

Alderbury and West Grimstead VA School Admissions Policy 2017-2018

Part I- Introduction

- 1.1** This document sets out the Policy of Alderbury and West Grimstead Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School with respect to Admissions. For the purposes of this policy, the Governing Body of Alderbury and West Grimstead School is the admission authority.
- 1.2** Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the churches at parish and diocesan level.
- 1.3** The school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith, and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the daily Christian act of worship and from Religious Education.
- 1.4** Parents who wish their children to be admitted to the school must complete the Primary Common Application Form (PCAF) in line with the Wiltshire Council Co-ordinated Primary School Admission Scheme, and state Alderbury and West Grimstead as one of their preferences. The PCAF can be obtained from the school office or from County Hall, Trowbridge and should be returned directly to County Hall. Alternatively, you may apply online at www.wiltshire.gov.uk. An application does not guarantee admission should the school be oversubscribed (please see Oversubscription Criteria). Registering interest with the school on a “register of interest list” before the admissions round guarantees neither a place nor priority within the oversubscription criteria. Offers of places will be made by the Local Authority on the school’s behalf.
- 1.5** Parents or guardians will be sent written notification of the outcome from Wiltshire Council on the date determined in the Co-ordinated Admission Scheme. An offer of a school place should be accepted by the deadline date, which is also set out in the Scheme, otherwise the offer of the place will be withdrawn.
- 1.6** Every year the governing body will review and publish information concerning Alderbury and West Grimstead School admissions policy. This will confirm the maximum number of children to be admitted to the school as a whole, the Pupil Admissions Number (PAN) which is currently 30 and explain how places will be allocated.
- 1.7** In accordance with government legislation, the governing body will consult with the Diocesan Board of Education, the Local Authority and other local schools in respect of the admissions policy.

Part 2 - Aims

- 2.1** The overriding aim of this policy is that it should work for the benefit of all children and parents/guardians in our area. It should be simple to use and assist parents/guardians to take the best decisions on the preferred school for their children. It should contribute to improving standards for all pupils.
- 2.2** The school aims to provide a place for all children whose address is within the designated area, defined as being the area **within the ecclesiastical boundaries of the parishes of Alderbury, Whaddon & West Grimstead**. Designated area means the area of benefit as defined in the school's Trust Deed. A map is available from the school office or at <http://www.achurchnearyou.com> where the ecclesiastical parish boundaries of each village can be seen.
- 2.3** The address is the place where the child is permanently resident with his or her parent or parents or legal guardians. Evidence may be requested to show the address, for example: to which any Child Benefit is paid or at which the child is registered with a medical GP together with recent utilities bill, council tax bill or tenancy agreement. This evidence will be used when reaching a decision on the child's home address for admissions purposes (including where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility for each part of the week). Parents should not assume that a place will automatically be allocated to their child.

Part 3 Starting School in Reception in September 2016

A full-time school place in the Reception class is available for children from the September following their 4th birthday. (i.e. children born between 01/09/2012 and 31/08/2013 will be admitted in September 2017.)

- 3.1** The procedure for applying to start school for the first time in Reception must be coordinated by the home local authority (the local authority responsible for the area in which the child subject to the application lives). Before applying for a school place, applicants should refer to the 2017 Coordinated Admissions Scheme published by the home Local Authority and other information set out in section 1.4
- 3.2** The application form (referred to as 'the Common Application Form') is available from the home local authority. This must be completed and returned to this authority, to arrive no later than 23.59 hours on 15th January 2017.
- 3.3** Parents may apply for their child to start school, for the first time in the September following his/her fourth birthday, either full time, or on a part time basis as preferred. However, a child becomes of compulsory school age when he/she reaches the age of five and, where registered at a school, must be attending on a full time basis in the term following his/her fifth birthday.
- 3.4** In the case of children born between 1st April and 31st August (summer born), parents may choose to delay their child's entry to school until the following September but must still apply during the earlier admissions round making clear on the application form the intention to delay his/her child's entry to school for one year. Where the parent states a wish for his/her child to be considered with the 2018 Reception cohort rather than to join year 1 at the earlier time, he/she will be required to formally withdraw the earlier application and to make an entirely new application as part of the 2018 normal admissions round. This must clearly set out the reasons for the request, which the governors will consider when making their decision. The governors will only support a request in those circumstances where a place is legally available and it is clearly in the educational interests of the child concerned.
The offer of a place in 2018 will be dependent on the number of applications received at that time and the number of places available to offer. If the school is oversubscribed, all applications (initially those received on time) will be assessed according to the published oversubscription criteria in order to determine a priority for the offer of available places.

