Code (2021)

Statutory requirements for admission authorities and local authorities, including offers, withdrawal of offers, waiting lists, and coordination.

Department for Education (DfE) Parental Responsibility Guidance (updated 24 Aug 2023)

Who is a "parent" for education law, how schools/Local Authorities (LA) should handle disputes, court orders, information sharing, and consent.

Education Act 1996, s.576

The definition of "parent" in education law includes biological parents, those with parental responsibility, and those who have care of the child.

Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005

Rights of parents to access the educational record.

Data protection legislation

UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018, as referenced in DfE guidance for information sharing with parents.

Oxfordshire County Council's admission rules and schemes

The Council's determined coordinated and in-year schemes and admission rules.

Definitions

Parent (education law):

Any biological parent, any person with parental responsibility, and any person who has care of the child. More than one person can hold and exercise parental responsibility.

Parental Responsibility (PR):

The rights, duties, powers, responsibilities and authority a parent has in relation to the child and their property (Children Act 1989). Examples of how PR is held/acquired are set out in DfE guidance (e.g., birth mother, married parents at birth, joint birth registration, PR agreements/orders, adoption, child arrangements orders, local authority via care orders, etc.).

Court Orders:

Section 8 orders (Child Arrangements, Prohibited Steps, Specific Issue), Care Orders, Special Guardianship Orders and others that may define or limit how PR is exercised—schools/LAs should act consistently with any such orders.

Policy principles

Child's best interests paramount:

The Council will act in the child's best interests and within the law, avoiding involvement in parental disagreements beyond what is required to process an application lawfully and fairly.

Neutrality:

The Council will not mediate, arbitrate, or take sides in disputes between parents; parties are expected to resolve disagreements themselves, through mediation or the family courts if necessary.

Single application and single offer:

Only one live application will be processed at any time for a child, and only one offer will be made, in line with admissions coordination requirements.

Evidence-led processing:

Where a dispute is evident, the Council will establish PR status and consider any relevant court orders before proceeding.

Compliance with data protection and information rights:

The Council will share information with parents in accordance with education law and data protection law, with redactions where appropriate to protect personal data.

What the Council expects before an application is submitted

All parties with PR should discuss and attempt to agree school preferences before an application is submitted.

The applicant must confirm they (a) have PR and (b) have the agreement of all with PR or hold a court order giving authority to proceed. The Council's online form declaration reflects these requirements.

How the Council will process applications where there is (or may be) a dispute

Indicators of a dispute

- Two or more applications received for the same child with different preferences; or
 - Contact from another person with PR disputing the submitted preferences; or
 - Information provided that suggests PR is contested or limited by a court order.
- The Council will pause to verify PR/court-order position where such indicators arise.

Evidence the Council may request

- Evidence of PR (e.g., full birth certificate, PR agreement/order, adoption order, child arrangements order, special guardianship order, care order).
- Copies of any current court orders relevant to schooling decisions (specific issue, prohibited steps, child arrangements, etc.).

Decision pathway

1. **Only one person has PR:** The Council will process that person's application.
2. **Court order specifies who may decide schooling:** The Council will comply with the order and process the authorised party's application.
3. **Multiple PR holders and no agreement/no relevant court order:** The Council will place the application on hold until either:
 - written agreement from *all* PR holders is received; or
 - a relevant court order is provided that authorises one party to decide.

Where the application is part of a main round process (reception, junior or secondary), written

agreement or a court order must be received by the date set for the LA to send information about applications to own admission authority (OAA) schools in Oxfordshire so that OAA schools can consider applications and rank applicants as set out in the coordinated scheme for the relevant academic year. Any agreement or court order received after this date, but before the late closing date set out in the coordinated scheme for the relevant academic year will be processed as part of the late round.

After an offer has been made (or a place taken up)

If the Council later learns an application proceeded without consent from other PR holders (and without a relevant court order), the Council may withdraw the offer/allocated place where permitted by the School Admissions Code (e.g., offer made in error or obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application). Each case will be assessed on its facts (including time elapsed and the child's position).

If the child has already started at the school, the Council will consider the length of attendance and potential impact before deciding whether withdrawal is appropriate, consistent with the Code and local circumstances.

Information sharing with parents

Any person who is a "parent" under education law is entitled to engage with their child's education and (subject to legal limits) receive educational information; maintained schools must provide access to the educational record on request.

Where a person with PR requests information about an application submitted by another PR holder, the Council will normally disclose application information consistent with DfE guidance and data protection law, redacting personal contact details of the applicant where appropriate to protect privacy or safety.

The Council will consider safeguarding or court-ordered restrictions before disclosure and may refuse disclosure where release could cause serious harm to the child or another individual.

Safeguarding and domestic abuse

Reducing parental conflict is distinct from domestic abuse. Where risks of harm are indicated (e.g., court restrictions, MARAC involvement, social care advice), the Council will prioritise safeguarding and follow statutory procedures, seeking legal advice where needed.

Communication and timescales

The Council will acknowledge receipt of evidence, confirm when an application is on hold due to a dispute, and explain what is required to proceed.

Where feasible, the Council may hold an allocated place open for a period of up to six weeks while parties resolve matters (without prejudice and subject to operational constraints and statutory timelines). This reflects reasonable practice seen in other authorities but is not guaranteed.

Appeals and complaints

Where an application is validly determined and refused, the right of appeal to an independent panel applies in the usual way; the existence of a parental dispute does not change appeal rights or timelines.

Complaints about the Council's handling of disputed applications can be made via the Council's complaints process; however, the Council cannot resolve disagreements between PR holders over school choice and may signpost parties to legal advice/mediation.

Data protection and records

The Council will process and share personal data strictly in line with UK GDPR/DPA 2018 and the DfE guidance. Records of disputes, evidence reviewed, and decisions will be retained in accordance with the Council's retention schedule.

Equality and inclusion

The Council will ensure equitable treatment of all parents (resident and non-resident), guardians and carers, unless a lawful restriction applies (e.g., court order). Communications will be accessible and reasonable adjustments provided where required.

How to contact Oxfordshire County Council School Admissions

Parents should apply and track applications via the Council's Parent Portal and can find general guidance on the Council's admissions pages.

For disputed cases, parents should email the School Admissions Team attaching PR/court-order evidence (admissions.schools@oxfordshire.gov.uk).

Determined

Paragraph 1.49 of the 2021 School Admissions Code requires Admission Authorities (and/or the Local Authority) to determine Admission Arrangements by 28 February each year regardless of whether a consultation has taken place.

Objections to these arrangements and rules can be made to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator by 15 May in the determination year.

www.gov.uk/guidance/schools-adjudicator-make-an-objection-appeal-or-referral#objections-to-and-referrals-about-determined-school-admission-arrangements

24.02.2026

Date

Lisa Lyons
Director of Children's Services

Signature
Role