- 3.5** The home Local Authority will forward details of any applications submitted for Alderbury and West Grimstead CE VA Primary School to Wiltshire Council. The Admissions Committee at Alderbury and West Grimstead CE VA Primary School will meet and consider all application forms that indicate a preference for the school and where necessary to do so, the committee will apply the oversubscription criteria in order to determine a priority for admission. Applications submitted before the 15th January 2017 deadline will be administered and available places provisionally allocated, before the consideration of any later application.
- 3.6** Decisions will be notified to applicants by the home local authority who will send a letter and/or email on behalf of the Governing Body, on or around 16th April 2017 (dependent on the date published in the LA Co-ordinated admissions scheme). It is important that you follow the instructions on the offer letter by either accepting or declining the place offered for your child. Details of where to send this information and the date this must be done by will be included in the letter. Failure to respond to this letter may result in the school place being withdrawn and the place offered to another applicant.

Part 4 - Deadline for application

- 4.1** Applications for Reception Year entry for the academic year starting September 2017 need to be formally registered with the Local Authority by the date stated on the PCAF, **midnight on 15th January 2017**, for consideration by the admission authority.
- 4.2** Alderbury and West Grimstead Church of England (VA) Primary School cannot guarantee places for children when there are no places available as a result of late applications for the normal year of entry or any application that relates to a different year group.
- 4.3** The Governors have set a maximum class size of 30 pupils in Key Stage 1 and 35 pupils in Key Stage 2. Legislation states that no infant class (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2) may exceed 30 pupils.
- 4.4** A decision on the admission of new entrants will be made during the spring term 2015. Parents or guardians will be sent written notification of the outcome from the Local Authority after **16th April 2017**.
- 4.5 Applications for Reception 2017 Intake – applications received after 15 January 2017**
- i. All applications received after the deadline of midnight on 15 January 2017, including those directed incorrectly to schools and not forwarded to the LA before the deadline, will be treated as late applications and considered only after those applications received before the deadline have been determined.
 - ii. Applications received between the 16 January 2017 and 23 April 2017 will be treated as second round applications.
 - iii. Applications received after the 23 April 2017 will be treated as third round applications.

Part 6 - Waiting List

- 6.1** During the normal admissions round it is always necessary to complete a Local Authority Common Application form to apply for a school place. Registering interest with the school on a “waiting list” before the admissions round guarantees neither a place nor priority within the oversubscription Criteria. Offers of places will be made by the Local Authority on the school’s behalf.
- 6.2** If the school is oversubscribed for children due to start in the Reception Year 2017-2018, or any year group including in year admissions, a waiting list will be maintained. The position on the list will be determined by **applying the published over-subscription criteria and not by date of receipt**. This means a position will change if a later application is received from someone with higher priority according to the over-subscription criteria. All applicants have the right of appeal against any refusal of a place. The existence of a waiting list does not remove the right of appeal against any refusal of a place from any unsuccessful applicant.
- 6.3** Names will only be removed from the list if a written request is received, or if the offer of a place that becomes available is declined. Waiting lists for ALL year groups will close on **20th July 2018**. (The statutory requirement is that waiting lists must remain open until at least **31 December 2017**).

After 20th July, a fresh application can be made for a place for the next academic year group. Looked after children and previously looked after children as defined within this policy, children who are the subject of a direction by a local authority or who are allocated to a school in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over any child on the waiting list.

- 6.4** Children will automatically be added to these lists if a preference higher than the school place offered has been refused.

Part 7 - Applications outside the normal admissions round (In Year Transfer Applications for year groups other than Reception 2017 Intake and Applications outside the normal admissions round)

- 7.1** Applications for a place during the academic year, may be submitted at any time, but will not be administered more than a term in advance of a place being required, except in particular circumstances applying for Crown Servant or Service family children. **Applicants must complete an In-Year application form** and return this to the LA. This form is available from the LA or a copy can be provided by the school office upon request.
- 7.2** The Admissions Committee will consider applications during term time only and strictly in the order that they are received. Applications that arrive during a school holiday may be held and processed when school resumes. If the governors receive more than one application on the same day for the same year group, they may need to apply the published oversubscription criteria in order to determine a priority for admission where insufficient places exist within the PAN or admission limit applying at that time
- 7.3** The non-statutory admission limits (applying to years 1 – 6) indicate the number of places available in a particular year group at a particular time. The governors are permitted to adjust these limits according to the level of resource available to support the year group concerned. If the Admissions Committee determines that the admission of a further child would impact on the efficient delivery of education or the efficient use of resources, the application will be refused.
- 7.4** Applicants will receive a written decision by first class letter post, where possible, within 20 school days of receipt of the In-Year application form or receipt of any supplementary information where this is subsequently submitted to support an application and is deemed necessary in order to determine the admission decision. If an application is refused, the decision letter will set out the reasons for refusal and explain how to appeal against the Admission Authority's decision.
- 7.5** Any offer of a place during the academic year, will remain open for six school weeks from the date of the decision letter. If the child concerned is not on roll and attending before this deadline, the Admissions Committee will consider withdrawing the offer of a place.
- 7.6** If your child is offered a place then you must accept or decline the place within 10 working days of the date of offer. If the place is not accepted then a further letter will be sent informing the applicant that should they not accept or decline the place within five working days the place will be withdrawn.
- 7.7** Subject to the information provided on the application form and the circumstances at the school, the Admissions Committee may decide to refer an application to Wiltshire Local Authority in order that the Fair Access Protocol may be applied. This would normally be where a child is deemed to require a higher level of support than can be provided at the school. The Fair Access Protocol enables the local authority to engage directly with a family in order to help identify a suitable educational placement as soon as possible.

Part 8 – Over-subscription generally

8.1 The admissions policy Alderbury and West Grimstead CE VA Primary School is, while there are adequate places, to offer a place to all applicants irrespective of gender, religion, ethnicity or country of origin, disability or academic ability. This school participates in the Local Authority's Fair Access Protocol.

8.2 Special Educational Needs - Education Health & Care Plans

Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education Health & Care Plan are admitted to school in accordance with a separate process administered by the Local Authority (LA) in whose area the family lives. The governors must always admit a child whose Statement or individual plan names Alderbury and West Grimstead CE VA Primary School.

Part 9 - Over-subscription Criteria

Where more applications have been received than places available or where to admit would conflict with the school fulfilling class size legislation, the following priorities shall apply in order:

9.1 LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

A 'looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child Arrangements, or special guardianship order. For admission purposes, a looked after child is a child who, at the time of application, is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 applies)

9.2 VULNERABLE CHILDREN NAMELY (in order of priority)

- i. children of families with confirmed refugee status
- ii. children with a medical condition or disability where written evidence is available from a senior clinical medical officer and the child's general practitioner or specialist showing that it would be detrimental to the child's health not to admit him/her to the school rather than any other. Details of this must accompany the initial application.
- iii. Children where either parent has a disability which would make travel to a different school difficult. Evidence from a registered health professional such as a doctor or social worker will be required. Details of this must accompany the initial application.

9.3 LIVING WITHIN THE SCHOOL'S DESIGNATED AREA AS DEFINED ABOVE IN PART 2:

9.4 SIBLINGS

A child is considered in this category if an older sibling is attending the school at the deadline date, **and will still be attending at the time of admission**, and where the child lives within the designated area at the same address as the older sibling. Sibling refers to brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or the child of the parent/carer's partner where the child for whom the school place is sought is living in the same family unit at the same address as that sibling.

9.5 CHILDREN OF STAFF AT THE SCHOOL

A child is considered to fall under this criterion

- i. where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at

- which the application for admission to the school is made, and/or
- ii. the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a skill shortage.

If applicants wish to be considered under this criterion then a letter from the Headteacher confirming the above applies to the applicant must be provided at the time of application.

9.6 OTHER CHILDREN

Children resident within the designated area who do not qualify under one of the criteria above.

9.7 LIVING OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL'S DESIGNATED AREA AS DEFINED ABOVE IN PARA 2:

i. SIBLINGS

A child is considered in this category if a sibling is attending the school at the deadline date, and will continue to do so when the sibling is admitted, and where the child lives outside the designated area at the same address as the sibling. Sibling refers to brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or the child of the parent/carer's partner where the child for whom the school place is sought is living in the same family unit at the same address as that sibling.

ii. CHILDREN OF STAFF AT THE SCHOOL

A child is considered to fall under this criterion

- i. where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, and/or
- ii. the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a skill shortage.

If applicants wish to be considered under this criterion then a letter from the Headteacher confirming the above applies to the applicant must be provided at the time of application.

iii. PRACTISING CHRISTIANS

Those children from outside the designated area who are regular (monthly for 12 months prior to application) practising Christians, of whatever denomination, at a recognized church or religious group. (A recognised church or religious group is one that is a member of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (see ctbi.org.uk) or the Evangelical Alliance (see eauk.org)).

iv. OTHER CHILDREN

Children resident outside the designated area who do not qualify under one of the criteria above.

9.8 Tie breaker

If the school is oversubscribed within any criterion above, the straight-line distance from the child's home address to the front door of the school will be used as the determining factor. Distances will be measured according to the Ordnance Survey eastings and northings for the child's home address and the school. Those living closer to the school will be given priority. If two or more children with the same priority for admission, live an indistinguishable distance from the school, but cannot all be admitted, then the available places will be decided by the casting of lots by someone independent of the school or the Local Authority.

Parents must accept the offer by the date set out in the Local Authority Co-ordinated Primary School Admission Scheme (Date TBC). Parents will be asked to reply to the Local Authority and confirm acceptance by this date.

Once an offer of a school place has been made, it may only be lawfully withdrawn in very limited circumstances, which include an offer of place based upon a fraudulent or misleading application. Where an offer of place is withdrawn, the application will be considered afresh, and a right of appeal offered if an offer of place is refused.

Part 10 - Appeals Procedure

- 10.1** Applicants whose school place application has been turned down will have the legal right to appeal against the governors decision, providing a formal application for a school place was submitted and a decision letter received. Full details explaining the appeal process will be set out in the decision letter.
- 10.2** An appeal timetable is published on the school website by 28th February every year. This is within the document from the SDBE 'A Parent's Guide to Appeals'. This sets out the timeframe for the various stages in the appeal process and includes statutory dates by which appeals must be heard. The governors do not organise appeal hearings during school holiday periods and any appeal received when the school is closed will not be administered until school resumes.
- 10.3** An appeal form must always be completed and submitted to the School Office. An appeal form can be obtained from the School Office or downloaded from the school website from the document from the SDBE 'A Parent's Guide to Appeals'.

Part 11 – Further General Information

11.1 Applications for children to enter a year group other than chronological age

The governors will consider applications on a case by case basis for retained or accelerated entry in cases where parents would like their child to be admitted to a year group either side of the chronological age year group. The reasons for the request must be fully explained in writing and included with the school place application form.

11.2 Multiple birth applications (for example twins)

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

11.3 Children from Overseas

The Governors will process admission applications for children living overseas providing they have European Economic Area (EEA) citizenship, are United Kingdom (UK) citizens returning to the UK, or they hold an appropriate Home Office Visa at the time of application. All overseas applications will be considered according to the child's home address at the time of submission unless proof of the child's future UK address is provided with the application (see 9.5 Home Address). The only exceptions are children of UK Service personnel and other Crown Servants (including Diplomats) returning to the UK with a confirmed posting within the area.

11.4 Parent

A parent in education law includes natural parents, whether they are married or not and a person other than the natural parent(s) who has parental responsibility or care of a child or young person.

Having care of a child or young person means that person who looks after the child and with whom the child lives, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child.

11.5 Home Address

For the purposes of school admission, the governors' definition of a child's home address is considered to be where the child resides for the majority of their time with the person(s) who legally have care of the child. Documentary evidence of house ownership, or a minimum six-month rental agreement, may be required together with proof of the child's residency at the property concerned. Places will not be allocated on the basis of a future house move unless this can be confirmed through the exchange of contract or a signed formal lease agreement in place at the time of application. An address used for childcare arrangements cannot be used as a home address for the purpose of applying for a school place.

11.6 Withdrawing the offer of a school place

The child must then be attending school within six school weeks of the date of the original offer letter. The governors reserve the right to withdraw the offer of a place if these conditions are not met and to reallocate the place to the highest ranked child on a waiting list, or to a new applicant where no waiting list exists. The governors may also withdraw the offer of a school place if the child's home address is subsequently found to be fraudulent.

11.7 Ecclesiastical Parish boundary maps

Maps indicating the Ecclesiastical parishes for Alderbury and West Grimstead CE VA Primary School can be made available from the school office or at <http://www.achurchnearyou.com/> where the ecclesiastical parish boundaries of each village can be seen.

11.8 Relevant Documents

Important information published by local authorities applies to some areas of school admissions procedure. If you are considering submitting an application for your child to start or transfer school, you are advised to refer to your local authority's website. Documents of particular importance include:

- The Local Authority Coordinated Admissions Scheme
- The Composite Prospectus 'Primary Admissions Guide for Parents' (this will include detailed information about how to apply for a child to start school for the very first time in the Reception year group)
- The Local Authority School Transport policy
- The Local Authority Fair Access Protocol (this document applies only for applications made in connection with a place required during the academic year)

Part 12 – Enquiries about these arrangements

These Admission Arrangements reflect the statutory requirements of the 2014 Department for Education School Admissions Code and the School Admissions Appeals Code www.education.gov.uk. The documents were compiled by the Governing Body (the Admissions Authority for the school) and published on the school website following a public consultation. The administrative practices described in these arrangements are designed to be fair and reasonable and the information provided is intended to explain clearly:

- How to apply for a place at Alderbury and West Grimstead CE VA Primary School
- How the Admissions Authority administers admission applications

- How to appeal against a decision to refuse admission

Enquiries about this policy should be addressed to:

Mrs Janice Ford, (Clerk to the Governing Body)
pmsford@btinternet.com

Note: Subject to the above policy and the relevant appeals procedure, decisions regarding admissions will be the responsibility of the Governing Body.